

***Camellia japonica* L. (TEA ROSE) IN SRI LANKA**

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ABSTRACT

Camellia japonica L. (Tea Rose) is one of the best known species of the genus *Camellia* which is comprising more than 200 species and having high economic importance and spread in up country areas in Sri Lanka. Among *Camellia* species, the economic value of the *C. japonica* ranks the highest due to its beautiful ornamental flowers as well as medicinal value. At present, the Hakgala Botanical Gardens commercially propagate White flower and pink flower varieties which are the most common Tea Rose varieties in Sri Lanka. This study focused on the study of *Camellia japonica* in Sri Lankan context basically considering the floral morphology and propagation. The flowers were collected from Victoria Park in Nuwara Eliya and some residences for the morphological study. Tea Rose stem cuttings were obtained from Hakgala Botanical Gardens to study the asexual propagation. The reproductive organs were reduced at white flowers thus they do not perform natural sexual propagation. Therefore white flower was identified as formal double (class 04) or double imbricated flower. Pink flower was identified as peony form flower. In the vegetative propagation using stem cuttings, the rooting performance of pink flower variety is at the higher level than the white flower variety and top soil was the best rooting medium among four different rooting media.

Keywords *Camellia japonica* L., Natural sexual propagation, Vegetative propagation, Floral morphology, Rooting efficiency