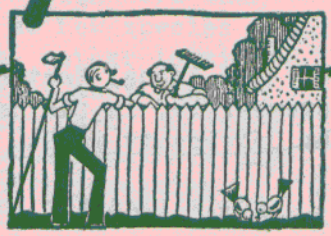
The Garden Spray

BULLETIN OF THE MEN'S GARDEN CLUB OF MINNEAPOLIS

Member--Men's Garden Clubs of America • Minnesota State Horticultural Society



November 1960
Volume 19, No. 11
G. "Vic" Lowrie, Editor

Associate Editors
Bill Hull, Joe Witmer,
Ev Haedecke, Geo. Luxton, Eng Hoy

November Meeting

Date: Tuesday, November 8, 1960

Place: Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church
50th & Knox

Time: 5:45 P.M. Sharp

Price: $1.75

Officers

Wm. H. Hull	Presider
Les Johnson	Vice-Presider
Dwight Stone	Secretar
Ev Haedecke	Treasure

Office of the Secretary
4620 Hampton Road

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401 Essex Building

PROGRAM

PANEL DISCUSSION by club members about their trials and errors with "experimentals" during the past year.

A VERY IMPORTANT business meeting will follow, at which time the Election of Officers for 1961 will take place.

This is the most important meeting of the year when we decide in whose hands we place the management of the Club for the ensuing year. So please do your level best to attend and come prepared to put your say into an interesting garden discussion. The meeting will adjourn in plenty of time for us to hear the election returns as they come in that evening.

NORTH STAR REGION ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the North Star Region will be held Saturday, November 19, in the new Student Union Building on the farm campus of the University in St. Paul.

Activities for the day are as follows:

10:30 a.m. - Registration (fee 50¢)

11:00 a.m. - Election of Officers

11:00 a.m. - "Look Down" - a new sound color film opening windows into the earth.

12:00 noon - Lunch in cafeteria (price $1.75)

1:00 p.m. - Talk by Mr. Lee Fetzer, President of the Men's Garden Club of America, in cafeteria.

1:30 p.m. - Dr. Hard will speak.

2:00 p.m. - Talk by Professor Wier on "Pruning" - when & how.

2:30 p.m. - Dr. Snyder will be speak on the subject, "What's New In Shrubs".

3:00 p.m. - Introduction of new Officers for 1961

3:30 p.m. - Door Prizes donated by the Men's Garden Club of St. Paul.

3:45 p.m. - Tour of new University of Minnesota greenhouses. Dr. Snyder will have undergraduate students on hand to answer any questions and to discuss any new research developments.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

NOTES ON SOME CULTIVATED SPECIES OF SALVIA

It is surprising that in such a vast genus as Salvia - with more than 800 species it is considerably larger than Rhododendron - so few species are in general cultivation. FARRER, in typical FARRER fashion, rather loftily dismissed the genis as a "family of leafy weeds" and possibly many people still think of salvias either as such or in terms of the pot herb, culinary sage. Yet throughout the group there are a host of decorative culinary sage. Yet throughout the group there are a host of decorative and interesting species, very diverse in habit, suitable for the rock garden, the herbaceous border and the greenhouse.

The two great centres of the genus are in the New World (Central Mexico, the Northern Andes and the Brazilian Highlands) and in South-West Asia (Turkey, Caucasus, Iran and Afghanistan). Many of the largest and gaudiest flowered species come, as might be expected, from the Americas: S. splendens (Brazil) and its many varieties, S. fulgens (Mexico) and S. patens (Mexico) are well known. Although the Old World has no such flamboyant species to offer, there is, nevertheless, a treasure-trove of potential garden plants in Asia, hardy and attractive, still little known, let alone grown.

Some recent introductions from South-West Asia are discussed below; other salvias which are, in one way or another, misunderstood, are also commented on.

S. candidissima. This is a common Turkish species which deserves to be much better known. At the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, it thrives in a dry scree and, for several years, in late June and July, it has been one of the handsome sights of the rock garden. The silvery-white, felted ovate leaves, the pale yellow-green inflorescence axes and calyces, the pure white flowers with a fraint trace of lemon on the lower lip, the aromatic fragrance and the long flowering period combine to make this a most desirable garden plant. Growing about 3 feet high, it sets abundant seed.

S. cyanescens. A very near relative of S. candidissima, S. cyanescens differs in the slenderer habit, the flowers tinged pale blue on the hood of the corolla, the blue-violet coloured calyces and the slightly later-flowering date. It shares with S. candidissima the same growth form and size, similar leaves and inflorescence. Almost certainly the first introduction of this species into cultivation is under the numbers Davis and Hedge 238 and 239 (1957) from the province of Sivas in central Anatolia. As with so many sages, S. cyanescens looks most effective when planted in clumps.

S. halophila. During Dr. Davis's 1957 expedition to Turkey, a remarkable new Salvia was discovered growing in a salt marsh at the margin of the great salt lake, the Tuz Golu, in central Turkey. It is probably the only known

Salvia which grows under saline conditions. Yet, although in the wild it was growing with such a salt-loving plant as a Salicornia, it grows well at Edinburgh in normal non-saline soil without any special treatment. S. halophila is characterized by the erect (3 feet high) habit, somewhat fleshy softly hairy leaves and the delicately coloured pale lavender flowers with an almost white middle lobe to the labellum. The original gathering of S. halophila is Davis 32815, of which seed has been distributed.

S. hypargeia. This is a handsome lavender-blue flowered species with whitish lanceolate leaves, mostly basal and which grows about 2 feet high. It is another Turkish steppe endemic which has been raised from seed of Davis and Hedge 258 (1957). Related to the Caucasian S. canescens and the Himalayan S. lanata, both desirable plants rarely seen in gardens, S. hypargeia in cultivation has the defect of dropping its flowers shortly after opening.

S. indica. A worthwhile plant for the herbaceous border is this large, bluish-flowered, tall-growing species which comes from Syria, Israel and the Lebanon. It is often grown under the name S. brachycalyx, with which it is synonymous, but the earlier Linnaean name must take precedence even though the species does not grow in India.

S. nubicola. This is generally regarded, erroneously, as a synonym of S. glutinosa. They are, in fact, two distant species. The true S. glutinosa, quite frequently grown in this country and on the continent, is native to the forests of Europe and South-West Asia as far east as the Elburz mountains of Persia. S. nubicola grows in Afghanistan, Kashmir, Nepal and Bhutan. Although most of the plants labelled S. glutinosa in gardens are correctly designated, S. nubicola, not nearly so frequent in cultivation, is usually grown under the same name.

S. russelii. Many gardens grow S. verticillata (and its varieties), the closest relative of this Turkish species. But there is much to be said in favour of the lesser-known S. russelii for the herbaceous border. The tight clump forming erect habit, the narrow lanceolate leaves, the violet-blue calyces and the profusion of violet flowers make it a very striking plant.

S nemorosa cv. 'Superba'. This well known plant of the herbaceous border occurs under the names S. x superba, S. sylvestris superba, S. virgata nemorosa, S. nemorosa and the varieties 'Lubecca' and 'East Friesland'. Although neither the origin nor the status of this plant have ever been established with absolute certainty, there is little doubt that S. 'Superba' is very closely allied indeed to S. nemorosa (syn. S. sylvestris auct.*) a species common and very variable in

*There is still some uncertainty as to the correct application of the Linnaean name S. sylvestris. Although it is sometimes used as the name for the species under discussion here, there are considerable grounds for treating it as the epithet for the commonly occurring hybrid between S. pratensis and S. nemorosa.

NOTES ON SOME CULTIVATED SPECIES OF SALVIA (Cont'd)

in South East Europe and South-West Asia and which occasionally occurs as an alien in this country.

Whatever doubt may exist as to its origin and status, there is no doubt about its value and attractiveness for the herbaceous border, possessing as it does all the attributes of the ideal border plant - tight compact habit, hardiness, abundance of flower and a long flowering period.

S. verbascifolia. Sharing with S. argentea the characters of silvery woolly leaves and large strongly hooded white flowers, S. verbascifolia is a hardy perennial which thrives at Edinburgh to such an extent that it self-seeds in considerable quantity. A native of Turkey, the Caucasus mountains and Persia, S. verbascifolia is a very polymorphic plant in nature: flowering time, habit and flower size are most variable. Within this variation are certainly several forms which would make very fine garden plants.

by Ian C. Hedge (Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh)
Reprinted from the "Journal Of The Royal Horticultural Society", October 1960

SLIDES FOR THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

We would like to have every member of the Club represented in the showing of slides at the Christmas Party. Bring your slides to the November 8 Meeting. Slides of your own garden or those that you have taken of some other member's garden. Do not submit slides that have been shown previously. You can tell them by the large white numbered dot in the lower left hand corner. Bring slides to P. W. Young at the November meeting.

CAMERA - Special Interest Group

Chairman Eng Hoyme called a meeting of the Camera Group at his home, Monday, October 24 to discuss fundamentals of photography and to help those members in attendance with their individual problems. His assistants were Vern Roufs, Bob Sicora and P. W. Young. The attendance left something to be desired, but those who attended will assure you that they learned more and profited more than they could possibly have by listening to the Kennedy - Nixon debate!

It is planned to hold these meetings monthly, and if you want to learn how to take better pictures of your garden, children and grandchildren; how to use your cameras so as to get the very best possible pictures, make your plans now to attend these meetings.

If you are not presently listed as a member of this group, call Eng Hoyme and ask to be notified of the next meeting.

WE KNOW IT'S IN THERE

of one of the plants to achieve a cross. Furthermore, speeding up flowering and growth gives plant breeders a way to run through successive generations faster, pushing toward stock they want. Beaming lights at wheat, plant breeders already have managed to produce three generations of wheat in a single season - one in the field and two in the greenhouse.

A SHORT-STEMMED GRAIN?

And through better breeding with the help of phytochrome's power, it may be possible, among other things, to produce plants in sizes tailored more closely than ever to farm needs. One result might be a short-stemmed grain resistant to flattening by the wind. As harvesting machines continue to take over on farms, plant breeders also may come up with crops that bear their fruit at heights most convenient for mechanical picking.

If such manipulation schemes sound farfetched, consider the Hawaiian sugar cane growers who found there was a two-week period in the Fall when the nights were just long enough to put flowers on their cane - something that cuts stalk growth and reduces valuable sugar yield. One company stole a strick from researchers here and actually lighted a big area with floodlamps on a high tower. This neatly stopped flowering, but proved too costly for regular use. Now the growers use a chemical growth inhibitor, really a weed killer, that just happens to work on sugar cane.

"This is a shotgun method," says one of the researchers here. The ideal: Precise knowledge that would permit this type of manipulation for many plants. Dr. Borthwock himself suggests it might be possible to breed a sugar cane plant that would try but never quite succeed in flowering. Controlled light application here has kept some plants from flowering for five years.

For years chrysanthemum growers have served up the traditional Fall bloom at all seasons by outright manipulation. These flowers, like sugar cane, need long dark periods to bloom; that's why the blossoms ordinarily come in late summer or autumn. Thus light-shielding curtains will speed up chrysanthemums' flowering. Conversely, a single hour of artificial light near the middle of the night can knock the flowering urge right out of them.

A "SHORT DAY" PLANT

The search for the key to plant growth began 40 years ago when two pioneers discovered that the Maryland Mammoth tobacco plant would flower only when the daily light period was kept short. They called it a "short day" plant