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INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY

INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY is a non-profit corporation comprised of individuals who share a particular interest, appreciation and fondness for lilacs. Through exchange of knowledge, experience and facts gained by members it is helping to promote, educate and broaden public understanding and awareness.

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TYPICAL VARIETIES AND AUTONYMS

James S. Pringle

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Previously, in the Lilac Newsletter 9(5):1, I published a discussion of typespecimens. The present paper continues the topic of what is "typical" in the context of botanical nomenclature, with a discussion of the typical (or nominate) variety.

In this paper, I have concentrated on botanical varieties because this is the rank generally used for the major divisions of Syringa species. Whether it might be better or worse to designate these taxonomic entities "subspecies" is not within the scope of this paper. The rules pertaining to autonyms are similar for all taxonomic ranks below that of species.

The tree lilacs (Syringa subgenus Ligustrina) in cultivation are usually treated as two species, viz., Syringa pekinensis Rupr., which is not involved in the present discussion, and S. reticulata (Blume) Hara. Most of the plants of S. reticulata in cultivation in North America and Europe are derived, ultimately, from material collected in Japan, where the species is native, and are called "Japanese Tree Lilacs." Some, however, are derived from material collected on the Asian mainland, where the species is also native, and are called "Amur Lilacs." Plants derived from Japanese and mainland populations are highly similar, and anyone who has attempted to determine whether a lilac was a Japanese Tree Lilac or Amur Lilac will probably be satisfied with their inclusion in a single species. It is generally agreed, however, that there are consistent morphological differences

between the Japanese Tree and Amur Lilacs, subtle but not without significance in ornamental horticulture, and that these differences are worthy of taxonomic recognition.

As noted in the previous paper in this series, the nomenclatural type of the name of a species is one specimen. This is the one designated as such by the original author, or, if the name was published before the present rules of nomenclature existed, a specimen from those studied by the original author, selected and designated the type (lectotype) by a later researcher. Obviously, the one specimen that typifies a species name cannot itself represent more than one variety of that species. The variety of the species that is represented by the type specimen is the typical variety of the species, in the context of botanical nomenclature. The first variety of a species to have become known to science has, of course, not always been the one most widely distributed in nature, nor the one that eventually became the most important in horticulture. Fortunately, however, in the case of S. reticulata, the nomenclaturally typical variety is also the more widely cultivated variety.

The species now called Syringa reticulata was first described and given a botanical name by Carl Ludwig von Blume. (Blume, who treated this species as a privet, named it Ligustrum reticulatum, but the name Syringa reticulata was based directly on the earlier name, so both have the same type.) Blume was acquainted only with the Japanese variety of the species. The typical variety of S. reticulata, therefore, is the Japanese variety, upon which Blume's original description was based. The mainland-Asiatic variety is the non-typical variety, nomenclaturally, and is called S. reticulata var. amurensis (Ruprecht) Pringle.

How to designate the nomenclaturally typical variety of a species remained a matter of controversy for many years. Some authors simply used the name of the species (and such phrases as "the species") to refer only to the typical variety, but the potential for confusion in this practice is obvious. Other authors in the past provided new names for typical varieties, often "var. typica (-us, -um)," sometimes "var. genuina," occasionally others. Such names are not permitted under the present provisions of the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature. The Code now requires that the name of the typical variety shall repeat the species epithet (i.e., the word that constitutes the second part of a species name). Therefore, in the case of the tree lilacs, the typical variety of S. reticulata is called S. reticulata var. reticulata.

No authors' names are used following the name of a typical variety. (See Table 1 in Lilac Newsletter 9(3):2.) Whenever a variety is named that does not include the type, the remainder of the species, which does include the type, automatically constitutes the typical variety and automatically acquires a name that repeats the specific epithet. Such names, therefore, are called autonyms. In the present example, because the name Syringa reticulata var. reticulata was formed automatically, and no new epithet was coined by any subsequent author, the typification of the name depends entirely on the original use of the name Ligustrum reticulatum by Blume. This provision of the Code is retroactive to 1753, the starting point for botanical nomenclature.

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

by Walter W. & Gloria K. Oakes
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We have put together a selected list of books and pamphlets, some entirely about lilacs and some containing sections with information about lilacs. Additions will be made as they come to our attention.

It is doubtful if any of the books published before 1970 can be found without the assistance of dealers in rare and out-of-print books. The most expensive will probably be Mrs. McKelvey's masterwork THE LILAC when it can be found in good condition and with the color charts. After all, the book sold for \$25.00 in 1928. Others may be found at less cost but be prepared to back-order and for a long wait. The Russian book may be available and we will attempt to negotiate a supply if there is enough interest in it.

The three books published by the International Lilac Society Corporation are available in limited quantities at the prices quoted and may be ordered from us at the address above. Prices include postage - please prepay - immediate shipment. In addition, we will provide copies of sample pages from any of the books starred and will suggest price ranges for any except the Russian one. A stamped, self-addressed envelope will be appreciated.

(1) MONOGRAPHS

- * DVORAK, Joseph, Jr. LILAC STUDY. 1978 - International Lilac Society Corp. Line drawings of lilac flowers with description of form and color. Soft cover. \$10.00
- * HARDING, Alice. LILACS IN MY GARDEN. 1933 - Macmillan Co. A handbook for beginners. Illustrated. Black and white.
- * MCKELVEY, Susan Delano. THE LILAC. 1928 - Macmillan Co. The bible on the genus Syringa with color charts.
- * NEW HAMPSHIRE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION. TENTATIVE INTERNATIONAL REGISTER OF CULTIVAR NAMES IN THE GENUS SYRINGA. 1976 - International Lilac Society Corp. Color, flower form, species classification and originators of more than 1300 lilacs. Soft cover. \$5.00
- * PRINGLE, James S. A REVIEW OF ATTEMPTED AND REPORTED INTERSERIES AND INTERSUBGENERIC HYBRIDIZATION IN SYRINGA (OLEACEAE). Baileya 21(3):101-123. September 17, 1981. Vol. 21. An exceptional history and handbook for hybridizers and serious lilac plant collectors. Black and white. Not illustrated.
- * RUBTZOV, LI., MIKHAILOV, N.L., ZHOGOLEVA, V.G. LILAC SPECIES AND CULTIVARS IN CULTIVATION IN U.S.S.R. 1980 - Naukova Dumka. Kiev. More than 70 color plates of excellent quality with a few exceptions. In Russian. See Special Issue of "Lilacs", December 1982. Vol. 2, No. 2.

- * UPTON, Edward A. THE EDWARD A. UPTON SCRAPBOOKS OF LILAC INFORMATION. 1980 - Reprinted by the International Lilac Society Corp. Vol.1 of a 3 vol. set planned. Contains Vols. 1 & 2 of the original scrapbooks assembled by Edward A. Upton over many years. Reproduced in black and white. Soft cover. \$22.50. Limited Edition, numbered.
- * WISTER, John C. LILAC CULTURE. 1930 - Orange Judd Publ. Co. Evaluation of varieties, recommended landscape uses and cultural practices. Black and white. Illustrated.
- * WISTER, John C. LILACS FOR AMERICA. 1953 - Arthur Hoyt Scott Horticultural Foundation of Swarthmore College. A report of the 1953 survey of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboretums. A standard reference work. Soft cover.

(2) SPLIT MONOGRAPH

- * BARTRAM, Douglas. LILACS AND LABURNUM. 1959 - John Gifford Ltd., London. Evaluation of selected lilacs grown in England, cultural practices and observations. Contains two color plates of lilacs.

(3) BOOKS CONTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT LILACS

BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN. PLANTS AND GARDENS.
"Handbook on Flowering Shrubs". 1964 -
Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

BUSH-BROWN, James. SHRUBS AND TREES FOR THE HOME LANDSCAPE. 1963 - Chilton Books. Inadequate treatment of the species lilacs. Good descriptive list of S. vulgaris cultivars.

DAWSON, Oliver. SHRUBS AND HOW TO USE THEM. 1969. William Heinemann Ltd. London.

FARRINGTON, Edward I. ERNEST H. WILSON PLANT HUNTER. 1931 - A biography. The Stratford Company.

HAZELWOOD, Walter G. A HANDBOOK OF TREES, SHRUBS AND ROSES. 1968 - Angus and Robertson Ltd., London.

WILSON, Ernest H. AMERICA'S GREATEST GARDEN. 1925 - A tour of the Arnold Arboretum and discussion of the plant collections.

WILSON, Ernest H. PLANT HUNTING. 1927 - The adventures and plant discoveries of the author. Volumes I and II.

WILSON, Ernest H. ARISTOCRATS OF THE TREES. 1930 - History and description of the great trees. Folio size, many photographs, 1 color plate.

All published by the Stratford Company.

* ZUCKER, Isabel. FLOWERING SHRUBS. 1966 - D. Van Nostrand Co. Excellent treatment of species lilacs. Very little information on S. vulgaris and other species cultivars. Valuable landscaping reference for colder climates.

- (4) Many myths, legends and proverbs have attached to lilacs over the centuries. Some of these will be found in:

FRIEND, Rev. Hilderic. FLOWERS AND FLOWER LORE. Vol. II. 1886 - Swan Sonnenschein & Co. London.

KENNEDY, Mrs. Alexander. THE LEGENDS OF FLOWERS. 1930 - William Farquhar Payson. New York.

MILTON, Abby, FLOWER LORE. 1956.

SKINNER, Charles M. MYTHS AND LEGENDS OF FLOWERS, TREES, FRUITS AND PLANTS. 1925 - J. B. Kuooubcitt Co., Philadelphia and London.

(This section from A SCENT OF LILACS compiled by Ms. Meryl A. Miasek, Reference Librarian, The New York Botanical Garden. April, 1973).

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NEW VARIETIES OF LILAC (Syringa vulgaris L.)

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Common lilac (Syringa vulgaris L.) is an indigenous plant in Southeastern Europe, and in Yugoslavia it is widespread in the eastern parts (Serbia, Macedonia).

The results of selection have led to the cultivation of about a thousand cultivars of common lilac. However, little is known about the variability of this species in its natural habitat. In floristic and dendrofloristic studies the information about the variability of common lilac is still rather scarce. McKelvey (1928) lists the following varieties in her monograph on the lilac:

- S. vulgaris var. transsilvanica Schur.
- - var. macrantha Borbas
- - var. pulchella Vel.
- - var. alba West.
- - var. purpurea West.

Starcs (1928) mentions the following varieties:

- S. vulgaris var. coerulea Ait.
- - var. alba Ait.
- - var. rubra Lodd.
- - var. violacea Ait.

Hayek (1930) lists only:

- S. vulgaris f. pulchella Vel.

It is known in respect of geological substratum that the lilac grows mainly on limestone.

Grebensčikov (1963) says: "the substratum is almost

exclusively limestone and related stones, but sporadic cases of the occurrence of lilac have been noticed on conglomerate and on serpentine."

Very recent investigations (Jovanović and Vukićević 1980) on the variability of the lilac in natural habitats in Yugoslavia (Serbia - the Ibar river ravine), where this species occurs on serpentine, describe new varieties of the common lilac. According to these authors, the specific ecological factors of the region, above all serpentine, have affected the ecological and morphological differentiation of the lilac in comparison with the lilac appearing in regions of limestone bedrock.

Jovanović and Vukićević (1980) have described the following new varieties:

1. Syringa vulgaris var. hyacinthoides Jov. et Vuk. var. nova.

The cultivar 'Hyazinthenflider' (Späth 1906, Starcs 1928, McKelvey 1928, Krussmann 1962) has been described in the literature. According to McKelvey, this cultivar was obtained by crossing: 'Mons. Maxime Cornu' (♀) x 'Andenken an Ludwig Späth' (♂). There is also the hybrid species: Syringa x hyacinthiflora (Lemoine) Rehd. (S. oblata x S. vulgaris).

2. Syringa vulgaris var. forsythioides Jov. et Vuk. var. nova.

A similar form has been described in the literature. McKelvey (1928) mentions var. pulchella Vel., and Hayek (1930) also lists f. pulchella Vel.

3. Syringa vulgaris var. brevilaciniata Jov. et Vuk. var. nova.

4. Syringa vulgaris var. parviflora Jov. et Vuk.
var. nova.

Literature:

- Grebensčikov, O. 1963. O rasprostraneniu sireni obiknovenoi i sirenovih nizkolesii v jugostočnoj Evrope. Bliten Mosk. ob. isp. prir. LXVIII (1).
- Hayek, A. 1930. Prodrromus Florae Peninsulae Balcanicae 2:437.
- Jovanović, B. and E. Vukićević. 1980. O variaabilnosti jorgovana (Syringa vulgaris L.) na serpentinama u Ibarskoj klisuri. Hortikultura 1: 11-16.
- McKelvey, S.D. 1928. The Lilac, a monograph. New York.
- Krussmann, G. 1962. Handbuch der Laubgehölze. Berlin und Hamburg.
- Starcs, K. 1928. Übersicht über die Arten der Gattung Syringa L. Mitt. DD Gesell.

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