

# European Oleander Cultivars: History, Origins, and Dates

**Alassio** Single, medium pink with bluish overtones. Vigorous, upright growth habit. Origin: France, Jean Rey, 1973.

**Alsace** Single; extremely pale pink, essentially white, with red stripes in the throat. Buds pale peach. Faint fragrance on warm, humid evenings. Beautiful deep-green foliage. Outstanding; robust; easy to grow and propagate. Probably a very old variety whose origins are lost in the distant past. It is possible that two or more extremely similar varieties have been distributed under this name in Europe. One of these is known as ‘Mrs. Willard Cooke’ in Galveston.

**Altini** Single, bright-red. Throat light pink with red stripes. Fragrant. Origin: France, Jean Rey, 1973

**Ametiszt** “Amethyst”. Double, lavender-pink. Medium-sized shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2004. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of Louis Pouget.

**Aphrodite** Single, magenta-red. Throat white on newly-opened blossoms, becoming pink-red with age. Lightly fragrant. Very long corona appendages. Origin: Greece. Bred by Irmtraud Gotsis.

**Athená** Single, pale-pink with deeper pink eye. Lilac fragrance. Origin: Greece. Bred by Irmtraud Gotsis.

**Andrea kedvence** “Andrea’s Favorite”. Single, fuchsia-pink. Compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Jannoch’.

**Angiolo Pucci** Single, ivory; throat orange-yellow with red stripes. Unique and unmistakable. Medium-fast grower. Origin: Italy, Baldacci, 1952.

**Barcelona** Single, very pale mauve with one edge bordered in lavender. Bud lavender-purple. Compact shrub. Collected in Barcelona, Spain, and sent to Olivier Filippi in 1995.

**Belle Hélène** Single bright pink, willowy growth habit, continual bloomer. Origin: France, Jean Rey, 1985.

**Chopin** Triple corollas, a mix of salmon, cream-yellow, pink, and fuchsia. Origin: Ravenholt Nursery, Denmark

**Claudia** See Ville de Lalonde.

**Commandant Barthélémy** Double, crimson-red, occasionally streaked with white, fragrant. Blossom structure variable. Strong grower but not as tall as most doubles, tends to spread out horizontally. Origin: France, Sahut, 1898. Often incorrectly identified as ‘Géant des Batailles’.

**Csillagpilla** “Starry Lashes”. Single; large fuchsia blossoms. Compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Kis gödöllői’.

**Csillagszóró** “Sparkler”. Single; deep fuchsia blossoms; corona appendages tipped with white dots. Compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Kis gödöllői’.

**Csipkerózsika** “Little Lace Rose”. Single; large pink blossoms, tall shrub. Einfach; grosse rosa Blüten, hoher Strauch. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Virginie’.

**Csodapink** “Fuchsia Wonder”. Single, large fuchsia-colored blossoms; tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Kis gödöllői’.

**Csömöri szépség** “Beauty of Csömör”. Single, a mix of cream-yellow, salmon, apricot, and pink. Pictured on the front cover of Leandercsodák. Origin: Hungary. Bred by an amateur gardener, Mrs. László Vágány, in her yard; a seedling of ‘Dr. A. Ragioneri’

**Dr. Attilio Ragioneri** Single, salmon-pink with wide, conspicuous yellow throat with red stripes. Huge flower clusters. Origin: Italy, Sgaravatti Nursery, 1962.

**Éjkirálynő** “Queen of the Night” Single. Blood-red blossoms with extraordinarily long corona appendages. Compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Emile Sahut’. Named for the evil queen in Mozart’s opera *The Magic Flute (Die Zauberflöte)*.

**Ellás** (“Greece”). Single, very large deep-pink flowers. Rose fragrance. Stems are somewhat weak and need to be staked. Origin: Greece. Bred by Irmtraud Gotsis.

**Emile Sahut** Single, dark red; flowers slightly goblet shaped. Mild refined fragrance. Medium-tall growth, stiff stems, vertical habit. Tends to drop lower leaves early. The most popular and widespread single red. Origin: France, Sahut, 1873. Known in Galveston as ‘Scarlet Beauty’. The parent plant of a number of distinguished new varieties.

**Emilie** Single, fuchsia-pink, fragrant. Vigorous grower, but wood is soft and susceptible to breaking. Origin: France, Sahut, 1873.

**Érdi vajsárga** “Butter-yellow from Érd”. Single, cream-yellow with wide, canary-yellow throat. Origin: Hungary, 2006. Bred by Mariann Hátori. A seedling of ‘Tito Poggi’.

**Firewalker** My own discovery. It has the same intense red color as Emile Sahut. The fragrant flowers open flatter, however, and the foliage is somewhat lighter in color. A major advantage:

the lower stems don't get bare early on. The plant is rounder than Emile Sahut, and also seems to be more robust; many sprouts appear in the leaf axils. 'Firewalker' has had an adventurous history. The original cutting was brought over from Sulmona, Italy, by an Italian resident of Wethersfield, Connecticut. He gave a cutting to a Portuguese neighbor, who in turn gave me a couple of cuttings. I recognized the plant as a superior variety and named it after my firefighter boots (Ranger Firewalker brand). I sent several cuttings to Germany (to the Flora Mediterranea nursery) and the cultivar later turned up in Hungary, in the collection of the Hungarian oleander expert Mariann Hátori. A photo of it appears in her book *Leandroázis (An Oleander Oasis)*.

**Grandiflorum** Single, light pink; lightly fragrant. Very large flowers. Vigorous grower. Origin: Italy, Fedi, 1956.

**Hamupipőke** "Cinderella". Single; pink flowers with white throats. Spreading growth habit. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek

**Hamvadó parázs** "Smoldering Embers". Single, very dark dusky red. Medium-sized shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of 'Emile Sahut'.

**Harmónia** "Harmony". Single pink; tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of 'Virginie'.

**Hófehérke** "Snow White". Single, white. Medium-sized shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of 'Kis gödöllői'.

**Hókristály** "Snow Crystal". Hose-in-hose; white. Tall shrub. Doppelte Blütenkronen, weiss. Hoher Strauch. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of 'Mont Blanc'.

**Italia** Single, pinkish-red. Very popular standard European variety, quite cold-tolerant. Origin: Baldacci Nursery, Pistoia, Italy, early 1950's.

**J. R.** Single, deep reddish-pink; fragrant. An early bloomer; floriferous. Normal growth habit. The initials are those of the breeder Jean Rey. Origin: France, Jean Rey, 1986.

**Liláspillás** "Lilac Lashes". Single; lavender-pink. Very long corona appendages. Tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of 'Virginie'.

**Louis Pouget** Double corollas, pink, extremely fragrant. Large plant; Köchel describes it as a "baby elephant". Origin: France, Sahut, 1898

**Luteum Plenum** Double or triple corollas, funnel-shaped flower. Light yellow with deeper yellow throat. Very fragrant. Vigorous plant. A very old variety, mentioned in Julius W. F. Bosse's *Vollständiges Handbuch der Blumengärtnerei (Complete handbook of Flower Gardening)* in 1851. Known in Galveston as 'Mathilde Ferrier'.

**Madame Allen** Double corollas, pink, very fragrant. The most common garden center and supermarket oleander in Europe. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries, 1973

**Madame Léon Blum** Single salmon. Extremely elegant, narrow leaves. Premium variety and a best-seller in Europe. Named after wife of the very popular three-time Prime Minister of France in the early to mid 20th century. Origin: Italy, Capecchi Nursery, Pistoia, 1959

**Magaly** Single, pink. Large, vigorous plant. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries, 1973.

**Magenta** “Andrea’s Magenta”. Single; magenta with white throat. Compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Kis gödöllői’.

**Maresciallo Graziani** Single, pink, narrow petals, very long corona fringes; yellow throat with red stripes. The name is a bit unfortunate; Rodolfo Graziani was commander of the Italian Royal Army and later of Mussolini's armies; the UN wanted to try him for war crimes after WW2 but Italy and Great Britain stonewalled them. Origin: Italy, Gambetta Nursery [?], ca. 1962.

**Margaritha** Single, bright pink; lightly fragrant. An early bloomer; floriferous. Normal growth habit. Origin: France, Jean Rey, 1973.

**Marie Gambetta** Single, pale yellow, with brilliant yellow throat. The brightest and best-selling single yellow. Growth tends to be floppy and plant can be susceptible to fungus. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries, 1973.

**Marie Maureon** Single, fuchsia-pink. Compact plant. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries, 1984.

**Massif de l’Étoile** Single, coral with orange throat. Very compact and slow-growing; however, leaves are long, narrow, and elegant, as with ‘Papà Gambetta’. Origin: France, nursery of Robert Péliissier. A seedling of Papà Gambetta. Named for a rock promontory north of Marseille, the “Mountain of the Star”.

**Maurin des Maures** Single, fuchsia-pink. Flowers slightly funnel-shaped. Compact plant. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries, 1992

**Méhkirálynő** “Queen Bee”. Single; large pink blossoms with yellow throat. Medium-sized shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Korall’.

**Mézes-krémes** “Honey Cream”. Single. Blossom “honey-“ or “Muscatel”-yellow with yellow throat. Robust, compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2014. Bred by Mariann Hátori. A seedling of ‘Dr. Attilio Ragioneri’.

**Mézeske** “Little Honey”. Single. Ochre-yellow blossoms with yellow throat. Tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Angiolo Pucci’.

**Mézespuncs** “Honey Punch”. Single; large deep-pink flowers with orange throats. Tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Korall’.

**Mont Blanc** Hose-in-hose; pure white with yellow throat. Very fragrant. Huge inflorescences. Very vigorous shrub. Probably a very old variety, the origin of which is now unknown. First listed under the name ‘Mont Blanc’ in Baldacci’s catalog, Italy, 1952. Sometimes incorrectly listed as ‘Soeur Agnès’, which is a single white variety. Known in Galveston as ‘Magnolia Willis Sealy’.

**Narancs-szoknyás balerina** “Ballerina in Orange”. Triple corollas; yellow-orange with orange throat. Compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Korall’.

**Neguev (Negev)** Single, pure white. Fragrant. Corona appendages very short; almost non-existent. Compact shrub; thin branches. Collected in Israel in 1992 and listed under this name by Olivier Filippi.

**Oasis (Retour de Rome)** Hose-in-hose; pale yellow, almost white; throat bright yellow. Very fragrant. Loose growth habit with spreading branches. Collected in Israel in 1992 and listed under this name by Olivier Filippi; ‘Retour de Rome’ collected in Italy, obtained by Filippi from the collection of Dr. Jean Turnin).

**Opálszemecske** “Little Opal Eyes”. Single; small white blossoms with yellow throats. Tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Marie Gambetta’.

**Óriás korall** “Giant Coral”. Single; large salmon-pink flowers with orange throats. Tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2004. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Korall’.

**Papà Gambetta** Single, reddish salmon-pink with orange throat. Extremely elegant, narrow leaves. Super-premium variety and a best-seller in Europe. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries, 1973

**Perfect Peach** Single; salmon flowers with yellow throats. Origin: Hungary, 2006. Bred by Mariann Hámori. A seedling of ‘Dr. Attilio Ragioneri’.

**Professeur Granel** Hose-in-hose or semidouble; deep pink, almost red, irregularly streaked with white. Very fragrant. Floriferous. A ‘utility’ oleander in Europe, widely used in landscaping; almost indestructible! Origin: France, Sahut, 1898.

**Professeur Parlatore** Single; deep cerise; large flowers. Large shrub. Originally listed by Sahut in 1876 as having light pink hose-in-hose flowers, which does not match the current description. The name was evidently forgotten in Europe and survived only in Galveston. Named for Filippo Parlatore, a highly-respected 19<sup>th</sup>-century Italian botanist. In 2015, a plant originating in Galveston was shipped by James Nicholas to the Oleander Haus in Rax, Austria, for propagation and reestablishment in Europe.

**Provence** Triple corollas, Salmon-pink tinged with yellow. Very large flowers; very fragrant. Vigorous shrub. Blooms early but not a long-season bloomer. Origin: France, Jean Rey, 1973.

**ReD JR 95-3.** Single pinkish-red, very large flowers with narrow petals. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries.

**Rokokó Rose.** Triple corollas, pale cream-yellow. Sweet fragrance reminiscent of lemon blossoms. Origin: Hungary, 2014. Bred by Mariann Hámori. A seedling of Luteum Plenum.

**Rosa Bartolini** Single salmon-pink. Large blossoms, very similar to those of Papà Gambetta but a little lighter in color. Foliage also similar to that of Papà Gambetta; very narrow and elegant. The plant is a bit more delicate in appearance. Origin: Italy, Gambetta, 1981.

**Rosario** Double or semi-double, salmon-pink; lightly fragrant. An early bloomer; floriferous. Vigorous shrub. Origin: France, Jean Rey, 1973.

**Roseum plenum** Triple corollas, intense pink, irregularly variegated with cream-white. Throat yellow; orange at the base. Very fragrant. Floriferous. Normal growth habit. Origin: France, Sahut, 1873.

**Rózsaszín álom** “Pink Dream”. Single; large pink flowers. Tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2006. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Korall’.

**Sápadt tündérke** “Pale Fairy”. Single. Large flowers, very pale pink, throat yellow. Compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Virginie’.

**Sárga gyöngy** “Yellow Pearl”. Single; small yellow blossoms with orange throats. Flower somewhat start-shaped owing to the inner edges of the petals curling inward. Tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Luteum Plenum’.

**Sellő** “Mermaid”. Single pink; tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2004. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Virginie’.

**Simie** Single, variegated pink and white. Fragrant. Small leaves; normal growth habit. Collected on the island of Sými in Greece; obtained by Olivier Filippi from the collection of Dr. Jean Turnin.

**Soeur Agnès** Single, pure white with yellow throat. Lightly fragrant, especially in the morning. Large, vigorous plant. The classic pure-white single. Origin: France, Sahut, 1873. Sometimes incorrectly listed as ‘Mont Blanc’, which is a hose-in-hose pure white. Known as ‘Sister Agnes’ in the United States.

**Souvenir d’Emma Schneider** Single, salmon-pink-coral. Similar to ‘Soleil Levant’ but with broader and rounder petals. Floriferous. Long, narrow leaves. Origin: Italy, Baldacci, 1979.

**Souvenir des Îles Canaries** Single yellow, similar to Marie Gambetta. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries, 1973.

**Soleil Levant** “Rising Sun”. Single, deep salmon. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries, 1973.

**Splendens Giganteum** Triple or quadruple corollas, intense pink, irregularly striped with white. Very fragrant. Floriferous. Vigorous plant. Origin: France, Sahut, 1873.

**Splendens Foliis Variegatis** Triple or quadruple corollas; pink, occasionally with white streaks. Fragrant. Foliage irregularly variegated with light yellow. Mentioned in Julius W. F. Bosse’s *Vollständiges Handbuch der Blumengärtnerei* (Complete handbook of Flower Gardening) in 1854. Known in Galveston as ‘Mrs. Runge’.

**Szarasztró** “Sarastro”. Single; large blood-red blossoms with pink throats. Long corona appendages. Tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek. Named for the High Priest of the Sun in Mozart’s opera *The Magic Flute* (*Die Zauberflöte*).

**Szélforgó** “Pinwheel”. Single, white. Compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of “Luteum Plenum”.

**Szerényke** “Andrea’s Li’l Kitty”. Single; whitish-pink blossoms with white throats. Medium-sized shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of “Virginie”. “Szerényke” translated literally means “little humble one”; it is actually the name of a kitten in a Hungarian children’s film which grew up in a flowerpot.

**Szivárvány** “Rainbow”. Single whitish-pink blossoms with orange throats. Medium-sized shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of ‘Korall’.

**Taurus** Single pink. Collected wild in the Taurus Mountains of Turkey. Particularly cold-resistant.

**Tito Poggi** Single light salmon-pink; large flowers. Throat yellow-orange. Normal growth habit. Leaves very narrow. Very similar to ‘Madame Léon Blum’, which is said to be a seedling of ‘Tito Poggi’ and whose flowers are a slight shade lighter. Origin: Italy, Capecchi, 1959.

**Tünemény** “Phenomenon”. Single white flowers with yellow throats. Compact shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of “Alsace”.

**Tüzes bársony** “Velvet Fire”. Single; blood-red blossoms with red throats. Tall shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of “Emile Sahut”.

**Tyche** Single, very large blossoms, a true deep-scarlet. Very narrow, columnar growth habit. Origin: Greece. Bred by Irmtraud Gotsis.

**Üstökös** “Comet”. Single; large salmon flowers with yellow throats. Medium-sized shrub. Origin: Hungary, 2007. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of “Single Salmon”.

**Vérvörös bársony** “Blood-red Velvet”. Single, very large, intense deep red flowers. Origin: Hungary, 2000. Bred by Andrea Heyek. A seedling of Emile Sahut .

**Villa Romaine** Single light pink with a bright pink border. One edge of each petal curls inward. Lightly fragrant. Normal growth habit; vigorous plant. Very cold-tolerant. Collected in Loupian, France, in 1993 and named for the nearby ruins of a Roman-era villa with remarkable floor mosaics.

**Ville de Carpentras** Double corollas, medium-salmon, throat yellow with fuchsia-red stripes. Fragrant. Somewhat compact growth habit. Origin: France, Jean Rey Nurseries, 1973

**Ville de Lalonde** Single, extremely striking pinkish-red flowers with broad petals and throat of the same color, fantastic effect at a distance. May be the same as an old variety known as ‘Claudia’. Vigorous plant. First published under this name by Jean Rey, 1995

**Virginie** Single, pale pink. Widely-separated petals. A darker pink band on the underside of the petals shimmers through when back-lit, creating a bicolored effect. Vigorous plant. Origin: France, Sahut, 1873.