

THE GARDEN SPRAY



BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

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

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Vic Lowrie, Editor

Associate Editors
Don Methven, Art Fakler,
Herb Kahlert

NOVEMBER MEETING

Date: Tuesday, Nov. 11, 1952

Place: Hasty Tasty Cafe,
50th & France Ave. So

Time: 5:45 P.M. sharp.

Dinner: \$1.50

Officers

Vic Lowrie President

Bill Brooks
Vice-President

Rene Dufourd Secretary

Chet Harkins Treasurer

Fred Paul Past President

PROGRAM

6:30 P.M. Business session

6:45 Report of the Nominating
Committee and Election
of Officers

7:00 Report of Awards Committee to be
voted on by the members

7:15 "What's New in Grass" by William S.
Van Scoik, Agriculturist with the
American Cyanamid Company

8:00 "Your Own Special Gardening Interest"
Chairman, Tony Koester

This is the one meeting of the year when our full membership should be present, not only to help select a new slate of officers for the year 1953, but also to lend support and demonstrate our interest in the management of the club. Remember, as individuals we get no more out of our club than we put into it - so say, how about going out of our way to make this one! Unfortunately your president has an important out-of-town engagement of long standing which regrettably cannot be ducked. It will be the first missed this year and I hope the last for a long time to come.

In addition to the election of officers, Bob Adams has another cracking good program lined up for us - a good speaker with a subject every gardener wants to hear more about - "What's New in Grass." Then a wide-open discussion on your own special gardening interest.

THE OCTOBER MEETING

Bob Adams and his Program Committee really came up with a humdinger of a program last month - one that had meat in it for everybody. Take a bow, gang! Although Dr. Cutkamp's illustrated talk on how to eradicate slugs, bugs, mite and the like didn't exactly offer a simple solution to the insecticide problem, he did give us the low down on the most effective chemical to use in each case and a sensible approach to better management and control. It was a highly educational talk and most interestingly presented. We thank you, Professor Cutkamp, for the enlightenment; you clarified a lot of problems for us and with your assistance we will see that the information is properly documented for the full membership in later issues of The Spray. The Professor has an engaging personality which he certainly got across to his audience with a subject that could have been quite dull but was actually entertaining.

"Propagating Under Fluorescent Lights" as keynoted by Archie Flack with supplementary contributions by Fred Paul, Curtis Rice and others proved to be a live subject and one worthy of additional exploration. Your editors will endeavor to round up the more pertinent facts and report them in an early issue.

Seems like we can expect a lot of good discussion material for our special interest groups, according to Tony Koester, who promised to program a segment of the year's experiences in each succeeding winter meeting. This will give every member an opportunity to present his own gardening problems for solution at our monthly meetings as well as aiding the other fellow in solving his particular difficulties.

OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY, THURSDAY DEC. 11 payable to the Men's Garden Club of Minneapolis, and mail to C. Harkins, c/o Northern States Post Office, 15 S. Fifth St., Minneapolis 2, Minn.

1. Make your reservations now for our Annual Family Christmas Party. Notify Rene Dufourd by phone or mail but do it this very week and block the calendar for Thursday, December 11. Full details will appear in the December Spray.

2. Bring the slides of your garden for showing at the Christmas Party to the November meeting. George Titus, Chairman of the Photographic Committee, has asked us to make a plea for slides from every member's garden. We need many more colored slides of individual flowers, shrubs, plants, flower borders, rock gardens, flowering banks and floral arrangements to complete a well rounded library of garden slides. Turn your duplicates over to Rene Dufourd and thus make them available for lecture purposes by members of the club.

DUES ARE DUE DECEMBER 1st

Those of you who haven't already paid, how about mailing a check for If you have changed your address, telephone number at home or office, please notify the secretary.

Did you ever try sowing seeds in the open ground before it freezes? Larkspur, snapdragons and cornflowers can be sown now in the spot

HOUSE PLANTS I HAVE LIVED WITH

By Walter R. Menzel

A discussion of house plants can be made into a long, involved subject if you are to list each variation of a plant species. In fact, a discussion of just one house plant - as for instance the African Violet - is a long project in itself and can go on and on. It is a subject to be assigned to a specialist in a special interest group. I believe that in a discussion of house plants for this club or their families, a statement of each plant group requirement will be helpful:

1. Sun or shade-loving plants - spot in the room where plant will thrive best.

2. Water requirements - Usually succulents do not need watering as often; and delicately leaved plants, on the other hand, because we plant them in a small, novel planter without a drain, need a small watering every day. Such plants suffer with just a lapse of one daily watering. House humidity is closely related to watering.

3. We will want plants which can thrive in our home in the temperature we want to live in, not accommodate ourselves to any other degree of temperature which may be more satisfying to a certain plant.

4. We know that some plants thrive where night temperature is decidedly lower than that during the day.

5. Some house plants are remarkably free of pests or diseases. Aphids can appear by the thousands almost overnight. Mealy bugs sometimes are discovered too late to save a plant, and inconspicuous scale insects can take over a woody stemmed plant like Asparagus Plumosa or dwarf citrus. Root infestations, as well as some other topside pests, can now be combatted with pot-sized, already prepared doses of Sodium Selenate.

Many plants are valued for their foliage rather than for their bloom.

Following are listed some of the plants, more or less alphabetically, which I have had as house plants, some for many years, with an indication of growing success which I have had with ordinary care and attention.

AZALEAS. All of us had some of the lovely florists azaleas, which, after bloom, we have tried to hold over. Even though these potted plants were summered over beneath some larger shady bushes, my luck has been less than 50% and the second bloom is never as profuse as the original. I will never try to carry over another one.

ABUTILON, Flowering Maple. This has been a real pleasure to have. Some were grown from seed; others from cuttings. The bell-like flowers are found in red, pinks and salmon and serve nicely as cut flowers in tiny arrangements. The maple-shaped leaf also comes in a variegated form. The plants are probably too large after they are a year old. The plant brought in from the garden may shed some

ASPARAGUS SPRENGERI AND PLUMOSA. Both varieties are fern-like and a good addition to an indoor window box. In the spring, Sprengeri is ready for a sting, with its trailing stems, in the outdoor window box. Plumosa is interesting for its downward, pointed, sharp thorns and the habit of throwing out new shoots, which reach out and wind about, sometimes six feet long.

AMARYLLIS. To go in for amaryllis calls for some study, with all the lovely new hybrids with color variations. It is a thrill to see the flower stalk grow inches a day. While I carry over all my bulbs, summer them outdoors, I have found succeeding bloomings very erratic and unpredictable and generally smaller than the first year.

BULBS. Under this head I refer to tulips, hyacinths, narcissus and daffodils. I choose varieties which can be forced in pots, and plant them in pots, usually in November. I have had good bloom, invariably from narcissi, and most tulips and hyacinths. I have at times saved some of last year's bulbs and forced them again. Don't waste your time.

BEGONIAS. This plant family is huge and no one can begin to have a representation even of the various types, and yet the smallest windowsill garden will have its begonia, be it on farm, in village or city. All propagate easily from cuttings and I have long forgotten where I snipped off a shoot in my visits here and there. All begonias, I have found, are remarkably pest-free. I like the large, stately Angel Wing with the silver spots and large grape-like clusters of bloom in pink and red, some pistillate, some staminate. I also like the little begonia with the tiny double rosebud blossom. The fibrous rooted clan is huge; white blooming kinds with light green leaves. Then comes pinks and reds and dark reds with bronzed leaves. We would be lonesome without begonias as a house plant.

GERANIUMS. These offer a great variety, too, in color of bloom, size, and color of leaves. Maybe geraniums are considered old-fashioned because "Grandma" had 'em, but they offer splashes of color and are easy to care for. I find that they like a sunny window and thrive best when left a little on the dry side. Low humidity in the house seems not to bother them.

COLEUS. Leaves of this plant offer a great variety of color as desirable as the bloom on other plants. Some beautiful colors can be secured from the rainbow species growing outdoors during the summer. These grow upright and large. Another strain I like is quite dwarfish and trailing, and grows well in water. Mealy bug and coleus are almost synonymous, so watch out. Besides hand picking the bugs, Volck seems to help eliminate this pest.

ASPIDISTRAS. Cast iron plant, which may be as out of date as the 'hall tree,' with which it was found in close company during the gas light days. It was thought originally that this plant just about had to be kept in a dark hall, but you will be surprised what one will do with adequate light, water, and an infrequent repotting. The long, spear-shaped, dark green leaves are very refreshing to look at, and have thrived in conditions where it is hard to have other plants for very long.

CALLA LILY. I have had several white callas, which have been potted for years. Wandering Jew is growing and trailing out of the same pot. The occasional lilies are long lasting. I pay little attention to these except for watering.

CACTUS. These offer another large field of speculation. The Christmas Cactus is probably the best known - spineless and easy to care for. Grown from a hanging basket, this plant is really exotic and profuse in bloom all winter long. This single plant is really the result of four or five cuttings spaced around the pot some 15 years ago. I have a number of deeply ridged, dark green, spiny barrel cactus. The several blooms which come in the summer are cream colored and very fragrant. These are the plants you won't have to worry about if you are away over the weekend. Another interesting cactus is upright, as big and long as your forearm, pale yellow in color, and, oh, what spines! I put up with it, hoping some day to see what kind of a bloom it will have.

CARRION PLANT. I am not sure whether this plant is classed with cacti or with succulents. The long, dark green, segmented, rat-tail-like growth is upright until too heavy, when it will trail out like the tail on a planter. It slips easily, is decorative with other succulents. Never has bloomed for me. The hard, button-like blossom is supposed to draw blue bottle flies.

CROWN OF THORNS. This is one of the large Euphorbia family. I have had some large ones with feet and some with feet of twisted, circularly twined spiny stems. This plant has a resting period, likes plenty of sun, and the bright red blossoms in the center of the small whorl of leaves are attractive in late winter and spring. Does not like too much watering, as I found out. I haven't any more.

HIBISCUS. This is of the grafted and budded Chinese variety and does make an interesting and exotic house plant if you have the space. I have inherited such a potted woody plant. It has thrived so that it is more than three feet tall and two feet across. The blossom is completely double, looks more like a red tomato, and completely lacks the long stigma and stamens common as an identifying character of the hibiscus plant family. The leaves are maple shaped and a most beautiful bright green. The plant, even without bloom, is worth having.

DWARF CITRUS. I have always had a few of the dwarf Ponderosa lemon plants around. A few lemon blossoms make their presence known throughout the house. I do have difficulty getting fruit to set while the plant is in the house, but the annual crop of one or two large, good lemons proves we can do it right here in Minnesota. The plants of Otaheite Orange are real dwarf, bloom profusely, and fruit the size of golf balls if you have the patience to see the fruit mature.

HOLLY. I have two potted holly trees. Have had them for four or five years. One is a golden, variegated leaf, blooms and has produced berries. The other, a common Washington State variety, is bright, shiny-leaved, with spines, and a very showy plant as a Christmas decoration.

JACOB'S COAT (of many colors). *Alteranthera Bitznicki*, is a long-time favorite of mine. Outdoors gardeners use it for a colorful, low, compact border, or for a splash of brightness in the beds here and there. It slips easily, but I like to make fairly large divisions and pot them up for the house. They grow well under ordinary house conditions, in or out of sun and seem not too particular for watering needs.

BABY TEARS. Like Paddy's Wig, this is an interesting plant for low, compact, lacy effect. Once started, growing on a greenhouse bench, there is never-ending supply for repotting. I find that it likes shade, needs frequent watering, and in the house does like more humidity.

(To be continued in the December issue of THE SPRAY)

WILD MATERIAL USED FOR WINTER BOUQUETS

(Released by the University of Minnesota)

Common Name	Botanical Name	Part of Plant Used	Natural Color
American Lotus	<i>Nelumbo lutea</i>	Ripened seed head	Brown
Blazing Star	<i>Liatris punctata</i> , <i>pycnostachya</i> and <i>Scariosa</i>	Flower spike	Purple
Bittersweet	<i>Celastrus scandens</i>	Berry-like fruit	Orange & red
Blue Cohosh	<i>Caulophyllum thal-</i> <i>ictroides</i>	Berry-like fruit	Blue-black
Burning Bush	<i>Euonymus atropur-</i> <i>pureus</i>	Berry-like fruit	Orange & pur- plish red
Cattail	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Ripe seed head	Brown
Cotton Grass	<i>Eriophorum angusti-</i> <i>folium</i>	Ripe seed head	White
Ground Pine	<i>Lycopodium sp.</i>	Whole plant	Green
Milkweed	<i>Asclepias sp.</i>	Seed pods	Gray-green
Mullein	<i>Verbascum Thapsus</i>	Seed stalk	Brown
Penny Cress	<i>Thlaspi arvense</i>	Seed pods	Yellowish
Pepper Grass	<i>Lepidium virgini-</i> <i>cum</i>	Seed pods	Brown
Reed Grass	<i>Phragmites communis</i>	Ripe seed head	Light tan
Sensitive Fern	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	Spore case cluster	Brown
Wild Indigo	<i>Baptisia tinctoria</i>	Seed pods	Bluish-black
Willows	<i>Salix sp.</i>	Immature flower clus- tar	Gray
Winterberry	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Berry	Bright red
Wool Grass	<i>Scirpus cyperinus</i>	Ripe seed head	Grayish-white

LILIES FROM SEED

Would you like some free lily seed? Grown by the experts? The most economical way to get disease-free lilies is to grow them from seed. To encourage the growing of lilies from seed by beginners, the North American Lily Society will send two packets of hybrid lily seed to anyone who sends 6¢ in stamps to John L. Tingle, Treasurer, Route 1, Kennet Square, Pa., requesting them.

type lilies, the other, seed of reflex type lilies. Both are easily germinated and grown under ordinary conditions. For the pamphlet "Growing Lilies from Seeds," enclose 25¢ extra. Membership in the Society also allows the purchase of a wide variety of species and hybrid lily seed from the N.A.L.S. Seed Exchange at a moderate price. Further information on membership in the North