

Plumeria Potpourri

The Plumeria Society of America



July 9th Meeting

Speaker: Joy Columbus, VP of Horticulture, Houston Botanic Garden

Title: Update: Houston Botanic Garden

Tuesday, July 9, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, Texas

... anyone with an interest in plumeria is invited to attend ...

July 2019

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President's Corner

With early summer about to peak in the northern hemisphere, our celebrated plumeria blooming season is upon us—that which we all love!

Many of you who were at the very well-attended PSA June Flower Show and Sale may know we set a record for our June sale. Let's hope we can surpass those sales numbers and place lots of plumeria in new homes for the upcoming July sale.

by Ray Allison (RayAllison@GaryGreene.com)

By popular request, we will continue producing and emailing a low resolution electronic version of the newsletter to our membership. If we don't have a good email address for you, please let us know.

This is a good time to renew your PSA membership as we celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Plumeria Society of America.

Speaker—July 9, 2019

Joy Columbus

Vice President of Horticulture
Houston Botanic Garden (HBG)

Joy's function with HBG is to articulate and develop the HBG's horticultural program, build the horticulture team, and oversee plant conservation, and landscape management.

In her talk, Joy will tell us the status of the new HBG which expects to break ground in 2018 on a 120 acre-site located a short

distance from downtown Houston. Included in her talk will be the status of the overall design and planting of the garden and when the garden will be open.



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FLOWER SHOW AND SALE

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Cash Check Credit Card

2019 Houston Area Plant Sale

Clear Lake Sale

- | | |
|---------|--|
| July 2 | Commitment to sell at Clear Lake |
| July 9 | Sellers' meeting after the general meeting |
| July 10 | Cultivar list for Clear Lake sale |
| July 20 | Sale at Clear Lake |

Contact: Renee Riley
renee11riley@yahoo.com
713.485.9652

Historical Plumerias of Sicily

submitted by **Antonio Butera, Sicily**

We are glad to inform you that the Sicilian Regional Administration has initiated the inclusion of the historical plumerias of Palermo and Sicily and their popular historical names in the Register of Intangible Assets of Sicily, according to the Convention for the Protection of Intangible Heritage approved by I. Unesco on 17th October 2003.

The plumeria, better known in Sicily with the name of Pomelie, have been an integral part of the culture connected to the use of exotic plants in the gardens of our capital since the 18th century. Already in nineteenth-century catalogues the news reported the cultivation of these plants in Palermo. The love for this plant has led to its diffusion, with its various cultivars, in terraces and popular gardens, until it assumed a symbol linked to female fertility, and therefore transferred from mother to daughter.

The ever increasing diffusion and commercialization

at the international level of plumeria cultivars, induces traders and nurserymen to replace the historical names of the Sicilian varieties with other names with an English-speaking sound, in order to improperly assume the authorship of the selection of the cultivars, to better commercialize them.

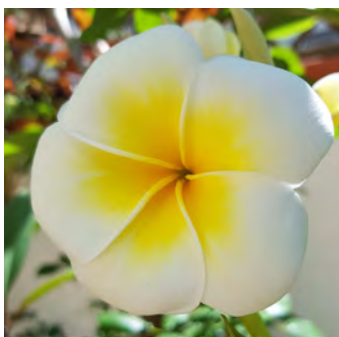
These historical names, now patrimony of the passionate cultivators, although not correct from the point of view of the botanical classification, were attributed by the Chief Gardener of the Royal Botanical Garden of Palermo, Vincenzo Riccobono in 1904, as shown by the relative publication kept in the library of the Botanical Garden of Palermo.

Therefore we ask you don't classify historical varieties from our island to modified names only for commercial purposes.

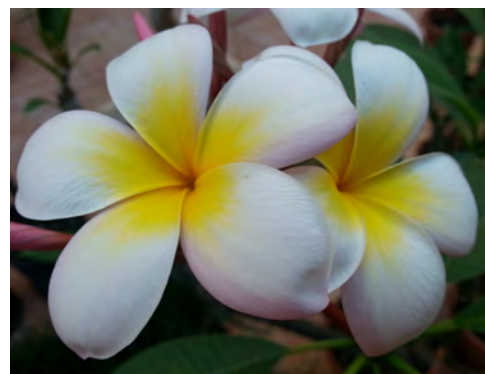
In progress, signature list adhering to the safeguard initiative.



'Lutea'



'Acutifolia'
aka **'Palermitana Tonda'**



'Incarnata'



'Jamesonii'



'Purpurea'

My Plumeria Journey

by Goolpranee Alm, Arizona

I feel privileged to be able to have had two plumeria journeys to Thailand with American friends who share the same inspirations as I do.

Each trip I started to plan and organize two years ahead of time. We had our own little itineraries laid ahead in each period of days. We traveled by private vans and chauffeurs. With shared transportation and accommodations, our costs were not much at all. Moreover, we also had a brief chance to visit Singapore during our layover.

My plumeria passion started in 2013. Half of my life in Thailand I paid no attention to plumeria. It was a forbidden plant not to be grown in common households since its name in the Thai language, 'Lan Tom,' represented sorrow and sadness. In the olden days we saw them grow on the temple grounds or cemeteries. Later on a Thai dignitary changed the name, 'Lan Tom' to 'Leelavadee.' Since then plumeria have become booming and widespread landscape trees all over the country.



Top left photo:
'Muang Sangiam #1' and
'Penang Peach'

Top and bottom right photos:
'Penang Peach' is grown
along roadsides and common
households in Thailand.



Even though I have been in the US for 30 years, I only started collecting plumeria in 2014. Since then my plumeria addiction has turned into a wild fire!

I made many plumeria purchases from different sources from all

over the US. I still remember paying \$700 for a five-gallon 'Singapore White' from a seller in Florida. Then, it died on me that first winter because I didn't know how to care for it in an Arizona winter.

Back then, Facebook and different plumeria groups were newly established. Prior to that I collected knowledge of plumeria through garden forums on the Internet. Over time I began to make friends with many plumeria lovers from all over the US and different countries. I had a strong desire to travel back to my homeland to see how Thailand plumeria prospects had changed. With that idea, I organized and led two small groups of American friends in 2016 and this year in mid-April 2019.

Both times Kukiat Tanteeratarm and Nui Leera, who have become my close friends, gladly and readily opened their private gardens for us.

Kukiat's garden is in Pratumthani, a Bangkok suburb. His plumeria grow on a former orange orchard with canals all around his growing grounds. He was kind and knowledgeable.

Kukiat also collects rare and exotic plants from all over the world. He greeted us by displaying his own selected hybrids which were fabulous and spectacular.



Left to right: Luis Lopez, Mark Wright, Cindy Fernandez, Joseph Elijah, Yvonne Lorenzana, and Kukiart Tanteeratarm, at Kukiart's garden, 2019

From what I observed and was told by Kukiart, he prefers hybridizing large-flowered plumeria. His hybrids 'White Christmas'



Kukiart Tanteeratarm

(non-released), 'Purple Serendipity,' and 'Clare Corre Beach Wave' are examples of such. His seedlings are classic and carefully selected before releasing into the market.

Moreover Kukiart's garden is also his private playground. He grows exotic plants from seeds. His

friends send seeds for his collection from all over the world—bahia, cassia and baobab are examples.

Kukiart's plumeria are top notch. At sunset it's mesmerizing to see plumeria growing beautifully with canals full of water surrounding them. He took us to see his new seedling section which is amazing. He also taught and demonstrated for us how to spot plumeria virus and to prevent it from spreading. We were in awe and wanted to come back.

After seeing Kukiart, we continued our excursion to Nui Leera's farm in Saraburi (120 kilometers from Bangkok). Nui has been in love with plumeria since he was young. He still remembers having only \$1 in his pocket for a bus ticket to go around to different temples in order to collect plumeria seeds. Now he owns 4–5 different plumeria plots.

His plumeria groves are different. Nui's plumeria depend on rainfall

mostly since they are grown in arid and hot locations.

He collects plumeria from different sources from all over the world for hybridizing programs. He intensely observes them and experiments with them. He doesn't do hand pollination. He believes in good environment, sun, wind, and fresh air to make plants happy. The end results are productions of good offsprings. He propagates many specific plumeria which are grafted or grown all over his groves to produce spectacular seedlings. He says that in Thailand, from the time he sows plumeria seeds till its first blooming cycle, it takes only 7 months. He plants 10,000 seedlings to be able to get only 100 beauties. Then, probably only 10 are stellars which people desire. It's an exhausting process, he feels sometimes. One of Nui's dreams is to produce purple obtusa one day.

His knowledge about plumeria lineage is astonishing. He is a walking encyclopedia when we had conversations about the history of a particular hybrid.

Nui is a master in grafting as well. Before he started his own



Bud Graft

farm, he made a living by grafting plumeria for a prominent Thai plumeria seller.



Nui's farm 2016



Nui's farm 2019

In 2016 Nui took us to visit a plumeria farm nearby called Leelavadee Trading. We could not visit in 2019 as it's closed to the public now. A few well known hybrids of Leelavadee Trading's are 'Yala,' 'Banana Cheese' (Afouria), 'Yellow Thammasart,' and 'Tawan Torsang.'



'Tawan Torsang'



'Yellow Thammasart'



'Banana Cheese' ('Afouria')

In 2018 Nui went to Perth, West Australia to demonstrate plumeria grafting and meet Australian plumeria enthusiasts.

In his goals, he told me he is in a process of acquiring a new property near a lake to accommodate plumeria lovers who want to stay in a country-styled home and wake up in plumeria surroundings.

Hopefully by 2022 when I go back there again with friends, his dreams will have come true.

I have learned so much from these trips. They have opened my eyes and increased my understanding of growing plumeria and the plumeria business. When I came back and retraced my thoughts, I felt lucky to have these experiences. I am sure that gaining knowledge from these two hybridizers makes me become a better plumeria grower. Moreover I am happy to share what I have learned with new plumeria

enthusiasts who haven't had a chance to travel yet.



'Diana's Fire'



'Tierra Flore'



'Pride of Nui'

Above:
Three of Nui Leera's
new seedlings

The *Plumeria*

Part 8: *Plumeria pudica*

This eighth installment of the series presents and discusses *Plumeria pudica*.

- 5. *Plumeria pudica*** (*pudica* = shy, bashful, or shrinking, perhaps alluding to its somewhat closed flowers or relative scarcity when found).
Synonyms: *P. caracasana* (*caracasana* = of or near Caracas, Venezuela).
P. cochleata (*cochleate* = coiled like a snail's shell; or *cochlearis* = spoon-shaped).

Nicolaus Joseph von Jacquin (1727–1817), a Dutch-born Austrian botanist, physician, and chemist, named and briefly described *Plumeria pudica* in 1760 in his *Enumeratio Systematica Plantarum quas in insulis Caribaeis*, which was an account of the plants he had studied and collected on the Caribbean Islands and northern South America (Colombia and Venezuela) from 1755–1759. Austria emperor Franz Joseph I had commissioned Jacquin to undertake this expedition to collect plants, animals, and other curiosities for his palace's natural history collections. Jacquin's description was very brief and hardly diagnostic, stating the plant was fruiting and the flowers were closed (still in bud?).

A few years later in 1763, in his *Selectarum Stirpium Americanarum Historia*, Jacquin provided a more expansive but still largely undiagnostic description of *Plumeria pudica*. He stated it was similar to *P. inodora* in habit, so an erect, shrubby tree with a few-branched trunk, but only to five feet tall. The leaves were long, wide, and flat. Flowers were yellowish white, pleasantly scented, and the corolla lobes (petals) erect in bud. He stated that westerners highly esteemed the flower and plant and affectionately referred to the flower as “Donzellas five Virgins” (perhaps alluding to the five closed petal lobes). He also noted that the plant from

by Donald R. Hodel

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which he derived the description was cultivated on Curacao, the Dutch island off the north coast of Venezuela. Jacquin cited no type material when he named and described *P. pudica*.

The species *Plumeria pudica* is rarely found in cultivation; what typically is found in cultivation under this name is the apparent horticultural selection or cultivar *P. pudica* ‘Bridal Bouquet.’ The description is from Woodson (1938a, b) and Zarucchi (2019), and cultivated plants.

Habit: shrub or small tree, evergreen except in cool-winter areas, to 15 feet tall and wide, vase-shaped, moderately branched, old trees with a spreading, more or less flat-topped or slightly rounded canopy, or in the cultivar ‘Bridal Bouquet’ strongly upright and erect, nearly cylindrical (especially when young) to narrowly vase-shaped, few-branched (Figs. 1–3).



Fig. 1: The cultivar *Plumeria pudica* ‘Bridal Bouquet’ has a strongly upright, nearly cylindrical to narrowly vase-shaped habit. Linda and Eileen Ohara garden, Carson, California.



Fig. 2: The cultivar *Plumeria pudica* ‘Bridal Bouquet’ has a strongly upright, nearly cylindrical to narrowly vase-shaped habit. Nuku Hiva, Marquesas Islands, French Polynesia.



Fig. 3: The cultivar *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet' has a strongly upright, nearly cylindrical to narrowly vase-shaped habit. Nuku Hiva, Marquesas Islands, French Polynesia.

Trunk: to 4 inches diameter; bark smooth and purplish brown-gray when young, becoming tan to brownish gray, sometimes corky and with warty or knobby protuberances with age; young twigs 4-sided with rounded or slightly angled margins, with numerous, prominent, semi-circular leaf scars.

Leaves: numerous, spirally arranged; petioles subsessile (very short, to 0.4 inch long or lacking) (Fig. 4), blades 4–12 inches long, 3–6 inches wide,



Fig. 4: The petiole of *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet' is lacking or very short, only to about 0.4 inch long. Linda and Eileen Ohara garden, Carson, California.

generally obovate-oblong, widest beyond the middle and mostly near the tip (Figs. 5–6), fiddle-shaped or spoon-shaped, in the cultivar 'Bridal Bouquet' abruptly and prominent flared or bulged toward the tip (Figs. 7–8), often v-shaped in transverse section forming an upward-facing trough (Fig. 9), glossy green to dark green above, pale below and slightly hairy to becoming hairless, midrib raised and prominent below, apex short- to long-pointed, base gradually narrowing to wedge-shaped, lateral nerves conspicuous, nearly perpendicular to midrib in narrow part of blade to conspicuously ascending in



Fig. 5: Leaves of the species *Plumeria pudica* are widest beyond the middle and mostly near the tip. Fendler 1026, Venezuela (K).



Fig. 6: Leaves of the species *Plumeria pudica* are widest beyond the middle and mostly near the tip. Marulanda 2093, Colombia (USF).



Fig. 7: Leaves of the cultivar *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet' are abruptly and prominent flared or bulged toward the tip. Linda and Eileen Ohara garden, Carson, California.



Fig. 8: Leaves of the cultivar *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet' are abruptly and prominent flared or bulged toward the tip. Linda and Eileen Ohara garden, Carson, California.



Fig. 9: Leaves of the cultivar *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet' are v-shaped in transverse section forming an upward-facing trough. Linda and Eileen Ohara garden, Carson, California.

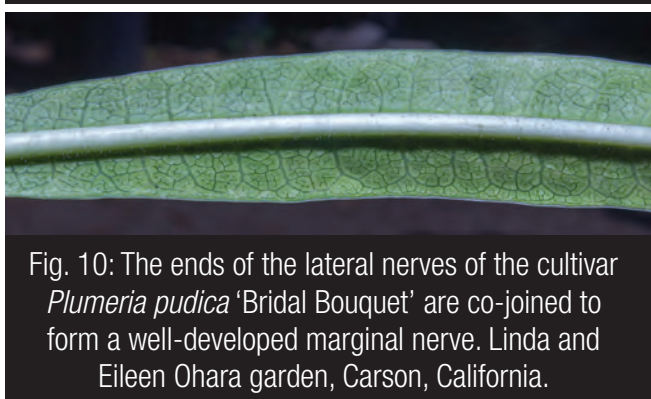


Fig. 10: The ends of the lateral nerves of the cultivar *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet' are co-joined to form a well-developed marginal nerve. Linda and Eileen Ohara garden, Carson, California.

apically widened part, slightly impressed, their ends co-joined to form a well-developed marginal nerve (Fig. 10).

Flowers: arranged in congested, sub-umbellate clusters of usually 20–50 flowers (Fig. 11);



Fig. 11: Flowers of the cultivar *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet' are arranged in congested, sub-umbellate clusters of usually 20–50 individual flowers. Linda and Eileen Ohara garden, Carson, California.

peduncles 2.75–6 inches long, without or sometimes with hairs, secondary peduncles or branches much shorter; individual flowers to 3.25 inches long and wide (Fig. 12); pedicels 0.25–0.5 inch long; corolla lobes in bud only about half



Fig. 12: Flowers of the cultivar *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet' have gradually flared corolla tubes attaining nearly 0.25 inch diameter at corolla lobes, about twice the diameter at the calyx. Linda and Eileen Ohara garden, Carson, California.

spiraled; calyx lobes ovate to subtriangular, 0.06–0.08 inch long, without hairs; corolla trumpet-shaped, tubular at base, tube 0.6–1 inch long, 0.125 inch diameter at calyx, gradually flared to nearly 0.25 inch diameter at corolla lobes (Fig. 12), corolla lobes 1–1.4 inches long, 0.8–1.2 inches wide, broadly obovate to obovate oblong, white or yellowish white with small yellow dot or "eye" at base of lobes (Fig. 13), only faintly fragrant if at all,



Fig. 13: Flowers of the cultivar *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet' have broadly obovate to obovate oblong, white or yellowish white corolla lobes with a small yellow dot or "eye" at their base. Linda and Eileen Ohara garden, Carson, California.

but pleasant; stamens 5, inserted near base of corolla tube; pistil composed of 2 separate ovaries with a single, short style.

Fruit: 2 pods (follicles) 6–8 inches long, 0.4–

0.6 inch wide, brown, long-pointed, wide-spreading, joined at base.

Distribution: Lesser Antilles, Panama, northern Colombia, northern Venezuela. The apparent cultivar 'Bridal Bouquet' is widely cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions worldwide.

Ecology: *Plumeria pudica* mostly occurs from nearly sea level to 1,500 feet elevation in relatively open, seasonally dry forests, often on rocky substrates.

Common Names: frangipani, plumeria, fiddle-leaf plumeria or frangipani, Puerto Rico plumeria.

Notes: The case of *Plumeria pudica* is a strange one. The straight species *P. pudica* is a little known, rarely grown, and a somewhat poorly documented species. It could easily be confused with *P. inodora* or perhaps even some forms of *P. obtusa* and some white forms of *P. rubra*. Woodson (1938) stated that *P. pudica* was distinct from all other members of the genus except *P. inodora* in its nearly funnel-shaped corolla, the floral tube gradually widening above the attachment of the stamens to an opening twice the diameter of the tube at its base. He further stated that *P. pudica* differed from *P. inodora* in its leaves mostly lacking a distinct petiole, its leaf blades fiddle- or spoon-shaped, and the corolla lobes in bud only about half spirally contorted. Surely much more work is needed to circumscribe and differentiate *P. pudica* better from other species, especially *P. inodora*.

However, the apparent cultivar 'Bridal Bouquet' is strikingly distinct from all *Plumeria* in its strongly upright and narrowly vase-shaped habit and its leaves with an abrupt, apical lateral bulge or flare (or two) just prior to the tip. This strongly spoon-shaped leaf easily distinguishes *P. pudica* 'Bridal Bouquet.' Leaves of 'Bridal Bouquet' are 6 inches long overall, the narrow part or "handle of the spoon" about 4 inches long and 0.6 inch wide, and the abruptly flared or bulging part just before the tip about 1.2 inches long and 2.4 inches wide. The entire leaf is strongly v-shaped, forming a distinctive, upward-

facing trough. Unfortunately, next to nothing is known about the history of this apparent cultivar.

A variegated form of 'Bridal Bouquet' called Golden Arrow or Gilded Spoon and a pink-flowering Thai hybrid called Sri Supakorn or Pink Pudica are sometimes offered in the trade.

NEXT: *Plumeria rubra*

Literature Cited

Woodson, R. E., Jr. 1938a. Studies in the Apocynaceae. VII. An evaluation of the genera *Plumeria* L. and *Himatanthus* Willd. Ann. Missouri Bot. Gard. 38: 189-224.

Woodson, R. E., Jr. 1938b. *Plumeria*. North American Flora 29(2): 115-119.

Zarucchi, J. L. 2019. *Plumeria*. Flora Mesoamericana. On-line: <http://www.tropicos.org/name/40012241?projectid=3>. Accessed 20 March 2019.

If you're on Facebook, join us at
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/PlumeriaSocietyAmerica>

Our page now has 3,100+ members from all over the world—a great place to ask a question or show off your blooms.

The Plumeria Society of America

Social Media Guidelines and Information (see the PSA Facebook Group Files section for full document)

- Because the PSA is a non-profit organization, selling, trading, or offering for trade of any items is not allowed.
- Advertising, soliciting, self-promoting are not allowed (personal or for the business of others).
- Comments are to be kind and respectful.
- Posted photographs need to be labeled on the photo or in comments, even if a NOID.
- Ask permission before posting, copying, reusing, or sharing someone else's photo.
- When adding friends to the group, please let them know so they can answer the required screening questions (to prevent spam).

New PSA Registrations

#501 - 'Ubud Pink'

registered by Mariano Randazzo, Palermo, Italy



#500 - 'Tarvin's Golden Sunrise'
registered by John Tarvin, Southern California



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Our new website is easier to navigate and to find information about plumeria care, cultivar registration, society news, events, and much more! Since the website is new, please check for updates and to see added features such as the flower identification database and a members only newsletter archive! Below is the current MEMBERS ONLY login and password information that will be needed to access the website's newsletter archive.

Log in: **psamember** Password: **Scottpratt93**

Twitter feed: **@Plumeriasociety**



Joining the PSA ...

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Click on "Join the PSA" tab at the top of the home page.

To join by mail, select PDF.

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Dues are \$35 per year

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.

When does your PSA membership expire?

Your newsletter envelope mailing label has your membership expiration date.

2019 PSA Calendar

January 15meeting
March 12meeting
May 7meeting
June 8 (Bay Area Community Center
Seabrook/Clear Lake) Show & Sale I
July 9meeting
July 20 (Bay Area Community Center
Seabrook/Clear Lake) Show & Sale 2
October 8 Fall Luau Social (potluck) & meeting

- Meetings are held at Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston, Texas.
- Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. You're welcome to come 30–45 minutes before the meeting for snacks and chat.
- We have a raffle, guest speakers, and more.
- Non-members are always welcome!
- Join us to learn about plumeria care and collecting.
- Bring plants, cuttings, etc. for door prizes! These can be anything, not just plumerias.

2019 PSA Officers and Directors

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