

## **Nomenclature: Write it Right!**

A very precise order is used when writing a scientific name

### **Genus Name**

The genus name is written first and always underlined or italicized. The first letter of the genus name is always capitalized. Example: *Rosa* or *Rosa*.

### **Species Name**

The species name is written second and always underlined or italicized. The first letter of the species name is never capitalized. Example: *rugosa* or *rugosa*. The scientific name of this plant would appear as: *Rosa rugosa* or *Rosa rugosa*.

Often mutations occur which create diverse color, size, or growth habits in a plant. These characteristics are passed on to its descendants. When this happens, a population of plants exists with the same scientific name, but a sub-group displays different characteristics. If the mutated group is significantly different from the parents and is stable (the traits are passed on from generation to generation), then this new group of plants is often assigned a variety name. The abbreviation *var.* is used to signify that the mutation is a variety. *var.* is placed after the species and is not underlined or italicized. Example: *Rosa rugosa var.* The variety name is written after *var.* Capitalize the first letter of the variety name only if it is a proper noun. (e.g. *Rosa rugosa var. Henry Kelsey*). Underline or italicize the variety name. Example: *Rosa rugosa var. alba* or *Rosa rugosa var. alba*.

### **Form Names**

Form names are given for sporadic or minor variations (e.g. a mutation in flower color). The abbreviation *f.* is used to signify that the mutation is a form. *forma (f.)* is placed after the species and is not underlined or italicized. Example: *Astrophytum myriostigma f.* The form name is written after *forma (f.)* Do not capitalize the first letter (e.g. *Astrophytum myriostigma f. quadricostata*). Underline or italicize the variety name. Example: *Astrophytum myriostigma forma quadricostata* or *Astrophytum myriostigma f. quadricostata*.

### **Cultivar Names**

Mutations also occur from active human involvement such as breeding or propagation. When this happens, the new group of mutated plants is called a cultivar. "Cultivar" is an abbreviated form of cultivated variety. The mutated plants are assigned a cultivar name. The abbreviation *cv.* is used to signify that the mutation is a cultivar. *cv.* is placed after the species and is not underlined or italicized. Example: *Astrophytum myriostigma cv. Onzuka.* or single quotes are used instead of *cv.* Example: *Astrophytum myriostigma 'Onzuka'*. The cultivar name is written after *cv.* or within the single quotes. Capitalize the cultivar name. Never underline or italicise the cultivar name. Example: *Astrophytum myriostigma cv. Onzuka.* or *Astrophytum myriostigma 'Onzuka'*.

If you have questions or need additional information the Horticulture Committee and the Club's Horticulture Judges are there to help you.