



www.natureswayresources.com

GROWING ROSES ON FORTUNIANA ROOTSTOCK "THE WAY TO GROW"

by Don Adlong

Houston Rose Society - www.houstonrose.org

Most modern roses are grafted or budded onto a rootstock because they do not produce a vigorous root system on their own. The most common rootstocks are Multiflora, Dr. Huey, Manetti and Fortuniana. Most large commercial nurseries don't propagate onto Fortuniana, because they don't perform well in Hardiness Zones lower than 7. However, they have proven to perform very well across the southern part of the United States, producing larger bushes along with more and larger blooms.

Fortuniana rootstock was discovered in China in 1850 by Robert Fortune a Scottish gardener. It is a white OGR (Old Garden Rose), a natural hybrid of "Lady Banks Rose" and "Cherokee Rose."

It is believed to have been introduced to America and Australia about 1903. Dr. Samuel McFadden of the University of Florida began grafting on Fortuniana in the early 1960's. Fortuniana has proven to be better suited than other root stocks to sandy soils, particularly those rife with nematodes and eel worms. That property was very instrumental in the introduction of Fortuniana to Florida.

Fortuniana root systems have very few woody roots and generally no tap root. This characteristic, on hybrid teas in particular, necessitates the staking of plants, as it is often common for bushes to grow to 6 or 8 or even 10 feet tall. The numerous feeder roots grow relatively shallow, 6 to 8 inches, and a Fortuniana root system can reach a diameter of 6 feet or more.

NATURE'S WAY
RESOURCES
an organically based service company

www.natureswayresources.com



Fortuniana roots, left. Dr. Huey roots, right.

There are numerous similarities in horticulture practices between growing roses on Fortuniana and another rootstocks. Differences include planting, watering, fertilizing, pruning and winterization.

Certainly in my own garden, Fortuniana is "The way to grow."

* * *