

THE Daylily JOURNAL

The view from Poland
on daylilies and hybridizing



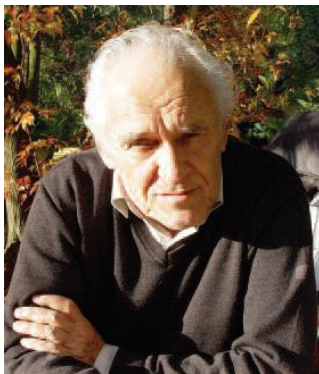


THE CHARM OF DAYLILIES

Thoughts on daylilies and hybridizing from Jerzy Bodalski in Poland

My interest in breeding daylilies was preceded by many years of active gardening and popularizing activities dedicated to another flower, lilies. In the years 1980–95, my achievements in this field won recognition from lily breeders far beyond my country's borders. As an acknowledgment of my successes during that period, in 1994 I was granted the first European Honorary Membership in The North American Lily Society. In the mid-1990s, life circumstances forced me to put a hold on my activities in the world of lilies.

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Closing a period of my active working life — as a professor of the Medical University in Lodz, Poland, a pediatrician, and then retiring — has opened another chapter, a passion again in flowers, specifically daylilies. My selection of daylilies to begin again was not accidental. It was enough to compare the old varieties of daylilies, blooming for many years in my garden, with pictures of contemporary daylilies on the websites of nurseries in the United States. It was easy for me to decide that the main location of fascination with daylilies — with an extremely high level of creative breeding and admirable

achievements — is the continent of North America, more precisely the United States of America, with Florida in the lead, it seemed. The magnitude of the daylily craze over there was astounding — an overwhelming number of people of all ages, occupations, and genders, both professionals engaged in horticulture, as well as amateurs dedicated to the dreams of the breeding passion. It was a great discovery that not only aroused my admiration and respect, it reawakened an addiction that could not be dropped.



All photos courtesy of the hybridizer

Clockwise from left, facing page: Jerzy Bodalski's "The Garden of Hope" in Poland: Pchła Szachrajka (2015), Flight to the Future (2013), Brunetki Blondynki (2014)



There was another reason for my renewed interest, which stems from the very nature of the daylily; it, like no other flower among the ornamental plants — in its unparalleled variety of forms and shapes, rich in color and art. — has yielded obediently to confident breeders who believe they would make it even more beautiful and more attractive.

This submission of the daylily to breeding is its unique and most charming property. And so, in 2008, I started expanding my collection of daylilies, believing that, in time, they would make a basis for breeding. My daylily seedlings were mainly imported from American and Australian nurseries: P.G. Stamile, L.R. Lambertson, B.M. Maryott, R. Selman, D. Hansen, B. Charman, R. Howard, G. Pierce and several others.

In 2010, my garden, named "The Garden of Hope," was filled with more than 300 varieties of daylilies, mainly classic forms of tetraploid daylilies. These provided the foundation for the creation of the my growing fields which I named the "Experimental Daylily Nursery."

Observation of the world of daylily breeding forced me to recognize the need for experimentation. The Progress of the American daylilies was such that the differences between the daylilies of the American continent and the daylilies grown in the nurseries and garden of Europe, including Poland, were shocking. They weren't even the same plants; they were completely different flowers!

The temptation of having American daylilies in my own garden was enormous.





"Pierwsza Brygada" (2015), Links, von oben nach unten: „Waiting for You" (2013)

However, the daylily seedlings from the United States, imported to Poland by some of the more resourceful *aficionado* of ornamental plants, caused only disappointment and bitterness.

According to popular belief, the advantage of the daylily as an ornamental garden plant was its natural capacity for relatively easy and fast growth into large, flowering shrubs. It turned out that this was not the case with plants that were not adapted to our climate. Even if the imported seedlings were able to survive the winter, their entire vegetative period was devoted to restoration and regeneration. Covering the plants and others protective measures before the coming of the Frost created only illusory hopes.

The abundantly flourishing and growing shrubs never happened. This led me to ask some basic questions: To what extent would the daylilies, mainly evergreen, bred in the velvety climes of eternally sunny Florida, be able to adapt to the transient, variable, oceanic-continental climate of Poland?

How much of the beauty of these flowers, coded in their genotype, could be transferred to their offspring through seeds collected and sown in the Polish climate? The first attempts led to some serious losses in the collection of daylilies, dying irretrievably during cold winters. On the other hand, progeny derived from seeds often maintained the beauty of their Parents and displayed good tolerance to new, more severe climatic conditions. This was true of both my own crosses and the seeds that I sometimes bought from the Lily Auction, or received from the AHS Seed Bank courtesy of the AHS International Membership Chair, Maureen Strong. Experimenting in this way, I managed to grow and register 150 of my own, frost-resistant varieties of daylilies from 2013–2016.

From the very beginning, I was fascinated with toothed daylilies. The toothed-petal feature was, in the '90s, a novel morphological accent, little known, and extremely original. Stunned by the beauty of these flowers, I developed the genealogy of toothed daylilies and their register, organized by order of registered varieties. As far as I know, this study has not gained wide popularity, even though it has no counterpart in the world's floristic literature. Delving deeper into the nature of toothed daylilies, I noticed a void between the accepted "toothed" nomenclature and the varied character of the serrations of the outer edges of petals, such as ragged, laced, and fringed, with tentacles, horns, and/or hooks. The idea of changing the overall term for serrated petal edges from "toothed" to "jagged" was explained in my article,



'Cud nad Wisla' (2015)



'Mysterious Stranger' (2014) 'Walc cis-mol' (2013)

'Panorama Raclawicka' (2015)

"Oda do Mlodosci" (2014)

"Jagged Daylilies," published in the *British Hosta and Hemerocallis Society Newsletter* in 2015 (or read it online at: <http://liliowce.net/en/liliowce-strzepiaste/the-british-hosta-and-hemerocallis-society/>). My special interest in the Jagger daylilies resulted in the registration of 32 self-bred clones of this category of daylilies in the AHS register and the preparation for registration of a dozen or so more. Although the gardening activities associated with daylily breeding remained most exciting and satisfying, they are only part of a broader program for me. I have the unbridled desire to popularize the image of the modern



Black Angel

I have published informational, educational and popular materials on daylilies: <http://liliowce.net/en/>. It is difficult for me to judge the overall impact of this site, but statistics show that over a period of six years, over 600,000 internet users from 113 countries around the world have visited it. However, even more important than letting Europeans know about the beautiful new faces on daylilies, is to let them know how rewarding it is to hybridize and register daylilies. On my website, I have posted the following

daylily in my country and throughout Europe. This desire is accompanied by the conviction that many of the ornamental plant *aficionado* on my continent are not aware of the transformations that breeding has made in the appearance of daylily flowers in recent years. To fulfill this promotional intention, I set up a website edited in four languages, on which

message to my country's ornamental plant enthusiasts: "The breeding of flowers, daylilies included, is a creative undertaking, which results in the creation of something new, attributed solely to its creator and constituting their exclusive, unquestionable property — just as a poem becomes the property of the poet, a painting the property of



'Children's Dreams' (2014) '

Children's Lullaby' (2015)

'Sen o Matce' (2013)



'Dancing with Giggles' (2017)



'Mather's Smile' (2017)

the painter, or a piece of music the property of the composer. Creating one's own flowers is not a commonly cultivated activity, as the blessing of enjoying the beauty of flowers created by one's own hand is bestowed by the gods only upon the chosen. These chosen ones are the daylily breeders." One result of all of this activity was the creation of the "Hemerocallis Club," which currently numbers 18 members engaged in the breeding of daylilies in Poland with the ambition of creating new varieties to match the level of modern breeding standards. The club is holding meetings every two years

that it is necessary among the people who create the beauty of flowers. A symbolic gesture of generosity from a daylily breeder, which singularly stuck in my memory, was the gesture Linda Agin who was seriously ill at the time. Having had spectacular successes in jagged daylily breeding, clearly outstripping the others' accomplishments at the time (in my opinion), she made public on the Internet the information that 'Red Friday' (Agin, 2007) is a carrier of the gene that



in different parts of the country, combined with reading papers on determines the jaggedness of the petals. I have registered the cultivation and breeding of daylilies, and visiting the flowering the clone I had obtained, thanks to this information, and, in gardens The meetings are open, accessible to all who are interested in daylilies; beginners may gain valuable experiences (Bodalski, 2013). Careful observation of the world of daylily and trade secrets from the more experienced breeders. I mention breeders, and evaluation of the achievements of others, this openness intentionally, as I know

helps to identify one's own preferences and plan one's.



Seedlings and futures from Jerzy Bodalski



'Milosny Napoj' (2017)



'Polluks' (2017)

In my opinion, after the understandable period of excitement about the breeding of tetraploid daylilies in the daylily world at the second part 20th century, and the overwhelming influence of this Direktion on the general population of daylilies In the world, there has now been a clear shift of interest back to breeding diploid forms. The achievements of R. Faulkner and E. Shooter, and in recent years also of N. DeVito, S. Nall, and L. Lambertson have shown, in my opinion, a clear advantage in the richness and diversity of arrangement of the morphological decorative elements in flowers of diploid forms over tetraploid ones. Breeders are making attempts to compensate for these differences, resulting in a very attractive breeding pattern known as "patterned daylilies." I believe D. Trimmer and G. Pierce have had extraordinary successes in this field Rusing clones derived from the transformation of diploid forms into tetraploid forms. Some conversions they have used are Tetra 'Texas Kaleidoscope' (Carpenter-J.,



2001), Tetra 'Colorful Etchings' (Carpenter- J., 2009), and Tetra 'Exotic Pattern' (Carpenter-J., 2007) for crossing with other tetraploids. Similar results have been obtained in a different way by D. DeCaire and S. Ansari. The gene determining the sculpting of the petal surface will, in my opinion, receive a significant increase in interest and gain a much wider use in the breeding of tetraploid daylilies. Dan Hansen's achievements in this field, especially In the last few years, provoke a strong enough urge in me to join in this breeding trend. The two directions described above for the breeding of tetraploid daylilies are the ones that I have included in my own breeding

program for two years, recognizing them as a priority. It is difficult to assess, at this moment, how much the future will confirm the validity of such choices, but as an excuse I shall quote the noted educator, author, and management consultant, Peter Drucker's aphorism: "The best way to predict the future is to create it."

