



# The Clivia Quarterly

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[www.northamericancliviasociety.org](http://www.northamericancliviasociety.org)

Fall 2003 – Inaugural Issue

## From the President's Desk

Greetings and welcome to the North American Clivia Society! You are getting in on the ground floor of what we believe to be the first formal plant society dedicated to the genus Clivia to have been started in North America (please correct me if I am wrong)! This is an example of the kind of newsletter we will be bringing you as part of your membership.

Our fundamental purpose is to promote the Understanding and appreciation of plants in the genus Clivia. That will include encouraging scientific studies, holding meetings for exchange of information, and indeed facilitating communications at all levels among students, growers, and lovers of Clivia.

We offer the beginner at growing Clivia a source of advice and experience. We offer the experts a venue for sharing their accumulated wisdom. We offer to all the means to share our common love of clivias with one another.

We will have an annual meeting starting in 2004. We will try in successive years to meet in different parts of the country and at different times of the year. Our meeting in 2004 is planned to be in Chi-

### Highlights

- Dave Conway's first yellows
- Letter from the president
- Editor's Message
- Introduction of the founders
- Auction

cago on one weekend in August. We will keep you informed of how plans progress for this meeting.



Tea Party

*courtesy of Dave Conway*

There is likely to be a Clivia Conference in California in March, 2005. If so, our 2005\_meeting will coincide with that conference in California. Watch these pages for further information.

There is likely to be a Clivia Conference in South Africa in August or September, 2006. If so, we will try to have a meeting of NACS members in connection with that conference.

Our web site will reside at [www.northamericancliviasociety.org](http://www.northamericancliviasociety.org) and we ask your assistance in providing it with pictures of Clivia in bloom. Contact Webmaster Marc Hamel if you have pictures to share. We invite experts and amateurs alike to submit both photos and articles for the NACS Newsletter or for the web site. Contact editor Agnes Bardossy for information on how to prepare and submit articles and photos for the newsletter.

Because our membership live and grow their clivias in a variety of climates, we will be able to offer first hand accounts of growing them under very diverse conditions. From Boston to Los Angeles, from Toronto to Mexico City, wherever you are, let us hear how you grow clivias.

Jim Shields

## Editor's Message

Welcome! Join us on a Clivia adventure. I promise that it will be a wonderful and exciting journey. Through the Clivia Quarterly we will explore every aspect of our favorite plant, the versatile and ever enchanting clivia.

Clivias come in many shapes, sizes, colors, leaf patterns, variegation, simple hybrids, complex hybrids, intergenerics, and much, much more. One can never know enough about them. Even if you only want one plant to grace your home or many plants to fill your greenhouse or garden you will definitely find valuable information in your Newsletter.

This is your Society and Newsletter. Your observations, comments, tips on growing, will always be welcome. As your editor I look forward to hearing from you.

In this, our introductory newsletter we wish to acquaint you with the President, Vice President, and the Board of Directors. You will find their qualifications impressive. Their dedication to Horticulture is unquestionable. Every one of them is a Clivia grower, hybridizer, and enthusiast. Please read about them and get to know them. Your society is in good hands.

Also, taking a sneak peak at our next issue of The Clivia Quarterly, you will find an article by James Comstock on peach colored clivias, as well as other exciting features.

Happy Clivia Growing,  
Agnes Bardossy  
Editor

## Our First Four Yellow Flowered Clivia Miniata Plants *by Dave Conway*

Tom Wells asked me if I would write an article for the first issue of the North American Clivia Society and my response was a reluctant yes as I am no writer however this attempt will give an answer to Ken Smiths (two years old) request for details on our first Yellow Clivias.

Our first yellow Clivia miniata hybrid was acquired as a gift from the late Ted Kalil, he just pulled a piece out of the ground and handed it to me, in the year 1979 or 1980. Ted ( in his 90's when we met) was an early Clivia seed grower/vendor; grew on his Montecito estate about a 100,000 seeds a year for two large California plant wholesalers. Needless to say Ted's story is one of interest but will have to wait for another day. When asked where Ted got this yellow plant he said that a City gardener dug the whole plant for him after he asked the gardener if he could get a piece; this was in the mid 1970's. When I got my piece there were three large clumps and several single plants in Ted's garden, proof that the plant was prolific at making offsets.



*Lemon Ice AKA Whip Cream*      *courtesy of Dave Conway*

This 1st. plant was named 'Whip Cream' because it was a pale yellow and matured to a pale cream. The name was changed to 'Lemon Ice' due to a publishing error in a 1993 Pacific Horticulture article on yellow Clivias where this name was used rather than 'Whip Cream'. The plant has: leaf length 34", width 2.5", scape about 24" high , a flower diameter of about 3" with a green ovary

when in flower. This picture of ‘Lemon Ice’, taken in about 1987, shows a plant in a 12” plastic tub with 4 umbels in bloom.

As a breeder there is nothing quite like your first yellow! The visions of what possible flowers will result from crosses with this and that are almost overwhelming, and to think we only have to wait four to five years to see these results. There are still vivid memories of family and friends belief that we had finally proven them right: that this was a real nut with his head down between his legs.



*Lemon Chiffon* *courtesy of Dave Conway*

Our 2nd. yellow plant (about 1982) was acquired by trade of a Kentia Palm for the plant/flower now known as ‘Lemon Chiffon. I would make bi-weekly trips to this City of Santa Barbara parking garage after Ted told me where he acquired his yellow. Ted had also told me that a Dr. Glen Couvillon, at this time unknown to me, had acquired several yellow plants from this same planting area and one of his is a dead ringer for ‘Lemon Chiffon’. Harold Koo-powitz in his book Clivias makes reference to the origins of these yellow Clivias (pg. 183) that, to date, I can neither prove nor disprove but am trying to find a record of purchase.

‘Lemon Chiffon’ has an elongated green ovary with flowers that open greenish yellow, then turn to a lemon yellow and mature to a butter yellow; we



*Lemon Chiffon berries* *courtesy of Dave Conway*

have had 32 tightly grouped 3” flowers to an umbel. A well grown mature plant will generally have two scapes the second opens after the first has completed its flowering. In other words it is in flower for about two months; as a group they are the last of our yellows to flower. The green ovary appears to be a mutation since only one of the three loculi set seeds. When the seed berry (often 2.5” long with a tit at both ends) is opened you find up to eight egg shaped seeds spiraling around a central umbilical.

The plant is large with 34” leaf length and 3.5” wide. Also, there is about a 6% chance that a division will have fasciation which will form a multi headed fan of plants on a single plant. Our largest of these fans now has a total of 12 separate plants growing from the fan of seven. This characteristic seems to lead to dwarfism as the leaves become smaller in length and width. Also of note is the relative slowness in making offsets; we have had totally mature divisions that have not made an offset in 8 years.

Lemon Chiffon also holds our record for the value offered for a plant. Not long after acquiring the plant a large California wholesale nursery sales manager offered to buy the original plant for

\$10,000.00 when he saw a picture of the plant at an American Society of Landscape Architects Convention in Santa Barbara. The offer was turned down and to this day there are those close to me that do not understand how I could ever refuse such an offer.

Our third yellow *miniata* came from a trade with Randy Baldwin of San Marcos Growers in the mid 1980's. One afternoon while visiting the nursery Randy showed me this plant that was sitting on his desk top; the sun was streaming through the window onto the plant and its flower was emanating a very strong sweet Liliaceae fragrance. He informed me that he had acquired it from a nursery in Los Angeles and they had received it from Monterey Bay Nursery; meaning a Joe Solomone Hybrid. Beside the obvious fragrance the flower has one other outstanding quality, its umbel is a complete ball. Because of this ball effect, at the time the first we had seen before, we named the plant/flower 'Supernova' for this likeness to an exploding star with florets pointing in all directions.

garden again in the mid 1980's. When Ed asked the owner if he could get a piece the owner told him to dig the whole plant that he didn't like it. I acquired two small divisions after Ed asked me if I would divide and replant the divisions for him. Again, this plant had a different flower than we had seen before with the majority of flowers pointing down much the same as a species other than *miniata*.



*Yellow Showers* courtesy of Dave Conway



*Supernova* courtesy of Dave Conway

One other difference was the ovary which remained yellow until pollinated, at which point it turns green. Typically, the 3" flowers with about 23 flowers to an umbel do not make our desired dense display. The plant has leaves that are about 29" long and 2.75" wide.

The fourth *miniata* yellow was found by my ex. Sr. Park Supervisor, Ed Haldeman, in a Santa Barbara

We named the plant *Yellow Showers* because of this weeping effect. The pedicel is the key to this effect as it is either curved or hooked at the ovary and seldom straight. Like 'Supernova' the flower has a yellow ovary that changes to green when pollinated. Moreover, I sometimes classify this as a bastard somewhere between a *cyrtantiflora* and *miniata* and maybe it is just this kind of cross since the parentage is unknown. Also, it's a pain in the back to pollinate unless the plant is raised to eye level. There are usually about 18- 3" flowers to an umbel. The plant has leaves that are about 27" long and 2" wide and will often have offsets that are variegated, however this variegation does not last.

Lastly, there is one interesting oddity in our experiments with these four plants to see what percentage we could get of seeds with no pigmentation. With four plants you have the possibility of sixteen seed parents, 4 selfed and 12 crosses. In the first experiment 15 of these selfed and crossed plants gave seedlings that were 100% no pigmentation and one had 100% pigmented seeds. Thinking I made an error the same

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experiment was made again with the two parents that created this oddity and the results were the same. No attempt by me will be made to explain this as this didn't and still doesn't fit with my understanding of Mendel's law.

## Meet our Founders:

### **James E Shields, PhD**

President

Founding member

Jim has a PhD in biochemistry from the University of California Berkeley. He has been a professor of chemistry at Case Western Reserve University, a research scientist and author of more than 25 scientific publications.

His scientific background is a great asset to his plant-related activities. We can always rely on his advice about what chemical sprays are safe and effective to use on Clivias.

Jim's love of plants dates back to his early years when the responsibility of the family's garden became his. Here he learned about plant propagation, planting bulbs, pruning roses, and general plant culture. This dedication has become more pronounced through the years. Jim became active in many plant organizations. Just to name a few-- Clivia Society of South Africa, American Iris Society, American Daffodil Society, Pacific Bulb Society, Alpine Garden Society(U.K.) North American Rock Garden Society, and more. He is founder and past president of the Amaryllis Research Institute. Jim's many achievements are too numerous to list. Now we are fortunate to have him as president of the North American Clivia Society.

Jim is also the President of Shield's Gardens Ltd, where he grows and hybridizes daylilies and clivias.



*Nursery*

*courtesy of Dave Conway*

### **Ernest T. Wells, AA, AB, M.Ed**

Vice President

Founding member

Tom's professional career is not plant related. He is Superintendent of Marine Stevedoring Operations, for Marine Terminals Corp. in Los Angeles. Yet, Tom's love of plants dates back 32 years. He has grown Clivia Miniata for these many years, propagated them for 28 years, and has landscaped his garden with them.

For the past few years he has been collecting Clivias very seriously and is building up an exceptional collection of rare and unusual plants.

Tom is an excellent and enthusiastic grower, always ready to help, and is a dedicated and tireless worker for the Society.

### **Marc S. Hamel, BA**

Secretary

Founding member

Marc's academic degree is in Theology with a minor in Medieval Studies from The University of Notre Dame. He also did post graduate work in Theology at Catholic University of America.

At St. Joseph's Abbey he worked as secretary to the Abbot, and as a tailor and designer of liturgical vestments. After his years at the Abbey, Marc worked as a computer programmer for a medical billing company.

Marc is now part of Hamel-LeSage Studio that specializes in the design, hand-weaving, and tailoring of liturgical vesture.

Marc had been a plant enthusiast since early childhood , developing over the years a love of tropical plants. While at St Joseph's Abbey he and another monk built a modest greenhouse for the collection of allemandas, bougainvilleas, cacti, euphorbias, etc. But it was the gift of a clivia about 25 years ago , which had bloomed only once in all those years, that led Marc to search the internet for more information about this special plant. Thus was born the love affair with the wonderful Clivias.

Marc's expert computer skills that he brings to the Clivia society are invaluable. He is currently setting up the web site. He is also involved in publishing the Newsletter as well as handling the many computer related needs of the society.

**Kathryn S Anderson, AB, MS, PhD**  
Board of Directors

Kathy has a PhD in organic chemistry and has taught at Bryn Mawr College and worked in research in Physics and Pharmacology.

She is a member of many plant societies, which show her wide range of interests: North American Rock Garden Society, New Zealand Daffodil Society, Alpine Garden Society, National Chrysanthemum Society, North American Lily Society, just to name a few. She is past president of the American Daffodil Society, National Chrysanthemum Society, North American Lily Society, and is currently on the Board of all three. Kathy is secretary of the International Bulb Society. She is the recipient of ADS Silver Medal, NALS Slate- Macdaniels Medal and the National Garden Club Tribute in Horticulture. She is ADS judge, NALS judge, NCS master judge, and National Garden Club master judge.

Kathy has traveled the world on plant expeditions. She enjoys viewing and hunting for plants in their native habitat. She attended the Clivia Conference in South Africa in 2002 and is taking advantage of

trips to see clivias species in their native habitat.

**Michael E. Riska , BS. M.Ed**  
Board of Directors

Mike 's background is in Biology and Natural Science. Mike began his career with the Delaware Nature Society. Since 1984 he has been its Executive Director.

Mike has received many awards for his dedication to nature. He was awarded the prestigious Nature Conservancy Lifetime Conservation Achievement Award in 1997 and the President's Award of Association of Nature Center Administrators for Dedication and Service to the Nature Center Profession. Mike has held many leadership positions in his field and is a member of related organizations.

Through his love of nature and plants, Mike has led trips to many natural areas in different parts of the United States, as well as to foreign lands such as Trinidad/Tobago, Mexico, Canada, Kenya, Botswana, to name a few.

**AUCTION! AUCTION! AUCTION!**

**For NACS members only**

Just to give a preview of a few of the wonderful plants that were donated to the society for a fund-raising event.

Sir John Thouron  
Tessa  
Victorian Peach  
Flame

Take advantage of this opportunity to acquire some fantastic additions to your collection. We don't know what will be at future auctions since we depend on the generosity of our donors. You may or may not see these plants again at future auctions.