

## KEEPING TRACK OF NEW CULTIVAR INTRODUCTIONS

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Some time ago I read an article about Callery pear cultivars which mentioned the name of a cultivar with which I was not familiar — 'King Road.' No details about this cultivar were given. Let me tell you about my search for information. First, I consulted the "Checklist of Cultivars of Callery Pear," by Frank Santamour and Alice Jacot McArdle, from the *Journal of Arboriculture* in April, 1983, which contained a comprehensive list of cultivars. However, 'King Road' was not among the names listed.

I looked in McClintock and Leiser's *Annotated Checklist of Woody Ornamental Plants*, Dirr's *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*, Gerd Krussmann's *Manual of Cultivated Broadleaved Trees and Shrubs*, the lists of patented plants, W.J. Bean's *Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles*, and the indexes of *HortScience*, all without success. Next I turned to nursery catalogs, but I didn't find the cultivar in question.

I wrote letters to two people, one to Frank Santamour at the U.S. Arboretum, who prepared the checklist that had appeared in the *Journal of Arboriculture*, and one to the editor of the newsletter in which I had seen the reference to 'King Road.' Dr. Santamour indicated that he had not run across this name previously. The editor of the newsletter did not answer my letter. Later, when I called him, he claimed to have no personal knowledge of the plant and no recollection of the name. The article, he said, probably had been picked up from some other source.

These experiences illustrate the difficulty in tracking down information about a cultivar. With large numbers of cultivars on the market and new ones being introduced each year, there is a need for some way to keep track of new cultivars as they originate.

A committee of the American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS) has inaugurated a plan to assist in doing that. The purpose is to obtain information about a new cultivar while that information is still readily available. The committee has prepared a one-page form to be filled in with the appropriate data, such as kind of plant, cultivar name, trademark name (if any), originator, plant description, location of the original plant, and so forth. There is no cost to participate in this process, and it does not obligate the originator to anything. In

time, the committee plans to publish annual lists of new cultivars with brief descriptions and source information.

Collecting this information is designed to do the following: make the horticultural community aware of a new cultivar and its availability in the trade; establish who originated a particular cultivar, in case of dispute in the future; and provide a data base for historical information on cultivars introduced to the gardening public. Furthermore, it will afford an opportunity to make known regionally adapted cultivars, which otherwise get little attention beyond their region.

The goal of this committee of the ASHS is to have one person in each state who will receive the information about cultivars originating in his or her state. So far, more than half the states have a person acting in that capacity, whom we can call a State Coordinator.

After the one-page data forms are filled out by the person involved with the cultivar (most likely the originator or introducer), the forms should be returned to the State Coordinator who, in turn, will forward those collected each year to the Committee Chairman. Information about these new cultivars will then be published, probably in the *Journal of Environmental Horticulture* (a publication of the Horticulture Research Institute) or in *HortScience*.

However, supplying information to this organization does not substitute for registering the name of the cultivar with the International Registration Authority for that kind of plant. The person who originates or introduces a cultivar should take seriously the responsibility of having the name of the cultivar registered.

Registration is simply the acceptance of a cultivar named by a Registration Authority and the inclusion of the name in a register. The main objective of registration is to stabilize and standardize cultivar names.

Registration Authorities are national or international agencies entrusted with compiling and publishing lists of cultivar names within a particular genus, species, or group; establishing which names are valid and legitimate and which are clearly synonymous; advising on and accepting new names; and interpreting the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants* in certain instances.

Plant societies, such as the Holly Society of America, Inc., or the American Magnolia Society, often act as Registration Authorities. Within an institution or organization which has been appointed to act as a Registration Authority, usually one person is designated to act as Registrar. To learn the name and address of a Registration Authority, contact the American As-



sociation of Nurserymen at 1250 I Street N.W., Suite 500, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Before introducing a cultivar, one should consult the appropriate Registration Authority. The Registrar can supply a checklist of names already used in the genus, species, or cultivar group to which the cultivar belongs. This list will enable one to avoid picking a name too similar to names already in use.

As a cultivar, its name must follow certain rules and recommendations set forth in the "Cultivated Code" — the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants-1980*. The name must be applied to a cultivar not already legitimately named; it must be selected in accordance with the Code; and it must not duplicate a name already in use for another cultivar in the same cultivar class. A previously used cultivar name cannot be reused later for any other cultivar on the assumption that the original cultivar no longer exists.

The Registrar can advise whether the proposed name is acceptable, and he or she can proceed to register the new cultivar's name.

Once a satisfactory name is chosen, the name must be "published." This means that:

- The name must appear in printed reading matter which is distributed or available to the public. Non-technical newspapers and handwritten materials are excluded.
- The reading material must be clearly dated at least as to year.
- Publication of the cultivar name must be accompanied by a description of the cultivar, or by a reference to a previously published description. The description should contain particulars to distinguish the cultivar from related cultivars. (Note that a name published without a description is not a legitimate name and could be replaced by another name.)
- Whenever possible, an illustration should be provided with the description.

If these criteria have been met, dated trade catalogs qualify as acceptable printed material, as do horticultural journals and magazines, or a registration list of a Registration Authority.

Registration prevents confusion that could arise from the use of the same, or similar, names for two or more distinct cultivars, or the application of two or more different cultivar names to a single entity. It ensures that the selected name is

the legitimate name for that cultivar only.

It must be emphasized that registration is a published and documented record of the name only and does not apply to the actual plant or clone being named. Acceptance of a cultivar name for registration does not imply judgment on the distinctiveness or merit of the cultivar.

To conclude, at any time when you are introducing a new cultivar, you should take these two steps:

- 1) Register the cultivar name with the pertinent Registration Authority;
- 2) Contact the Landscape and Turf Working Group of the ASHS, fill out their form and return it. If you do not know who your State Coordinator is, contact Dr. Gerald Klingman, Department of Horticulture and Forestry, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701, for information and data forms.

## REFERENCES

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## NEW PLANT FORUM

JACK ALEXANDER and GARY KOLLER, MODERATORS

**JOERG LEISS:** *Dianthus* 'Frosty Flame' starts to flower in May and continues to flower until frost. The color is an attractive deep red. The originator is Tony Huber of W. Perron and Cie, Montreal. It is easily propagated by softwood cuttings during the summer months under intermittent mist or under plastic.

*Taxus cuspidata* 'Aurescens' is a plant that has been in commerce for quite a while. It is sometimes falsely called *T. baccata* 'Aurea'. The foliage is banded in shade and bright yellow in full sun. There is a plant at the Arnold Arboretum. It propagates easily as does most *Taxus*, but grows best under light shade.

**RICHARD LIGHTY:** *Lindera angustifolia* has been in North America for at least 30 years, although it originally was circulated, probably by