

Magnolia cylindrica introduced *again* from China

Charles E. Tubesing

In April, 1987, The Holden Arboretum received the gift of a shipment of seeds from the Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing. Among the seeds received was a generous packet labelled *Magnolia cylindrica*. The packet was also labelled 31° N, 117°E. This latitude and longitude is in southern Anhui Province, which is also where the type specimen of *Magnolia cylindrica* was collected.

My interest in these seeds was definitely piqued, but I tried to avoid getting too excited, for the seeds were dry. My success in germinating magnolia seeds received dry had been so limited that I really could not expect to succeed. It would be worth the effort to try, however, so the seeds were soaked in water overnight in preparation for placing them in cold, moist storage.

The next morning, I noticed that a few seeds had swelled and split. It seemed obvious that these had begun to germinate, so they were removed and sown. These gave rise to four seedlings, three of which survived. One of the seedlings was later given to the U. S. National Arboretum, and in May, 1991, the remaining two were planted in the magnolia collection at The Holden Arboretum. The remaining seeds, which were stored moist in a refrigerator until later winter, 1988, gave rise to approximately 40 seedlings. These plants were distributed at the 1988 Magnolia Society Meeting in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

In April, 1992, the two seedlings in the Holden collection bloomed, at five years from seed. Their flowers were white, with a reddish-purple or pink stripe beginning at the base of each tepal and extending about one-third of the distance up the midline. The tepals were held upright until they fell. In general the blooms agreed with those I've seen on cultivated plants labelled *Magnolia cyclindrica*, being very striking in their erect carriage.

Imagine my surprise when it became obvious that one of the two seedlings was setting a few fruits from its first flowering! When mature, these fruits were stout, three inches or a little more in length, nearly two inches in diameter, and heavy enough to bow the branches that bore them. In addition to being sizeable, the fruits were a uniform bright red, and consequently were effective ornamentally from some distance. The fruits were collected, seeds extracted and treated, and seedlings resulted.

In spring of 1993 both plants bloomed again, and this time the other seedling bore fruit. I remembered reading the Dr. Stephen A. Spongberg of The Arnold Arboretum was interested in seeing additional material of *Magnolia cylindrica* of wild origin, so I removed two short branches bearing fully developed fruit and shipped them in fresh condition to him. Not long after that I received a letter from Dr. Spongberg which states "I am confident that your plant represents the true *Magnolia cylindrica*...." I am pleased to be able to share this good news with those who obtained sister seedlings in the 1988 distribution. If any of these persons would care to write to me with a progress report on their seedling, I would like to read it. Photographs of flowers of the different seedlings would be of even greater interest. ✻

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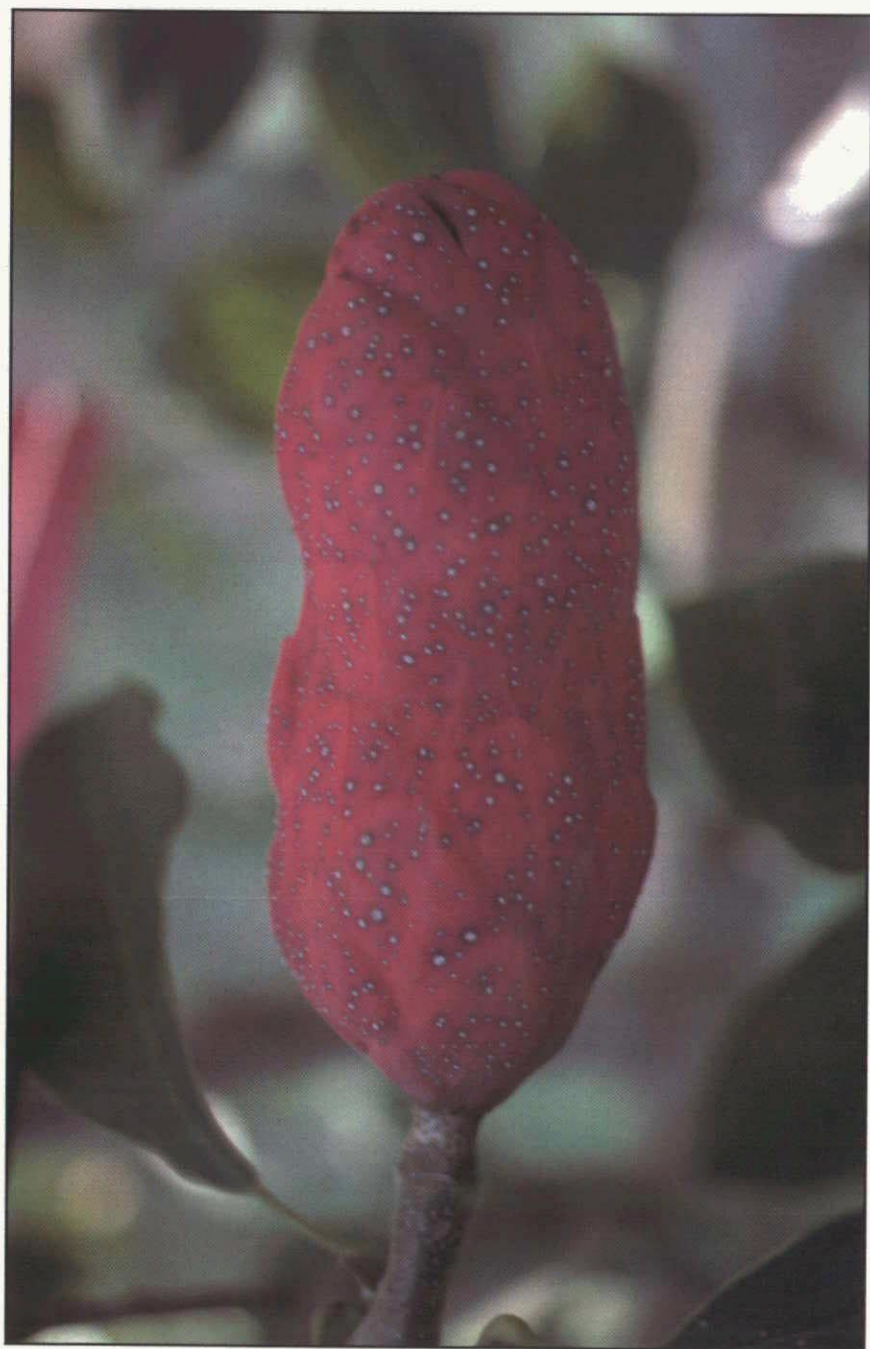
MAGNOLIAS

—J. M. Gardiner—

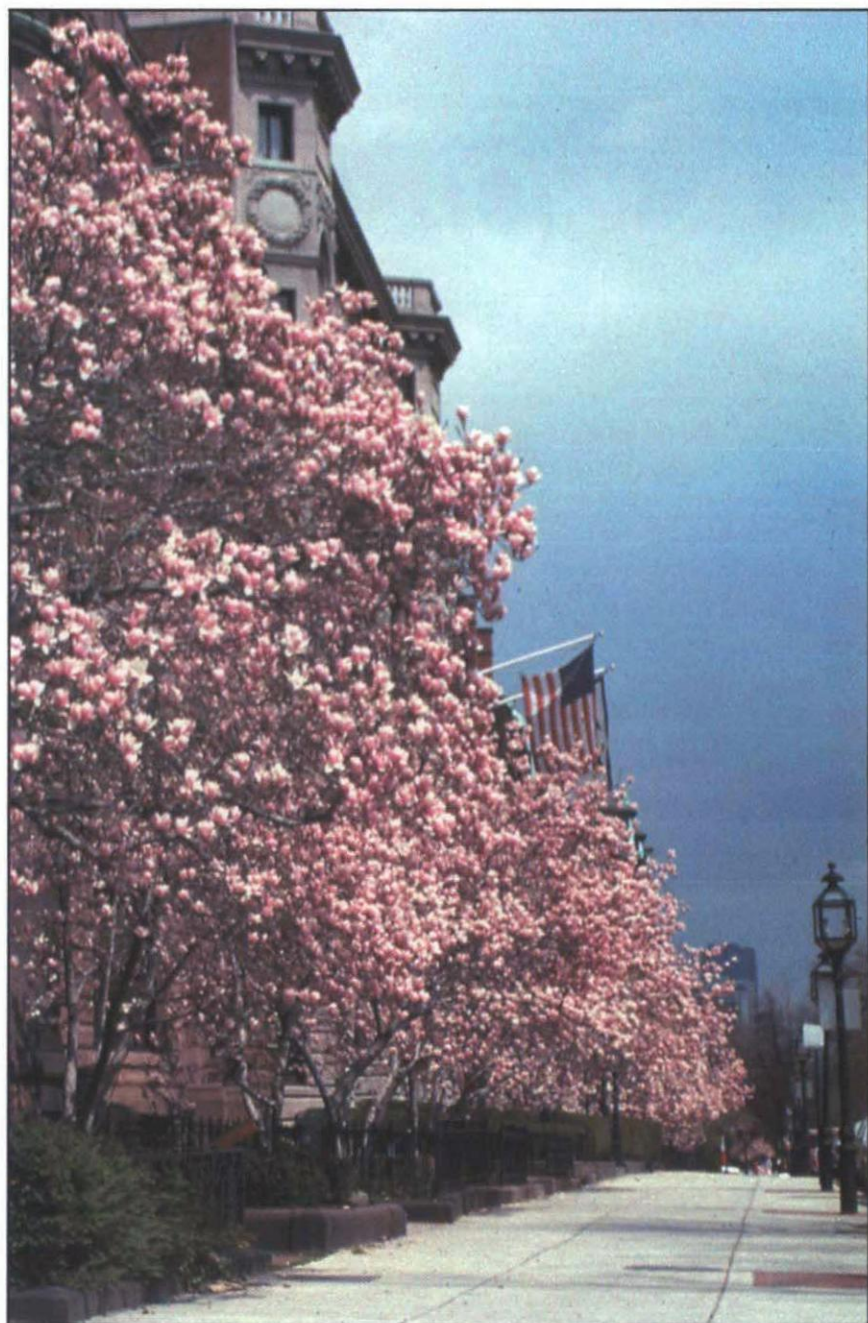
The Magnolia Society has purchased the remaining stock of Gardiner's beautifully illustrated book, *Magnolias*. These books are available, while stock lasts, for \$15.00 postpaid (surface mail). Why not order one, or more, for yourself and one for the local library or garden club?

Send orders in US dollars—or use your Visa or Mastercard—to

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Magnolia cylindrica



The magnolias of Commonwealth Avenue, Boston.