

Primroses

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PRIMROSES

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Editor: Maedythe Martin
951 Joan Crescent,
Victoria, B.C. CANADA V8S 3L3
(604) 370-2951
Designer: Rebecca Nolte

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Spring issue ... March 1
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ON THE COVER

"Lavender Cloud," one of the *Primula x Juliana* hybrids, has been grown in Victoria gardens for many years. In 1978 Mr. W. H. Warren, horticulturist at Victoria's Butchart Garden said "Lavender Cloud" was brought to the garden from England many years earlier.

Ask the Growers

What mix do you use for your primrose seedlings?

RICK LUPP

Graham, Washington

Rick owns Mt. Tahoma Nursery and grows species primulas and auriculas from seed. Many are rock-garden plants but Rick also has some double primroses and juliae hybrids. Here's his mix.

For each wheelbarrow load:

- 9 parts coarse sand
- 5 parts coarse peat
- 4 parts crushed pumice rock
- 1 part well rotted, screened leaf mould (maple, usually)
- 1/2 pound raw bone meal
- handful dolomite lime

For auriculas he uses this mix straight. For primulas that like more moisture, such as the vemales, Rick adds an additional two parts coarse peat. For special alpine treasures, such as *Primula allionii* he layers the mix with pure pumice to ensure fast drainage.

He covers his seed with a light layer of pumice, unless the seed is very tiny and then he

sprinkles it over the pumice. He also said that with his loose mix he doesn't have a problem with dividing his seedlings — they come right apart.

For seedlings that are slow growers and Rick knows they may have to live in a 4 inch pot for a couple of years, he adds an extra treat of a few pellets of Osmacote (not more than 10) near the bottom of the pot to provide a bit of extra food.

Rick warns to always use new or clean pots. He starts his seed in December, January or February, depending on the winter. No primula or auricula seed is planted after April first — it's too warm for good germination after that time. He also starts primula seed when things cool down in the fall, late September as a rule.

Seedlings started early in the year are usually ready to pot up in early June. If you have some auriculas or high alpine species of primula, give Rick's mix a try.

Photo by Cy Happy



Rockery treasures such as Primula allionii do well in Rick Lupp's mix with extra crushed tufa for drainage.

*Ask the Growers continued***JUNE SKIDMORE***Mercer Island, Washington*

Another grower of auriculas and small primula species — destined for her troughs — is June Skidmore. Ask what mix she uses for seedlings, she replies, "Anything I have at hand!" This can be her own fresh screened compost, if there is any ready, or a commercial mix that is primarily artificial ingredients but has a lot of pumice or Perlite for good drainage. If June is using her own compost and has some crushed pumice she adds that to aid drainage.

Her advice for getting primulas over the first spring and summer is to fertilize with a weak solution each time you water them.

June's crop of seedlings might include any of the Juliana hybrids, *Primula marginata*, *P. minima*, *P. glaucescens* or *P. melanops*.

HERB DICKSON*Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery*

Herb's mix: In the bottom 1/2 of his 4" pot he puts whatever soil mix he has made up and that is handy. The last mix contained mainly peat, pumice, and some Perlite. He also uses sand in his mix when he can find a good coarse sand. The next layer, about 1/4 of the pot, is the above soil mixed with a little more peat and Perlite added for drainage. The final layer is Redi-earth, a commercial mix with peat and mica.

Then he tamps all this down firmly and sprinkles the seed on top and covers it lightly with #2 vermiculite. The pots are then sprinkled with a fungicide, Truban, to help prevent damping-off. The pots with really fine seed get covered with squares of cloth, usually old sheets cut to fit.

APRIL BOETTGER*A Plethora of Primula*

April's mix: Rick's mix is about what I plan on using, slightly modified. I will use 8 parts sand, 5 pumice, 5 peat, and 2 leaf mould. I want the

parts to total 20, because I am hoping to have this custom-mixed and delivered by the truck load.

The grade of vermiculite that Herb and others have used for years as top dressing seems to be no longer available, so right now I am using Perlite because I have some and Herb said it would be fine. I will be using pumice for my androsace and any others that need superb drainage.

In the future I will use pumice for all my top dressings, since I will have it around anyhow. Also, I will probably add some Redi-earth to my general mix for seeding, because I keep hearing it works great.

I am trying three different ways with my seed this year — Rosetta's pop bottle method, sheets of cell packs and some pots. I am using 4 1/4 X 6 1/2" pots Herb had around, which I plan to keep just for seed.

I am hoping the cell packs work out. Mine consist of 72 cells. The cell packs are mainly used for the larger seed, such as double acaulis and candelabra. It is slow planting them individually, by tweezers or damp finger tip, but it will save much time later when it comes to transplanting. No tangled roots or stress for the seedlings — just pop them out and into the ground or whichever size pot is needed.

BARBARA WILKINS*Toronto, Ontario*

Barbara is a keen grower of rhododendrons under which she plants primroses and other woodland plants. Many delectable varieties of dwarf and species rhodos can be found down the slopes of her garden, which is on one of the famous, or infamous, Toronto ravines. *Primula sieboldii* does well for her, as well as the acaulis and Julianas. Many of the candelabras find the drainage of the slope in the summer too dry for their liking.

Once the seedlings are up and have reached a reasonable size for transplanting, Barbara pots

Follow-up on the Primula from the Cowichan Valley

March 24, 1993

Dear Editor,

I was interested to read in the Winter 1993 issue of *Primroses* that Angela Bradford of Barnhaven 3 had approached the National Auricula and Primula Society in the UK regarding the name "Cowichan" for the strain of polyanthus developed by Florence Bellis and then Barnhaven.

It was my suggestion to rename the "Cowichan" hybrids developed by Mrs. Bellis, but if the powers that be feel the modern hybrids should retain the name "Cowichan" then I would like to recommend again that the plant still grown on Vancouver Island be called "Cowichan, Neel Variety."

There should be a distinction between the "Cowichan" plants still grown in this area and the modern hybrids. Mrs. Bellis was an American living quite a few hundred miles from the small Cowichan Valley on Vancouver



Photo by J. Kerridge

This "Cowichan" primrose variety, grown on Vancouver Island for many decades, is distinctive for its purple color, lack of eye and slightly long, sometimes drooping pedicel.

Island in Canada where the original plant was found.

From Angela Bradford's letter to Dr. Kerridge and the editor's comment I gather that pieces of the "Cowichan, Neel Variety" still grown on Vancouver Island today continue to be handed over the fence in the Cowichan Valley as in days gone by.

Sybil McCulloch, Victoria, B.C.

Ask the Growers*continued from page 4*

them up in three or four inch pots in a mix of commercial peat-based potting mix to which a third to a half of spent mushroom compost, leaf mould or garden compost — what ever there is to hand — is added. After a couple of months, when the seedlings are of a good size, "out they go, into the garden — to be eaten by slugs," Barbara says with chagrin.

For the final mix, here's a classic from the editor. C.G. Haysom, in his book *Florists' Auriculas and Gold-laced Polyanthus* includes on page 24 a "recommended compost" mix for auriculas. This is what I use for my show auriculas and you might want to try it, even if slightly modified, for yours.

Mix up, by bulk:

7 parts of good loam
3 parts of moss peat
2 parts of course sand
to which is added, per bushel:
3 oz. of bonemeal
2 oz. of hoof and horn, fine grade
1 1/2 oz. of dried blood
a 4 inch pot of [dolomite] lime
a 5 inch pot of crushed charcoal.

I've found it works fine if used as a guide — just how big is a bushel? Instead of hoof and horn I use a 4-10-10 vegetable fertilizer, and for loam I usually use screened compost. Just remember auriculas like a loose, rich mix. ❖

Primula marginata on Long Island

by Fred Knapp

My favorite primula, on merit but especially because it is in bloom as I write, is *Primula marginata*. Like many of its relatives, it is a marginal plant hereabouts outdoors, disliking our summer heat and humidity and our winter rain cycle. Perhaps this is why I still find old confused name tags marked "Primula marginalis" that only show up when someone who knows better visits the alpine house. These primula are best grown under glass in any climate since their charm is heavily dependent on their farina overcoat.

Primula marginata hybrids occupy four to five square feet of bench space next to various forms of *Primula allionii*, *Primula auricula* and other alpine types in our cold or alpine greenhouse amongst tall trees ("alpine" because it is situated 35' above grade on top of the roof. It has taken a few years to develop an instinct for the care of alpine plants, including primulae, in

this situation, especially since meticulous record-keeping is not a local speciality.

The biggest problems are April sun-scorch (before the trees leaf out fully) and steamy summer weather. When the outdoors is at 95 degrees F. and 95 percent humidity, the alpine house simply cannot be fanned and exhaust-ventilated even down to that level. The plants are remarkably capable of withstanding adverse conditions once their keeper is attuned to their distress signals.

Grand Ridge mixes (generic, substitute freely, but the only limit to how much stone you use is how often you can water), an occasional systemic drench of the too crowded pots, Sun Oil for visible greenhouse pests, dilute liquid fertilizer in growing seasons and daily communion with the plants are basic requirements.

Photo by O. Agee



Primula marginata "Agee," developed by Ivy Agee in Oregon, has very heavy meal and a distinctive toothed leaf.

Division right after flowering is highly preferable to the recommended mid-summer timing. The flower season can be advanced with lights to extend the day and, of course, the warmer temperatures – often natural in mild mid-January/February periods – provide suitable conditions.

Primula marginata hybrids are basically all alike, just like people on the sidewalks of a foreign country. Their variability increases as you get to know them. A "hybrid" is still correctly named whether it be of two different species or of two different forms within the same species — a fact which always bothers me since, if pursued far enough, its logic makes even the type form of a species into a hybrid. With this broad definition, my collection numbers ten hybrids. Two of them are certainly more hybrid than the others, since they are known to include other species: "Linda Pope" and "Janet."

The books characterize flower color in terms of mauve blue, lilac blue, lilac purple and blue violet. Magenta, an extreme of this cast, is not normally found without an additional species influence, or a tired bloom. There is the usual white form. Leaf shape is quite variable but usually toothed visibly, and the typical farinaed leaf seems to catch extra grains in its very teeth to outline margins crisply. Lets look at my ten variations on the theme.

"Amethyst"

An early bloomer, pin-eyed flower of medium color, good farina, modest irregular teeth on a broad flat leaf in a ratio of 2:1, length:breadth.

"Beamish"

Late bloomer, pin-eyed deep red-violet flowers, leaves 2:1 or 3:1 and large

"Caerulea" (or "Coerulea")

Early bloomer, thrum-eyed small flower, bluest of the lot but not dark. Petals seem almost rectangular and very dainty. Heavy farina on shark-toothed narrow leaves 3.5:1. A very good form. Took best in show at February meeting of the Long Island Horticultural Society with it this year.



Primula marginata in the editor's garden among the oak leaves of *Victoria*. This variety has particularly large serrations on the leaves.

"Drake's Form"

Medium to late-bloomer with pin-eyed medium lavender flower. Best leaves of any form I can imagine: big rectangular teeth, heavy farina, 2:1, convex in a perfect rosette looking like a flower all by itself. Good propagator but tends a bit towards a tree form for me.

"Dr. Jenkins"

Pale colored late pin-eyed flowers, leaves 3:1 with very rectangular tiny teeth. Good propagator but too much tree.

"Kesselring's Variety"

Probably most easily described as a lesser version of "Linda Pope" in shape size and coloring, but pin-eyed.

"Linda Pope"

Certainly not all *Primula marginata*, everybody's favorite cabbage primula. Large thrum-eyed medium colored flowers, good farina on large leaves much like an auricula with uneven edges rather than evenly toothed. Great propagator.

*Marginata on Long Island continued***"Pritchard's Variety"**

No flower yet this year but books say large lilac purple with striking white eye. Leaves quite congested, medium farina and small toothed.

"Alba"

Several plants, perhaps different clones. Not yet in bloom.

"Janet"

A reputed cross with an auricula. This one is too close to magenta-pink, has neither farina nor regular toothed and is the spitting image, in flower and leaf, of *P. x belluensis* (Siskiyou).

An attractive plant withal, but does not really fit into the group.

Playing with the above plants is great fun but leaves many unanswered questions, all pretty typical. Where can one get other selected forms? How can tree forms be encouraged to break out new laterals? If one takes the top of a tree form as a cutting, will the remainder break new growth — and is timing critical to this? And does anybody have a form with nice leaves, of course, and a deep gentian violet flower hue? This last might well be possible from a pairing of "Caerulea" with a show auricula such as "Remus." Are there any experiments going on out there? ❖

Plant Exchange/Want List

This is the gardening corner where you can request that special primula you've always wanted. Send your notices to the editor. Keep you list short — only two or three items per request, and hope for the best.

Used books wanted. Buy or trade. O'Briens, 9450 Herbert Place, Juneau, Alaska, 99801
 Haysom. **Florist's Auriculas and Gold-Lace Polyanthus.** London, 1957.
 Puttock. **Primulas.** London, 1957.
 Lyall. **Hardy Primulas.** London, 1959.
 Moreton. **The Auricula, Its History and Character.** Ariel Press, 1964.
 Jacques, Frank. **Florist's Auriculas and Gold-Laced Polyanthus.** 1980.
 Nelson, Dr. E.C. **Irish Primroses.** 1984
 Newton, Robert. **Fifty Modern Auriculas.** 1970.

Wanted: Named varieties of *Primula pubescens*. Willing to trade. Thea Oakley, 3304 - 288th Ave. NE, Redmond, WA 98053-3111.

Wanted: Seed of *Primula fedshenkoi* from Uzbekistan. This is a member of the primrose family originating in a climate with summer

drought similar to the Pacific Northwest. Maedythe Martin, Editor. Address inside cover.

Wanted: Named auriculas. Have some to trade. Paul Chyz, 1751 McKenzie Ave., Victoria, B.C. V8N 1A6 Canada

Wanted: Auriculas, especially green/grey/white-edged and doubles. Also, old julies and double acaulis primroses. April Boettger, A Plethora of Primroses, 244 Westside Highway, Vader, WA 98593.

Wanted: Information on alpine houses or good sources about alpine houses, particularly in which to grow primroses and auriculas. Any members have directions for an alpine house they've constructed? Jan Kelly, HC 83 Box 5525, Fairview Rd., Coquille, Or 97423.

Want list: Named forms of *Primula allionii* and *P. marginata*. Also show auriculas. Anyone have any spare seedlings of *P. minkwitziae* in the Cortusoides section, from Soviet Central Asia? Joseph Halda was out of seed. Contact Fred E. Knapp, 58 Kaintuck Lane, Locust Valley, NY 11560.

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Primroses for a Beginner's Garden in Alaska

From a talk given to the Juneau Garden Club by Caroline J. Jensen, Juneau, Alaska

While primroses differ widely in flowers, in their habits of growth and time of flowering, they all have certain important traits in common. All dislike extreme heat. Almost all can stand low temperatures provided they are protected from the scalding sun and winds and from soil heaving. All varieties lose water rapidly through their leaves and so do best when they get constant moisture during the growing season.

If the summer is warm and dry, then a mulch of peat moss, stone chips or gravel will help conserve moisture and keep the soil cool. Good drainage, such as provided by a sloping site or gravelly subsoil, is necessary. All primroses prefer a deeply prepared soil, fertile and well supplied by leaf mould, compost, peat moss or other organic matter. Besides the slugs, primroses have few enemies in our area. Red spiders can be a problem if there is a lot of sun and low moisture.

Primroses are classified into about thirty sections based on botanical characteristics, such as

the direction of the leaf edge curl, the presence or absence of leaf stems and whether the plants possess farina, which is silver or gold-colored meal present on the leaves, stems or sometimes blossoms. We won't go into the different sections — just so you are aware of them. As you get involved with the growing of primroses you will automatically become aware of the sections. You will want to know how to classify primroses.

I have selected the following primroses for the beginner. They all do well in our area, as we can provide the growing conditions they need.

Primula juliae was crossed with *Primula vulgaris* (wild primrose native to the British Isles and most of Europe) and *P. elatior*, *P. veris* and a great many hybrid polys and



One of the primroses recommended by Caroline Jensen is Primula denticulata. It is blooming here in mid-March by a typical Victorian rocky outcrop.

Primroses for a Beginner's Garden continued

primroses to produce the hybrid line of *Primula x Juliana* which blooms profusely in our gardens. The "Wanda" hybrids and "Dorothy" are popular. These primroses multiply rapidly and should be divided every two or three years and the hard center portion of the clump discarded.

Primula denticulata is commonly called the ball or drumstick primrose with which you are all familiar. This primrose is native to the high meadows of Kashmir and all along the Himalayan chain. It is an accommodating plant for many situations. It comes in various shades of lavender, red and white. To divide a denticulata clump, dig deep and with a shovel remove the entire plant, shake as much soil off as possible, then hose the roots thoroughly until all the dirt is removed and you can see the tangled mass of roots. Carefully pull the crowns apart. *Primula cashmiriana* is a good lavender form of *Primula denticulata*. It is shorter (4 to 6 inches) with beautiful silver farina in the buds and stems. The balls are smaller and consist of a tight mass of florets.

Acaulis primroses and polyanthus, both June-blooming here, are two varieties that are so similar in their characteristics that they can be described as well as grown together. They differ only in habit of flowering. The acaulis sends up a multitude of blossoms, each held singly on a stem that comes from the crown of the plant. The polyanthus has a stout flower stalk that holds an umbel of blooms high above its rosette of leaves.

The British wild cowslip (*P. veris*) and the oxslip (*P. elatior*), crossed with *P. vulgaris* and the colored vernal primulas of eastern Europe are thought to be the ancestors of the fantastic hybrid polyanthus primroses. Other forms are Jack-in-the-green (the enlarged calyx makes a green ruff around the flower), Hose-in-hose (calyx has become petal tissue making a flower within a flower) and doubles with extra petals. Gold and silver laced polyanthus have fine lacing around the edge and down the middle of

each petal. The rich deep-colored eyeless Cowichan is a more recent form.

Polyanthus primroses are wonderfully adaptable to a great variety of garden conditions. No primrose makes as vivid a show. The colors include whites and pastel shades as well as strong reds, yellows and blues. In our climate, polyanthus need winter protection to enable them to survive freezing and thawing. Polyanthus roots are shallow and need protection.

Primula rosea is a rosy carmine small primrose and flowers with the denticulata. It needs a lot of moisture.

Primula auricula is a good rock garden primrose. The distinguishing characteristics of the auricula are their thick succulent leaves and heavy stems. They have adapted to drier and more open conditions than the thin-leaved primroses. They need good drainage to prevent rotting of the crown, so ideal planting spots would be on a scree-like slope. They need sweeter soil, gravelly without dryness and a little more sun. Through hybridizing, the color-range has been expanded from the original yellow and lavender colors into interesting shades and now include a wide range of colors.

Primula sieboldii looks different from the others for its leaves are lobed and have a delicate lacy aspect. Flowers are white, rose, purple, blue and lavender plus bi-colors. It is robust in spite of its delicate appearance. After flowering, the foliage dies and disappears. The rhizomes can then be easily lifted and divided, but this need not be as often as for other primroses. Because of this early dormancy it is a good idea to mark the patches so that you will not forget where they are and inadvertently dig them.

Candelabra primulas are June to July bloomer here. These Asiatic primulas are characterized by their unusual flowering habit. They first send up a flower stalk that bears a whorl of blooms at the top. No sooner have these flowers opened than the stem grows up through the first whorl to

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News from the Chapters

ALASKA

Primrose growers in Alaska have had a busy year already. Their news as well as future plans are included in a letter by Misty Haffner that went out to all APS members in Alaska.

March 3, 1993
Greetings Fellow APS Members

We have some interesting news to share with you. The program "Primulas Around the World" [held on two weekends in January] was a success. We had an attendance of 37 each Saturday. Everyone enjoyed the slides and video. It was great to see some new faces and enjoy familiar company.

John O'Brien hosted and gave an interesting discussion about the various primulas during the slide shows. The video with Ron McBeath was informative and entertaining — a must if you haven't seen it.

We sent thank-you letters to Mendelhall Community Library... the Juneau Garden Club... the Cooperative Extension Services ... Master Gardeners...

Special thanks go to Caroline Jensen for use of her cultural directions, John O'Brien for coordinating and hosting the program, Vivian Chelstad for help and yummy treats, Rick and Misty Haffner for help with clerical work, coffee and snacks, and a thanks for all of you who could make it to the programs. If you could not make it, hopefully we can get together in the future.

John O'Brien was asked by Cyrus Happy, president of APS to be the next slide librarian and John accepted. So now if we want to access the Society's tape and video library, we just need to give John a call and stop by. Other Alaskan members can write him:

John O'Brien Sr.
9450 Herbert Place
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Phone (907) 789-7516.

Congratulations, John!

[Misty encourages Alaska members to get involved in two projects:

1. Slide program of Alaska primroses — Alaskan members send slides to John O'Brien
2. Alaskan APS plant show and sale, May 22 in Juneau. Get your plants ready now.]

Also I would like to share that John has received calls after the "Primulas Around the World" program asking that we put on a workshop with the basic cultural information on seed planting, plant division, etc. ... It would be nice to have the workshop at the same time as the plant show and sale. If you are interested in teaching a workshop or have any ideas or suggestions, please contact Misty Haffner.

Another bit of interesting news: Master Gardener's and Cooperative Extension will be having another gardening conference and trade show in 1994. There is a strong possibility we can arrange to have a speaker from APS come and talk. So far the suggestions have been Cyrus Happy or Rosetta Jones. If you would like to suggest someone, please contact John O'Brien. This might be something for you folks up north to think about. If you want to come down to the conference, we might be able to find a place for you to stay.

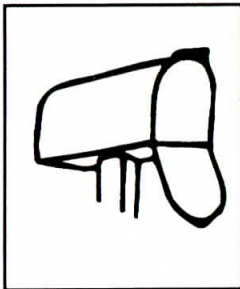
In December 1992 I wrote every APS member outside of Juneau. We wanted to touch bases with them and find out their interests. So far I have received letters from:

Stanley Ashmore and family in Palmer. His main interest is terrestrial orchids. He has done some interesting crosses with them. He would like to correspond with anyone in our group that has an interest in our native orchids. He shared that the auriculas do fairly well in their area and that *Primula denticulata* grows like crazy in the summer but does not always survive the winter. That was news to me, I did not realize that the denticulatas could grow that far north.

Marjorie Dale in Anchorage is involved in the plant sale for epilepsy put on by the Pythian Sisters #2. If anyone is in Anchorage during the first part of June, you might want to check out this sale. They have a large selection of plants.

Marie Skonberg of Ouzinkie — that's north of Kodiak on Spruce Island — has a real primula powerhouse. Mrs. Skonberg has a good article in the last APS quarterly. From what I hear, her yard is almost full of primulas. And this year the spring Kodiak Garden Club will be coming over to her place to have a meeting. What fun, Marie! And look out — primulitis will be spreading.

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From the Mailbox

Letters from our readers

To the Seed Exchange Director
November 1992

Dear Candy,
Thank you for the information on books about primroses. I bought **The Book of Primroses** by Barbara Shaw and **Primroses and Auriculas** by Brenda Hyatt.

I am trying to get a copy of **A Plantsman's Guide to Primroses** by Philip Swindells. Think I'll write to the publisher in England. I get it from the library and it is helpful.

The primrose seeds I ordered last year are doing well. I am transplanting some now. Sure do enjoy the quarterlies. Hope to get to a couple of shows this year and see how the experts grow them. I really like the auriculas.

Jan Kelly, Coquille, Oregon
P.S. Now I need a book on alpine houses. Timber Press has one I'll order.

February 2, 1993

Dear Editor,
..Rick and I enjoyed helping John [O'Brien] with the "Primula Around the World" program [held in January in Juneau, Alaska]. Everyone enjoyed the slides and the video of Ron McBeath [from the 1992 symposium "Primula Worldwide"]. We are thankful the Society has a slide and video program available for use.

Before the program I wrote to every Alaskan APS member outside Juneau. We wanted to touch bases with them and find out their interests. So far I have received letters from Stanley Ashmore in Palmer, Marie Skonberg in Ouzinkie and Marjorie Dale in Anchorage. All

of them shared various interesting information about their areas. This has been a great opportunity to start new friendships.

In May John wants to have a plant show and sale. We are looking forward to this new project with anticipation. The interest in primulas in Juneau is growing. This show would give our community an opportunity to see the variety of primula species firsthand....

Yours truly,
Misty Haffner, Juneau, Alaska

February 24, 1993

Dear Editor,
You can be ecstatic! I just got WordPerfect on my computer today. In fact we just got home from having it installed and I am copying this over from the letter I had ready to mail to you.

It was funny, but I had been talking to both Herb and Rick Lupp about how they grow their seed. Of course, everyone has a favorite method, but they both use 4" pots to start their seeds in.

[April's information on seedling potting mixes can be found in the article on mixes in "Ask the Growers..."]

Herb and I found out this spring that sometimes it's better just to plant your seedlings in chunks rather than try to take them apart individually. We had some *P. yargongensis* that we were massacring trying to get them apart. So we just "chunked" them up and potted them. Then if you wish, you can divide them again later.

When I saw June Skidmore at the Seattle chapter meeting on February 18, she was talking about the same thing — using healthy chunks that can be redivided later without damaging your seedlings.

I thought you might also be interested in this

great tip Rosetta Jones shared at the last Washington chapter meeting on cleaning plastic plant tags. Bon Ami cleanser is the trick! It even will take off pre-printed names and addresses.

Herb and I use pencil to do our tags, since it lasts **much** longer than the permanent markers. I had tried bleach, ammonia, and 409 cleaner to remove the pencil. The only way that had worked before was using an eraser or steel wool. So points to Rosetta!

Fred, Herb, Cy and I went to the Seattle chapter's February 18 meeting to hear John Kerridge speak on polyanthus and cowichans. I am glad we went; he did a great job. One of the things I especially appreciated was his not rushing through the slides so that we had time to get a good look. And he also provided us with humor along the way, something I quite relish. Truly, it was a good program and I am sure that some of the other chapters would enjoy hearing and seeing it.

I also got to meet Cliff Lewis and his wife, which was most delightful. We had shared some correspondence over an article of his in one of the quarterlies, and it is always great fun to put faces to names.

Enough for now, except if you haven't already planned to do so, you might want to mention that members could go to the Vancouver Island plant show in Victoria and the one John is sponsoring all in the same weekend.

One thing I know for sure is that as soon as possible I am extending my spell checker to include all the primula names and the names of the people that I write to or about frequently.

Now only if I remember how to save correctly!

Bye-4-Now
April E. Boettger, Vader, Washington
The editor is ecstatic to receive any copy already on diskette. This saves time in re-typing onto computer and is more accurate, too.
Thanks, April.

Photo by Cy Happy



Modern "Cowichan" hybrids, which John Kerridge hybridizes, retain the eyeless characteristic of the original but are found in a wide range of mouth-watering colors.

January 19, 1993

Dear Editor
We recently had two well-attended programs about primroses. Attendance was good and those who came reported the programs were excellent. The librarian where we held the meeting said the number at the primrose programs were the largest she had ever had on a topic in the meeting room at the library. So everybody was happy.

The first program was the APS slide show kindly sent to us by slide librarian Jerry Flintoff. That was followed by the video of "Primulas of the Clouds," a presentation by Ron McBeath from "Primula Worldwide."

The second Saturday the program consisted of slides almost entirely of primroses in Alaska gardens. This was followed by a second video from the symposium, "A Rocky Marriage" also by Ron McBeath. The video had a bit too much blue in the flower colors due to technical

From the Mailbox continued

difficulties, I guess, but nevertheless were of great interest.

Lots of kind help and interest made the programs so successful: newspaper, radio and television provided free notice to the public; Rick Haffner put up notices around town; Misty Haffner helped in several ways; Vivian Chelstad helped with refreshments.

We had only planned on two programs this winter, but with public interest and requests we are planning now for a Primrose Workshop at the end of February or early March and a Primrose Society plant show on May 22.

Our programs were free. Juneau Garden Club chipped in towards expenses and we are told Master Gardeners here plan to chip in also, which is OK with me as miscellaneous expenses add up when you count in postage, long distance calls, stationery, getting prints made into slides and so on, but it is all well worthwhile.

Our handouts for those attending were "Cultural Suggestions" from a talk by Caroline Jensen to the Juneau Garden Club; membership application forms for the American Primrose Society and copies of Dr. Kerridge's recently received seedlist. We also mentioned Rosetta Jones' seed for those interested in doubles and Herb Dickson for those interested in auriculas. And we told everyone that people who joined APS would learn additional sources for seed, including the APS seed exchange.

My thought, and it is gradually coming together, is that if we can get enough good slides from gardeners of primroses in Alaska gardens, we could donate them as a program to the APS slide library. We could use more slides from different locations, such as Sitka, the village in Southeast Alaska, from Anchorage and from Fairbanks.

John A. O'Brien Sr., Juneau, Alaska
[Caroline's cultural notes are found elsewhere in this issue. Editor.]

[Once when looking through the mailing list, the editor noticed there are three APS members living St. John's Newfoundland. This coincidence could not go unremarked, so she wrote to ask if they knew one another. Here is the reply.]

February 22, 1993

Dear Editor,

Thank-you for your recent letter. St. John's is fairly small and most gardeners know one another. I have known Stan Atkins for decades and he lives just around the corner. I have known Earl Benson for a very long time as well.

Primroses do quite well here as we have a mild maritime climate that suits them. There are a number of growers in the area and most grow a range of polyanthus primula, *P. denticulata* and others. Most gardeners have "Wanda" and polys.

I have a collection which grows each year as I order from the seed exchange and I am particularly interested in gold-laced polyanthus and *P. auricula*. I have a few of our local *P. laurentiana*.

I have a gardening show on the local cable station and last year, our third season, I did a half a show (14 minutes) on my primulas. All extreme close-ups. The light was sparkling that day and the dusky red cowichans looked wonderful. Of course, they all did.

Most of the species that I have tried have done well although there certainly are some that do better than others. Location is important. My first bed was in full sun and tended to be rather dry. I now have a shadier bed and the plants look quite good. I got some seeds from Cravens last year and the plants look really good. Anxiously awaiting spring and the flowers.

Best regards,
Dr. Peter J. Scott,
St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada

continued on page 28

Concerning Certain Pests

Two-legged and Four-legged Pests — and Cures, by John Kerridge

When Barnhaven in England was closed by Jared Sinclair it was possible for me, fortunately, to obtain seed of each line of polyanthus offered. These germinated well and it was exciting to see a collection of them growing together here on the West Coast. Seedlings were set out in orderly lines and carefully labeled. But it was not long before the whole bed was in total disarray!

BIRDS AND BALL GAMES

It wasn't the dog fight, or the neighbor's toileting cats that did the most damage — bad as that was. Nor can you blame the birds entirely. Robins abound (not the delicate European fellow, but a red breasted thrush found here) and are always searching for worms. The rufous-sided towhee is of similar size and scratches the surface of the ground searching for food. I think the Stellar jays just pull the plants up for fun! Seedlings are tossed everywhere.

But there were also flying baseballs and footballs, more recently hockey pucks, that were pursued by pairs of eager feet right through the patches of polyanthus. How can a seedling survive?

THE SQUIRRELS

In spite of all these assaults it was the squirrels that seemed to do the most damage. Since they arrived we no longer have the baskets of walnuts and hazelnuts — they are all buried somewhere around the garden — and many are right in the middle of the Barnhavens. Seedlings get scattered around and, even more irritating, the labels are all mixed up. Lots of the little plants still survive, but unlabeled. Peanuts are now found in the primrose rows, fed to the squirrels by well-meaning folk, but ending up in my garden.

Our neighbour trapped eighteen squirrels and chauffeured them to a new home in the woods far away, but the numbers didn't seem to reduce. Help came suddenly, and rather sadly, from an

unexpected source. A pair of bald eagles built their nest high in the fir tree and are a wonderful sight as they soar around. From their aerie they have a commanding view not only over the Fraser River delta where there is abundant wild life but also over the squirrels below. One neighbor saw them carry a squirrel to their nest, but it could have been a cat — several have disappeared. Somehow I am now missing those squirrels, and their fate bothers me. There are still survivors, as the eagles have gone fishing for salmon at this time of year.

MOLES

The moles and I have come to an agreement — perhaps an arrangement would be a better term. They keep providing those mounds of freshly dug soil for the auricula mix and I will skim it off out of the way and leave their tunnels alone. This works in the lawns, but when they heave up a seed bed or auricula patch it's exasperating. Just now some seedlings are perched on the roof of a tunnel that may collapse at any moment.

Remedies for moles abound, from putting axle grease or chewing gum in the tunnels, to growing lavatera to deter them. I will persevere with the "arrangement." It was better before the cat disappeared.

OTHER PESTS, TWO-LEGGED

As for the other pests — a fence of fish netting was effective; then it worked to lay the netting on the ground over the beds to deter cats, birds and squirrels. Too bad that on lifting the net the larger plants were uprooted and all mixed up — by me!

CHICKENS IN THE CITY

Believe it or not, right here in the city, chickens have been a problem. They escape from a neighbor's chicken coop. We were not sorry when, feeling a bump coming up the driveway, a flattened chicken was seen in the rear-view mirror. Their departure was hastened by an

Concerning Certain Pests continued

unusual event. One day a rooster was seen on top of a vintage car I kept in the garage. He had been flapping his way up there and scratched all the paint — down to the metal: original paint on an old Mercedes. Needless to say, relations with the neighbors were strained for a while with endless insurance problems. It is illegal to keep chickens within city limits their insurance company insisted. We don't miss the cock crowing early each morning.

RACCOONS IN THE NIGHT

Raccoons amble around in families but don't seem to do any harm except leave footprints here and there on their way to causing trouble somewhere else. Deer are not seen here, but on Saltspring Island where I have a cabin they are liable to sheer off the foliage of primulas, arbitrarily sampling and rejecting rather than making a meal of it. Established growing plants can stand up to this, stay rooted and sprout again. Recently I came upon a stag with beautiful antlers lying in the middle of the primrose bed, apparently chewing the cud. I didn't know deer did this.

GARDEN HAZARDS

Back at home it's unfortunate that the border of

the Juliana bed is the baseline for a volley-ball court. Oh well, the primulae are not alone. A Spartan apple tree and a Redhaven peach form the goal posts for soccer. If the fruit doesn't get a direct hit, a good blow on the trunk from the ball, or the goalie himself will bring it down.

Life is never dull in this quiet residential area. We are only a block and a half from apartment buildings but we're secluded with plenty of shade the primulas need — secluded enough to be home to such animal friends as I've mentioned. One might think that, with all the wildlife I am writing from Alaska or the interior of British Columbia — rather than the heart of Vancouver.

When vexed one must remind oneself of the advice to "support wildlife — throw a party," then relax and enjoy what you have left.

POST SCRIPT

As I was packing up for the national show I noticed a flat of primroses that looked like they had been run over by a truck. They had! After 21 years of negotiating my driveway, it comes naturally. But look out, flats of treasures on the drive — plant owners are a hazard too. ❖



Two-legged pests — here an entymologist — can be a garden hazard. The florist's tulips are being trampled in this 18th century print. From Ruth Duthie's book *Florists, Flowers and Societies*. Reprinted courtesy of Mr. Peter Goodchild with permission from Shire Publications, England.

Primrose Notes

SPRING IN VICTORIA

Old varieties of primulas are found in gardens around the city, a legacy of past primula growers in this historic city. They include the old julie hybrid "Schneekissen" or "Snow Cushion" listed in Blasdale's book. Out in bloom from early March this year — we had a cold winter — it has a tidy habit and makes a very acceptable mound or cushion of white flowers. The flower is a bit ragged in outline, but has a cheery yellow eye.



Tony James' floriferous white *acaulis* raised from APS seed.

Another julie hybrid found here is "Lavender Cloud." I've tried to match it to descriptions of old julies in the list found in primrose books from the 1940s and 1950s but with no clear match. Perhaps it is a separate and distinct hybrid developed in this area in decades gone by. It is both an *acaulis* and a *poly* in habit and has a distinct orange cast to the yellow eye. The effect, with a lavender-pink flower color, is arresting. As an edging to a spring border it is unequalled.

PRIMULA GROWERS NOTES

Marginatas are out this week — the second in March — and their quirky combination of colors — mauve, silver and lime green — intrigue Paul Chyz, one of the growers keen on primulas here in Victoria. He grows the *marginatas* in pots, and they sit there on his porch, welcoming him as he comes home every day. "I think they need to be out where you can see them," Paul says.

There are about a dozen Barnhaven auricula seedlings in Claire Hughes' greenhouse about to bloom for the first time. Claire is a recent primula fancier but is rapidly developing a choice collection. Spring is full of anticipation

as she waits to see what the seedlings will look like.

Claire had the unfortunate experience of breaking out in a rash from clearing up the leaves around her auriculas. Her experience serves to remind us all to be careful around the auriculas with meal. Some auricula growers have a nasty allergic reaction to the dust, and it causes a painful rash. If you are one of the unlucky ones, remember to wear rubber gloves and handle the plants with respect. Don't brush your face with the gloves, either.

And remember Bill Mason's advice in his letter on p. 18 of the Summer 1991 issue of *Primroses* — a good soaking in hot water, as hot as you can bear for as long as possible immediately after you handle the leaves, sometimes prevents the rash from developing.

TONY JAMES SENDS SOME NOTES FROM HIS GARDEN.

I am having some encouraging results from my Field House Alpine seeds received from June Skidmore. I set nine flats of seeds on January 16. I did not use any special hot water treatment, I just put the seeds out in an unheated

Primrose Notes continued

greenhouse with a plastic cover over. In spite of some very cold weather in February, seven out of nine flats had shown some germination by March 7. The earliest germinated in 20 days, the last in 50 days from setting. Two flats of seeds from Craven's Nursery (West Yorkshire, England) set in January 21 had also shown some germination by February 21.

Another source of primula seed, not mentioned by Marie Skonberg in her list of sources in the Fall 1992 APS quarterly, is Plant World Botanical Gardens and Plant Centre, St. Marychurch Road, Newton Abbott, Devon, England. Their 1993 catalog includes 36 primula seed selections as well as many other choice plant seeds. I set five flats of their seed on January 29. Three have shown some germination by mid-March.

It would seem that primula growers on the Canadian side of the border are beginning to see some benefits of micro-propagation. Rainforest Gardens of 13139 224th St., R.R. 2, Maple Ridge, B.C., V2X 7E7, list eight English named varieties of double primroses such as "Alan Robb," "Dawn Ansell" and "Lillian Harvey" in their mail order catalog.

I was at Art Knapp's Nursery here in Victoria the other day and noticed that they also had four or five of the same varieties on sale — very healthy-looking plants. I thought perhaps these were being micro-propagated in England and exported here, but Maedythe Martin tells me she has heard micro-propagating is being done in the Pacific Northwest. Let us hope that more named varieties of primulas will become available to growers in this way.

Two of my last year's *Primula vulgaris* seedlings have blossomed this spring into

the most wonderful white primroses, simply covered with flowers. Unfortunately my labelling was not as precise as it should have been and simply says that the seed was from Germany. Examining my 1992 A.P.S. seed list, I think these splendid seedlings must have been from the "Heterosis Ernst Benary" mix from Klaus Jelitto of Hamburg.

My wife, Marjorie, and I visited for the first time the Northwest Flower and Garden Show in Seattle on February 11. What a wonderful show! The gardens were a delight. We visited the APS stall, had a chat with Ann Boyd and admired the display of primulas in flower. At the American Rock Garden Society stall we admired June Skidmore's beautiful small trough garden with the *Porophyllum saxifragas* in flower.

A feature of our time is the amazing multiplicity of books on every aspect of gardening and horticulture. I started my primula growing with auriculas and at that time was rather surprised to find very few books devoted specifically to these plants. The first book I obtained was W.R. Hecker's *Auriculas and Primroses*, a sound textbook on the cultivation of auriculas, primroses and polyanthus published in 1971. My next acquisition was Jack Wemyss-Cooke's



The old julie "Schneekissen" or "Snow Cushion" still found in Victoria gardens.

Primulas Old and New. Slightly over half of this book is devoted to every aspect of the cultivation of auriculas, the remainder to a fair selection of other primulas.

Another useful guide is the Wisley Handbook: **Primulas and Auriculas** by Brenda Hyatt. For the dedicated auricula grower Brenda Hyatt's *Auriculas* (1989) is notable for its lucid text and for 24 pages of gorgeous photographs, mostly, alas, of named varieties not readily available over here.

But for the all-round primula grower, I would think that Mary A. Robinson's **Primulas, the**

Complete Guide (Crowood Press, 1990) is among the very best reference books available today. It covers a wide range of the genus and combines good descriptive information with practical advice on cultivation. At the International Primula Conference last year I purchased a copy of Josef Halda's **The Genus Primula** (Tethys Books, 1992). This must surely be the definitive botanical reference book on the genus as a whole. ♦

Don Keefe has not been feeling 100 percent so "Primula Notes" come from the editor this issue. We all wish Don well and hope to see his interesting tidbits back for the next issue.

News from the Chapters

continued from page 11

I really have enjoyed receiving letters from members throughout the state. If anyone would like to write, please do. You increase our knowledge and interest.

Rick and Misty Haffner
8118 Hamstead Lane
Juneau, AK 99801

PENNSYLVANIA

Doretta Klaber Chapter

Interest in the chapter is picking up and the chairman, Dot Plyler, is very encouraged. The first meeting of the year was snowed out, she reports, except for 10 hardy souls who braved the roads to attend. More news is expected soon.

WASHINGTON

Eastside Chapter

Meets the first Monday of every month at the Universal Savings Bank, 6615 132nd Ave. NE, Kirkland at the Bridal Trails Mall at 7:30 pm.

Special Note: there are a few primrose sweatshirts still available and now some t-shirts. Contact Thea Oakley for more information.

January: No meeting.

February program: Discussion of primroses in the garden, and drought resistance plants by Sally Cadrenell. A chapter birthday cake will be provided by Thea Oakley at the February meeting.

March program: June Skidmore will speak on the use

of troughs to grow primulas, particularly *marginatas* and *farinosas*.

Seattle Chapter

Meets four times a year.

February program: John Kerridge from Vancouver B.C. To be held at the Center for Urban Horticulture, February 18, 1993.

Report on the February meeting: Seattle Chapter's winter meeting had a very special speaker. Dr. John Kerridge came down to give a talk on his breeding programs with polyanthus, lace-edged and "Cowichan" primroses. He brought to our attention the fact that one very seldom sees polyanthus primroses any more and showed slides of some really lush beauties. He reminded us also of the exquisite scent most of them had.

Dr. Kerridge is also involved in breeding gold-laced primulas and had slides illustrating good and bad forms of this primula and some of the odd color combinations that arise. There were wonderful pictures of men with bowlers and boots: the keepers of nineteenth century primulas!

The history of the "Cowichan" primula was given, especially the influence Florence Bellis had upon its development. Slides showed the sumptuous shades now available. Seed was available from some of Dr. Kerridge's crosses.

continued on page 24

Board of Directors' Meeting

February 6, 1993

Present: Cy Happy, John Kerridge, Addaline Robinson, Herb Dickson, Don Howse, Etha Tate, Thelma Genheimer, Candy Strickland, Rosetta Jones, Allan Jones, Thea Oakley, Don Keefe, Flip Fenili, Maedythe Martin, Leslie Phillips, Dorothy Springer, April Boettger and Barbara Flynn.

Cy Happy brought the meeting to order at 11 am. The minutes were read and approved. Correspondence from Geoff Nicolle was read.

Treasurer's Report: Addaline Robinson presented her report which showed receipts of \$14,985.20 and expenses of \$7,542.43 and \$11,345.46 in C.D.s. Don Howse proposed the secretary's and treasurer's reports be accepted as presented and John Kerridge seconded the motion. Passed.

Nominating Committee: Nominating Committee reported that John Kerridge has accepted the nomination for president; Cy Happy for vice-president; Addaline Robinson for treasurer; Barbara Flynn for secretary; Flip Fenili for board position 1; Larry Bailey for board position 2.

Judging Committee: We need a list of judges. Junior judges are needed for both show plants and garden judging. Applicants should contact Rosetta Jones.

Editor's report: Maedythe Martin reported that it would cost \$2,100 per issue for printing to include color plates. This is \$1,000 more than for an issue now. It was decided to continue with the current format. Thea Oakley reported that the Eastside Chapter sponsors libraries getting copies of the quarterly. Maedythe Martin would like someone to take on the advertising and correspondence sections of the quarterly.

Seed Exchange: Candy Strickland reported that one commercial order has not arrived yet. She has started on the orders sent in.

Northwest Flower and Garden Show: Primulas will be donated by Herb Dickson and others. It was proposed by Rosetta Jones and seconded by Flip Fenili that we work with the Rhododendron Society to make a display at the National Rhododendron convention. This was passed unanimously. It was proposed by Candy Strickland and seconded by Don Howse that APS members be reimbursed for

expenses incurred in putting up and taking down the display at the Flower Show. Passed.

Shows: Valley High Chapter will have a one-day show at Beaverton Mall on April 17, 1993. Oregon Chapter will host a show April 10 and 11 at Milwaukie Community Club. The National Show will be April 3 and 4 at Lakewood Mall in Tacoma. The Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society will have a show April 23 and 24 in Victoria B.C. Primulas will be represented.

Dorothy Dickson Award: It was proposed that the award be presented to Jay and Ann Lunn. Passed unanimously.

By-Laws: The proposed changes will be distributed in the quarterly and be voted on at the next meeting held at the national show in April. Don Howse was thanked for his superb job in updating this document. Dorothy Springer proposed and Etha Tate seconded that the Board accept the changes as proposed. The motion passed.

The next board meeting will be at the national show in Tacoma on April 3, 1993. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Flynn, Secretary ❖



APS SUMMER PICNIC

Herb Dickson's Send-off

July 10th

Everyone make a special effort

to come to the last picnic at

Herb's place

in Chehalis, Washington

Tributes

A TRIBUTE TO ANNE SIEPMAN

President of the American Primrose Society, 1959 to 1961, Recording Secretary, a judge for many years and president of the Washington State Chapter in 1958. Also president of the Eastside Garden Club in which she was so active.

A devoted primrose grower and a very gracious lady. She was active in APS as long as her health permitted.

By Etha Tate



Anne Siepman from the winter 1959 quarterly.

Anne Siepman, who died in August 1992, was an avid primrose fan, raising, selling and showing primroses at all the shows. She worked for many years at APS, joining in 1950 and holding many offices in the society. She was also a primula judge.

Anne was a member of the Eastside Garden Club and helped in many ways with tireless energy with the spring flower shows the club put on every year. The show was such a success that people came from Canada, Alaska, England and all the western states from as far away as California.

In the large old YMCA building in Kirkland she arranged for truckloads of sawdust to be hauled in. Displays by primrose growers and nurserymen filled the hall until it looked like a wonderland. The old building is gone, but people still talk about the spring flower shows held there.

Anne was active in the Washington State Chapter and the Eastside Chapter of the American Primrose Society.

By Beth Tait

A TRIBUTE TO RUTH E. SMITH

Ruth Smith died in January 1993. She was a member of APS since 1957 and was active in the Washington State Chapter and the Eastside Chapter. Ruth showed primroses at all the shows and was also a judge.

By Beth Tait

HELEN WILLINGHAM

Helen passed away recently; we are so sorry. She had been in poor health and had trouble getting around but she never complained and always had a cheerful, happy smile.

She worked with her husband, Ross, for years on the seed exchange and got it thriving. Helen traveled to all the shows with Ross, regardless of the distance or length of stay. She enjoyed seeing old friends wherever she went. This very courageous lady will always be remembered by her friend in APS.

By Etha Tate ❖

Notes from the Editor

SPRING NEWS FROM MINNESOTA

There is spring gardening and primrose news from two different corners of America. Karen Schellinger writes that she is busy planting all those seeds she couldn't resist. She ordered seed from Angela Bradford at Barnhaven and now has seedlings in the greenhouse.

Karen is another plant-packer that uses a suitcase to move plants around. She got lots of plants at the "Primula Worldwide" symposium and brought them home with her packed in a large, old suitcase. Sounds familiar. I have moved auriculas to and from Toronto in a suitcase. Each plant is rolled loosely in a sheet of newspaper, the roots in plastic bags first, and packed to the outside edges of the suitcase. I fill it up full, so nothing shifts. As Karen mentions, everything arrives in perfect shape.

"It's always a joke at the Lunn's to see if I can get all the plants I buy and am given into the one large empty suitcase I bring along! So far, they have always lost the bet as I am an expert packer and the plants arrive in really great condition even with the way the luggage people throw suitcases around. Mine is so heavy they can't possibly toss it very high!

"I even packed a one gallon-sized rhododendron plant. When there are so many, the plants can't move around much. Can't be a new good suitcase that you expect to reuse. And I always tie a cord around the middle as I don't trust the locks.

"I am giving two garden talks in April on rock gardens and will manage to tuck a few primula slides into them. Quite a few rock garden people in Minnesota do grow primulas in their rock gardens and woodland gardens, so we compare plants."

AND ALASKA

Last minute news from Misty Haffner: "John O'Brien now has the governor's wife involved with our slide project. Mrs. Hickel's mother,

Aline Strutz is a former APS member, now 90 years old has lots of slides of wild Alaska and domestic primroses. Mrs. Hickel will be helping her mother go through and select ones for a program. Check out APS quarterly fall 1979. Mrs. Strutz has an interesting article. That John is something else!"

SOURCES OF BOOKS

There is an agent in Maine called Smyley who is very successful at ordering special interest gardening books. However, I don't have his address. Any help out there — those of you on the eastern side of the US? APS member Jan Kelly of Coquille, Oregon, would like to know of any other place to special order out of print primula books. Anyone got any suggestions?

COMPUTER INFO ON PRIMROSES

You will read elsewhere in this issue how delighted I am to receive articles or letters for publication already on diskette. Saves time re-typing and is far more accurate. Now I have a communications package and a modem so I can receive documents over the telephone. And finally, if anyone wants to send a message through a computer network, my gardening friend Dianne Whitehead has a computer address and will be happy to relay messages. Contact her with primrose news sent via computer at dwhite@cue.bc.ca anytime you like. We really are moving into the twenty-first century!

NEWS FROM JAPAN

Mr. Kazuo Hara has come to my rescue with information of the Sakurasoh distributed at the symposium "Primula Worldwide" held last spring. With his letter he also sent a table of named Sakurasoh from the soon-to-be published book *The World of Japanese Primulas*. So those of you who subscribed for the book at the symposium and haven't heard anything — be patient just a little while longer. Mr. Hara had a very busy fall and the publishing schedule fell behind.

NEWS FROM THE YEARBOOKS

Reports from the National Auricula and Primula Society shows in their yearbooks make those of us in North America very jealous. All those named plants. We all just want to rush over there to attend the shows — not often possible. At least we get the wonderful reports to read.

STRIPED AURICULAS

In the Southern Section's 1992 Yearbook Alan Hawkes has written a description of a non-competitive display of 20 plants at the 1992 April show. Plants were raised by four growers: Ray Downard, Allan Guest, Frank Jennings and Allan Hawkes. Allan is able to report the quality of the flower has improved markedly over the last seven or eight years and new color combinations are emerging. I've always admired the ragged seventeenth century auricula flowers seen in paintings and prints and agree with Allan that people are turning back the pages of the history books in recreating these. I, for one, am very glad.

In addition to his description of the display, Allan has written some historical background in *Offsets*, the bulletin of the Southern Section. Here are the references to early sources of illustrations. Also included is the information on how the more recent striped auriculas have been developed. He tells us that there are still some color combinations that have not resurfaced: red-and-yellow striping and black-and-yellow seen in "Glory of Chilton." Are any hybridizers in North America raising any striped auriculas? Here is a challenge for you.

Auriculas can be successfully grown as garden plants. In fact in North America that is the predominant way we grow them. And here, laid out in this article, are the qualities to grow and select for.

ROCK GARDEN SPECIES

A report in the SNAP (Southern Section) Yearbook by David Winstanley describes his observations of *Primula allionii* and its varieties at the Alpine Garden Society Early Spring Show in 1992. The variety is dazzling. Many of the primula species suited to the rock garden

were observed. The best of the petiolarids noted was *P. aureata x gracilipes*, "a plant with 4 cm cream flowers with golden centres. Its leaves had the superb farina of *P. aureata*...." Sybil McCulloch has shown these to perfection at the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Society shows in the past but no longer has any plants.

I understand these petiolarids must be raised from fresh seed. Is there anyone who would like to arrange the exchange of fresh seed for petiolarid enthusiasts here in North America? Just let me know. Perhaps we can put some seeds and growers together.

PRIMULA SIEBOLDII IN BRITAIN

The 1992 Yearbook had a number of pieces of information which caught my eye. On page 31 there is a note on *Primula sieboldii* which mentions it was introduced into Britain in the late 19th century. The grower Von Siebold in Leyden, Germany, had it in his garden and it was distributed in Britain through the London firm of Vietch.

TOP SIXES

The yearbook from the NAPS (Midland and West Section) *Argus* always list the "Top Six" award winning auriculas. Those named varieties winning points at the show are listed in descending order in each class — green-edged, doubles, selfs, alpine. Comments on the "Top Sixes" of 1992 give some insight into the rise and fall of named auriculas, with information on the growers or on the strengths and limitations of the plants. Fascinating reading! Once again it makes us covet violently the range of named auriculas grown and available in Britain.

Another *Argus* article on double primroses by Peter Ward contains on page 39 the interesting fact that the double white Jack-in-the-green primrose "Dawn Ansell" was raised by Cecil Jones. This plant is found in nurseries throughout the Pacific Northwest and is an attractive plant with the added sense of history. ❖

News from the Chapters

continued from page 19

development. Slides showed the sumptuous shades now available. Seed was available from some of Dr. Kerridge's crosses.

After a short business meeting, Herb Dickson provided everyone present with seed from some of his auricula crosses, and Cliff Lewis provided us with some of his home-baked shortbread containing a whole pound of butter. In spite of the terrible weather many people brought plants for the exchange so that, as usual, we all had treasures to take home. What a great group primrose people are!
Report by Barbara Flynn, Redmond, Washington

Tacoma Chapter

Meets the first Tuesday of each month, except July and August in the Fireside Room of the United Methodist Church, 1919 West Pioneer, Puyallup at 7:30 pm.

January program: Video tape presentation by Tass Kelso "Yankee Doodle Dandies" from the symposium "Primula Worldwide" held in Oregon in April 1992.

February program: Round table discussion of how to select plants for the show, how to dig and prepare them for becoming winning plants.

March program: Cy Happy will tell us of his experience with rock garden plants. Also a discussion on preparing plants for the show.

Washington State Chapter

Meets the second Friday of each month except July

Primroses for a Beginner's Garden

continued from page 10

form another blossom ring above the first. This process continues until the plant carries as many as six tiers of flowers. All candelabras prefer boggy conditions with a constant flow of water through their roots, but many can be grown in the border if given partial shade and plenty of water. The best known and easiest is the pink, white or rosy-carmine *P. japonica*. Closely related to *P. japonica* is red *P. pulverulenta* from China. *Primula beesiana* is carmine to purple; *P. bulleyana* is similar, but the color is

and August at the Good Neighbour Center at 305 S 43rd St. Renton at 7:45 pm.

January program: Mystery program by Peter Atkinson. His methods of growing primula and companion plants, using the Peter Klein method: damp paper towels stored in the refrigerator. He has tried many methods, but finds this method most successful. Discussion also of *Primula rosea* seed — whether they germinate in the green state. Peter also discussed primulas in winter, mulching methods, early dividing of julies and potting early for the shows.
Starting seeds in clear plastic bakery-goods trays have been tried by several members with good results.

February meeting: Program on judging by Rosetta Jones. Many questions and much discussion of plants on hand were contributed.

Discussion of the APS booth at the Northwest Garden Show at the Seattle convention center. Rita Happy brought a super display of white primroses, donated by Windmill Gardens, and a Victorian plant stand. Herb Dickson and Thea Oakley and many others contributed plants. Many comments about the *Primula malacoides* and *P. obconica* brought by Thea.

March program: Discussion of grooming plants and getting them in shape to win many ribbons at the shows. Reminder: the National Show is to be hosted by the Tacoma Chapter this year. ♦

chrome yellow and the buds are a deep orange.

Primula florindae will extend the primula flowering season until the end of July wherever bog conditions can be provided in the garden. In a fresh water bog it will grow four feet high with sulphur yellow flowers. It will survive and bloom in a drier location but will not give as impressive a show.

Getting involved with primroses can open up a whole new world of gardening. ♦

Tips on Growing Primulas

by Herb Dickson of Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery

STARTING WITH SEED

Most primula like cool moist spring weather with a temperature range 40 to 60 degrees F. to germinate. Freezing the seed is not necessary but will not hurt the seed or young seedlings.

Here is my successful method developed from many years of trial and error. I plant during January, February and March here in the Pacific Northwest. I use 4" square plastic pots. The deep pots serve as a reservoir for water. They also give me the benefit of a psychological factor: I will tackle a four inch pot at transplanting time but hesitate to start on a whole flat of seedlings.

I use a sterile seedling mix (there are several brands on the market and all are good), fill the pots 3/4 full, then add a slow release fertilizer containing trace elements about 1 level teaspoon per pot and stir it a bit, finish filling the pot to the brim, press this down and level it 1/4 to 1/2 inch below the rim.

Scatter the seed on the surface as evenly as possible, cover with a layer of vermiculite, place a cotton cloth cut to fit on top inside the rim, place a few pieces of coarse grit or pea gravel on the cloth to keep it from blowing off when dry. I give an initial light watering from on top with a fungicide (follow label instructions for strength). To this point all the work is done inside where it is comfortable.

I put the pots in flats and set the flats outside on benches fully exposed to sun, wind, rain and snow until the seed germinates. Remember — never let the seed get dry. The cloth cover helps keep moisture in and makes watering easy from overhead. It also keeps the rain from washing the seed out and keeps the birds from eating the seed. The layer of vermiculite keeps you from taking the seedlings with you when you remove the cloth. When the cloth is removed, place the pots in well ventilated shade.

TRANSPLANTING

There are two times when transplanting is usually successful. The first is when two to four true leaves have developed. The second is much later after some heavy tractile roots have developed. Some of the small and low-growing species are too small to handle during the first time. You will get better results leaving them undisturbed in the seed pot over the first winter and transplanting the next spring as they start to grow.

Some of the new systemic fungicides work wonders on primulas that are very difficult to keep alive in the hot summers. It is not the heat primarily but a root rot fungus that grows in warm moist soil.

continued on page 30

Herb Dickson covers each seed pot with cotton cloth cut to size and weighted with a bit of gravel. Pots are then left outside for full exposure to the weather.



From the President

by Cy Happy

THE PEMBROKE PRIMROSE

I have missed seeing plantings of a pinkish-purple primrose that grew in many Tacoma gardens in great quantity 50 and more years ago. It was the first flower to bloom in most gardens. A few warm days in February brought forth sheets, rows and patches of bright light purple.

Smith and Fletcher list it in the Vernales section as *Primula vulgaris* var. *purpurea*. They note, "This variety forms 60 percent of the vulgaris population in Pembrokeshire (South Wales). The flowers are purplish to liver-colored. This variety occasionally produces a well-developed scape, and such wild caulescent plants are recorded from Pembrokeshire."

This February I visited the Steilacoom garden of Tacoma's foremost conservator of things historical, Gary Reese. There in a back corner was the Pembroke primrose. With its small stature and ability to carry on through moderate neglect, it was unmistakable, the eye a fat yellow star with a bit of orange running from center to each star point. Needless to say, I begged a few starts. The liver-colored flowers were on another plant. I'm going to have to collect a bit of it too.

The Reeses claimed the primrose had nothing to do with their Welsh ancestry. It just happened to be there when they moved in more than 20 years ago. The soil and climate on the Reese's hillside garden are almost identical to that of a south Wales farm where we stayed in 1974. No wonder the plants survived.

I have observed four different Pembroke primroses locally. All bloom through February and March:

1. My old one from D. C. Scott garden. A slight bit pinker; pin-eyed but pin 1/8 inch down inside tube. Calyx long and thin. Probably a hybrid.

2. Reese. Purplish; good color eye with orange star. Thrum eye. Calyx normal — same as 4.
3. Reese. Liver-colored; strong orange star. Thrum eye. Calyx thick and ruffled. Possibly hybrid; has more poly stems.
4. Read. Purplish; good color; eye yellow, fat rounded, and white where it joins the purple. Pin eye. Calyx normal, same as 2. Originally from Wagners' garden on Gravelly Lake.

Numbers 2 and especially 4 appear to be our old Pembroke primrose — but not the same clone.

I find non-yellow wild primroses in England an interesting subject. The purplish ones are also found in colonies in Durham and Northumberland in the far north of England.

As I read on in Smith and Fletcher, I found information about a plant of special interest — var. *rubescens*. The account read, "Base of leaves, pedicels and calyx strongly charged with anthocyanin products (reddish-purple). Locally from Gibside Woods and near Birtley; occasionally from the coast (of S. Devonshire). The whole of the plants secured from Torquay belonged to this variety." So here we have the bearer of the color also found in Garryard Guinevere foliage, flower stem and calyx.

The bulk of this information was quoted from a 1931 article published by Harrison in **Transactions. North. Nat. Union, i**. Could someone send me a photocopy? The article seems to cover all variations of the vernales. Another author much quoted by Smith and Fletcher is Miller Christie in the **Journal of Linnaea Society, xxxiii, 172 (1897)**.

JELITTO HYBRIDS

Appearing now along with the boringly similar supermarket primroses are "Wanda Hybrid" primroses with dark bronze leaves and vivid colored, nearly eyeless flowers. The color range a few years ago was mostly deep red and

purple. Now they come in white, lilac, purple, pink, cerise, maroon, blue and yellow.

They are very hardy. A 5-degree cold snap did no damage, and they seem inclined to live for many years. First-year colors may not be quite the same in succeeding years. Last year's carefully selected blues are edging into the violet-lilac range. If you really want true blue, avoid the ones that have a small red eye the first year.

Most of the pinks and light reddish ones have a large dark eye. However, one deep pink is almost eyeless and very effective. Best of all are the rich butter yellows set off by the dark foliage. These yellows are absolutely outstanding. Rain and hail hardly mark the flowers. As for the dark rich colors, they do show marks from rain and hail, and the flowers are not really complemented by the dark foliage. But they are an exciting addition to a collection.

I can probably guess what the family background of this strain is:

1. The old Julie hybrid Wanda.
2. Cowichan polyanthus for intense color and small eye.
3. Garryard Guinevere for foliage color.
4. Modern supermarket primrose for full range of colors.

Number 1 is probably the parent of number 2. Numbers 1 and 3 are very hardy. The vigorous first year of bloom produces larger flowers than succeeding years, but I find them more

Photo by Cy Happy



The old form of the Pembroke primrose from the D.C. Scott garden.

attractive in the scaled-down version.

Out of 30-plus seedlings there is one that looks very much like Garryard Guinevere with pale lilac flowers and deep reddish leaves. The lilac flowers look almost as good as the yellows against the dark leaves. Seed of these plants from Jelitto is available in the APS seed exchange.

AN INTEREST IN PRIMULAS

A very competent garden writer, collector of choice alpine plants and primulas and garden designer has come from Denver to work for Tacoma Public Utilities as water conservator. Anna Thurston's job is to sell "water-wise" gardening to Tacoma's gardening public.

I took her to Milt Gaschk's garden to see how he has removed his front lawn, planted countless Crocus chrysanthus bulbs plus many cyclamen and other bulbs and covered the area with fine bark. The display is fantastic in early spring. Almost no watering is required. The shrubs and trees have minimal water requirements.

We'll be hearing more from Anna. ❖

From the Mailbox

continued from page 14

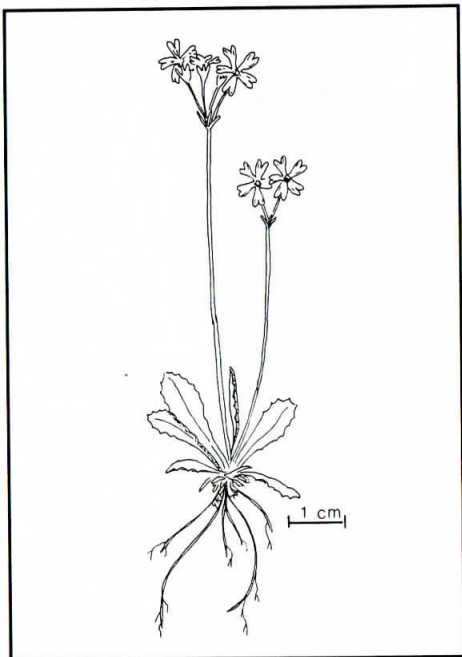
January 25, 1993

Dear Dr. Kerridge

... I enjoyed your article "Pollinating primulas" in Fall 1993 issue of *Primroses*. It contains such a wealth of information. Though I know hybridizing required constant vigilance, it must be exciting and very rewarding.

The process of actually pollinating is quite clear to me now, but I feel very fuzzy on choosing parent plants. I know you can strive to accentuate desirable traits or combine them, but I've heard of dominant and recessive genes. How does one recognize these? ...

Maybe I'm questioning too much, but hybridizing seems such an interesting project. Would you consider writing another article for *Primroses* following up your first with further



P. laurentiana from Newfoundland is a variety similar to *Primula mistassinica* var. *mistassinica*. Drawing by K. Fenderson.

information? You have a very easy and graphic style of writing that is thorough and easily understood. I love gardening but there must be others in APS who, like me, would like to try hybridizing just for the thrill of seeing one of our own creations.

Thank you for sharing your knowledge via *Primroses* and for sharing the fruits of your labors with your primrose seed.

Respectfully,
Mary Kordes, Ahmeek, MI
P.S. Are there general rules for succeeding generation crosses? What can be expected? I've heard it takes many years to achieve one's goal for a hybrid.

Reply from John Kerridge:

Dear Mary,
Thank you for your letter. With a limited understanding of genetics I will answer your questions as well as I can.

The process of hybridizing is easier to follow if you are starting with pure species for then more constant results can be expected due to the genetic consistency of the parents.

When crossing plants such as polyanthus, for instance, the grower must understand the parents are already genetically complex. With no two parents on either side likely the same, the off-spring will exhibit genes according to which ones are carried by the pollen (variable) and seed plant's ovary (also variable).

Breeding programs commonly use the time-honored method of "line-breeding" to improve a strain. Here, closely related plants are chosen as parents for their desirable characteristics: blueness, a stiffer stem, more compact inflorescence, for example. Desirable characteristics are "bred in" and the undesirable ones are "bred out" by choice of parents. This can take many generations, of course.

The laws of inheritance are well laid out and not hard to follow. I recommend a small book *Practical Plant Breeding* written by W.J.T. Lawrence and first published in 1927 but reprinted up to 1965. Here you can completely master the theory and understand probabilities. Then you step into the garden and immediately go into a fog, so bewildered by the array of colors and forms that it is impossible to start.

It is necessary to keep a cool head, have a limited plan for one specific project and make a clean and decisive start. Information and records should be kept, available for successive seasons and future plans.

The question of dominance is not hard to follow in theory; however, conditions can vary between plants. For instance, in the snapdragon, when red is crossed with white, the first generation is all pink — neither color is dominant. However, crossing the same colors in the sweet pea, the grower finds that the first generation will be all red. Red is dominant in this case. Nevertheless, the gene for whiteness is there; it is just recessive. It is suppressed and will appear in later generations. When a dominant gene is present it will always be expressed, that is, show in the plants' form to the exclusion of the recessive.

One of the aims of the plant breeder is to clear the recessive gene from such dominance so hitherto unknown characteristics can be revealed. Thus it can be shown that if one self-pollinates a first generation (F1) plant with a two-gene inheritance (AaBb — where A and B are dominant and a and b recessive) there is a one in 15 possibility that one plant in the next generation (F2) will have all the recessive characteristics (aabb) and have totally new characteristics. Here I am of course referring directly to Lawrence's book. This information can be followed in print, but not retained in the mind for many minutes!

Also, by back-crossing an F1 hybrid (AaBb) to its recessive parent, one can predict that in four of the next generation would be all recessive genes (aabb) and a start for a new line.

Sometimes things will be more complex because of gene interaction. The presence of some genes will modify the way in which other genes will manifest themselves, that is, in how their presence is revealed in the plant's form.

These examples are elementary to the geneticist and it is extraordinary how complex details have been worked out. To get back to primulaceae, we can see there is obviously room for lots of experimentation.

Where to start? A trial of hand-pollinating, with polyanthus, for example or what is available, to prove your technique is successful, would be worthwhile. The satisfaction of obtaining seed pods and collecting ripe seed is great in itself.

Again, any project depends on plants and the space available. You could separate and improve on color lines in a strain such as red "Cowichan" (try these) or improve a gold-laced strain to bring flowers up to the old florists' standards, for instance. Make that first cross and self-pollinate the progeny. Perhaps create new vigorous F1 hybrids or, better still, find F2 recessive novelties. Those are things that are on the list of projects here.

With regards,
Yours sincerely,
John Kerridge

March 14, 1993

Dear Editor,

The enclosed note is from Bob Taylor. It concerns an inquiry in Don Keefe's "Primula Notes" (page 32, Summer 1992 issue). Bob asked me to forward it to the appropriate person. I'll send a copy to Don Keefe as well . . .

Take care,
Ann Lunn,
Hillsboro, Oregon

Note from Bob Taylor:

I note on p. 32 (*Primroses*, Summer 1992) a query about double gold-laced polyanthus. Mrs. Hyatt has given permission for me to let

Ruth Duthie

It is with sincere regret we learned that Ruth Duthie died on February 20, 1993 at her daughter's house in England. She had been ill, but the end came fairly rapidly. Ruth Duthie was the author of **Florists' Flowers and Societies** published by Shire Publications along with other books and articles on gardening and historical subjects. *She will be sadly missed.*

From the Mailbox

continued from page 29

you know what has happened to this strain.

Over a period of 20 years Dr. Jones of Llanelli raised his Penlan strain of GLP and also double GLP. In his continual search for perfection, only a few of the best were potted up for exhibiting and fresh seed was sown regularly. He always produced more seed than he used, and surplus seed was available from Brenda Hyatt who sold it on behalf of Dr. Jones.

Owing to a severe attack of arthritis Mrs. Hyatt was forced to relinquish her interests in primulas other than the auriculas and she passed all her stock on to another grower who unfortunately has not been able to perpetuate

the strain. More sad news is that following a series of circumstances Dr. Jones also no longer has the strain. It would seem that unless an enthusiast somewhere still has these plants, the strain has been lost to cultivation.

Dr. Jones also produced an excellent strain of double Jack-in-the-green which were perennial. One of his plants gained an award of merit from the RHS and from his seed the very good and now widespread double white Jack-in-the-green "Dawn Ansell" was produced.

R. Taylor, Hon. Editor
National Auricula and Primula Society (Northern)
Keighley, West Yorkshire, England ❖

Tips on Growing Primulas

continued from page 25

On dividing crowded primula plants in the Vernales and Auricula section, there are three times each year:

- 1) when they first start new growth in the spring
- 2) right after flowering
- 3) in the early fall (late August or early September). They need three to four weeks of growing weather before it gets hot in the summer or freezes in the winter.

With the candelabras and many of the primulas that go dormant, the early Spring as growth starts is the only reliable time to divide them. Do not divide after flowering.

The genus *Primula* contains a diverse group of species — some tropical, some polar, some lowland, some alpine, some desert, some swamp. As you progress, you may want to try some of the difficult species. Many have yet to be established in cultivation. ❖

A tip from the president . . .

"Hand pollinate for a better seed crop for the seed exchange."

Sakurasoh Inventory Update

Information from Kazuo Hara of the Matsumoto Sakurasoh and Primula Club in Japan has just arrived. Spelling of the named varieties of Sakurasoh was not correct in some cases and has been changed in the list below.

Also numbers for the border Sakurasoh are confirmed and these too have been corrected — please take note, those of you who have them. Variations on these numbers were plentiful. Please correct your label from the list below.

Since these numbered plants are border Sakurasoh and we do not have descriptions, could the owners please send the following information to the editor sometime this summer:

- ◆ a photograph for identification. This should show the shape of the flower and the habit of the plant
- ◆ a written description of the plant and flower, with the color of the flower and its shape

For those who are interested and want to participate, the editor and an interested friend, Dianne Whitehead, are going to compile a list over this summer of the cultivars of *Primula sieboldii* grown in North America. Anyone who has an established garden plant, not raised from seed, please send the same descriptive information listed above for the border Sakurasoh, but add a bit of history for the plant. Where did it come from? How long have you grown it? Send this to the editor for inclusion in the list of Sakurasoh grown in North America.

A special thanks goes to this same friend, Dianne Whitehead and her daughter Chelsea. Dianne has some familiarity with Japanese, and her daughter takes Japanese at school. They have come to the rescue to translate the descriptions of the Sakurasoh received from the Matsumoto Sakurasoh society. Some of them are found in the book [**Sakurasoh**], *Primula sieboldii* by Mr. Torii (which has the name E. Morren in English on the cover). This beautiful and useful book was donated to APS by Mr. Torii on behalf of the Sakurasoh society.

Thanks to Kazuo Hara, president of the Matsumoto Primula Club, the APS editor now has a list of over 200 named Sakurasoh, taken from the soon-to-be-released book **The World of Japanese Primulas**. This list contains over 90 percent of the known named forms of Sakurasoh grown in Japan with basic descriptions. It has been of considerable use in compiling the descriptions below.

Thanks are again expressed to Andrew Faulkner, data base analyst, for his help in setting up and customizing the Sakurasoh inventory data base.

Here are descriptions of the named *Primula sieboldii* that were made available at "Primula Worldwide" last year in Portland.

SAKURASOH MADE AVAILABLE AT "PRIMULA WORLDWIDE"

The number in brackets after the name is the authorized number given by the Sakurasoh Kai (The Sakurasoh Society of Japan). The society is untangling the confusion of synonyms and has authenticated 261 varieties to date. There are 40 more old and new varieties that are currently being studied for authorization. Three of our varieties are in this group and therefore don't have numbers.

The page numbers refer to color pictures in Mr. Torii's book. Plate numbers refer to color pictures in the forthcoming book **The World of Japanese Primulas** and were taken from the list sent by Mr. Hara.

"Gyokkoh-bai" (53) page 29

This is a graceful plant that looks more wild than the wild species. Its vivid magenta petals are unnotched and form a simple gappy flower. Though the pedicels are long, they arch upwards, so that the flowers are easily seen. The plant is strong and spreads well, though it has small roots. Pin - stigma just above the anthers. Mid 19th century.

Sakurasoh Inventory Update continued

"Hagi no uwakaze" (141) page 42
The gracefully drooping flowers have notched wide petals white on the front, washed with pale pink on the reverse. The plant is easy to grow. Pin - stigma level with corolla

"Hana taishoh" (or "Hana daishoh") (149)
This is the plain rose sport of "Kogarashi" (68) In the picture on page 42, both plants are shown. "Kogarashi" is pale pink, irregularly striped and dotted with rose. Occasionally, a flower is partly striped and partly solid rose, like some of the Japanese bonsai azaleas. The petals are notched and wide, the umbel spreading. Pin - stigma level with corolla. Mid 19th century.

"Jisshuh no sora" (87) page 28, plate 102
The large flower has two colors that contrast well - white on the front, and blue dappled white on the reverse. The petals are notched and wide.

In **Sakurasoh**, this variety is labelled Zissyu no Sora. The reverse of the petals is a blued pink with a white edge, and the corolla is wavy and cupped. It is a beautiful flower, but it doesn't quite match the official description. Spreading umbel. Thrum. Mid 19th century.

"Kokoro-iki" Plate 111
The notched wide petals of this flat flower are rose with a white edge on both surfaces. The umbel is spreading, and the flowers are the normal species size. Recent, by K. Itami

"Mejirodai" (190) page 40, plate 93
This unique, lovely plant is unfortunately difficult to grow. It is similar to *Primula obconica*, with a flat round white face, red tube, and slightly notched petals feathered pink on the reverse. Upward umbel. Thrum. Triploid. c1928 by Y. Toda

"Niisato" page 103
This is a rosy wild form with heart-shaped petals, from the village of the same name.

"Setsugekka" (109) page 89
Small up-facing umbels of medium-sized pure white snow-crystal-shaped flowers top long stems. The plant spreads easily. Thrum. Mid 19th century.

"Shiun-ryuh" (80) page 61
The pink backs of the drooping large flowers hide the white side of the fringed petals. The plant spreads readily. Pin - stigma just above anthers. Mid 19th century.

"Takane no yuki" (261) page 18
The huge pure white cherry-blossom shaped flowers are on very long pedicels, so that they face the leaves. The plant is large, robust, easy to grow, and spreads well. Pin - stigma just above the anthers. c1980 by I. Takagi

"Toh-chirimen" (135) page 36, plate 85
This flower is bright! The center is light, veined magenta which becomes stronger towards the edge. The back of the flower is plain magenta. The large corolla is cupped, so that the bright back is most noticeable. The slightly notched petals overlap each other. The umbel is spreading. The plant is strong and spreads easily. Intermediate - stigma and anthers are on the same level. Mid 19th century.

"Toh-en Shinkiroh"
The pale pink flowers have a darker pink center, and the notched petal edges are rolled in to make a star-shaped flower. The flowers are medium-sized, and the umbel is spreading. 1979, by S. Yamahara

"Toyohata-gumo"
The giant saucer-shaped flowers have cherry-blossom petals of pure white backed with pale blue. The umbel is spreading. Recent, by S. Yamahara

"Ukima" page 102 shows the white form
This is another wild form, from Ukima, an old habitat in Tokyo. Although the book shows only the white form, there has been no indication as to the color of the plants we received.

"Yuki no Hada" (202) page 53
Short stems place the pure white flowers just above the abundant, deeply- quilted leaves. The effect is crisply starched, and this robust plant looks as though it would be an ideal florists' potplant. The petals have the heart shape of cherry blossoms and overlap each other. The umbel is spreading, and the flowers are outward-facing. Pin - stigma level with corolla.

SECTION 1: LIST OF PLANTS WITH GROWERS

Here is the list of plants printed again but with the names and numbers of the *Sakurasoh* plants corrected. Please use it with the list of growers and their addresses in the last issue (Winter 1993) if you want to contact directly any grower of the *Sakurasoh* described above.

If those of you that have the numbered Border *Sakurasoh* will send a description and photograph, the quarterly will publish these at the end of the summer.

Gyokkoh-bai	Shiun-ryuh
Ray & Sandra	Carla Lankow
Laidendorf	Takane no Yuki
Hagi no Uwakaze	Ray & Sandra
Diane Whitehead	Laidendorf
Hana Taishoh	Toh-chairimen
Donald Howe	Bart Arenson
Jisshuh no Sora	Toh-en Shinkiroh
Dave Whitehead	Norbert Markert
Kokoro-iki	Toyohata-gumo
Elise Felton	Mary Kordes
Mejirodai	Ukima
Barbara Flynn	Myrna Dowsett
Donna Freeman	Fred Graff
Niisato	Jim Hershner
Jean Hausermann	Keith Howe
Penney Hubbard	Kay Huffman
George Lankow	Don & Mary Keefe
David Palmer	Dick Kordes
Sandy Seres	Larry Korn
Marlene Smith	Bodil Leamy
John Thomson	Irma Markert
Elaine Whitehead	Maedythe Martin
Setsugekka	Mary Jo McCassey
E. Smith	Ruth McGrail

continued on page 35



A snowflake-patterned Primula sieboldii growing in the garden of Darlene and Lyle Heller, Mt. Vernon, WA.

Notes to the Treasurer

Membership renewals bring notes from APS members. Here are some of their letters. We hope the authors won't mind sharing their comments.

Dear Addaline,
...I have had great upheavals in my work and home life in the last 12 months and the garden has taken a back seat for a while. I now have dispersed my plants to friends as I sell my house in Alexandra. I have moved to a job in Bendigo but a few days ago got a new job in Melbourne. This is a promotion and I've never been happier.

Through all this the APS journal, including the mouth-watering 50th anniversary issue, has been a constant source of pleasure. The regional experiences with climate I find very interesting. I have winter wet and summer dry. Summer wet seems to be a problem with many types of primroses in North America.

I have clumps of various years' seedlings clotted around the Alexandra garden still. They are all starting to come into growth now. Some of the modern blue vernaes are decidedly purple for me, though — not the Barnhaven blues I still have a few of.

Several of the *Primula veris* subspecies have become good-sized clumps and reliable flowerers. I have some "Rising Sun" anomalous cowslips in flower this year — very exciting. I sent some seed of my own plants to the originator in Wales.

I have found the new requirements for seed exchange donations don't enable me to send current season seed. My plants are in flower when donations close. Would also be sorry to see some companion plants disappear from the lists.

Kindest regards,
Robert Peace, Alexandra, Victoria, Australia

Dear Mrs. Robinson,
Thank-you for all your work on behalf of the American Primrose, Primula and Auricula Society.

I hereby apply for renewal of my membership in our notorious neurotic bug-murdering association which please find enclosed my \$15 US dollars.

Respectfully,
Peter Atkinson

Dear Addaline,
... My wife and I are enjoying our trip and have now arrived in San Diego. We went to the Butchart Gardens [in Victoria] as you advised. Tried to find more details of the "Cowichan" types that I grow in England — red and yellow. No one had ever heard of the "Cowichan" primroses. Would you believe it? I very much look forward to joining the society and to participating in the seed exchange. Thanks again for your advice and help.

Yours sincerely,
Roger Woolley, Lancashire, England

Dear Mrs. Addaline W. Robinson,
I desire to renew my membership of the American Primrose Society and enclose the sum of \$15 in payment of my subscription for the year 1993.

I am always grateful to you for your service to the APS.

Sincerely,
Takesumu Susa, Tokyo, Japan

Hello,
I would like to renew my membership in the APS and also add Alice Hendrickson to our society. I decided to join after meeting Mr. and Mrs. O'Brien at the '92 Alaska Master Gardening Convention in Juneau. Alice and I

work for the Ketchikan Parks and Recreation doing beautification programs. This last year we grew about 100 various primroses: *Primula viallii*, *P. nutans*, candelabras, ball [*P. denticulata*] and more — I'd have to look through our records.

I enjoy the quarterly bulletin and look forward to another year of reading them. Happy growing. Thank-you.

Glenn Greene & Alice Hendrickson
Ketchikan, Alaska ❖

Plant Exchange/ Want List

continued from page 8

Wanted: Old seed and plant catalogs that list primulas for sale. Specialty nurseries from the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s especially welcome. To go into APS historical files. Send to the editor, Maedythe Martin, address inside cover. ❖

Sakurasoh Inventory

continued from page 33

Lew Micklesen	Border 137?	Ruth Anderson	Evelyn Hess
Melvin Monson	Beverly Peacock	Harry Huffman	Francis Mason
Claire Muller	Border 2-37b	Border 3-17h	Bill Meztlaff
Barbara Murray	Robert Brotherson	Michael Ewing	Border 2B-45
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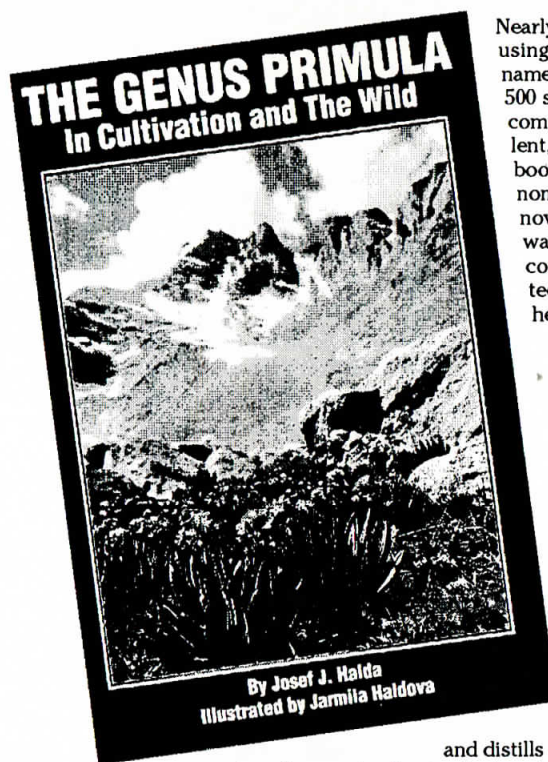
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