

NEW PLANT FORUM

JACK ALEXANDER AND GARY KOLLER, MODERATORS

SUSAN NOLDE: *Juniperus conferta* 'Silver Mist' has been in the Japanese nursery trade for years. It was named and registered by Brookside Gardens in 1983 after no valid cultivar name was found in the Japanese literature. We purchased this plant from a large exporter in the Angyo Nsy area of Japan.

'Silver Mist' is similar to *J. conferta* 'Blue Pacific', however, it has distinctly grayer foliage. Additionally the needles are shorter which gives the plant a thicker and denser appearance. It is more compact than the species. This clone has been around for quite a while. The U.S. National Arboretum has it in the Gotelli collection and some nurserymen may have this plant under another name.

Monrovia Nursery has shown a great deal of interest in this plant. We have distributed it to them and it should be showing up in the trade under this name soon. It is also being tested by Weyerhaeuser Research Program so Hines Nursery may be carrying it soon as well. Additionally we have also distributed it to selected evaluators around the country, including Eisely Nursery in Oregon and the North Carolina State University Arboretum, which has made it available to nurseries in North Carolina. Cuttings root 80% with an 0.4% IBA-talc treatment.

GUSTAV MEHLQUIST: *Rhododendron* 'April Dawn' is a single-flowered selection from a cross between *R. dauricum* var. *album* and *R. carolinianum* var. *album*.

Height: 4 to 5 ft in 10 years.

Blooming time in Connecticut: April, about five days later than *R.* 'P.J.M'.

Flower color: pale to medium pink, depending on temperature.

Flowering habit: similar to *R.* 'P.J.M'.

Number of petals: five.

Foliage color: somewhat lighter than *R.* 'P.J.M'.

Rhododendron 'April Rose' is a double-flowered, rose-colored evergreen selection from crosses involving *R. dauricum*, *R. dauricum* var. *album*, *R. carolinianum*, and *R. mucronulatum* 'Cornell Pink'.

Height: 3 to 4 feet in 10 years.

Blooming time in Connecticut: April.

Flower color: rose.

Flowering habit: similar to *R.* 'P.J.M.'.

Number of petals: 12 to 15.

Foliage color: deep red throughout the year.

Rhododendron 'April Gem' is a double-flowered, pure white evergreen selection from crosses involving *R. dauricum*, *R. dauricum* var. *album*, *R. carolinianum* var. *album* and *R. mucronulatum* 'Cornell Pink'.

Height: 3 to 4 ft. in 10 years.

Blooming time in Connecticut: April.

Flower color: pure white.

Flowering habit: similar to *R.* 'P.J.M.'.

Number of petals: 12 to 15.

Foliage color: green, leaves that drop in fall turn bright yellow.

Rhododendron 'April White' is a semidouble, pure white evergreen selection from crosses involving *R. dauricum*, *R. dauricum* var. *album*, *R. carolinianum* var. *album*, and *R. mucronulatum* 'Cornell Pink'.

Height: 3 to 4 ft in 10 years.

Blooming time in Connecticut: April.

Flower color: pure white.

Flowering habit: similar to R. 'P.J.M.'.

Number of petals: 10 to 15.

Foliage color: green, leaves that drop in the fall turn bright yellow.

JIM ZAMPINI: *Malus* 'Molten Lava' is a new weeping crabapple with red buds opening into masses of white flowers in the spring. Cascades of brilliant red fruit flow like lava from the pendulous branches throughout the fall season. 'Molten Lava' will reach a height of 15 ft and have a spread of 12 to 15 ft. The foliage is green. This cultivar is the strongest grower of all weeping white *Malus* and is free of scab. I recommend the use of Gro-Straights and metal stakes for the production of superior trees. It is hardy to Zone 4.

Malus 'Madonna' P.A.R. forms a compact upright head (height to 18 ft and spread of 10 ft) that makes it ideal for street tree or landscape use. The large (2½ to 3 in.), double, fragrant white flowers open slowly. It is among the first crabapples to show color in the spring and the last to go out of bloom. Clusters of golden fruit with a blush of red follow the flowers. During production little or no pruning is required, tree and shrub forms are easily produced, and it is disease tolerant. It is hardy to Zone 4.

Tilia cordata 'Corinthian' grows as a compact pyramid with a potential height of 45 ft and spread of 15 ft. The formal shape of this tree is created by evenly-spaced limbs around a straight central leader. Dense branching combines with thick, lustrous dark-green foliage to make a shining pyramid in the summer. The leaves are smaller, thicker, and glossier than the species. The flowers, which are ivory and fragrant, are followed by tan fruit about ¼ in. in diameter. 'Corinthian' is dormant one week longer than other cultivars. Growth is slow compared to other cultivars the first year but the growth catches up the second and third year. It is hardy to Zone 3. Growing suggestions for superior trees include the use of Gro-Straights in the spring and metal stakes.

Elaeagnus umbellata 'Titan' P.A.F. is a plant that can be used as an easily controlled hedge or screen. 'Titan' grows to 12 ft and has a width of 5 ft. Its dense, uniquely upright branching gives it all-seasons beauty starting in the spring when it is covered in a mass of soft, golden sweet-scented flowers. During the growing season, its leaves are a rich olive green. With the slightest breeze, each leaf dances a silver reflection. In the fall its bold red fruit attracts songbirds. Hardy to Zone 4.

JACK ALEXANDER: *Leycesteria formosa*, the Himalaya honeysuckle, is a member of the Caprifoliaceae or honeysuckle family. It has been cultivated in the West since 1824. Its native range extends from northwestern India through the Himalayas to southeastern Yunnan and northeast to Szechuan and Tibet. Future selections from some of the colder regions of the range may serve to extend its use as a garden plant. It is not very hardy, but can be successfully grown as far north as USDA Zone 6 by treating it as an herbaceous perennial and cutting back each seasons growth to near ground level. The leaves of *Leycesteria formosa* are bright green and opposite. Stems reach heights of 4 to 5 ft in a season, are hollow, bluish green, and arching.

The funnel shaped white or pinkish flowers are produced over a period of several weeks in mid-summer and are on the current season's growth near the ends of the arching branches. They are in terminal or axillary spikes that include very attractive ½ to 1½ in. long purple bracts. The fruits are many-seeded, shiny, reddish-purple berries and borne among the persistent, purple bracts. It is this combination of fruits and bracts that are the plants most attractive feature and on a sunny October day all passers-by will stop to admire them. The fruits are said to be edible, but having tried them, I do not recommend them. Birds are reportedly very fond of them.

In the North, it is necessary to transplant the Himalaya honeysuckle in the

spring, so that plants will have a growing season to become established before winter. *Leycesteria formosa* will tolerate light shade, but colors best in sunny locations. Seeds, which are abundantly produced, germinate without pre-treatment. Seedling growth is rapid and lush.

CLARENCE FALSTAD: The herbaceous perennials, *Hosta sieboldiana* cvs. Northern Halo and Northern Lights, are both sports of the popular blue-gray leafy hosta, *H. sieboldiana* 'Elegans'. These plants were developed and registered by Walters Gardens, Inc., Zeeland, Michigan.

Hosta sieboldiana 'Elegans' in maturity has large, heavily-textured, corrugated, blue-gray leaves mounding out 36 to 40 in. above a densely rhizomatous base. The near white flowers are closely clustered on a spike showing just above the foliage.

Hosta sieboldiana 'Northern Halo' is identical to *H. sieboldiana* 'Elegans' except that it has a creamy-white margin surrounding the leaf.

Hosta sieboldiana 'Northern Lights' has a creamy-white center with some light green ribboning between the blue-gray margin and the center. This cultivar is noticeably slower growing than the parent due to reduced chlorophyll.

Hosta 'Moon Glow' was discovered and registered by Ken Anderson. This selection develops a rich, toasted gold leaf by mid-summer that is also variegated with a creamy-white border. A mature plant gets 18 to 24 in. tall and the leaves become slightly corrugated. The flowers are near white.

KRIS BACHTELL: One type of vernal witchhazel that deserves a closer look by propagators and nurserymen is *Hamamelis vernalis* f. *carnea*, the red-flowering vernal witchhazel. According to Steyermark in his *Flora of Missouri*, *H. vernalis* f. *carnea* naturally occurs sporadically in only two adjacent counties in southeastern Missouri. Besides the unusual flower color, this plant often possesses exceptionally beautiful fall color. The colors range from orange-red to deep maroon and can often resemble the fall color of *Fothergilla gardenii*. The fall color of individual plants can vary and selections should be made from seedling-grown plants for good, consistent autumn coloration. I know of two nurserymen that are currently working on such a project. A few cultivar selections of *H. vernalis* f. *carnea* have already been made. One hard-to-locate selection named 'Sandra' was selected by Hillier Nursery in 1962. Hillier's *Manual of Trees and Shrubs* states that, "in autumn the whole bush ignites into orange, scarlet and red."

Hamamelis vernalis f. *carnea* can be rooted by cuttings quite successfully. In fact, *H. vernalis* is reported to be the easiest witchhazel to root. For seed propagation, collect fruits before the seed has been expelled from the capsule, and sow immediately. Seeds treated this way will germinate in fairly good percentages the first spring. Germination will also likely occur the second year.

Juniperus communis 'Repanda' is an attractive and useful ground cover juniper that merits greater use. 'Repanda' is an old selection from Ireland made before 1934. Its sex is undetermined. Hasselkus and Schneider in their ground cover juniper evaluation, *The Best and Worst Ground Cover Junipers for Landscapes in the Midwest*, published in the *American Nurseryman*, July 15, 1983, rated this plant to be the best selection of *Juniperus communis* they observed.

Mature plants of 'Repanda' reach a height of only 15 in. and form fairly regular circles. The needled foliage is medium-green during the growing season and turns yellowish green in winter. The foliage color holds well in winter while other selections from this species turn brown. Although the foliage is coarsely textured, the twigs are very supple and flexible, and soft to the touch. The foliage densely covers slightly ascending branches that nod at their tips. Juniper or Phomopsis blight (*Phomopsis juniperovora*), a disease that is particularly destructive to many ground cover junipers in the Midwest, has not been reported to affect this plant.

'Repanda' is easy to propagate successfully from cuttings. Cuttings taken in winter and treated with 5000 ppm IBA quick-dip have rooted in high percentages.

JOHN WALTERS: *Hibiscus* 'Anne Arundel' (PP5209) is an introduction by Richard Darby, formerly of College Park, Maryland, and now of Iowa City, Iowa. Mr. Darby has done some excellent work with the hardy hibiscus including breeding the outstanding cultivars, *H.* 'Lady Baltimore' (PP4271), and *H.* 'Lord Baltimore'. Anne Arundel is currently under an exclusive selling arrangement with Wayside Gardens of Hodges, South Carolina. It is scheduled to become available to the general nursery trade in the fall of 1989 and spring of 1990.

This exceptional hibiscus can best be described as a glorious pink. The flowers are 9 in. across and the height is 4 to 5 ft. The bloom period begins in Michigan in early July and continues into October. This is an exceptionally long bloom period for this type of hibiscus. The flowers extend appropriately beyond the foliage giving them a full color effect. Anne Arundel is known to be hardy to Zone 5 without mulching. The leaves are moderately abundant, finely cut, and decorative. The color of the leaves is medium green and palmately lobed. The growth is vigorous. It is a hardy herbaceous perennial with bushy annual growth from the root stock.

This is a normal hibiscus in that dormancy is broken very late in the season with very little show even with foliage until late spring. The very long blooming period from early summer until well into fall makes this hibiscus a very desirable plant for a summer flowering hedge or border, or grouped to form a landscape focal point.

Echinacea purpurea 'Alba' is a seed-grown *Echinacea* with good creamy-white flowers and showing only slight variability when seed-grown. The cone is coppery-brown with the white petals displayed quite flat this allows the flowers to be displayed at their best. Flowering begins in late June in Michigan and continues well into September. Flower performance peaks during July and August with a continual display of white flowers that makes this plant an exceptional, long-blooming perennial. Height is about 24 to 26 in. with blooms approximately 4 in. in diameter. The dark green, heavily-textured foliage arises from a single root.

Our observations over three years indicate *E. purpurea* 'Alba' to be a long lived perennial and hardy without winter protection to at least Zone 5. In general, *E. purpurea* is described as being hardy throughout the continental United States. It is described as being strong, drought tolerant, and a low maintenance perennial. Other white *Echinacea* cultivars currently being offered include: 'White Lustre', 'White King', 'White Prince', 'White Swan', 'Talent White', and possibly others. *Echinacea purpurea* 'Alba' can play a valuable role in the perennial landscape, and also in naturalized plantings.

BILL THOMAS: *Chrysanthemum pacificum* is a garden perennial, ground cover, or pot plant grown primarily for its foliage. The leaves are white-edged and bright white tomentose underneath. Small yellow blossoms appear in early November and stay attractive for about 3 weeks. A Japanese native that spreads quickly to 3 ft and a height of 15 in., it needs no staking or pinching. It is a full sun plant that tolerates hot, dry conditions. Perfectly hardy in USDA Zone 7, it probably will grow much further north.

Stem cuttings root any time of the year and Longwood Gardens will provide cuttings to get nurseries started growing it. Propagation is also possible by division.

Pennisetum setaceum 'Burgundy Giant' is a coarse-textured ornamental grass with purple leaves and large purplish flower clusters. A rapidly growing annual in most parts of the country, it is actually a USDA Zone 10 perennial. Burgundy giant pennisetum propagates very quickly when stem cuttings are taken between April and September. It roots within 10 days in sand under mist, and can reach 7 ft in height with a 3-ft width in one growing season. Individual stock plants easily over-winter indoors. Marie Selby Botanic Garden and Longwood Gardens are registering the cultivar name and Longwood will have cuttings available by the summer of 1988.

Sorbus rufoferruginea is a healthy and attractive, Japanese mountain ash that

thrives in hot summers which usually kill other members of the genus. Our 20-year-old plants are 20 ft tall and wide, with a round-headed form, and free of scab and fireblight. This tree is spectacular the entire month of October with wine-red leaves and contrasting orange fruit clusters. The fruits remain showy well into December. Longwood Gardens will provide scions and seeds. Seeds need a 2 to 3-month cold stratification period.

ROB NICHOLSON: *Betula apoiensis*, the dwarf Apoi birch, is a Japanese species that is restricted in its range to one mountain. Mount Apoi is situated on the south coast of Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island. The mountain is a few miles from the sea, reaches an altitude of 900 m, yet has an alpine zone with a number of endemic species. This birch is found between 600 and 800 m, usually growing in gravelly places and rocky crevices. Species found with it are *B. ermanii*, *Alnus maximowiczii*, *Pinus pumila*, *Rhododendron dauricum*, and *Potentilla fruticosa*.

In 1977 Drs. Richard Weaver and Steven Spongberg collected seed on this mountain for the Arnold Arboretum and the dwarf Apoi birch was among their collections. The plants they collected from were only 2 ft high and we now have a stand of ten year old plants grown from this seed. All are under 3 ft high, some being multi-stemmed and some show a single leader. The white bark of this birch coupled with its small stature make it a fine species for small scale landscapes and rock gardens.

Propagation by seed is fairly straightforward; give the seed a short stratification period of 2 or 3 months before sowing to ensure uniform germination.

PETER DEL TREDICI: *Pinus nigra* 'Arnold Sentinel' continues a long tradition of introducing new plants by the Arnold Arboretum. This fastigate clone was selected from a group of seedlings that were raised in 1970 from seeds collected in western Turkey by Turkish entomologist; Dr. Abdulgafur Acatay. The seeds came from a wild population of *Pinus nigra* that naturally showed the upright or pyramidal habit. Dr. Acatay discovered the stand which covered about 110 acres near Mt. Uludag, in 1955, and in 1968 he described it as *Pinus nigra* var. *pyramidata* (Mitt. Deuts. Dent. Gesell. 63, Jahrbuck 1967/68: 54-54).

In 1970 Dr. Acatay sent seeds from this stand to nurseries and botanic gardens throughout the world including the U.S. National Arboretum, who forwarded half of their share to the Arnold Arboretum, where they were accessioned under the number 502-70. Numerous seedlings were raised at the Dana Greenhouses by the former plant propagator, A. J. Fordham, and seven of the most upright were planted out. The seedling selected as 'Arnold Sentinel' is now 16 ft high but only 4 ft wide. It keeps a good dark-green color throughout the winter, and has a dense, full habit. Possessing the same salt tolerance of the species, this new fastigate clone can offer a touch of variation to the often tedious rows of *Pinus nigra* that adorn so many of our highways and industrial complexes.

During January, 1987, the branches of the tree were badly splayed out by a series of ice and snow storms. The damage was severe enough to cause a delay in our scheduled introduction for a year to see if the plant could recover from the trauma. Today I am happy to report that the tree has fully recovered its upright habit. *Pinus nigra* 'Arnold Sentinel' has the backbone to stand up to the rigorous environmental conditions it would have to face in many of the most demanding landscape sites.

GARY KOLLER: *Schizophragma hydrangeoides*, Japanese hydrangea vine, is a little known Japanese plant which suffers lack of landscape use as a result of being compared, unfavorably, with climbing hydrangea (*Hydrangea anomala* subsp. *petiolaris*). The two plants are similar in that they are native to the woodlands of Japan where they climb trees, attaching themselves to the trunk with rootlike hold-fasts. They both grow naturally in a shaded woodland environment and clamber to the tops of the tree canopy where they spread out gaining the advantage of an exposure of full sun which encourages optimum flowering. They both prefer a moist but well-drained soil. Both vines are hardy to approximately -25°F.

Japanese hydrangea vine differs from climbing hydrangea in the following ways. In Boston, *Schizophragma* flowers in July after climbing hydrangea finishes its bloom sequence, thereby providing landscape designers with the option of extending bloom. Using both species of vines in a landscape allows a designer to extend floral interest over a longer season. By selecting one or the other the designer can choose when the floral presentation will be most effective in relation to the total landscape scene. Japanese hydrangea vine bears showy creamy white bracts which remain in good condition for 4 to 6 weeks depending on the exposure and ambient air temperatures of the season. However, as the bracts begin to age they fade to a straw-brown color and remain visually effective for a period of 2 to 3 months. At the Arnold Arboretum they are showy till early October when they tend to recede into the landscape picture as a result of competition with more colorful autumn foliage. Since both species of vines flower in light to moderate shade they are excellent choices where lack of sun might be problematic from a plant selection standpoint.

Japanese hydrangea vine clings to wood, masonry, or stone much the same as climbing hydrangea but it bears shorter horizontal branches resulting in less bushiness. *Schizophragma* tends to contour itself more closely to the surface upon which it climbs.

Autumn color is different! The Japanese hydrangea vine produces a pale yellow to amber autumn color while climbing hydrangea leaves fall away still basically green color.

One establish growth after transplanting and can take 4 to 6 years to resume normal shoot elongation. Japanese hydrangea vine, on the other hand, attaches itself to a wall and begins rapid upward growth within the second or third growing season. This faster growth allows quicker coverage and greater customer satisfaction.

Two existing new additions to the world of Japanese hydrangea vines are a pink-flowered clone (*Schizophragma hydrangeoides* 'Roseum') introduced by the Arnold Arboretum from Europe and which will be for sale at the September, 1988 Rare Plant Auction of the Arnold Arboretum. A new clone recently named 'Moonlight' was introduced by Brookside Gardens in Wheaton, Maryland. 'Moonlight' bears leaves weakly marked with a silvery color or sheen while the veins are dark green producing a color combination which appears as though moonlight shines on the foliage. 'Moonlight' roots more easily and over a wider seasonal range than cuttings taken from the typical species.

Seeds require one month of cold stratification to insure optimum germination. Seeds are small, dust-like and light brown in color. The plant can be easily reproduced vegetatively if cuttings are taken from soft new season growth before flowering.

NANCY VERMEULEN: *Pinus thunbergiana* 'Mini-mounds', mini-mounds Japanese black pine, was almost named 'Many-mounds' and then 'Many Mini-mounds'. It's ultimate mature habit is not yet certain. Our original plant is now 23 years old. It has been under close evaluation since it was purchased from Princeton Nurseries in 1975 as an 11-year old specimen. The name aptly describes the plant which is low and dense with merging mounds of medium-green foliage. The 3½ to 4 in. needles are closely spaced along short shoot growths, mostly 3 to 5 in. with occasional shoots to 8 in. These are bunched attractively so as to form larger mounds comprised of other mini-mounds. Our original plant measures 7 by 9 ft wide and 2 to 4 ft high. It has a trunk caliper of 4½ in. Spring "candles" on 'Mini-mounds' are extremely attractive. In its early years the plant grows somewhat awkwardly, like a gangly teenager. But what a handsome mature plant it makes!

SIDNEY WAXMAN: *Larix laricina* "Newport #7" and "Newport #9". Both seedlings, Newport #7 and Newport #9 were obtained from a witches'-broom found in Newport, Maine in 1977. They were selected from a group of 95 seedlings. Both selections are dwarf and have very short branches. The needles are approximately ½ in. long. The outstanding characteristics of each cultivar is the vibrant light

bluish-green foliage that develops each spring. In the fall the needles turn a deep tan. In winter they look like a small mass of dense chocolate-brown twigs. Newport # 7 is a mounded dwarf that has grown about 2 ft wide and one foot high after 7 years. Newport # 9 differs from # 7 in that it has more strongly developed lateral branches. It is slightly irregular in form and not as tall as # 7.

Both selections can easily be propagated by cuttings, but because they do not do well in dry soils, I would recommend that they should be grafted onto a larch rootstock that is more tolerant of soils that are drier than those in which the American larch is commonly found. Grafting onto Japanese or European larch is acceptable.

R. WAYNE MEZITT: *Rhododendron* 'Weston's Pink Diamond' was selected as the outstanding plant from a 1964 cross (our # 201) performed by Edmund V. Mezitt (*R. P.J.M.* × *R. mucronulatum* 'Cornell Pink') and introduced in 1983 to commemorate our nursery's 50th anniversary. It is a lepidote and has tested flower bud hardy at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum to -18°F .

Its best attribute is the heavy flowering in late April in Hopkinton, MA. Flowers are clear-pink and fully double. The plant is multistemmed, wide, upright, and retains less than 50% of its foliage in winter. Leaves are bright green in summer, becoming red, orange, and yellow in fall, or mahogany in winter if they are evergreen. The original plant is now about 5 ft tall and 3 ft wide; anticipated mature size is 8 ft high and 5 ft wide.

Rhododendron 'Milestone' is a compact growing lepidote, originally called 'Marathon' by us because its April bloom often coincides with The Boston Marathon that begins in Hopkinton on about April 19th. (The name was changed because another rhododendron was already registered as 'Marathon'). Its current registered name is appropriate because our nursery is located at the one-mile point of the Boston Marathon. The flower bud hardiness of 'Milestone' has been tested and found to be -13°F by the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

This next plant is a selection from a 1972 cross performed by Edmund V. Mezitt. It is a self-pollinated seedling of *R. 'Mindaura'*: *R. minus* 'Compactum' (a form from Wyman's Framingham Nurseries) × *R. dauricum* var. *sempervirens* (Probably the same parent used for the original *R. P.J.M.* cross in 1938). I think it is our cross # 913. Its bloom begins with dark pink buds which open to just-as-dark flowers that retain their color intensity throughout the entire bloom period; it appears almost red from a distance. Foliage is quite small, dark green in summer and red, yellow and orange in autumn. Less than 50% of the foliage is retained in winter and it has a burgundy-mahogany color. Flower buds are prominent in winter. As with most plants in the *R. dauricum* group, this one performs best when planted in full sun and well-drained, rich, acid soil.