American Primrose Society

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QUARTERLY

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All material for the QUARTERLY should be sent direct to the Editor's Office,
7213 South 15th, Tacoma, Washington 98465

Membership (including four Quarterlies): $5.00 per year, $14.00 for three years paid in advance. Ten old copies of the QUARTERLY are available for $3.65, and Pictorial Dictionaries at $3.00 each, postage included, at the Treasurer's Office—Treasurer, Mrs. John Genheimer, 7100 S.W. 209th, Beaverton, Oregon 97005. (Free cultural chart and Seed Exchange privileges with new memberships.) All dues are payable each November 15 and should be sent to the treasurer: MRS. JOHN GENHEIMER, 7100 S.W. 209th, Beaverton, Oregon 97005.
Dear Fellow Members:

Hurray! It's that time of year again! That seed you planted last year is now ready to bloom in all its glory. Sometimes I wonder why a person puts forth so much effort when you are never sure of good results. The seed may be old and refuse to germinate. If it does there is damp-off, bugs and pests of all kinds that would just love to eat up a tender sprout. Then too hot, too cold, too wet or too dry! and still too many bugs. Then you have a good growing year like we did here. The plants grew beautifully. They are now loaded with an abundance of buds and flowers, with the best still to come. And the nicest part, the species still like species. Proof that you got the blossom pollinated before the bees could get to them. The worst thing there is in my estimation is to get a flower into bloom and find you have nothing but an addition to the compost pile. Also, the acaulis and the polyanthus are coming true to form and the hybrid doubles are waxing fast and starting to open their florets. Each new plant is a new treasure. Watching to see what the next tight bud is going to look like keeps me stomping around the beds until they are a quagmire. A spring like this is more than ample reward for all the many failures and disappointments. Even if next year is a bummer, I'm sure I'm completely hooked on Primroses for a long time to come. I sincerely hope that your year has been as pleasant and rewarding as mine. If it has, our shows should really be something this year. I sure hope so!

See you at the show.

Your president,
Dick Charlton

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As the days grow longer and brighter and the temperature (sometimes!) climbs up the thermometer plants and people welcome the Spring. Your Editor especially welcomes the sight of lush budded polyanthus almost ready to pop into bloom. We have had polyanthus in bloom in pots on the deck for some six weeks. I cannot resist a pot purchased here and there along with a bag of groceries or supplies from the garden store. A riot of color drew me last week to the opening of a new shopping center. Thousands of polyanthus bobbed about in a strong wind and the wise lady selling them cut the price as I arrived explaining they would not last long in the drying wind.

Recent year after year of winter losses finally convinced me to try covering my seedlings with evergreen branches. The winter was very mild here but I am now certain we must all learn to adapt some sort of outdoor covering during the winter months, not so much for cold protection but for wind protection.

Reading thru back issues of the Quarterly and remembering plants seen at past Shows and plants grown in former gardens makes would-be collectors of us all. Descriptions of long-gone plants in books and conversations about also long-gone growers make us all go slightly "bananas" in our quests for treasures. I think we must stop looking back, stop trying to collect things that are not to be found except in memory and start to build for the future, making certain we pass about our NEW treasures to those around us so that growers generations from now will be able to covet living plants instead of those listed and buried between the book covers. Of course, the Editor is probably the most guilty member of the "I Wish I Had" set in the Society!!

I hope you all take camera in hand when you attend the spring shows and also when a choice plant comes into bloom in the garden or greenhouse. I ask that descriptions of outstanding plants in the various shows be submitted, along with a brief history if possible. The only listing of the trophy winners at the shows will be that of the National Show winners. We have had many requests to eliminate lists of names and substitute information regarding the winning plants, so, with your cooperation, this will be so attempted in the Summer issue.

DEADLINE FOR SUMMER ISSUE WILL BE JUNE 20, 1975!!!!!!!!!
Some Experiences With Petiolaries primula

By Herbert Dickson
Chehalis, Washington

P. EDGEBORTHII — As grown in Herb Dickson's greenhouse.

Photo by Herb Dickson

The Petiolaries primulas are not difficult to grow if you can give them a few special conditions, such as, shade and coolness in the summer with overhead protection from water in the winter and during their early blooming period. Their one big problem is the seed must be absolutely fresh, preferably still sticky and green from quick and easy germination. This makes it necessary to plant the seed in late June or early July, not the easiest time of the year to care for small seedlings.

Back in the 1950's several people in the Northwest were growing various species in the Petiolaries section either in frames, alpine houses, or in protected locations outside. If something happened to your plants, you could either obtain a plant or fresh seed from a specialty nursery or a friend.

For one reason or another the commercial sources disappeared and private collections were lost not to be replaced. I lost my collection of about 50 plants including four different species when the shade fell down one hot summer day while I was at work. The sun killed the half of the plant on the sunny side of the pot. Within three days all were dead. After a futile search for plants or fresh seed I gave up.

Finally I learned that by ordering in May I could sometimes get fresh seed by airmail from Jack Drake in Scotland. By this time I had become very sophisticated in my small propagating greenhouse with automatic heat cables, controlled mist and fan ventilation that worked real good for cuttings. Upon arrival in July, I planted the seed in pots and placed the pots under the mist. The germination was perfect, and I was elated. I made the fatal error of leaving them under the mist after germination. In a little less than two weeks, dampoff struck. In spite of a surefire curative treatment, all the seedlings were dead within two days.

The next year with a fresh package of seed of Primula calderiana from Jack Drake again germination was perfect again under the mist; but, this time immediately after germination they were removed from the mist and watered by hand as needed. They were transplanted as soon as large enough to handle. They came along beautifully. All were in pots with some kept over winter in the cold greenhouse and some outside under about 65 percent shade. Most of them flowered the next spring and lived thru the summer and next winter in good condition. That spring February and March were good growing months. Primula calderiana started growing, some even blooming. April and May were two of the most miserable months imaginable with almost continual drizzle, sometimes warm and sometimes freezing. Outside or inside made no difference. All the Calderiana rotted and died along with many other types of choice alpine plants.

One more attempt: This time with P. edgeworthii from Jack Drake in July 1973. Now, the middle of March 1975, I have over a hundred plants in full bloom with a few spread around to my friends as insurance in case something happens to mine. This time I kept them all in my cold greenhouse. By chance every plant turned out to be the white form of Primula edgeworthii which is supposed to be more rare than the colored forms. Only time will tell if my plants will set seed and survive past their first bloom.

I hope this account mostly of failures will help others have success with the Petiolaries primulas because they are truly beautiful plants.

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NATIONAL AURICULA AND PRIMULA SOCIETY — Midland Section
Invites all Auricula and Primula Lovers to join this Old Society
Hon. Sec., Mr. P. Green
Primrose Hill, Bell's Bank, Buckley, Worcs., England

AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY
Primula Sieboldii

Courtesy of Mr. Jared Sinclair
BARNHAVEN
Westmorland, England

The Japanese star primula was introduced to England in the 1860's and over the next half century it throned the mighty conservatories, where it peeped prettily through the fern fronds and sparked in the lamplight at many a white-gloved, after-the-ball proposal. It became popular as a bit of oriental nonsense standing on the bamboo table with the Japanese lacquer top. After flowering it would be marched out and hidden in the shrubbery until the twigs were bare, then it would be repotted, brought inside again and stood with the geraniums on the window sill until it bloomed.

When those famous lights went out all over Europe, its career was ruined by the Kaiser. Primula sieboldii vanished into the gloom, where, but for an occasional flicker, it has remained for the past 50 years. In Japan, it has been cultivated with fervour for centuries, grown in traditional hand-thrown pottery and displayed in traditional bamboo structures. With such a long history of confinement in pots, it was probably not realized that this primula is an almost indestructible hardy perennial surviving the fiercest frosts and the most scorching droughts and rapidly forming large clumps in the garden. Of late there has been a great resurgence of interest in the world over, and an avid and fearsome number of collectors has suddenly loomed over the horizon. Flowers are poised polyanthus-fashion on wiry 9 to 12" stems like a multitude of butterflies bobbing in the spring breezes over light green, fern-like foliage. Leaves disappear in late summer and the plant busies itself underground until the following spring. During this period the roots and dormant buds some times climb out of bed — tuck them in again with a light dressing of peat or leaf soil.

A woodlander in nature, give it a rich, moist, well-drained soil in dappled shade and it will soon caper about happily and form large clumps. Lift and tease apart the rhizomes every third year or so and discard the center portion of the plant which is usually rotting away. The rhizomes march outwards and abandon the middle. October or November is the time for this operation. You can divide more often if you wish to increase your stocks quickly, but the plant needs two undisturbed years to realize its full potential.

You can save some of the rhizomes for pot culture if you so wish. Use four to a 5" pot and arrange the buds so that they point outwards from the center. Use a loamless compost and grow hot or cool — too much heat induces floppy growth. Feed at ten days intervals when the plants break dormancy. After flowering, turn the plants out of their pots and grow on outside in dappled shade if possible. Mulch with old manure, and you can carry on the liquid feeding until the plants go dormant. They should increase about six-fold in a season, with the exception of some of the blue shades which are rather slower to multiply.

In planting out new "pips", hold out the rhizome with the bud point- ing to the side. Shake and carefully disentangle the roots and place the rhizome in its quarters. Cover to a depth of 1/2 to 1" and mark the location. They do not wake up until March or April in a normal season.

The beautiful new Barnhaven sieboldii hybrids are the result of many year's work on this flower, a labor of love while patiently waiting the Great Revival which is now upon us. Blooms may be smooth and round as a penny, or fringed like extravagant lace, or of the most exquisite snow-flake patterns. Years of selection and hand-pollination have yielded undreamed-of dividends in size, petal texture and substance of the flowers, length and strength of stem and tear-away vigour. As cut flowers they are very long-lasting.

We find the best method with seed is to sow from November to the end of January and leave the flats outside to weather, protected against beating rain and anything on legs that might show an interest by stretching a piece of porous material over the sowing and fixing with drawing pins (thumb tacks) if the flat is wooden. Plastic contain ers need a larger piece so that the ends can be trapped underneath to keep the material taut. About the middle of February we move half of the sowings into a shaded frame, and the remainder are left outside to germinate naturally. Those left outside usually start to squirm in April in this part of the world.

In the more temperate parts, seed can also be sown in March and April as described above, but the sowings must be left outside. The seed will not perform if temperatures are too high.


NATIONAL AURICULA AND PRIMULA SOCIETY — Northern Section

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Membership of $4.50 per year includes Year Book
Hon. Sec. David G. Hadfield
146, Queens Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire SK8 5HY England

American Primrose Society

1975 Spring Quarterly
More notes on . . .

P. Sieboldii
By Bob & Dorothy Goplerud
Far North Gardens
Livonia, Michigan

Regarding P. sieboldii, most of what we can say has been said many times before. Personally, we think this is a honey. For some reason many books have mentioned that P. sieboldii should be grown in the alpine house, but this is certainly only a rumor. We have found it to be extremely hardy here in Michigan, where the temperature sometimes falls below zero in winter and soars over 100 in summer. The plants do become dormant after blooming, and do not appear again the following spring until a bit late in the season. Hence, one must guard against accidentally digging them up before they emerge from the ground. The roots have a tendency to appear at the soil surface, also, but this is easily counteracted by dividing and resetting following the blooming season, or by applying a good mulch of compost, leaf mould, aged manure, or even peat, if necessary, in early fall.

In Japan, where Primula sieboldii originated, the plants are grown in pots and displayed individually, and this may be the reason they have so often been considered as tender. P. sieboldii gives very satisfactory bloom when forced during the winter. The thing to remember is not to have too much heat in the greenhouse or alpine house — certainly not higher than 60 degrees.

We have found seed germinates best when left outdoors in our climate, to thaw and freeze naturally, but with some protection from weather and animal life. After this treatment, every seed seems to swell and grow when the weather becomes warmer or when the flats are brought into the greenhouse in very early spring.

1975 Dues Are Now Past Due!
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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Answers by Alice Hills Baylor, Corresponding Secretary
Stage Coach Road, Rt. 2, Stowe, Vermont 05672

Q. Is P. denticulata alba less hardy than the lavender and pink ones? A. I have found it as hardy. The only reason I had difficulty keeping a supply of the white form is that it was so popular. All the seed of P. denticulata I found does not come true.

Q. Kindly give me information on growing P. modesta. I can germinate it but have trouble after it is transplanted in the garden. A. This is one of the Primulas that is extremely difficult to transplant from growing flat to garden as the roots are so very fine and break easily. I used peat pots when I pricked them out of the germinating flat, using a mixture of half fine compost. When they were ready to put out in the garden I planted pot and all at the base of a northwest facing terrace with the bed raised 2 to 3 inches above the path. Use far more compost in the planting site. Once established it will multiply by root runners. It is one of the delightful miniatures, four inches from the tiny rosette to the top of the umbel bearing four to six florets that are pink with a yellow eye. When P. modesta first emerges from the compost filled soil it appears as a ball of white cotton. This primrose is choice and rare as is its cousin P. Fauriei which may also be pink or white but is smaller in all respect. They come from the cliffs on the Kurile Island, Japan.

Q. I planted P. japonica along with wild seeds in a shady spot, just broadcasting them. Now I am told I should have started the primrose seeds in a pot or flat. Do you think I will get a stand of P. japonica? A. I certainly hope you do. Watch for seedlings and I would suggest you transplant them in a well prepared site, rich soil and partial shade. I do not advocate broad-casting primrose seed as they are scarce and rare. However, when I had my nursery I often dug primrose seedlings from grass and paths where the seed fell when being gathered. I also found that P. acaulis would germinate easily on a patch of moss that seemed to be always moist. I used that patch every year.
Q. Have you grown P. Reinii and is it difficult?
A. I have not grown it but our Chairman of the N.E. Unit of the ARGs has and won Honorable Mention in the show at Conway, N.H. in June 1974 for a pot of P. Reinii. Mrs. Grant germinated it from seed in 1972 Jack Drake. The three inch high plant was topped by a cluster of fragrant bells of French blue. It comes from the Himalayas where it grows in moist woodland.

Q. Have you grown P. luteola and what is the culture? Where is a source of seed?
A. I have grown it for ten or twelve years with no difficulty until last year when there was no snow and the temperature was below zero. It must be that it needs snow cover. I do not know now of a source of seed. My notes on P. luteola are that I received the seed from the late Harold Rugg, of Dartmouth in 1958 which had been sent to him from India, and the first bloom was in the summer of 1960. It is a handsome plant with large light green leaves thrust up with dignity which are lanceolate and slightly dentate. The scapes rise from this crown to about 9 or ten inches and a cluster of florets are from 12 to 14 florets in soft yellow about an inch and a half to two inches across. It is delightful as it blooms in summer which is unlike most of the Auriculatae group of which it is a member. It comes from the moist meadows of the high Eastern Caucasus and has been in cultivation in the United Kingdom since 1867. The first years I had it, it was planted in a raised bed, three or four inches above the path in rich compost soil. There were 20 to 30 plants behind a planting of polyanthus which bloomed earlier. They were heavily mulched with compost.

American Primrose Society National Trophy Show

Much interest in the American Primrose Society National Trophies is evidenced at the National Show each year. In response to requests for information about them the following is presented:

The Bamford Trophy was presented to the Society in 1953 by Dan Bamford of England to be awarded at National Shows for the Best Show Auricula Seedling.

The John Shuman Perpetual Trophy was given to the Society in 1960 for the Best Alpine.

The Frank Michaud Perpetual Trophy was given for the Best Show Auricula and was awarded for the first time in 1960 to Cyrus Happy.

The Capt. Comely Hawkes Trophy was presented to the Society in memory of Capt. Hawkes of England and is awarded for the Best Gold Laced Polyanthus.

The Ellen Page Haydon Trophy was presented to the Society by Ellen Page Hayden of Riderwood, Maryland. The beautiful silver bowl was awarded for the first time in 1966 to Ralph Balcom and is presented annually for the Best Double Auricula.

The Haddock Trophy is given for the Best Alpine Seedling. It was presented to the Society by Mr. and Mrs. John Haddock of Seattle, Washington in 1960.

The C. F. Hill Perpetual Trophy was presented in 1970 by Mrs. Lawrence Tait in honor of Mr. Hill of England. This is given for the Best Alpine Auricula Seedling.

The American Primrose Society Hybridizing Award is also presented to an individual making an outstanding contribution in the field of hybridizing.

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1975 SHOW DATES

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IN MEMORIAM

The American Primrose Society mourns the loss of another member, this time Mr. Cecil Monson of Ireland. Mr. Monson was a contributor to the Quarterly under the name C.S. Marsh, and was a grower of many choice primula. He was a good friend to many in our Society and we extend our condolences to Mrs. Monson.
THE AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT
January 1 to December 31, 1974

Balance January 1, 1974 $2,016.06

Expenses 1974
Quarterly Winter issue .................................................. 596.00
Editor Mrs. Frank Springer .............................................. 137.32
Mailing permit .............................................................. 50.00
5M Envelopes Star Printing Inc .................................... 148.68
Quarterly Spring issue .................................................... 784.00
Editor Mrs. Frank Springer .............................................. 127.80
Quarterly Summer issue .................................................. 884.00
Editor Mrs. Frank Springer .............................................. 129.60
Quarterly Fall issue ...................................................... 692.00
Editor Mrs. Frank Springer .............................................. 128.20
State of Washington (Dept. of Revenue) ......................... 38.88
Horticulture Ads ............................................................ 139.05
Postage Stamps .............................................................. 160.00
Misc. Expenses-Labels-Plaques-Typewriter repairs .......... 10.00

$4,136.66

Income 1974
Membership 1974-1977 .................................................... 2,678.38
Commercial Ads ............................................................ 284.00
Directory Sales .............................................................. 245.00
Quarterlies ................................................................. 114.55
Cards & Stationery ......................................................... 26.25
Show Sales ................................................................. 86.75
Gift from member Gary Box ........................................... 50.00
Interest on Savings A/c. 1974 ........................................... 55.78

Income $3,540.71
Balance 2,016.06
Total Income $5,556.77

Expenses $4,136.66
Balance December 31, 1974 $1,420.11

Submitted: Thelma W. Genheimer
Treasurer APS.

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The A.P.S. Slide Library
By Dorothy Dickson

New slides are needed for the A.P.S. slide library and glossy black and white prints (will accept clear color) for the Editor's use in future Quarterlies. In your travels when you take pictures of Primula, especially of species in the wild, take an extra one or two for the A.P.S. and make a note of the time and place, local conditions and companion plants, if any. We also need pictures of named hybrids showing their use in gardens.

We wish to thank Mr. James Sawyer for a good slide of Primula parryi and Mr. V.O. Virkan for some slides of P. malacoides passed on to the A.P.S. from the Kaunas Botanical Gardens of Lithuania.

We still need a few old numbers of the Quarterly to complete the permanent sets that will be available for the elected officers. Thanks to the generosity of Charles Gilman and Anita Alexander, both former Editors of the Quarterly; Mrs. Lloyd Quigley, President of the Oregon Primrose Society and Mrs. Erwin Graewin of Wisconsin there are only a few holes left to complete the sets.

Still needed are: 3 copies of Spring 1944, 3 copies of Summer 1944, 4 copies of Fall 1944, 4 copies of Winter 1946 and 3 copies of Spring 1949.

Method of Marking A Cross And Saving
By Lois Gamlam
Seattle, Washington

First, scrub off the varnish of a plastic bread clip with household cleanser. Rinse and dry and use these tags to mark with pencil your crosses — 1x2, etc.

The mother plant is always the first number and the father is the last. Clip these onto the stem of each flower that is hybridized. White waiting for the seed to mature so many times in the past if I wasn't there when the seed capsule split I would lose my seed, so I devised a method that is certainly successful for me. I take an old pair of nylon mesh stockings and cut them into squares — about 2 1/2 x 3 inches. When the seed capsule is almost ready to split I slip this square loosely over the capsule and clip it with my hybridizing tag below. If we should have a rain the nylon dries off in a flash and there is no mould either in the garden or when the seed is stored. Also, slugs cannot get to it and I get every one. When the capsule splits inside the stocking square, cut the stem and put the seed capsule into a jar in the refrigerator for winter storage. In the spring each cross is separate from the others and each is planted in a pot with its identifying tag. When it's time to transplant to a flat the tag marks the rows and when large plants are put into the garden the tag is stapled to flat stakes to mark those rows. So, from the beginning to the end the same tag remains with the same plants. Save the nylon squares. They are good for many years . . . they never wear out!
Dr. Charles A. Watson

By Mrs. H. R. Hanson
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Dr. Charles A. Watson was president of the Vancouver Island Rock & Alpine Garden Society in 1961-1962 and again from 1967 till his death in 1972. Under his guidance the society flourished and grew. He was a gentleman with a first-class brain combined with kindness and tact, plus an infectious enthusiasm with which he approached any subject of interest to him, and there were many. He was interested in Alpines and collecting, but Primulas were his first love. Mrs. Watson, the former Bruce Gilmer, was just as keen a gardener as her husband, and wherever they lived a choice garden took shape.

In 1963 after retiring as superintendent of the Veteran's Hospital in Victoria, Dr. & Mrs. Watson purchased Bryden Place on the West Saanich Road. This ten acre estate had the element Dr. Watson considered ideal for a garden. Orchard, shrubbery, lawns, trees, open spaces, hedges, and underground springs which surfaced in one place to form a small bog and natural pool. The property sloped westward to waterfront on Brentwood Bay. Although it supplied most of the requisites Dr. Watson considered essential for a perfect garden, it lacked one important feature, natural rock for a rock garden. This he set out to rectify at once.

The soil of Bryden Place was gritty loam over clay, and Dr. Watson was delighted to find Primulas did well in these conditions. He believed in gardening from the ground up. Rather than using insecticides for pests, he preferred to prepare the planting site thoroughly. A sprinkle of Bluestone went into each planting hole for Primulas, and he was never bothered with the vine and strawberry weevil which are such persistent pests in this area. Potash he supplied in the form of wood ash, and Primula seedlings were watered with a pink solution of Permanganate of Potash.

Dr. Watson had a good display of Primulas each spring. He received Polyanthus seedlings from David Barton of Gayborder Gardens, of the very beautiful Venetian Red Cowichan, from seed developed by Florence Bellis of Barnhaven. They did extremely well and made a fine showing. Selected forms of P. acaulis were everywhere, including the double Marie Crouse and the old lavender and white forms. His selection of P. Wanda were the finest I have seen, but one of his special pets were P. Cowichan, a fine dark red with sturdy red stems and well flushed leaves. This he declared was the original from the garden of the late Buchanan Simpson of Cowichan Bay in 1930. Since many Primula growers have made similar claims, it remains a moot point, at least it was a very fine form. The Cowslips (P. veris) were Mrs. Watson's special joy, and she also grew the green Show Auricula Mrs. Rae Berry gave her after judging our Show one year. This was increased and spread among her friends. It turns up on the Show bench from time to time. Dr. Watson had a very fine white P. Juliae and a beautiful wine Jack in the Green. These two are in my garden now and I am spreading them to as many gardens as I can.

Mrs. Susan Watson gave Dr. Watson a flat of double Auricula seedlings. Several of these came fully double and a fine color from golden to soft chamois. These too are now spread among friends.

The natural pool area provided ideal conditions of P. denticulata and a fine drift of P. florindae and P. beesiana. It was here that the tiny P. farinosa grew well and seeded itself into a sizeable patch of its own under high shade, wet winter conditions, and fairly dry summers. Surprisingly the Asiatic P. rosea did not do well here, but thrived in the rockery he created in the open. Dr. Watson had a very good color form of P. viscosa, and his ambition was to obtain the white P. nivalis, which Farrer says is just an albino form of P. pubescens or perhaps P. helveticas. He has P. viscosa which I hope to increase enough for a planting in the Society's Rock Garden in Beacon Hill Park. This Rock Garden was in the planning stage when Dr. Watson died, but he visualized its potential and was most enthusiastic about establishing it as our Society's contribution to the beauty of Victoria. It will ever be associated with his name and his white P. Juliae and wine Jack in the Green are already thriving there.

The V.I. Rock & Alpine Garden Society has undertaken to establish a Rock Garden, supply the plants, and maintain it in perpetuity. The area chosen provides natural rock outcrops, splendid crevices for planting, gently sloping areas for Rhododendrons under oak trees, natural pool area above, around which the moisture loving Primulas can be massed to follow the soak away fissures to a Primula bed below. Saxatile varieties can be placed in almost perfect surroundings. Members of the Society gather each Saturday weather permits, to weed, clear debris, and extend the plantings. A wonderful project to be associated with, and members are proud to be part of its creation. The Dr. Charles A. Watson Primula Trophy awarded by this Society for
PART OF THE ROCK GARDEN — Given to Victoria, B. C. by the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society in Beacon Hill Park. Saturday mornings members weed, collect debris and add to the plantings. Each section is to be completed before further areas are attempted. This was a special project of Dr. Watson's and it also commemorated the 50 year anniversary as a Society.

The best Primula in the Show held each spring, is coveted by all members who grow Primulas. Truly the legacy he left this Society is a rich and wonderful one.

The annual Spring Show of the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society will be held April 25 and 26 in the Memorial Hall, 951 Rockland Avenue, Victoria, B.C. Over 500 plants will be displayed. Show hours are 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Saturday. Admission 50 cents.

Alexander Pope—

Nothing is foreign, parts relate to the whole
One in all extending all preserving soul
Connects with each being, greatest with the least,
Made beast in aid of Man, and Man of beast;
All served, all serving, nothing stands alone;
The chain holds on, and where it ends unknown.

Pollinating Polyanthus and Acaulis Primroses

By Dick Charlton
Gresham, Oregon

Many of the members of the American Primrose Society know at least the basics of hand pollinating. However, many times I have been asked questions that lead me to believe there is a need for more information on this subject.

Let's start with the polyanthus primrose. This I believe would be the most important one to start with. Especially to the beginner. If all you are interested in is one or two pods of seed, the plants can stay right where they are. If you do this special care must be taken to protect your seed plant from breakage to the pollinated umbel, (dogs, cats, husbands and children playing ball etc.) Bugs like the fresh seed. So you have to protect from that problem. If more seed is required you will want a place to work. This can be accomplished by lifting and potting or by placing in an especially made bench. We do some of each. But most of the three or four hundred plants hand pollinated at our place are placed in a bench. This bench is in an unheated greenhouse. Some kind of cover is needed to protect from excess wind and rain. Which we get lots of during the pollinating season.

Now that where to put the plants for pollinating is settled we have to select the plants. If at all possible I like to cross pin to thrum. Both ways of course. This gives a good balance of pins and thrums for the next years crosses. I also believe the seed set is greater. And in the case of two plants that have come from divisions it keeps you from selfing a plant.

Most colors are already set if plants are used that came from good hand pollinated seed. So in order to get seed from your own plants you must select the best that you have. As an example for two good plants in white. Watch the eye. Is it pale yellow or greenish gold or red. These should be matched. Look for good substance in the petal tissue. Strong upright stems and short pedicles. Foliage should be in balance with the flower stalks. Dark green crinkled leaves are especially eye pleasing.

The qualifications just listed for plant form is about standard with all polyanthus.

In the yellows it is necessary to be careful of shades. The same holds true for pinks and blues. With pink and blue the centers should be watched and match these too.

Well, let's put those plants in the bench or pots. The plants if wet should be left under cover until they are dry. When dry the plant should be groomed. Take out all dead or damaged leaves. Also old blossoms. The later in the season the more careful you have to be. If it has been warm pinch off all blossoms until the most open is a tight bud. No bee will have been there. nor will the stigma have been selfed. The wind can self a thrum styled florets.

Now that the plant is groomed of all unwanted blossoms we can start.

With a pin styled flower you must take the corolla or pip (herein/after called a flower), between thumb and index finger of each hand. Applying outward and downward pressure will split the flower in two and separate
More About ... Polyanthus and Acaulis

the flower from pedicle. Each flower should be handled like this. You could just pull the entire blossom off. Two undesirable things would happen if you did. First the stigma would be selfed. Look where the pollen is. Worse still the stigma would be pulled off entirely. For now let’s stick to one flower at a time. Later you can strip a whole plant if you want to.

Now let’s go to the thrum. This one has the pollen bearing anthers exposed. Most plants you can remove the entire flower with one hand. I prefer to split as with a pin styled flower. Removing only one half of the flower. Remove the second half when placing the pin pollen. Take this flower and fold the outside back and hold together between thumb and forefinger in such a manner as to leave the pollen bearing anthers sticking out. Brush these anthers on the stigma of the pin styled flower. Not so hard as to break the style. Make sure the stigma is well covered with pollen. You should have no trouble seeing it. If you can’t see it get another blossom. If it turns out there is no pollen wait a few days. This allows the pollen to ripen. Happens most often in cold weather.

Next we take the pin styled flower and carefully place pollen on the thrum styled stigma. As with the thrum the half flower will have to be bent back to expose the pollen bearing anthers. These of course are almost all the way into the throat. A little practice will make this easy. Just get the pollen exposed and use lightly as with a brush. Remember don’t be stingy with the pollen. Keep going until you get tired or out of plant. Harvest the seed as soon as ripe. The pods will open on the end and expose many nice dark seeds. Harvest at intervals so you don’t lose the first you pollinated. Place in paper bags. Tie the top and put in a warm dry place to finish curing. When dry clean from pods and chaff. Put seed in envelopes, pill bottles etc. and place in refrigerator.

If you don’t have pin and thrum, you can cross pin to pin or thrum to thrum. Some people don’t mind this. Also you can self a plant. Groom the plant. Pull the flowers off and apply the pollen on the same flower. Don’t leave the petals on. If you do, some bee will come along and help you. How about some nice blue pollen on your choice pink? As soon as the petal tissue is gone there is nothing to attract a bee.

Acaulis are pollinated in the same manner. They are harder of course, as they don’t stand up as the polyanthus do.

Now if you decide that you want to make a new color or series go right ahead. But keep track of it all the time so there is no way it can get back onto the originals. The first cross F1s could be real nice but when you recrossed the best of this bunch F2s, things could be all messed up. Or you might be on the way to something new and exciting. You’ll never know until you try.

Now I know there are other ideas on this subject. This article is not meant as the only way. Just the way we at the Wagon Wheel learned.

Have lots of fun now. And remember if you made more seed than you need, don’t be stingy. Donate it to the Seed Exchange. Good seed is always in short supply.
WISH CORNER

The Quarterly offers this column as an aid to members trying to locate specific seed or plants.
Send your requests 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.

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I wish for:
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