

## Proposals to amend the *Code* (H12–H13)

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### Proposal 12: The use of punctuation marks

(H12) Art. 19.16 A cultivar name may not be established if...its epithet consists solely of a single letter or solely of Arabic or Roman numerals *or a single letter or numerals in combination with a punctuation mark.*

Article 19.16 in its present form does not allow the formation of cultivar names that are either solely a single letter, such as 'K', or solely of Arabic or Roman numerals, such as '400' or 'MMIV', to quote the examples given in Ex. 25 in the *Code*. Punctuation marks are generally not permitted in cultivar names, but Article 19.21 lists the exceptions that are allowed. At present however, there is nothing to prevent cultivar names being formed of either a single letter or Arabic or Roman numerals in combination with a punctuation mark. The following made-up epithet examples could therefore be established: 'U!', '.I', '1!', '/123', 'CXV!'.

The current trends for abbreviating language, in a text-messaging style, have already been seen creeping into plant names. *Triteleia* '4U' was submitted to the *RHS Plant Finder* for the first time during the compilation season for the 2007–2008 edition and was registered by the International Cultivar Registration Authority for bulbous, cormous and tuberous-rooted ornamental plants in 2003. It would therefore only seem to be a matter of time before an epithet such as '!!' appears. This proposal would therefore be a timely addition to the *Code*.

### Proposal 13: The exclusion of certain words

(H13) Art. 19.20 A name is not established if...its cultivar epithet contains the following words or their equivalents in any language: "cultivar", "grex", "group", "hybrid", "maintenance", "mixture", "seedling", "selection", "sport", "series", and "strain" or the plural form of these words, or the words "improved", and "transformed" or their equivalents in any language.

The 1995 edition of the *Code* included seedling in the list of words in the equivalent Article (17.16). This proposal would re-include seedling within this list.

Seedling is a word that is frequently used descriptively for a plant, often in combination with the name or a person or place, such as WISLEY SEEDLING. Since the publication of the current edition of the *Code*, “seedling” has been a permitted part of a cultivar epithet. When a name like WISLEY SEEDLING is listed in a nursery catalogue that lists all of its plant names in capital letters and doesn’t show cultivars in single quotation marks, it is not possible to be certain whether its use is meant as a descriptor, Wisley seedling, or as a cultivar name, ‘Wisley Seedling’.

**Recommendation to amend the *Code* regarding publication**

Article 22 makes it clear that “Publication is effected...only by distribution of printed or similarly duplicated matter...to the general public or at least to botanical, agricultural, forestry or horticultural institutions with libraries accessible to botanists, agriculturists, foresters or horticulturists generally.” It goes on to state the ways in which publication “is not effected” and includes, “publication via electronic media.”

Recommendation 22B.1 strongly recommends that “copies of publications, especially trade catalogues, containing new cultivar or Group names should be sent to appropriate International Cultivar Registration Authorities and, if possible, to libraries that maintain collections of such publications.”

An important method of establishment of cultivar names has been through the distribution of printed nursery catalogues, though this method is now decreasing in its effectiveness. In 2000, 56% of nurseries listed in the *RHS Plant Finder* submitted a nursery catalogue to the book’s compiler as requested; this decreased to 29% in 2006. It appears that fewer nurseries are producing a printed catalogue, preferring instead to market their plants to the public via the Internet, often via a dated online catalogue that can be downloaded or printed by visitors to their websites. While this might fulfil the individual nursery’s requirement to market and advertise its plants, it does not currently fulfil the requirements of the *Code* for effective publication of new cultivar or Group names.

It is requested that the Commission consider ways that these electronic nursery catalogues, which are likely to be ephemeral, could be secured as printed copies for long-term preservation. This would enable the cultivar and Group names that first appear within them to be published and therefore established.

The method proposed here is to include an Appendix to the *Code* of the “libraries that maintain collections” of nursery catalogues, as referred to in Recommendation 22B.1. This would then provide a list of libraries to which paper copies of the electronic nursery catalogue could be sent. It is proposed that paper copies be distributed to a given minimum number (five or ten) of libraries or to specifically designated library collections.

It is noted that a recommendation to place copies in libraries would, to some degree, be comparable with Art. 30A.2 in the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature* 2006.

#### REFERENCE

Brickell, C.D., Baum, B.R., Hetterscheid, W.L.A., Leslie, A.C., McNeill, J., Treharne, P., Vrugtman, F. & Wiersema, J.H. (eds) (2004). *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants*, Seventh Edition. *Acta Horticulturae* **647**: 1–123, i–xxi.