

## ADAM BLACK WILL SPEAK AT MARCH 14 MEETING

Plant explorer Adam Black will discuss “Exciting New Plants Adaptable to the Gulf Coast” at the LSHR annual meeting March 14, 2020. His talk will be at noon in Lafayette’s Petroleum club; more details will come in the February newsletter.

The talk will highlight Adam’s top picks for exciting trees, shrubs, succulents and perennials awaiting Gulf Coast gardeners’ attention. Many of these species stem from his numerous collecting expeditions from Texas to Florida, as well as from Adam’s international collecting in regions with climates similar to the Gulf Coastal Plain.

From 2016 until fall 2019, Adam Black served as director of horticulture at Peckerwood



Garden in Hempstead, Texas. There he worked to transform John Fairey’s private collection of valuable plants from Mexico and beyond into a public botanical garden. This transition incorporated conservation collections and promoted a diverse and exciting landscape of underutilized plants.

Adam Black previously served as a horticulturist at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens in Gainesville, Fla. Thereafter he managed the forest pathology and forest entomology laboratories at the University of Florida.

While in Florida he also co-owned Xenoflora LLC, a rare-plant mail-order nursery that introduced many new plants to cultivation from Adam’s worldwide plant collecting expeditions.

## SPRING PLANT RELEASE TO FEATURE FEWER BUT LARGER PLANTS

For many years the LSHR annual spring plant release fit neatly in a beer box and typically featured ten plants in 4-inch pots.

The 2020 release should include five one-gallon plants and two plants in 4-inch pots.

“The plant release won’t come in a box any more,” said Billy Welsh, who chaired the LSHR committee to revamp the plant release format.

Welsh reported to the Nov. 10 LSHR board meeting that he has a tentative plant release list, but the list may change based on availability of the plants. More details will be forthcoming in the February newsletter.

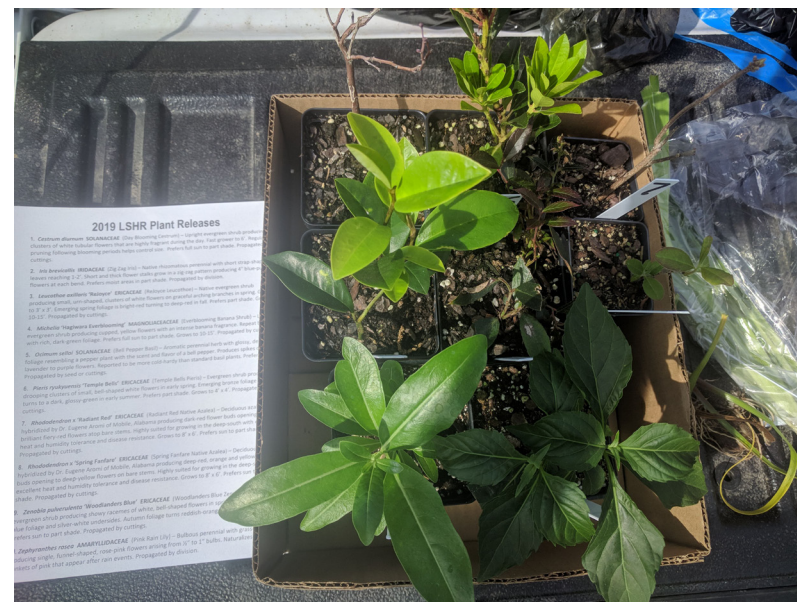
Now that the plant releases won’t fit in a beer box, how *will* LSHR members pick up their plants? We don’t know yet. But this is the kind of problem you

based in part on the annual evaluations of the previous year’s released plants.

Some of the four-inch potted plants did not survive, many took a long time to establish and grow, and in some cases LSHR members ran out of space for ten plants and were giving the plants away to friends. So board members felt that releasing fewer but larger plants would better serve the LSHR membership.

One-gallon plants cost more than plants in 4-inch pots, but changing from a hard-copy newsletter

to this online format has saved LSHR more than \$2,500 annually, which can be used to upgrade the plants.



The 2019 plant release box

want to have, and by plant release day a system will be in place.

The LSHR board adopted the new format for many reasons,

# HONORARY BOARD MEMBER ALINE ARCENEAUX TURNS 99



Aline is flanked by Glenda Balliviero, right, and Linda Bourg. Below right, Aline with one of Glenda's poinsettias.

Aline Arceneaux celebrated her 99th birthday in July; LSHR member Glenda Balliviero brought her a card and birthday best wishes from the association.

"Aline is a lady small in stature but with a brain overflowing with knowledge and love of plants," Glenda said. "Horticulture was and is special to both of us." Until Aline turned 96, Glenda and LSHR President Norman Balliviero brought Aline to many LSHR board meetings: "We'd give her rides to meetings, as she wanted to be sure to attend."

Aline grew up in a plant family; her father Edgar Arceneaux ran

Eddie's Iris Garden in Lafayette, said Louise Begnaud Ganuchau, her niece. "Plants seemed to always be part of the Arceneaux family," Louise recalled. "I always remember the pond in their back yard was laden with irises. Her mother and father were in the circle of horticulture lovers with Ira Nelson and Caroline Dormon. I am sure she inherited that passion, just as most of her siblings did, from her mother and father."

In addition to her service to LSHR, Aline was in the Lafayette Garden Club, the Louisiana Garden Club Federation, Louisiana Project Wildflower, the National Wildflower Research Center, the Louisiana Native Plant Society, and she was a charter member of

the Society for Louisiana Irises. She even has an iris named after her; hybridizer Bernard McSparrin registered the Aline Arceneaux iris cultivar in 2007. She has also served as Arbor Day Chairman and did volunteer work for the Festival des Fleurs in Lafayette.

Several years ago our organization recognized Aline with its highest distinction, the LSHR Medallion. In presenting this award, board member Dr. Ellis Fletcher commented, "Miss Aline is the embodiment of the spirit of this award, in the broad sweep of her work contributing significantly to the horticultural interests of Louisiana. She has been to generations of university students, friends, and acquaintances a reliable, generous, and inexhaustible source of information about horticulture."

Fletcher noted that Aline has been a stickler for using Linnaean binomial nomenclature, as well as varied common names, when writing about plants. However she is known for sharing not only her knowledge of plants, but also the plants themselves: "She is tireless in her generosity," Fletcher

commented. "One never knows when she will leave a rare bulb or cutting on your doorstep with a delightful repartee follow-up on cultivation. One might conjecture that she has populated Lafayette and the wide circle of her horticultural friends with her finds."

Glenda Balliviero said of Aline's generosity: "She'd shared many plants with me throughout the years, and after my being unsuccessful in germinating seeds of the Princess Tree (*Paulownia tomentosa*), she actually had some plants shipped in from California and gave them to me." Glenda has reciprocated in recent years by bringing Aline a Christmas poinsettia.

Outside the world of plant people, Aline Arceneaux is best known for her role as secretary to Dr. Ray Authement, who served as president of UL Lafayette from 1974 to 2008. Prior to her work at the university, she had a teaching career that was interrupted by three and a half years' service in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Working in Washington, D.C., for the Navy Bureau of Ships, she expedited the shipment of submarine parts to their intended

recipients. After the war she retained her Navy affiliation within the Naval Reserves for more than 26 years, rising to the rank of Acting Commander.

As Ellis Fletcher concluded in presenting her with the LSHR Medallion: "Aline has done it all; she has written articles and better, seen that we all received them; she has been a speaker at a host of public events related to horticulture; her tireless efforts have been the cornerstone for increasing the knowledge of Society members; and Aline is the epitome of inspiration for this membership."



# *Camellia japonica* 'Black Magic'

story and photos by Dr. Ellis Fletcher

The Black Magic Camellia was an LSHR release in 2016. This hardy, evergreen, freely blooming, chance seedling is a welcomed addition to those who grow or admire camellias. With proper location and timely maintenance, this plant offers years of enjoyment to those who appreciate plants capable of being grown as a shrub or small tree in the landscape.

Some choose to grow the Black Magic Camellia as a container specimen capable of being moved to locations where enjoyment is greatest.

Plants start blooming in mid-through late-winter or early spring. Its medium-large flowers have exceptionally firm, very glossy and wavy petals. Petal color is so dark red, and petal form so distinct, that flowers appear somewhat artificial. Shape varies from semi-double to nearly double with some becoming almost rose-like in form. With some flowers being more double than others, and with some flowers fully opening to reveal bright yellow stamens, it is not uncom-



mon to observe flowers of slightly different appearance on the same plant. Regardless of flower appearance, as buds begin to open flower petals appear to be nearly black.

Waxy, rich green leaves, slightly wavy, are obviously

pointed and have numerous very small teeth along most of their margin. Leaf outline may range from elliptic to obovate, with leaf length around 4 inches. With their dark green color, leaves offer an excellent contrast to the distinctive flowers, and they provide

ornamental value throughout the year.

Plants have an upright to spreading growth habit and can develop into much-branched shrubs 6 to 8 feet wide and 10 feet or more in height. However, size may be easily controlled with timely and proper pruning.

Performance is best when plants receive sun during the early morning or late afternoon with light shade or filtered sunlight during mid-day. Not only does this reduce water requirements but both leaf coloration and size is improved. Plants can usually tolerate overnight temperatures that drop below freezing for short periods of time, although there may be damage to floral buds.

Although Black Magic ca-

mellias are adaptable to various soil types, a fertile, slightly acid to acid, evenly moist and well-drained soil is required for optimal growth and most profuse flowering. Camellias always perform best when planted shallow.

Once established, camellias are fairly tolerant of drought but constantly wet soil drastically increases the possibility of poor plant performance or plant death. Excellent drainage is necessary, especially when grown in containers. Camellias grown in outdoor containers often require more frequent watering than those grown in the lawn or garden. Roots in containers are more severely damaged by freezing temperatures during the winter than those in the land-

scape, especially when container media has insufficient drainage.

Black Camellia, Blood Red Camellia, Japanese Black Camellia and Nuccio's Black Camellia are other common names for *Camellia japonica* 'Black Magic.'





# KEW GARDENS

LONDON'S FABULOUS PALACE OF PLANTS

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DR. T. MICHAEL MAHER

The Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew is the world's largest and most diverse collection of living plants.

Kew earns its UNESCO World Heritage status by virtue of many superlatives:

- It preserves some 20,000 living taxa.
- Its Temperate House (right) is the largest Victorian glass house on the planet. Its \$50 million renovation was completed in 2018.
- Its herbarium preserves 8.5 million specimens and attracts researchers from across the globe.
- Its library contains 750,000 volumes.
- Its digital database, Plants of the World Online (<http://www.plantsoftheworldonline.org>) allows you to browse through more than a million plant names.
- Its Millennium Seed Bank preserves 4.3 billion seeds, representing 40,000 species, in underground vaults maintained at  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ . It's the world's largest collection of wild plant seeds.
- Its art collection includes 175,000 prints, drawings and paintings of plants.



Kew began as a private horticultural garden in the 16th century, then in 1731 Prince of Wales Frederick Louis acquired Kew. His son King George III, before he began battling the rebellious American colonists, built a cottage at Kew for his wife, Queen Charlotte. You can visit this cottage, along with Kew Palace, the smallest of the panoply of royal palaces in England.

Apart from the royal structures, Kew has four Greek/Roman-style temples, a 10-story Japanese pagoda, and a variety of restaurants.

You will find specialty gardens devoted to roses, climbers and creepers, bamboo, children's favorites, Mediterranean plants and woodland plants, as well as a rock garden and the Agius Evolution Garden.

Joining the Temperate House and the Princess of Wales Conservatory (left center photo) are an Alpine House, a Palm House, a Waterlily House and a Treetop Walkway, which allows visitors to observe the tree-canopy biome.

Additionally Kew offers concerts, lectures, hiking trails, and a variety of tree groves.

You can reach Kew by subway or train from central London, but the scenic route is the Thames ferry from Westminster Dock.



The world's largest water lilies, *Victoria amazonica*, are a favorite at Kew's Princess of Wales Conservatory. This structure houses 10 microclimate zones, including cacti (left) and carnivorous plants (immediate right). This free-roaming iguana at left seems at home among the tropical flora.





**CHIHULI AT KEW**

Nestled amongst the verdant beauty of natural world, a host of plant-like shapes greets the Kew visitor: the blown glass art of Dale Chihuli. The Seattle-based artist installed 32 large-scale plant-form glass sculptures at Kew in April. The pieces include "Temperate House Persians" (left), 33 feet long, and "Cattails and Birch Reeds" (upper right), situated along Kew's Cherry Walk. Unfortunately the Kew exhibit closed Oct. 27. However, Chihuli's "Rose Crystal Tower," a 22-foot tall glass sculpture, was just installed Nov. 1 at the New Orleans Botanical Garden in City Park, and will be there through Oct. 31, 2020. New Orleans Botanical Gardens Director Paul Soniat was LSHR's featured speaker (and singer) at the 2018 spring meeting.



**TREASURER'S REPORT**

As the year 2019 is rushing by, it is time for dues! December 31 will be here in no time, so please pay dues early; such a bargain! I would love to finish early collecting dues to enjoy my Christmas holiday and New Year's Day with my family. The form is at right; you can print it and fill out, or just hand write your information and send with your payment. Please indicate any change of

information, address or email.

With the Compost Pile being sent electronically, I will get creative on how to handle membership verification on release day in March. I may just print membership cards to be distributed on release day so members do not need to bring a Compost Pile. Do check in the Spring issue, which will have information for March 14. The Petroleum Club has been reserved and always has a great buffet.

**LSHR OFFICERS**

- Norman Balliviero ..... President
- Sarah Schoeffler ..... First Vice-President
- Robert Barry ..... Second Vice-President
- Roxanna Champagne ..... Recording Secretary
- JoAnn Pugh ..... Treasurer

**DIRECTORS AT LARGE**

- Billy Welsh 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20
- Scott Reed 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21
- Michel Honhon 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22

**PAST PRESIDENTS WITH CURRENT MEMBERSHIP**

Mary Courville, Dalton Durio, Dr. Jim Racca, Margo Racca, Albert Durio Sr., Dr. Dennis Wollard

**HONORARY BOARD MEMBERS**

- Aline Arceneaux ..... Past Treasurer
- Dr. Jean Kreamer ..... Scholarship Chairman
- Dr. Ellis Fletcher ..... Membership Chairman
- Ann Justice ..... Past Editor - Compost Pile
- Rebecca Moss ..... Past Editor - Compost Pile, Scholarship Chairman
- Dr. Michael Maher ..... Compost Pile Editor

**Membership Dues Notice  
FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020**

- Active \$15
- Sustaining \$25
- Donor \$100 and up

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Please print this form or copy all info and mail with your payment to:  
LSHR, P. O. Box 51366, Lafayette, LA 70505  
due by December 31, 2019

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NEWSLETTER OF THE LOUISIANA SOCIETY FOR HORTICULTURAL RESEARCH

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LSHR plant people, send me your news!  
I welcome articles and photos about your favorite plants,  
growing techniques and plant lovers.

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

As Fall begins I'm hoping that we'll have a surge of cool temperatures, not only for our plants but also for our gardeners, who have been struggling with the horrible heat of summer.

Hopefully your 2019 plant releases have survived the heat, will enjoy the coolness of fall and have established a good root system before winter.

Our speaker for the spring gathering will be Adam Black, who has spent much time this summer collecting various specimens for Peckerwood Nursery. The next edition of the Compost Pile will provide much information on his life experiences as a horticulturist.

I'm hoping that all have enjoyed the changes in the newsletter, which has certainly saved our society many dollars that can be used in other areas. Dr. Michael Maher, editor, is to be commended on his work and the great article on Michel Honhon, our newest board member.

—Norman

**WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS**

- Maxine Ducrest, New Iberia
- Louise Ganucheau, Lafayette
- Theresa Gore, Lafayette
- Ann Hardy, Abbeville
- Paul Manuel, Lafayette
- Lynn McDonald, Boyce
- Derek Moore, Franklinton
- Gay and Bruce Odell, Lafayette
- Ryan Perry, Lafayette
- Gerald Roberts, Ville Platte
- Gail Whitney, Lafayette
- Sarah Leblanc, Lafayette
- Wynette Jones, Arnaudville