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The LOUISIANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

DEADLINE FOR WINTER '86 NEWSLETTER

The deadline for submitting articles, chapter information, plant requests, etc. for the Winter 1986 Newsletter is December 1, 1986. Please mail your correspondence in as early as possible, at least several days prior to the deadline so it will arrive in time to:

David Heikamp
717 Giuffrias
Metairie, Louisiana 70001

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES YET ?

If you haven't paid your dues yet, send your \$5 in before you forget to:

Bill Gebelein
11128 Woodmere Drive
Shreveport, Louisiana 71115

PROPAGATION OF DECIDUOUS AZALEAS

by A.D. McNees

NOTE: the following article is here reprinted from the January 1983 Newsletter of The Alabama Wildflower Society, with permission of The Alabama Wildflower Society and Mr. A.D. McNees.

There does not appear to be anything mystical about the rooting of species and hybrid deciduous azaleas. By using correct methods, keeping good records and by following a prepared outline it can be a routine practice. I know successful gardeners who have been growing plants all their life who look on propagation as something beyond their grasp. "T'AIN'T SO!"

The following method has worked successfully for me and it is one method and certainly not the only method. I am sure it can be improved and I intend to continue to experiment in the future as there is always something new, i.e.

willow water, triacontanol, etc.

CUTTING I always take what I can get, but the best cutting is the very tender first growth. Contrary to most other types of cuttings these have to be tender. I do not believe that you can take them too young or too tender.

TEMPORARY HOLDING If there is to be any delay in the sticking of the cuttings, they should be cared for as follows; I use plastic freezer bags (1 gal. size) and spray the inside of the bag with a trigger spray-bottle with water until droplets are seen on the inside of the bag. I then place the cuttings in the bag and blow it up like a balloon and seal it with a tie. The blowing up of the bag will protect the cuttings and also put carbon dioxide in with them.

LENGTH The cutting should be three plus inches long and I always pinch out the terminal. This will induce branching and it has been reported that this pinching is what makes the plants break dormancy in the spring.

WHEN The day after a rain and in the misting rain is excellent. Always in the morning if possible. These cuttings have to be turgid and have to be kept that way. Here in north Alabama anytime in April when you can get the length is all right.

PREPARATION I reduce the leaves to four or five at the top of the cutting and all leaves that would come in contact with the rooting medium are removed. Excessively long leaves should be reduced in size by one third to one half. No wound is necessary.

DIP The following is a strong brew and will not hurt the cuttings when used as a quick dip. If you soak the cuttings in this, I guarantee their demise:

3 gallons water
1 tablespoon Banrot
1 teaspoon Benlate
2 tablespoons Malathion
2 tablespoons Kelthane

ROOTING MIX I use two and one half gallons of screened peat moss and two and one half gallons of coarse perlite (fine perlite will keep the mix too wet). The peat moss will have to be moist and the only way I have found to do this is to soak the peat moss in water and squeeze out by hand (a messy job). The two ingredients are then mixed until there is an even color contrast. It will be light and fluffy when finished.

CONTAINER I use a rooting tray from Western Maine Nurseries, Inc., 36 Elm Street, Fryeburg, Maine, 04037. It is called a Multi-Pot Nursery Tray, 8.75" X 14" and will hold 67 cuttings. The above is a commercial nursery and will only sell 10 trays at a time. The delivered cost is around \$3.75 each. These trays are reusable, and will last many years.

I fill the tray with the mix and tap the tray on the ground to settle, then I refill the tray until the mixture is level with the top. DO NOT PACK IN THE TRAY; the mixture needs to be loose. Tapping is all that is necessary. I have tried several alternatives but these trays seem to do the best job.

HORMONE No hormone is necessary. When I have used hormones, the bottoms of the cuttings that rooted turned black where they were in the hormone and rooted above where the hormone was applied. I am sure that hormones are a boon to the propagation of a great many plants and I use 2% IBA on rhododendrons; but for me the use of hormones on deciduous azaleas has not proved to be successful.

INSERTING With one motion the cutting is plunged directly into the center of the mixture about one half to two thirds the length of the cutting. I do not firm the mixture around the cutting.

WATERING I use a watering can and thoroughly wet the tray full of cuttings. These cuttings are not firmed in and sometimes will turn in the container. This does not, apparently, make any difference.

ROOTING BOX The rooting box is under lath shade with a 50% sun exposure at high noon and probably less in the morning and afternoon as the thickness of the lath strips would reduce the amount of direct sunlight let in. The box measures 34 inches deep by 60 inches wide, outside dimensions. There is no bottom to the box and it rests on top of approximately 10 inches of pea gravel drainage. On top of the pea gravel the 2" X 8" treated lumber is nailed together to form the 34" X 60" rectangle. On top of the 2" X 8" boards there is a 2" X 6" frame nailed together the same way with hinges on the back so it can be raised. Between the 2" X 8" base and the 2" X 6" top there is a one inch wide sponge weatherstripping (replaced annually). Across the top of the 2" X 6" top there is loosely stretched a piece of 6 mill plastic. I use white nursery batten tape about 3/4" wide around all sides, on top of the plastic. This tape is stapled at about 4 inch intervals. I then go around the outside of the frame with my knife and cut the plastic exactly the same size as the top of the frame (makes a neat job). On the inside of the top of the frame two roofing tacks are nailed on the front and two on the back, about half way down. From the hardware store I get some 6 inch spaced welded wire fencing and cut this into a three foot square being sure there are no sharp edges sticking out. Then stick one side of this wire behind and on the top side of the two roofing nails in the back, and then bend the wire upward to raise and make the plastic tight and create a quonset hut-looking affair. You may need to wait and place the front two roofing nails after a trial to see where they need to go. A handle on the front, an eyelet above the handle, a chain with a hook hanging from the lath roof to hold the box open and the job is complete.

PLACING I set the trays in the rooting box and water again to be sure they are very wet.

LABELLING The tray is lettered across the front from A to G and numbered down the side from one to ten. This enables you to keep up with the identification of the plants. Later identification is very important and you cannot trust your memory. A nursery pen that will absolutely not wash off is required.

AFTERCARE I spray weekly with the following: 1 teaspoon Benlate to one gallon of water, and I make sure they do not dry out.

ROOTING TIME Most of the plants will root in twelve weeks and a few will root in eight weeks.

HARDENING OFF After they have rooted I raise the lid of the rooting box for one hour for three days in the afternoon. Then two hours for three days then overnight for three days. During this period it is necessary to keep a close watch on the correct moisture as they become acclimated to less than a saturated atmosphere.

POTTING I pot up in Lerio #C-350 pint pots with the following mixture. The following makes about 20 gallons of mixture which will fit nicely in a large wheelbarrow. My measuring bucket hold two and one half gallons:

3 1/2 buckets	pine bark (mini-nugget size)
2 buckets	screened peat moss
1 bucket	good top soil
1/2 bucket	sand
2 tablespoons	Epsom Salts
1 cup	Gypsum
2 cups	soil amendment (Sta-Green 13-6-6 plus minor elements)

These pots are then set under the lath house and attention to watering is always a must. No additional fertilizer is added until the following spring. A periodic spraying with Benlate, Kelthane, Malathion and any other chemicals you normally use in the care of your plants would be helpful.

NEW GROWTH New leaves and adventitious shoots from below the potting mix will show up in about three to five weeks. New growth is necessary before cold weather.

OVERWINTERING All of the plants must be kept under plastic for the first winter. If you do not have anything in the rooting box you can overwinter 135 without any trouble. All that have some growth before the fall will break into growth the following spring when they will need repotting and fertilization. Some will set buds the first summer.

NOTE On occasion the plant will just callus and not form roots. Take your fingernail and break off the callus, and if the cutting is still in good shape, reinsert it and it will sometimes root in about four weeks.

I hope the foregoing will help you in rooting some of these plants. If you have a successful method for Heavens Sake please don't change. I promise you who have never rooted any plants a great thrill in seeing those little white rootlets and the creation of a favorite plant.

I would be interested in hearing from anyone who has a different method and I welcome suggestions for changes and improvements.

Pete McNees
1408 Memory Lane
P.O. Box 350
Tuscumbia, Alabama 35674

PROPAGATION OF MAGNOLIA MACROPHYLLA

by Richard L. Johnson

Here at Briarwood I gather the seed cones from Magnolia macrophylla just as the seeds begin to show. I use a 35 foot electrical hot stick but in the wild, a small caliber rifle can be used to knock the cones onto the ground. A few seeds shatter out of the cones when they strike the ground but I gather all and drop them into a paper bag. If I don't have time to process the seeds immediately we place the bag of seeds in the refrigerator. Magnolia seeds should never be allowed to become dry. The seeds so stored should be processed within three weeks.

The seeds, as you know, are covered with a thick red pulp that in nature is removed in the stomachs of birds or by other means. I use my thumbnail to fracture the pulp and then squeeze the seed out between my thumb and forefinger (similar to skirting watermelon seeds, as all good southerners understand!). Soaking in water helps to loosen the pulp and speeds the process. My experiment in removing the pulp from large quantities of seed with a food processor proved unrewarding - as of yet, I have not found a use for magnolia puree!

After pulping the seeds, drop them into cool water. Some seeds will float because they are faulty or immature. Throw these away and keep the ones that sink. I wash the oil from the remaining seeds with soap in luke-warm water. This may be an unnecessary step, but it is no problem to do it anyway.

Next I soak sphagnum (peat moss) until thoroughly wet and then process out as much water as possible leaving the material only slightly damp. Then I take a strip of plastic food wrap and place it flat on the counter and cover it with a thin layer of the damp peat moss and on top of this I place the

prepared seeds. I leave one inch clear of peat moss and seeds on the sides and four inches clear at the trailing end. Then I roll the peat moss up, just like rolling a rug. Place a rubber band on each end. As each roll of seeds is finished I mark the data on a small card and place it inside the trailing end of the clear plastic. Then into the crisper of the refrigerator for 60 to 90 days.

To save transplant time, we use direct seeding. The seeds so treated have a 90% chance of sprouting but mice love them, so plant four to the hill and weed out the weak ones when they appear out of the ground. Not enough can be said about soil preparation. Get competition out and add lots of humus to the hole. Rotted cottonseed meal is ideal, if available. On poor soil, plants sit for years as seedlings, as they build up a good root system. With good humus culture, four feet of growth in a year is possible.

Remember Magnolia macrophylla must have drainage. By nature a high bank tree and that means poor drainage is slow death for them. They also do better where they have some protection from wind, as it rips the huge leaves to pieces.

These magnolias can be container grown, but transplanting shock is common. I have been told that broken roots tend to "bleed" and that root rot is therefore a problem.

You may want to experiment with planting the seeds right away instead of placing them in the refrigerator after cleaning. A good rule of thumb is not to plant the seeds any deeper than they are thick. Also, they appreciate a mulch of some type to keep the soil from drying out too much.

One final note, I'll be shipping Magnolia macrophylla seeds to the Seed Exchange in late September or early October. I'm not sure of how many, so get your order in early!

OUR SEED EXCHANGE CHAIRMAN, MR. LARKIN, WRITES:

When I offered to handle the seed exchange for the L.N.P.S., it was with the idea that I would be doing something useful for the Society. I understood that part of our aim was to help preserve and expand the use of the wildflowers of our state.

The program started off fairly well, with major seed contributions from David Heikamp, Fred Dunham, and a few others whose names escape me at the moment. Since then we have had contributions from other members which have helped expand our program considerably.

Consequently, I never imagined it would be taking as much time as it has been taking to run the Seed Exchange. After our last winter meeting in Alexandria I was swamped with seed requests and inquiries, particularly from people who had read the article that appeared in the Alexandria newspaper. Some requests were for information on plants that I was not qualified to answer.

When Julia Sanders showed me Harry Phillip's "Growing and Propagating Wildflowers", I decided to use some of the money from the seed exchange to invest in the book - one very useful to the functioning of the Seed Exchange.

In the past year, I have spent a lot of time collecting seeds for the exchange (see numbers 61 through 92 on our current list). I don't mind spending a lot of time for a good cause, but I can't keep the program going without help from other members. I thought someone would have brought some seeds to our last meeting, but no one did.

For members who are interested in helping out, I've come to the conclusion

that the best way to collect seeds is to grow them yourself - it makes for much easier picking considering the limited time between when the seeds are ripe and when they are released from their pods.

I would like to thank those who have contributed to the program. I need help to keep it going. Please mail in any seeds you have to spare. The present list includes a half dozen I collected recently. The ones marked with an asterisk (*) are seeds that either may not be viable, or that will probably be sold out by the time you read this.

SEED EXCHANGE LIST FOR 1986/1987

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a list of available seeds for winter 1986/spring 1987. Price is 25 cents per packet. Number of seeds per packet varies with scarcity of seed. Some are in short supply. Please note with your order what you want done in case a particular species is sold out: refund, substitute, or donate to the society. Orders will be filled as they are received. Send your requests to:

Mr. John Larkin
Rt. 4, Box 189 B
Mockingbird Hill Rd.
Franklinton, Louisiana 70438

* indicates last year's seeds, which are in short supply, besides being a year old.

1. * Rudbeckia hirta, Black-eyed Susan (strain w/ red splotches)
2. Penstemon digitalis
3. Arisaema triphyllum, Jack-in-the-Pulpit
4. Rudbeckia hirta
5. *Queen Anne's Lace
6. Baptisia australis, Blue False Indigo
7. Rudbeckia sp. Purple Cone Flower
8. Centrosema virginianum, Butterfly Pea
9. Campsis radicans, Gold Trumpet Vine
10. Rudbeckia maxima
11. *Clematis texensis, Texas Red Clematis
12. *White-flowered Yarrow
13. *Coreopsis grandiflora
14. Liatris sp.
15. Gaillardia sp., Indian Blanket
16. Hibiscus sp., bright pink flowers
17. *Penstemon tubiflora
18. Penstemon sp., from Arkansas, tiny white flowers
19. *Blue Waterleaf
20. Acacia sp., Huisache
21. Hibiscus sp., large pink-flowered mallow
22. *Clematis pitcherii
23. *Penstemon sp., pinkish flowers, Keithville, La. area
24. *Clematis glaucophylla, red flowers, collected in eastern Miss.
25. Deleted
26. *Wisteria macrostachya, wild Wisteria
27. *Styrax americana, Snowbell
28. Sesbania vesicaria, Bag-Pod

29. **H. argophyllus*, Silverleaf Sunflower
30. *Coreopsis tinctoria*, Golden Wave
31. *Rudbeckia hirta*, Brown-eyed Susan
32. *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*, Ox-eye Daisy
33. *Rudbeckia columnaris*, Mexican Hat
34. *H. annuus*, Annual Sunflower
35. *Cassia occidentalis*, Coffee Senna
36. **Dioclea multiflora*, Wild Bean
37. **Apios americana*, Hog Pea
38. Deleted
39. *E. americana*, Strawberry Bush
40. **Matelea decipens*, Vining Milkweed
41. *Matelea zenocarpa*, Honeyvine Milkweed
42. *O. biennis*, Evening Primrose
43. *H. tuberosus*, Jerusalem Artichoke
44. *Bidens aristosa*, Sticktight Sunflower
45. *O. lararckiana*, Evening Primrose
46. *Dioscorea villosa*, Wild Yam
47. *Passiflora incarnata*, Purple Passion Flower
48. *Cocculus carolina*, Carolina Moonseed
49. *Crotalaria sagittalis*, Rattle Box
50. *Desmanthus illinoensis*, Prairie Mimosa
51. *Wisteria* sp., Wild Wisteria
52. *Centrosema virginianum*, Butterfly Pea
53. *Baptisia* sp., Wild Indigo
54. *Sesbania punicea*, Brazilian Rattle Box
55. *Coreopsis tinctoria*, *Coreopsis* (some solid red)
56. *H. argophyllus*, Silverleaf Sunflower
57. *O. biennis*, Evening Primrose
58. **Bignonia capreolata*, Crossvine
59. **Cardiospermum halicacabum*, Balloon Vine
60. **H. virginiana*, Witch Hazel
61. *Rhexia alifanus*, Meadow Beauty
62. *Lobelia cardinalis*, Cardinal Flower
63. *Eupatorium coelestinum*, Wild Ageratum
64. *Cercis canadensis*, Redbud Tree
65. *Callirhoe papaver*, Poppy Mallow (limited)
66. **Hibiscus coccinea*, Scarlet Mallow
67. *Verbena rigida*, Wild Verbena
68. **Louisiana iris* (mixed, from named cultivars)
69. *Helianthus angustifolius*, Narrow-leaved Sunflower, Sept. into Nov.
70. *Helianthus divaricatus*, Wild Sunflower
71. *Agalinus fasciculata*, Pink Foxglove
72. *Helenium amarum*, Bitterweed, collected along US 190
73. *Solidago altissima*, Goldenrod
74. *Solidago odora*, Goldenrod
75. *Cercis canadensis*, Redbud Tree
76. *Cornus florida*, white flowering Dogwood
77. *Solidago tenuifolia*, Goldenrod, 24-30 inches tall
78. *Phlox pilosa*, Downy or Prairie Phlox
79. *Penstemon canescens*
80. *Rhododendron canescens*, wild azalea, "honeysuckle"
81. *Gelsemium sempervirens*, Carolina Jasmine
82. *Ipomopsis rubra*
83. *Coreopsis lanceolata*
84. *Daubentia punicea*, Red Rattle Box

85. *Hibiscus lasiocarpus*, Woolly Rose Mallow
86. *Hibiscus aculeatus*, Pineland Hibiscus
87. *Callicarpa americana*, American Beauty Berry
88. *Monarda punctata*, Horsemint
89. *Coreopsis tripteris*
90. *Physostegia virginiana*, Obedient Plant
91. *Habenaria ciliaris*, Yellow Fringe Orchid (very limited supply)
92. *Chrysopsis graminifolia*, Silk Grass

APIOS TRIBUNE AVAILABLE

William Blackmon of the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station in Baton Rouge is heading up an ambitious attempt to promote the lowly ground nut, *Apios americana*. The *Apios* Tribune is a newsletter aimed at doing just that. As Noel Vietmayer writes "The rediscovery of a native American food plant - once a staple of Indians - demonstrates the vital importance of preserving even the most unassuming wild species."

Permission has been granted to use some of the articles in the AT in future newsletters. Anyone wishing to help with donations of tubers from any plants of *Apios americana* that appear to be outstanding in any way (taste, production, disease resistance, growth habit, etc.), or if you'd just like to receive the newsletter, contact:

William Blackmon
Dept. of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology
Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
302 Life Sciences Bldg.
LSU
Baton Rouge, La. 70803
Phone (504) 388-1464