

The Original Home of the Tea Plant and its Utilization

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The original habitat of the tea plant (*Camellia sinensis*) was thought to be the mountains dividing the Chinese province of Yunnan and other southeast Asian countries. However, verifying this information was not possible as access to these areas was restricted for foreigners.

In 1980, the open-door policy of China made it possible to go to Yunnan and search. As a result of my investigations spread over nine visits to the region, I consider the mountains of Yunnan to be the natural habitat of the tea plant. However, the culture of processing tea leaves and tea drinking seems to have originated in Wolingshan, in a mountain area called the land of Bashu, at the north end of Yungui-Gaoyuan in the northern part of Yunnan.

At Wolingshan in the land of Bashu, the Chinese and Chinese culture come together with the tea plant and the culture surrounding tea seems to have had its genesis. The next group of Chinese people to start using tea were the Yaozu, who subsequently spread the use of tea to the rest of the country when they moved southwards from Yunnan to the south Asian mountain area.

It became clear in my investigations that the original habitat of the tea plant and the place where its use started are quite different.

An Attempt to Introduce New Kinds of Flowers for use in the Tea Ceremony

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The Tea Ceremony is an integral part of Japanese culture. It is carried out in a tea room, chasitu, and traditionally an alcove in the room is adorned with a flower arrangement. This arrangement is known as chabana (flowers for the tea ceremony), and the idea is that these flowers should look as natural as they would in the wild. This idea was handed down from the originators of the Tea Ceremony and fresh flowers collected from the wild are the most sought after.

Traditionally some 200 wild species have been used most often in the Tea Ceremony, along with *Camellia japonica*, *Hibiscus syriacus*, and *Prunus mume*. Some 20% of the plants included are endangered. Not all of them are collected in the wild, for obvious reasons it is no longer permitted to utilize wild plants for chabana when one fifth of these plants are endangered.

The purchase of flowers for chabana is the new trend. However, the use of nontraditional flowers such as roses and carnations does not have the same appeal to people taking part in the Tea Ceremony, but change would seem to be inevitable with the increasing difficulty of obtaining wild flowers forcing a change to the style of the Tea Ceremony.

Because of these circumstances, the development of new chabana flowers and the commercial production of these flowers is necessary. It is estimated that there are more than 5 million people who enjoy the Tea Ceremony and if only a proportion of them use bought flowers, the demand would be substantial. The commercial production and supply of flowers for chabana will help in the protection of endangered plants in the wild.

The author has introduced flowers suitable for this purpose from time to time.

Accelerating Rooting by the Pretreatment of Direct Stuck Cuttings of Chrysanthemum

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INTRODUCTION

The cultivation of *Dendranthema* 'Seiun', a summer-autumn flowering cultivar, by the direct planting of shoots before rooting is widely adopted for savings in labor costs. However, the rooting of autumn-flowering cultivars grown for late season sale using light-culture techniques and production is not reliable because the planting season in mid summer is too hot. To solve this problem, methods to stimulate the initiation of root primordia by the pretreatment of shoots were investigated.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Experiment 1: Temperature and Light Condition Before Cutting. Shoots of *D.* 'Set Alps' were kept at 5C in the dark in a cardboard box, at 20C, illuminated with a metal halide lamp and at 25C in natural light in a north-facing room. The shoots were collected 22 Sept. 1997 and 30 shoots were set in #2.5 pots, after the whole shoot was dipped in 40 ppm IBA, drained, and kept in a sealed plastic bag for 9 days.

Experiment 2: Temperature Treatment and Duration. Shoots treated in the same way as above were kept at 15C for 5, 6, and 7 days, also at 20C and 25C for 4, 5, and 6 days, respectively. The shoots were collected 10 March 1998. After dipping in IBA solution the shoots were dried for 4 h because in Exp. 1 some shoots rotted. After treatments the shoots were set in beds, kept at 20C with a 4-h light break for 4 to 5 days and root development was investigated.

Experiment 3: Methods of IBA Treatment. Treatments were by powder (0.5% IBA) applied to the cut surface, as a spray of 0.2% solution to the cut surface, by dipping the cut surface in a 0.2% solution, a spray of 0.04% solution to the cut surface, dipping the cut surface in a 0.04% solution, dipping the shoot in a 0.04% solution, and dipping the shoot in a 0.004% solution were compared. Pretreated shoots were preincubated at 25C for 4 days. The experiment then continued in the same way as Experiment 2.