American Primrose Society

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AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY
President's Message

Dear Members:

With the new year and another season for growing primroses ahead of us, it is time to take stock of our past efforts and make plans for the growing season ahead. The winter reading of seed lists and catalogs brings visions of beauty to come in our own gardens.

Now is the time to search out the sources of those rare primula species and read of their natural habitat or known cultural requirements. Armed with as much knowledge as possible you may be successful this time. Your local conditions may be ideal for some species.

If every member would try one new species primula each year and report their success or failure, we would soon have an encyclopedia of knowledge. This knowledge we need because there is a lack of scientific experimental programs on primula. As yet the economic importance of primula is not enough to cause the government research programs of any country to allot money for their research and study. The necessary information must come from individuals gained as a labor of love with no thought of financial reward or assistance. This information means nothing unless it is recorded and available to other people. This is the task of the American Primrose Society; but, we as members must do our little task and report it.

Now to other matters. The complete list of members in this issue can be your tool to help get the members in an area banded together in a local group of A.P.S. members to spread the knowledge, interest and love of primroses to more and more people. You cannot measure the benefit and pleasure derived from association with the new friends and acquaintances with the common interest in primroses that you will meet in these groups.

There has been some consternation about the announcement in the last Quarterly that after this current seed exchange the A.P.S. would only distribute Primulacea seed. I have received one letter and the Seed Exchange Director has received a few voicing disapproval. The A.P.S. is a democratic society and the decision of the board does not take effect until the next seed exchange in January 1971. The decision could be reversed if enough wanted it so.

I will say this in explanation of the board's action. Faced with the problem of finding a new Seed Exchange Director for this enormous task that had grown too much for one person, they decided to follow the example of other specialty societies and spend all our efforts on our specialty, primulas, in hopes that we could be more thorough with them.

Now is the time for you to voice your opinion one way or the other before this finally goes into effect. Your letters are the board's only source of opinion from the majority of our members.

Herbert Dickson

ON A SEED

This was the goal of the leaf and the root.
For this did the blossom burn its hour,
This little grain is the ultimate fruit.
This is the awesome vessel of power,
For this is the source of the root and the bud.
World unto world unto world enfolded.
This is the seed, compact of God,
Where-in all mystery is enfolded.

—Georgie Starbuck Galbraith

From the Seed Exchange Director

It has been decided that in the future the Seed List will be sent with The Quarterly. No special request will be required.

A supplemental list will be available to all members on request to the Seed Director. If desired by Air Mail overseas members should enclose an International Reply Coupon; United States members enclose six cents in postage to cover additional cost.

Exception: Contributors to the Seed Exchange will automatically receive the Seed List and Supplemental List.

Miss Fayme Haverty
Seed Exchange Director
7730 - 199th S. W.
Edmonds, Washington 98020
Primroses
Modest But Endearing

By M. A. "Mike" Lawrence

Many of us old timers will remember Mike's beloved Ike (who is no longer with us) with very fond memories. This article was originally written for Northwest Gardens Magazine.

The most appealing planting of Primroses in our garden was a straggling little colony of Primulas of the *Cortusoides* section.

The bulk of this group was of *Primula kisoana* from a fine lot of seedlings. The *P. kisoana* varied in stature, as well as in individual pips, or florets, and trusses. Color and general appearance were fairly uniform, the flowers being a soft, rather dusty rose which went well with the woolly foliage.

A prize specimen of *P. veitchii* (*P. polyneura*) dominated one end of the colony, and across the path running down through the rock garden was a small lot of *P. lichiangensis* (another *P. polyneura*) and another of the same breed of *Primulas* that came from one of the early auctions of American Primrose Society. Its label carried a veritable jaw-breaker of a name, that came from one of the *Primulas P. polyneura* (another with the woolly foliage.

Modest But Endearing

This ability to thrive under untoward conditions is what I wish to stress. Not only did they do well, they seemed to do better under these apparently adverse conditions.

These are all deciduous Primroses, probably harder and tougher for that reason.

P. kisoana, especially, together with the jawbreaker and *P. lichiangensis*, spread by underground methods. In the spring wee tufts of bright, woolly foliage pop up where no plant had been. So we left this section alone, save for weeding, watering and mulching.

Woodsy Treatment

All of these seem to enjoy woodsy soil and woodsly treatment. Once well established, in fact, once planted in that kind of a spot, about all they need is watering and enjoying during their growing and flowering season and letting alone the rest of the year.

If they never bloomed, their foliage, with its Geranium-like character, and their colonizing habit remotely akin to that of Strawberries, would make them enjoyable inhabitants of an intimate garden. However, they do bloom well, and their color, even if it sounds a bit dull or unlovely on paper, or in the seed-plant catalog, is one that is easy to live with.

*P. kisoana*, *P. lichiangensis*, and the rarity, are all of the same soft tone. Not of the “see me, see me” school, they are persuasive and endearing, *P. Veitchii*, that is to say the one plant we had, was in the same color group, but it has a brilliance difficult to assess. Although probably due to its eye and center it is beyond my power to adequately describe. Both this brilliance and the plant’s more commanding stature made it dominant.

"Hands Off"

These are Primroses to live with. They are not difficult to grow from seed, but that part of the business, like the other facets of their culture and cultivation, belongs in the “plant-with-care-and-then-leave-alone-and-don’t-worry-about” field of gardening.

Our experience has been that regardless of when the seed was put in the ground or flat, the seedlings came up when they got good and ready and behaved thereafter individually as each saw fit.

Carl Starker grows *P. Sieboldii* from seed splendidly in a cold greenhouse. What incantations he may perform I know not, but a pan of his Southern Cross seedlings making their first flowers is something to rave about. Seems to me they are worth a try.

One thing is sure on this new place we have, one of the first Primrose sections we are going to try, once we have the soil in the Alderwood subdued, will be the *P. cortusoides*.

If you have a woody or shady spot you would like colonized with an altogether charming *Primula* that does not have to be evergreen to please you, try members of this *P. cortusoides* section. If you don’t like them, somebody else will be delighted to take them off your hands. Despite their manner of spreading by underground runners, they distinctly are not pests.

* * *

Ike reminds me that the *P. kisoana* came from a packet of seed her friend, Mrs. John Young, sent her with a Christmas card some few years back. A lovely idea, one other *Primula* lovers could well copy, especially with the lesser grown species. We are so used to thinking of the bigger and bigger flowered “hybrids” now so popular that they crowd the daintier or more unobtrusive ones out of our minds when the word “Primrose” is named. Yet, in the long run, some of the more modest species will be found the more enduring, and the more endearing.
A life membership in the American Primrose Society has been awarded to Mrs. Lawrence G. Tait for her "devoted service" while its treasurer the past nine years. Mrs. Tait, or rather "Beth Tait" as she is affectionately known by her many friends here in the Pacific Northwest, richly deserves this honor. This will be warmly affirmed by the four different presidents under whose regimes she has served, as well as by the many who know of her efficient handling of this important job.

Few of our members realize the great amount of work involved in the handling of the exchequer of an organization the size of ours. It involves the collecting of the dues of the hundreds of members and the mailing back of receipts and acknowledgments, the bookkeeping necessary and the vast numbers of letters that must be written in answer to inquiries. Beth tells me that in the busy time of the year she often writes thirty to fifty letters a day. These are but a few of the many duties of a good treasurer and this is all a labor of love with not a bit of remuneration.

It is remarkable how much she undertakes and accomplishes, much of it physical work, in addition to her duties as the treasurer of the APS. It just tires me out completely to even think of it. I will mention a few of the undertakings in which she is involved in spite of the fact that Beth has been ill quite a bit of the time the past few years and has spent periods of time in a hospital.

First and foremost is the plant nursery that she and her husband, Larry, own and operate on the outskirts of Seattle. This they call "Primrose Acres" and it is very well known as one of the finest of its kind in the Northwest area. They hire very little outside labor and, since Larry is busy during the week at another business and can only help on week-ends and their son, Jim, attends college, it means that most of the work at Primrose Acres falls upon Beth.

Primrose Acres grow and market thousands of beautiful polyanthus and acaulis type of primroses each year which are a feature at the annual sale conducted by the various guilds of the Seattle Children's Orthopedic Hospital. They also grow most other sorts of primulas including the candelabras, various species, garden auriculas as well as many others. They have probably the largest and most complete stock of the exhibition alpine and green and show type auriculas in the entire country. These are advertised in most every issue of the American Primrose Quarterly. Besides the primulas, they also grow and market many other kinds of plants such as geraniums, delphiniums and azaleas.

Beth finds time too to do a great deal of hybridizing among her plants. I noticed in one of the recent issues of the Quarterly, she advertised seed from hand pollinated \( P. \text{Sieboldii} \) and various colored polyanthus plants as well as seed from \( P. \text{capitola}, \text{frondosa}, \text{poly-neura} \) and various sorts of candelabras.

For many years too, the Taits have found time to display at many of the Primrose shows held in the Pacific Northwest. They have often been a sweepstakes winner. I have visited their home which Beth somehow finds time to keep in the most neat and tidy order and in their trophy room are numerous ribbons and awards which they have won at the various Shows.

How she manages all these projects as well as others I have not mentioned, and on top of it all, serves as the treasurer of the American Primrose Society, is a mystery to all her friends. She has surely earned this award.

by Ralph Balcom
Notes from Alice Hills Baylor

Dec. 31, 1969

I appreciate all the notes that came with the Christmas cards sent to me with reference to this column. One told me that the bed into which seedlings had been planted had been mulched with pine needles and that there were fewer (if any) slugs. In the other portions of her garden she had had quite a struggle with slugs this wet summer in the East. It may be that pine needles deters slugs and that is why I have so few. Our white pine wind break is also a shelter from wind for my Primrose garden, our nursery has the same pine wind break.

It is such a joy to receive notes with bits of news as it makes the miles between the East and the West coast disappear. One from Ivy Agee telling me about the crosses she has made with her green edged show auriculas. (Also, congratulations for winning the Bamford Trophy with one of them.) I well remember the day I visited the Agees in the West coast. It was like a jewelry store! Each pot held a treasure.

Dear Mrs. Hale:

This from H. Lincoln Foster today:

"This past summer was hard on true alpines such as saxifrages and androsaces—too many muggy days and nights with pelting rains. Primroses and ericaeae seem to have taken it well. P. Luteola is established again and has fat buds of promise. P. viali bloomed well but does not look at all permanent. P. warshenewskiana has great promise."

Mr. Foster introduced P. abchasica into this country from Russia and we can look forward in the not too distant future to having the charming little Birdseye, P. warshenewskiana to add to our collection of rare Primulas. It is described as having characteristics of both its near relatives, PP. rosea and Clarkii. Its home is Afghanistian and grows at 5,000 to 8,000 feet elevation in marshy places. The rosette is flat with a broad pale midrib and serrated margins on the foliage. The flowers are in an umbel of 1-6 on a one to two-inch scape and are rose pink with a white eye. It is said to be increased both by seed and by stolons.

—Alice Hills Baylor

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Alice Hills Baylor
SKY HOOK FARM
Johnson, Vermont

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Answers by Alice Hills Baylor, Corresponding Secretary
Johnson, Vermont, 05656

Question: Is October the proper time to divide and reset Primroses?
Answer: I believe it is the opinion of most Primrose growers and fans to try to divide and reset Primroses as soon as possible after blooming. The roots should become established before cold weather sets in.

Question: Is it true that the bloom on Primula plants tend to become smaller each year?
Answer: Not if the plant has plenty of plant food, moisture and mulch. It is wise to reset in newly prepared soil about the third year. The plants should be divided then so the roots are not interwoven and massed and they can take up the proper amount of fertilizer.

Question: Should all three-year-old Primrose plants be thrown out the third year?
Answer: Definitely not. Lift, divide and reset into a well prepared site and the plant will put on a lovely show the following spring. It is such a joy to receive notes with bits of news as it makes the miles between the East and the West coast disappear. One from Ivy Agee telling me about the crosses she has made with her green edged show auriculas.

Question: How can one keep a certain color of a P. POLYANTHUS by seed?
Answer: To reproduce a given color of a P. polyanthus is by division or to propagate vegetatively. An article on dividing appeared in the Winter 1969 Quarterly.

Question: How soon in spring should Primroses be fertilized?
Answer: As soon as the ground begins to thaw. It is also wise to look at Primulas in very early spring for any plants that may have heaved from frost during the winter. One can push the plants back into the soil, mulch and fertilize. If the roots are exposed there is danger of loss of the plant.

Question: I am very concerned about learning which Primroses would be hardy in mid Wisconsin.
Answer: Wisconsin is a splendid State in which to grow Primulas. As a rule there is plenty of rain fall, and also the water table is high, giving a moist soil. The glacial drift makes for good drainage, and most years there is a good snow cover. The popular six will give a good display from early spring until into June. Beginning with P. denticulata (lavender-lilac and white, pink to red). Then the hybrid Julies from deep burgundy to pale pink, pale yellow to deep yellow, lavender, bright rose-pink, bright red and white. The acaulis and polyanthus follow with the same wide range of colors including blues and purples. The auriculas have velvet tectured flowers in a bunch on a two to four-inch stem. One told me that the bed into which seedlings had been planted had been mulched with pine needles and that there were fewer (if any) slugs. In the other portions of her garden she had had quite a struggle with slugs this wet summer in the East. It may be that pine needles deters slugs and that is why I have so few. Our white pine wind break is also a shelter from wind for my Primrose garden, our nursery has the same pine wind break.

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—Irish Hills Baylor

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yellow to orange and flame. Added to this list should be the *P. Sieboldii* which are easy and long lived.

**Question:** At the present time some kind of insect is attacking the Primrose plants I have planted beneath Azaleas and they look as though they have been eaten.

**Answer:** From the description it must be slugs attacking your Prim-rose plants. There are several trade named slug baits on the market and all we have tried are good. Use it generously around your plants. We also add powdered tobacco dust to our mulch which I believe helps to keep plants insect free. The use of wood ashes is said to keep down slugs, we use it and have very few slugs. It’s good to correct an acid soil and also for flower color.

**Question:** What other plants besides primulas are included in the Primrose family?

**Answer:** The following are members of Primulaceae: *Anagallis*: *An-。<ref>rosace*: *Cortusa*: *Dodecatheon*: *Cyclamen* and *Soldanella*.

**Question:** If I would like to hybridize a certain pink *P. polyanthus* and get the same color could I use the pollen from one flower to another flower on the same plant?

**Answer:** According to one authority: “Seed production in many species of Primula is either scanty or lacking if flowers are self-pollinated; that is, pollen of any individual plant is not capable of fer-
tilizing the ovules of the flowers of that plant. Hence dimorphism fa-
ors seed production.” Division is the sure way to perpetuate a given color.

**Question:** Is there a *P. acaulis* that is the same shade of pink as *P. Garryarde Guinevere*?

**Answer:** Yes. *P. acaulis* “Church " is that lovely shade of pink. Of course the florets of the acaulis are far larger than those of *P. Garryarde Guinevere* and the foliage is like the regular acaulis, not the stunning bronze of Garry-
arde.

**Question:** Should compost and garden soil be sterilized before using to start seeds?

**Answer:** No. We never sterilize the seed starting medium. We have used the same mixture year after year (only adding to the amount as it is used in taking out tiny plants) so there are no weed seeds in the mixture. Also there are some who believe that sterilization de-
strys some very valuable microbes in the soil and compost.

**Question:** Which is the smallest Primula?

**Answer:** I believe most growers would say *P. minima* was the small-
est Primula. The separate rosettes are not more than one-half inch across (if that large). However, the rosettes grow in a mat forma-
tion which gives the effect of a larger plant. The other tiny mem-
ber in my garden is *P. modesta fawriae alba*. The rosette is about the size of a silver quarter and the flowers stem about an inch long topped with a cluster of tiny florets. The seedlings of 1967 gave me one lavender in the white group. It is the same shade as a lavender *P. denticulata*. I was interested in

### AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY YEARLY REPORT — JAN. 10, 1970

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### EXPENSES

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**Loss for Year 1969** $374.50

**Bank Savings** $1066.56

**Bank Checking** $481.97

**Cash on Hand** $6.65

**Stamps** $6.00

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Mrs. Lawrence G. Tait, A.P.S. Treasurer
reading that Mary Baxter has a
miniature *P. denticulata*. The by-
line did not give the height of the
plant. 

*Question: Can you give me any
information on *P. concholoba*?*

*Answer: Seedlings from 1967
planting bloomed this summer in
late July and into August. The
flower stem, heavily covered with
farina was six to eight inches high
topped with a cluster of the most
beautiful violet florets in a com-
pact head (florets nodding) and
over laid with white farina to ap-
pear silver dusted. The foliage two
to three inches long and about an
inch wide, slightly dentate. They
are planted at the edge of a path
bordering a special auricula terrace
that has sharp drainage but is
moist all summer. The plants stayed
in bloom so late that no seed was
formed but the wilted pods were
left on in hopes there may be a
few seeds within. The seeds germ-
inated readily. 

*Question: Will you please give
me the color of *P. beesiana* and
is it easy to grow?*

*Answer: It is very easy both to
germinate from seed and to grow
in same conditions as other Can-
delabras, moist semi shade. The
colours are a range of pastels, some
blending as the tubes of the flow-
ers are pale orange and the petals
are pink to rose. The florets are
compact on the tiers which gives
an extremely full umbel. Can be
spotted out of bloom by the red
mid-rib in the large leaves. 

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**The American Rock Garden Society**
(founded 1934)
cordially invites you to join its growing
list of enthusiastic members
Annual Seed List • Quarterly Magazine

Family membership—$7
Single membership—$5
Richard W. Redfield, Secretary
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Closter, N. J. 07624

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---

**TRILLIUMS**

*By Art Guppy*

I am not an expert on trilliums,
but as I have recently tried a num-
ber of species in my garden and
have found most of them to be
obliging garden subjects, I thought
a brief description of some of the
species might be of interest to oth-
ers.

Little need be said about our fa-
miliar *Trillium ovatum* (Pacific
Trillium) though it is a superb
plant and makes a lovely display
when grown in clumps of moist,
open woodland. Its white flowers
turn pinkish in age and even occa-
sionally take on a rich red, making
people think they have found a new
species. Of interest is its habit of
producing odd mutations. Six pet-
aled and even four-petaled plants
are only somewhat rare, and a
number of plants with fully double
flowers have been found. I have an
odd specimen that produces its
leaves near ground level and its
flower on the end of a six or eight
inch stem. Perhaps this trillium
is seeking to defend itself against
people who destroy plants by pick-
ing the leaves along with the flow-
er!

Only one other trillium is native
to B.C. That is an unnamed mini-
ture species with pale pink flowers
which is known from only one loca-
tion; in an isolated area of north-
western Vancouver Island it grows
among scattered pine trees in a
rather open, rocky location. Al-
though at present only a few people
are lucky enough to have this
plant, it seems to be fairly easy
to propagate and should be avail-
able to others within a few years.

*Trillium grandiflorum* (Snow
Trillium or Wakerobin) is the east-
ern equivalent of our *T. ovatum.*
It is equally easy to grow, and in the size and purity of its white flowers is perhaps even superior to our native plant. Its range is from eastern Canada south to Georgia and Arkansas.

*Trillium sessile* (Toad Trillium) is another easy woodland plant. It seems to be tolerant of most soil conditions but would probably object to poor drainage. This is an extremely variable species and there is great confusion in the naming of color variations and geographic forms. All varieties have in common the rather long-petaled, sessile (stemless) flowers, but flower colors vary from darkest reds through greens and yellows to purplish reds. There is great confusion in the naming of color variations and geographic forms. The finest plant I have of the sessile group is the *T. sessile rubrum* but which is probably really a selected clone of *T. chloropetalum*. At any rate it is a beautiful plant with an immense bloom of lovely translucent red. My white form of *T. chloropetalum* (bought as *T. sessile* californicum) is also a real gem with extraordinarily long lasting blooms.

*Trillium recurvatum* (Prairie Trillium) is another sessile trillium and is distinguished from the others by its recurved sepals. Its brownish-red flowers are not especially showy. It seems at home in typical trillium conditions as it is a woodland plant, not a plant of open prairie as the common name might suggest. It is native to the region of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.

*Trillium erectum* (Purple Trillium) is very different from the sessile group as the flower often has a stem several inches long. It is a robust and adaptable plant with a range of colour variations almost equal to that of *T. sessile*. It is native to much the same region as *T. grandiflorum*. The carnation scent of the flower has given this species a rather bad name, but I have not noticed this to be a problem, perhaps because our damp coastal atmosphere does not bring out flower scents, either good or bad. I consider a wine-red form in my garden to be a really choice trillium. A white form of *T. erectum* (known as the Wax Trillium or *T. erectum album*) is too much like a somewhat inferior *T. ovatum* to be of more than passing interest.

*Trillium nivale* (Dwarf Snow Trillium) from the Eastern United States (Pennsylvania, Nebraska and Kentucky) is a plant for neutral soil in the partly shaded rock garden. It is a six-inch plant with a white flower like a little three cornered star.

*Trillium rivale* (Dwarf Oregon Trillium) is like nivale in both name and appearance. In good colour forms the flower is beautifully marked with purple spots. It is also a plant for a partly shaded rock garden, but it would perhaps prefer a little more moisture and a somewhat more acid soil than *T. nivale*. In Oregon it is to be found along stream banks.

*Trillium stylosum* (Rose Trillium) from the mountains of North Carolina and Georgia is a slender, graceful plant. It likes moist, open woodland but its lovely nodding, pink flowers are seen to best advantage if it can be grown in a raised position.

*Trillium cernuum* (Nodding Trillium) is an even more bashful plant for it hides its flower completely beneath its leaves. This is unfortunate as the white flower with its reflexed petals and reddish ovary is well worth seeing. It is a native of eastern Canada and the northeastern United States. Moist, open shade will provide ideal growing conditions.

*Trillium undulatum* (Painted Trillium) with its white flowers painted with a zone of pink is perhaps the most beautiful of all trilliums, but, unfortunately, it is also one of the most difficult to establish in our region. Perhaps it pines for the snowy winters and sudden freeze and for Polyanthus and Acaulis Primroses.

Dickenson's Primroses
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Seed List Now Available

Continued on page 39
Leaves from the University of Washington Arboretum

The Naming of Plants Part II

By Arthur R. Kruckenburg*

SINCE THE FIRST installment of these notes on plant names in the last number of the Quarterly I hope that the reader has continued to encounter Latin botanical names and has asked himself questions about them. You might have met a binomial like *Townsendia Rothrockii* and been perplexed at the lack of information content in such a name. Both the generic name and the specific name are latinized personal names: they tell you nothing about the nature of the plant in question. Or, you may have puzzled over a "jawbreaker" like *Eccremocarpus scaber* and wondered how in the world to pronounce it. To resolve some of these questions, we had better confront plant names analytically. We will take a close look at the kinds of names one encounters in botanical literature, the history of the binomial, and some of the rules of pronunciation and grammar.

What variations on plant names do we encounter all within the framework of the binomial? There are essentially four classes of generic and specific names. In the previous paragraph I used the genus name *Townsendia*. This example of the commemorative epithet honors a little-known eastern amateur botanist, David Townsend. Kings, rogues, botanists, patrons and lovers, all have been eulogized in this way. The addition of "-ia" to a personal name is a sure route to immortality. Just look at these commemoratives: *Linnaea, Kalma, Lewisia, Kolkwitzia, Magnolia, Jepsonia, Jeffersonia,* and so on through the floras of the world! *Linnaea,* the delightful trailing twin-flower, is named for Carolus Linnaeus, the father of systematic botany. *Kalma,* the mountain laurel, is named for one of Linnaeus' students, Peter Kalm. You would be certain to recognize that *Levisia* is named for Meriwether Lewis of the Lewis and Clark expedition. William Clark is commemorated in the genus *Clarkia,* a delightful group of annuals so common in the spring floras of the Pacific Coast.

A more academic class of generic epithets is the classical descriptive name. Here, Greek or Latin, or sometimes a mismatch of both ancient tongues, are used to depict some characteristic of the genus in question. Thus the genus *Liriodendron* is translated from the classic language as "ilky tree"; *Xanthorhisa* means "yellow root"; *Oxydendron* means "sour tree"; *Cladodamnus* means "branched shrub"; *Ekuianthus* means "pregnant flower"; etc. Occasionally generic names have been derived from the original native word. A botanist in the tropics would find that many

*For more details on the word Ginko and its origin see Dr. H. L. Li.—*Origin and Cultivation of Shade and Ornamental Trees, pp. 106-111 (Univ. of Pa. Press, 1963).

of the genera he finds there are latinized versions of the original native name. Two examples from the Asiatic flora are *Tsuga,* which is the Japanese name for hemlock, and *Ginkyo,* the Chinese name for that famous and sacred tree of temple gardens. The last category of generic names is both an amusing and intriguing one—the so-called fanciful, poetical or mythological name. Here are four names which typify this kind of generic epithet. *Dodocatheon* means "twelve gods"; *Theobroma,* the generic name for the cocoa plant, means "god's food"; *Phyllodoce, Calypso* and *Narcissus,* are characters in Greek mythology. Now test yourself. Pick up any book which abounds in botanical names, and see if you can identify various kinds of generic names just outlined. You should be able to pick out commemorative, classical, or latinized native names, and even some of the fanciful names or those that have mythological allusion.

Of the four categories of species names, the descriptive and commemorative groups of names are the commonest. Such simple descriptive adjectives as *rubra* (red), *nana* (dwarf), *repens* (prostrate growth), *saxatilis* (growing in rocks), etc. are ubiquitous examples. Sometimes the descriptive adjective is compound, as in *angustifolia* ("narrow" and "leaf"), *cordifolia* ("heart-shaped leaf"), *race-miflora,* (flowers in a racemose inflorescence). Occasionally, a specific name is taken from the generic name in another group—thus we find the specific name *bignonioides,* which means "like bignonia," or *acerifolia* ("leaves like a maple"). A great many of the more recent specific epithets are simply commemorative, quite like the situation in commemorative generic names. Thus, you would find on any page of Rehder's *Manual of Cultivated Trees and Shrubs,* plants with proper names as the specific epithet, such as *Thuenderii, Wilsonii,* *Kerneri, Greyaena, Forresti, Mildredae.* Parenthetically, I should mention that, whereas in the past commemorative specific names have been capitalized, the current recommendation of the International Rules is to descriptively capitalize such names. The last group consists of species names which indeed are nouns. In the binomials, *Pyrus Malus* and *Prunus Laurocercus,* the specific epithets are nouns. Usually such names are formerly generic; thus the species in question which was once named in another genus now uses the former genus name as a specific epithet.

The inquisitive reader may wonder about the meaning of specific epithets. A number of references can satisfy curiosity on this score. I have before me a book by H. I. Featherley called the *Taxonomic Terminology of Higher Plants.* The latter portion of this book contains a list of common specific epithets and their meanings. Old subscribers to the Arboretum Bulletin will recall that for several years a continuing series of lists of such names and their meanings appeared regularly in The Bulletin. These lists are particularly fascinating because many of those used almost exclusively in the regal genus *Rhododendron* are transcribed and their meanings given. Another source is the introduction in the first vol-
L. H. Bailey's *Cyclopedia of Horticulture*. Part I of the Royal Horticultural Society's *Rhododendron Handbook* (1963) gives the English derivatives for all of the species listed in that volume. The meanings of many generic names can be found towards the end of each generic synopsis in such books as Bailey's *Manual of Cultivated Plants*, Rehder's *Manual of Cultivated Trees and Shrubs*, or if it is a genus which is quite local in our own flora, the five-volume series on the *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest*, by C. L. Hitchcock, et al., is another source. So curiosity can be satisfied, memory aided and information content increased when you delve into meanings of some of the commoner names encountered in horticultural and botanical literature.

Now for a little history. Somewhere during the course of our high school or college training, most of us were indoctrinated, how-few of us were indoctrinated, how-ever fleetingly, with the idea that Latin botanical names and the 18th century Swede, Carolus Linnaeus, were inextricably linked. Indeed, Linnaeus contributed more than anyone else to the codifying, namin-g and cataloging of the then-known plants of the world. He is the father of systematic botany. In 1753, Linnaeus published the all-important work, *Species Plantarum*. This compendium in Latin of all of the known plants of the period serves today as the starting point for botanical nomenclature. Succinct and pithy Latin statements followed the generic name and out in the margin was a single name in italics; at the time this so-called trivial name was meant to be a reference or index term for the particular plant in question. The species name of Linnaeus was actually the more lengthy phrase or sentence. I quote such a combination of generic name, the multi-word species name, and the trivial epithet from *Species Plantarum*:

"1. *Plantago foliis ovatis glibris, nudo scapo tereti, spica, flosculis imbricatis.............. major."

Here you have the generic name, the compound species name and the trivial name as it appeared in 1753. What has come down to us in the form of the present binomial is the generic name and the trivial name joined together, that is *Plantago major*. Thus, the birth of the present-day binomial was somewhat of an unexpected, but blessed, event. Linnaeus' intention was to use the generic name with a polynomial specific name; he wanted his specific name to serve as a series of descriptive words by which each species was to be differentiat-
ed at a glance from all others in the genus. The Linnaean polynomial species name is roughly equivalent to the diagnosis found in present-day botanical works. A diagnosis is a series of "telescoped" phrases of description, succinctly defining the morphological boundary of the species in question. My only point in dragging you through all of this, though, is to remind you that the binomial—the two words, genus and species—came into being through an accidental coupling of the Linnaean or even pre-Linnaean generic name with the inconspicuous, marginal "trivial" name.

We can do little but skim over the thorny problems of pronunciation and grammar in the forest of botanical names. Strict conformity to the classicist's rules of pronunciation of Latin and Greek names would cause, I am sure, embarrassment among even professional botanists who have used their own or inherited pronunciation for years on end. Europeans tend to pronounce Latin binomials largely as they appear in school. This is not so in the New World. Pronunciation seems to be inherited from teacher to pupil and I can offer no great solace to those who are looking for pat rules to pronunciation. Some taxonomic works, like Jepson's *Flora of California*, show accent marks on generic and specific names. This, of course, is a big help. There is usually little difficulty in dealing with the pronunciation of commemorative names: one simply pronounces the name of the man and adds (in the case of a generic name) "ia," or in the case of a specific name the "ii" or single "i." Thus, one would say Jo-nel-si, rather than Jone-sil. In all other names of Latin or Greek origin, the downfall of the way out is to pronounce each syllable and hope that the next to the last syllable is the one to accent. There does remain one rather exceptional suffix to specific names, the one called "unlucky" by Dr. C. B. Bradley in his quaint note on accentuation of Latin names given in Jepson's *Flora*. The suffix "-oides" is generally mispronounced as though one were saying such words as ovoid, thyroid and mas-toid. "All such tabloids," says Dr. Bradley, "are of modern manufacture and suited to the haste and impatience of our modern life: but -oides is a leisurely and dignified mouth-filling trisyllable and has been such at least ever since the Trojan war."* The grammatical rules for binomials apply particularly to the specific epithet. Since these are largely adjectives they must agree grammatically with the generic name. The generic name is always singular in number and either masculine, feminine or neuter. What follows is a sampling of such specific epithets with three case endings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Neuter</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>albus</td>
<td>alba</td>
<td>album</td>
<td>white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niger</td>
<td>nigra</td>
<td>nigrum</td>
<td>black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viridis</td>
<td>viridis</td>
<td>viride</td>
<td>green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acer</td>
<td>acer</td>
<td>acer</td>
<td>green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>japonicus</td>
<td>japonica</td>
<td>japonicum</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vulgaris</td>
<td>vulgaris</td>
<td>vulgare</td>
<td>common</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See also Reginald Farrer, *English Rock Garden*, vol. 1, Introduction, xxiii (1914).
Commemorative names take the possessive case and thus end in -i or -ii, regardless of the gender of the generic name — if the person honored is a man. Here are some examples: Bailey, one: Nuttallii, two i's; Jonesii, two i's. Thus, in most cases, such specific epithets of commemorative type end in double "i." A rather rare exception is when the commemorative word ends in "ey" or "et." It is then followed by a single "i" — thus Baileyi, Kerneri and Rehderi. If the honorific refers to a woman, then the proper ending is always "-ae," as in Edithae, Margeritae, Mildredae, etc. Here is a cute variation on this immediate theme: If two or more persons are being honored, as two brothers or a man and wife, the ending would be "-orum"; the plural possessive, as in Davisiorum. Gender for generic names varies depending upon the nature of the name: thus, most commemorative genera, such as Magnolia, Kernera, Jepsonia, Grayia, end in "a" and are usually feminine. Generic names ending in "um" are neuter, and those ending in "us" are usually masculine. A rather odd exception is that for many trees the generic name, although ending in "us," is considered feminine and therefore would take a correspondingly feminine form of the specific name: Thus Quercus alba, rather than Q. albus; or Pinus monticola, not P. monticolus.

Sometimes the ending gives a clue to the meaning that is intended by the specific epithet. Thus, if the epithet is derived from a geographical name, it is usually adjectival and takes the ending "-ensis," "-anus," "-inus," Besseywa wyomingensis, Iris virginian, Rubus columbianus, and Acer pensylvanicum. Habitat preference of plants is often indicated by the suffix "-icola," as in rupicola or saxicola, and silvicola — meaning, respectively, "living in the rocks," and "living in the forest." Now is the time to remind my reader that meanings and grammatical equivalents can best be attained by examining some of the source books mentioned at the end of this article.

It is hoped by now that the justification for the binomial, its usages, its pronunciations, its grammatical procedures, etc., are at least incipiently understood by the reader. It should also be apparent, especially if you were to scan a list of binomials in a catalog or a floristic list or a manual of systematic botany that the information content of these binomials is rather minimal. They don't reveal much about the plant they name. But the same gap exists in everyday communication: most names in any language mean very little by themselves but take on meaning when associated with an object. That this is true of botanical nomenclature will become even more apparent when we chuckle over some quaint botanical anagrams. Some practitioners of the art of nomenclature have resorted to twists and inversions of established generic names in order to manufacture more generic names with minimum effort. A good example is the lily family: the old established name of Allium (for all onion species) was borrowed to name a closely related group of plants in the California flora; the taxonomist, lacking a generic name, turned Allium around to make Muilla the generic name for this related group. Here are some more examples of this droll practice: the name of Edwin Palmer is used anagrammatically in the generic name now Malperia; Psoraleae becomes Parosela; Filago becomes Gifola; Invula becomes Lutna; Onagra becomes Angora; Mitella becomes Tellima; Asarum becomes Saruna; there are two anagrams for the genus Liatris; Trilisa and Liritisa. Cheap erudition to get two names for the price of one! Yet these bits of nonsense are indeed part of the accepted and official lists of generic names.

Editor's Note: Due to the length of the Directory and the mechanical necessity of adding four pages to the publication, this fine article will be concluded in the spring issue.

Due to circumstances beyond our control — sickness, death and mechanical schedules your editor would appreciate any corrections or omissions in the Membership list reported to the Editor or Treasurer.

Application for Membership

Mrs. Lawrence G. Tait, A. P. S. Treasurer
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1970 Winter Quarterly
Page 26

1970 Winter Quarterly

AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY

Page 27
April 11th.

Power and Light Company Build-

Primrose Show this year. The show

Society will host the National
date is April 19th, from 12 noon to

Angel Garden Club, will be held in

Chairman. Show opens at 2 P.M. on

Mrs. Herbert Dickson is Show

will present "Breath of Spring"

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Mrs. Betty Archer, 22923 35th Place West, Alderwood Manor, Wash. 98036

1970 PRIMROSE SHOW DATES

Tacoma Primrose Society Show

The Tacoma Primrose Society will present “Breath of Spring” Saturday, April 11th, and Sunday, April 12th, at the Villa Plaza Bank-

ing in Lakewood, Washington. Mrs. Herbert Dickson is Show Chairman. Show opens at 2 P.M. on April 11th.

Mt. Angel Primrose Show

The 23rd Annual Mt. Angel Prim-

os are growing and flourishing in the

Kennedy High School. Show date is April 19th, from 12 noon to 6 P.M. Admission free. Show Chair-

man is Mrs. A. A. Schacker.

National Primrose Show

The Washington State Primrose Society will host the National Primrose Show this year. The show will be held in the Puget Sound Power and Light Company Building in Bellevue, Washington, May 2nd and 3rd. George and Richard Long are co-chairmen.

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TRILLIUMS

Continued from page 17

warm springs of its Home in east-

eran Canada and the United States.

You could try it in moist, acid soil,

but don’t be surprised if it leaves

you in a year or two. An added

bonus with this beautiful plant is

the bright red fruit in midsummer.

Trillium petiolatum (Idaho Tri-

lirium) is a little-known trillium

from Idaho and Oregon. It seems

happy in the conditions that suit

most other trilliums, but its rather

insignificant reddish flowers would

not warrant it being grown except

as a specimen in a trillium collec-

tion.

Trilliums can be propagated by

seeds or by dividing the clumps

when they are dormant in the fall.

Seed sown as soon as it is ripe will

come up the following spring.

In this article I have dealt only

with trilliums I happen to be grow-

ngrowing. These are, with one or

two exceptions, the ones most like-

ly to be available at nurseries. For

the lucky person who is able to ob-

tain them, there are another ten or

so species native to North America

and a few from Asia.

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