

Quarterly of the American  
**Primrose**  
Society

VOLUME XXII

SPRING YEARBOOK 1964

NUMBER 2



*Primula Chionantha* — Photograph by Orval Agee

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 of the  
 American Primrose Society

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THE PICTURE ON THE COVER: *Primula Chionantha* photographed in the garden of Mrs. A. C. U. Berry by Orval Agee. *P. chionantha* blooms in April and May in the Northwest. See Robert Putnam's article on page 46.

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*Mrs. John L. Karnopp, A founder, charter member, and honorary life member passes*

With deep regret we announce the passing of Mrs. John L. Karnopp of Portland, Oregon, at the age of 88. Mrs. Karnopp was the first to be awarded the Bamford Trophy when it was presented to our Society in 1954 by Mr. Dan Bamford of England. It was his wish that it first be presented to the one who had done the most to popularize and improve primulas in America, particularly the Show Auricula. Mrs. Doretta Klaber, of Quakertown, Pennsylvania, had the difficult task of judging for this award and the following is an excerpt and an excellent summary of the contents of the many letters written in behalf of Mrs. Karnopp.

To quote Mrs. Klaber . . . "It is my desire to nominate Mrs. John L. Karnopp to be the first winner of the Bamford Trophy: First, for her tireless devotion, over a long period of time, to the task of raising perfect Show Auriculas in the tradition of the Old Florists who long ago set the standards of perfection. Second, for her willingness to pass on to others the knowledge gained during these years of ceaseless effort and patient toil. Third, for her willingness to share with others the fruits of her work in the form of her most cherished Show Auriculas. Fourth, the final and most important reason for my choice: The encouragement she has given in the art of Auricula growing to the novice both old and young.

"If the American Primrose Society could be blessed with a dozen members possessing the character, ability, skill, and generous nature of Mrs. Karnopp the Show Auricula would soon bloom in many places where it has never bloomed before; and if it had not been for her they would not now be blooming half a continent away from her garden on the premises of the writer of these lines."



*Mrs. Lucien (Anita) Alexander*

## A New Editor

Beginning with the summer issue, Mrs. Lucien Alexander will become the new editor of the Quarterly. An active member of the Oregon Primrose Society and a knowledgeable grower, Mrs. Alexander is well qualified to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mrs. Robert Ford. Time does not allow a more detailed account of the change in this issue but members are urged to give their full support to our new editor. Please address all correspondence to her at 11848 S.E. Rhone, Portland, Oregon.

Ralph Balcolm, President

## 1964 National Show - April 11, 12

The Tacoma Primrose Society will present the National Primrose Show, "Heralds of Spring," at the National Bank of Washington in the center of Villa Plaza, Lakewood, Washington (just past Lakewood Center).

Colonel Louis M. Haas, 536 Ramsdell St., Fircrest, Wn., will be the show chairman again this year, according to club president Floyd S. Keller.

The show will open at 1:00 p.m. on April 11 and close at 9:00 p.m. On April 12 it will be open at 11:00 a.m. and close at 6:00 p.m.

Because the building is not available until the morning of the 11th, plants may not be entered for exhibit until 7:30 a.m. Saturday the 11th. The deadline for entering is 9:30 a.m. Please see the show schedule on page 38 for further details.

## Annual Meeting and Banquet April 11

The National Awards Banquet and election of American Primrose Society officers will be at the Pantry restaurant (next to Rhodes Department Store) in Lakewood on Saturday the 11th, at 7 o'clock. Dinner will be \$2.50 and reservations may be made with Mrs. Louis Haas in Tacoma or with Mrs. Ralph Balcolm in Seattle.

Featured speaker at the banquet will be an outstanding local authority, Robert Putnam, of Kirkland, who will show

slides of some of his plant hunting expeditions in Northwest mountains as well as choice primulas.

The nominating committee presents the following list of candidates for election at this meeting. President, Ralph Balcolm; Vice President, Mrs. Ivel Agée; Recording Secretary, Mrs. John Siepman; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Alice Hills Baylor; Treasurer, Mrs. Lawrence G. Tait; Board members, Mrs. Etha Tate and Mr. Ross Willingham.

### CLASSIFIED ADS

VERMONT HARDY PRIMULAS. New introductions—old favorites. Species, double and semi-double auriculas, \$3.50 and \$2.50—red, purple, lavender, pink, white, apple blossom or yellow. Seeds of above: 50 for \$3.00. Gold Laced Polyanthus and Sieboldi (including Southern Cross). 1963 Seeds. SKY HOOK FARM, Johnson, Vt.

ROSEA GRANDIFLORA — 75c. Species Juliae—\$1, Juliana hybrid "Buttercup"—\$1. Frondosa 75c and several rare species in limited supply. See these plus a wide selection of auriculas, candelabras and polyanthus at DICKSON'S PERENNIAL GARDENS—13347 56th Ave. S., Seattle 78, Wn.

DOUBLE AURICULA SEEDS AND PLANTS . . . New colors in these. Seeds sold in mixtures only. A few 1963 seeds left, but order early for 1964 crosses. Plants for sale at garden only. No shipping. Good choice of garden auriculas. MRS. JANET ROUND, SOUTH COLBY, WN.

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## 1964 Shows

### MT. ANGEL PRIMROSE SHOW

April 12—from 12 to 6

Plants may be entered from 5 to 8 April 11 and from 8 to 9:45 April 12. At St. Mary's School (basement) Mt. Angel, Oregon. East College St. across from St. Mary's Catholic Church. (Church can be seen from the highway). Signs will be posted. Show chairman is Mrs. Wilbert Schaecher, 780 Elm, Mt. Angel. Mrs. Joe Annen, Rt. 1, Box 122, is club president.

### LEWIS CO. PRIMROSE SOC.

April 11—1 to 9

April 12—10 to 6

"Springtime in the Valley" is the theme. Mrs. J. G. Morris, Rt. 2, Centralia, is show chairman. Mrs. LeRoy Teasdale, 311 N. Diamond, Centralia, Wn., is the club president.

### CANADIAN PRIMULA AND ALPINE SOC.

April 10—2 to 10

April 11—12 to 9

Mr. A. Gilchrist, 6005 Eagleridge Rd. W. Vancouver, B.C., is show chairman of the show to be held at the Douglas Park Fieldhouse on Willow St. between 20th and 22nd. Admission 50c. Mr. E. C. Darts is the new president.

### EASTSIDE GARDEN CLUB—Kirkland

April 17—2 to 9

April 18—12 to 9

April 19—12 to 6

"Spring Glory" is the theme. This will be a Standard Show. Show Chairman is Mrs. Hilton Brown, 12046 N.E. 70th, Kirkland, Wn. Mrs. Francis Rae is club president. Horticulture entries will be accepted from noon to 9:30 p.m. April 16. Decorative entries from 4 to 9 on April 16 only. Admission 50c.

### CLARK COUNTY PRIMROSE SOC.

April 18—1:30 to 8

April 19—10 to 6

"Primrose Parade" is the theme of this show at the Experiment Station, 1918 N.E. 78th, Vancouver, Wn. (turn east off Hwy. 99 on 78th St. at Totem Pole Shopping Center or turn at St. Johns Manor Hwy. on 78th St.) Plant sale. Plants may be entered from 9-12

noon on April 18th. Show chairman is Mrs. Seth Barnett, 9219 St. Johns Rd., Vancouver; Mrs. Harold Owen, 4015 N.E. 47th St., Vancouver, Wn., is the club president.

### OREGON PRIMROSE SOCIETY

April 25—2 to 8

April 26—1 to 6

The Oregon Spring Show will be in the Milwaukie Community Hall, 42 and Jackson Sts. Plants may be entered Friday, April 24, from 7 to 9 and April 25 from 8 to 10 a.m., deadline. Rather than floral arrangements the show will have Dish Gardens and Bonsai. Mrs. Orval Agee, 11112 S.E. Wood, Milwaukie, is show chairman. Club president, Mrs. William Tate, is co-chairman.

### WASH. STATE PRIMROSE SOC. AURICULA SHOW

May 2—1 to 9

May 3—10 to 6

At the Naval Reserve Building, 860 Terry Ave. N., Seattle, Wn. Mr. Pete M. Schoolcraft, 15115 88th N.E., Bothell, Wn., is Show Chairman with Mrs. Sylvester Harp as co-chairman. Mrs. William Dines is club president. Exhibits will be received May 1 from 7 to 10 p.m. and May 2 from 8 to 10 a.m.

### ONONDAGO PRIMROSE SOCIETY

On April 17 at the Hiscock home Mrs. Hilda Baldwin will give a review of the Primrose Quarterly and its purpose. On May 9 the annual garden tour will be followed by a supper at the Elmer C. Baldwin home. Mr. Mansueto Capra, 103 Ontario Place, Liverpool, N.Y., is the new president.

### FRIDAY HARBOR PRIMROSE CLUB

April 11—opening at 11 a.m.

"Legacy of China and Primrose" is the theme of this show to be held at the Study Club. Tea will be served. There will be a small admission charge and a plant sale. Jessie Woods is show chairman as well as club president.

VICTORIA, B. C.

April 17 and 18

The Victoria Horticultural Society will have a Rock and Alpine Show.

## 1964 National Primrose Show

### Tacoma — April 11-12

NAT'L BANK OF WASHINGTON IN THE CENTER OF VILLA PLAZA, LAKEWOOD

1. Show will be open to visitors Saturday, April 11, from 1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Sunday, April 12 from 11:00 to 6:00 p.m.

2. Exhibits will be received Saturday, April 11, from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., deadline.

3. All divisions and classes except Division VII are open to both amateurs and professionals and no differentiation in judging will be shown, whether the plant be entered by an amateur or professional.

4. All Primulas entered in the show must have been grown out of doors (except Show Auriculas) and have been in the exhibitor's garden for at least three (3) months. Glass covering for protection of bloom (not forcing) is permitted.

5. Only Show Chairman, judging committee, and clerks will be permitted on the show floor during judging. All entries will be placed by the committee.

6. Entries are the property of the show during the show hours and must not be removed until the show closes at 6:00 p.m. April 12, 1964.

7. Exhibitors shall furnish their own pots (of clean clay or plastic) which should bear the exhibitor's name, on the bottom of the pot. No top dressing around plants in pot.

8. All exhibits will be judged according to the standards of excellence established by The American Primrose Society.

9. It is understood that members of the Tacoma Primrose Society will not be held responsible for loss of, or damage to person or property.

10. The show management may make such other rules as it may deem necessary for the proper conduct of the show.

11. The judges' decisions are final.

### DIVISION I—ACAULIS

(Vernales Section)

Competitive—One plant in Pot  
Open to all

#### Section A—Hybrids:

- |                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Class 1. Light Blue | 7. Dark Pink |
| 2. Medium Blue      | 8. Lavender  |
| 3. Dark Blue        | 9. Rose      |
| 4. White            | 10. Yellow   |
| 5. Cream            | 11. Red      |
| 6. Light Pink       | 12. Purple   |

#### Section B—Doubles:

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Class 1. Lavender | 7. Cream            |
| 2. White          | 8. Red              |
| 3. Yellow         | 9. Striped or edged |
| 4. Pink           | 10. Named Varieties |
| 5. Purple         | 11. Any other       |
| 6. Blue           |                     |

#### Section C—Jack-in-the-Green:

- |                           |
|---------------------------|
| Class 1. White and Yellow |
| 2. Pink and Rose          |
| 3. Tan and Brown          |
| 4. Red shades             |
| 5. Blue shades            |
| 6. Any other              |

### DIVISION II—POLYANTHUS

(Vernales Section)

Competitive—One Plant in Pot  
Open to All

Plants in this division must not have more than 5 crowns and not less than 5 open florets.

#### Section A—Hybrids:

- |                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Class 1. Light Blue        | 12. Scarlet to tile Red |
| 2. Dark Blue               | 13. Coral               |
| 3. Purple                  | 14. Maroon and Dark     |
| 4. Light Yellow            | 15. White               |
| 5. Deep Yellow             | 16. Peach               |
| 6. Orange                  | 17. Pink                |
| 7. Chartreuse              | 18. Rose shades         |
| 8. Brown shades            | 19. Violet              |
| 9. Magenta                 | 20. Lavender            |
| 10. Blends                 |                         |
| 11. Bronze to brick shades |                         |

Section AA—Hybrids, Large Plants—same as in Section A, Classes 1-20.

Section B—Cowichan Hybrids: (Eye small or absent; stems wiry)

- Class 1. Ruby and Amethyst  
2. Garnet and Maroon  
3. Black Garnet  
4. Any other

Section C—Bizarres:

(Colors and patterns shaded, striped, picoteed)

- Class 1. Light color  
2. Dark colors

Section D—Jack-in-the-Green:

- Class 1. White  
2. Yellow  
3. Pink and Rose  
4. Tan and Brown  
5. Red Shades  
6. Blue shades

Section E—Miniature Polyanthus:  
(Flower stalk not to exceed 6 inches)

- Class 1. Blue shades  
2. Yellow shades  
3. Red shades  
4. White  
5. Any other

Section F—Gold and Silver Lace  
(Show Polyanthus)

- Class 1. Gold laced  
2. Silver laced

Section G—Doubles:

Same classes as Division I, Section B

Section H—Hose-in-Hose:

Same classes as Division II, Section A

DIVISION III—ACAULIS-POLYANTHUS

Competitive—One Plant in Pot  
Open to All

An Acaulis-Polyanthus exhibits both Acaulis and Polyanthus characteristics by carrying florets both on single stems as acaulis, and in umbels as polyanthus.

Section A—Hybrids:

Same classes as Division II, Section A

Section B—Doubles:

Same classes as Division I, Section B

Section C—Hose-in-Hose:

Same classes as Division II, Section A

Section D—Jack-in-the-Green:

Same classes as Division II, Section D

Section E—Any other Hybrid

(*Vernales Section*)

DIVISION IV—JULIAE

(*Vernales Section*)

Competitive—One Plant in Pot  
Open to All

Section A—Hybrids (Cushion Forms)

- Class 1. Blue 6. Magenta  
2. White 7. Red shades  
3. Pink 8. Yellow  
4. Rose 9. Any other  
5. Cream

Section B—Hybrids (Stalk Forms)

Same classes as Section A

Section C—Hose-in-Hose:

Class 1. Any color

DIVISION V—SEEDLINGS

(*Vernales Section*)

Competitive—One Plant in Pot

Open to All

A seedling is a plant grown by the exhibitor from seed, showing a maiden bloom with not less than three (3) open blossoms. (This division will be judged upon individual merit. Each plant of award quality will receive a ribbon.)

Section A—Acaulis:

Same classes as Division I, Section A through D

Section B—Polyanthus:

Same classes as Division II, Sections A through H

Section C—Acaulis—Polyanthus:

Same classes as Division III, Sections A through E

Section D—Juliae:

Same classes as Division IV, Sections A and B

Section E—Species

DIVISION VI—AURICULA

(*Auricula Section*)

Competitive—One Plant in Pot

Open to All

Section A—Garden Auriculas:

- Class 1. Light Blue 8. Chartreuse  
2. Dark Blue 9. Tan  
3. White 10. Brown  
4. Pink and Rose 11. Red shades  
5. Yellow shades 12. Maroon  
6. Lavender and Black  
7. Purple 13. Any other

Section B—Double Auriculas:

Same classes as Section A

Section C—Alpine Auriculas:

- Class 1. Light center  
2. Gold center

Section D—Show Auriculas:

- Class 1. White edged  
2. Grey edged  
3. Green edged  
4. Red selfs  
5. Yellow selfs  
6. Blue selfs  
7. Any other selfs

Section E—Oddities

- Class 1. Edged  
2. Green  
Hose-in-Hose  
4. Any other

Section F—Auricula Seedlings

(Maiden Bloom):

(Not less than 3 open florets)

Same as Division VI, All Sections

DIVISION VII—NOVICE

Competitive—One Plant in Pot

Open to anyone who has never exhibited previously or has never won a ribbon on a primula shown. This division will be judged on individual merit. (Every plant of award quality will receive a ribbon.) Exhibitors shall be limited to 5 entries in each class in this division.

Section A—Vernales Section:

- Class 1. Acaulis  
Class 2. Polyanthus  
Class 3. Juliae

Section B—Auricula Section

Section C—Any other Primulas

DIVISION VIII—RARITIES

Competitive—One Plant in Pot

Open to All

Rarities are those plants which are still rare by virtue of limited supply or infrequent occurrence. They include Jack-a-napes on Horseback, Gallyskins, new novelties or any other primula for which no class is provided.

This division will be judged on individual merit. (Each plant of award quality will receive a ribbon.)

DIVISION IX—SPECIES AND HYBRIDS

Competitive—One or More Plants

in Pot or Pan

Open to all. This division will be judged on merit. Each plant of award quality will receive a ribbon.

Section A—Auricula

- B—Candelabra  
C—Cortusoides  
D—Farinosa  
E—Nivalis  
F—Petiolaris  
G.—Sikkimensis  
H—Muscaroides  
I—Soldenelloideae  
J—Vernales  
K—Any Other

Section L—Denticulata

- Class 1. White  
2. Pink  
3. Rose  
4. Red  
5. Lavender  
6. Purple

Section M—Sieboldii

- Class 1. White  
2. Pink  
3. Rose  
4. Two-toned  
5. Southern Cross

DIVISION X—DECORATIVE

Competitive—One entry in Each Class

Open to All

Section A—"HERALDS OF SPRING"

Designs in which primulas must predominate. Other foliage and accessories may be used, unless otherwise stated.

- Class 1. Heralds of Spring—design depicting the show theme.  
2. Harbingers of Dawn—using rosy shades of primulas.  
3. High Noon—featuring yellow primulas.  
4. Heralding New Members—using figurine as a container.  
a. It's a Boy, blue primulas.  
b. It's a Girl, pink primulas.  
5. Bird Songs—primulas with birds and flowering branches.  
6. Ebb Tide—design combining primulas with  
a. drift or weathered wood.  
b. sea shells.  
7. Sunshine and Rain—stressing water reflection.  
8. Silvery Moonglow—crescent design using white or near white primulas.

Section B—Corsages

- Class 1. Beauty in a basket—using a  
2. Tailored.  
3. Evening.

Section C—Juniors

- Class 1. Beauty in a Basket—using a basket as a container.  
2. Spring Medley—Primulas in a low bowl.

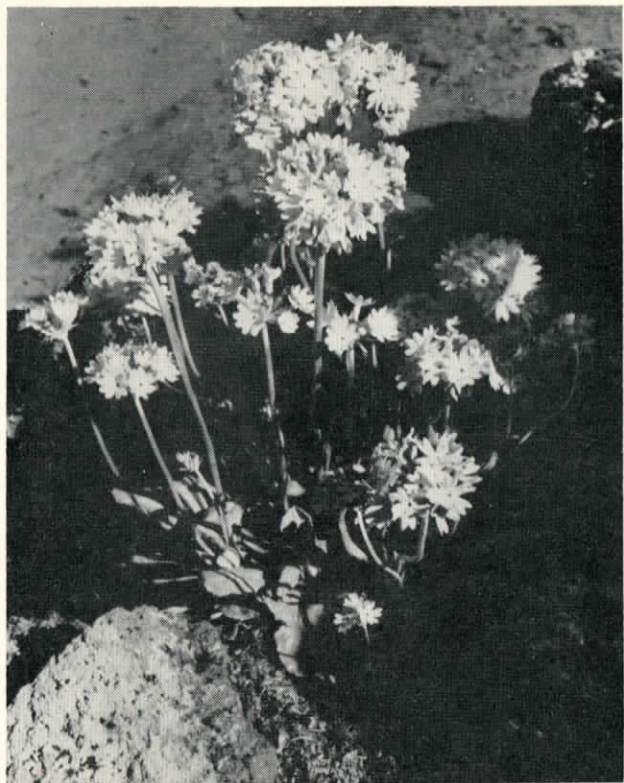
Section D—Men Only

- Class 1. My Game—design using your favorite primulas.  
2. Spectacle of Species—species primulas predominating.

DIVISION XI—GROWERS' EXHIBITS

Competitive—Open to all Growers

Exhibits with primoses must be 40% primulas. The set must be completed Sat., April 11 by 9:30 a.m. Plants from these exhibits may be sold but must not be removed from the exhibit until the show closes, 6:00 p.m. Sunday, April 12.



*P. longiscapa* . . . Courtesy R. Ruffier-Lanche

## Primula Longiscapa

R. RUFFIER-LANCHE, *Alpine Botanic Institute at Lautaret, Grenoble University*

**PRIMULA LONGISCAPA** Ledeb.  
(=*P. altaica* Lehm. = *P. intermedia*  
WW. Smith et Fletcher,  
non Sims.; etc. . . .)

This species, placed by W.W. Smith and Fletcher (under *P. intermedia*) in their Section Farinosae, sub-section Eu-Farinosae, was later placed by Fedorov in his Section Fariniferae. In the wild, it is known from East of the Volga to Southeastern and Northern Siberia, reaching Central Asia. It generally inhabits the Steppe Zone, in moist meadows, along streams and lakes, and is of-

ten found in brackish bogs (solontchaks.)

In the garden, it is easily cultivated, in the way of *P. farinosa*, *P. auriculata* and the like. The plant which is shown in the accompanying photograph is from seed collected in the wild in Uzbekistan and sent for distribution, and is growing in the Lautaret garden, on the margin of a small pond.

At flowering time, the scapes reach from 5 to 12 inches, and bear any number of flowers from 10 to 50—it is said even to bear as many as 100! Though related to *P. farinosa*, it is quite distinct, and reminds one of *P. sibirica*.

## A Funny Thing Happened

FLORENCE BELLIS  
*Barnhaven, Gresham, Oregon*

Sooner or later, sowing seed becomes a personal matter, as personal as how you wash your face or comb your hair. You have your way and I have mine, and there are just about as many ways to sow seed as there are to comb hair. But, the thing is, how do we arrive at the particular method that suits us? Usually it is a method developed over the years by taking a fragment from one, an idea from another, a little here and there, selected, changed and adapted to the particular growing conditions, climate, equipment and material at hand, and your own personality. Some like to fuss, and others just like to comb by wiping their hair dry with a towel. Then there are those who don't like to take the time to comb very much at all. They're the ones who just throw their seed at the edge of a rhododendron or azalea, scratch it in a little, and come up with a real "do."

Perhaps the green thumb thing enters into it to a large extent. To me, a green thumb means but one thing—a love for nature sufficiently deep to perceive and understand the divine principle of how things grow; to be able to put yourself in the position of these growing things; and to be willing to do the small, often trivial, extras that mean life or death, health or sickness to your plants, and success or failure to you.

Take, for instance, the recipe devised by Mrs. Symes of Sherwood, Oregon. Her method will appeal to the ladies who go in for baked Alaskas and such things. It could be called "A Funny Thing Happened On My Way to the Oven With a Pan of Primrose Seeds," the funny thing being the thirty-six hour, or less, sprouting period. The seed spent most of this time in the freezing unit, with a short hitch in the warming oven.

Mrs. Symes noticed, she said, ". . . that there is a steaming condition in nature in the spring, and I theorized that if I could duplicate such a condition,

germination might be hastened." So she planted the seed on a Tuesday morning, April 19th (which happens to be traditional Primrose Day in England) in the suggested equal parts of coarse sand, sieved peat and leaf mould, using an aluminum cake pan as a container, and covered the pan with aluminum foil after watering the pan from below. And here is another funny thing. Had she not noticed that this spring process was a moist, steamy one, and had she omitted the covering of foil, she probably would have succeeded only in drying out the seed. She could also have succeeded in drying out the seed had she failed to soak the soil thoroughly. And she did notice that this condition occurred in the spring at a time when it was safe to put tiny baby things outdoors.

She continues. "After I put the pan in the freezing compartment of the refrigerator over night, the next day, after it sat an hour or two at room temperature, I put it into the warming oven of my electric range for two hours."

Then panic set in. "After two hours the pan got quite warm, and I was terrified that I had ruined the seed." So she rushed it back into the freezing compartment—to cool it off in a hurry, I suppose—and when she approached it with little hope the next morning, the seed was a mass of sprouts.

She asked if this was unusual, or if the seed had been treated in any way. I would say the only thing unusual about it was the care with which she observed. You will notice she did not put the pan directly into the warming oven from the refrigerator. She allowed it to thaw an hour or two at room temperature. She followed one of nature's trails with every step she took.

Here is the way Mrs. Jessop, who gardens in Goderich, Ontario (Canada) sows her primrose seed. She sowed on February 29th, after having frozen and thawed the seed for two weeks prior to

sowing. This she did by first putting water on the seeds in their glassine envelopes, wrapping them in plastic, and putting them in the freezing compartment of her refrigerator, taking them out occasionally to thaw. These, she says, germinated in two weeks in peat pots of loam and peat moss in the basement. There was no difference in the germination time of the Polyanthus and Candelabras.

She word-paints a bitingly beautiful picture—the blue waters of Lake Huron, lovely beyond a mile of ice—“and when the snow melted, the borders of Polyanthus were already in bloom beneath it.”

Mrs. Snyder, who gardens in Kent, Ohio, also likes to re-freeze seed. She first sowed in flats and then put them in her deep freeze for about two weeks in late winter. Then, in early spring, “when it was wet and cold, I covered them with plyofilm, or a garment bag, and put them under an evergreen tree. I was thrilled when they started popping out of the soil. They are growing nicely and I haven't lost any except where a skunk stirred up one corner of the flat.”

I suspect Mr. Younken of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, of combing with a towel. He accomplishes the same thing an easier way. He sowed some *Acaulis* and some Candelabras on December 22nd, in flats, watered them well, shoved them into plastic bags and put them out on his patio, and let the winter do its natural best. He left them there in the plastic bags until April 7th when they were removed from the bags and placed in the hot bed. A cold frame would have done as well, or just some place protected from birds and beating rains. Incidentally, by this method he was the happy winner of some twelve hundred Candelabras on a dollar ticket. He used them in his landscape business and gave the people of Pennsylvania something new to love and Oh and Ah over.

Mr. Younken believes in letting nature take its course. The plastic bag trick is so simple most of us have overlooked it. Can anyone think of a better way to keep seeds moist, yet protect from heavy rain;

to freeze and thaw with the weather and yet not feed the birds primrose seed?

Mr. Ronald Solt of Barto is another commercial grower in Pennsylvania who found that by taking things more casually he came out with more plants. “The germination,” he says, “Must have been close to 100%. After trying several years of sowing in flats, without too much success, I went back to sowing in the open ground in a cold frame and it worked splendidly. Our plants went into winter, many with blooms, in excellent condition, and we are indeed eager to see what spring holds in store for us.”

In a cold frame, with extra covering in “zero weather if there is no snow, blooming primroses will probably stand up to any Pennsylvania winter. Just as primroses, winter blooming in the Pacific Northwest's great outdoors, will stand up if covered in snowless freezes. (See Winter Weather Watching in last issue.) To reduce winter bloom, seed should not be sown in variable climates, such as the Northwest, until late winter or early spring. Otherwise, plants from fall and winter sowings tend to burst into bloom during mild days in November and December and run the chance of being carried off by sudden drops to 20, or 10, or zero. The more developed the plant, the touchier it is in leaf and stalk and bud.

Mrs. Harding of East Derry, New Hampshire, has an interesting comment to make on the viability of old seed when properly stored. This hinges on whether the seed which has been properly stored has been properly harvested. She writes in June of 1963 that, in 1957, she was in the plant business and had purchased a quantity of Polyanthus and *Acaulis* seed. But before the seed arrived she had taken ill and could not plant, so put it in a tightly closed peanut butter jar in her refrigerator. For storage, of course, seed is put in some out-of-the-way corner on a bottom shelf, quite removed from the freezing unit. Anyway, her seed stayed there until April, 1963, when she planted it in flats in her living room. She was astounded, to say the least. “I really didn't expect anything,

just planted them for the sake of my spring nostalgia to plant something. And now, in June, I have enough primroses to plant the entire acreage, I do believe!”

Seed should always be stored in a tightly covered container in a cool place. For most people, this is the refrigerator. But there are still some who do not have refrigerators, as incredible as that may seem to those of us who do. I didn't know this until a few years ago when I sent a man on the east coast the seed he ordered, together with the usual seeding instructions which carry the artificial freezing method. He returned the seed with a letter. He told me he was a bachelor, that he did not own a refrigerator—did not, in fact, intend to own one—and gave me detailed instructions exactly where I could sow the seed he was returning. Until that time I actually thought everyone had a refrigerator.

Since Victor Ries of Columbus, Ohio, a few years ago implied, more or less, in the Quarterly that artificial freezing was a batch of nonsense, I tried sowing without freezing. I haven't frozen since. But I do use our hot water method, because it gives control. Seedlings, here, must be ready to transplant in early May just as soon as hybridizing ends. By sowing in flats, outdoors, using hot water for watering in, I know it will be six weeks from seed sowing to transplanting, and six weeks from transplanting to shipping or planting in the fields. However, for the private gardener there is no need to synchronize with anything but the weather. If you happen to get a late start in the spring, and you are sowing only in smaller amounts, then Mrs. Synes' thirty-six-hour germination method might come in handy. If you have your seed on hand—say from the summer harvest—and live in a cold climate, then store it as did Mrs. Harding in New Hampshire, and sow it in winter, enclosing it in a plastic bag according to Mrs. Snyder and Mr. Younken. If you live in a hot summer and mild climate, then store the seed and plant outdoors in early fall when the weather begins to cool. It will bloom the following

spring. There are some years in the Pacific Northwest when seeds sown in July will flower the following spring, and this has been one of them. But this year winter went fishing here on the Pacific Coast, from Canada to California, and didn't trouble himself much about work.

There have been any number of good seeding methods published in past Quarterlies. It would be of help and interest if many more members would send in their favorite methods. If you are interested in a few tricks I have learned over the years, perhaps two of the most important are good air drainage and good soil drainage. This applies more to the seed after it has germinated, than before. There is really nothing to germinating seed if it comes from a knowledgeable source. By that I mean seed that has been properly harvested, cured, and stored before and during distribution.

I now sow in flats with five half-inch cracks for drainage. The flats are half-filled with sharp rock, over which the seeding compost is put. This compost consists of very coarse sand (fill sand which keeps the soil open, not mason sand which packs) leaf mould and sieved peat in more or less equal proportions to make an open, porous soil with a brown sugar feel. This is tamped down with a brick, then more compost added, if necessary, to bring the soil surface just barely below the top of the flat after another tamping. This is for good air circulation around the necks of the seedlings-to-be. It allows the breeze to flow freely across the surface of the soil unimpeded by the sides of the flat.

The seeds are then scattered in what is supposed to be an even and uncrowded manner, but which always turns out to be thick and bunchy. I do my best dreaming when I am sowing seed. Can you look at primrose seed and see only a collection of brown, wrinkly shapes? I see living plants in glowing colors, and color combinations so exquisite I am reduced to nothingness. However—our spring sowing takes place from mid-March to early April. I then use water, just under 120 degrees, to water them

in the day I plant. The next day I reduce the temperature to about 115 degrees. An ordinary thermometer gives you the measurements. Never go over the 120 mark. By watering in, I mean using a sprinkling can with the finest rose you can get, and seeing that all areas get equal and thorough attention.

The seed is not covered by soil or sand until after it has germinated. But plastic covers are used, or cheese-cloth tents, to prevent sparrows from feeding on the seed. The reason for leaving the seed open to view is to watch for fungus which often develops as the seed sprouts. This is the bread mould, the same mould which develops in moist, stale bread. It feeds on the seed germ as the chemical change takes place, and leaves nothing but the empty husk.

If your site is such that brisk air flows through, fungus will be little or no problem. But in sites surrounded by trees, or shrubs, or close buildings, fungus has more chance to develop because of air stoppage. If you have not already found a safe fungicide to take care of everything from sprouting seeds to crown rot in field plants, we have. This is Natriphene, used in sanitoriums and sick-rooms as a germicide, and in horticulture as a fungicide. It cures everything from athletes' foot to mange on your cat or dog. And it certainly cures, completely and safely in one application, fungus on seeds, damp-off, leaf and crown rot. It is to be had from The Natriphene Co., 424 Book Bldg., Detroit 26, Michigan. Here, we prefer the powder which is used at the rate of a rounded 1/2 teaspoonful to an eight-quart sprinkler. It is also offered in tablet form, but this takes longer to dissolve. I have learned, the hard way, to always use less material than instructed on the label.

A day or two after Natriphening, germination has advanced so rapidly that it is necessary to lightly cover the sprouts with sieved sand. All plastic covers, cheesecloth tents and other novel inventions are then removed. The sand pro-

ducts the sprouts from hot sun and birds, and nothing remains to do but wait until the seedlings have developed their first true leaves, and then transplant them.

There are four precautions worth taking to insure soil drainage: Large enough drainage spaces in containers to prevent clogging; sharp rock in the containers; an inch, or two inches, of a porous seeding mixture on top of the rock; and elevating the containers for a drip-away. We place all seeded flats, and flats of transplanted seedlings, on 2 x 4's strung on top of benches in high-roofed sheds completely open on all sides and ends.

As I write on, I realize the subject of seeding might be wearing a bit thin for even the most ardent sowers. There were several more topics that seemed of interest when I started. Such as the trouble you can get yourself into by using chemical fertilizers in your transplanting mixture, or fertilizer of any kind in your seeding mixture. How it pays to put seeded Candelabra flats in a tray of water the day you plant, for an overnight soak and remember them three days later. How Mrs. A.C.U. Berry, of Portland, used to take seed received from plant hunting expeditions up into the mountains in the fall and leave it there until spring. And how Mrs. Mary McNeal, also of Portland, used a catsup bottle with laundry sprinkler attachment to sprinkle seeds with hot water. This was some thirty years ago and led to our adapting these practices into the artificial freezing and hot water methods. Also, I was going to warn about seed sprouting in the freezing unit if left there too long. Too long, as I remember, is about a month. It has been years since I last made that mistake.

But all this can wait until another time. In summing up, I believe that the over-all principle of seed sowing—all gardening for that matter—is to go with the seasons, to go with nature. And this reminds me of the ancient Mayan farewell "Go with God, for you cannot go without Him."



*P. Allionii* is in bloom February 14 for the Author . . .

Photograph by Orval Agee

## Auricula Species and Hybrids

IVANEL AGE<sup>®</sup>. Milwaukie, Oregon

There are several small primulas in the Auricula Section that are now fairly common and not too difficult to grow. These small plants are good for the rockery or alpine house. It is most interesting to hybridize and produce little hybrids from the auricula species.

*Primula marginata*, of the Maritime and Cottain Alps, has lovely orchid or lilac blossoms. The plant has serrated leaves edged in farina. *P. carniolica*, of the Julian Alps in Italy, is a variation of rose tones with a white eye. *P. rubra*, covering more territory and a wider range of altitude in the Alps, presents more variation of form. The blooms are rose tones with white eye. *P. villosa*, subspecies *commutata*, found in Styria, also has blooms in various tones of rose. *P. pedemontana*, of the Alps be-

tween France and Italy, is another with variations of rose with a light eye.

*Primula Allionii*, not common, is a tiny plant with sticky leaves. This primula is found in a restricted area of the Maritime Alps. It is about an inch high and at present, February 14, has frosty pink blooms about an inch in diameter just hovering over the plant. *P. Allionii* does not set seed for me, but apparently makes a good pollen parent.

*P. marginata* x *P. Allionii* is in bud. It seems to have the growth habit of *P. Allionii* but the leaves are half way between both parents. The buds show quite a cluster so will probably come up with a cluster (a characteristic from *P. marginata*). The *P. marginata* x *P. carniolica* resembled *P. carniolica*. *P. Com-*

(Continued on Pg. 46)



## Primula Chionantha

ROBERT C. PUTNAM, Kirkland, Washington

*Mr. Putnam's enthusiasm for P. chionantha must be shared by all who have grown it. See front cover for illustration.*

Not often seen in our gardens, but certainly worthy of the finest setting, is *Primula chionantha*. The smooth, handsome leaves remind us of its American relative, *Dodecatheon Jefferyi* except the primula has gold farina on its leaves. The flower scapes extend 15 inches or more, with white florets in loose whorls. Just to say the flowers are white is not enough. They are a soft, warm, iridescent white and, together with the leaf and general stature, give this plant a classic elegance not easily matched.

Seed germinates easily and the plant generally is not hard to grow or keep in the garden. The only foible we have found is a slight resentment to transplanting, both in the seedling stage and as a mature plant. It is no great problem, however, if one picks a cool, cloudy day for transplanting, followed by ample watering.

Some sources have reported them difficult to winter over in the resting place, but we have not found this to be true. Good drainage, leafmould, moisture, and shade in the growing season have kept our bed for five years. When you see their dying leaves and messy crowns in fall, as they prepare for winter, you will swear they are giving up for good. In spring, while you are still grieving, they will start at once, grow faster than other primula, and bloom in spite of gardeners. Its native habitat may account for its built in mechanism that says "let's get going." Growing at altitudes of 12,000 to 13,000 feet and surrounded by melting snow fields, it has become accustomed to the hurried schedule of high altitudes.

By all means plant *Primula chionantha* in groups—they have a way of complimenting one another. They are also beautiful grouped among Rhododendron and other evergreen shrubbery. Nor do they need small companions at their feet. They have a tendency to look down on lesser things. *P. chionantha* can afford to be aloof.

The flowers take on a glow at dusk and in moonlight really live it up. If you ever wander in a garden, while wrestling with Morpheus or other night foes, you will find *P. chionantha* even more beautiful than by day.

### Auricula Species and Hybrids

(Continued from Pg. 45)

*mutata* x *P. rubra* blooms very well, rather like an overgrown rubra. *P. commutata* has been crossed with *P. Allionii*. In another cross, a hybrid of *P. commutata* x *P. rubra* was pollinated with *P. Allionii*. These crosses were all planted this spring.

x *P. pubescens* is an old hybrid of the species auricula and *P. rubra* and is quite variable. As seeds of both may now be obtained in the seed exchange one may have his own pubescens. This may be done by crossing the yellow species auricula with rose-toned rubra and one can expect variations in color. One sees 'Pubescens Hybrids' in shows. These are probably crossed with our garden auriculas and do make attractive garden or rockery auriculas.

There have been some hybrids of *P. minima* on the market at times, but minima and all its hybrids do not bloom very easily—at least not in the Portland area.

## Concerning Primulas

GRACE DOWLING, Seattle, Washington

CHAPTER 14

### AMERICAN PRIMULAS

*Permission to reprint this chapter was given by the University of Washington Arboretum Bulletin.*

Plant explorers in America have been busily at work for many years and in their stride primulas have been discovered, generally, as in most other countries, high in mountain meadows or under overhanging cliffs. Not a great deal of effort has been made to classify this particular group and the different names given to the same plants have complicated the correct identifications in many cases.

The following list has been gathered from floras, magazine articles and reports from collectors. It is offered with no assurance that it is a complete or accurate account, but only with the hope that American primulas may tempt some appetites jaded with struggles growing European and Asiatic ones.

Many on this list I have seen growing, others I have found as specimens in herbariums and a few are only names that are interesting to hear about. In time there will, without doubt, be many more gardens featuring American primulas and, considering the time it has taken English gardeners to establish some European varieties with only comparative success, there is no reason why we cannot equal these accomplishments.

#### *Primula farinosa*

All over the world, wherever there are spots favorable to the growth of *P. farinosa*, this little primula, in some unaccountable way, has found a home and grown contentedly. Apparently it prefers picking its own location and, more than most primulas, has difficulty settling in a garden spot deliberately made

for it. The various forms of the American *P. farinosa* may not be identical with those which grow in other countries. The color may vary or the leaves may be a trifle longer or shorter, but the family characteristics are so evident it is not difficult to recognize. It has been found in Greenland, then in Maine and around Quebec. Gradually, wandering across the country, it grows in high, wet, grassy meadows in Michigan, Minnesota and western Canada.

Most of the forms of *P. farinosa* are more or less covered with white meal, at least when young, and this fact alone makes it difficult to differentiate its subspecies; one, called *mistassinica*, is the Canadian *P. farinosa*, differing from the type in that the leaves are larger, the flowers are paler and it lacks the meal of *P. farinosa*. It is much easier to tame and stays a longer time in the garden.

#### *Primula incana*

A little primula, so much like the type that it has been called *P. farinosa* var. *incana*. Another synonym, according to Mr. Williams (an early plant explorer) is *P. americana*; it is found in Utah, and farther north in Alberta along the Mackenzie River, then drifting down through the Rocky Mountains in Montana, Wyoming and Colorado. The rosette is a tiny thing formed of leaves one to three inches long. The undersides of the leaves are mealy and the edges are notched above the middle of the leaf. The blossoms are pale lilac, on farina-coated stems four to eight inches tall. It grows in the garden more easily than *P. farinosa*.

#### *Primula egaliksensis*

Not unlike *P. sibirica* and so nearly resembling *P. farinosa* that it is often

called the Greenland farinosa. *P. egalik-sensis* seems almost like an old friend that is met in Northern Labrador. Without a doubt, it is one of the various forms of the "Bird's e'en" that grows in the north of England. It is smaller than the type form, being almost a dwarf with smooth, pale-green leaves without meal, from one-half to one inch long with white blossoms growing in an umbel on a stem from two to five inches tall. It likes limestone chippings in a rich, rather heavy loam in a sunny situation.

#### *Primula borealis*

From the Canadian Rockies, as well as from Siberia, comes this little gem of the Farinosa section. The plant is a minute tuft of leaves, smooth and about one-half inch long, with toothed edges, and a surprisingly long flower stem, three times as long and more as the length of the leaves. The specimen in the herbarium, with its sweet, faded petals (originally probably rose or lilac) was charming and I longed to be able to bring some plants into a garden.

#### *Primula Specuicola*

*P. specuicola*, probably a sub-species of *P. farinosa*, also grows in Utah, along the San Juan River on hillsides and bluffs under overhanging limestone cliffs. The tuft of thin leaves, from which springs the flower stem, shows signs of farina while the leaves are yet young, but as they grow older the meal disappears. The flower stem is scarcely one inch tall but it is topped by an umbel of from ten to twenty dark-violet blossoms with yellow tubes, blossoming from February to August.

#### *Primula laurentiana*

*P. laurentiana* was sent to Dr. Fernald, keeper of the Gray Herbarium at Harvard University. It came from the Laurentian Hills in the vicinity of the St. Lawrence River. As far as I can learn it follows the general pattern that *P. farinosa* has established.

#### *Primula sibirica*

With amazing foresight plant explorers have brought primulas into cultivation where, with good food and care, they have become affluent and outstanding. While *P. sibirica* itself has never become a plant that has caused much excitement, some of its close relations have developed latent fashions and temperaments not guessed by the original collector. Mr. Lohbrunner, a traveler and plant collector who lives in Victoria, B.C., found growing in a small river in the Yukon Territory a little primula with its feet completely covered with water. He was not particularly impressed with its beauty, but in spite of that he brought it home. It developed, with solicitude and careful nourishment into what he called *P. A. Y. Ex. No. 104*, a fragrant counterpart of *P. involucrata*, deep, clear pink with a yellow eye. Not a true *P. sibirica*, but one of a group, *P. chrysope*, *P. tibetica involucrata* and *P. borealis*, so difficult for the amateur to separate under their respective names. The true *P. sibirica*, as its name signifies, is found in Siberia, but is also reported from the Northwest Territories where it was found by a Canadian-Arctic expedition. It has flowers that vary somewhat. Some are pale pink, without much substance and with little soul. It is only included in this meager list of primulas to show the differences in a generally fine section.

#### *Primula Parryi*

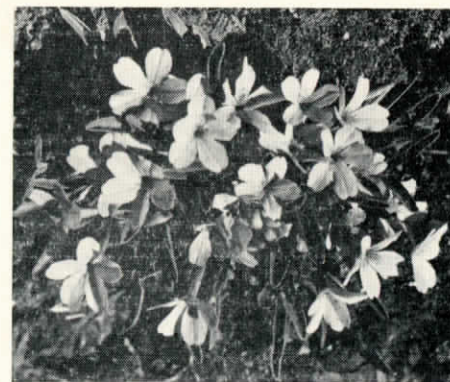
If *P. Parryi* could have arranged to belong to another and easier section without doubt it would have run a close race for the position that *P. japonica* now holds in our gardens. One of the largest and handsomest, if not the best of all the American primulas, *P. Parryi* compares in size with the Asiatic Candelabra group and reminds one of a giant plant of shooting star (Dodecatheon), another genus of the Primulaceae family. It has a reputation of "rank-smelling" but this has been denied, and on the other hand the root is said to be fragrant. Mrs. Kathleen Marriage of Colorado Springs, Colorado, wrote of seeing a row of them in

blossom, growing on a moss-covered, half-rotten log imbedded in a shallow stream. This may be a suggestion for a similar position in a garden.

*P. Parryi* grows from Montana to New Mexico, from Nevada to Arizona, always high in the mountains, eight thousand to thirteen thousand feet, along banks of rocky streams running through alpine meadows. The flowers grow in a one-sided umbel of "rosy-purple" flowers, sometimes on eighteen-inch stems. It is the most common of any of the species in the Rocky Mountains and, while it is capricious and not easily tamed, it has been grown, quite successfully, by many primula growers. *P. Parryi* prefers a rich loam, rather heavy in texture, in half shade, plenty of moisture in the growing season and a dry crown during the winter months. According to some writers, *P. mucronata* and *P. m* var. *arizonica* are synonyms of *P. Parryi*.

#### *Primula angustifolia*

The narrow leaves that its name describes give this primula a dainty, rather frail look that belies its constitution. In the mountains it is a husky plant but more or less delicate when grown in a garden. *P. angustifolia* is very small with leaves which grow in a tuft only one-half to one inch long, and the flower, with scarcely any stem, is tucked among the foliage. The whole plant, without a grain of meal, is dainty and appealing. Generally, there is only one large blossom of a dark lilac shade, sometimes two, neither is as large as the flower on the plant that carries only one. It grows on many mountains in Colorado; Pike's Peak, Long's Peak and on the Spanish Peaks, and then south to the alpine meadows in New Mexico. It has been grown in some gardens in fibrous loam with limestone chips, in moist half-shade with glass over it in the winter. There has been found a variety called *P. a. Helenae*, which is purple, or in some sections a white one has been found.



*Primula angustifolia*

#### *Primula Cusickiana*

*P. Cusickiana*, which grows in the Wallowa Mountains, Oregon, on high alpine, rocky hillsides, is generally found before the snow disappears entirely; a tiny, three-to-six-inch flower stem over a smooth rosette of non-mealy slender leaves. After the snow is gone *P. Cusickiana* has also disappeared entirely, not to be seen until the next spring. The flower umbel consists of from two to four violet flowers and very rarely a white one is found. It has been cultivated in some gardens in a half-shady place where it has good loam with plenty of leaf mold. It is very nearly related to *P. angustifolia*, which it closely resembles; in fact it has been called *P. angustifolia* var. *Cusickiana*. Some authorities place *P. Broadheadae* var. *minor* in the list of synonyms given under *P. Cusickiana*. *P. Broadheadae* grows in Utah in marshy places about nine thousand feet high. The plant is covered with broad sheaths of faded and dried leaves. *P. B.* var. *minor* varies somewhat from the typical form in the shape of the corolla.

#### *Primula Rusbyi*

Some thirty or forty years ago *P. Rusbyi* was introduced to garden cultivation. Most often it has been found in New Mexico and Arizona, on a ledge jutting out from a cliff on a side facing north. It is a handsome plant, perhaps one of the most beautiful American species. *P. Rusbyi* has leaves with notches

varying in size and shape on different plants and with smooth surfaces, free from farina. The umbel of blossoms is carried on a stem six to ten inches long whose color Reginald Farrer described as "obscure purple, like an old blood stain on faded velvet." Farrer also thought it had a "certain sinister expression." It grows fairly well in shady, cool, especially prepared spots in the rock garden in good loam, peat and leaf-mold.

*Primula Maguirei*

From northeast Utah, a close relative of *P. Cusickiana*, *P. Maguirei* was named for its discoverer. According to its description it has fairly thin broadly spatulate leaves with red or purple flowers. When there is only one bloom the flower is large and conspicuous, but when more than one the flowers grow smaller as the number increases. It grows on damp, overhanging rocks in the Wasatch Mountains.

*Primula Eximia*

Growing through the tundra of the Arctic regions this primula has been called by Mr. Walter Eyerdam one of the loveliest flowers in the Aleutians, and it is typical of the coastal regions of the Bering Sea. It is a large plant with smooth leaves with no meal, sometimes five inches long, broad at the tip and narrowing to a short leaf stalk. The leaves seem rather scalloped but they lack any notches. The flower stem has traces of meal at the upper end and the umbel of flowers consists of six to ten beautiful purple or purple-blue blooms. It is a rare species but has been found in the Kurile and Pribilof Islands as well as the Aleutians. When brought into cultivation it should be planted in a damp spot in half shade, in a rich, somewhat heavy, fibrous loam.

*Primula Maccalliana*

The herbarium specimen I saw of *P. Maccalliana* was collected many years ago and it was impossible to guess its original color. It has been described as



*P. cuneifolia* subsp. *hakusanensis*  
—Photo by D. Wilkes

pale pink or bluish with a conspicuous orange eye. The flower stem was three inches or longer and the leaves were one-half inch long, pale green above and more or less mealy beneath. This specimen was collected in the Canadian Rockies which, apparently, by the inscription, is in Saskatchewan.

*Primula Cuneifolia*

This is a cunning and choice little species called "Pixie Eyes" in Alaska. It grows in the Bering Straits, as far south as Juneau and Seward where there is a white form. It forms a tuft of smooth leaves, which are one-fourth to three-fourths inches long, wedge-shaped and notched at the top, with no meal. My first impression on seeing it in the herbarium was its likeness to *P. minima*, but the leaves are not square across the top. It has an umbel of from one to six rose-colored flowers on a stem four to five inches long. Growing in the Arctic it is naturally hardy and in the garden will generally flourish in gritty fibrous loam, in a moist, open spot. Mr. Walter Eyerdam, in an article in "Little Gardens," says it is a very variable species in size and character of the leaves and flowers. He reports it growing in alpine meadows where the ground is still damp from melted snow.



*Primula Suffrutescens*

*Primula suffrutescens*

High in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California, the mountain climber may meet a little shrub-like, partly prostrate plant with dense tufts of leaves growing in rosettes at the end of stout, woody stems. The leaves are leathery in texture, like a wedge in shape, smooth, with no meal, and notched at the top with from four to seven sharp teeth. If found in June or July there may be an umbel of clear pink flowers with yellow eyes topping a stem from two to five inches high. Undoubtedly this is *P. suffrutescens*, which has been more or less of a puzzle to primula growers since 1884 when it was introduced into cultivation. It belongs to the *Cuneifolia* section, a group fairly closely related to the *Farinosa* section. A grower on Vancouver Island grew *P. suffrutescens* for twelve years in an alpine house as it does not like our wet winters. It seeds sparingly but may be propagated by cuttings.

*Editor's note:* Please check your Quarterly Index for other interesting notes on American Primulas. In Vol 10, number 3, Mrs. John Karnopp, Portland, Oregon, has written in her notes on *Native American Primulas* the following:

"The difficulty of establishing our wild species in the gardens comes undoubtedly from the fact that we cannot possibly provide the growing conditions for them that nature does. Some require their winter rest under snow, others must be almost dry the year around, while some like their toes in ice water and their heads in rarefied sunshine. There are those that must have meadow sod to grow in, and others that like mountain scree, or even the extreme of arctic tundra. As yet, we know little about the effect of altitude on these rare things. We must first realize that they have growing habits of very, very long standing and that these are not easily overcome. Acclimatization has been accomplished with many *Primula* species, in fact some of these have become the parents of lovely hybrids. Perhaps we may succeed with the American *Primula* through science or even through seed or the selection of plants, but progress can only be made through effort."

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## Conserving Moisture

ALICE HILLS BAYLOR, *Sky Hook Farm, Johnson, Vermont*

The plants at Sky Hook were not the only ones that were on a limited supply of water from May to November during 1963. The entire Eastern area of the country as well as many other places had below normal rainfall. The needles of Christmas trees dropped early this year which proved a dehydration. I only hope many people remembered the old warning to gardeners, "Do not sit down to your Thanksgiving dinner until you have soaked your evergreens." This applies to a normal year as well for if roots freeze dry the plant is doomed whether it be Spruce or Primrose.

April was cold this year with patches of snow lingering beneath pines and on the north side of ravines. The first week of May continued this pattern so that the early Primroses (*rosea, acaulis, modesta, glaucescens and Julianas*) were held in color bud while the Polyanthus and Auriculas tightly kept their trusses to themselves. Then on the twelfth of May warm spring came to the Green Mountains. The Amelanchier and apple blossoms joined the Narcissii and every primrose except the candelabras and the belled, tumbled into bloom. There was a riot of color combinations never before seen. The nights remained cool so that it was not until mid-June that remarking of beds and transplanting could be started.

All plants are removed from a bed that is due to be remade and the soil dug two spades deep. We fill buckets with compost, add water and liquid fertilizer and allow this to stand overnight or for at least four or five hours. Often more water is needed to saturate the compost. This is spaded into the soil and the beds are ready for replanting. A trowel full of wet compost is pressed against the roots of each plant as it is reset. If seedlings are being planted a more generous amount is added beneath the roots. Care must be taken not

to set the plants too deep as the crowns must not be covered with soil. When the bed is replanted a heavy layer of wet compost is put on for a summer mulch. It would be weeks before a bed so prepared would dry out.

There were only a few showers in June and July proved to be drier. The areas that had been remade during the fall of 1962 were beginning to look too dry and it was obvious that we would need a greater amount of mulching material than was on hand. In July we tore newspapers into strips, soaking them in water overnight, and used this as mulch. The plants responded with fresher foliage. The *Florindae, alpicolas* and *nutans* flourished and held their flowers well into August. We camouflaged the newspaper mulch with a sifting of peat moss in the garden area for a better appearance. In the nursery where the newspaper mulch was used in quantities it held moisture and in a matter of weeks disintegrated to become a part of the top soil when more was added.

Where there is a shortage of snow dry shredded newspaper may be used as a winter mulch anchoring it into place with evergreen branches, corn stalks or bare branches from shrub and tree trimmings.

We also dug the shredded, soaked newspapers, with liquid fertilizer added, into a pile of heavy clay, the subsoil from a wall excavation that had been the base of one of our compost piles for three years. In all that time the consistency of the clay had not changed. In about three weeks, after adding the paper, the clay was friable and was used in the remarking of beds during fall planting.

Mulching is the easiest way to conserve moisture in the soil. Whatever the material used it should be well soaked. Dry peat moss will rob the soil of moisture so should only be used after soaking

for several days. We have found compost the best medium but lacking that shredded, soaked newspaper is a boon to the gardener when dry weather prevails.

There is an old saying that "The Canadian Mountie always gets his man." I cannot make the same claim concerning my search for rare and scarce books, but I am really doing better than just "very good."

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## Bucks County Garden Notes

(The following notes were written by Mrs. Doretta Klaber for her local newspaper under the name "Aunt Susie.")

April 19, 1951

There is a golden haze in the woods hereabout. The spicebush is in bloom. It forms the main undergrowth in our woods and we have cut paths through which are gradually becoming bordered with primroses. Primroses and Spring! What lovely words! One sees visions of the English countryside even though one has never been there—for when one reads of primroses it is almost always of the famous English wildflower.

Many people know that we can grow them with ease right here in Bucks county, that the original English primrose has been hybridized until it comes in every color of the rainbow—as do the bunch primroses. Not everyone knows, however, that there are earlier and later primroses so that now one can have some members of the family in bloom from the earliest Spring until Fall. There are kinds that do best by the waterside, many that prefer light woodland or a shady border and some that thrive in rock gardens. They fit in so beautifully with our own native wild flowers—hepaticas, violets, the blue phlox, the red columbine—and what a boon they are for those who want color in a shady garden!

The whole countryside has come alive this past week, animals as well as plants. Take time off to stop and look and listen and, literally, to enjoy life!

May 15, 1952

This is primrose time in the garden, but it isn't the only time that primroses grow. There are early primroses that have already finished blooming, like the denticulatas. They send up round balls of bloom in white or lavender or purplish colors before many of their leaves develop, and later big cabbages of leaves grow and the plants increase quite rapidly. There is the bird's-eye primrose, a tiny pink flowered plant, which comes early but stays in bloom for a long time. There are Juliae primroses, low plants

(Continued on page 69)

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Alpine Garden Society, Sec. C. B. Saunders Husseys Green St., Green,  
 Farnborough, Kent, England  
 American Rock Garden Society, Edgar L. Totten, Sec. 1220 Everett Way,  
 Henderonville, N.C.  
 Bailey Hortorium New York State College of Agriculture, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, N.Y.  
 Department of Agriculture Library Washington 25, D.C.  
 Dept. of Agriculture, Main Library Sci. Serv. Bldg., Ottawa, Canada  
 Horticultural Newsletter, H. Gleason Mattoon Box 96, Arlington, Vermont  
 Library of Congress, Exchange & Gift Division Washington 25, D.C.  
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 Longwood Gardens, Library Kennett Square, Penna.  
 Massachusetts Horticultural Soc. Library 300 Mass. Ave., Boston, Mass.  
 Milwaukie Public Library 922 Main St., Milwaukie 22, Ore.  
 Missouri Botanical Gardens 2315 Tower Grove Av., St. Louis 10, Mo.  
 Natl. Association of Gardeners, c/o Edith A. Medlock, Editor, 194 Old Country Road,  
 Mineola, N.Y.  
 National Auricula & Primula Society, Northern Section, Hon. Sec. Mr. J. Robinson  
 584 Edenfield Road, Norden, Rochdale, England  
 National Auricula & Primula Society, Southern Section, Hon. Sec. Mr. W. J. Arthur,  
 13 Langdale Crescent, Bexleyheath, Kent, England  
 New York Botanical Gardens Bronx Park, Bronx, N.Y. 10458  
 Northern Horticultural Society, Donald G. Ineson Milestones, Hightown,  
 Liversedge, England  
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 Pennsylvania Horticultural Society 389 Suburban Station Bldg.,  
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 Scottish Rock Garden Club, James T. Aiken 75 Whitehouse Rd., Midlothian, Scotland  
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 The Horticultural Society of New York, Inc. 155 West 58th St., The Essex House,  
 New York 19, N.Y.  
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## Primroses For Fun

MRS. A. V. RONEY, *Chehalis, Washington*

Our primrose business is just an overgrown hobby. When we got to the saturation point something had to give.

Doing something I like doesn't seem like work. I change my mind when it comes to carrying heavy flats and sieving a lot of soil. That part of it is just plain work—after that the fun begins.

Chehalis is just halfway between Portland and Seattle. The climate is also halfway between.

We have a heavy clay soil so have to do a lot of conditioning with manure, old sawdust, compost, etc. Even before we added much of any humus primroses did very well.

We grow mostly polyanthus, candelabras, some acaulis, julianas, a few species and quite a number of garden auriculas. Candelabras are planted by the creek where they do beautifully. Some were completely covered with water for a day or so with no damage. They need no extra water, no fertilizer nor soil conditioning.

I place my seed flats on a shelf in the lath house at a convenient height. I have tried putting them in a cold frame, on the back porch, or even in the house, but find the lath house works the best for me.

When I prepare the flats I put gravel and small lumps of dirt left over from the sieving in the bottom. I finish filling with a mixture of sieved soil, sand, leaf mold and a little Blue Whale Peat. I also put in a little aldrin and mix it well. Press the soil down with a board.

I like to plant early in April. I plant the seeds thinly and water with a weak solution of Natriphene. I lay a double thickness of newspaper flat down on the seeds and sprinkle water on the paper until it is well soaked. I keep the paper on until the seeds begin to germinate at

which time I remove it and sprinkle sand over the seeds until they are just covered. When the paper is on I check each day for mold. If there is any remove the paper and spray again with Natriphene solution. I seldom have mold. Everyone who reads this will probably throw up their hands in horror, but my mother did this and it works for me, too.

I keep flats moist with a fogger and cover them with hardware cloth to keep birds out. When seedlings are big enough to transplant they go into the cold frame and from there to their permanent place.

These warm January days are bad if we happen to get hard freezes later. My primroses are bursting into bloom right now. When we anticipate a freeze we put on fir boughs or excelsior, but, when we run out, sheets of heavy black plastic are used. The plastic seems to work well but must be removed each morning if the sun shines, otherwise the plants might cook.

We welcome visitors. If anyone is driving through Chehalis stop and see our place. We are located Southeast of Chehalis off old 99 Highway (now Jackson Highway) on Kennicott Road.

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*Springtime at Primrose Acres*

A. P. S. Treasurer Beth Tait has time to care for two spring lambs in addition to her many other activities. Last fall she took over the named English Auriculas of John Shuman and has grown

them, as she does all her primulas, with great success. She has extended her primrose garden and added a new greenhouse this spring. *Primrose Acres* is a *must* to visit this year.

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## A Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor:

I have just received the winter issue and feel I must have my say about the new strains of primroses being produced as described in Mr. Baldwin's article.

Granted, they will be effective plants for greenhouses, for very commercial nurseries, for bedders out, for anyone looking for long bloom of masses of color. But, HELP, HELP for those of us who value primroses for their grace of growth, their form, the beauty of the individual flowers, probably the fragrance (which is usually lost in most plants that are "improved"! ) and for their gentle but insistent appeal. The only advantage that I can see in them for real gardeners is that the flowers are reverting to a more nearly normal size. I have always felt that, while some enlargement of the flowers does not spoil the plants, there is great danger in ever-increasing size of losing the "wild" look of primroses that is one of their charms.

Let us pause a moment, and think about some of the flowers that have been thus developed. Pansies are an outstanding example. As the advertisers say they are a far cry from the original Johnny-jump-up. But who, in exclaiming over their size, their ruffles, their exquisite colors, has ever felt the warmth of affection that is called forth by the gay little Johnnies? Who, in admiring the great beautifully formed modern roses with their wonderful colors, ever feels the catch of the breath that a wild rose along the roadside will elicit?

So, let those who want just color (which imitation plants are beginning to supply—why bother gardening? They never fade, they are weather-proof, and you never have to weed!) —let them have these latest developments, but

for the sake let us poor old GARDENERS have some of our dear old plants and all the weeds that come with them.

So sincerely,  
Doretta Klaber

*For the next issue, Mrs. Bellis has written valuable notes on summer care of primulas.*

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## A. P. S. Judges 1963

The A. P. S. Board of Directors voted last fall to allow qualified Primrose judges who are members, in good standing, of the A. P. S., to judge at National Primrose Shows. This ruling does not affect local shows. Mrs. Herbert Dickson was appointed judges chairman and has presented the following list of qualified judges as of the 1963 membership list. Please contact Mrs. Dickson if your name should be added to the list, or if you would like to have your name withdrawn.

Mrs. Orval Agee  
Mr. Ralph Balcolm  
Mrs. Ruth Bartlett  
Mrs. Florence Bellis  
Mrs. A. C. U. Berry  
Mrs. C. C. Chambers  
Mrs. P. B. Charles  
Mrs. Grace Conboy  
Mrs. William Dines  
Mr. Herbert Dickson  
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Mr. Albert Funkner  
Mrs. Lillian Gentner  
Mrs. June Harp  
Mr. Cyrus Happy  
Mrs. Rosetta Jones  
Mrs. Hazel Keller  
Mr. Frank Michaud  
Mrs. L. C. Murdock  
Mr. Robert Putnam  
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Dr. Matthew C. Riddle  
Mrs. A. V. Roney  
Mrs. Charles Seefield  
Mr. John Shuman  
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Mrs. Sidney Smith  
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Mrs. Alice Warneck  
Mr. Ross Willingham  
Mrs. Joe E. Wolff  
Mr. Dale Worthington  
Mrs. Mary Zack

AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY

## Bucks County Garden Notes

(Continued from page 54)

with wrinkled dark green foliage, and though the original one was a dark wine color, they now have been hybridized until most colors are represented. They send up an occasional bloom all Summer.

Just now all the "cups and saucers" are in bloom, both those developed from the common English primrose and the polyanthus which are all hybrids, and both of which have more colors than the rainbow, for you never saw the rich garnets, brownish and contrasting colors in the rainbow.

These will be followed by a large assortment of the so-called candelabra primroses. They got their name from the fact that the flowers grow in tiers, opening row upon row. There are also many so-called bell primulas, which bloom late. They grow much like the others except that their flowers hang like so many bells. There are still others and nothing in the garden can excel them for color, fragrance, late bloom and best of all, color for shady gardens, for while some will grow in the sun, and a few rare sorts demand it, most of them prefer semi-shade, and will light up a dark corner where few other flowers would grow.

Photographs of primroses in glossy black and white or colored slides for the A.P.S. slide collection are needed. Slides are available to your garden club.

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