President's Message

January is upon us and once again we are probably full of New Year resolutions — perhaps to grow more primulas, to sow all that seed that has been hiding in the back of the fridge for the last five years, to really remember to cross pollinate those special plants in the greenhouse, or to never, ever let the seedlings dry out! Most important of all, I hope you resolve to introduce more primula lovers to the APS. Increasing membership will be our greatest goal this coming year and if each member enrolled just one new person, the society would be in great shape. With the great surge of interest in gardening in U.S., we now have a golden opportunity to increase the general public's awareness of primulas. Members who live near parks or botanical gardens might look to see if primulas are featured and if not — why not? In the Bellevue Botanic Garden situated east of Seattle (just four and a half years old), a wonderful rock garden has recently been created. Along with alpine plants, I helped plant a number of primulas that hopefully will attract the attention of visitors to the garden. A collection of named Julia hybrids, marginatas, and Primula allionii hybrids were a few of the varieties planted.

We have gained a few members through the Internet and I am sure as time goes on more people will be aware of the society through this medium. Recently I received an e-mail asking if I could help with information about Evening Primrose Oil tablets for dogs! (Apparently the sender had heard that they were effective for getting rid of fleas.) I did direct the sender towards the correct plant genus and although I did not think we had gained a prospective member, it was reassuring that the APS Home Page was being read.

A book that I have recently been given is called Tasha Tudor's Garden and it is a sheer delight. She is an artist, getting up now in years, living in a 17th century style farmhouse in Vermont with a wonderful garden, and primroses are some of her favorite plants. Apparently she only belonged to two societies — the Welsh Corgi League and the APS! We must feel honored. I close on that bright note and look forward to a great year ahead.

June Skidmore, Mercer Island, Washington

Primroses

Quarterly of the American Primrose Society

Volume 55 Number 1

Winter 1997

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ON THE COVER

Primula luteola in the garden. See Ann Lunn's Plant Portrait on Page 15.

— Photo by Jay G. Lunn
Primroses and More in Japan
by Carole P. Smith, Hudson, Ohio

 Viewing *Primula sieboldii* growing wild in the Tajimagahara Primrose Preserve along the lower Arakawa River in Japan is an experience enjoyed by few Americans. Both Paul Held, founder of the American Sakurasoh Association, and I had that opportunity last spring as the guests of Mr. Gishu Aoki and his wife in Urawa City near Tokyo. Although Paul visited early in April and I was there in early May, we both saw primula in many shades of pink blooming in the semi-wetland area, interspersed with wild hosta, euphorbia, polygonatum, heracleum, grasses, and other plants. For several weeks every spring, individuals and whole families use narrow boardwalks to view the display of perhaps a million primula in the field, which is designated as a special national monument by the central government.

Mr. Aoki has written about the Tajimagahara Preserve in *Primroses*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Summer, 1994) and about Sakurasoh (Show *P. sieboldii*) in Japan in *Primroses*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (Fall, 1995). His job with the Urawa City Board of Education includes responsibility for the Primrose Preserve.

I first contacted Mr. Aoki before my trip when I wrote many letters to members of APS and NARGS in Kyoto and Tokyo, explaining about myself, the time of my visit, and asking for nurseries where I might buy plants. I received more responses and invitations than I could accommodate, but I was able to meet with Mr. Aoki and three others while in Japan visiting my son.

Early on the morning of my visit, Mr. Aoki met me at the train station and we went to Nihonkaki Nursery, where I had the difficult task of choosing a reasonable number of plants to take back to the U.S. Nihonkaki, a huge indoor garden center, had several large rock garden displays that rivaled any I had seen at the Chelsea Flower Show in England. I purchased several small hosta (giboshi) and received one as a gift from the owner of Nihonkaki, who was introduced to me by Mr. Aoki.

From Nihonkaki we went to a park containing examples of residential gardens, each with the estimated price that a landscaping company might charge. My favorite was one of the most expensive! Afterwards, I was invited to the Aoki home. Mrs. Aoki, who loves American children's literature, had prepared lunch with the help of their two daughters. Mr. Aoki's garden includes *Acer japonica*, *Paeania suffruticosa*, hosta, camellia, iris, and potted bonsai. Mr. Aoki presented me with two giboshi from his garden and two Sakurasoh (*Primula sieboldii*) in bloom. (In spite of the bare-root procedure required to bring the plants home, all of them lived.)

We also visited the gardens of three neighbors. Mr. and Mrs. Kamio had many interesting plants and shrubs in a very tiny garden beside their house. In the second garden, Mrs. Kazama had built up an earthen "mountain" supported by the garage, with many beautiful plants including a wisteria arbor and an exquisite *Paeania suffruticosa*. The tea garden of Mrs. Shimane, an 87-year-old tea ceremony master teacher, was full of green-textured plants surrounded by a bamboo fence. Outside the fence, azaleas and another *Paeania suffruticosa* were blooming. I was allowed to climb through a two-foot square door into one of the tea ceremony rooms, and learned that the small opening forced samurai of old to remove their swords, ensuring a peaceful tea ceremony experience by encouraging humility and equality.

Inside the house, Mrs. Shimane served us green tea in beautiful tea bowls. Then, as a fitting climax to a wonderful day, we traveled out to the Tajimagahara field to enjoy the primula in their natural setting.

**YOKOHAMA**

Another interesting day was spent with APS member Mr. Yoshito Iwasa of Yokohama, who helped me identify many of his trees, shrubs, perennials, and bulbs by sharing a list of more than 350 plants growing in his garden. A tall *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* looked down on camellia, gardenia, jasmine, and magnolia shrubs. I was a little envious that he could grow *Davidia involucrata* and other plants not hardy in Ohio. There were numerous species of tricyrtis, iris, hardy orchids, arisaema, epimedium, and eleven varieties of oxalis. *Primula* included *P. japonica*, *P. kisoana* and *P. sieboldii*. At the entry was a small rock garden with dwarf hosta from Korea and a pot with a new dwarf skabiosa named "Heige Blue". After we viewed the garden, Mrs. Iwasa served tea and a small melon. I also tasted a steamed sweetened pudding made of kudzu that is specially made for Boys' Day celebrated on May 5th. Mr. Iwasa showed me his extensive botanical library with many publications in English that aid him in his job as senior managing director of the Sakata Seed Company.

In the afternoon, Mr. Iwasa took me to the Sakata Garden Center. It was during Golden Week holidays and the warm weather had brought out many customers to purchase plants for their gardens. I bought a white *Lysichiton kamtschaticense* (which does not have the distinctive odor of the American native skunk cabbage), two delicate *Iris gracilipes* (one blue and one white), and...
a Glaucidium palmatum in bloom. Mr. Iwasa warned me they might not survive the trip home, but I was willing to try.

**YET MORE SHOPPING**

The third APS member to respond was Takisumi Susa of Tokyo. He generously offered to purchase some plants and deliver them to my son in Tokorozawa-shi before I arrived, in case it was too difficult for me to go to a nursery. His offer was greatly appreciated and I hope we will have the opportunity to meet someday. I was able to make purchases at several nurseries, including the garden section of one of the large department stores, which often stock rare and desirable plants. At the Seibu Depaato (department store) I examined but did not purchase plants — with price tags up to $400 — in a locked cage. I finally chose a Primula sieboldii or Sakurasoh with fancy magenta flowers, a small white-flowered primula, probably *P. denticulata*, two Aquilegia flabellata var. nana, Viola sieboldiana, a variegated giboshi (hosta) and a red-leaved thalictrum. As I debated the price of the latter, 2000 yen or about $20, a wise-looking woman shook her head and said, "Muzukashii!" Even my limited Japanese vocabulary included the word for "Difficult!" I disregarded her warning and regretted it later when the thalictrum was the only plant confiscated by the USDA inspector back in the U.S. I was fortunate to discover that the main Tokyo post office was open 24 hours every day of the year, so we stopped there on our way to the airport. I filled out a Customs Declaration, listed the plants as "Botanical specimens" with the name of each one, valued them as "Under $50 — No commercial value" and marked them as gifts. The postal clerk told me that U.S. Customs would not allow shipment of plants, but he finally agreed to take them when my son explained in Japanese that I had a plant permit. Actually, the permit was irrelevant but it helped persuade the clerk to accept the packages.

When we arrived at the Chicago airport my sister and I acknowledged on the Customs Declaration that we were carrying live plants, so we were shifted to the USDA inspection line. We were declaring twelve plants each, the legal limit. The inspector, appearing unfamiliar with plants and afraid of making a mistake, was not pleased that she had to OK the plants. I told her I had a permit even though I knew (1) it was not acceptable at the port of Chicago and (2) we did not need one because the number of plants was allowable. She became friendlier when I reminded her that we were trying to comply with the law instead of smuggling in our purchases.

She did confiscate the thalictrum because I had not identified the species and one type of thalictrum was listed in her regulations as a noxious weed. She told me she would mail the plant back to me at my expense if her supervisor could identify it. I never saw it again.

The airmailed boxes arrived at my home just four days after I did. I potted them up immediately, as I had done with the ones I carried back. Some did not survive, possible due to the shock of the bare root procedure. Others, including a very tiny *Primula modesta* var. fauriae and a *P. denticulata* in bloom, seemed to decline more slowly because I may not have provided a sharp enough potting medium. Of three *P. sieboldii* or Sakurasoh carried home while in bloom, two survived and are growing well in my garden. The hosta, hemerocallis, epimedium, viola and asarum seemed to tolerate the process and are also growing. Hopefully the *Disporum flavens* is only dormant. I will find out in the spring.

My trip to Japan was a totally exhilarating, enjoyable, exhausting experience enriched by the help and hospitality of all the people who responded. Truly, gardeners share the same language.

**IMPORTING PLANTS**

Before leaving for Japan I had applied for a USDA plant import permit, in order to learn the regulations and have a list of permitted and forbidden plants. But the permit is valid only at certain designated ports of entry. What few tourists know is that any person can bring in up to twelve (12) plants through any airport without a permit if certain conditions are met. Most herbaceous perennials are allowed. Woody plant material is either forbidden or requires a permit plus being subject to a period of quarantine. Each plant must be thoroughly washed and all soil removed. Each plant must also be labeled with its botanical name, and a master list should be available.

The night before our flight home I cleaned my plants, wrapped the bare roots in damp sphagnum, put them in plastic bags and then into a carton to carry on the plane. Since I had purchased more plants than I could legally carry back with me, I chose to mail back the less fragile ones. I followed the procedure used Mr. Shinpei Miyazaki of Tokyo, who had received one of my letters and mailed me a box of plants. I wrapped the bare roots in damp sphagnum I had brought with me, packaged them into three small boxes, each containing less than twelve plants and weighing less than two pounds. I wrote the botanical name of each plant on the outside of the box. I was fortunate to discover that the main Tokyo post office was open 24 hours every day of the year, so we stopped there on our way to the airport. I filled out a Customs Declaration, listed the plants as "Botanical specimens" with the name of each one, valued them as "Under $50 — No commercial value" and marked them as gifts. The postal clerk told me that U.S. Customs would not allow shipment of plants, but he finally agreed to take them when my son explained in Japanese that I had a plant permit. Actually, the permit was irrelevant but it helped persuade the clerk to accept the packages.

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1997 APS National Show

The Tacoma Chapter of the American Primrose Society will host the 1997 APS National Show and Annual Meeting at the Lakewood Mall in Tacoma on Saturday and Sunday, April 12 - 13, 1997. As this is the only primrose show in Washington state this year, all Washington chapters — Tacoma, Seattle, Washington State, Eastside — are working together to make it a very good show. Show hours will be:

10 a.m. - 6 p.m. on Saturday
11 a.m. - 6 p.m. on Sunday

The Lakewood Mall is located at 10509 Gravelly Lake Drive SW, Tacoma, Washington.

The show will feature a combination of show plants and sale plants. The hours for show entries are:

6 - 9 p.m. on Friday, April 11
8 - 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 12

Any plants arriving after 9:30 a.m. Saturday will be benched for display only and will not compete in the show.

For those members wishing to attend the APS National Show from afar, a Hospitality Committee has been formed to provide housing accommodations for those desiring them.

For show information, or to offer help or suggestions, contact:
Candy Strickland
8518 - 28th Ave. E
Tacoma, WA 98445
Tel.: (206) 531-4449

For information about, or to offer rooms for, our Hospitality Committee, contact:
June Skidmore
6730 W. Mercer Way
Mercer Island, WA 98040
Tel.: (206) 232-5766
Email: JSkidm4011@aol.com

What Makes a Winner

By Thea Oakley, Redmond, Washington

What makes any primrose a winner? Is it color, blossoms, or foliage? If you have never exhibited a primrose, it is hard to know when, how, or where to start. So let’s start at the beginning.

You just brought home a new Polyanthus primrose; it is spring and the primrose is blooming. The best thing to do is put it in the garden — don’t leave it in the pot! It would like morning sun, moisture, and a little plant food after it has bloomed out.

Your primrose will grow all summer and it should make offsets. So in the fall we can divide it; in the Pacific Northwest, we can do this in September when the weather is still warm but not hot. Dig the plant out of the ground and divide it. How? I cut off the leaves and trim the roots. A good guide is to lay the plant in the palm of your hand, close your hand around it, cut the leaves leaving 1 inch showing above your fingers, and trim two inches off the roots. I know this sounds like you are killing the plant, but you are really persuading it to grow new roots and new leaves. After you replant this poor little primrose, give it some plant food. I use a Startup or a vitamin B1 mixture very low in nitrogen (4-12-10). The last feeding is in October, 0-10-10, no nitrogen! Check the primrose every once in a while to clean off the dead leaves; don’t let the plant dry out over the winter.

After the last frost, wake up your primroses with a 20-20-20 fertilizer, followed up with a low nitrogen plant food (0-10-10). I use each at half strength.

* Fertilizer contains nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K), expressed as a percentage of the product: N-P-K.
It's Show Time
By Rosetta Jones, Shelton, Washington

The APS National Show is coming up in April in Tacoma, and members might wonder how they can enter and show their plants.

If you have never entered plants in a show, the first thing to do is to obtain a show schedule. The instructions will give you a much better picture of what you need to do. Study the different divisions and you are sure to remember some plants in your garden that would fit into a section of the schedule.

It is best to pot your plants at least two weeks before the show. Use a pot that balances the size of the plant. Water well and fertilize; a 0-10-10* formula can help the plant recover from shock of transplanting. Give protection from the weather (and slugs!) in a greenhouse, covered deck, or cold frame. Even a pane of glass over them will help if you have no other means of keeping them out of the weather.

It is a good idea to use water absorbent crystals such as Agrosokè™ in the soil. The crystals absorb up to forty times their weight in water. The roots attach to the crystals and take water from them so that if the soil dries, the plant still has a source of water. By Sunday at the show, many plants show stress from drying out in the warm, dry indoor atmosphere. If you water well and use the crystals before the show, the plant will not need watering again.

If the plants have been grown in pots, you can put the crystals in by making three or four holes in the soil with a dowel or pencil and adding a few crystals. You can generally find this product in garden stores. By the way, it is great in hanging baskets and tubbed plants.

Grooming can make any plant look like a winner. The first step is to clean soil from the pot and leaves. You may have to mist the leaves to get all the dust. Remove any damaged leaves and damaged or spent blooms. Be careful not to remove too many leaves — especially if the weather has been hard on the plants. Sometimes you can trim a little damage off the edges of the leaves.

Acaulis primroses should have a central mound of bloom with a collar of leaves around the edge of the plant. This can be accomplished by gently pulling the blooms up through the leaves. Arranging the blossoms really works wonders on the appearance of the plants.

The umbel of the polyanthus primrose should be sturdy and upright. Any weak side blooms could be removed if you have enough remaining bloom. If there are too many blooms in the umbel, remove a few of them so that the rest will lay flat.

Species primulas are often shy of a lot of bloom. Don't worry about that. Just put them in clean pots with damaged leaves and damaged or spent flowers removed. Many species do not bloom profusely and the judges know that.

When you bring your plants to the show, should you need help with the final grooming, there will be someone glad to help. Remember that your plant is just as special as anyone else's.

On show day and before judging has started, you are free to make a final turn around the tables to check your plants. If the plants have been brought in the night before, very often over night a bloom may wilt or a slug may still be around to do a little damage (from someone else's plant, of course). All plants have a good side, so check to see that yours is placed on the table with its good side toward the front of the table.

See, that was easy. Now pot up those plants and bring them — we can't have a show without them!

* Fertilizer containing no nitrogen, 10% phosphorus and 10% potassium.

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Editor's Calendar

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<td>April 19 - 20, 1997</td>
<td>Valley Hi &amp; Oregon Chapters' Show, Beaverton, Oregon</td>
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<td>April 26 - 27, 1997</td>
<td>BC Primrose Group Show</td>
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As this 1985 photo from the editor's archives shows, Rosetta's primrose displays perfect form.
Another Show, Another Interesting Plant

By Cyrus Happy III, Tacoma, Washington

We were on the 6 a.m. ferry. Behind us was Victoria and another grand Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society Show. Ahead was the Vancouver show at VanDusen Gardens. Judging started at 9 a.m., and I was going to be a little late.

At the show I took a quick look down the long table that held the Primula section and began judging. In Canada one judge does one section — with or without clerk.

I soon realized several of the big growers were not exhibiting this year. Where were Thea Foster’s garden auriculas and John Kerridge’s alpine auriculas and gold laced polyanthus? Ah well, judges are not supposed to know things like that.

As I neared the end of my section, a clear lilac-blue small polyanthus kept catching my eye. Finally I looked at the tag. It was a new name to me — *Primula repentina*. This superb little plant was clearly a vernales with smallish round or kidney-shaped leaves and 6-inch polyanthus stems. It looked like *P. renifolia* except for the longer poly stems.

I gave it “Best Primula” award; then all the judges gave it “Best in Show”. It was beautifully grown and presented, and it was certainly rare.

Vera Peck, the grower, said it came as seed from an eastern German collector, Rudy Schlamm, in 1988. The seed was collected in the Caucasus in 1987.

The plant is described in a German work, *Primaular*, by Koehle as follows: “Roots heavy rhizomes, flowers yellow. First found in 1957 in Caucasus. Rediscovered in 1972. Similar to *P. renifolia*. Leaves round.”

Vera said two seeds grew from the collected seed. The plants have multiplied but have not produced seed. She also said she was uneasy about the name. I am too.

Vera said she grows the plant in a rather shady location. That would account for the six-inch stems. And Koehle says the flowers are yellow. I lean toward the plant’s being *Primula renifolia*.

Vera Peck's prize winning primula at Vancouver Rock and Alpine Show, 1996.

To Show ... Or Not to Show Your Plants?

By Maedythe Martin, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

HOW DO YOU ANSWER?

You are madly keen about auriculas or primroses. You want nothing more than to find a kindred spirit who also is madly keen and also wants to talk about and share your interest in the plants. So how do you find these precious gardening friends?

Joining a society dedicated to the particular flower, like the American Primrose Society, is a great way to start, but another way is to attend a show of primroses and auriculas and talk to the people there. Not only are you likely to find some of these new precious friends, but you will also have a chance to look at a whole bunch of the plants you love. You may even be able to do this with your new-found fellow-enthusiast. This must be the very best way of learning more about your current grand plant passion.

But to have a primrose show, people must bring in their plants. It is an effort, and also a stress, on both the plant and the exhibitor, but considering the benefits, it is worth it. Over the years, I have exhibited primroses and auriculas in at least fifteen of our local society shows, and the things I have learned, and the people I have met and had the opportunity to talk to, are very satisfying. This is one good reason why you might consider showing plants.

Now some growers say they are not competitive and don’t want to be part of a competitive show. I understand this. It is fun the first few times you win a ribbon, and then it is bitterly disappointing when you have a treasure that no one else seems to appreciate. But if you can set the ego aside and use the opportunity of a show to learn and to compare notes with other growers, another dimension opens up.

Comparing plants, after all, was how primrose and auricula shows first developed. You may recall that gold-laced polyanthus (admittedly a special group of primroses) and show auriculas are called exhibition plants. Florists’ societies of yore began as a meeting for locals to compare exhibition plants and have a pint. The name of an auricula plant recently seen in England, “Gizabrun” is, I am told, Scottish for “give us a brown [ale]” combining both pleasures — auricula plant chat and ale-drinking — all in one phrase! Quite often exhibitors today continue the tradition and get a chance to socialize at a restaurant meal, during or after the show. The information exchanged on plants (we are confining ourselves to locals to compare exhibition plants and show auriculas) and show auriculas is limitless.

Accounts of early florist society meetings clearly indicate a social aspect. The late Ruth Duthie, in her little book *Florists’ Flowers and Societies* notes that an advertisement in the 1707 *Norwich Gazette* states that “The Florists Feast or Entertainment for lovers of Flowers and Gardens will be kept at Mr. Thomas Riggs in St. Swithin’s Lane on Tuesday the 8th day of July next...” The *Craftsman*, again quoted from Ruth...
Duthie’s book, reports, “On Tuesday last, a great Feast of Gardeners call’d Florists was held in the Dog in Richmond Hill, at which were present about 130 in Number; after Dinner several Shew’d their Flowers (most of them Auricula’s) and five ancient and judicious Gardeners were Judges to determine whose flowers excelled…”

“Amateur florists” set standards for their exhibition flowers and worked towards them. Perhaps the artificiality of this notion does not appeal to you, but the green-edged flowers so admired today would not exist had not some amateur florist, a couple of hundred years ago, discerned the tinges of green at the edge of some auricula flower petals and set about breeding these unreal but somehow compelling green flowers. Often it is only when you have many of the same kind of plant, say alpine auriculas, side by side with others of their kind that appealing characteristics stand out — the depth of color in the petals and the sturdiness of the plant. And if you are feeling nostalgic for former times, pots very like these are now sometimes to be found in your corner hardware store at a reasonable price. One could pot up a set of three auriculas with history, such as the old reliable ‘Argus’, in single crowns, for a small display if not an entry.

I have also noticed that some exhibitors have a knack for setting plants in a pot in a way that makes the plant look really good. Not all of us can do this right off, but if you spot someone with this ability, ask if you can watch them “pot up” for the show sometime, and learn from them.

Read the rules for the show and learn if it is the custom to top-dress the pot with chips or moss or fresh sieved compost — or nothing at all. And at the end of the show, make yourself a solemn oath to replant those poor plants, unless you usually keep them in pots, with appropriate care, all year round. There have been many promising seedlings that have not seen the bench at the end of the show, don’t detract from this effort with a mud-stained flower pot. It gives the wrong impression!

Auriculas at shows in England have traditionally been shown as a single crown in a tall terra cotta pot with no rim, called a “long Tom”. You don’t have to go to that length in North America (most growers would ask you who is Tom) but if you are feeling nostalgic for former times, pots very like these are now sometimes to be found in your corner hardware store at a reasonable price. One could pot up a set of three auriculas with history, such as the old reliable ‘Argus’, in single crowns, for a small display if not an entry.

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REFERENCES

PRIMULA LUTEOLA

At first glance, it looks like a delicate, more refined version of a yellow polyanthus. Closer examination, however, reveals longer and narrower leaves, bright dark green on both sides. The leaf margins are distinctly toothed and often regularly double toothed.

The flower stem can be taller than the average polyanthus, reaching a height of about 12 inches. The flower stem is farinose toward the top, as are the individual flower stems and calyces. The umbel boasts up to 25 primrose-yellow flowers. There occasionally may be two superimposed umbels. Flowers appear in May.

This gem, Primula luteola, hails from the Caucasus and Eastern Turkey. It is a close relative of P. rosea which resembles in form, but not color. It is also closely allied to P. auriculata in the section Oreophlomis; in fact, it was once classified as P. auriculata var. luteola. Like P. auriculata, it is heterostylos (flowers can be either pin or thrum) and is a tetraploid with a chromosome count of 44.

In its native habitat, P. luteola is found in wet meadows or near springs in the alpine zone at 4200 to 9000 feet. It is surprisingly easy to grow at lower elevations. In the Portland, Oregon, garden where the front cover photograph was taken, the plants were grown in well-drained soil that was not allowed to dry out in the summer. Plants received morning sun and afternoon shade in a border with rhododendrons and meconopsis.

Primula luteola grows readily from seed. A population of the species may be maintained by division after flowering, but they usually do not live more than five years, so it is best to keep some seed handy. Self pollination may not yield many seeds; copious amounts do result from crossing a pin flower with a thrum or vice versa. Be aware that it does die back to a resting bud for the winter.

Although the species was introduced into cultivation in the United Kingdom around 1867, it is not now commonly found in nurseries. Look for seed of P. luteola in various plant society seed lists. It is well worth the search!

SOURCES
Sowing and Growing Barnhaven Primroses

By Angela Bradford, Langerhouad, Plouzelambre, France

You've just received your APS Seed Exchange order or a Barnhaven seed order and you are thrilled, but a little apprehensive. Here are some notes aimed at helping you enjoy the beauty of primroses at their best.

STORE YOUR SEEDS CAREFULLY

If you do not wish to sow your seeds immediately, place the packets in a plastic box or screw-top jar and store them in the fridge (not in the freezing compartment). They can remain viable for several years.

USE AN APPROPRIATE COMPOST

Primula seedlings are very sensitive to concentrations of mineral salts found in fertilizers. If the mixture is too strong, the seedlings may not grow at all, or the young roots may be killed. Always use a seed compost and look for one that is as gritty and fibrous as possible. Primula roots need air to grow and develop. If the compost is too fine, a few waterings will drive all the air out.

SOW THINLY

One packet of seeds to a standard seed tray is about right. Very small seed (Primula reidii, P. capitata, P. denticulata) should be mixed with dry silver sand before sowing.

DO NOT COVER THE SEEDS

Primula seedlings need light and air to germinate. Sow on the surface of the compost and do not cover with soil. Seeds that are slower to germinate (double primroses, hose-in-hose, jack-in-the-green, auriculas and most of the species) can be sown on a layer of vermiculite or very fine gravel over the compost. Water them in with a fine rose. Place a seed tray of the same size over your sowings (to protect the seeds from driving rain, foraging birds, and the neighbor's cat) and place the whole thing in a shady spot outside. Weight the cover down with a stone. Inspect your sowings regularly and water when necessary. Remove the covers as soon as the seeds have sprouted and sprinkle lightly with compost. Protect against slugs. Polyanthus and primroses should show signs of sprouting in 2 – 3 weeks. Auriculas are slower. Sieboldii may take as long as 6 weeks so should be sown as early as possible. Most of the species need natural freezing and thawing to get them started, so sow early.

KEEP SOWINGS COOL AND MOIST

High temperatures inhibit germination. Drying out — especially at the moment when the seed is about to sprout — can be fatal. Unless you live somewhere with very severe winters, do not be tempted to plant your seeds under glass, as temperatures can rise much too high on sunny days even in winter. Ideal germinating temperatures are around 12°C – 15°C. Lower temperatures do no harm at all, but disaster looms if they go above 18°C. NEVER use a heated propagator. We get best results by sowing in February. Frosts can aid germination, but if you live in an area with very severe winters, you should probably delay sowing until March or April. You should still get flowers the following spring if you sow before the end of May. But the later you leave it, the harder it is to maintain the right conditions and your plants may not establish so easily.

DON'T PRICK OUT TOO SOON

Primula seem to establish much more quickly if the roots are well branched before they are moved. Wait until you have at least four leaves before you prick out; but waiting a little longer won't hurt them — especially if you have sown thinly. A feed with a high potash fertilizer about a week beforehand seems to be appreciated. Primula reidii develop extremely slowly and are best left for a full year in their seed trays before pricking out.

PLANT IN APPROPRIATE CONDITIONS

Primroses and Polyanthus

The Barnhaven primroses and polyanthus are bred to be hardy and are tolerant of a large range of conditions. But the wild plants from which they are descended are woodland plants and their plants are happiest in humus rich, well drained soil that should not be allowed to dry out. The ideal place would be under deciduous trees or in a north or east facing bed. Waterlogged conditions in winter, full sun on frozen foliage, or hot, dry conditions in summer are likely to be fatal. All plants benefit from being divided and replanted every two to three years, but this is essential for the doubles. For best results, feed the plants with a weak solution of tomato fertilizer every ten days from the time the buds start to form until the first flowers open. A “thank-you” feed when flowering is finished also helps, but don't feed late in the season and don't use high nitrogen fertilizers.

Auriculas

Auriculas need a moisture retentive soil, but one that drains well in winter. Autumn leaves should be cleared away from the crowns of the plants and a mulch of gravel added to guard against rot. They will tolerate more sun than the polyanthus, but should never be allowed to dry out.

Sieboldii

The sieboldii are woodland plants that thrive in the same conditions as the polyanthus, but they will not tolerate any trace of lime in the soil. Plant them under deciduous trees and make sure they are well supplied with humus. They form large clumps, so give them room. Their leaves start to die down for the season and don't use high nitrogen fertilizers.
Sowing and Growing Barnhaven Primroses continued

**Candelabras and *P. florindae***

These are both easy to grow as long as they have moist conditions all the year round. If allowed to dry out they will weaken and die. Candelabras hybridize readily with each other and self-sow a profusion of new seedlings. They lose their leaves in winter. *Primula florindae* is often slow to get started again in the spring.

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**P. reidii**

*Primula reidii* is a difficult plant, best grown in an alpine house, though you could try it out of doors if you live in an area where the ground is covered by snow for most of the winter. It must be kept as dry as possible in winter, but needs to be consistently moist during the growing period. A gritty soil and semi-shade seem to suit it best.

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Angela Bradford owns and operates the mail-order seed business Barnhaven Primroses, Langerhouad, 22420 Plouzelambre, France, Tel: (33) 96.35.31.54, Fax: (33) 96.35.31.55

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**American Primrose Society Bookstore**

Hot off the presses: **The Barnhaven Book**, by Angela Bradford, 1996 — $12 US

The history of Barnhaven and the development of Barnhaven strains, advice on sowing seeds and growing all the primulas in Barnhaven’s catalogue, full descriptions of the series with eight color plates, how to produce your own seed, flower arranging with primulas, plus a catalogue of Barnhaven seed offerings.

Plus special prices on these books:

- **Auriculas Their Care and Cultivation**, by Brenda Hyatt, 2nd Ed., Soft Bound — $15 US
- **Primulas, the Complete Guide**, by Mary A. Robinson, 1990 — $15 US
- **Primula**, by John Richards, 1993 — $36 US
- **The Genus Primula**, by Josef Halda, 1992 — $20 US

Periodically, our librarian obtains older, used books. For a list of what is currently available, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to her. Address your orders and inquiries to:

Thea Oakley, American Primrose Society Librarian

3304 288th Ave. NE

Redmond, WA 98053 USA

Thea’s E-mail address: othea@halcyon.com

Orders must be prepaid in US dollars by check on a US bank or by international money order, made out to **Thea Oakley, A.P.S. Librarian**. Postage and handling: in the US add $3 for the first book and $1.50 for each additional book, or outside the US add $5 for the first book and $2.50 for each additional book.

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**Notes from the Editor**

**ROSACEOUS POLYANTHUS PRIMROSES**

Jack Smith of Grand Rapids Michigan sent this follow-up to his earlier letter regarding the ‘Rosaceous Polyanthus’ primroses:

I’m happy to report the following:

In my home garden, the rosaceous primroses had more robust foliage than the usual polyanthus. They also had ‘repeat’ blooms over a period of several weeks in late spring.

The foliage of most polyanthus primroses is disfigured by slugs here in Michigan, but the foliage of the Rosaceous Polyanthus remained vigorous and healthy-looking through the entire summer with no evidence of slug damage.

In the Frederik Meijer Gardens, we had planted a number of the Rosaceous Polyanthus primroses along a woodland path — and we were pleasantly surprised that they rebloomed this fall.

I’ll give you a report on the hardiness of the rosaceous primroses after they have gone through our winter months. I plan to mulch some of them with shredded leaves, and other will be left unprotected (except for our normal snowfall) to see what protection, if any, is needed in future winter seasons.

**PRIMROSES IN VIRGINIA**

Ann E. Kleine of Falls Church, Virginia, writes about growing primulas in Virginia’s challenging climate:

The Potomac Valley is just about the primula growing country. However, just to make a liar out of me, we just had the most incredible summer that I can imagine. Our summer was so hot that I did not need to water any of my plants. I did not need to water my vegetables either. The only moisture they needed was from the rain.

I must wait until the seedlings have two or three true leaves before I attempt to do any potting-up, and even then I still lose a good percentage of the seedlings. I have tried several mixes with poor results and have now settled on Professional Pro Mix and no additional fertilization for about a month; then I start fertilizing with a half-strength solution of Roots Plus for Seedlings. Our nightly minimums usually don’t go below 70°F until after mid-September; only then can I think about putting primroses in the ground for the fall growing season, which usually lasts until the middle of December.

Yes, Virginia is definitely not primula growing country. However, just to make a liar out of me, we just had the most incredible summer that I can imagine.
remember. We had only 67 nights when the temperature remained above 70°F instead of the normal 95-100 and we only had 21 days of 90°F or above instead of the 50-60 we usually have. We spent half the summer waiting for the hot weather that never arrived. I wonder what our winter will be like?

As a result, I had the best crop of *Primula vulgaris* hybrids that I have ever had. I grow the vulgaris hybrids because they bloom a good two or three weeks before the polyanthus and are less likely to be mowed down with the series of days in the high eighties that we usually get in April between late frosts. I planted out about three hundred seedlings the first week in October and they look great. The only problem — and it is a big only — is that the pesky squirrels come around after me and dig up the seedlings so they can bury an acorn in the nice soft ground; I have to go around the places where I planted the seedlings every day and push them back in the ground and press the dirt around them!

Ann also passes on a tip about cold frames:

I outline the area I would like to protect with two rows of paving bricks, put a sheet of heavy duty plastic painter's cloth on the ground, fill in an inch of sand, put down a heating cable of the required size, and then fill up to the top of the bricks with more sand. I frame the whole area with half width cinder blocks and put basement window stormwindows over the top — and lo, I have a temporary cold frame that works very well in our not-so-cold climate.

**IT'S CATALOG TIME AGAIN**

It was still autumn, really — mid-November — when the first snows of the season fell on my yard. A foot of heavy, wet snow blanketed everything, dragging the rhododendron branches to the ground and toppling a couple of 60 foot hemlocks that had grown tall and spindly under the taller fir trees. Was this just a hint of what winter would bring?

At least I am ready for the bad weather — we have a generator for when the electricity goes out and a good supply of logs for the fireplace. And for reading, there are plenty of enticing, intriguing catalogs.

One that has me sorely tempted is from Karmic Exotix Nursery (Box 146, Shelburne, Ont. LON 150, Canada), run by Andrew Osyany. I'm sorry that I received last year's catalog too late to include in the Winter 1996 *Primroses* list of primrose seed sources. This is a nursery with a mission, to offer seeds from Easter European collectors and growers at reasonable prices. The business is six years old and offers a dozen *Primula* species, plus rare rock garden plants and lengthy listings of *corydalis*, gentians, *campanulas*, violas, etc. The catalog costs $2 US, credited to the first order. If you write, please mention that you are an APS member.

**AMERICAN SAKURASOH ASSN.**

If Carole Smith's article on *Primula sieboldii* in Japan made you want to know more about Sakurasoh, you might consider joining the American Sakurasoh Association. The ASA, an organization for Sakurasoh enthusiasts, has grown to about 100 members since it began a couple of years ago. Annual membership of $30 U.S. brings a newsletter, starter seed packets for the first two years, cultural notes, and a seed exchange program. Paul Held, ASA founder, is also working to establish a Sakurasoh registry in the U.S.

In his latest newsletter, Paul tells about his busy summer involvement in ASA activities (and an unanticipated trip to the hospital). Sakurasoh plants and seeds were mailed out to ASA members this summer, and in November members received a bonus pack of ten or so buds of named forms that Paul unexpectedly received from Japan. The address is Paul Held, American Sakurasoh Association, 195 North Ave., Westport, CT 06880.

The mystery primrose featured in the Fall Quarterly (Vol. 54, No. 4) attracted much attention, and while the concensus seems to be that it was indeed an androsace, it shows that members are really reading the Quarterly thoroughly.

I am pleased to say a member of the Tacoma Chapter, Bridgie Graham-Smith, has kindly offered to take over the job of Slide Librarian. Over the past few years, John O'Brien in Juneau, Alaska has done a grand job of putting slide programs together, and the Society thanks him very much.

Perhaps there are some camcorder buffs amongst our members who might be interested in creating a video for the APS Library: showing primulas in private and public gardens in the U.S. and abroad, or showing how to divide or cross-pollinate plants, or showing methods of sowing, etc. Please write to me if you have any ideas on the subject.

There are many activities happening in the Northwest in 1997. In February, the Seattle Chapter, along with the NARGS local group, is participating in a primula/alpine display at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show in Seattle. This Garden Show, an annual event in its ninth year, attracts thousands of people and is on par with the famous Philadelphia Show on the east coast. The Tacoma Chapter promises to put on a great Primrose Show in April together with plant sales, a banquet, and garden tours. I would encourage as many members as possible to attend; accommodations will be available. If we're lucky Mr. Primrose himself, Herb Dickson, will be there to answer all your primula questions.

**Notes from the Editor**

Continued from previous page

**APS PHOTO CONTEST**

The first entries have arrived! Geoff Nicolle in Pembrokeshire, Wales, sent in a stunning half dozen photographs of auriculas for the APS Photo Contest for Garden Auriculas. Please check the contest rules on Page 31, then review your existing photos to find a winning entry. Or if your photo box is empty, break out your camera gear, polish up your posing techniques, and get ready to start clicking!
**News from the Chapters**

*A summary of chapter meetings*

**ALASKA CHAPTER**

The group met in October to hear John O'Brien's report on the recent APS Board Meeting and to discuss plans for next year's meetings. Members voted to replace the Barbara Shaw primrose book in the Juneau Library as it has apparently been stolen. We decided to donate $500 of this year's $1,825 plant sale proceeds for color in the Quarterly. Members also voted to make copies of the Alaska wild and tame primrose slides so we can keep a copy of the slide program in Juneau for subsequent showings and additions when John O'Brien turns over these slides to the incoming slide librarian.

We decided to invite two nationally-known primrose experts to come to Juneau next spring to give programs. Ed Buyarski also offered to give a slide program on his tour of Japanese gardens in Seattle, Portland, and Chicago. The meeting ended with a showing of a video of the 1996 Chelsea Flower Show in England that was provided by John O'Brien's twin.

The Alaska Chapter will have a new leader — in January, Mrs. Lee Sandor will be taking over from Jean Eichman. Thank you, Jean, for a job well done, and welcome, Lee!

**PENNSYLVANIA**

**Doretta Klaber Chapter**

Meets four times a year. Contact Dot Plyler, chapter president, for details.

This summer's chapter picnic was held at Anita Kistler's house. Her garden was splendid and featured an intriguing primrose with a green flower. Richard Critz was the scheduled speaker for the October meeting, talking about his experiences with primroses in his gardens.

The Chapter's popular seed sowing meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 1, 1997, at 10 a.m. at Dot Plyler's house. An alternate meeting date is set for February 15, just in case the group is snowed out on the first.

**WASHINGTON**

**Washington State Chapter**

Meets the second Friday of each month, except July and August, at the United Good Neighbor Center at 305 S 43rd Street, Renton, (across the street from Valley General Hospital) at 7:45 p.m. Guests are welcome.

October's program was on dividing primulas and sharing. November's program was a slide presentation on auriculas from the APS Slide Library. The next meeting will be held in March.

**Eastside Chapter**

Meets the first Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at members' homes on a rotating schedule.

November's program was a slide presentation on auriculas from the APS Slide Library. December's meeting was a potluck and Christmas party — good food, good company, and gift exchange.

The chapter made a $67 donation toward color in the Quarterly.

**Seattle Chapter**

Meets four times a year. Contact June Skidmore, chapter president, for details.

The chapter's fall meeting featured a presentation by Thea Oakley on the APS Librarian's job and what books she has available to members. We also discussed what the chapter could do to help with the APS/NARGS display at the upcoming Northwest Flower and Garden Show in February. The meeting ended with refreshments and a plant exchange.

**Tacoma Chapter**

Meets the first Tuesday of each month, except July and August, in the Fireside Room of the First United Methodist Church, 1919 West Pioneer, Puyallup, at 7:30 p.m.

Cy Happy gave a slide presentation on primulas in the Vermales section for the October meeting. In November, Thea Oakley, APS Librarian, gave a presentation on the APS Store service. She brought several books to sell and answered members' questions.

December's meeting was the Annual Christmas Potluck, held this year at Candy Strickland's house.

In addition to their regular activities, the Tacoma Chapter has been busy planning this year's APS National Show and working to raise money to cover show expenses.

**OREGON**

**Oregon Primrose Society**

Meets the third Friday of every month from September through May at 1 p.m. at the Milwaukee Community Club, 42nd and Jackson Sts., Milwaukee, OR. Contact Thelma Genheimer, chapter president, for details.

**Valley Hi Chapter**

Meets the second Monday of the month from September through November and February through May at 1 p.m.

The chapter's fall meeting featured a presentation by Thea Oakley on the APS Librarian's job and what books she has available to members. We also discussed what the chapter could do to help with the APS/NARGS display at the upcoming Northwest Flower and Garden Show in February. The meeting ended with refreshments and a plant exchange.

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**BC Primrose Group**

The group held its first meeting of the new season in September. As we had outgrown the facility at Southlands Nursery, we ended up meeting in the Board Room at South Arm United Church, at the corner of No. 3 Road and Steveston Highway. The meeting was well attended, though we did lose one or two Vancouver residents who didn't want to drive in to Richmond.

John Kerridge demonstrated how to divide an auricula plant, explaining how many offsets could be pulled off the parent plant, complete with their own root system, and how the old "carrot" should be trimmed off, particularly where there are signs of rot. He also showed how to divide a *Primula acaulis* type and how the plants on the outer edge would easily pull away, complete with roots. In many cases, the old root should be discarded unless it is a special named variety worth keeping.

John also showed slides of the same kind of plants, including before and after division pictures and the good root systems by the new plantlets. He also showed a slide of the damage caused to roots by root mealy bugs. John advised us to check any plants purchased at sales for the pest's telltale blue marks found on the inside of pots. Heavily infested plants should be discarded and others could be treated with a Malathion drench.

The BC Primula Show will be held Saturday and Sunday, April 26 – 27, 1997; location to be announced.
Journal Report
By Mary Frey, Kent, Washington

PRIMULA ON THE WILD SIDE

If you grow Primula allionii, then an article in the September 1996 Quarterly Bulletin of the Alpine Garden Society is a necessity. Jules G. Fouarge investigates the wild side of this beautiful but challenging plant. Research is uncommon because of several factors including the plant’s restricted geographical distribution and its very early flowering period. Fouarge believes that because access to the plant is so difficult it is naturally protected, so it is not an endangered species.

Fouarge avoided naming specific plant locations but his general descriptions of growing sites and conditions become helpful hints for growing cultivated plants. Plants grow primarily on calcareous cliffs that are “studded with crevices, holes, overhangs, cracks or even caves.” He rarely finds P. allionii on cliff bases even though seed must certainly fall on open soil. However, on the crags, plants grow “on open rock, in full wind and full sun” as well as protected areas. The root system of these rock dwellers is so deep and extensive that Fouarge indicates that only dynamite can expose them!

Although flowering times vary, generally plants at the lower elevations (2200 feet) start blooming in March while those higher (4900 feet and above) flower in April and May. The color, shape and size of the blossoms reveals inordinate diversity. However, dark colors like maroon, dark violet with blue, and pure white are very rare. Seeds mature in October or November at inordinate diversity. However, dark colors like maroon, dark violet with blue, and pure white are very rare. Seeds mature in October or November at

GO FORTH AND PROPAGATE

HortIdeas is a monthly publication with a broad appeal for all gardeners. It includes abridged reports on “the latest research, methods, tools, plants, books, etc., for vegetable, fruit, and flower gardeners.” The August 1996 issue carries a short but intriguing piece worth exploring. German investigators planted eleven rose species in a sand and clay blend, with or without one-half ounce of commercial compost activator (active ingredients: microorganisms) per ten ounces of seeds. The seeds remained at 68-77°F for twelve weeks, then stratified in bags of peat and sand for twelve weeks. Germination rates for the seeds with compost activator were higher (no available statistics).

The September 1996 HortIdeas includes another unique propagation method. High school science students led by teacher Peter Faletra, Ph.D. in Lincoln, New Hampshire reproduced Cypripedium reginae through tissue culture. The students also found a process to germinate the seed so that they had enough tissue for experiments. The slow process of division is typically the method used for obtaining new plants. University of California researcher Joseph Arditti, Ph.D. exclaimed, “Frankly, I’m awed.” Dr. Faletra vows more information will be available as the students continue their tests.

The same issue also contains a report of interest to flower show exhibitors. U. S. Department of Agriculture plant geneticist Robert Griesbach studied the biochemistry of flowers to help genetic engineers produce “an infinite range of custom-colored flowers.” He examined petunias to reveal how flower colors rely on the exchange of three pigment forms (chlorophyll for green colors, flavonoids for red and blue colors, and carotenoids for yellow and orange colors) with cellular acidity (pH). Variations in this pH changed the flower color in many plants. Griesbach stressed that soil pH does not effect cellular pH. He laments, “The drawback is the cost of doing the chemical analysis necessary to create novel plants like blue roses.” Finally, the researcher discovered that more vibrant blooms can occur by exposing plants to bright lights and cool temperatures during flower formation.

A LOVE FOR MONTROSE

The November 1996 Horticulture features Montrose, the wonderful garden of APS member Nancy Goodwin. She may blush when the author, Thomas Fischer, describes her as “one of the key figures in American gardening.” Although shade plants are given a slight wink, the article contains enough about Nancy’s gardening philosophy and techniques to keep any gardener satisfied. Many splendid photos accompany the piece.

E-mail address: MLFREY@AOL.COM

New Address for APS Treasurer

Addaline W. Robinson, APS Treasurer, has moved. You may contact her at:
Addaline W. Robinson
41801 S.W. Burgursky Rd.
Gaston, OR 97119
U.S.A.
Board of Directors Meeting  
October 19, 1996 at Mary McCrank's restaurant, Chehalis, Washington


The meeting was called to order by President June Skidmore. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as written. June announced that Frank Springer, Dorothy's husband, had suffered a heart attack this past week. Our best wishes for a quick recovery go out to him.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Addaline Robinson presented the third quarter financial statement. After a correction to the figures for the checking account, a motion to approve the report was passed. Addaline is moving this month. Use her current address until otherwise notified. The mail will be forwarded to her new home.

EDITOR'S REPORT

Claire Cockcroft stated that the APS has received Pagemaker and Photoshop software free through a philanthropic program by Adobe Systems, Inc. This amounts to approximately $1800 in savings for the Society. Thank you, Claire, for following up on this program and thank you, Adobe, for a great contribution.

The Fall quarterly is scheduled to be mailed out the week of October 21, 1996. For those whose membership expires at the end of the year, a reminder will be stamped in red on the envelope.

The theme of the Spring quarterly is "Primroses in the Wild."

CORRESPONDENCE

Ed Davis reported that the Round Robin is in action, although moving slowly. He will send in a report to the Board and the Quarterly shortly.

MEMBERSHIP FLYER

The cost for printing 1000 flyers would be $900 whereas 2500 could be printed for $1200. A motion to authorize Claire to have 2500 printed was approved.

INTERNET

There have been some responses and two new members as a result of the APS Homepage.

SEED EXCHANGE

Claire presented the proposed rules and deadlines under which the 1997 Seed Exchange will operate. A motion to adopt the guidelines was approved. Claire suggested that a small laptop computer system be purchased for use by the Seed Exchange committee. A motion to authorize Claire to purchase the equipment from Seed Exchange funds was passed.

Addaline and June will work together to transfer the remainder of Seed Exchange funds from the Bank of Alaska to the current account in Seattle.

SLIDE LIBRARIAN

John O'Brien reported that one slide program is currently rented out. He also continues to work on the program titled "Primroses in English and Irish Gardens." Slides of primroses in Irish gardens or slides of primrose cultivars that originated in Ireland are needed to complete this set. He noted that we need to publicize our slide programs to other plant and gardening societies. John would like to pass the job on to another member. Thank you, John, for a job well done!

NATIONAL SHOW, TACOMA, 1997

Candy Strickland, Show Chairman, presented plans for the 1997 National Show. It will be held at the Lakewood Mall in Tacoma Washington on April 12 - 13, 1997. Garden tours are planned for Saturday afternoon and Sunday. Host families are needed to accommodate out-of-town guests. In addition, sale plant sources are being sought.

BOOK STORE

Thea Oakley outlined the books that are available to APS members at a discount price. Up to this point, Thea has been purchasing books with her own funds and reimbursing herself only when the books were sold. She currently has over $500 in book inventory. A motion to advance her a $500 operating fund for the bookstore was approved.

ARCHIVES

The APS archives were transferred to Larry Bailey in California. However, it is felt that a suitable site in the Pacific Northwest should be sought. If anyone has an idea of such a site, please contact June Skidmore.

NORTHWEST FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

June Skidmore presented a plan to have an 8' x 8' display in cooperation with the Seattle Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society. The Garden Show will pay $192 to the two organizations for their efforts in constructing the display. The dates of the Show are February 5 - 9, 1997. The Seattle Chapter will prepare it for the APS. However, plants are desperately needed.

Next Board Meeting: The next meeting will be held January 11, 1997 at 10:30 a.m. at Mary McCrank's restaurant in Chehalis, Washington. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Lunn
Substitute Secretary
The Mystery Primrose is Now the Mystery Androsace
By Arthur P. Dome, Seattle, Washington

The Fall 1996 issue of *Primroses* contained an article entitled “Mystery Primrose”, in which I explained that I’d photographed an as-yet-unidentified primula during my 1989 trip to Yunnan Province, China. Claire Cockcroft, editor of the Quarterly, asked me to report the results of my request for information on what is now the Mystery Androsace.

It seems that as soon as the issue of the *Primroses* was delivered, Claire started receiving e-mail replies concerning the mystery primrose. Jay Lunn of Hillsboro, Oregon, was the first to identify it as an androsace. Ernie O’Byrne of Eugene, Oregon, also identified it as an androsace. Thea Oakley in Redmond, Washington, was also among the first to contact Claire to let her know that she felt it was an androsace. Jerry Flintoff of Seattle, Washington, said he was sure it was an androsace, but recommended that I call Rick Lupp in Graham, Washington, for his opinion. Rick agreed with Jerry but declined, at that time, to suggest which species it might be; he did say that it appeared to belong to the section *Chamaejasme*. Since no actual specimen was available to examine, we were forced to use a non-scientific approach to resolve which species it might be.

The process of elimination was started by using a list of the species in the section *Chamaejasme* as a check list (Ref. 1). First to be eliminated were those species that would not be found in this area of western China and Yunnan. When this was done, we were left with *A. chamaejasme*, *A. sarmentosa*, *A. spinulifera*, and *A. villosa* var. *jacquemontii* as possibilities.

Next, using the references listed at the end of this report, the characteristics of these four species, their varieties and forms were compared with those of the plant in the photograph. This was somewhat difficult, since we really only had its flowers and stem or stalk.

Plants that could have flowers with both yellow and red eyes in the same umbel or had flowers where the yellow eye turned to red as the blossoms aged were checked. There was only one species that fit this criterion and that was *A. chamaejasme*, (Ref. 1, 2, 4, and 5). Since this evidence seemed to be overwhelmingly in favor of my mystery plant most likely being *A. chamaejasme*, no other characteristics were checked.

Some varieties of *A. villosa* fit the eye color criterion (Ref. 1), but I couldn’t find a reference that stated that

A. *villosa* var. *jacquemontii* did. *Androsace sempervivoides* also fit this criterion, but it is supposed to be found only in the northwestern Himalayas of Kashmir and Punjab (Ref. 1).

After completing all this detective work, I again contacted Rick Lupp, who has or still is growing all of the plants mentioned. We reviewed the research and the conclusion, and Rick also agreed that the plant in the photograph could be *A. chamaejasme*!

We are forever appreciative to all of those who used their knowledge and other resources to help solve this mystery.

REFERENCES

Regional Reporters

As we start the new year, we’d like to thank our regional reporters, who faithfully gather much of the interesting and enlightening material for the APS Quarterly. If you’d like to contribute material to *Primroses*, feel free to send items either directly to the editor or to any regional reporter near you. (Deadlines for material to be sent to the editor are found on Page 3.) Our regional editors are:

**Alaska:** Pat Wilson, 9621 Kelly Ct., Juneau, AK, 99801-8721
**British Columbia:** Dennis Oakley, 10606 Dennis Place, Richmond, B.C. Canada V7A 3G8
**New York/New England:** Fred Knapp, 58 Kaintuck Lane, Locust Valley, NY 11560
**Minnesota/Midwest:** Karen Schelling, 31335 Kalla Lake Rd., Avon, MN 55310
**Ontario:** Glen Spurrell, 72 St. Anne’s Road, Toronto, Ont. M6J 2C3, Canada
**Southern U.S.:** Ann E. Kline, 3016 Cedar Hill Rd., Falls Church, VA, 22042
**United Kingdom:** John Gibson, “Farinosa”, 3A Primrose Lane, Kirkburton, Huddersfield, Yorkshire HD8 0QY, England
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