



THE PLUMERIA

VOL. I

THE PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF SOUTH TEXAS

OCTOBER, 1993

Next Meeting: October 27, 1993

Place: Corpus Christi Garden Center
5325 Greely Drive

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Program: Mrs. Ruth O'Brien, Teacher of Taxonomy at Texas A&M-CC.
Will discuss "Basic Botany of the Flower, Specifically
Plumeria". Bring magnifying glass.

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I couldn't have been more pleased at the response we had at our first meeting on September 22, 1993, at the Botanical Gardens. Now we have 19 paid members. If you haven't done so, you have an opportunity to pay the \$10.00 dues by sending in the enclosed application. I must give credit to Kim Fuller, Horticulturist with the Nueces County Extension Service, for spreading the word and giving the Plumeria the highlight of her column in the Garden Section of the C. C. Caller Times. We also owe one to Paul Thornton for allowing us to meet at the Botanical Gardens. Mrs. Ray Buebe, President of the Plumeria Society of America, Inc. from Houston, gave a very impressive talk and slide presentation. As testament to her dedication to the Plumeria, Ray came to Corpus Christi for us without compensation.

I hope that as many of you can attend the next very important meeting on Wednesday, October 27, 1993, at the Garden Center which will be devoted, in part, to the nitty gritty business of organizing. I have made reservations to have our future meetings at the Garden Center on the fourth (4th) Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. May I suggest that we have four (4) meetings per year during the growing season on the fourth (4th) Wednesday of March, May, July, and October, 1994. I would like to hear your preference on this schedule.

Enclosed is a questionnaire that will provide us information as to your experience level and preferences. Please mail to me at 1107 The 600 Building, Corpus Christi, Texas 78473 or bring to the October meeting. I encourage as many of you to get

involved by volunteering for a job. This will spread the "work and fun" out among many - the result of which will be success.

First order of business would be to formulate and adopt a set of By-Laws to operate under. I would like to have three (3) volunteers come forward for this task, please.

I propose that we have the following Standing Committees for adequate function:

Membership
 Newsletter
 Social
 Research
 Program
 Plant Sales

Call me as soon as possible to take one of these committees. They may go quickly! I can be reached at 884-4252 (office).

I can envision our purpose is to educate and inform the public about the lovely Plumeria. Hopefully, we can have experts come to speak at our meetings about their expertise. Each of us can conduct experiments, such as grafting, hybridizing, propagation, care, and inform the other members of the results. We can conduct plant sales to raise funds for research and programs by co-sharing the proceeds, with the member receiving a majority of the sale proceeds. We should sponsor a variety of Plumerias and provide the care for the Botanical Gardens. Let me hear from you on where you would like our Plumeria Society to go from here.

Wouldn't it be nice if each member brings a guest or new member to our October meeting!

I am looking forward to the Plumeria Society's future. For the meantime, Happy Plumeriaing!

Bob Owen

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WINTER STORAGE

With winter season approaching, it is time to think about bringing your Plumerias inside to protect them from freezing. Plumerias will not survive temperatures below 37°F. When the outside temperature reaches 40°F, usually by late November, it is time to store your plants in the garage, storeroom, attic, greenhouse, or makeshift cover on the patio. Provide temperature control to keep above 37°F. Personally, I feel secure when I can keep the temperature above 40°F.

Many experts advise to cease fertilizing your Plumerias in August to allow the plant to harden up for the winter. This practice greatly reduces the chance of getting black tip on the end of the branches, especially when frostbite occurs. Check stem for soft to touch feel indicating rot from black tip. Prune branch to "white wood". Personally, I keep my Plumerias "fired up" with fertilizer for blooming on into October on the chance that we might have an Indian Summer. I do keep a watchful eye on the temperature.

If your plants are in pots, you can store them in the pots. Cut away any roots protruding out the drain holes in the pot. Remove as many leaves (leave 1" of the leaf stem) as desired to reduce moisture loss. Do not water the plants once in storage to avoid rot.

If your Plumerias have been planted in the ground, it is best to root prune with a sharpshooter shovel about 18" out from the trunk before pulling out of the ground. Bare root the plant by shaking or hosing off the dirt. This job is made easier by preparing a friable, organic soil to start with in the spring. After taking the Plumeria out of the ground, let dry in the shade for 2 or 3 days, providing temperatures are above 40°F. Place roots in a paper bag, newspaper, or "gunny sack" dry. Some store their plants with the dirt on, so long as you keep the root ball dry. Keep branches and roots from touching concrete as the lime in the cement will cause plant damage. The Plumerias will go dormant for the next 3 or 4 months. Bare root plants can be hung upside down or stacked like cordwood. If not careful, rough treatment will result in the bark being scraped off like it had been in a good fight. In time, the scars will heal over. However, best to handle with care to insure a healthy looking plant.

After about 3 months of storage, some of your Plumerias will wrinkle or shrivel up due to moisture loss. Not to worry. Next spring, when you bring the plants out of storage after the last freeze and when temperatures are above 40°F, usually sometime in March, add water and watch the limbs fill out quickly.

Under sufficient light and controlled temperatures, Plumerias can be grown indoors during the winter without leaf loss. However, without adequate candlepower, the Plumeria will go into dormancy and drop leaves.

Invariably, a branch will break off while moving plants to storage. Simply place broken branch on the shelf in the garage, leave it until next April at which time it can be placed in a pot for rooting. Treat the wound in the mother plant with a fungicide.

The Plumeria is like your faithful dog when treated properly, it will be most obedient.

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TRIVIA

Did you know that Plumerias are members of the APOCYNACEAE family including such well-known plants as the Oleander, Periwinkle, and Allamanda? Beware, the milky white sap is poisonous as the Oleander.