

## Propagation of *Enkianthus perulatus* 'J. L. Pennock'<sup>®</sup>

**Shelley Dillard**

Morris Arboretum, 100 Northwestern Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19118 U.S.A.

*Enkianthus perulatus* 'J. L. Pennock', J. L. Pennock white *Enkianthus*, is a highly sought after ornamental shrub closely related to the commonly grown *E. campanulatus*. The white enkianthus has pure white urn-shaped flowers in late spring. The foliage is bright green, appearing whorled on the tips of the branches. The leaves turn a brilliant scarlet-red in the autumn, rivaling nyssa or winged euonymus.

'J.L. Pennock' white enkianthus is even more exceptional than the species because of its extended season of fall color. The fall color begins with a blush of burgundy in September, becomes deeper into October, and finally turns dark red to scarlet in November. Because of this extended period of display, in 1990 it was awarded the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Gold Medal, and has also been patented. The original plant at the Morris Arboretum is approximately 12 ft tall and 21 ft wide having grown at the Arboretum since 1920.

After many years of dismal trials, consistent propagation success was achieved. The method producing success was:

- 1) Propagation media — 3 peat : 2 perlite (v/v).
- 2) Propagation flats — Christy flats, 3.5 inches deep.
- 3) Time of collection of cuttings — Early May to mid-June.
- 4) Type of cutting — New, very soft current year's growth. Most often they have no node.
- 5) Rooting hormone — 1000 ppm IBA dissolved in propylene glycol, 10 second dip, 10 minute dry.
- 6) Rooting environment — Fog, with back-up mist.
- 7) After care — After rooting, do not disturb the cuttings; leave the cuttings in their propagation flats through the summer and into the fall. Encourage further growth with supplemental light and extended photoperiod, and then allow them to go dormant.
- 8) Over wintering — Place flats in cold house kept at 35 °F; pot up in the spring into 4-inch pots after the leaves have fully expanded.
- 9) Further strategies — The first winter after potting in 4-inch pots, place once again in cold house at 35 °F. Move up to quarts after another season in 4-inch pots. In succeeding years, never over pot.

### CONCLUSION

The greatest success with rooting and growing *E. perulatus* 'J. L. Pennock' is achieved with proper after-care of the cuttings. Care should be taken to maintain extended photoperiods, keep the cuttings in the propagation flat for the first winter after cuttings are taken, and gradually increase the pot size of the rooted cuttings. By following these steps, growers will greatly increase the success of rooting and survival of this outstanding plant.