



THE PLUMERIAN

VOL. III, Issue 1 THE PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF SOUTH TEXAS MAY, 1995

NEXT MEETING:

Date: May 24, 1995
Time: 7:30 P.M.
Place: Garden Center 5325 Greely Drive:
Program: "Growing Plumerias the Smolik Way"
by Johnny Smolik, Kingsville, Texas

THOUGHTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

The activities of our Plumeria Society had a late start this year, mainly due to a medical problem I had last November. I am much better now, so I enlist your understanding. Be assured we will have four meetings in 1995 as promised -- April 26, May 24, July 1, and October 25. Please note that the July 1st meeting will be on a Saturday afternoon at 1:00 P.M. at the Garden Center. The reason for the Saturday meeting is the speaker, Weldon Mayse, Houston, works during the week and only has the weekend for a speaker's engagement. You will enjoy his Hawaiian Plumeria slide presentation, tips for successful bloom production and cuttings for sale.

I am pleased to report that our Plumeria Society successfully participated in the Floral Show last Saturday, May 13th at Padre Staples Mall. We were continually surprised to learn of so many people having plumeria plants. Now, a lot more people know about PSST. Hopefully some will become members. I must thank the following members for taking their shift at running our exhibit--Ann Yeager, Leatrice Koch, Lois Millard, Mary Lou and Jack Klatt, Joan Merryman, Johnny Smolik, Jocko Taylor, Bob Owen and Frank Iwanski.

The last meeting on April 26th was fairly well attended by 19 members to hear Emerson Willis, public relations for the Plumeria Society of America in Houston, tell us about his project of planting different varieties of Plumeria in Key West, Florida. Emerson, also, showed slides of Plumeria cultivars in Hawaii. Thanks again to Lois Millard, June Owen and Barbara Howard for providing the refreshments.

NEW SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 1995

Election of officers for 1995 was held at the April 26th meeting, as follows:

President:	Bob Owen
Vice President:	Leonard Howard
Secretary:	Ann Yeager
Treasurer:	Lois Millard

A great deal of gratitude is extended to outgoing Secretary Ann McCord and Treasurer Margie Olivarez for doing a job well done.

DON'T FORGET TO PAY 1995 DUES!!

If you haven't already done so, please send your \$10.00 for 1995 dues to the Plumeria Society of South Texas, 1107 The 600 Building., Corpus Christi, Texas 78473

At my house this past winter, I did not have a single freezing day. Matter fact, I doubt if the temperature ever reached below 38 deg. F. Nevertheless, I left my Plumeria's outside in their containers, completely exposed all winter. I only had two branches with "black tip fungus" which is primarily initiated by frost bite. When you first see signs of black tip, immediately cut the infected branch to clean white wood and treat cut with a fungicide like benomyl, then dob with tree paint. Otherwise, the fungus can rapidly move down the branches and kill your plant.

By now most of my plumerias have leafed out and are setting inflorescences (flower stalks with flower buds). Three plants have a few blooms as well. I am now in the process of repotting to the next size pot larger and root pruning, that is, cutting away bottom 2" of the root ball. Also, I am shaping plants by pruning and saving the cuttings to root for the August 26 Plant Sale at the Padre Staples Mall. Last year, I had a serious attack of mealy bugs. This occurred while on vacation last summer in Colorado. The neighbor who was taking care of my plants thought it was fungus because of the "many small white cotton balls" and treated with a fungicide which didn't even phase those critters! Well, when I got home, the damage was so serious it caused leaf drop. Gill's Nursery identified the mealy bugs and prescribed Orthene spray. This spring, the mealy bugs returned again. This time I am treating with a spray of 50% alcohol and 50% water every five days. Now, I seem to have the situation arrested. I suspect, I brought them home on a Plastic Pink Plumeria purchased in Houston. The lesson learned here is to "quarantine" any plants you buy for one year to prevent an outbreak of an insect like mealy bugs or the Longhorn beetle or rust fungus known to exist on Plumeria plants in the Houston area.

When repotting, make sure the soil mix is at least 50% organic such as composted manure, 25% leaf mold or peat moss 25% sand and potting soil. Mix in some super phosphate, 0-18-0. As Fred Allon told us last October, Plumerias love a pH range of 5.5 to 6.5. If using city water, your soil can become too alkaline. Use a pH meter of some kind, according to Fred, to monitor the pH. Adjust accordingly by using either fertilizer high in phosphate or Epsom Salts, either way, to bring the ph back to the desirable range. Every Plumeria grower has his own theory on fertilizer use. For what it is worth, I will recite to you my practice. To begin with, when I make up my potting soil I usually mix in the super phosphate 0-18-0. You can also use bone meal. Then during the growing season, I try to fertilize once a week using a dilute liquid solution of fertilizers alternating between Super Bloom and BR61, one tablespoon per 2 gallons of water. Once a month treat with 2 tablespoons of Epsom salts per mature plant (less for a small plant) for too much acidity. I like to keep my plants a little on the dry side. Make sure the soil drains rapidly.

My plants prefer morning sun with filtered sun-light in the afternoon during the hot summer. Remember, it takes at least 6 hours of sunlight to force blooming.

May is the best time to take cuttings because my success is nearly 100% due to ideal temperatures. In April and March my success is 75% and 50%, respectively. I have good success up to about June 15 or 20th, at which time my success declines rapidly to poor results in July, August and September. If you make a trunk cutting (that is a cut 12" to 18" above top of pot) more branching will occur in the spring versus any other time during the year. Since we will only sell rooted cuttings in the August 26th Plant Sale, I hope you have already started your cuttings to root as it takes 60 days for roots to develop. Root development can be hastened by first girdling the branch or trunk and allowing cut to callous over before cutting off branch and planting in a pot. This should have been done as early as March 1st to get good roots by August 26th.

When you believe small roots have formed feed with a root stimulator for rapid root development. Place pots with cutting on the patio for bottom heat or, for best results, place pots on the green surface of your tennis court like one member did I know of!

Speaking of the August 26 Plant Sale, I hope that all of you will participate in this event. This is an excellent opportunity for PSST to promote the Plumeria and, at the same time, raise badly needed funds for the Society programs. You, too will benefit as we decided at the last meeting, the split on the proceeds of sale would be 75% to the member selling the plant and 25% of the sale to PSST and each member would contribute one plant to the Society for the sale.

Looks like we are on a roll with new members coming in. Let's keep up the momentum. I still need more members to work and help "lighten the load" for a few hard workers. Such projects need a chairman as --- the Botanical Garden Plumeria Collection, Plant Sale, August 26, membership social, Corpus Christi Council of Garden Clubs

representative, Historian, Newsletter editor. Get a friend interested in Plumerias by giving him or her a Plumeria plant and a copy of the Newsletter. Perhaps they just might become a member.

Regards,



Bob Owen, President

PS. Please note that PSST is an acronym for our Plumeria Society of South Texas and PSA refers to the Houston Plumeria Society of America.

EVENT CALENDAR 1995

April 26 -----PSST meeting, Garden Center, 7:30 p.m.
May 13 -----Floral Combined Show, Padre Staples Mall, 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
May 24 -----PSST meeting, Garden Center, 7:30 p.m.
June 10 -----PSA, Houston, Plant Sale, members only allowed to sell plants. Open to public.
July 1 -----PSST meeting, Garden Center, 1:00 p.m.
July 15 -----PSA Plant Sale, Clear Lake Park, Texas
August 12 -----PSA Floral and Plant Display, Herman Park Garden Center
October 15-----PSST Meeting, Garden Center, 7:30 p.m.

TRADE CUTTINGS

Emerson Willis has ample supply of cuttings for trade, as follows:

Key West Honey Suckle (white)
Dark Pink (Jasmine Street)
Pink (Orchid color)
Pink (Sunset with red eye)

In return Emerson wants "reds and rainbows" (tri color). Call 713-471-3641 or write to 402 South 3rd. Street, La Porte, Texas 77571.

PLUMERIA IDENTIFICATION PROJECT

As a needed project, I am starting on Identification of Plumeria's by Photograph. I will be using color prints and 35mm slides. If you have a registered variety in full bloom in your backyard please call me so that I can take a photograph for this purpose. Of course, the project will be shared with the membership. Anyone wanting to help me with this project?

REGISTERED VARIETIES

For your information attached is the official list of Registered Varieties approved by PSA through 1992. There have been a half dozen more Plumerias approved since 1992 to date. I will pass this additional list on to you as soon as I get up dated. The Plumeria Society of America is charged with the responsibility to Register Plumeria Cultivars Internationally. If, from a seedling, you have hybridized an unusual specimen; such as, color, keeping quality, bloom production, you may one day wish to have it registered.

"HAPPY PLUMERIA-ING"

PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF SOUTH TEXAS

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Plumeria Society is for those who enjoy the lovely Plumeria and who want to participate in learning more about the aspects of propagation, culture, classification, research, hybridizing.

Meetings are held four times a year on the fourth (4th) Wednesday of the months of March, May, July and October at 7:30 P.M. at the Corpus Christi Garden Center, 5325 Greely Drive. Four Newsletters per year are included. Membership dues are \$10.00 per year per member.