

NO orders, so far, for the following numbers: 6, 8, 10-12, 14, 16, 17, 35-37, 48, 49, 51, 52, 57, 59, 71, 74-77, 82. All other items had one or two orders each.

It appears there is little demand for any *stellata*, any open-pollinated *soulangiana*, any *loebneri* except pink 'Leonard Messel', any *virginiana* except "large flowered", and not much for any *tripetala*, or any but the most "northern" of *grandiflora*.

The only *kobus borealis* orders (3) were for the "columnar" tree.

Among seeds still in good supply, I'd like to recommend that beginning growers try their luck with either of the Illinois *M. X loebneri* cultivars: 'Ballerina' (No. 4) very "double", slightly blushed (grown next to pinker 'Leonard Messel'); or (No. 7) 'Spring Snow', the large white flowered parent of 'Ballerina'. Both are somewhat more compact growers and have more fragrant flowers than the better known *loebneri* 'Merrill'.

— J. C. McDaniel



## Robin Notes

Virginia Melnick, Robin Editor  
Route 6, Box 347A  
Jackson, Tenn. 38301

Virginia Melnick - Our apologies to good friend and Robin member, Mr. A. W. Massey (England) for spelling his name "Massen" on page 14 of the last issue.

Robin No. 1 has added two members, Elliott Jessen of Riverton in n.w. Connecticut near the Berkshire Hills and Priscilla Storer, a lass of 26, of Chappaquiddick Island off Cape Cod in Massachusetts.

Elliott in spring '75 acquired 25 new Magnolias, including six of the National Arboretum "Little Girls," to add to *M. liliflora*, *soulangiana*, *stellata*, and *macrophylla*, and feels the temperatures down to -8 degrees F. of the past four years are no real test for those he has acquired in that time. Priscilla, with lows of 5 degrees F. some winters but more usually 20 degrees F., is trying a *M. grandiflora* cv., *sieboldii*, *dawsoniana*, X 'Freeman,' and *soulangiana*, and has seedlings of *stellata* and *macrophylla*.

Edward (Bud) Horder of Mobile is testing several magnolias for heat tolerance and has *M. stellata*, *virginiana australis*, *campbellii*, *c. mollicomata*, *dawsoniana*, *sprengeri* 'Diva,' *acuminata*, *macrophylla*, *pyramidata*, and a

*grandiflora* cv. He keeps them in 3 to 6 gallon cans in well drained mixture of sand, peatmoss, and pine bark.

Ike Hunter of Dowagiac, Michigan, had his best flowering season ever in spring '75 and good germination from "seed counter" material. Ken Durio of Opelousas, Louisiana, on December 14 had flowers opening on *M. soulangiana* and *denudata* showing color but was dreading a freeze and spoilage. Ken wants to know how to get *M. cordata* 'Miss Honeybee.' We like Ken's slogan at his nursery: "The best time to plant a tree was a long time ago. The next best time is now."

Ginnie Melnick, Asheville, N.C. - The Merrill Nursery in Painesville, Ohio, are growing hundreds of the fine *M. acuminata* var. *subcordata* cultivar, 'Miss Honeybee'. That Magnolia 'Orchid' (*M. liliflora* X *M. stellata*) described in the McDaniel-Savage article on *M. liliflora* in Vol. IX No. 2 of the AMS newsletter (April 1973) is being propagated by Hillenmeyer Nurseries, Lexington, Kentucky 40505. They have container-grown plants. . .Do any nurseries list *M. macrophylla* and *M. ashei*. . .?

Edward Horder, Mobile, Ala. - The region from which *M. campbellii* comes is the very one that holds the greatest interest for us in the South on new ornamentals, and the least promise for northerners. Research on cold hardiness is going on constantly, but research on heat tolerances and winter chilling needs of buds, practically not at all. Perhaps with *M. campbellii* and its varieties we have a plant that will eventually flower well here with our mild winter (less than 600 winter chilling hours). *M. soulangiana* in its varieties frequently blooms erratically here, opening many buds in the fall, shortly to be ruined by the first freeze.

Herbert Trautman, Franksville, Wis - Last year I had about a thousand hardy Magnolia seedlings planted on a medium low elevation. Due to early frost last September, damage to soft foliage and stems appeared evident. Corn and other crops were also severely damaged throughout the Midwest. I'm waiting to see how extensive the damage was. Never in my lifetime have I seen this happen before.

Ken Durio, Opelousas, La. - Fluctuating hot and cold weather this spring caused most Magnolias to start blooming too soon and they were caught by several later freezes. *M. campbellii* died; probably didn't like our weather. . . We are fond of *M. virginiana*, especially the fragrance of the blossoms. We have much variation here in leaf shape and size, some from local seed, some purchased from various sources over the years. You can no longer get the variety of Magnolias that were once offered by the nursery trade in Mobile. We get a few from Tom Dodd. Does anybody know of other sources of unusual Magnolias in southern areas. . .? We are slowly leaning toward favoring the late blooming or more dormant types of Magnolias. The slower they are in the spring, the better they seem to bloom for us. The early bloomers nearly always get caught. . .We will probably have *M. X soulangiana* 'Grace McDade' for sale in gallon cans next spring.

Oliver Diller, Wooster, Ohio - *M. macrophylla*, *obovata* (*hypoleuca*), and *virginiana* were in full flower for us this year, though a few weeks late. Rehder

than 'Sundew', forming a thick leafy tree, but has grown just as fast. The flowers are slightly smaller but it is exceedingly floriferous, more so even than 'Sundew'. This year we had 14" of snow in a snow-thunderstorm which lasted between three and four hours, when the buds were about to open. I enclose a photograph taken 48 hours later. Damage to the blossom was minimal, much less than to 'Sundew' and 'Picture'. I do not know where Pickard got this plant, but presume that it has a rather close association with *M. liliflora* (foliage, flower color, and size).

Growing alongside *M. X s.* 'Brozzoni', and 'Alba Superba', and other well-known cultivars since discarded, 'Picture' and 'Burgundy' seem to me to be in quite another category both for merit as garden decoration and because of the singular nature of their flowers. 'Sundew' and 'Grace McDade' though more in the nature of the general run of *X soulangiana* cultivars, have blooms so much larger and are such strong growers, that they also seem to be in a quite different order of merit. These are, of course, opinions based upon a single plant of each kind, and in the particular conditions of soil and climate which we have here. Our trees are so young that we are revising our estimates of the value of various plants every season.

I have planted this year a very small graft of *M. X s.* 'Triumphans', from Hillier. Do any members have information about this? In particular is there any assembled information about new *M. X soulangiana* cultivars available in the United States? I grew one here under the name of 'San Jose' but discarded it after its second year blooming as lacking distinct character: this may have been too hasty: Grace did not show her true form until the fourth year blooming.

At the moment our plant of *M. X watsonii* is in full bloom. It has attained about 10 ft. and has about 25 blooms this year, but resolutely refuses to be grown into anything like a tree. It is a wide-spreading bush with long stretches of leafless branches with a terminal flower and new leaves. Ambrose Congreve who has just been here, advises shortening these, but I am not really sure that this will improve matters, and wonder if this plant is not better dealt with by occasionally cutting one of these long growths right back to the base.

On our *M. campbellii* family grafts, we have been troubled by a fungus disease attacking the new foliage. This seems to have been precipitated by overhead watering in April, when we had threats of a spring drought, a very unusual thing here and a disastrous event in any collection of newish plants. Spraying with Dupont's Benomyl (Benlate) does not seem to have been entirely effective. No other plants in our collection seem to have it, including the rest of the Magnolias, which number above sixty species and varieties.

*Michelia doltsopa* now stands 12' feet high but still no bloom, whereas *M. figo* is blooming at 18 in. We have put *Magnolia coco* out of doors in a sheltered south-facing corner. Are there reports on its hardiness in California or cooler climates where there is night frost?

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