

VOLUME 44, NUMBER 1 WINTER 2015



## QUARTERLY JOURNAL

of the International Lilac Society

IN THIS ISSUE: Abnormal Florets in Single Lilacs, and ILS Membership



In center of photo *S.vulgaris* 'Danton' has a trimerous floret; one petal has a "cockscomb" with one cut in petal Photo Credit Igor Semenov



Syringa vulgaris 'Panteon' with central floret displaying pentamery or 5 petals and 3 stamens Photo Credit Igor Semenov

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*Front Cover:* A beautiful inflorescence of *Syringa vulgaris* 'Mikolaj Karpow-Lipski' displaying some florets with 2 petals (dimery) and 3 petals (trimery) Photo Credit Igor Semenov

Editor's Deadline for Spring Issue:

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LILACS 2015

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### President's Message

Dear Lilac Friends,

I don't know about you but here in the State of Virginia USA winter arrived at a gallop and surprised us with snow, very cold temperatures and high winds. Usually here in zone 7 we enjoy mild temperatures and we can go about our daily life without complications from the weather. Winter usually waits for the beginning of the year to show its muscles. In the North of the USA in the East and the center of the country in particular very unusual snow clouds over the Great Lakes brought feet of the powdery stuff to our lilac friends. Houses, trees, cars and streets disappeared under an eiderdown of snow. Main highways were shut down and many were without power for days. Everything and everyone was at a standstill for several days. It was an unusual phenomenon. It is repeating itself presently.

The lilacs probably liked this mantle of snow. Since outdoor gardening has slowed down or is non-existent at present, this is the time to plan for next years lilac adventures. Make plans to attend the ILS convention May 21-23 2015. Your registration information was included in the Fall Issue of Lilacs. Frank Moro made it easy to pay the registration fees. You can do it in three installments. He and his wife Sara have put a lot of effort planning this convention. I say it again, you will not be disappointed. For those of you who have not been to Canada it is a beautiful country, a must see country. The city of Montreal is not far from Mascouche. Maybe after the convention you can visit this engaging modern city.

So much is published online but you know I miss the flower/plant catalogues. They used to pour in en masse in the spring and just intoxicated you with a smorgasbord of plants, flowers and seeds. Now most sellers rely on posting their goods on the internet. It just does not have the same effect, the same flavor and savor. Paging casually through those colorful catalogues sitting in your favorite chair you could dream at loisir of a beautiful garden, a grand tree specimen and the very rare lilacs who finally had become available and affordable. You could touch the plants almost and smell them almost... Now everything is so remote. Yes you may have great pictures on your electronic devices but they are not tactile. It just not the same...what do you think? I remember getting a lilac catalogue a longtime ago. I don't remember the name of the business, it just disappeared one year. It was of course lilac color within its fold a long list of lilacs each accompanied by a picture and a clear description of the cultivar. Delicious!

The fall issue of Lilacs was full of beautiful lilac pictures. As you saw the New England Region put on their annual "Let's Talk Lilacs" Roundup in October. Thank you to Jack Alexander, New England RVP, and Evie King, owner of Syringa Plus Nursery, for organizing this gathering. It looks like everyone had a

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great time talking lilacs! This fall gathering has become a very successful event. Other regions should take a cue from it and try to organize similar mini symposia. It does not cost much in terms of time and money but add another avenue for lilac lovers to get together past peak lilac season.

On the ILS Robin the subject of leaves color has been discussed. Tatiana Poliakovia sent photos of leaves she had collected and staged to document their colors. I have heard people say that beside their bloom liliacs have nothing else to offer. Of course I disagree but the idea that lilac foliage can be an attraction in the fall landscape is something to promote.

In Lilacs Volume 43, Number 4, Fall 2014 Lilacs in Moscow: A Photographic Essay by Igor Semenov, gives us a glimpse of the profusion of lilacs in that city landscape. By the beautiful St. Basils Cathedral the lilacs complement its colorful tours. By the Kremlin 'Krasav<u>itsa</u> Moskvy' illuminates the picture as does the bountiful blooms on a cultivar of Leonid Kolesnikov on the next picture. In the city statues are enhanced by the lilacs planted at their feet. Makes you want to go to Russia for a convention does it not? A picture is worth a thousand words...

Tatiana Poliakovia, RVP for Russia and Asia, is a world traveler always on the go to promote lilacs and visit lilac collections. In October a Russian delegation of 16 including filmmakers and scientists, Tatiana Poliakovia, Sergey Aladin and Nastia Aladin went to Belgrade, Serbia. They planted one hundred forty lilacs in three different cities. They had the honor of meeting the Serbian President in the city of Kragujevac . In Belgrade they met with the Patriarch of Serbia Irinej. She says Serbs love lilacs!

Then in late October Tatiana and three others ILS members Natalia Bulmysheva, Irina Okuneva and Irana Kovaleva were invited for a visit by ILS member Elke Haase, of Piccoplant Nursery in Oldenburg, Germany. They were treated to a wonderful time by their hostess and enjoyed visiting museums, nurseries, botanical gardens etc. Tatiana wrote "I am always so happy to see how lilacs send friendship from person to person". How true it is!

2015 is here and I want to say thank you to our officers: Bradley Bittorf, Executive Vice President, Karen McCauley, Treasurer and Convention Chair; William Tschumi, Assistant Treasurer; Kent Millham, Editor ; John Kirk ,Membership Secretary and Freek Vrugtman our Registrar. Also thank you to all the Board members and the Regional VPs. Thank you to David Gressley for hosting the Cleveland Convention and thank you to our auctioneer Bruce Peart. A big thank you goes to Joan Speirs for digitalizing the journals. Thank you to all of you who have jumped in, give lilacs generously and give your time to make ILS the the great society it is. Thank you to Candace Wentz our web page manager and thank you to all of you our members. We may be dispersed all over the planet but we are united with our love of lilacs. I wish everyone a wonderful year. I'll see you in Mascouche, Canada in May for the fantastic convention Frank and Sara Moro have planned for us.

Mes amities, Nicole Jordan ILS President

# Are You Ready for the 2015 Lilac Convention?

Winter here in Quebec always comes too fast and we never know when it will finish. We are so proud to be hosting the 2015 convention. It was my dream to have another here in the Montreal area for such a long time. It will be a different lay out and we hope it will be bring good memories for a long time after.

Sara and I worked on all kinds of ideas to make a unique visit with things that probably have not been done in the past. I had planned a long day at the farm but when it came down to time slots, well I had to move and delete and create more ideas.

The auction again will be fun for there will be lots of lilacs that will interest everyone. Once the auction is over we will offer to the members a chance to buy other lilacs also from Select Plus and we will donate a % of the sales to ILS. But be weary, what is at the auction will not be available for sale after. We will have other plants for sale that will be possible to receive by mail order. For the auction any lilacs that are purchased will be mailed out the first week of June. Because of the weekend and cost of the phytosanitary certificate we decided it would be best to do it this way. Thus a minimum charge for shipping will be charged and Select Plus Nursery will pay for the phytosanitary certificate for you. This way you may buy as much as you want. We will have other lilacs, magnolias, new shrubs, new perennials, roses, and vines for sale.

The outings on Friday have little boutiques and so will give you the chance to buy some wonderful local products to bring home from jellies to wines to maple syrup products. The US dollar is sitting at about 12-14% higher than the Canadian dollar at the moment.

We have a little garden that is a wonderful place to take some photos in. It is a composition of perennials, shrubs, a few lilacs and some magnolias and evergreens. There are a couple of photos of the garden included with the article. We are expecting some well-known horticultural people from the Quebec region. We also will have Colby and our wonderful family there on site to meet everyone as well as a couple of our friends (to be confirmed) who have done some modelling for us on our website.

Corinna and Cameo will dazzle you with their knowledge of lilacs. Sara always has a wonderful smile to help everyone. Alex and Ricky are the backbone in the nursery during the summer. Jordan who now lives on his own comes around when there are important things to do. Colby is the one playing with the dogs and I'm the one who everyone says "dad we'll get it done, don't worry keep packing boxes"

The Saturday lunch will be an Italian style lunch with cheeses, cold cuts, Italian sausages, breads, Italian coffee, wines of course and some tantalizing Italian desserts. A la Moro as we say!!!!!

It will be under a closed tent. Depending on the number of people who attend if the group is small we will do the lunch and auction in our building which is set up as a little chalet.

But I would love to have 60 plus people attending the convention. Every convention is important and has a unique setting. For a change I will attend! It's at home.

The biggest thing for this convention we wanted to concentrate on is to rekindle the fire in all of us for lilacs. We will be naming 2 two lilacs. Each one very important for the society and maybe a long time overdue. Got your attention! Good now you have to wait until May 23 to find out. We will also have a ceremonial planting of a couple of lilacs. These lilacs can be preordered for delivery in early June of 2016.

Our collection although young still has some great cultivars in it and about 300 lilacs in ground. We do have some mother plants in pots so that will bring up the quantity of cultivars. As we do not use herbicides in our pots expect a few weeds and we do not use pesticides. We will try a massive clean up the week prior. We are so concerned about the environment. We reuse our pots; recycle soil shaken from mail orders to use in our gardens. Our watering is timed to not waste water and we use a fertilizer that sticks to the soil once watered so if the pots are blown over in high winds none of the fertilizer is wasted.

This is my most favorite time of the year. We get to go to the farm and have a few cups of coffee and relax viewing the gentle snow falling on the mature white pines. It is a time of thinking towards the future and hoping you will all enjoy what we have planned for you.

We invite you all to the 2015 convention to make a moment in time a wonderful memory.

Sara and Frank Moro January 2015

### Journal Indexing and Scanning

Updates, to include 2014, have been made to indexes of cultivars, species, authors and the general index of articles in *Lilacs* from Vol. 22(3):1993. Candace has these on the website under Publications. As well the four journals for 2014 have been scanned and are found on the members' site (the last three years are found here, the previous ones are under Publications and available to all).

It is interesting to note from the cultivar index, which plants are mentioned most frequently in the 86 journals over 20 1/2 years. In all 1611 cultivars are mentioned. *Syringa pubescens* subsp. *patula* 'Miss Kim' tops the list with mention in 48 of these journals. *S. vulgaris* 'Krasavitsa Moskvy' is in 46 journals, *S. vulgaris* 'Rochester' and 'Sensation' in 43 each, and *S. vulgaris* 'Andenken an Ludwig Späth' in 42.

The most prolific authors (or co-authors) were Freek Vrugtman with 73 articles, Owen Rogers and Colin Chapman with 71 each, Kent Millham with 65, and Frank Moro 59.

> Joan Speirs January 12, 2015

### Lilac Wisdom

"I am very reluctant to registering lilacs until they have bloomed several times, and there are so many mediocre plants already registered that I do not want to add any more . . . .

"I don't think any plant should be registered until they have bloomed at least five times."

(Kenneth [Ken] W. Berdeen, 1907-1987, to the Registrar in a letter dated 3 December 1976)

Editor's Note: Ken Berdeen spent a lifetime developing and testing new hybrids of lilacs on his 60 acre farm in Maine. Some of his named cultivars include 'Chris', 'Dianah Abbott', 'John Kennedy', 'Lee Jewett Walker', 'Max Peterson' and 'Olive May Cummings'. Evie King of Syringa Plus nursery propagates some of his cultivars, and continues his legacy.

### Abnormal Florets of Single Lilac Cultivars

Closely examining inflorescences of single-flowered lilacs we almost instinctively look for florets with five petals. In wild or specific forms, *pentamery* of corollas is an uncommon thing. Sometimes it takes much time to find even one 'happy floret' in a big bouquet.

In varietal (hybrid) lilacs, florets with five petals are not at all uncommon. Moreover, there are forms prone to production of such corollas. I know a number of them: 'Cavour', 'Crépuscule', 'D<u>zh</u>ambul', 'Mme F. Morel', 'Col. Wm. R. Plum', PEARL SEEKER ('P**ërļu Zvejenieks'**), 'Stefan Makowiecki', 'Tiina', 'Rochester'(and some American cvs after). Among these forms, French cv. 'Cavour' is of special interest as every fourth floret in its inflorescences is abnormal. We made counting in the Botanical Garden of Moscow State University in 2011. Iranian botanists from the University of Tabriz (M.R. Dadpour et al., 2011) noted two features associated with the initiation of pentapetalous florets in lilacs. A floret with such a deviation often forms a pentamerous calyx, and an additional third element arises in its staminal circle. These data are corroborated by our observations. In cv. 'Santa' (selected by L. Karklins) as well as in French cultivars 'Firmament' and 'Danton', we found pentapetalous florets with three stamens. In pentamerous floret of cv. PEARL SEEKER (selected by P. Upitis), a pentaphyllous calyx is produced.

In some cultivars, florets with six or seven petals arise parallel with pentapetalous florets. Among such cultivars, the most striking example is cv. 'Cavour', where not only pentapetalous florets are a commonplace but hexa- and heptapetalous florets too. Examination of the shrubs of cv.'Cavour' in Botanical gardens of Moscow, Warsaw, and Tallinn in 2011- 2012 suggested that discovered *corolla deviations are rather stable and could be considered a reliable diagnostic character of the cultivar.* Pictures of cv. 'Cavour' placed at the site of a famous Danish breeding nursery Heides Planteskole corroborate this idea. As a rule, hexapetalous florets in the inflorescences are less numerous than pentapetalous, and heptapetalous florets in lilacs are always uncommon.

Let us figuratively compare initiation of petals in the tube circle of lilac florets with cyclic operation of a sewing-machine that normally performs four strokes per full cycle after equal time intervals. In this case, four identical limbs of the tube arise producing a regular cross in the plane. If operation of the sewing machine is interrupted, and it performs five strokes per cycle instead of four, five petals are initiated respectively. In this case, stitches become shorter and petals more narrow than in common tetrapetalous florets. Stitches become even smaller if the sewing machine accelerates and performs six strokes per cycle. In this case, six even more narrow petals are initiated. Seven strokes per full cycle are its limit because sewing machine cannot perform shorter stitches. Seven petals are maximum possible number of petals arising in irregular florets in accordance with this mechanism. We have considered one of the ways of creation of irregular lilac corollas with more than four petals. It turned out to be related to peculiarities of embryonic development of individual florets. Teratological deviations periodically detected in garden lilac can even be a cultivar trait.

#### ACCRETION

An absolutely different mechanism responsible for abnormality is involved in production of unusually large lilac florets with 8 – 11 and even 16 - 18 petals. Their creation does not depend on further fragmentation of corolla material into still more narrow petals. Multipetalous floral structures are uncommon and found in few cultivars. At the same time, they are abundant in such cultivars as 'Cavour', 'Firmament', 'Daughter Tamara', and 'Partizanka'. Their inflorescences always have two or three (no more than five) such floral structures. Especially frequently I observed them in 2011 in a bluish lilac growing by the entrance to Central Botanical Garden, Russian Academy of Sciences. They arise as a result of accretion of several tetra-, penta-, and hexapetalous florets in the course of fasciation producing quasiflorous multipetalous structures. Such florets often have different petals, numerous stamens, thick and sometimes deformed tube, and a huge multidentate calyx. Apparently, this type of irregular floret should be attributed to 'Rochester' type because of similarity with floral structures of lilac cultivars of American selection of the same name where they are permanently set. Very often individual florets of cv. 'Rochester' have 12 identical petals and look like chamomile heads. The ability to produce unusual floral structures of regular shape also occurs in the cultivars of American selection produced on the basis of 'Rochester' such as 'Dwight D. Eisenhower', 'Sesquicentennial', and 'Wonderblue'. They are called radial doubling in contrast to common doubling where the tubes of three common corollas are inserted into each other.

#### FOUR -THREE - TWO - ONE

Another noticeable deviation in floral structure of single-flowered lilacs associated with a reduction in the number of petals is *trimery* of corolla, i.e., formation of florets with three petals. Out of cultivars I know, it was distinctly pronounced in Latvian cv. 'Pārsteigums' with white edging, Polish 'Mikolaj Karpow-Lipski', Ukrainian 'Poltava', and Estonian 'Kristjan'. In 2010, together with N. Gordina, we made counting in the syringarium of the Institute of Fruit Growing (Dobele, Latvia). According to our calculations, every fifth floret in the clusters of some inflorescences of cv. 'Pārsteigums' had tripetalous corolla. The same as pentamery, floral trimery turned out to be common in varietal lilacs and was found in numerous selections. For instance, in such cultivars as 'Golubaya', 'Krasnaya Moskva', 'Cosmos', 'Jacques Callot', 'Hugo de Vries', 'Fürst Bülow', 'J.R. Koning', 'Priscilla', 'Romance', 'Réaumur', 'Danton', 'Vésuve', 'Marceau', and some others tripetalous corollas are occasionally found. It is interesting that the same as pentapetalous florets, tripetalous florets show visible deviations in the number of stamens. Parallel with tripetalous florets, cv. 'Pārsteigums' also has florets with dipetalous corollas. *Dimery* of corolla is an infrequent phenomenon that accompanies tripetalous florets. From time to time, we found dipetalous florets in cvs. 'Réaumur', 'Fürst Bülow', 'Vera <u>Khoruzhaya'</u>, 'Priscilla', and 'Mikolaj Karpow-Lipski'. In this respect, champion was cv. 'Poltava' (Botanical Garden of Moscow State University) in whose apical bunches in 2013 and 2014 I found numerous dipetalous florets often arranged in clusters (up to 4 florets).

The most amazing thing is that corolla reduction extends further than dipetalous florets. One day, in a bunch of cv. 'Pārsteigums' we detected two neighboring florets whose corollas had only one petal. The shape of these monopetalous florets that assimilated all the plastic material of tube limbs resembled perianth of calla.

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If we return to the analogy with the sewing machine, irregular florets with reduced number of petals arise when in the course of cyclic excursion three strokes are performed instead of four; i.e., when it works slowly. If these strokes occur at equal time intervals, the flowers arise with three identical petals. However, we often find in the corollas different petals (one large and two somewhat smaller petals). Their production could be accounted for by an omission in four-stroke operating mode. But it is more probable that these tripetalous florets arise from common regular florets where two elements of corolla accrete in a later stage of floral development. This is suggested by the occurrence of "cockscombs" when the corolla has a large petal with a cut that is a marker of primary initiation of normal tetrapetalous floret. This idea is even more distinctly illustrated by a cock's comb with two cuts arising when supposed pentamery of corolla resulted in production of tripetalous floret. This means that at one time one deviation gave place to another. In case of dipetalous corollas, the machine decelerates and performs only two strokes per full working cycle after equal time intervals. In this case, only two large petals of equal size are formed, which is especially distinct in dipetalous florets of cv. 'Poltava'. And finally, the machine almost stops working when it performs only one stroke per operational cycle. As a result, a floret with only one huge petal is produced.

Thus, we have dwelt upon the mechanism of formation of florets whose corollas have less than four petals. It turned out that petal reduction is probably a more complicated process than formation of multipetalous florets described above. It looks as if reduction in the number of petals was a result of a more complicated stage in embryonic development of floret. In this relation, the cultivars that simultaneously have florets with three and five petals ('Anna Nickels', 'Jessie Gardner', 'Frau Wilhelm Pfitzer', 'Danton', 'Daiga', 'Pārsteigums', 'Gaištosais Sapnis' and others) are of special interest. Why does a single-flowered varietal lilac often have irregular florets? In wild lilacs that arose as a result of evolution under natural conditions, the processes related to formation of florets are finely adjusted and well-balanced. Therefore, in all the florets of specific forms the limbs of corolla tubes have perfectly regular shape of equilateral cross. Interruptions causing formation of irregular florets are rare and may be looked upon as random events. Artificial hybridization is often associated with impairing the mechanisms of floral initiation arisen under natural conditions because of mutation changes. This shows in frequent faulty operations of the genes that are responsible for development of flowers (*MADS-genes*, in particular). As a result, produced flowers have some deformities. The degree of these deformities depends on the extent of genome deterioration (in extreme cases, *homeotic mutants of identity of floral organs* arise).

Two different mechanisms ensuring elevation of the number of petals in the florets of common lilac we have described above are not extraordinary. After all, additional petals are normally found in the florets of specific lilac. But usually they are extremely rare.

Fusion of individual florets along their tubes is not unusual either because the elements of corolla are initially able to accrete producing a tube along the whole length except for limbs. As a matter of fact, this circumstance is responsible for the characteristic type of flower in lilac. The same or close mechanism (*fascia-tion*) may be involved in the fusion of several neighboring tubes because of their tight overlapping and in formation of corollas with reduced number of petals.

The florets of cultivated lilacs are much bigger than in natural forms and much more numerous in the bunch. It is obvious that embryos of these florets are compressed during their 'prenatal' development within the bud. Most probably, their corolla elements are in close lateral contact and sometimes even fuse along the whole length of tubes producing spectacular *quasiflorous multipetalous structures*. In varietal lilacs of American selection, this property was genetically fixed and is steadily reproduced.

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Igor Semenov Plant Physiologist January 2015

#### CAUSES FOR ABNORMALITY OF FLORETS



A row of florets in 'Cavour' displaying 4, 5, 5, and 6 petals Photo Credit Igor Semenov



'Firmament', a beautiful azure-colored cultivar, displays one 10 petalled quasifloret with 5 stamens. taken at the Academy of Science Botanical Garden in Moscow Photo Credit Igor Semenov



Here us a S. vvlgaris cultivar in Minsk that displays a super-sized 15 petal quasifloret with 9 visible stamens Photo Credit Igor Semenov



In this inflorescence of 'Cavour', florets can be seen with 4, 5, 6, and 7 petals, with one quasifloret of 12 petals Photo Credit Igor Semenov



'Poltava' displays a number of florets with 2 petals or dimery. Some petals display a "cockscomb" with one cut Photo Credit Igor Semenov



A Syringa vulgaris cultivar with a 3 floret accretion structure Photo Credit Igor Semenov



The dark purple cultivar 'Fürst Bülow' displays 3 trimerous florets; in other words 3 petals instead of the usual 4 Photo Credit Igor Semenov



'Madame Charles Souchet' displaying a 10 petal quasifloret. note one floret is a "cockscomb" with a small cut in petal Photo Credit Igor Semenov

#### Membership Roster as of 12/31/2014

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VOTE FOR NEW SLATE OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

Now is the time to vote for the next 4 board members

who will serve for the next 3 years

The voting insert is in the journal, and ballots may be sent

to Nancy Latimer. Also, the slate will be posted on the ILS website

and voting can be done online

### 2014 NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome the following members who joined throughout 2014:

**Irine Abramova,** Glebovskaya ul., dom. 5 k.11, Moscow 107238 RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Valerie Best, P.O. Box 27040 Washington, D.C. 20038-7040 USA

**Martha Hudson Crum,** 13604 Black Meadow Road, Spotsylvania, VA 22553 USA

**Tatiana Kashirina,** ul. Krivorozskaya, dom. 7 kv 2, Moscow 317638 RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Natalia Korneeva, Verzekeka ul. Dom. 7 kv 25, Moscow 129272 RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Nadin Marchevskaya Smol'naya ul. Dom 61, Korp kv 426, Moscow, 125445 RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Nathan Maren, 1118 18th St. North, Fargo, ND 58102 USA

New Hampshire State Library, attn.. Michael York, 20 Park St., Concord NH 13301

**Bettina and John Norton,** 6 Rollins Place, Boston MA 02134 USA

Jane and Al Osman, 1081 West 27<sup>th</sup> St., Holland MI 49423-6814 USA

Warkworth Lilac Festival, David Benfield, 12 George St., P.O. Box 233, Warkworth, Ontario KDK 3KD CANADA

Robert Zavodny, 1085 Mt. Vernon Ave., Akron, OH 44310-1179 USA

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VI.	MEMBERSHIP -				
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	ELECTIONS				
	1001H				



'Cavour' at Warsaw Botanical Garden displaying florets of 5, 6 and 8 petals. Also numerous buds will open to florets of greater than 4 petals Photo Credit Igor Semenov



Syringa vulgaris 'Pārsteigums' with a number of trimerous florets (3 petals) note great similarity to 'Sensation'. Parentage is 'Sensation × ? Photo Credit Igor Semenov



One of the gardens to be seen at Select Plus Nursery at the 2015 ILS convention

