Autumn Glory

C. Sasanqua and Other
Fall-Blooming Hybrids
The Lure of Fall-Blooming Camellias

• Bring color to garden at the bleakest time of the year (October through February)
• Deep green, glossy evergreen foliage
• Cold hardiness
• Versatile -- make excellent hedges and screens
• Scent!

C. sasanqua
“Apple Blossom”
What is c. sasanqua?

- Name comes from Japanese word *sazanka* meaning “plum-flowered tea”
- Japanese do not consider it a true camellia (*tsubaki*)
- First identified as variant of *c. oleifera*, later classified as species by Linnaeus student K.P. Thunberg in 1784
- Third camellia species to be recognized after *c. japonica* and *c. sinensis* (tea camellia)
C. Sasanqua Found in ...

Kyushu and Shikoku islands of Japan
C. Sasanaqua Also Found in ...

Ryukyu Islands of Japan
History of *c. sasanqua*

- Earliest cultivars date to Edo period in Japan (early 17\textsuperscript{th} century)
- Mostly grown for oil used in lighting, cooking and cosmetics
- Remained an enigma to many fanciers in Europe until second half of 19\textsuperscript{th} century
- First plants exported in 1869 by Dutch traders for cultivation in France; British gardeners began growing a decade later
**C. sasanqua** bloom characteristics

- Single form with some anemone and peony forms and a few formal doubles
- Typically pinks and whites with light pink margins; deep reds unusual
- Prominent golden yellow anthers

*C. sasanqua* ‘Navajo’
Cultivation

- More sun tolerant than other camellias such as *c. japonica*
- Once established, tolerates wetter or drier soils than other camellias
- Can thrive in less acidic environment if well supplemented with non-animal organic matter
- Resistant to *phytophthora* (root rot) and makes good rootstock for grafting *c. japonica*
Setsugekka ("Wavy White")

White
Semi-double
Mine-no-Yuki ("Snow on the Mountain")

White
Semi-double to loose peony form
Fuji-no-Mine ("Peak of Fuji")

White
Rose form double
Narumigata

White tinged pink at edges
Single
Fragrant!
Pink Snow

Light pink
Semi-double
Hana-Jiman
White edged pink
Semi-double
Cleopatra
Rose pink
Semi-double
Jean May
Shell pink
Rose form double
Our Linda

Pink
Rose form double
Bonanza

Deep pink
Semi-peony form
Blooms do not shatter as quickly as other sasanqua varieties; good for fall shows
Crimson King

Crimson red
Single
Yuletide
Orange red
Single
More Yuletide!
Other Fall/Winter-Blooming Camellias

*C. hiemalis*: nomenclature book states “origin unknown” and “evidence that this may not be a separate species but rather a non-reticulata hybrid with japonica and sasanqua parentage”

*C. vernalis*: Same disclaimer in nomenclature guide
Shishi Gashira ("Lion’s Mane")

*C. hiemalis*

Pink

Rose form
Kanjiro

*C. Hiemalis*
Rose pink
Single form
Showa-no-Sakae

*C. Hiemalis*
Deep pink
Rose form double
Chansonette

*C. Hiemalis*
Deep pink
Formal double
Star Above Star

*C. vernalis*
White shading to lavender
Semi-double
Egao

*C. vernalis*
Deep rose
Semi-double
Cold-Hardy Hybrids

Devastating winters of 1977-78 and 1978-79 decimated National Arboretum collection

One of the few survivor was “Lu Shan Snow,” a white *c. oleifera* from Northern China

Another less attractive *c. oleifera*, “Plain Jane,” proved even more cold resistant

When crossed with *c. sasanqua* and *c. hiemalis*, both produced hybrids of great beauty and winter hardiness
Fall-Blooming Hybrids

- Bloom at younger age than other camellias – some the second year from rooted cuttings
- Smaller, glossy dark green leaves
- Blooms do not shatter as less easily as those of *c. sasanqua*
- Varieties include Dr. Ackerman’s “Winter” series
Winter’s Interlude

*C. oleifera* 'Plain Jane' x *C. sinensis* Rosea ("Pink Tea")
Bright pink
Anemone form
*Lends itself to hedges*
Winter’s Beauty

*C japonica* 'Billie McCaskill' x *C oleifera* 'Plain Jane'
Shell pink with very light pink petaloids near center
Peony form
Winter’s Waterlily

*C.oleifera 'Plain Jane'* x *C.sasanqua 'Mine-no-yuki'*

White
Anemone to formal double
Winter’s Rose

*C. oleifera* 'Plain Jane' x *C. hiemalis* 'Otome'

- Shell pink
- Formal double
- Small flowers
Winter’s Dream

*C. hiemalis* 'Peach Puff' x *C. oleifera* 'Plain Jane'
Pink
Semi-double
Winter’s Fire

'Frost Prince' x C. vernalis 'Takarazuka'

Bright reddish-pink

Semi-double
C. sasanqua “Our Linda” at Leslie’s house at left (closeup of canine *chihuahuaensis* fertilization unit above)
What’s your favorite fall-blooming camellia?

Japonica or Sasanqua?