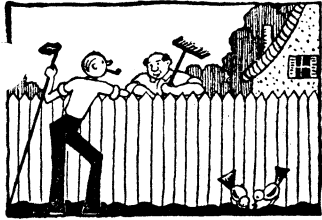


# THE GARDEN SPRAY



BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

MEMBER—MEN'S GARDEN CLUBS OF AMERICA  
MINNESOTA STATE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Volume 5  
Number 4  
Jack Cohen, Editor

April 1947  
Associate Editors  
Ed Montgomery, Upsher Smith

## APRIL MEETING

Date: Tuesday, April 8  
Place: Fountain Terrace,  
Medical Arts Bldg.  
Time: 5:30 P.M.  
Price: \$1.25 per plate

### PROGRAM

- 6:20 P.M. Meeting called. President Harold R. Kaufmann
- 6:30 Subject: "What your plants have a right to expect of your garden soil."  
Speaker: Dr. J. M. McGregor, Assistant Professor of Soils, University of Minnesota
- 7:15 Subject: "Our experience with Vermiculite, sphagnum moss and peat."  
Speaker: Lloyd Bachman - H. Bachman Sons, Inc.
- 7:30 Debate - "Dusting versus Spraying"  
F. H. Upsher Smith vs. Archie H. Flack
- 7:45 News from seed catalogs. Robert Bryant
- 8:00 Correct names - E. C. Culbert
- 8:15 "Musts" for April - William Holmberg
- 8:20 Questions & Answers - H. W. Bishop

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### PATRONIZE MEMBERS AND HOME

Industry. Don't let the beautiful out-of-town catalogs beguile you into sending your money for plants and seeds elsewhere until you have tried the local sources first. Here is a list of our members who should have first call for your garden needs:

<u>Henry Bachman</u>	Plants, seeds, flowers, etc.
<u>Harry Bake;</u>	Shrubbery, trees, landscaping
<u>W. H. Bofferding</u>	Seeds, insecticides, etc.
<u>Bob Bryant</u>	Dahlias, begonias, orchids

## THE MARCH MEETING

Last month's meeting was an interest-rouser and -holder from beginning to adjournment and well worth while for the large number that turned out for it. Stan Lund was the meeting chairman and he did his job with all the finesse and polish of a trained master of ceremonies. The program - while a full one - ran off in tiptop shape. Scattered through this issue of The Spray are reports of what was said and done at this meeting.

### Grow More Perennials from Seed

Walter Quist, our professional amateur and a Farm School graduate, learnedly discussed the growing of perennials from seed.

The question he propounded was "Why grow perennials from seed when they can be purchased at low prices?"

The arguments for raising perennials from seed are:

1. More economical.
2. Amateur experimentation is the purpose of being a Garden Club member.
3. Acclimated better when grown from seed to plant.
4. Tendency for freedom from disease by controlling soil around plants.
5. Grow before actually needed.
6. Offers opportunity for trading of plants with others and gives chance to ride your hobby.

Arguments against raising own plants:

1. Takes a lot of time and 2 to 3 years to get good-sized clumps.
2. Less chance to come true from seeds, especially the hybrids.
3. Need attention, particularly at the growing season.
4. Less labor in transplanting; some transplants need to be shifted around two or three times.
5. Easier to reproduce from clumps.

But if you still want to raise your own perennials, Walter gives the following advice:

Start in greenhouse, hotbeds or flats around March 10. Have a soil mixture of sand, loam, charcoal and peat moss and have it on the poor side, not too rich

When plants are not too large, transplant to garden. Some good perennials to start are Aquilegia, Delphinium, Gallardia, Gypsopholia, Violas and Asters.

### Our Own Club Rooms

Our Men's Garden Club will be one of the few such in the U.S. to have its own club rooms and library. Through the courtesy of Chris Mosberg, we are enabled to have a room on the second floor of the Danish Seed Company for our own committee meetings, conferences, etc.

A library will be "positively established" says Herb Kahlert, and the call is out now for furniture to fix up the place. Archie Flack is donating a sectional bookcase, but we need a few comfortable armchairs, a table, chairs, etc. A fine reference library and complete set of catalogs will be available at all times.

### Projects Committee Reports

Roses - To meet on March 18th with talks by Wilcox, Doell and Lucking.  
Sweet Peas - Secured seeds from Upsher Smith after the meeting.  
Tuberous Begonias - Jim Cristman has his group working.  
Rock Gardens - Ed Montgomery says project enlarged to include wildflowers.  
Vegetable - Bill Swain urges membership as a whole to keep up interest in vegetables for they bring forth both beauty and sustenance.  
Photographic Documentation - Bill Block says photos of indoor plants should be taken. He will make a special trip to capture, on film, unusual blooms.

There are 34 members signed up for the Rose project; 29 for Chrysanthemums; and the rest have from twelve to fourteen members each.

USE CORRECT NAMES

Edwin C. Culbert

We have a real professional teacher giving us our monthly lesson on the names of plants and what they mean - and the way he puts it, it's going to be lots of fun getting to understand a botanist's nomenclature.

Names usually used are in Latin and it serves as a common language for the naming of plants. Here's how it works:

<u>Reds</u>		<u>Blues</u>		<u>Whites</u>	
roseur	rosy in color	cyanus	plain blue	albus	white
ruber	ruby	azureus	sky blue	candicus	white
sanguineus	blood red	coelestinus	heavenly blue	candidus	pure white
coccineus	like cochineal	caeruleus	dark blue	argentene	silver white
		lilacinus	lilac		
		purpureus	blue purple		
		violaceus	violet		
<u>Yellows</u>				<u>Miscellaneous</u>	
chryseus	flavus, luteus, xanthinus			niger	black
aureus	golden yellow			virens	green
citrinus	lemon yellow			vividus	green
croceus	safron yellow			fulvus	tawny hue
				incarnatus	fleshy tone

For April: Review lesson and then we'll go on to some new ones.

"MUSTS" FOR MARCH - Jim Criseman

THE GARDEN CLUB SIGN

Spray trees with scale; trim out old branches so new sprouts will get a chance. Repaint arbors. Get labels ready. Inspect dahlia roots. If cannas are growing, put in cooler temperature. Get soil ready for seedlings. Look evergreen over; give dormant sprays. If tulips are sprouting, cover with boxes, gunny sacks, etc. Start tuberous begonias in Vermiculite and sand and pot up when they get good root formation in 5"-8" pots.

The new Garden sign at a buck is a wonderful buy and all members who have not yet received theirs better get in touch with Rene Dufourd.

If you already have your sign, put it up in your garden to identify you with our organization and show that we are a permanent organization that is devoted to a more beautiful Minneapolis.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- Q. How long do you leave in Vermiculite before transplanting?
- A. As in soil; about two weeks. If left in longer, feed with liquid fertilizer or Hyponex.
  
- Q. Do small tuberous begonia bulbs do better than the large bulbs?
- A. The 1-inch bulbs seem to make the best root system.
  
- Q. Is ventilation needed in Paul's hotbed?
- A. Built so poorly gets lots of air.
  
- Q. Mold forms on my flats in the basement. What is the cause?
- A. Spray Aerosan but eliminate the cause.
  
- Q. How much covering do you use on your dwarf apples?
- A. (Correct answer) While called dwarf, they grow 4 and 5 feet tall so need no covering.
  
- Q. What is name of "Jacob's Coat"?

## WHAT ROSES NEED MOST

Charles Doell, Rosarian

Our own Charlie Doell, according to the M.C., is an editor, engineer, and rosarian, besides being Superintendent of the Minneapolis Park System. He gave us his usual enlightening talk on roses, but based it this time on Dr. Longley's report to the Minnesota Rose Society. This report is the A-B-C of growing roses in Minnesota and copies of it are available from Stan Lund or Charlie Doell.

He supplemented this report with the following observations:

Peace Rose is the outstanding new rose. It is one of the finest ever grown; how it will stand up, time will tell.

The Lyndale Gardens are an All-American Rose Test Garden, having 100 roses in 25 varieties.

Floribundas are easier to grow than Hybrid Tea Roses. Some Rugosas and Hugonis should be in every garden. The beginner should start with a few of the old reliable growers, or try bench roses (hothouse roses) which are for sale at \$2.75 per doz. in the spring. Two good varieties of these cheap roses are Better Times and Briarcliffe. You can get a lot of bloom out of these roses and the cost is so small you don't need to bother covering for the winter.

How to plant roses. A reasonably good garden soil is the first and only essential for rose planting. A fair amount of sun, preferably morning sun, and good drainage help to get better roses. Regular schedule of dusting and spraying are also necessary.

## MY DWARF APPLE TREES

Jack Cohen was asked to talk about his lone dwarf apple tree. He was put on the program because dwarfs aren't supposed to grow in this climate. Jack, not knowing any better, bought a dwarf apple tree, grown from buds grafted on a special root stock known as Malling IX from Jackson & Perkins 3 years ago. Last year, the darned thing bloomed and gave some Wealthy apples.

Having eight more minutes to talk, Jack told about some of the other unusual plants in his garden. His two "family apple trees" - one having 5 kinds of apples, the other 8 - are new but look promising for 1947.

The espalier apple tree blossoms but no fruit yet.

His tree peonies bloom before the regular or herbaceous type. The stems of the tree peony become woody and the eyes form along the stems. The Yellow Lutea Hybrid is his pride, for yellow peonies are in the unusual class. Likes it because

## THE ANNUAL PLANT AUCTION

Frank Janes, auction chairman, says his affair is another way of trading plants and enhancing the treasury. Bring along those plants you think will grow another year. Date of auction will be announced.

## INDOOR HOTBEDS USING FLUORESCENT LIGHT

Fred Paul, our city engineer, told us how he raised 3,000 plants and didn't lose a single one this early spring. It was done in a wooden frame 10x3x6' placed in his furnace room. The essential was a 40-watt fluorescent bulb of the blue type. He used Vermiculite to start the plants, 2½" thick, then seed, then sphagnum moss on top. Glass wicking gave the moisture and bulb gives heat to raise the plants. Kept light 15 inches above plants for 24 hours daily. All enclosed with cardboard boxes.

(Note: A complete description and specifications, together with drawing of Fred's basement greenhouse, will appear in the December issue for 1948 planting.)

## THE APRIL MEETING

Herb Kahlert was, as usual, an excellent master of ceremonies at the April meeting, introducing each speaker in an interesting, humorous vein. He set the tone for an evening full of facts and good dope for us to know in meeting some of our garden problems this year.

### The Great Debate - Dusting vs. Spraying

The program promised an interesting flight of words for the arguments on the question whether dusting or spraying is best for the garden.

As an argument for dusting, it was pointed out that some plants cannot take spraying, such as roses in the evening, tuberous begonias, tomatoes, etc. - all of which are better off when dusted. A good example is tomato blight, where experts recommend there be no overhead sprinkling. Dusting is the logical answer.

Dusting, its proponents say, also stays longer on the plant and stays where you want it; whereas liquids are bound to trickle down. Animals, including chickens and horses, roll in dust to rid themselves of bugs; while plants cannot take such drastic action, the gardener can furnish a dusting for the same purpose.

On the other hand, those favoring spraying point out that in the animal kingdom the duck and birds always clean themselves with water and do not depend on dust for complete cleaning. While these analogies do not relate especially to plant life, they were used to point up the fact that nature takes care of its own both by spraying and dusting.

Sprayers emphasize that a spray is not just a stream of water but a little water and a lot of chemicals, which cover the surface to be sprayed completely and more positively than will a dust. Besides almost any type of spray tank will do the work but you have to be rather particular about what kind of duster you use. (Ask Harold Kaufmann with his million dollar equipment that he uses for dusting !)

While we admittedly didn't learn much or get any definite agreement from the arguments, most of the members had probably previously come to the conclusion that both methods of using bug-killers in the garden have their place.

### THANKS - JOHN COWLES AND GOERGE LUXTON

Our Men's Garden Club made a distinct community contribution and at the same time got a lot of publicity for itself when it was featured in the Special Gardens & Home Beautiful issue of the Sunday Tribune Garden & Home Section.

Members contributed their pictures as well as material on subjects on which they were supposed to be expert, and while the entire membership could not be represented in this issue, some of the project chairmen were selected and got in some information that they felt would be of interest to general newspaper readers.

The fact that 300,000 people will see this issue of the Sunday Tribune and most of them will read the garden section means that it was a fine publicity stunt and a goodwill builder so far as our Club is concerned. At the same time it creates a greater interest in home gardening at the time of the year when people are getting the itch to dig around and plan their Spring planting.

## PEAT, SPHAGNUM MOSS AND VERMICULITE

Lloyd Bachman

Peat is the organic residue produced by successive generations of plants growing in standing water. These plants could be roots of trees, twigs, seeds, shrubs, mosses, sedges and grasses - all of which go to make up a peat.

Peat is still comparatively new to gardeners because in previous years well rotted manure was easy to get and it made an excellent soil conditioner. Peat does not do what barnyard manure does, but is becoming very prominent in soil preparations along with the use of commercial fertilizers. As sold commercially, it comes as a soft, brown-colored, spongy material, which is dried and easy to handle. It is highly absorbent, retains moisture, rich in organic matter, and is higher in nitrogen content than manures. However, it is lower in potash and phosphorus content than manures, which should be remembered when preparing soils. It has been placed in four different classes: deep water peat, marsh, swamp and bog peat.

Domestic peat found in this area is dark in color, finer in texture than the imported peat, which is largely composed of sphagnum moss.

Many of the commercial peats are acid and therefore beneficial in growing such plants as azaleas, rhododendron, hydrangeas, tuberous rooted begonias and gloxinias.

Some of my experiments with peat have resulted in these findings: When peat was used alone as a growing medium, it proved to be an unsatisfactory substitute for soil and manure composts. When peat was used in potting soil or garden beds, best results were obtained when used by volume of 1 part peat, 4 parts field soil (a good sod field), 1 part well-rotted manure, 4" pot of superphosphate to a bushel of the above mixture. (Addition of leaf mold and sand if soil is extremely heavy for begonias is okay.)

This has proven an excellent greenhouse mixture for almost all our potted plants. Tuberous begonias thrive in it.

Peat has proven an excellent top dressing for lawns and seed beds. Sphagnum peat is useful as a medium for the rooting of softwood and hardwood cuttings which are difficult to root in sand. With that I'd like to jump quickly to vermiculite or Unigro - which I believe is the finest medium for rooting of cuttings and starting of seeds.

### Vermiculite

Technically, vermiculite is exfoliated mica which means that a certain type of ore has been roasted at over 2000° F. until it has popped like corn on a hot griddle. This intense heat destroys every vestige of life so that as it is sold commercially it is completely sterile. No fungi or bacteria which might injure young seedling or cuttings can survive the heat of furnaces which blast the particles of ore.

As these particles of ore pop, they form tiny sponges or kernels, so porous and absorbent that they can hold many times their weight in water. It is almost impossible to drown out plants growing in vermiculite because of the large area of intersurfaces in each particle of ore which absorbs the water.

One of the reasons I like vermiculite is that the plants grown in it will never suffer from lack of oxygen. In soils where there isn't proper drainage, oxygen is cut off by overwatering and the plant eventually dies.

I would use vermiculite as a soil conditioner - 1 to 4 or 5 (1 part vermiculite to 5 parts soil). In a heavy soil mixed in this way, I believe you'll find your plants have longer, huskier roots and more of them capable of supporting stouter, heavier tops. A mixture of half soil and half vermiculite is perhaps the finest of all mediums for starting seedlings. With this mixture no additional fertilizer or nutrient solution is needed up to the transplanting stage. I've used straight vermiculite and had wonderful results, but find the seedlings become undernourished without a nutrient solution applied as soon as the first true leaves appear.

Another method used that has proven satisfactory is the use of straight vermiculite and covering the seeds with a fine layer of powdered sphagnum moss. Little damping off is encountered if the air circulation is good.

Back to the nutrient solution. It isn't necessary to purchase separately the potassium nitrate, monocalcium phosphate, calcium sulfate and magnesium sulfate for this little task of watering the seedlings. Take a good commercial fertilizer - 4 nitrogen, 12 phosphorus, 4 potash - or 5-10-5 - and use the weakest soluble solution on the foliage for the watering. Two waterings should be sufficient before the transplanting stage. Vermiculite being completely sterile and not having the material bacteria and vitamins found in soils, it is advisable to treat your seeds in a rooting hormone. The mass of roots is amazing when you lift your seedlings for transplanting. Be sure and leave on the vermiculite that is in contact with the roots when transplanting.

Now to the rooting of cuttings in vermiculite. To those that I have shown the results of chrysanthemum cuttings in vermiculite, not one has left without wanting to try for himself. Not only are the roots better, but they appear 3 to 7 days earlier and in the case of evergreens (which I have not tried), authorities say three weeks earlier than in sand or peat.

A good medium for rooting cuttings must supply plenty of moisture and not exclude air. Vermiculite does exactly this. Since using vermiculite, I have never trimmed a chrysanthemum cutting as I found it isn't necessary. In fact, I believe the more foliage left on the cutting, the quicker it will root. True, they do tend to wilt, but they soon come out of it. It takes leaves on a plant to manufacture carbohydrates; my theory is that as soon as the cutting heals and starts to take root, the added leaves make a stronger and huskier plant, rooting a week earlier than if the cuttings were trimmed.

A mixture of half sand and half vermiculite is also an excellent preparation. For cuttings that like a slightly acid medium, I would suggest 1/3 sand, 1/3 acid peat, and 1/3 vermiculite. It has a pH of 6.7, which is rather high for some cuttings as azaleas and hydrangeas.

It must be remembered that it is a good insulator and holds the heat, if electric cable is used for heating your propagating bed. If there is too small an amount of space between the end of the cutting and the cable, it can hold so much heat that it will cook the lower end of the cutting.

Although it would be costly, I see no reason why vermiculite should not be used as a garden mulch or covering of perennials. It will maintain a more even soil temperature in the early Spring with the constant variation in temperature so prevalent in that season.

## F L O W E R   S H O W

Sponsored by MEN'S GARDEN CLUB  
Park Board Greenhouses, 38th & Bryant Avenue South, June 14, 1947

### R U L E S

1. Exhibits must be entered before 4 P.M., June 14, 1947
2. Each exhibit to qualify for prizes must be grown by a member of the Men's Garden Club.
3. No exhibit may be removed until the close of the Show without permission of Show Chairman.
4. There can be only one entry to a class. Deviation from this rule will result in disqualification.
5. Containers will be furnished - unless otherwise specified.
6. After completion of Show, all entries will revert to original owner.
7. The Grand Champion Award will be made for the best exhibit of entire show.
8. The Sweepstakes Award will be made to the exhibitor with highest total points.
9. Points toward Sweepstakes Award will be awarded in the following manner: First place, 3 points; second place, 2 points; third place, 1 point.
10. The Grand Champion entry will be selected from the first place winners.
11. There will be an award to first, second and third place winners in each respective class.
12. Prizes galore, such as potted tuberous begonias, potted carnations, potted mums, potted delphinium, and many more. Be sure to enter early and get your share of these worthwhile plants for your garden.

### C L A S S E S

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Roses - Tea  | 15. Delphinium - Blue (1 stalk)   |
| 2. Roses - Floribunda   | 16. Delphinium - Purple (1 stalk)   |
| 3. Roses - Rugosa   | 17. Potted plants - African Violets<br>(must be owned by exhibitor for at least two months) |
| 4. Roses - Climber  | 18. Other potted house plants (must be owned by exhibitor for at least 2 months)            |
| 5. Peonies - White (1 bloom)  | 19. Columbine (3 stalks)  |
| 6. Peonies - Pink (1 bloom)   | 20. Wild Flowers (3 blooms)   |
| 7. Peonies - Red (1 bloom)  | 21. Coral Lillies (1 stalk)   |
| 8. Peonies - Variegated or bicolor<br>(1 bloom)                               | 22. Violas (3 blooms)   |
| 9. Tuberous Begonias (1 plant to an exhibitor)                                | 23. Pansies (3 blooms)  |
| 10. Tuberous Begonias - Camelia type<br>(blooms only in your own container)   | 24. Coreopsis (3 blooms)  |
| 11. Tuberous Begonias - Fimbriata type<br>(blooms only in your own container) | 25. Oriental Poppies (3 blooms)   |
| 12. Tuberous Begonias - Picotee type<br>(blooms only in your own container)   | 26. Iris (1 stalk)  |
| 13. Tuberous Begonias - Other types<br>(blooms only in your own container.)   | 27. Phlox (1 stalk)   |
|   | 28. Carnations (hardy) (3 blooms)   |
|   | 29. Miscellaneous - not listed  |