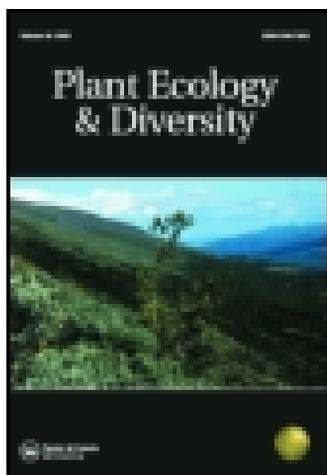


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On: 04 January 2015, At: 12:41

Publisher: Taylor & Francis

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## Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/tped18>

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Published online: 01 Dec 2010.

To cite this article: R.L. Harrow (1896) III. On Plants In The Plant Houses, With Exhibition Of Specimens, Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh, 20:1-4, 182-183, DOI: [10.1080/03746609609468833](https://doi.org/10.1080/03746609609468833)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03746609609468833>

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III. ON PLANTS IN THE PLANT HOUSES, WITH EXHIBITION OF SPECIMENS. By R. L. HARROW.

About sixty species of plants have flowered in the houses of the Royal Botanic Garden during February, this number being a decided increase upon that of the preceding month. The earlier flowering Acacias have done much, with their numerous heads of usually bright yellow flowers, to give the several houses containing them a bright appearance. Conspicuous amongst them being the well-known *A. dealbata*, Link., so commonly seen in the windows of florists; the greater quantity of the supply for our markets coming from the Riviera, where it is very successfully cultivated out of doors. M. Vilmorin, in a paper read before the Royal Horticultural Society, mentions an artificial process to facilitate the opening of the flowers of this species in that district:—"The flowering branches are cut a week or so before they would bloom in the open, and are submitted, with their butt end steeped in water, to the action of moderately heated steam. The flowers expand in from ten to twenty hours, and last as long afterwards as if cut direct from the tree."

Amongst the others exhibited are *A. discolor*, Willd., a stiff-growing plant with long spikes of flowers lasting for a considerable period, native of New South Wales, and introduced in 1788.

*A. melanoxylon*, R. Br. From Australia, with large balls of light yellow flowers, the plant being bush-like in habit, bearing rather large leathery phyllodes; the native name being Blackwood.

*A. longifolia*, Willd. The spikes are thickly crowded with small flowers, the phyllodia being linear lanceolate. It is of an erect habit of growth.

*A. Latrobei*, Meissn. This is an extremely graceful, free-flowering plant, with small phyllodes; the flower-heads solitary, and produced a good distance from the apex of the shoot.

*A. imbricata*, F. Mueller. Very similar as regards its flowering, but differing in its more loose mode of branching, and the phyllodes being rather larger.

*A. verticillata*, Willd. This is a distinct species, with

linear phyllodes, and solitary axillary spikes. Introduced in 1780.

The Camellias have also been very showy, the colours ranging from dark red to pure white, about twelve varieties of which we are able to exhibit.

*Deherainia smaragdina*, Decne. Is one of the small number of plants which bear green flowers. The plant under notice is a member of the order Myrsinaceæ, being a native of Mexico. In habit it is a small, compact-growing shrub with dense foliage, the oblong lanceolate leaves covered with brown hairs. The flowers are borne in clusters towards the apex of the growths, being scarcely discernable amongst the green foliage where they are concealed. The flowers are about two inches in diameter. Formerly known under the name of *Theophrasta smaragdina* it was first introduced in 1876, and this is probably the first time of flowering in this garden, the plant exhibited having been received from Kew during 1893.

*Lælia harpophylla*, Rehb. fil. A slender-growing plant, till recently rare in cultivation, the flowers having an unusual colour amongst orchids. In Messrs. Veitch's "Manual of Orchidaceous Plants" it is said to have first flowered in 1867, and that, although introduced from Brazil, no record was obtainable as to the locality.

Amongst the others worthy of note are: *Tillandsia splendens*, Brongn.,—a native of British Guiana, with bright purple bracts; *Phyllocladus rhomboidalis*, Rich.,—a coniferous tree, growing to a height of sixty feet in New Zealand; *Illicium floridanum*, a brightly coloured magnoliaceous plant, introduced from Florida in 1771; *Pilocarpus pennatifolius*, Lem.,—a Brazilian plant furnishing the jaborandi of commerce; *Brunsfelsia latifolia*, Benth.; *Cœlogyne testacea*, Lind.; *Dendrobium primulinum*, Linn.; and *Phalænopsis Schilleriana*, Rehb. fil.