



## **The Magic of Life Butterfly House**

### **Conservation and Research**

#### **The Brugmansia Collection**

The Magic of Life keeps over 800 exotic plant species both inside and outside. Among these are specialist plant collections, one of which is the Angel's Trumpet or Brugmansias. These are flamboyant shrubs and trees from South America in the potato family (Solanaceae). They have long pendulous flowers that in the wild are pollinated by hawkmoths. There are two high altitude species that have red or orange flowers that are pollinated by hummingbirds.

The aims of the Brugmansia collection are :-

- i) To maintain a collection of rare cultivars and species. Plant material of which is to be distributed for free to specialist collections and Botanic Gardens.
- ii) To carry out horticultural trials on different species and cultivars.
- iii) To develop new cultivars that have ornamental appeal.

To start the collection, we imported plants from The Netherlands and Germany. The National Brugmansia Collection in Meole Brace Shropshire also donated many of the plants that we now grow. Two recent imports from The Far East by Gareth Walsh of Butterfly World in Stockton are grown and have been further distributed to specialist growers. While making the hybrid cross is easy with such large flowers, these plants require a lot of heated space in the winter and can take years to flower. Our main conclusion for growing these plants is to liquid feed at three times the recommended dose in the growing season e.g. Tomorite and keep well watered with a tray underneath. Put



outside from April to October. In the winter, bring inside and keep between 2 -6 C. They can take everything but frost.

### **Result of the Brugmansia Horticultural Trials**

Brugmansia 'Langenbushcer Garten' - strongest orange, triple flowers. Needs feeding.

Brugmansia 'Angel's Flight' - Pale apricot triple flowers performing well in the UK

Brugmansia 'Salmon Perfection' - Beautifully-shaped flowers but needs heat

Brugmansia 'Super Spot' - Very strong performer with pink to red single flowers.

Brugmansia 'Volker' - Strong pink to red flowers with prominent upturned whiskers

Brugmansia 'Apricot Queen' - one of the largest flowers needing to be big to flower.

Brugmansia 'Phanomenal' - Exquisite individual flowers, but poor performance in UK

Brugmansia 'Color Point' - large flared flowers but needs heat to perform well.

Brugmansia 'Margaret' - white

Brugmansia 'Pink Flare'

Brugmansia 'Single pink'

Brugmansia 'Variegated Leaf' - probably the strongest scent and very free-flowering

Brugmansia 'Variegated Leaf2'

Brugmansia versicolor

Brugmansia 'Singapore Swirl' - a very free-flowering cultivar even when small.

Brugmansia 'Singapore Flare'

Brugmansia sanguinea – needs cool to perform well.

### **Magic of Life Hybrids**

Brugmansia 'Wedding Bells' - a profusely-flowering shrub with smaller, white flowers

Brugmansia 'Cascade' - Large abundant white flowers which are slightly curved outwards.

Brugmansia 'Heaven Scent' - a *B. insignis* hybrid that has white flowers with a delightful scent.

Brugmansia 'Geronimo' - A versicolor hybrid that has huge (2") white flowers, no whiskers

This one took three years to flower from seed. Not free-flowering.

At the moment, we have around ten cultivars waiting to flower, mostly large versicolor hybrids that all take three years plus to flower.



*Brugmansia* Langenbuscher Garten (Top left), *Brugmansia sanguinea* rarely grown in the UK and the graceful B. 'Apricot Queen' in full flower.



## Magic of Life Brugmansia Hybrids



Brugmansia 'Cascade' (Above) - White, pendulous, very floriferous. And B. 'Geronimo' (Below) – huge pendulous, white flowers with stubby whiskers. This one took three years to flower from seed.

