



Plumeria Potpourri

The Plumeria Society of America, Inc.

October 2010

The next meeting of The Plumeria Society of America will be held on **Tuesday, October 12, 2010, 7:30 p.m.** at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston.

Anyone with an interest in plumerias is invited to attend.



Gladys Brandt



Kaneohe Sunburst



Strawberry Loops

October Meeting ROUNDTABLE

How to Prepare for Winter

The October 12th meeting of the PSA will feature a discussion of winter storage methods for plumeria. Come and tell us your approach to winterizing your trees. Be sure to arrive early to mix and mingle with other plumeria lovers and enjoy the snacks. Door prizes will be given as usual, and a special drawing will also take place.



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President's Corner

by *Mark Wright, Texas*
email: wright5447@sbcglobal.net

Fall is almost here. Why then are all these new inflos popping up? Will I have time to see them without a flashlight when I get home from work? Time answers most questions like these. These are simple questions with simple answers.

The PSA is sponsoring a contest—a question contest. Submit your plumeria-related questions to us. A panel will select what they feel are the three best questions to be answered by a group of plumeria experts. The three winners will receive a \$50.00 Gift Certificate from Florida Colors Nursery. The questions and their answers will be in a future issue of *Plumeria Potpourri*. Some of the best remaining questions will be answered in other issues of the newsletter or on the website.

The questions can be emailed to me or mailed to the PSA (**P.O. Box 22791 Houston, TX 77227-2791, USA**). All submissions must be received by November 1, 2010. Remember, no question is insignificant, and all questions received will be considered.

Many of you are members of other plumeria clubs, societies, and organizations. I have a proposal for you. The PSA has a great website that is visited frequently and underused by us. There is a Plumeria Calendar on the site to promote plumeria-related events. How would you like to have your events listed

on our website? Our website should be “all things plumeria.” We are offering to put your group’s functions on the site at no charge. The only requirement is that your group must be a non-profit organization dedicated to plumeria. People from all over the world visit our website. Plumeria enthusiasts in your area could see these announcements and benefit from your listing. To take advantage of this offer, my email is included in every issue.

In our last issue, we highlighted the Naples Botanical Garden. The list of registered plumeria needed to complete “The Hills” section of the garden is now available on the PSA website. Please take a moment to look at this list. A donation of a cutting to NBG is easy to do. One branch is not much to give. The PSA donates a plaque for each cultivar donation. These plants are in a protected and secure area. Your donation will be seen by thousands of visitors each year. This is not a Florida thing, as I have heard some people comment. This is a plumeria thing. From what I have seen, plumeria people are very special people!

From Palermo with Love

by *Matilde De Mattia, Italy*

I address these few lines to all the readers of *Plumeria Potpourri* to tell them about my long “dedication” (and not “addiction” as I used to say) to this wonderful flower. Many of you perhaps know me from the Member Spotlight that Paula Furtwangler published on May 2008 in *Plumeria Potpourri*. I write these few notes just to update you on my “dedication!”

As most of you already know, my voice comes from Europe (which you can't say is exactly the land of plumerias!), but in its southern regions, this plant grows very well, although not with the lushness of the tropics. I live in Sicily, the extreme southern region of Italy. Since I've lived here, I have devoted myself to the cultivation and collecting of this plant.

But my love for it has roots much further away—I was born in the Ethiopian Highlands, and when I was a child, I used to go with my family to the lower lands, near the Danakil Desert (the hottest region in the world). There I used to admire, among other natural beauties, these wonderful plants growing along the edge of the savannah or in the patios of the poor natives huts. They looked fragrant, fertile, and majestic regardless of the heat surrounding them! When I insisted to my father, a great lover of plants, to take one of those plants home, he would tell me that it would not survive the cold nights of the

Highlands. When I finally left Ethiopia in the late sixties, I continued to follow all around the world the footsteps of these plants in their infinite varieties, but I never took them home, remembering the wise words of my father.

I have lived in various Italian cities, first in Turin, then in Venice and Florence, and finally in Rome. But all these places were not suitable, in my opinion, to grow plumerias. Besides, I was not living very well myself in all those wonderful cities (too cold and rainy during the long winters), and my continual moves were always along a steady slope to the south! When in 1985, on a working trip and just by chance, I came to Palermo, the capital town of Sicily, and I saw all the balconies overflowing with frangipani, I realized that I had arrived in the right place! Here I met my future husband, got married, and we settled into a comfortable penthouse with a big terrace. There, I began to grow for the first time in my life this plant that had impressed me so much from my childhood.

I was told that in Palermo this plant is usually handed down from mother to daughter as a symbol of fertility. As my mother lived in Venice, my mother-in-law gifted me the first plumeria plants, and when my mother, in the last years of her life, came to Palermo, I gifted her some seedlings, and she was very happy

with them on her balcony. When also my mother-in-law died, I inherited all her plants. They were old plants with twisted and very woody branches that my mother-in-law had had as a gift from her mother. She used to tell me that when she was young, her family would move to the countryside for two months in the summertime. No one remained in Palermo to take care of the plants. When they came back home, despite the rudimentary irrigation devices consisting of rags oozing water from buckets full of water, they would find the plumerias prostrate to the ground. Pots were then immersed in big buckets of water until the branches gradually straightened. She used to tell me that in winter the tips were covered with eggshells to provide protection from occasional frost, and also to get an earlier blooming which was a big pride in the neighbourhood.

When I reached the first 20 plants (most of them harvested or stolen here and there indiscriminately), I began to surf the Internet, and I discovered the PSA. It was true love at first sight. I joined the Society; I discovered the great Florida Colors Nursery; and I found in Italy, in Turin, the only importer of PSA registered plumerias. I began collecting only PSA “branded” plants, those plants selected with love and professionalism during almost 30 years.

Now, I want to tell you the backstage of my presence at the 2006 International Plumeria Conference in Houston. When I

first knew about it, I immediately decided that I had to be there, but God knows how many problems I had to face. Bending over backwards, and with many sacrifices, I was able to be there indeed! It was a dream come true, but I was totally distraught. Everybody there was very kind to me and everything was perfectly organized, but I was in a state of complete confusion. The day of the Clear Lake Show & Sale, I wandered aimlessly around the stands like an idiot for the first two hours. Before I realized that I could have grabbed the world’s most beautiful varieties, most of the plants on sale were gone, and I had to settle (so to speak!) for what was left. I had bought for the occasion a big Samsonite hard type suitcase divided into two halves, one for clothes and one for plumeria sticks!

On my flight back home, I passed unscathed, carrying my big and precious suitcase, through airports and customs. When I finally reached home and triumphantly opened my suitcase to all my relatives who had come to greet me, they were incredulous and disappointed—they had thought that the big suitcase would be full of gifts and gadgets “Made in USA” and not filled with stupid sticks! I also brought back from Houston a seedling raffled by Florida Colors that bloomed for the first time last year. It’s a very dark red flower. I call it “Houston Raffle,” and I am waiting for the second bloom this year.

Plumeria Potpourri



After the conference in Houston, there have been many other events in my life that helped me grow and better characterize my collection. I was in Bali for Frangifest II (unfortunately I missed the Frangifest I in Australia) where I got some astonishing varieties and could attend some very interesting talks by Dr. Richard Criley. In 2008, I went back to Ethiopia, more than 40 years after I had first left, and brought back the plumeria of my childhood. I call it "Addis Plumeria" after the name of the capital town of Ethiopia, Addis Abeba, which means "new flower."

For the last few years, I have been trying to reproduce the local varieties, some of which have been in the Palermo Botanical Garden since 1860. I am trying to collect the basic species known of this plant.

I also had the honor of having two varieties of mine registered by the PSA. I call them "Palermo Princess" and "Palermo Fahrenheit" in honor of the town where they were born, and now I am sending

cuttings of them to Luc at Florida Colors Nursery and to the Naples Botanical Garden! I hope that soon everyone in the USA will be able to see these two beauties "au naturel!" I have already given some



Palermo Princess



Palermo Fahrenheit

plants to a public garden in Palermo, where a little bush was planted in memory of the deceased daughter of the architect who designed the garden. A very nice poem is engraved near the bush. It says:

The Angel of the Garden

to Manuela Filippone Lechner

In this corner of the garden that your mother with commitment and love created for you, between these hopeful plumeria trees there is a chair without legs that nobody sees.

In this garden of peace and memory dedicated to you, you can come and sit, without shoes or clothes, whenever you decide to descend from the sky, without wings or ladders, to watch the sea!

In this garden we have planted words of love, to make them flourish with the water from the fountain and with the sun.

And these words will tell tales to people while dancing in the wind gifting sweet smelling caresses ...

We would hang to the leaves and branches, like praying mother's loving hands, words, caresses, sounds of laughter that you did not have the time to see and hear ...

Because too soon you left, too soon you decided to become an angel.

In recent years, Italian nurseries mostly import plumerias from Asia, because they are cheaper and require fewer custom formalities.

It has become more and more difficult to find PSA registered plants.

Recently I received from Luc, some "historical" varieties dating back to Elizabeth Thornton's time, as well as some recent ones like Plumeria Don.

Currently I have over 150 different varieties. I had to transfer most of them to the roof of the building where we live. Daily I climb to the roof on an unsafe spiral internal staircase. From the trimming of my older plants, I have created many new plants. Last summer, I began to graft, a practice which I became quite familiar with, following the wise advice of the PSA Yahoo! Group. I thank warmly all the members, and I apologize for not actively participating.

Recently two members, Seba from Switzerland, and Aishah from Malaysia, came to Palermo, and it was so nice to meet them and to spend some time talking plumerias! The dream of my life is to create in Palermo a great plumeria garden like the one in Naples, Florida to which I would gladly give all my plants, provided I knew they would be well cared for after I'm gone.



PSA Luau 2010 Invitation

Plan now to attend our annual luau on **Saturday, October 16, 2010**. As usual, it will be held on the gorgeous grounds of Lake and Eulas Stafford at **2301 Primrose, Pasadena, Texas 77502**.

Arrive early at 6:00 PM to tour their garden and chat with friends. Dinner will be served at 8:00 PM, and the Hawaiian dance program will begin around 9:00 PM.

Attendance for members and one guest will be free. Additional guests will be \$15.00. Members without reservations will be charged \$10.

Drawings and contests for door prizes will be new this year.

RSVP: (281) 438-3653 or wright5447@sbcglobal.net by **October 12th**.



Do You Have Mealybugs?

by Eulas Stafford, Texas

Do you see white or light yellow spots along the center stem of your leaf? Do you see a curled or deformed leaf? If you start to see any of these signs, then you have to turn the leaf over and look for the small cotton balls along the center vein of the deformed leaf. Check all of the nearby leaves if you find any mealybugs.

If you find these under your leaf, then you need to get them off as fast as you can. A few can be mashed between your fingers or rubbed with alcohol. If there is a heavier infestation, you can spray with an insecticidal soap or any good insecticide (Malathion, Bayer Powerforce, Sevin liquid) or even dormant oil spray. You should mix 1 to 2 tablespoons of a good dishwashing soap in all of the above sprays except for the dormant oil. This process should be repeated every 7 to 10 days to end the cycle.

If you have a bad infestation, then you will have to defoliate the entire plant and spray each branch to kill the eggs. Be sure to put all of the leaves in a plastic bag and seal the bag well when it is full.

If you find the mealybugs on your plant, good luck with this process to get rid of them.



Light infestation: A few small white spots of cotton-looking insects.



Heavy infestation: Insects may cover the entire back side of the leaf and some may be found on the front side.

GCPS Benefits Palma Sola Botanical Park

by *Laura Galle, Florida*

Although the week of February 13, 2010 had the coldest Saturday in decades, members of the Gulf Coast Plumeria Society, armed with supplies bought with a donation from the Plumeria Society of America, went to work. The goal was the installation of a new irrigation system at the Palma Sola Botanical Park in Bradenton, Florida.

GPS President Roger Galle manned the trencher while GPS members Al and Suzanne Semago, Gary Parker, and Suzanna Pouso moved and glued piping, and helped fill the trench back in. The plumies at the gardens will undoubtedly appreciate their efforts in the hot summer months!

<http://www.palmasolabp.com>



Thank You Note from Gulf Coast Plumeria Society

Dear Members of the PSA,

I am forwarding you copies of photos taken here at Palma Sola Botanical Park the week of February 13, 2010. It was the coldest Saturday in decades, but members of the Gulf Coast Plumeria Society, armed with supplies bought with a generous donation from your group, were ready to work. The new irrigation system was going in!

GPS President Roger Galle manned the trencher, GPS members Al & Suzanne Semago, Gary Parker & Suzanna Pouso moved piping, glued and helped fill the trench back in. Now the “plumies” are watered. Thank you so much for providing the new watering system.

Laura Galle, President, P.S.B.D.

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Plumeria Society Website

Additional information concerning The Plumeria Society of America and culture of plumeria plants may be found on the World Wide Web at the following address:

<http://www.ThePlumeriaSociety.org>

A listing of currently registered cultivars — Research Committee Bulletins — PSA By-Laws
Plumeria Care Bulletins — Photos from past events — Map links to meeting and sale sites
Photos of plumeria plants and flowers — past color insert pages in PDF format

Purpose of The Plumeria Society of America

- (1) Promote interest in and increase knowledge of plumeria hybridization, propagation and culture of plumerias.
- (2) Share this knowledge with hobbyists interested in plumerias.
- (3) Provide a register for recording, identifying and classifying by name new types and varieties of plumerias.
- (4) Encourage and unite plumeria enthusiasts around the globe, throughout America and across the seas.



Copy this page for all your friends who love plumeria or just want to know more about them.

The Plumeria Society of America, Inc.

P.O. Box 22791

Houston, TX 77227-2791, USA

Dues are \$25 per year

PSA Calendar — 2010

January 12 meeting
March 9 meeting
May 11 meeting
June 12 Show & Sale I (Clear Lake)
July 13 meeting
July 31 Show & Sale II (Katy)
October 12 meeting
October 16 Fall Social

- All regular meetings are held at the Houston Garden Center in Hermann Park, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX. Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m., workshops begin at 6:45 p.m.
- Bring your blooms. Bring your friends.
- Bring plants, cuttings, etc. for door prizes!! These can be anything, not just plumerias.
- Visitors are invited and encouraged to attend.

PSA Officers/Committee Members— 2010

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volunteer position available

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Plumeria Potpourri



Candy Stripe



Gardenia



Miracle



Salmon Pink



Golden Pagoda



Moraque #93

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/lopaka>

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