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QUARTERLY

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Dear Members:

This being our new Editor's first edition, please take time to thoroughly read each page. Dorothy will be following the same pattern of our previous Editors, however, she will have many of her own new and interesting ideas. I feel sure she will be putting forth all effort possible to please all of her readers.

Those interested in placing an ad will find a complete price break-down, also there will be a want-ad page available to you without cost.

Show time is here, the time of the year we all have been looking forward to. Do you have all of your potting and grooming complete? Don't put off until the last minute to take care of such an important project. Remember, should you expect your prize plants to survive the show, give them a good soaking for at least an hour, then let them drain well before taking them to the show. This will help in keeping the tables much neater. In order to make the show a real success we need the cooperation of all of our members. Please plan on attending with your most treasured plants.

Along with show time it will also be time for election of officers. I have appointed a nominating committee to recommend a slate of officers; however, nominations will be accepted from the floor. Only paid members can vote or be nominated for an office. Those planning to attend the Banquet and/or the National annual meeting please contact Beth Tait or Ann Siepman. Reservations are not required; however it will be of great advantage in knowing how many plan to attend. The Banquet will be held at The Bleu Dolphin Restaurant, 437-108th N.E. Beth Tait's address is 14015 84th Ave. N.E., Bothell Wn., 98011, and Ann Siepman's address is 3616 N.E. Bellevue-Redmond Rd., Bellevue.

This year Washington State Primrose Society is hosting the National Show, which will be held at the Puget Sound Power and Light Building, Bellevue, Washington on April 28th and 29th. I will be looking forward to seeing all of my many friends at the shows.

Your President,
Al Rapp

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**From the Editor**

In going through old year books in the Editor's files, a letter printed in a year book caught my eye. In it, our Editor Emeritus Florence Bellis, described the early days of the APS Quarterly. In her words... "by 1943 no publication had materialized... and I was appointed editor."

Thirty-one years later, and with the same sort of mixed emotion, this editor steps into the shoes originally worn by Mrs. Bellis and then passed on by those editors who followed in her footsteps. It is because of Mrs. Bellis that I write this message today, for it was through her words many years ago that I started down the Primrose Path, never dreaming that some day I would find myself in this capacity. The Quarterly has been very dear to me and it is my sincere wish to continue the Quarterly publications with the same high standards and hopes set for it by my previous editors.

This is YOUR publication. Articles, photographs, and advertising are solicited, and constructive criticism will be most welcomed.

Because of the late publication of the Winter issue and the subsequent delay in transferring the the Editor's files, the Spring issue does not contain all the changes that were originally intended for it. Included in this issue is a feature called "Want Column," a service designed to help members locate specific seed or plants. Also planned is a column which will be titled "Down The Primrose Path" and which will contain excerpts from notes to the Editor.

To those of you who helped with this issue: President Al Rapp, who has been my right hand, to Cy Happy for pictures; to my printer Bryce Pollard... my most sincere thanks. To Florence Bellis: my eternal gratitude for your faith in me and for your article in this issue, and hopefully, for more to come.

Quarterly Editor
Dorothy Springer

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**Application for Membership**

Mrs. Lawrence G. Tait, A. P. S. Treasurer
14015 - 84th Ave. N.E.
Bothell, Washington 98011

I desire to be admitted to (or to renew my membership in) the American Primrose Society. Herewith I enclose my dues as checked below, which will include four Quarterlys a year.

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Little Julies... Little Loves

By Florence Bellis, Editor Emeritus

Little Julies, how like children you are. Carefree, you romp with joyous abandon wherever you are allowed to play. You wander, childlike, in hand along paths and borders and strewn rainbow fragments over rockeries and bare strips. You play hide-and-seek throughout the gardens of the world and trail garlands of gaiety across entire countries.

And like children, they take after their parents and their grandparents and the grandparents that went before. They are not breath-taking in their beauty as the polyanthus, but the polyanthus has passed on all their loveliness of color to its pretty little offspring. Nor are they as luscious as the acaulis, yet they inherit their charm. Good breeding eliminates the impolite magenta of their tiny forefather, P. Juliae, but it is a color I find little fault with. Magenta with blues and wild rose and raspberry pinks weaves a rich brocade.

The little Julianas have been trained in the ways of this elfin ancestor. It is its stoloniferous habit of spreading that allows so many of them to scamper about; the innocent-eyed flowers frolicking over tiny leaves, so often heart shaped, that give them the look of small children.

From the very beginning this little plant was eager to accept in marriage the hand of its close cousins—the cowslips, oxlips and the sweet common primroses that roamed the British Isles, Europe and the Mediterranean and wild rose and raspberry pinks. Scotty, like the bearded gentian, is woodsy and moist, unfertilized. Save for a mulch of leaf mold around the rhizomes, the root stocks, should they creep to the surface of the soil.

Madame Mlokossjewicz carried her find to Tiflis, some eighty miles from where she found it, and from there it was eventually sent to Dorpat (now Tartu) in Estonia. Professor Kusnetzow received it at the Dorpat Botanic Garden, named it P. Juliae for its discoverer, and sent it on to the Oxford Botanic Gardens in 1911. In 1912 he made the same gift to the Botanical Society of Edinburgh and to Kew. The little Julianas, too, like to play in the sun a little longer. And they also like a soil that is woody and moist, unfertilized

1900. Legend has it that she came upon it flowering behind a waterfall but this I disbelieve for the species blossoms well only when placed in more sun than acaulis and polyanthus like. The little Juliana, too, like to play in the sun a little longer. And they also like a soil that is woody and moist, unfertilized save for a mulch of leaf mold around them or on the rhizomes, the root stocks, should they creep to the surface of the soil.

Madame Mlokossjewicz carried her find to Tiflis, some eighty miles from where she found it, and from there it was eventually sent to Dorpat (now Tartu) in Estonia. Professor Kusnetzov received it at the Dorpat Botanic Garden, named it P. Juliae for its discoverer, and sent it on to the Oxford Botanic Gardens in 1911. In 1912 he made the same gift to the Botanical Society of Edinburgh and to Kew. Then the wedding of the primroses began. Of all the named hybrids of P. Juliae and the English and Levantine primroses, the cowslips and the oxlips, the acaulis and the polyanthus, it is Wanda, irrepressible and almost indestructible Wanda, that remains. Originating with Mr. W. G. Baker, who received Primula Juliae for Oxford in 1911, it burst upon an unsuspecting world in 1919. Every year since, in the late winter of many countries, this violet-purple poem that is Wanda sings of spring. Perhaps there are others here and there. Probably Dorothy with its dainty little stalks of yellow fairy mist, but they would be found only in gardens where sentiment and nostalgia are cultivated along with the flowers.

In the January, 1945 Quarterly (Volume 2, No. 3) is an article called Primula Juliae and Hybrid Juliana Forms by my friend and primrose worshiper, the late Lou Roberts. It is especially valuable for its comprehensive list of the old named varieties and their countries of origin. However, I must re-claim Millicent from England for it was the first of my hybrids I considered beautiful enough to name and so named it for my daughter. Some of you may still remember those pure pink popcorn balls on slender knitted needle stalks of mahogany. In those early days I surely named others but I can remember only Millicent.

Mrs. Roberts lists sixty-nine varieties, almost all bee-cross-pollination by hand: twenty-eight purple shades, eight red shades, twelve light red and rose, six pink shades, eight lavender and orchid, two near-blues, one yellow, and four white and off-white.

There are three good reasons for the fading urge to name plants and perpetuate them by division. There are only a few truly professional hybridizers left and they are so swamped with work that they can no longer indulge themselves in this amateur hobby. Then, in the process of multiplying the same plant over and over again by division, its weaknesses as well as its virtues are constantly being reproduced. And, finally, the little Julies have now been hybridized to the point where almost every new plant supersedes the majority of old named varieties in daintiness, grace of form, clarity of color and color range. And in a sound linebreeding program each new generation from seed supersedes the last.

There are two goals in breeding Julies. One is to see how tiny, tiny you

Photo by Cyrus Happy

P. juliae hybrid seedling raised by Ruth Barlett Huston... a cross between Kenloch Beauty and Lady Greer.

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can make them in every quaint and modern form known to this springflowering family group called Vernalias. The other is to keep them small but to bring to them every tint and shade of every color. Dr. Matthew Riddle and I first hybridized Julianas in this country. It was well over thirty years ago that we began. He delighted in imposing the tiniest form possible upon them and I still remember one. Thumbelina he called it, that could and did sit in a thimble. But, now, both Thumbelina and Dr. Riddle are gone.

My love of color took me down the other path. I began with P. Julias as the pollen parent for, with me, blooms were scarce. I had them along the creek in too much shade. Nor did I ever succeed in setting seed on the few flowers they did manage. I attributed this to a mechanical difficulty in the fertilizing process. To break up the magenta for new colors I used yellow. For the truly blue Julies, I used magenta for new colors. I used yellow. The intermediate stalked form I dully loved they are wearing clean, starched pinasoles of blue and candy pink, rose and cherry red, shades of garnet steeped in wine, all the yellows, corals, peach and bronze—even perfect. Gold Lace and the quaint Elizabethan hose-in-hose and Jacks-in-the-green. Truly, nature has blessed this primrose marriage with children of grace, good nature, and elfin charm.

HISTORICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

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S-O-I-L
BY RUTH BARTLETT HUSTON.

The knowledge of soil, its properties, composition, care and improvement is really more important to a gardener than the knowledge of plants. The very best seed and plants are of little value if the soil into which they are placed is poor or lacking in any way. Soil is defined as the loose layer of materials that cover the "bones" of this old world of ours. It is thin or nonexistent in places and many feet deep in others where the action of water, wind, glaciers and earthquakes have concentrated it over the centuries. Soil is composed of many things. The basic material is rock fragments. These rock particles make up to 90% of many soils by weight. They vary in size from micro-microscopic to boulders. Humus is the second largest amount of material. It is the decomposed remains of any living material, either plant or animal. Without humus there would be very few plants that could survive. As a general rule the more humus the better the soil.

Soils are of four general classes. Clay soil is made up of very minute particles. They cling together so tightly and hold water so well that the soil is cold, hard to work, has very poor drainage and when it does dry out it bakes hard and forms clods. It is never good for early planting. It is also hard if not impossible to work it into a good seed bed. It is greatly improved by the addition of large amounts of organic material, sawdust, straw, peat, manures, or compost. Horse manure, in a fairly fresh state, is especially good as it tends to lighten and break up the particles allowing air to get in. If possible large quantities of sand can be added and liming tends to cause the particles to cling together in groups thus allowing even more air to enter. Clay is able to hold fertility extra well. Sandy soil has larger particles and usually quite irregular. It is often decomposed granite rock. In other places it is water sorted and deposited. It is loose, light and drains well. It is usually poor in soil nutrients as they leach away readily in the soil water. Adding humus materials in any form is very advantageous. Cow manure is good as it has a tendency to bind the particles together. Cover crops and green manure plantings in the fall are valuable as they prevent erosion and they tend to take up soil nutrients as they become available and thus prevent leaching loss. They can later be plowed in to add more humus. Sandy soil is warm and so good for early crops.

Loam is a mixture of sand, clay and humus. If sand predominates it is sandy loam, light and easy to work. If clay is the main mineral component it is much heavier but still workable and good. Loam that is half way between is the ideal garden soil other things being equal.

Muck, bog and peat is the fourth class. It is entirely made up of the decomposed remains of swamp plants, roots, rhizomes, stems and leaves. It is sometimes quite rich and at other times is very poor. It requires draining and liming to make it productive. Most muck needs nitrogen and the addition of sand or loam helps the physical structure.

Besides rock particles and humus soil contains water, air, dissolved chemicals and micro-organisms. Soil water is never pure. It contains dissolved materials such as carbon dioxide, nitrogen and other dissolved chemi-
Builder. Ever notice that it flourishes. Broom is a legume and a good soil building plant. Believe it or not, the pesky Scotch are often considered the best and are used for soil building on a large scale. All legumes are soils. In fact they leave a surplus in the air they can live well in low nitrogen. This necessary element.) There is one that gives us a method of quickly adding to the material formed by nature. It is springy and in good working condition. This water forms a film around the rock grains. The plant roots take up this water and with it the nutrients. This is the only form in which plants can take in fertility. The microorganisms are one-celled plants and animals. Of these, the most important are bacteria, a one-celled plant without chlorophyll. They are dependent on organic matter in the soil for their food. Some of these bacteria are helpful to plant life while others form harmful products. One of the "good" forms, the bacteria of decay, "eat" dead organic matter and breaking it into simple products of carbon dioxide, water and ammonia. Two other general forms transform the ammonia by nitrification into nitrate salts. The first group forms nitrates and the second changes the nitrite into nitrate, the only form of nitrogen compound that it is possible for a plant root to take up. (Nitrate salt commercially manufactured and sold for fertilizer is identical to the material formed by nature. It gives us a method of quickly adding this necessary element.) There is one general class of plants that are not dependent upon dissolved nitrogen. These are the legumes or the members of the Pea family. Due to their association with a certain bacteria that forms nodules on their root and that has the power to fix nitrogen from the air they can live well in low nitrogen soils. In fact they leave a surplus in the soil when they die. All legumes are good but Sweet Clover and Field Peas are often considered the best and are used for soil building on a large scale. Believe it or not, the pesky Scotch Broom is a legume and a good soil builder. Ever notice that it flourishes in the poorest of sandy land? Air makes up quite a bit of the volume of well tilled soil. Air is necessary for the roots to breathe and most plants will not live very long if they are cut off from soil air for any length of time. Flood loss is an example of this. Swamp and bog plants have special adaptations for living in waterlogged soils.

Plants obtain most of their "living" from the air but there are seven elements that no plant can survive long without. They are Sulphur, Phosphorus, Calcium, Magnesium, Potassium, Iron and Nitrogen. Besides these there are several elements that seem to aid plant growth. These are called the trace elements: Boron, Copper, Zinc, Manganese and perhaps Iodine. Most soils contain some or all of these in sufficient amounts but when one or more is absent some plants suffer badly.

Soil color has very little to do with its fertility. Humus makes soil dark especially when wet. Soils rich in iron are red and no amount of humus will make them black, it only darkens the red color. Iron sulfide makes the soil "blue".

Tillage is the name applied to soil that is springy and in good working condition. For years the idea that digging or plowing was necessary has been a gardening and farming axiom. Many farmers even use sub-soiler plows that break up the earth to a depth of feet. This does allow the taking in and likely the retention of more water, terracing also aids in this way. In old and well established plantings of shrubs and perennials digging, rotovating or plowing is impossible. In such cases added measures of compost applied in the spring and a mulch of shredded leaves in the fall are helpful. The many earth worms and especially the big "night crawlers" this material brings will do a good job of tilling and aerating the soil.

Next quarterly I will write on mulching, compost heaps and potting soils.

**QUESTIONs AND ANSWERS**

Answers by Alice Hills Baylor, Corresponding Secretary
Stage Coach Road, Rt. 2, Stowe, Vermont 05672

Q. I wish to propagate P. auriculas and the "off-shoots" are still attached to the old root [carrot] how should the wound be treated to avoid rot?

A. Cut off shoot from carrot with a clean sharp knife or razor blade. Treat both carrot and off-shoot wound with lime, flower of sulphur or charcoal and allow to dry at least 12 hours. The drying is more important than the medium used to caterize the wound. Perfect drainage would be given when replanting.

Q. What is the best soil mixture for P. auriculas?

A. My experience has been one third each of good rich garden loam, compost and clean sand. The plants should be top dressed with lime chips. If the soil is acid add woodashes, crushed egg shells or extra lime chips. Fertilize twice a year, early spring and after blooming. In periods of very wet weather or heavy rains use top dressing of any good commercial fertilizer as soil will have plant food leached out.

Q. What is the best compost to use for Primroses?

A. Any humus that is well rotted, leaf mold, grass clippings etc. just so it is moist and not dry. We have used rotted wood (tree stumps and old logs) with great success, especially for Candelabras. The soil from under an old wood pile is very valuable, plus a nitrogen heavy fertilizer.

Q. Is it necessary to freeze Primula seeds before planting?

A. Primula seeds should be stored before planting, in glass containers with tight lids, in refrigerator, not in freezing compartment.

Q. If hot water is used on seeds to hasten germination what temperature should one use? For how long a period?

A. One hundred degree water is advised. This may be alternated by a covering of snow or crushed ice to keep the flat moist at all times. Only use this treatment until germination begins. Flats may be watered from above if very fine spray is used carefully to avoid washing tiny seeds. Best method is to place flat in a container of water until moist. Then place flat on wooden slats so excess moisture may be drained away. Never allow seed containers to become dry. A mild solution of potassium permanganate may be used to control mold.

Q. Is there any green flowered Primrose in the Vernales group? If so, where can one buy seeds in the United States or Canada? I know about the green P. auricula.

A. To my knowledge there is no pure green Primrose in the Vernales group. In old Herbals there are records of P. floridus which according to pictures may have been P. vulgaris. There is a P. polyanthus called CHARTREUSE which has a faint green tint. I have grown it and had it for many years. I do not know now of a source where it can be procured.

Q. I have an area of Douglas Firs and Hemlocks. Can I grow Primroses in this type of "woods" or must it be a woods of deciduous trees?

A. This is a difficult subject as the
degree of acidity should be known. Primulas will grow in soil of from five to six Ph value, but is best to have the Ph nearer seven. The auricula group, as a rule like lime or a sweet soil, greater than Ph 7. When large amounts of humus are used there is likely to be a greater need for nitrogen. (Salts of ammonium, dried blood, fish oils or ground bone.) Such is need where the soil is dry. In an area of conifers the soil might be too dry and acid. The suggestion would be to try a small area. The edges of an evergreen planting can easily be fertilized and also the soil is moist. These are fertilized and also the soil is moist.

Q. Do you know of a source of seed of Jack-in-the-Green and Gold Lace blue in the United States or Canada?
A. I do not know where these seeds may be bought in the United States or in Canada. There was Jack-in-the-Green seed offered on seed exchange.

Q. How heavily should Primula seeds be covered? I am using vermiculite.
A. I do not cover my Primrose seeds but sprinkle them sparsely on top of the prepared flat, the medium used is:

- one third each of good garden loam, clean sand and humus with a handful of crushed egg shells to a bucket of the above, sifted THREE TIMES.

Q. Is it “cricket” to ask for more than one packet of a certain kind of seed from the APS seed exchange?
A. The Seed Exchange Chairman is the one to ask. They are always most helpful, and will oblige if there is a good supply.

Q. What soil mixture does one use when transplanting from seed pan into flat? Also what space does one leave between little seedlings when in second leaf?
A. The soil mixture is same for seed pan with the addition of a pint of dry cow manure and a tablespoon of bone meal to each bucket of mixture, sifted three times. As the plants will be left in flats until about August or when they are large enough to go either in seed bed or garden the plants should not be crowded. Allow at least two square inches per plant. Have a low dish of a very mild solution of any good fertilizer into which one can place the seedlings as one transplants. This will avoid wilt and be a starter. Water transplants with a liquid fertilizer once a week to keep them growing and in good health. Place flat in shade protected with a screen.

Notes from Around the Globe

Lovely Quarterly—such nice articles—I do enjoy it. Thank you...Dorothy Standish, Conn.

This has been a strange year. We live near a river and it has been over its banks several times this winter. We have not seen any thing like this for twenty years, our primroses have really had a challenge of survival. All the burrowing creatures have moved to higher ground. I have spent the past few days trying to comfort and return the primroses wildings to their proper likings so they can display their beauty and pleasure. Mrs. J. DeFries, Ind.

I look forward to the Quarterly and read it faithfully. I also grow primroses to a limited extent. If I had more time I would extend the effort. You people are doing a splendid job producing the “Quarterly” and keeping the Society going. Please accept my thanks and appreciation, Paul Robert, M.D...Calif.

I enjoy my communication with your group through the magazine so much. Primroses are my first love. I have many out at the moment which are a constant joy. Mrs. W. Pitt, Canada.

My Mother is still interested in primulas above all and does so enjoy belonging to the Primula Society. In bloom for the first time for her is the American Primula Cusickiana and what a beauty it is. Bob Woodward, Sacto. The heat doesn’t bother as much as red spider. I have had good luck with cowichan, polyanthus, hose & hose, and jack in the green. There aren’t any members that I know, so am alone in my gardening in Primroses...Mrs. T. Schulties, Calif.

I have recently discovered the diverse beauty and charm within the genus Primula and I feel this new awareness of mine will richly enhance my effectiveness both as a gardener and landscape designer...J. Domzalski, Cal.

My thanks to you and all the officers of the A.P.S. for the many ordained benefits which as a member I enjoy...C.V. Gaffney, N.J.

Miss Doris DeLys, who had lived with me for many years died Nov. 1. She was the one who raised our primrose plants from seed and was so patient and preserving with the tiny plants. Our plants were blooming out of season (so many pretty ones) when she died. As if they knew how much she loved them. She had a lot of young
plants in boxes on the porch and I didn’t get them protected so have lost them in that 12 below zero weather that we had here in Dec. I am sure we have lost many others outside also because of the hard and prolonged freeze came before the snow did. I hope others who had plants saved more of theirs. Jewell A. Pulmlee, Ore

***

Have always been interested in Primroses but didn’t seem to have the time to work with them. Now I hope “time” will give me the opportunity... Am over 75—Virginia Howell, Mich.

***

Thanks so much for the pkg. of seed from your garden. That has encouraged me to ask for seed from the seed exchange, now have the seed in the greenhouse. We used to have too much shade now moved to a new house, shade is at a premium and I have discovered gardening also. Sieboldii has been the only one that has stayed with me 3-4 yrs. I keep trying. Thanks for your encouragement... Frances Lamb, Kentucky

***

I hope your spring is more satisfactory than ours. We had almost three weeks without frost. In my yard there was a profusion of crocus, eranthis and snowdrops and even a single blossom on each of three primrose plants. Then on Sunday it snowed all day and the thermometer has hardly got above 32 f. since. But gardeners keep hoping...

Dorothy Drew, New York

***

Primrose growers in Washington and Oregon were hard hit with the Dec. & Jan. Freezes. Oregon nursery raising trees and shrubs were a total loss. I hope other parts of the country were not hit as hard. Will be hard to put on the primrose shows with such a loss of plants. I lost over seven thousand primrose plants, with the help of the neighbor’s horses and the freezer—Beth Tait.

Do you know what Conservation really is? Conservation is a word that means many things to many people. We think of Conservation as meaning the wise use of such things as our natural resources. But it is more than that—it is a way of thinking about those resources. It is a way of life which concerns our daily needs.

One fine morning you will step out of doors and look about you. The things you think and plan for your land sets an example for women all over the world. Really look about you. What has nature given you to live... With the help of the neighbor’s horses and the freezer—Beth Tait.

There is the land, then water, the life blood of the land. You know how carefully these must be joined and used.

As you look, your eyes stop at trees with their population of birds. Your eyes see these things every day, but today, stop and check them over. Our natural environment is made up of the necessary things for human life—soil, water, plants and wildlife plus rocks, minerals, air and sunlight.

Why should you as an individual concern yourself with Conservation? Because you have benefited from all these resources at hand in direct proportion to the intelligence with which you have used and conserved them. Conservation is protection and wise use. Land can and does wear out with use—cropping, grazing, timber cutting—kept within the land’s capability.

Conservation is wise use. Our forests of course are plentiful and are a renewable resource. By managing our forests properly, we can use them and still always have them. When a natural resource like coal and oil is used up— it is gone forever. Water is the priceless resource on which all growing things depend. It is the life blood of civilization. Good watershed management strives to conserve this water by wise use. Conservation is wise use. It is a way of thinking about those resources. It is a way of living which concerns our daily needs.

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it again; but the amount stays constant. Only the quality and distribution vary. Did you know snow has been called poor man’s manure? Because it contains nitrogen down to earth from the upper atmosphere and some soaks into the hungry soil with melting snows.

Air pollution is one of the unwanted side effects of modern civilization. The cause of air pollution is the imperfect burning of fuel or other material. Of course cars are the worst offenders but air pollution can also be caused by combustion of fuel for heat and electric power, burning of refuse and manufacturing. Trees serve as pollution abaters. They purify the air by absorbing such pollutants as carbon monoxide and sulfide dioxide, and by giving off oxygen. It is estimated that one acre of young growing trees will produce four tons of oxygen each year! Trees also act as noise controllers. I heard somewhere that it is figured that in one acre of young growing trees there was little time to do much about this wealth of beauty than acknowledge it. But we have long since turned from the arduous job of conquest to the less strenuous but equally important responsibility of custodianship. We now have time to preserve some of the native beauty of our land. Not only must we think of conserving our natural resources for ourselves and the present, but for the benefit of all mankind including future generations. The importance of conservation cannot be overestimated. Human life is impossible without natural resources. To live well we must have an abundance of them and to continue to do so depends upon their wise use.

NATIONAL AURICULA AND PRIMULA SOCIETY — Northern Section

Invites all Auricula and Primula Lovers to join this Old Society
Membership of $1.75 per year includes Year Book
Hon. Sec., Mr. J. Robinson
584 Edenfield Rd., Norden Rochdale, Lancs, England

Cold Weather . . .

By Herb & Dorothy Dickson

This past winter really separated the hardy from the other plants here in the Northwest.

The Pacific Northwest is notorious for its false springs throughout the winter that are followed by hard and sudden freezes. This winter of 1972-73 has been our worst since the disastrous Armistice Weekend freeze of 1955. This time the whole Pacific Coast from Mexico to Alaska suffered. After an unusually warm October and November with most things in an active growing condition a sudden and deep freeze with strong winds and no snow struck the whole west coast. Temperatures varied according to localities. Ours at Chehalis was -1, -6 and -8 before any snow. Further south in Salem and Eugene, Oregon it dropped to -13.

To top this off a light snow fell that lasted three or four days and another three or four weeks of very warm rainy weather started some things growing again before another week of sudden cold, this time only to 1 degree above 0 at Chehalis.

Many plants that have never been hurt before were killed or severely damaged because of their tender growing condition at the time of the freeze, and many of the alpine type plants were fooled into starting growth by the warm spell after the first hard freeze and they were caught on the second freeze.

The nurseriesmen were the hardest hit by the freeze (this includes us at the Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery) because so many plants are now grown in containers for the market. A plant in a container is much more subject to damage from quick temperature changes than are plants in the ground where the change is more gradual.

When we moved to Chehalis from Seattle four years ago, we could not bring our old orchard that provided shade for our primroses. We have constructed some shade and a cold greenhouse but not nearly enough for the primula we wanted to grow. We planted several beds in the open. This winter has convinced us that most primula need at least partial shade or a good snow cover during the winter. We usually put a fir bough cover on the beds after Christmas time. This year caught us short.

The main damage to the evergreen primulas in dry freezes is dehydration of the plant above ground. Since all outside water and hoses were frozen we covered the plants in our cold house with snow as soon as it fell. After four days of dry cold this snow prevented further drying and we think saved many of our auriculas that were in pots. Many of them were in good bloom before the freeze. The cold house looked like show time with the auriculas, lewisias, and polyanthus in bloom. Most of those that were in bloom are now dead.

We had two 4-inch pots of Primula calderiana seedlings growing very lush but small yet. The seed of this Petiolaris Primula was received by air mail from Jack Drake in Scotland last July and planted immediately upon arrival. The freeze knocked all foliage down to ground level. To our pleasant surprise this pot gave us 35 small sets of live roots with a growing bud on top. They are all starting to grow now (the middle of March) on our cable heated propagating bed.

In our open beds we lost all polyanthus and acaulis, the lewisias and rosea were damaged. The candelabra, florindae, and auriculas were not hurt.

In pots on benches in the air all rosea, juliae hybrids, candelabra, were killed. Many auriculas were killed or damaged. It is too early to tell how much damage was suffered. A few
reidii are showing life. All the Farino-
sae section stayed dormant and are
now blooming. Sieboldii in pots are
now growing nicely.
From past experience we knew
polyanthus and others in the Vernales
section will not stand much of a freeze
in pots or flats up in the air. The first
week in December we placed all of
these on the ground; even then we lost
some. The species in the Vernales
section are much harder than the
hybrids. Some of them even survived
in pots in the air, where they had
previously self-sown in pots with other
plants.
The denticulata seemed to like this
winter as they are blooming early and
much better than normal. Garryard in
an open bed decreased from 50 plants
to 2 plants that were covered by
weeds.
The rosea and juliae hybrids in open
beds are recovering and will bloom
some.
The cold must have been good for
seed. I have never seen so thick a crop
of seedlings around the candelabras
and florindae as are surrounding the
beds are recovering and will bloom
one another year.

CONSERVATION... COULD YOU AFFORD IT?
Suppose God charged us for rain,
Or put a price on a song-bird's strain
of music-the dawn-mist on the plain.
How much would Autumn landscapes
cost,
Or a window etched with Winter's
frost,
And the rainbow's glory so quickly
lost?
Suppose people had to pay
To see the sunset's crimson play
And the magic stars of the Milky Way.
Suppose it was 50 cents a night
To watch a pale moon's silvery light,
Or watch a gull in graceful flight.
How much, I wonder, would it be
worth
To smell the good, brown, fragrant
earth
In Spring? The miracle of birth.
How much do you think would people
For a baby's laugh at the close of day
Suppose God charged us for them, I
say!
Suppose we paid to look at the hills,
For the rippling mountain rills,
Or the mating song of the whippoor-
wills,
Or curving breakers of the sea.
For grace and beauty and majesty
And all these things He gives us free!
—By Etha Tate

Auriculas As A Hobby
By Cyrus Happy

Of all the hobby flowers: dahlia,
mums, rhododendrons, etc., the old
florist auricula and kindred gardens
and doubles are the most satisfying to
work with. They take up very little
space, can be grown in a cool green-
house or in the open, multiply discrete-
ly, and hybridize grudgingly. After
four hundred years of hybridizing,
their genes are hopelessly mixed. The
variations in offspring are endless.
Let me take you back twenty years
to a packet of double auricula seed
received from the Alpine Garden
Society of England. From a bit of dust,
two seeds germinated. One was a
greenish-yellow, more or less double.
The other, a purple single, died.
I was corresponding with Miss
Winifred Wynnne of Ireland at the
time, and she sent me a collection of
double auricula blossoms from her
garden by air mail.
One was an old double striped
dnamed "The Bishop." It had a little
pollen which was put on the greenish
double. A few seeds developed. One of
the resulting plants survived. It was
an all time bad plant with very weak
stems, puny brown blossoms and had a
growth pattern similar to a sick palm

For some unknown reason I chose to
put pollen from a very good double-a
little gift from young Floyd Keller-on
the bad brown. Floyd's plant had a hint
of stripping and I had hopes of 100%
to the striped habit. A few of the
new seedlings did produce a bright
yellow stripe on a few petals occasion-
ally, but the surprise was the Dusty
Doubles. They appeared from goodness
and had what combination of genes.
Each petal is lightly dusted with meal.
They were the plants that fascinated
the Time-Life people. I tried very hard
to have them use photos of good show
and auriculas in their book on
Perennials, but they would have none
of it. And that is the story of the Dusty
Doubles.
The moral should be to do your own
hybridizing. It is simple to do when the
pistils are moist and it is the most
rewarding thing a gardener can do.

Pictures Needed

The A.P.S. offers members the use
of the slide collection on a loan basis for
the payment of postage and insurance
each way. Non members are able to
rent the slides for $5.00 and the return
postage and insurance.
The slide collection needs sprucing
up at the present time. In demand are
slides of the new species and hybrids.
New slides of the Vernales family and
hybrids are also in great demand.
Now during the spring months
many pictures are taken at the various
shows and in the garden and green-
house. If you have extra slides or
something especially good you'd like to
share, please send to the slide chair-
man:
Dorothy Dickson
Rt. 5, Box 816
Chehalis, Wash. 98532

The Quarterly is also in need of new
pictures of all Primula subject matter.
Photo credit will be given to all
submitted. Pictures of shows, gar-
dens, greenhouses, frames, "how to do
it" pictures, and arrangements are all
welcome. Send to Quarterly Editor:
Mrs. Frank Springer
7213 South 15th
Tacoma, WA 98465
Black and white glossies are needed.
Primulas in Arrangement

We as Primulas enthusiasts sometimes forget one of the most enjoyable facets of our favorite flowers. In our quest for breeding the most perfect flowers, adding new varieties to our collections, harvesting and planting seed, and all the other time consuming elements of raising Primula for show and sale, we tend to ignore the delightful pastime of arranging flowers. The men in our group deliberately so, we women because we never seem to have the time!

Instead of discarding plants that are not quite up to the standards we need, try saving a spot for plantings just for cut flowers. These need not be perfect or even nearly so.

In choosing flowers for arranging, a trial and error method seems to be in order. Some flowers, especially polyanthus, just do not hold up no matter what is done for them. Here, those same old words "substance" and "texture" are important. The flowers with thick heavy substance and a smooth texture are naturally going to last longer than those with a thin substance and a crepey texture. Look too for thick stems and short footstalks to hold up the flowers.

The polyanthus take care of themselves, the acaulis and julianas need a little help. Clusters of single stems can be wrapped with rubber bands, thin florist wire, or masking tape before inserting them on a needle holder. Extra support can be given with adding a thin woody stem to the grouping before gathering together. Whatever the method, care must be taken to keep the cut end of the stem exposed to take up water.

In arrangements where it is not practical to insert the stems into water as when using driftwood, insert the stems in an orchid tube, or wrap moistened oasis with aluminum foil, insert plant material and attach it where needed in the design.

Hollow stems of other plants also can be used to provide both moisture and support. Try inserting your primula stems into those of lengths of narcissus stem, or calla lily and iris.

To condition your flowers before arranging, soak them well over night in cool water. A good way to do this is to construct a grid over a receptacle for water. You can use hardware cloth for a more permanent container or plastic grids can be found in the housewares department of many stores. Whatever you devise keeps the flower heads from sinking into the water and becoming waterlogged or spotted.

Sturdy stems such as polyanthus or denticulata can have the cut ends immersed in boiling water for a few seconds or can be passed thru the flame of a candle. Take care not to get the flower heads too close to the heat.

You can also try using one of the various florists' preservative solutions on the market.

Primulas can be used in all types of arrangements, whether for home decoration or for aflower show. The polyanthus, acaulis and julianas are all good for the more traditional arrangements. The candelabra tribe, especially the more vividly colored species can be used also in modern arrangements and are stunning used in vertical designs. Try some of the tiny species for miniature designs and for those under 8 inches.

For line material use fruiting or ornamental flowering branches, driftwood, dried kelp, or even painted contrived materials for modern designs. Ferns and moss are natural combinations.

Whatever you decide to use, study it carefully, put your design together and then enjoy it. If you are going to enter it in a flower show, read your schedule carefully to make sure your entry conforms to the schedule requirements.

THE NATIONAL SHOW

The National Show will be hosted by the Washington State Primrose Society April 28th and 29th at the Puget Power and Light Building, Bellevue, Washington. Hours are 2-10 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

The annual Banquet will be held Saturday, April 28th at 6:30 p.m. at the Blue Dolphin Restaurant, 437-108th N.E. Reservations not needed; for more information contact Beth Tait or Ann Siepman.

Election of officers will be held. At press time (April 16th) the nominating committee chairman had not submitted the slate of officers to be presented. The editor regrets not being able to include them at this time.

TACOMA PRIMROSE SOCIETY

Aauriculas stole the show at the Tacoma Society Show April 14th and 15th at the Lakewood Branch of Pacific National Bank in the Tacoma. The early date of the Tacoma show usually brings out just a few auriculas; this year they provided a beautiful showing, making up for the lack of Vernales representatives which normally provide the highlights of the show.

Sweepstakes winner was Mrs. William Dines. Runnerup was Ross Willingham. Other award winners were; Rosetta Jones, best hybridized double acaulis; W.V. DeChant, best polyanthus; Fred Clarke, best acaulis and best pink hybridizing; Cyrus Happy, best green edge auricula and best auricula seedling. Divisional awards were presented to Rosetta Jones, acaulis; Lee Campbell, polyanthus; Cyrus Happy, julianas; Lou Dines, hybridizing; Ross Willingham, exhibition plants; Alb Rapp, oddities and rarities; Mrs. R.W. Gordon, garden auricula; Lou Dines, species and hybrids; Mrs. Frank Springer, decorative division sweepstakes.

OREGON AND LEWIS COUNTY SHOWS

The Oregon Primrose Society and the Lewis County Primrose Society Shows were held on April 14th and 15th, and April 20th and 21st respectively. Reports of these shows were not available before press time and will be included in the next Quarterly.

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AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY
WISH CORNER

The Quarterly will now offer this column as an aid to members trying to locate specific seed or plants. This will be a service without charge and will be included in subsequent issues, with a much larger column. To inaugurate the column, the APS President and the Editor have indicated interest in several items to illustrate the use of the column. We are, however, serious in our desire to obtain these items.

Please submit your requests in writing to the Editor:
Mrs. Frank Springer
7213 South 15th
Tacoma, Washington 98465

List your request, and your return address. Those desiring to help satisfy items desired will please contact those making the request NOT the Editor.

WANTED:
Seed of double auricula in hose acaulis or polyanthus.
Mr. Al Rapp
4918-79th Avenue West
Tacoma, Washington 98466

WANTED:
Seed of true P. amoena, heucherifolia, or any of the old fashioned forms of Jack-in-the-green or Hose-in-Hose. A plant of Lincoln Foster's P. abschasica.
Mrs. Frank Springer
7213 South 15th
Tacoma, Washington 98465

Answers to the requests will not be printed in the Quarterly, unless those participating in the exchange of requests feel that a newsworthy item would be of interest to other Society members.
Rare Dwarf Slow Growing Conifers

Flowering shrubs and unusual rock plants suitable for Bonsai culture are listed in our catalogue, Alpenglow Gardens.

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