

# Plumeria Potpourri

The Plumeria Society of America Inc.

January 1999

## **President's Column** **Richard Miller, President**

Wow, what a great year for the Plumeria Society!!! So much has happened. I don't quite know where to start reporting the positive changes to our society during this past year.

We started the year with some By-Law changes that the Board of Directors felt were necessary including the addition of a January business meeting and an additional newsletter. As you have recognized, our Plumeria Potpourri Newsletter has been upgraded to a first-class publication of which we are all very proud.

Our membership rolls have swollen to unprecedented proportions. Some of this growth is due to our website, which has proven to be of great value to our membership.

All of these accomplishments and many more that have not been listed are directly attributable to the very hard work of our outgoing Board of Directors. Let's give a special thanks to Barbara Randolph, Jim Hill, Ada Ganze, E.J. Lanik, Emerson Willis, Mike Welbes, Mary Sue Lockler, Tom SoRelle, Sven Bors-Koefoed, Milton Pierson, Linda Litt, Bob Buebe and Abe Schonier. These outgoing PSA Board of Director members and all those others who serve on committees to do the work of our Society have our sincerest gratitude.

There is no doubt that 1998 was a great year for the Plumeria Society of America. Let's look forward to another great year in 1999.

### **Next Meeting**

**Date:** Tuesday January 12, 1999

**Time:** 7:30 PM

**Place:** Hermann Park Garden Center,  
1500 Hermann Park Drive

**Program:** "Rooting Plumeria"

## **Plumeria Society of America Officer Elections**

The nominating committee of the Plumeria Society of America submits the following slate of officers for 1999:

President - Richard Miller  
Vice-President - Weldon Mayes  
Secretary - Ada Ganze  
Treasurer - Jim Hill

Election of officers will take place at the January 1999 General Meeting of the PSA in Houston, TX.

Positions on the following committees will be available for the new year: Publicity, Program, Membership, Newsletter, Registration, Research, Social, Plant Sale and Charter Chapter.

In addition, the PSA is searching for a new Newsletter Editor to replace outgoing Editor Tom SoRelle. If you have interest in any of these positions, contact President Richard Miller at the PSA address.

### **Inside This Issue:**

**The Name Game**  
**Coming Events**  
**International Committee**  
**Color insert of P. Kimo**

**page 2**  
**page 4**  
**page 5**





## The Name Game by Emerson Willis

How many times I've heard, "names mean nothing as long as the flower is nice," or "I don't care if it's named, as long as it's pretty and has fragrance." These statements are understandable but can present a major problem. Hypothetically, let's say I have a small unnamed plumeria, its first inflorescence producing blooms that are to die for.. your hands are shaking and that lump in your throat tells you a cutting must be obtained. "Sorry, my plant is too small to cut.. my original cutting was one of several from a friend in Orange, California. She probably wouldn't know which tree I was talking about even if I were to call her."

This is my point..a name can and should be very important. When ordering a cutting from a mail order concern, knowing the name is an absolute necessity unless of course you're purchasing common colors. Young rooted cuttings found at nurseries and plant sales, on occasion, will bloom sufficiently for identification purposes, but more often than not, without a name you're buying a "pig-in-poke."

Personally, I like to know the name of the "pig." Helpful hint: use a permanent marker to write the name or some form of ID on each tree. Do not depend on tags or memory alone. As the years pass, both are subject to loss and/or deterioration.

I was given free room and board in the early 1960's in "paradise" ..occasionally referred to as the state of Hawaii. My 20-month tour in the U.S. Army exposed me to plumeria, but to be perfectly honest at that point in my life flowers didn't mean much to me unless they were adorning something shapelier than a tree. My mind wanders .. let's fast-forward 30 years, carrying with us words and thoughts that are now intertwined with my hobby:

- Mela Matson .. A Hawaiian shipping company. "Mela Matson" registered cultivar.
- Lurline .. One of the above company's ships, named for a family member. "Lurline" registered cultivar.
- Kaneohe .. A town near Honolulu. A huge marine base is located there full of huge marines! "Kaneohe Sunburst" registered cultivar. "Kaneohe Sunrise" named cultivar.
- Hilo .. A town on the big island of Hawaii. "Hilo Beauty" registered cultivar.
- Kona .. Kailua Kona area opposite Hilo. "Kona Hybrid #26" named cultivar.
- Maui .. The second largest Hawaiian Island "Maui Beauty" registered cultivar.
- Kauai.. The Garden Isle. "Kauai Beauty" named cultivar.
- David Kalakaua .. Hawaii's last king. "King Kalakaua" registered cultivar.

Several Hawaiian plumerias are named in honor of people, especially ones involved in botany: "Kauka Wilder," "Paul Weissich," "Donald Angus," and "Scott Pratt." I'm sure everyone is aware that the "J.L." prefix on a select group of trees means Jim Little of Haleiwa, Hawaii. Jim and his son Clark are probably the world's largest supplier of plumerias.

I'm not worthy of an attempt to write about the Moragne series, so I will refer you to the *Handbook on Plumeria Culture* by Richard and Mary Helen Eggenberger.

Let us set sail and take our name game to the mainland. Shortly after dirt was invented, a Houston man by the name of Willis Slaughter brought seeds home from Indonesia... "Slaughter Pink" registered cultivar. In the Houston Heights, Edward Courtade Sr., a nurseryman, was also involved with plume-

(Continued on page 3)





(Continued from page 2)

ria .. "Courtade Pink' registered cultivar.

Our registered cultivar list includes three sunset flowers: I am proud to say I consider myself personal friends with the registrants: O.R. "Bud" Guillot of Huntington Beach California, "Guillot's Sunset;" Jim and Eileen Hill of the Clear Lake Area of Houston, "Caribbean Sunset;" and the late Iris Rock of Houston: "Iris Sunset."

It's easy to take a name for granted, when in fact naming a tree can be an exhausting chore. I'd love to know though who came up with "Aztec Gold." This name has it all .. not only color, but thoughts of an ancient empire that undoubtedly included plumerias in their lives. Some names might make you hungry .. "Mango Blush." A name that might stretch your imagination unless you've seen one bloom is .. "Mexican Snowball." Two wonderful names you will hear more about in the future ... "Flamingo Dancer," and Barbados Showgirl." My wife, Nancy, has a flowerbed of silk flowers. She wanted a "Plastic Pink' until she learned it really wasn't plastic.

No one on the planet has nicer names than Elizabeth Thornton, co-author of *The Exotic Plumeria*, charter and lifetime member, and one the the founders of the PSA. Some seedling names that roll off the tongue: "Pina Colada," "Mardi Gras," "Elegance," "Gold Dust," and if course, "Lemon Drop." If you have her book, please turn to page 25. The bottom photo shows an unnamed seedling. It was later named "Trio." another shot of this flower is on the back cover referred to in the index as "Triad." now please turn to page 46. The "above" photo reads "Timmy," when in fact it is "Kimi." This typo is also in the index on page 52. Hey, I'm not making any of this up. I wouldn't dare. I called Elizabeth before I sharpened my pencil. They were cuttings (not seedlings) .. but she also named "Cranberry," and "Lemon Chiffon" (Thornton

(Continued on page 4)

## Research Committee Report

*Milton Pierson, Chair*

Winter is here in the northern hemisphere and the research committee is continuing to collect data on projects that are already in progress. The coming year promises to be an exciting one as well. We will have new data to present on the current grafting and seedling study projects. This past summer, some of the seedlings attempted to bloom so we will see how this fits into the overall picture.

The research on growing Plumeria under lights is progressing and I hope to have a report later this year. I can always use input and ideas from others. If you can help, either write to me via e-mail at

[miltonp@ruf.rice.edu](mailto:miltonp@ruf.rice.edu)

or to the Plumeria Society of America, Inc., Research Committee, P.O. Box 22791, Houston, Texas 77227-2791 or at my home address 5254 Stillbrooke Dr., Houston, TX 77096-6200, or phone 713-728-2413. The data collected will be presented in a future PSA newsletter and added to our World Wide Web site located at;

<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~miltonp/plumeria/>

The procedural details of each project are located in the PSA WWW site. If you would like to participate in any of these projects, please let me know and we will share ideas. I am also forever open to suggestions about new areas to research.

This month's selected "Plumeria of the Month" is Plumeria c.v. "Kimo", the 5th one in a series. In the past, I have presented "Pandora", Plumeria c.v. "Guillot's Sunset", Plumeria c.v. "Dwarf Singapore Pink", and Plumeria c.v. "Jeannie Moragne". A different photo will be printed in each edition of the *Plumeria Potpourri*.





(Continued from page 3)

Lemon). The cultivar being commercially marketed as Thornton Lilac is in all probability her seedling "Lavender."

A catalog from a supplier in Florida is listing a white with poor keeping quality, calling it "Lemon Drop." Trust me, this is a mistake. the true "Lemon Drop" is one of the premier yellows in captivity. Unfortunately, it (along with many other Thornton cultivars), is not commercially available.

I'm wrapping this piece up now and going outside to check on a seedling I might name. The descriptive name could be a little long. How about "Tall and Skinny, Probably Will Never Bloom and Most Likely Will wind Up in the Fireplace"???

### Coming Events

- **January 12, 1999 - Business meeting and Election of officers for 1999, Hermann Park Garden Center, Houston**
- **March 9, 1999 - Business Meeting**
- **May 11, 1999 - Business Meeting**
- **June 12, 1999 - Plant sale at Hermann Park**
- **July 17, 1999 - Plant sale at Bay Area Community Center, Seabrook**
- **July 13, 1999 - Business Meeting**
- **October 12, 1999 - Business meeting**
- **Yard Tour - date to be announced**
- **PSA Social - date to be announced.**

### Notes and Quotes

Henry M. Dupree of 10002 Del Rio Road in Spring Valley, CA 91977 (619-465-6221) reports the following:

"I have discovered a plumeria that I have never seen before. It has pigeon blood red blooms of about six inches with the largest inflorescences that I have ever seen. The texture of the completely red bloom is velvety; quite similar to P. Hilo Beauty. I will trade size for size a cutting of this plumeria for one of Elizabeth Thornton's P. Mardi Gras. to anyone who happens to have same.

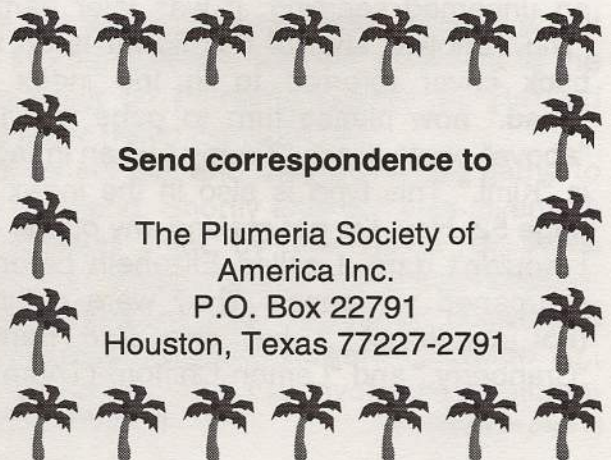
### Membership Report

*Mary Sue Lockler*

We welcome the following new members from the greater Houston area to the Plumeria Society of America: Brenda and Frank Raven, Gayla Hamilton, Rich Philpot, Al and Grace Pena and Hope Baker.

Also, we welcome the following new members: Shelia Martin from Winchester, Ohio; Phillip and Faye Cox from Fredericksburg, VA; Pat Porter from Jackson, MS; Charles Brannsky from Orlando, FL; Robert White from Cerritos, CA; Joy Morse from Fullerton, CA; Pauline Petris from New Whittier, CA; Linda and Ed English from Falls Church, VA; Arturo Martinez from Hollywood, CA; Shelia Martin from Canal Winchester, OH; and Jim Little from Haleiwa, HI.

Remember, please, that all dues are to be renewed in January. Members who paid during the last quarter of 1998 are considered paid for 1999. All other dues are due now. Please return the enclosed form with your dues for 1999. Thank you and a Happy New Year!







## International Committee Report

by Milton Pierson

Our internet site has proved to be a very useful tool for sharing growing tips and other information to Plumeria growers worldwide. I continue to encourage anyone with questions or comments about the culture of Plumeria to e-mail them to me. The issues brought up will probably apply to many people, so we share the questions and answers here in this column. These questions and comments come from many areas of the US and indeed the world. This month I continue to share a cross section of the questions and comments and the answers that were provided. I make an honest attempt to answer all correspondence quickly and accurately to the best of my ability. Occasionally responses are delayed slightly if research is necessary to completely satisfy the question or if I happen to be away for a short time. Hopefully the questions raised and answered here will help you further your knowledge of Plumeria and increase your ability to care for them. You may direct questions to me via e-mail at [miltonp@ruf.rice.edu](mailto:miltonp@ruf.rice.edu) and look for answers within the pages of our World Wide Web site; <http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~miltonp/plumeria/>

There may be many of you without e-mail or internet access. I would be happy to answer questions for you as well. Simply write your questions addressed to me at Milton L. Pierson 5254 Stillbrooke Dr. Houston, TX 77096-6200 or call at 713-728-2413. Answers will be provided in a timely fashion which in some cases can be critical to the survival of your Plumeria plants.

**Q:** Hi, my name is Sherry, and I moved to Texas four months ago just to pursue my gardening desires. Although I live near the Longview/Tyler

area, I have been told that I may grow Plumeria, given some protection. I was thrilled when I found your web page; and even more upon learning about the plant sale. However, I do have a question; how expensive are the plants. I'm not fussy, I just want to grow them for the pleasure right now. Later on, I think it would be great fun to grow some from seed, just to see what happens.

If you can supply me with vague information about the price ranges at the plant sale, I would be pleased. A 200-mile drive is far, if when you arrive plant prices are out of your personal price range. Thank you in advance for any courtesy. - Sherry W.

**A:** Hi Sherry,  
Welcome to Texas! Plumeria should grow fine in your area; you will just have to protect them a little earlier than the Houstonians do. As for Pricing on Plumeria at the plant sales, there is no easy answer. Prices may range from \$3 or \$4 for small Plumeria seedlings; Plumeria by color but unnamed from cutting should go for \$8-\$10. Named varieties will sell for anywhere from \$10 to \$35. depending on who is selling the plant and how much they value the plant. Larger plants will probably be available for various prices, here again primarily depending on who is selling the plant, what it is, and how big it is. I know this is all a bit vague but it might help some. Let me know if I can be more specific. Sincerely, Milt

**Q:** Subject: Scale on Plumeria  
Hi Milton,  
When Larry and I saw you Tues. night at the PSA meeting we had no idea our Plumeria had scale. Have you ever had this on your Plumeria? should we do to treat it? Right now it





## PLUMERIA POTPOURRI

*(Continued from page 5)*

the trunks and branches since they have only a few leaves. How harmful is it to the Plumeria? Hope to hear from you soon with some help in treating it.

Thanks, Ann A.

**A:** Hi Ann,

Sorry to hear about the scale. I had scale on one Plumeria a few years back and was able to kill it with diazinon liquid spray mixed according to label directions. There are 2 other possibilities. The first and safest is to wet a washcloth, then soak it with liquid dish soap, then vigorously scrub the areas of trunk infested with scale, but not so much as to damage the bark. Remember that greener wood is more tender. After a good scrub, gently rinse the washed areas with running water. Repeat the process in a week or two if more scale appear. You may be able to spray the trunks with a dormant oil designed to kill scale, but try not to get the dormant oil on either the leaves or tender new growth. Let me know how things turn out. Sincerely,

Milt

**Q:** Subject: Re: scale on Plumeria

Hi Milton,

Thanks for your reply and suggestions for treating the scale on the Plumeria. I sprayed the two Plumeria with dormant oil in the evening and got up early and washed it off the next morning. I didn't think to keep it off the new growth and few leaves. I'll have to see if it hurt it. I hope not. We're going to Hawaii for two weeks in August. Do you know where there are any really "exotic" rare Plumeria? .... I know what they say about getting cuttings and trying to root them the hottest part of the summer in Houston, but we've done it with success in the past. (We're going to Oahu, Maui, Kauai, and Molokai.) Hope to hear from you soon. - Ann

**A:** Hi Ann, Hope the scale is under control. I hope your trip to Hawaii is a good one! Unfortunately, I do not know where there are any really "exotic" rare Plumeria.. Sincerely, Milt

**Q:** Subject: Please Help

I live in St. Pete Fl. Three of my Plumeria plants have newly opened leaves that are deformed; they appear to be curled and shriveled but not

wilted they are very green and appear to be healthy except for the deformities. Also two of my older plants new leaves have turned yellow. Please advise.

Thanks, Paul in St. Pete.

**A:** Hi Paul, I don't think you need to be terribly alarmed. Often times the first leaves to appear on Plumeria in the spring are somewhat deformed. After some good

sunshine and water, newly emerging leaves will be normal. You may, however, want to check for pests such as spider mites on the tips to see if they are causing the deformed leaves. If you detect spider mites or another pest, treat with either a daily stiff spray of water or a chemical designed to correct the situation you discover. As for the new leaves that have yellowed, did they grow on the Plumeria where it is now? My experience has been that leaves of Plumeria that grow in the shade, then are exposed to the full sun, will become yellow and eventually fall off. New leaves will soon emerge and be OK. Keep me posted. - Milt

**Q:** Subject: Re: Please Help

I live in St. Pete Fl. and have several Plumeria that I have been growing in pots. Three of the smaller plants leaves are opening and they are deformed; they are curled but not wilted. I don't see any bugs or webs or slime. Also on two of my larger plants (7 ft. high) the new leaves have turned yellow. the buds and older leaves that have developed seem fine. Can you help? This just started during the last two weeks. Thanks, Paul in St. Pete

**A:** Hi again Paul,

I just saw your note about no bugs or webs or slime. How has the watering schedule been? Too much or too little water can also affect the plants. If leaves begin to grow and emerge while the Plumeria is very dry, then you water it well, the leaves will get a deformed look to them. This is because the main veins in the leaf do not grow as much when watered as the cells in between after they have developed on a dry plant. The result is leaves that are sort of puckered up between the veins. Is this what you see? - Milt

**Q:** Re: Please Help

*(Continued on page 7)*





That sounds like the problem. Just to make sure I've got this straight. If the plant was dry and was watered heavily the deformed leaves is the result. So I need to cut back on the water? Thanks for your quick response. - Paul in St. Pete

**A:** Hi Paul,

I don't think you need to hold back on water. I just meant that it is better to keep the soil where Plumeria are growing evenly moist while the plant is actively growing. Try to not let the soil dry so much; however, try to not let the roots stand in water either. Sounds sort if like a balancing act, but one that can be mastered. Good luck, Milt

**Q:** Subject: Re: Plumeria question

Sure hope you can help me. I've inherited some wonderful plants that my mother brought back from Hawaii in 1988. Unfortunately I don't have a green thumb. I've managed to keep them all alive but can't get them to flower any more. They always get beautiful leaves and are growing like crazy. Any advise you could give me would be appreciated. My main reason for e-mailing you is to ask for some advise on transporting a plant. I would like to take one of my 1 1/2 or 2 foot plants to a friend out of state. Will I damage the plant if I unpot it and wrap the roots in a plastic bag and keep it out of soil for 2 days? I'll be leaving next Wednesday so if you get this and can help me at all by then I'd appreciate it. thank you. - Kim W.

**A:** Dear Kim,

Your Plumeria will do just fine for a couple of days unpotted provided you try to keep them out of the direct sun while unpotted. You may want to loosely pack some moist moss around the roots and wrap with newspaper. Try not to have the roots in direct contact with the plastic bag. Repot as soon as you can at the new place and water well. A few leaves may wither but most likely, the Plumeria will not even show signs of being disturbed. As for getting the other Plumeria to bloom, are they getting plenty of direct sunlight? Do they have big enough pots with fresh fertile soil? Try to fertilize with a high middle number formulation of plant food this year and see if next year you are rewarded with flowers. Let me

know how things work out. - Milt

**Q:** Subject: Re: Plumeria

Hello Mr. Pierson, many thanks for all that information about the Plumeria, which I found in the internet. November last year I spend my vacation in Maui/Hawaii. I bought a small Plumeria without roots and without leaves. The plant had been proved for export, and so I took it home to Germany. The plant is growing inside the room. I was happy when I saw, that the top gets green. Then several leaves came. But now nearly all the leaves got destroyed by these red little spiders. Do you know any biological way to get rid of these animals ? I hope you can help me and I am waiting for your E-Mail. - Thomas S.

**A:** Dear Thomas,

I am happy that the Plumeria information on the web is useful. Sadly, Plumeria appear to be somewhat prone to red spider mites when grown indoors. To control these pests without harsh chemicals, try these 2 things. First provide for good air circulation around the Plumeria. You may want to place a small fan near the Plumeria to provide a constant gentle breeze. Do not crowd the plants. The other thing is to mist the leaves top and bottom sides and the growing tip(s) with water or a dilute dish soap solution at least once a week. Keep all dead leaves picked up from around the plants and discarded. Eggs of the pests may be on them. Let me know if this is helpful. Sincerely, Milt

**Q:** Subject: Re: Plumeria Spider mites

Dear Sir,

Please help me!

I have had my two Plumeria plants for about three years. I have had the same problem for about the same time. Spider mites! I just can not get rid of them. I have used the insecticidal soap, and the malathion, and they go away for a short time. Then after a few days I usually lose most of my leaves. I have even tried using soap and water in a spray bottle. I am sure that my plants have not ever flowered because I am poisoning my plants to death! These have always been indoor plants, as I live in New York City. My husband thinks that I have them because they came with the plants when I purchased them from Hawaii, and that they are in the plant somehow. I have a real predicament because my husband and I are expecting a baby,





and I can not get near the sprays. Is there something I can do to get rid of these bugs forever? Do you think if I place the plants on the fire escape outside, and wear rubber gloves, should I still be able to spray them? Do you have any suggestions for me? I am quite desperate! Please help me if you can. Thank you very much.  
Sincerely, Sam

**A:** Dear Sam, A Plumeria Lover like me, Congratulations on the expected baby. My wife and I have 3 children and they are truly a joy. The following is a reply that I sent to a person in Germany who is having a spider mite problem also. (See above answer) I do not think that one can be rid of these pests completely; however control is possible. Sincerely, Milt

**Q:** Hi, I bought some Plumeria sticks at a garden show here in the Denver area in Feb. They have started to grow just as promised and they are for the most part doing well. For some reasons each one of the plants has had a leaf die before fully opening up. They each have 1 to 2 large leaves and several growing but the ones that have died (one on each stalk) has turned black in the MIDDLE of the leaf causing the top of the leaf to flop over. I pulled those leaves off before the black reached either tip but it seems odd that they turn black and die in the middle of the leaf rather than at an end. Other than those 3 leaves they appear to be doing very well. I thought of the Black Tip Fungus but they don't start at the tip; perhaps that is not a strict rule. If you have any ideas I would really appreciate it. Thank you.  
Brad M.

**A:** Dear Brad,  
I am unsure of what is causing your leaves to blacken and drop. Are the Plumeria in full sun or at least very bright light? How about air circulation? Try to be sure that the air moves freely around the plants. The black tip fungus is more a problem that occurs directly on the point where leaves appear from the growing tip rather than on leaves after they have emerged. Try to provide lots of light and I think your problem will go away. If not, let me know and we will see if another solution can be found.

Sincerely, Milt



**Plumeria Society WWW Site**

You can find additional information concerning the Plumeria Society of America and Plumeria culture on the world wide information web at:

<http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~miltonp/Plumeria/>

**Check the WebPages for the following:**

- A list of all currently registered cultivars
- The rules for registration of new cultivars
- Cultural tips and hints
- Plumeria sources



# Plumeria 'KIMO'

by Milton L. Pierson

The Plumeria c.v. 'Kimo' was officially registered in the 1980s as one of the original 51 named cultivars to be registered by the Plumeria Society of America, Inc. 'Kimo' is one of the spectacular hybrids developed through open pollination of Plumeria c.v. 'Gold'. The seed parent is 'Gold' but the pollen parent is unknown. 'Kimo' is likely the first orange flowered plumeria. The flowers average 3" (7.5cm) in

diameter and the wide, rounded, highly overlapping petals nearly form a complete circle. The blossom color is changeable, at first appearing strong orange-yellow to

glowing apricot-orange with wide strong medium pink bands on front and back. The color on top is basically yellow becoming pale toward the tip, but overlaid by grainy red-purple in splotches and veins becoming more intense on the right. The overall orange appearance becomes much more purple during periods of higher ambient temperature and more yellow in cooler temperatures. Viewed from the bottom, the left half is red-purple, then becoming yellow overlaid by grainy and veiny red-purple

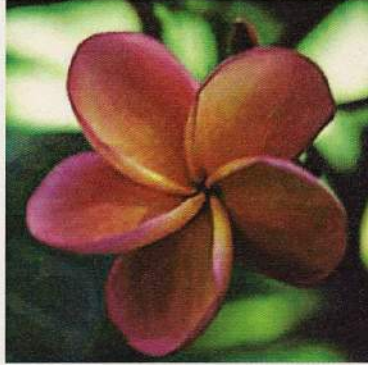


Fig. 1. Individual floret viewed from the front. (Photo by Glen Stokes)



Fig. 2. Photo of an entire inflorescence. (Photo by Emerson Willis)

yielding a richer yellow orange appearance. The flower texture is heavy with a good keeping quality. The tendency to fade is moderate. Petal type is wide obovate with a rounded tip. Fragrance is floral sweet, fruity and spicy and intensity of fragrance is strong.

Leaves are light green with a reddish border and are frequently speckled with reddish brown spots, and have a rigid texture. They are oblanceolate in shape with an acuminate tip and average 24.5 cm in length and 8.5 cm wide. Leaf petioles are green with a red tint. The plant is deciduous with good branching and an upright, compact growth habit. It's tendency to set seed is profuse. For a brief period, 'Kimo' was accidentally distributed as 'Paul Weissich', however, these two Plumeria are quite distinct and the classification is fairly easy.



Fig. 3. Photo of an entire inflorescence. (Photo by Alan Bunch, The Exotic Plumeria)