

A black and white photograph of a garden scene. On the left, a traditional stone lantern stands on a small square base. To its right, a dense bed of primroses is in bloom, with many small, light-colored flowers. The background shows a tree trunk and some foliage. The overall scene is peaceful and well-maintained.

Primroses

Winter 1978

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In this issue

2

- 3 Hybridizers
- 4 P. rusbyi
- 7 Charles Gilman
- 7 New clubs
- 8 P. elatior
- 10 Beginner's Luck
- 12 P. broadheadiae
- 15 Judges
- 16 Dicksons'
- 18 Spinach days
- 23 Letterbox
- 28 Artificial light
- 31 Official business
- 34 Market place
- 36 Diary

Quote, Unquote

The future of the Double Primrose depends, indeed, upon diligent search in old Irish and in Scottish gardens. There are, by now, a good many persons engaged upon this pursuit. At the moment, it is the Scottish gardens that may have the most to yield, since Ireland in the last ten years has been extensively combed for Double Primroses and Polyanthus. Before the War they grew in Ireland in great profusion. One Primrose grower wrote that, before 1914, old plants could be bought by the dozen and in limitless quantity. There are persons who remember, in their youth, seeing whole quarter-acre plantings of the rarer forms, many of which are now extinct and unobtainable.

—from **Old Fashioned Flowers**
by Sacheverell Sitwell
Great Britain: 1939

On the cover

Mrs. Corydon Wagner Sr. has devoted her skill and knowledge in creating at Tacoma, Wash., one of the outstanding private gardens in the United States. It features formal border, clipped boxwood hedges, a gazebo, pool, superb rhododendron collection—but it is accented by its fine collection of alpine plants and primulas.

Who will be the top American hybridizer for 1978?

If you think you qualify, bring your plant to the national show for judging on April 8 and 9 at Tacoma. If that's not the right blooming season for your hybrid, send a color photograph and description to the editors by June 1, 1978.

Winner of the award will be announced in the summer quarterly.

Who has the bowl?

Somewhere there may be a yin/yang bowl trophy awarded to an APS member who has created a "truly American plant." Who knows about the bowl and the award?

Roland E. Cooper of Essex, England, presented the bowl to the society in 1961. At that time he announced that the American grower producing the "most splendid result in any one year may be considered for the yin-yang award for that year."

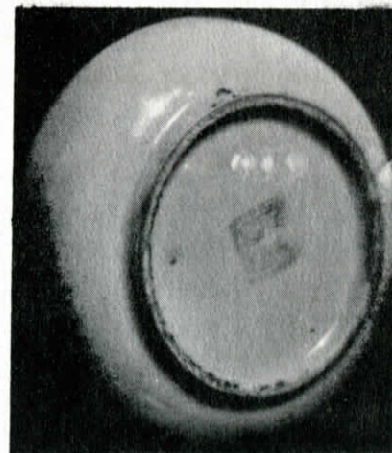
Cooper's award was to be given only for plants developed from American primulas. The regular APS award includes plants produced from any hybridizer's work.

American crosses only

Cooper stressed that a true American hybrid would be a cross between American species. He offered some tips for successful crosses.

Cooper suggested germinating pollen grains of American species in a 20 per cent sugar solution. By checking development through a microscope, the grower can see how long the pollen tubes grow. He can then decide whether the tube is long enough to fertilize another species as it reaches down to the ovule.

"Growing the pollen in sugar solution shows a surprising difference of size and



Painter's mark on Chinese bowl.

Hybridizer awards

3

length of that tube among different species," Cooper wrote.

Check chromosomes

Chromosome charts indicate that crosses between American species are possible. Most American primulas have a uniform count of 44 chromosomes.

Hybridizers who want to compare chromosome counts may refer to the chart published on page 8 and 9 of the 1974 spring quarterly.

"Glorious freak"

In case there's a mismatch of chromosomes a cross could produce a "most glorious freak," Cooper pointed out.

Successful fertilization is sometimes possible between different species, and whoever made some special cross earned Cooper's Chinese bowl.

Who has it?



Harvard records Mexican *P. rusbyi*

by G. K. Fenderson

Recently I visited Grey Herbarium at Harvard University to study native American primulas of the section *parryi*. Two specimens, identified as *P. rusbyi*, Green caught my attention.

They had been collected in northern Mexico.

Too confined?

The detailed monograph of the genus by Smith and Fletcher forms the basis for all current study. It gives the distribution of *P. rusbyi* as "confined to the mountains of Arizona and New Mexico."

The two specimens I found at Harvard certainly appeared to be identified correctly when I compared them with material which had been collected in the United States. Both specimens collected in Mexico did have distinctly tapering leaf blades which diminished to very slender petioles, but some individual plants from Arizona and New Mexico exhibited a similar leaf shape.

Mexican *P. rusbyi*

If the plants are *P. rusbyi*—and it seems likely—the Harvard information may extend the known distribution of *P. rusbyi*.

P. rusbyi is a rosette-forming perennial which arises from a stout rhizome. Leaves, inclusive of the petiole, are 4-15 cm long, of which 3-8 cm is a leaf blade of 1-2.5 cm in width.

Nivales-like leaves

Leaves have the general appearance of a primula of the section *nivales*. They are elliptic or narrowly oblong to spatulate. They are somewhat leathery and usually are rounded at their tips, but they may taper to a point on some individual specimens.

The leaves taper toward the base and are margined with distinct small points between shallow scalloping. Leaf surfaces, especially the lower, are thickly covered with small glands; they are without farina.

The mid-rib is broad and conspicuous on the lower surface, but few other veins are distinct. The petiole is visibly winged and sheathlike at its base and may be shorter than or equal to the leaf blade. In some forms the petiole is distinct, and in others it merges imperceptibly with the leaf blade.

White farinose

The 6-20 cm scape is white farinose or glandular in its uppermost portion and carries a 4-12 flowered umbel. The bracts, which overlap at their bases, are inconspicuous,

only 3-8 mm long and farinose at their margins. The pedicels are 1-3.5 cm long and often covered with white farina.

The 4-8 mm calyx is tubular to tubular bell shaped and cut for one third to one half its length into lanceolate pointed lobes often tinged with purple and with five lines of white farina. The corolla may be in shades of rose, magenta or deep purple with a yellow eye. Often a bright crimson ring surrounds the eye.

Maybe ringed throat

There may or may not be a raised ring at the throat, and both long and short styled forms of *P. rusbyi* are known to occur. The narrowly cylindrical, pale green, reddish striped tube is two or three times as long as the calyx and flairs slightly above the point at which the stamens are attached.

The corolla limb is from 1.5 — 2.5 cm in diameter with broadly heartshaped notched lobes. The calyx exceeds the capsule.

P. rusbyi at its best is a well proportioned, generously flowered plant and one on which further effort should be expended toward its successful cultivation.

REFERENCES:

The following material is as it appears on the two sheets of *P. rusbyi* examined at the Grey Herbarium.

Primula rusbyi No. 137 of W.P. Hewitt

Locality: 28°-15' N / 108°-17' W, Pinos Altos,
State of Chihuahua, Mexico.

Habitat: "full cliffs, west facing andersitic, associated
with moss, Begonias No. 138 and 139."

Notes: "found only on cliffs 1/2-1 km South West of Santo
Nino Mine, apparently neither widespread nor abundant."

Altitude: 7,500 ft.

Date: July 14, 1946

P. rusbyi No. 18945 of Francis W. Pennell for the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia

Locality: "Barranca Colorado"

Sierra Gazachic,
35 km South West of Minaca,
State of Chihuahua, Mexico

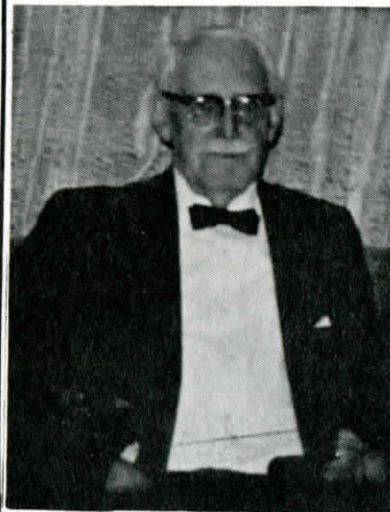
Notes: "crevices and ledges of rock-
altitude 2300-2500 meters."

Date: Sept. 16-17, 1934

Smith and Fletcher: The Genus Primula, Section Parryi, Trans. Royal Soc.

Edin., Vol. LXI, Part III, 1947-48 (No. 22) 649

Charles E. Gilman lived 'admirably'



Charles E. Gilman

The regret we feel at the passing of Charles E. Gilman in Oakland, Calif., on Aug. 29, 1977, is mitigated by the knowledge that he lived his eighty years admirably, ideally, happily.

He was the Quarterly's third editor, starting with the 1956 fall issue, edited in Redmond, Wash., and ending with the 1960 spring issue in Los Gatos, Calif. His love of primroses and facility with words came to light in the bulletins of the Washington State Primrose Society.

At Primrose Corner in Redmond he and his wife, Alice, grew beautiful primroses and made many friends who are still close, still appreciating Mr. Gilman as a quiet, scholarly man with a deep sense of humor. Born in Massachusetts, he leaves friends and relatives, both east and west, saddened at his leaving but grateful for having known him.

Florence Bellis

Two clubs form: east, west

Two new primrose clubs have been formed, one in the east and one in the west.

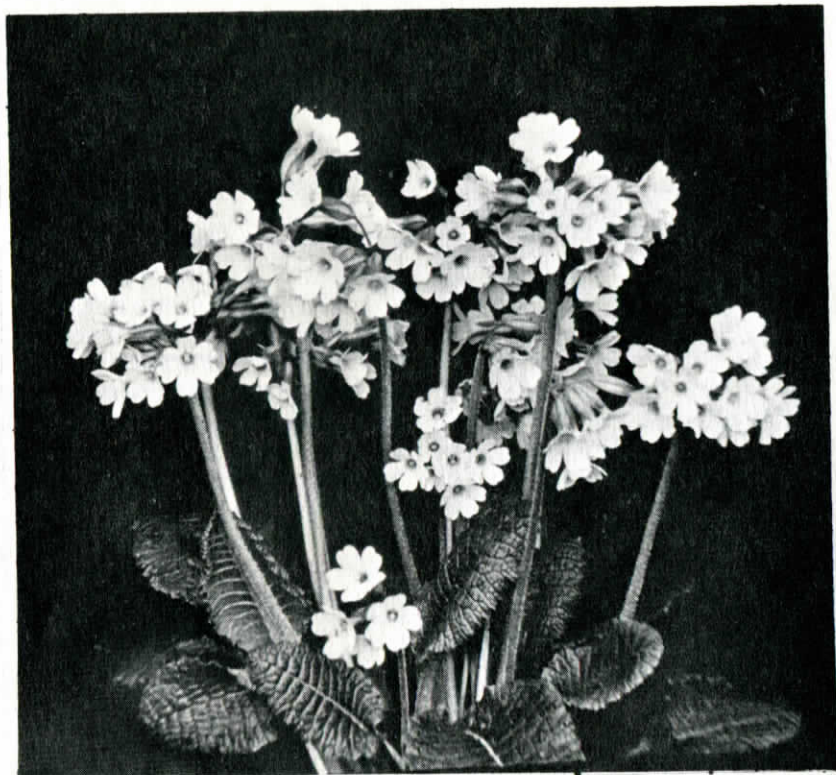
Richard Critz reports that 30 gardeners met Nov. 10 at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society headquarters to form the Doretta Klaber Chapter.

Members planned a Jan. 26 meeting in Exton, Pa., and they announced their participation in the annual meeting of the Eastern Chapter on April 29 in Wayne, Pa.

Interim officers are Critz, 1236 Wen-

dover Ave., Rosemont, Pa., 19010, and secretary-treasurer Marie Bertolette, 519 Woodside Ave., Wilmington, Del., 19809.

In Washington Mrs. Bill Bronow of Poulso has helped to organize Kitsap County Primrose Club. Club members have now elected officers: Charlotte Simpers, president, 6733 Jarstad Dr., Bremerton, Wash., 98310; Dan Dahl, vice-president, Rt. 4, Box 515, Poulso, Wash., 98370 and Lorene Klamke, secretary-treasurer, Rt. 4, Box 655, Poulso, Wash. 98370.



P. elatior (oxlip)

Growing the elatior is good — and bad.

Most years the elatior (oxlips) bloom earlier in the Midwest than any of the other vernal or their hybrids. But by summer they look awful.

Most subspecies, including *leucophylla*, *reysrecthii*, *cordifolia* and *carpathica*, are not evergreen. They have only a resting bud in the fall.

No fall growth

Pallasii, *intricata* and some of the varieties remain somewhat evergreen in wet years. They don't make fall growth.

I have never raised pseudo-elatior or *lofthousei*, so I can't describe their evergreen nature.

The elatior habit of dying back in mid-

Good and bad

Growing elatior

by Dr. Ralph Benedict

summer hurts their value as garden plants for large plantings. I suggest using them in small plantings with other plants that will make the area attractive during the time the elatior are dormant. In the spring the elatior will reward with some blooms.

Evident faults

Faults of the elatior are evident in the early *juliae* crosses. Elatior and its subspecies and the *juliae* species both die away above ground in midsummer in the Midwest. They do not make fall or winter growth in the normal year.

I have a bed of these old hybrids — Dorothy, Julia, Wanda—about 30 types. By mid-July they are a sad sight. Very few healthy leaves remain.

By using more *vulgaris* (*acaulis*) blood, you will get plants that remain evergreen all summer. They will bloom heavier and make better garden plants.

Try garryard

If you use garryard blood, you will get beautiful dark leaves that will stay all summer and fall. Use garryard as the pollen parent. It is hard to pollinate as a seed plant.

Cowichan strains also will give you healthy foliage on your julianas.

The only fault of these crosses, I feel, is the longer-type leaf that results.

These are not wanted on show plants.

Garden plant is first

In the Midwest the garden plant has to come first. The goal of the breeder has to be to produce "vernal primroses" that will bloom well in the spring, withstand the heat of July and August and then survive for several years.

The show-type plant must be kept in mind, but it must be secondary to garden plants here. Only by keeping our perspective can we have a plant that the general gardener will be interested in.

A question

I do have a question about elatior. Four years ago I planted seeds from the APS seed exchange of elatior ssp. *cordifolia* and *carpathica*. *Cordifolia* has very dark, heart-shaped leaves as it emerges from the ground in the spring. Later the leaves turn a normal green. The *carpathica* has very dark bright yellow flowers.

Are these normal colors for these subspecies? Can someone explain this for me?

Dr. Benedict, a veterinarian, contributes regularly to the quarterly to discuss growing tips for the Midwest. His address is 14 Alpine Ct., Wilson Lake, Hillsdale, Mich. 49242.

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Beginner's Luck

—with Tony



I want to have my plants ready for the show. What should I do?

10

Your seedlings are husky single crowns and really look good. Here is how to turn out winners.

1. Keep slug bait around the plants at all times.
2. Apply a weak solution of all-purpose liquid fertilizer twice before the first of March. Schultz's is good, since it is not too heavy with nitrogen. Too much nitrogen would bring on many leaves and few flowers.
3. Early March will bring healthy new leaves. Pull or cut off the old damaged foliage. Keep the plant clean. Take off precocious blooms.
4. Five or six weeks before show time switch to Liquinox 0-10-10 or a similar product. This forces almost all growth to the developing flower buds and the supporting root system.
5. If frost threatens during the last weeks before show, cover plants with newspaper or fir boughs until the weather moderates.
6. Start digging and potting your plants at least a week before show. Balance the size of pot with size of plant. Remove damaged and spent leaves and flowers.
7. Bring the potted plants to the open porch. Beware of hot sun. Continue to groom plant. Give a last watering with 0-10-10.
8. At the show entry table make sure your plants are entered in the right class. Give last minute attention to grooming and pot wiping. Good luck.

Dad

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The good old days and Mr. Broadhead's primrose

by Wilbur Graves

P. angustifolia, pictured, represents *P. broadheadiae* in higher elevations in the West. *Broadheadiae* grows a little larger and often has several flowers to a scape.

I walked toward the farmhouse, seeing so much green in contrast to the hill-sides we had just left in eastern Washington. Late spring flowers dotted the green with color.

Then I saw it — a blue flower new to me. It was as if a piece of the sky had fallen. Each short stem, was topped with a five petal floret, nestled against a rosette of rather pale green leaves.

The favorite

My aunt told me this plant was a primrose and of the half-acre devoted to many kinds of flowers this was a special favorite. It was soon to be one of mine.

Shortly after this Memorial Day weekend jaunt, we left eastern Washington for the milder climate of Puget Sound.

Aunt Millie shared slips of roses, daffodil bulbs and even a piece of that sky-blue primrose! And, having found an eager ally, plant wise, she seized every opportunity to visit each grower of primroses to be found.

Finding primroses

Ferrying across to the Kitsap peninsula, we passed the fishing village of Gig Harbor. It was difficult to read road signs with the lacy vine maples, graceful hemlock and cedar trees drawing my attention.

Nearing Port Orchard we turned down Mullenix Road. We were met by a bespectacled matron with a decided English accent. Ethel Mullenix.

It was here that I, as well as my aunt, became acquainted with *Primula vulgaris*, old double sulphur, green and gray edged auriculas and a plant from the original cowichan, a velvety black-red polyanthus without the yellow center most primroses then had.

Pins and thrums

There were other excursions, one to the primrose show at Winlock, a small town

some 40 miles south. It was here I learned from a judge that while thrum eyes were preferable to pins in auriculas and gold lace polyanthus, it was not so with garden plants where that feature could not be seen across the yard, and thusly was not considered when they awarded best plant in the show to a huge brick red polyanthus with very prominent pin eyes!

As the years passed my love for the primrose family grew to an insatiable passion. Trying every kind I could lay hand to or locate seeds, I always hoped for a plot of land where I could make them all happy.

Turning to natives

When seeds of the many exotic species became more and more difficult to find, I turned to our native kinds.

Having learned that the "mossrose" that grew on the north side of the hills behind my home in eastern Washington was indeed *Douglasia montana* and the "rock lily" was *Lewisia tweedyi*, I realized that whatever *primula* I found would surely be of singular beauty.

Failing in my quest to find the violet (color) and scented *P. cusickii*, I was determined to locate *P. broadheadiae*.

Search for broadheadiae

I traveled to the valley near Gooding, Idaho. It was just after the snows were gone, but the ground was still wet.

It was to be my introduction to gumbo soil as well.

Near the road and scattered amid sagebrush were little clumps of bright reddish-purple flowers. I had a wooden flat, a bucket and trowel. I carefully took a plant from this group and one from that, hating to disturb the plantings though rough-plowed ground nearby indicated "progress" would use less care.

Soil oozes

The flat was soon full, but the soil was

oozing together like so much thick gravy. I had only to push the clumps together to be able to squeeze in "just one more" plant.

I was so elated with my find that it didn't occur to me until the last plant was in the flat how tired I had suddenly become. My feet felt like so much lead.

Then only did I see and realize what had happened. Each sortie to the road with plants to be flatted let the mud dry on my shoes just enough to pick up another layer to add to the one preceding.

Gumbo

At the end these layers not only increased my height, but they had protruded past the edges of the soles. Had I fresh cement to make an impression in, I'm sure an elephant could not have done better!

Unfortunately that cursed gumbo, which was almost impossible to remove from my shoes as it dried, is the reason *P. broadheadiae* is not in cultivation now.

When the summer's heat dries out the soil the *primula* in its natural habitat dies back to a tiny green resting bud, getting just enough moisture (morning dew and infrequent rains) to maintain life until the following spring's melting snows allow the luxury of sustaining growth of new roots, leaves and flowers.

Right and wrong

Had I to do it again, I would use about two parts of my own soil to eight of sharp sand and grit as well as the rain shield I did use. The gumbo soil placed in my Puget Sound yard absorbed enough moisture from the air to trigger plant growth in the late fall. Weakened by too much moisture and too little sun, the little plants died during the first cold spell.

Perhaps I can try again one day.

Wilbur Graves, a professional gardener at Tacoma, Wash., has a deep interest in *primula* and alpine plants.

APS lists certified show judges

Two dozen judges have been certified or recertified by American Primrose Society following classes and examinations.

Included on the roster of persons qualified for judging APS, chapter and affiliated club shows are the following:

Anita Alexander, 35180 SE Hwy. 211, Boring, OR; Loie Benedict (instructor), 30805 112 Ave. SE, Auburn, WA; Helen Berg, Rt. 1, Box 20, Mt. Angel, OR; Doris Burge, 2318 14th, Forest Grove, OR; Dorothy Dickson (instructor), 2568

Jackson Hwy., Chehalis, WA; and Ludy Dines, 9017 18th Ave. NE, Redmond, WA.

Others are Ernest Gates (instructor), 5159 SW Childs Rd., Lake Oswego, OR; Cyrus Happy (instructor), 11617 Gravelly Lk. Dr. SW, Tacoma, WA; Thelma Genheimer, 7100 SW 209th Ave., Beaverton, OR; Ruth Huston, PO Box 42, Gig Harbor, WA; and Cleata Johnson, 6024 197th Ave. E., Sumner, WA.

Also listed are Rosetta Jones, 6214 S. 287th St., Kent, WA; Ron Kessel, 29410 117th Ave. SE., Auburn, WA; Margaret Mason, 4216 SW Bernard Dr., Portland, OR; James D. Menzies, 765 10th Ct., Fox Island, WA; Margaret Obersinner, 7886 N. Howel Rd., Silverton, OR; and Cheryl Oenning, 5509 N. 40th, Tacoma, WA.

Other certified judges are Al Rapp, 4918 79th Ave. W., Tacoma, WA; Vickey Sauer, 13631 196th SE, Renton, WA; Francis Schermerhorn, 8141 SW 47th, Portland, OR; Dorothy Springer, 7213 S. 15th St. Tacoma, WA; Tony Trujillo, 11617 Gravelly Lk. Dr. SW., Tacoma, WA; Mildred Washburn, 2905 SW 209th Ave., Aloha, OR; and Mrs. A.E. Young, Rt. 1, Box 86, Lakebay, WA.

APS officials urge judging chairmen to include an experienced judge with recently-qualified ones on show teams.

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Creativity at Chehalis

A trip to Herb and Dorothy Dickson's nursery demonstrates the truth of "necessity is the mother of invention."

At Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery, Chehalis, Wash., the Dicksons are deeply involved with primulas. That's involvement that goes back 25 years. The nursery also includes other specialties: daylilies, dwarf conifers, Japanese maples and a vast collection of dwarf and alpine plants.

That's a lot of nursery for two people to care for. They have devised systems to make the work easier.

By their roadside stand Herb built this



covered alpine plant display. The plants thrive in proper soil mixtures in the hollow concrete blocks. Primulas, lewisias, dianthus, dwarf bulbs — all put on a show over a long season.

Seed of hardy primula and alpines is germinated outside. Seed pans are covered with patches of white cloth (old sheets?) weighted with a few pebbles. Cloth is removed after germination.

Covered pans are sprayed regularly in the dry season. Natural freezing and thawing cracks seed coats and starts growth.



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For an ardent primrose lover, I had inauspicious beginnings. I remember that as a child I really resented all those clumps of flowering spinach that my family insisted on planting out with the much nicer mats of aubretia and campanulas in the shady rock garden. The flowers were all right, but those leaves!

The primroses were of course the typical polyanthus available at local nurseries. But for me, primroses meant spinach until I reached my teens. I had seen a few pictures of more unusual primulas that had shaken my faith at the time, but it wasn't until I found my first alpine meadow studded with hundreds of Fairy Primrose (*Primula angustifolia* that I was converted.

P. parryi did it

When I came across my first subalpine freshet overhung with gargantuan clumps of *Primula parryi*, my fate was sealed. I was doomed to become a primrose lover. I have never tried to grow *Primula parryi* again after my first transplanted clump was devoured overnight by slugs, but these two most common Colorado primulas remain my favorite species. After all, they opened the floodgates.

Like most APS members, I first grew primroses which were gifts and purchased plants. There are a number of fine rock gardeners in my neighborhood who had a few unusual sorts in their gardens, and two auricula fanciers I met by accident lived a little further away.

They survived

I ordered every primrose in the few catalogs at my disposal—and an unbelievably benign deity must have overlooked those initial plantings four and five years ago. Those gifts and mail-borne plants all survived my haphazard planting

and lived to bloom spectacularly the next spring.

I've learned that primulomania is not easily quenched, however. A careful re-reading of Farrer and the discovery of Doretta Klaber's delightful book sent my ambitions soaring, but where could one get all those fantastic plants? When I noticed an advertisement for the APS, I joined immediately and the first seedlist I received read like the purest poetry (have you ever noticed how pretty the names of primulas sound?)

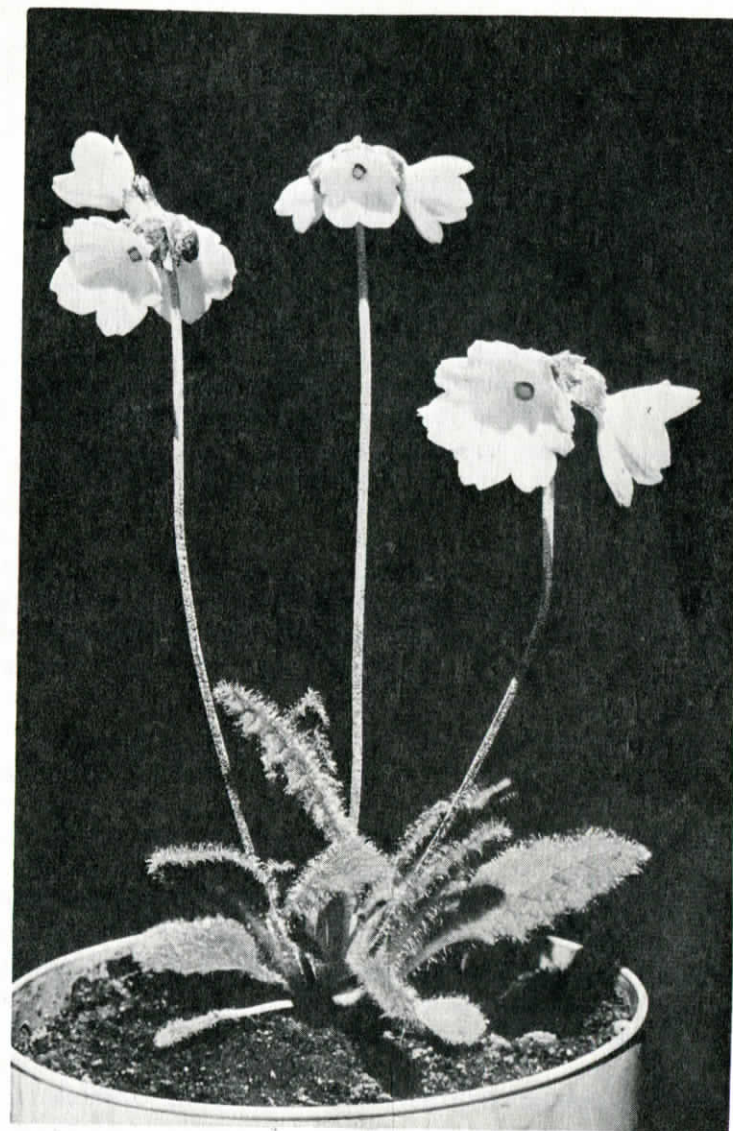
Lots of APS seeds

I ordered as much seed as I dared (not to be embarrassed by overindulging) and to my horror I noticed that half my seed pans were given over to primulas. The horror turned to delight when the primulas sprouted faster and grew more vigorously than the other perennials. I have been continually amazed ever since in that seedling after seedling, plant after plant, the primulas have proven easier to grow and bloom than the literature threatens.

'My favorite'

In the garden primulas have exceeded my greediest imaginings in color, fragrance and variety. Of course, they have become my favorite genus. I've come a long way from my spinach days, and polyanthus are even more common now in my garden than they were in my childhood days.

I should wait a few decades and watch my plants evolve over generations in the garden, but since I am a rank beginner still, I feel justified in writing a short account of my experiences before I am altogether compromised by the fastidiousness of expertise. Since I live in a region where few people grow anything but polyanthus, and I am perforce the



P. reidii liked dry winter

Spinach days are over

by Panayoti Peter Callas

most vocal enthusiast for literally hundreds of miles in any direction, I'm not afraid of offending anyone. I hope that similarly isolated primrose lovers will be heartened to hear of the success of some of my experiments in a relatively uncharted region for the genus.

Like pioneering

Isolation provides a curious consolation: you feel that your individual efforts are like pioneering ventures that might lead to a significant discovery. Nothing can really replace the companionship, the feeling of community that primrose-growers feel in more favored regions—but I hope that this may develop in time.

I notice that my gardening friends are tending the seedlings and starts I give them with each passing year with ever increasing reverence! Several are starting to order primula seed on their own, without any prompting.

Colorado is No. 1

I am convinced that Colorado, at least the narrow belt of foothills between the plains and mountains, is one of the best regions for growing primulas in America. The semi-aridity of our climate is easily counteracted with irrigation and careful soil preparation. Of the commonly grown primulas, the section *vernales* suffers the most (spider-mite seems especially prevalent here).

Our high elevation (5,600'), intense sun, dry but cold winters and dry summers devoid of any mugginess (whose heat is tempered by afternoon cloudiness and thunderstorms) are positive boons for growing many members of the genus. In addition, my house is situated literally in the shadow of the first rise of the Rockies, which has an added cooling effect. It is in an old neighborhood

overgrown with mature trees that help mitigate our climatic extremes.

Easy ones first

The first species I attempted were fortunately among the easiest: *P. sieboldii*, *P. juliae*, *P. denticulata* and *P. japonica*. The first two have subsequently been repeatedly divided and shared, and the last two were such terrific self-sowers in the choicer beds that I've been forced to exile them to unhappier spots in the garden.

After growing a number of garden auriculas I wanted to try the European mountain species. Plants of *P. marginata* and its hybrids, *P. hirsuta* and a number of *P. x pubescens* delighted me so much after several years of growing them that I have managed to grow a number of other species from APS seed (they are painfully slow) and obtain more interspecific crosses.

Surprises happen

Now that *P. marginata* has begun to cascade a bit from crevices in the prescribed manner, I wish I had it by the bushel. The greatest surprise has been *P. allionii*, which I had planted out with trepidation. It has weathered several summers and winters and bloomed well. I feel confident that all the mountain primulas could be adapted in time to my climate.

I have been pleased year after year with the various colors and forms of *P. sieboldii* that I finally decided three years ago that more of the section might endure my climate. My first seedling *P. polyneura* and *P. saxatilis* have already bloomed, and husky seedlings of *P. heucherifolia*, *P. cortusoides*, *P. geraniifolia* have joined them this past year from APS seed. I am certain now that these will be reliable here.



P. clarkii — a favorite

Watch it spread

P. kisoana has made it through its first winter here, and I am anxious to watch it spread. I am so fond of this section that I would still count primulas my favorite plants if no other sections existed. But they do exist.

The *farinose* section grows well, especially *P. frondosa* which has proven quite permanent and showy. I finally have found the two Colorado representatives of the section this past summer in the mountains: pale pink *P. incana* and the tiny flowered *P. egaliksensis*. My favorite *farinosae*, however, are *P. clarkei* and *P. X Peter Klein*—both of which are easy here under typical primula culture.

Asiatics like it too

the pleasantest surprises have been among the asiatics, however. I had avoided trying them because of the many terrifying warnings about their sensitivity to cold and moisture and drouth and everything else.

A visit to Herb and Dorothy Dickson's

nursery two years ago changed all that, although they didn't know me from Adam, they sensed my passion for primulas, showed me around and pressed a plant of *P. reidii* on me as I left. I was certain it would expire as soon as I reached the Colorado border, but the Dicksons realized that the dry winter conditions in my garden were precisely what the species needed.

Dubious — but reverent

I planted it dubiously, but reverently (and in a choice spot, just in case), and the single plant resulted in twin clumps the following spring graced with the loveliest flowers I have ever seen or smelled. There are four buds poking through the pebble mulch this winter. A single year's luck has convinced me that I will never want to be without it.

Primula capitata seedlings came through the winter with ease and bloomed prolifically the following year. It was summer, not winter, that killed my *Primula edgeworthii*.

Even sikkimensis

The great white hope for me among the asiatics are undoubtedly the sikkimensis section. Three color forms of *P. alpicola*, *P. sikkimensis* and *P. ioessa* have come up so easily from seed, grown up so quickly and established with such ease that I was filled with pride and excitement my first year.

I planted dozens of seedlings of these all over my yard. The next spring I was crestfallen. All the primulas were blooming, no sign of the sikkimensis group!

Just late

The literature fails to mention that these are horribly late in emerging. When they emerged, they emerged in mass and with vigor. Most bloomed a year after sowing. The robust foliage and cabbagey health of these plants has really impressed me—and every plant survived the winter and the summer both.

This winter I am anxiously awaiting the results of many more species I have tried

Wait for *P. kisoana* to spread



from seed in 1977. I am no longer doubtful that a large proportion will emerge and flower, but I hope I don't sound overweeningly complacent.

Try, try again

I have learned from repeated failures that the nivales section, for instance, will germinate but refuse to grow more than an inch in height before gasping their last in the dry Colorado air. Petiolarids too will be difficult in my dry climate. And such a reputedly easily plant as *Primula secundiflora* simply refuses to grow for me although I germinate and grow many seedlings every year.

I refuse to be discouraged even with these and will try again and again. Even if I fail, there are hundreds of other species and countless hybrids to console me in the future. Spinach is an acquired taste.

Panayoti Peter Callas, an enthusiastic new contributor to the quarterly, lives at 922 12th St., Boulder, Colo., 80302.



Letterbox

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Happy:

We live at 3000 feet in Blue Ridge Mountains. Cold winters and usually cool summers. Primroses do well here.

One thing I do hope is members will be more willing to share their plants. I tried every grower I knew of in APS some years ago and was never able to get one named auricula. I finally got named plants from England and Scotland of alpines and shows. I do have a good collection now and hope soon to build a store up. It has been slow, but I have sent plants to three overseas countries and three friends here. I also have promised six others. This way I feel friends are made and the society will prosper. I might add I would never charge for a plant either.

Since I correspond with 22 people overseas and in the USA, some of the best growers, I do get first hand information on plants; and I could never tell anyone how much I enjoy it and appreciate help and information so freely given.

I am now working on my own breeding of auriculas. I have more than 3000 seedlings I hope to see bloom in 1978 and about 2000 to bloom in 1979. Also grow primula and gold lace, doubles, etc. I hope soon to have some good seed.

To my delight a friend in California sent me some old double primroses I have searched for many years. I felt very humble to get them.

I am 44 years old. Wife and two children. We all love primulas.

James F. Long
Rt. 1 Box 1
Marion, Va. 24354

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a snapshot of a frilled primrose. It came in a lot of Pacific Giant seed. I have grown a few primroses since about 1972 but never have seen any like the one pictured. I would like to know if it is unusual.

Sincerely yours,
Louis A. Hindla
Landscape Gardener
Church St.
Bohemia, NY 11716





Dear Cy and Rita:

Hope you have a good year ahead. We have been married for 50 years this last May.

The marginata look so pretty and buds are showing. It's fun to see what the seedling will look like in spring. One might be something different.

We sent dues in for our library here in Milwaukie. Maybe others would if it were suggested. One always hopes someone will see it and become a member.

**Best Wishes,
Ivel and Orval Agee
11112 SW Wood Ave.
Milwaukie, Ore. 97222**

Dear Cyrus and Rita:

Thank-you for your words about Jim. Just right. I've been fortunate, as I was in the time of my mother's death, in feeling grateful for the past, for Jim and I had a real marriage which was delightful, interesting. Two old people being younger for each other. As Jim said, only last year, "Anyway, together we are one good man." . . .

I wish I know some botanical student. I have enough photostatic and other material together for the basis of a master's degree and a working knowledge of how to go about a consequent doctorate—all in primulacea—also gentian, erythronium synonymy now on microfilm at Smithsonian, hardy orchids, violets, half work on pines.

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Dear Susan Watson,

(who kindly shared with the editors)

Miss Takuma (Mrs. Baylor wrote about her in the fall quarterly) is one of my garden friends. She is a young, nice lady with good knowledge of plants.

Jintsu-riki is an interesting flower form; serrated petals, half-closing, outside red, inside white. Ginkujaku is white. Koroho is also white. Makino hana is one of the reddest of the *P. sieboldii* although there is no true red yet for this primula.

Musashino is magenta pink, a rather simple flower but it is very fertile. Shirowashi is white large flower with purple tube. It is a very old variety but it is still excellent.

Snow Flake was raised by Mr. Balcom, the ex-president of the American Primrose Society. He gave me a piece many years ago and I have given to many friends the piece. Uryu is a large, soft pink, nicely serrated petals.

My friends here are so much wanting seeds of foreign plants, and they will be very happy to try them in the future if your friends have enough to spare.

Best wishes to you all.

**Sincerely,
Dr. Shuichi Hirao
3-14 Yamanone, Zushi,
Kanagawa, Japan**

Speaking of Susan Watson, we hope she won't mind our sharing part of her letter with all of you.

25

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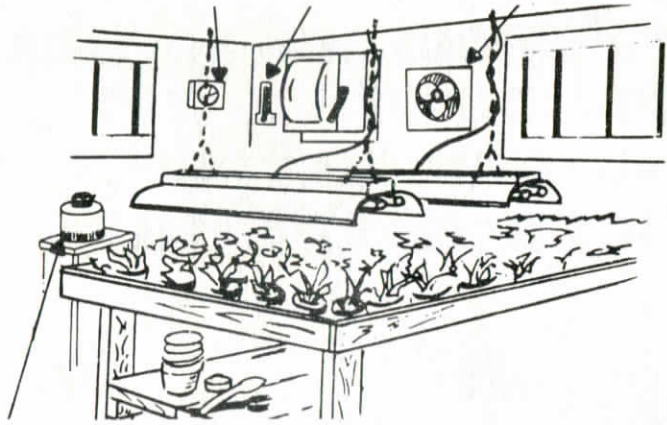
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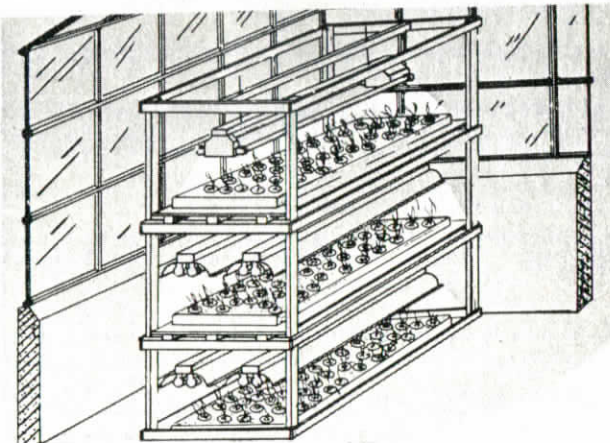
Indoor gardening under the lights

28

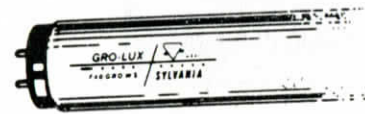
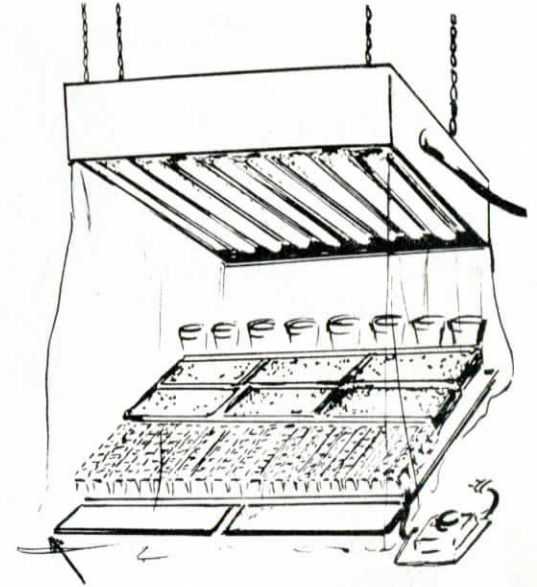
Almost everyone's trying it. Growing plants under artificial lights is a fascinating indoor gardening craze.

It is possible to have a primrose garden in the basement or spare room. Growers of hardy primulas should study the needs of their plants. Here are a few rules of thumb—green, we assume.

1. Primulas like about 12-14 hours of light and 10-12 hours of darkness.
2. Germinating seed seems to prefer somewhat subdued light—12 inches from a two-tube light.
3. Large and blooming plants need more light. Tops should be 6 inches from a two-tube light and not more than 12 inches.
4. Primula seedlings seem to prefer some cool periods. Most of the hardy ones need



29



5. Blooming plants prefer the same conditions, perhaps a little warmer but under 65 degrees F.
6. Humidity can be maintained by trays of water and gravel plus a plastic curtain around the unit.
7. A small fan would be beneficial if mildew or mold appears. Damping-off is rare under growth lights.

Here are some supplies and manufacturers—an incomplete list, of course. One is Duro-Lite Lamps, Inc., Horticultural Division, 17-10 Willow St., Fairlawn, NJ 07410. They sell Vita-Lite and Natur-escent.

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Write to manufacturers for literature and instructions.

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Manuscripts for publication in the Quarterly are solicited from members and other gardening experts, although there is no payment. Please send articles and photographs to the editor's office, 11617 Gravelly Lake Dr., S.W., Tacoma, Wash. 98499

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**Vol. 1 — 34, No. 2
1943 — 1976**

Compiled by Hilda and Elmer Baldwin

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Index — \$2 each.

I have a question!

Answers by Alice Hills Baylor

Q. I should like to bring primulas into flower during the winter and early spring months. Which ones are possible and probable bloomers?

A. Garden types best for forcing are the miniatures. Both garden and alpine auriculas can be forced. I have forced *P. marginata*, P.X Peter Klein and *P. rosea* with success. In the farinosa group try *darialica*, *frondosa*, *modesta*, *farinosa*. Try *sieboldii* of the *cor-tusoides* group also.

In the *vernales* group the *acaulis* are all good—as are the *juliana* hybrids. In these two groups one would have a choice of many colors.

Wine-colored *P. abschastica* does splendidly. That one is such an early bloomer in the garden that one might wish to leave it there. The *polyanthus* may be used, but they are taller. *P. Garryard* *Guinevere* proved one of the best under lights. The plant grew and multiplied to be divided when reset into the garden.

Several years ago I was given a small plant of *hose-in-hose* which I had developed myself and then lost. It was so small, and it was so late in the season (September) that I potted it up and placed it under the fluorescent light on my desk. In January when the big lights were started for seeds it went there—in our cool basement. It grew, bloomed and developed into a large plant to go into the garden in May.

The best method I have found is to pot plants for forcing in fall and hold them in the cold frame for six weeks to two months. Then bring them in and place under lights in a cool location or in a cool, shaded greenhouse.

Soil used is one-third each of humus, clean sand and good garden soil with a trowelful of dry cow manure mixed in after sifting the mix three times. Add a double handful of crushed egg shells for a bucket of mix.

When you bring the plant inside, water with a mild solution of any fertilizer and continue to do so every two weeks. Remember never place a pot of primulas in a sunny window. Some suggest using an all-purpose rose spray, but I give my plants a mist spray of either rain water or melted snow.

The primroses I mentioned are all hardy garden types for our country. If you want to grow primulas indoors, try the tender ones.

P. obconica is perhaps the easiest one in this group to force from seed. These proved to have a long-blooming season, splendid growth and beautiful flower clusters. *P. obconica* resents dry air. It needs a spray of clean water (containing no chemicals) every day. It certainly is worth the extra treatment.

P. sinensis has been hybridized for a long time in France, Germany, Austria and England. This brought changes of white, pink and double flowers from the original lilac. The foliage also took on a change. Some became curled and crimped as well as oak-leaved. It produced large flower umbels of many tiers and often star-shaped flowers.

P. kewensis is a most beautiful plant with silvery foliage. It is attractive even when not in bloom. The stem is topped with a cluster of golden-yellow flowers. I now have a plant of *P. kewensis* I have had for two years. As it has grown it has been repotted.

P. malacoides is different from the others. It is farinate. This is a smaller group, the members being all very much alike. The corollas have a fine angled, rounded eye. They are pink, red, white or lilac. The foliage is handsome—delightfully crinkled. It gives a rare fragrance when it is mist sprayed.

Early in handling these tender types, some growers found they were troubled with a skin rash. Cause of this rash is a crystalline substance or secretion of some gland-tipped hairs on petioles, leaf blade and scrape. Some crosses of *P. obconica* show less tendency to irritate skin. If you are one who is affected, try washing with plain yellow soap after you handle these tender plants.

Q. Can you tell me if it is true that there is a colored form of *P. involucrata*?

A. The Chinese form of *P. involucrata* is *P. yargongensis*. It may have rose or violet blossoms. It has been misnamed in some seed catalogs as *P. wardii*, and it also has been confused by the name *P. siberica*. It is an easy subject for the garden if—like its sister plant—it is placed in a moist, cool shaded location where there is plenty of humus in the soil. It is tall with a slender stem and cluster of flowers on top. I have had it planted against a hosta, and it gave a showy appearance.

Q. I should like to order some annual seeds of plants that will be suitable companions to primroses. Can you suggest some?

A. The begonias are all good because their foliage is attractive even when they are not in flower. I have used shirley poppies (where there is morning sun) and coleus for the deepest shade. Others for degrees of shade are *browallia*, *lobelia*, *anchusia*, *myosotis* (which will self-sow every year after it is established), *lunaria* and *schizanthus*.

Q. Can you tell me where *P. mistassinica* may be found in this country?

A. I have collected *P. mistassinica* in two locations, Apple River Canyon in northern Illinois and at Lake Willoughby in Vermont. It also is found all along the limestone bluffs around the Great Lakes. It is difficult to collect because the very fine roots extend into the limestone. I was once fortunate to find some plants growing on a limestone ledge where the water seeped from behind. There was a mat of growth among which was a plant of Grass of Parnassus. This group of plants lived in my garden for several years. It is like the walking fern—it needs pure lime. Articles about *P. mistassinica* are found in the quarterly of Fall 1972.

Do you have a question? Ask Alice Hills Baylor, corresponding secretary, by writing to her at Stage Coach Road, Rt. 2, Stowe, Vermont, 05672. She will select questions to be discussed in her regular column.

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Diary of a Primroser

by Cy Happy

The November cold snap didn't stop Springtime. Lavender-pink blossoms are right on schedule. So is the yellow jasmine overhead.

Just looked at the Fred Clarkes' plants. Most of the show prospects are in a 6' by 30' cold frame. Plastic and chicken wire lights are raised every mild day, displaying hundreds of fat seedlings.

Looked at the primrose house at Gibson's Florist, Inc., in Tacoma. What a sight! More than 75,000 polyanthus and a few acaulis. Some showing color already. Always the chance of a double or a jack-in-the-green or a color break with that many plants. Some blues are very small-eyed. Worth a visit every week. Seed from Ball's—produced in Japan.

Watch for root aphids

Many auricula growers do not watch for infestations of root aphids. These pests are visible around the carrot at soil level. More often the colonies are farther down in the small roots. White fuzz is the tell-tale sign. Easily available and very effective cure is Systemic Granules Insecticide from Dexol Industries. A scant half teaspoon scratched into the soil eliminates root aphids (and spider mites) for six weeks. Look for it where house plants are sold.

Pot-bounders, attention! Union Carbide Corp. is marketing Viterra 2 Hydrogel Soil Amendment. Makes for fool-proof care of auriculas and potted primroses. It increases available water and aeration. Will greatly reduce plant stress at the shows.

Gold lace and squash

Had a note from Agnes Johnson, Anderson Island, Wash. She said she still is not feeling well. She sent along a few of her prize gold lace polyanthus seeds. Anderson Island has a community fair every September. Agnes usually wins the giant squash competition. I remember one monster lurking in her vegetables. Well over 100 pounds and still a month until show time. She kept her seed source a secret. Vesey's Seeds, York, P.E.I., Canada, offers 300-pound-plus Canadian champion squash—5 seeds for \$1.50. You too can be a winner.

Has anyone primrose E. R. Janes? Pale rose-pink flushed with orange. A great winter bloomer. It was produced by crossing Wanda with *p. vulgaris*. I've made that cross but sure didn't get any orange shades.

Dry feet at last

Finally have dry feet in winter. Bought a pair of L.L. Bean's Maine hunting shoes. Rubber soles and uppers—leather around the ankles.

West-Winds Plants, Broughshane, Co. Antrim, N. Ireland, specializes in double primroses, polys, hose-in-hose. You may have to travel to buy in person. Lopen Red is one of the best red primroses—nearly eyeless—a bit of garryard in its "roots." Does anyone have it?

Cheers for wood heater

Another stormy December day. Price of natural gas prompted installation of a wood heater to supplement the furnace. Cozy warmth now radiates from a simple, \$35 hardware store air-tight. One load lasts 8 hours. Liked it so well we've ordered a high-output and ornamental Valiant from Vermont Castings. Sam, the Manchester Terrier was never happier. I feel fine too. Gas bill dropped from \$105 to \$18.

The Wakefield and North of England Tulip Society, c/o Mr. H. V. Calvert, 7 School Crescent, Lupset, Wakefield, WF2 8LX is going strong. Dedicated to the preservation of old English florist tulips. It is the only source of these striped and feathered varieties. Requirements are as stringent as those of the show auricula.

Rumors, we hear rumors

Mrs. E. B. Van Sickle, Box 308, Sequim, Wash. 98382, is rumored to have started a primrose club. Olympic Peninsula members, check this out.

Need a genealogy expert for southern New Castle Co., Delaware—Bergin/Happy family. Any volunteers?

B. Klos in an article on breeding edged show auriculas in the NAPS Northern year-book advises using green-edge Serenity. Beth Tait has it for sale.

G. E. Barrett, writing for the fall quarterly of the Alpine Garden Society about a botanical tour of the S. Russian Caucasus Mtns., mentions a large flowered deep pink *P. amoena*. Also mentions the American Rambling Club was there at the same time. Anyone know this group?

Important work

Dr. David Winstanley, Woodlands, Toot Hill Rd., Greensted, Ongar, Essex, and Ray



Scottish Rock Garden Club offers *P. yargongensis*.

Edwards have compiled a list of primula species in cultivation. It is being released through the National Auricula and Primula Society Southern section.

Just received the seed distribution list from Scottish Rock Garden Club. They have 117 listings under primula from alga to yargongensis. Wonder what the P. elatior from Romania is like.

New clubs, welcome

Leon Spielman, there is a new primrose group meeting fairly near you. Contact Richard L. Crit, 1236 Wendover Ave., Rosemont, Pa., 19010 (215-LA5-8331). They will have a show, plant sale program and tour in Wayne, Pa. (Leon is a new member from Sharpsburg, Md.)

Kitsap County (Washington) Primrose Club is discussing holding a show this spring. Their new president is Charlotte Simpser, 6733 Jarstad Dr., Bremerton, Wash., 98310 (206) 479-1162.)

Valley Hi Primrose Club will have their show the first weekend of April at Beaverton Mall.

Washington State Primrose Society meets the 2nd Friday at 8 p.m. in Lutheran Church of Atonement, 740 S. 128th, Burien. East Side Primrose Club meets 2nd Monday at 7:30 in the basement of Washington Federal Savings and Loan, 116 Kirkland Ave., Kirkland.

Rhodies and primroses

The Rhododendron Species Foundation, Box 99927, Tacoma, Wash., 98499, would like to include primula in their rhododendron plantings. Plantings will be grouped geographically—Burma, Nepal, Sikkim, China, Europe, etc. Primulas and rhodies from each area to be planted together.

A good source of gardening books is Beth L. Bibby Books, 1225 Sardine Creek Rd., Gold Hill, Ore., 97525. Ask for the horticulture list.

Note from Anita

Anita Alexander is collecting primrose pattern dishes. "The Flowers of Shakespeare's Day," Macbeth Royal Avon bone chine from Hammersley & Co. Any more? Anita is recruiting a "primrose crew" to plan what needs to be done at the Berry Garden.

Welcome to Dexol as an advertiser. I find their systemic insecticide a real cure-all on my potted show auriculas (except for slugs and crown rot).

If our members will report products that work well on primroses, we'll give them a mention.

Just noticed (two years late) that Alpine Garden Society of England has given the APS a life membership. Shouldn't we reciprocate?

And one from Rita

Note from Rita: We hope you'll support our advertisers. We'd like to use some color photos in the quarterly. Letting our advertisers know we're buying will bring us more advertisers, more revenue, more publication advantages. It's the kind of cycle that will work to benefit all of us.

One more thing. Don't think you have to be invited to write for the quarterly. If you're out there, we want to know you—what you're growing, how you've succeeded or failed and why, what kind of articles you need to find in the quarterly. Send us a card when you think of something we need to know. Thanks.

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