

Notes on the Introduction of *Manglietia decidua* Into Cultivation in Europe and North America

Richard B. Figlar

In April of 1999 Philippe de Spoelberch acquired approximately 100 seeds of *Manglietia decidua*, a new deciduous species from eastern China. He planted about 30 of these himself and sent the rest to several individuals—all Magnolia Society members—in the United Kingdom, Netherlands, United States, and Korea (see table below). By distributing the seed in this way, Philippe felt that this would increase the chances of germinating one or more plants successfully. It turns out that this strategy worked, and ten plants are thriving as of this writing.

Since *M. decidua* is deciduous and is native to China's Jiangxi province, a place that also supports indigenous hardy species such as *Magnolia denudata* and *M. officinalis*, it is quite possible that *Manglietia decidua* could be cold hardy in large parts of North America, Europe, and other temperate regions. Thus, these notes provide historical documentation of what is thought to be the first introduction of this species outside of China.

Of the ten surviving plants, Tom Hudson's two plants grew to about six inches tall and they seem to be somewhat affected by a fungus. Philippe's plant, now being cared for at W.A.M. Rutten's facility, has grown eight inches in its first year and is in good health. My seven plants grew astonishingly well, for the most part, with six plants growing to between 17 and 30 inches this summer. With basal stem diameters of 5/8 of an inch, these plants were by far the most robust, first-year, magnolia seedlings that I have ever grown! I have already permanently planted out one *M. decidua* at my garden (Magnolian Grove) in Pickens, SC and have donated another plant to the Arnold Arboretum for further propagation. In addition, some of the leaves from these plants were sent to several Magnolia researchers around the world (molecular biologists) for DNA sequencing.

Based on Sun Weibang's report (see related article elsewhere in this issue) and from what I heard last year in China, *Manglietia decidua* could be an exciting "new" magnolia for western gardens, and possibly one that is hardy to USDA zones 5 and 6.

The following table shows shows the seed distribution, germination, and survival rates.

Name	Quantity of Seed	No. Geminated	No. of Plants alive as of 11/1/99
John Allen Smith (US)	10	2	0
Richard Figlar (US)	10	7	7
Tom Hudson (UK)	10	3	2
John Gallagher (UK)	10	0	0
Maurice Foster (UK)	10	0	0
Ferris Miller (Korea)	10	N/A	N/A
W.A.M. Rutten (NL)	10	0	0
Philippe de Spoelberch (Belgium)	30	9	1

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