



# Primroses

The Quarterly of the American Primrose Society

Spring 2020

Vol. 78

No. 2



---

# Primroses

---

The Quarterly of the  
American Primrose Society

---

Volume 78 No. 2

Spring 2020

The purpose of this Society is to bring the people interested in *Primula* together in an organization to increase the general knowledge of and interest in the collecting, growing, breeding, showing and using in the landscape and garden of the genus *Primula* in all its forms and to serve as a clearing house for collecting and disseminating information about *Primula*.

## Contents

The View from Here	
by Elizabeth Lawson .....	3
Primula Cultivation by Robin Hansen .....	6
Vintage bits .....	9
Where Do I Start	
by Dean Wiegert, Secretary .....	10
Vera Maud Primrose	
by Maedythe Martin.....	12
The Smaller Auriculas .....	17
A Life Time Of Gardening	
by Anne Hogue .....	23
Miss Winnifred Wynne	
by Maedythe Martin.....	24
Minutes September 15, 2019.....	27
Proposed Revision to the Constitution.	29
New Members .....	31
Officers of the Chapters .....	31

---

Credits: Photos and text reproduced with permission.  
Front Cover: 'Phillip', a *Primula marginata* introduced by John Mercer from England. Photo: M Martin  
Back Cover: Oxlips, one of the classic signs of spring. *P. elatior* grown by M Martin from Kevin Baker's seed from the APS Seed Exchange. Photo: M Martin  
Clipart Images by [OpenClipart-Vectors](#) from [Pixabay](#)

## OFFICERS

**President** (to spring 2021)  
Elizabeth Lawson  
115 Kelvin Place  
Ithaca, NY 14850 USA  
president@  
americanprimrosesociety.org

**Vice President** (to spring 2021)  
Mark Dyen  
132 Church Street  
Newton, MA 02158 USA

**Secretary** (to spring 2021)  
Dean Wiegert  
3708 E Norport Dr  
Port Washington, WI 53074  
USA  
secretary@  
americanprimrosesociety.org

**Treasurer** Jon Kawaguchi  
3524 Bowman Court  
Alameda, CA 94502 USA  
treasurer@  
americanprimrosesociety.org

**DIRECTORS - to spring 2020**  
Cheri Fluck  
22675 SW Chapman Road  
Wing A  
Sherwood, Oregon 97140 USA

**DIRECTORS - to spring 2021**  
Amy Olmsted,  
421 Birch Road  
Hubbardton VT 05733 USA

Ed Buyarski  
P.O. Box 33077  
Juneau, AK 99803-3077 USA

**DIRECTORS - to spring 2022**  
Julia Haldorson  
Membership Secretary  
P.O. Box 292  
Greenbank, WA 98253 USA  
membership@  
americanprimrosesociety.org

Pat Hartman  
17060 Island View Drive  
Juneau, AK 99801 USA

Janice Anthony  
291 Hatch Rd.  
Jackson, ME. 4921 USA

Primroses  
Editor  
Jane Guild  
2546 Wentwich Road  
Victoria, BC V9B 3N4 Canada  
editor@americanprimrosesociety.org

Editorial Committee  
Maedylthe Martin  
Judith Sellers  
Michael Plumb  
Joan Hoeffel

Editorial Deadlines  
Winter issue - October 15  
Spring issue - January 15  
Summer issue - April 15  
Autumn issue - July 15

© American Primrose Society 2020

Primroses (ISSN 0162-6671) is published by the American Primrose, Primula and Auricula Society. All material printed in the quarterly, except as noted is copyright by APS. No part may be reproduced without permission of APS. Manuscripts for publication are invited, thought there is no payment. Send articles, preferably in Microsoft Word, directly to the editor.

Photographs are credited and used only with the permission of the photographer. Photos submitted to the editor are preferred in 300 dpi digital format but other images can be accepted. Any material used that has previously appeared elsewhere is properly credited and used with the permission of the original publisher and/or creditor.

Membership in the Society includes a subscription to Primroses, Seed Exchange privileges, password to the members' only section of the APS website (including the Pictorial Dictionary).

Dues for individual or household memberships, per calendar year, are as follows:  
US - \$30  
Canada - \$32  
International - \$38  
World-wide digital-only - \$25  
Membership renewals are due November 15 and are delinquent January 1. Submit payment to the Treasurer at the first of the year.

Advertising per issue:  
Black and White:  
Full page \$100  
Half page \$60  
Quarter page \$30  
Eighth page: \$15  
Color:  
Half page \$150  
Full page \$300  
Back Cover \$450  
Contact the Treasurer for details

# The View from Here

ELIZABETH LAWSON

As I struggle to make sense of the current changes in our society and the uncertainty that we face, I have searched for bright stories that come out of dark times. One is that of the founding of the American Primrose Society in 1941 by a small group of primrose enthusiasts, one being the now legendary Florence Levy (later Florence Bellis), who became Editor of the Quarterly in 1943 and founder of Barnhaven Primroses. The years preceding had been hard: World War I, the Wall Street Crash of 1929, the Great Depression, and on December 7, 1941 entry into World War II.

Florence Levy described details of the founding of the society in an essay titled "First Steps" published in 1976 in the Quarterly (see first entry under About Us on the APS homepage, link: <https://americanprimrosesociety.org/about-us/bringing-primula-enthusiasts-together/>). In the article Levy draws a connection between historical events and the formation of the first garden clubs in America. She writes:

*Maryland took the first step in 1860 by organizing the Horticultural Garden Club but stumbled when war was declared a year later. The Civil War could also have some bearing on the founding of the Ladies' Garden Club in Athens, Georgia in 1891. But perhaps it is just my fancy as a southern-born that the memory of Sherman's march from Atlanta to Savannah had something to do with this invitation: "Every lady who might be interested in growing anything from a cabbage to a chrysanthemum is welcome."*

*Still, only twenty-seven years had passed since Sherman's 60,000 men had cut a sixty-mile-wide swath some three hundred miles to the sea. In those twenty-five days, they burned everything they could not eat. I am quite sure that many of the ladies who gathered in Mrs. Lumpkin's ante-bellum drawing room that chilly January day remembered it very well. General Sherman died two months after the ladies organized.*

Maintaining the fledgling organization during World War II was daunting. The first President, Capt. E. S. Bradford, in his President's Message of July 1943, writes: "The American Primrose Society cannot hope to grow mightily while the war emergency is on. It is compelled to assume the role of a holding organization to keep Primula growers and lovers in contact with each other for the duration. Through it and them we can continue to lay the foundation and hold the basic organization for swift growth after the war" (Vol.1, Issue 1, July 1943). And they did—because of a shared passion. Captain Bradford concludes his message by describing the "Primula family" as "one of the loveliest, most useful and versatile of the instruments for creating beauty that can come to the hand of any gardener."

The story of Florence Levy and Barnhaven Primroses sprang out of an



**Barnhaven  
Primroses**

Keranguiner,  
22310, Plestin-les-Grèves, France  
+ 00 33 (0) 2 96 35 68 41  
info@barnhaven.com  
[www.barnhaven.com](http://www.barnhaven.com)

**BARNHAVEN PLANTS AND  
SEEDS ONLINE**

One of the largest collection of Primula, including the original Barnhaven strains still carefully hand-pollinated from rigorously selected plants.

PLANTS SENT BARE-ROOTED TO THE U.S. WITH PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATE.

historical moment and a serendipitous encounter with a seed catalogue. She writes, "I was a victim of the Depression, and a very different person in the 20s than I have ever been since."<sup>1</sup> She had trained to be a concert pianist but ended up out of work, destitute, and consumptive. At a friend's house she came across a Sutton's seed catalogue but could not barter overseas: "Then the miracle happened. A bit of luck and a bit of cash, and the last \$5 of it, with the seed order, was carried through snowdrifts to the suburban post office. There was 10 cents left and my husband and I bought two Hershey bars to eat as we tramped back in the

snow to our little place.”<sup>2</sup> She had ordered primrose seeds—Gertrude Jekyll’s Munstead Strain and Sutton’s Brilliance and Crimson King. She took 1,231 seedlings to an unheated barn in Gresham, Oregon where soon enough she would have 40,000 polyanthus in the old apple orchard on a hillside behind the barn, part of a strenuous breeding effort that spread Barnhaven primroses throughout the United States and beyond. In her catalogue of 1954/1955, she quotes a customer from Scotland: “It is rather a thrilling thought that primroses from Barnhaven form an international link around the world, a kind of floral chain like the daisy chains we used to make when we were very small.”



The American Primrose Society is part of the “floral chain” around the world. Now is the time to read the quarterlies closely and consider writing an article about primrose experiences in your neck of the woods. Check the website frequently for reports of new developments that occur between quarterly publication dates and consider sending additions that you would like to see to the Webmaster. In this issue, please pay attention to a proposed revision to the Constitution to permit the holding of online Annual General Meetings, which as this year proves is an important step in order to maintain organizational flexibility and strength in an international organization. A two-thirds majority vote of members is required to pass the amendment. Please vote.

Here in Ithaca, New York, I, like the rest of the US and much of the world, am enduring this long moment of social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. All my friends agree that there is really just one thing to do that is really hopeful--and that is gardening. Even my non-gardening friends have reached this conclusion. I am going to take this opportunity to garden more closely, to watch the “news” in the garden, day by day, not to turn my back on our crises but to enhance my stamina and resilience.

1. See Angela Bradford’s *The Barnhaven Book*, p. 4.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 5.



---

# PRIMULA CULTIVATION

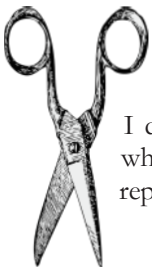
ROBIN HANSEN

As a relative newcomer to growing *Primulas*, especially auricula and marginata hybrids (but not to other primrose family members), I've had a fair amount of experience at killing these plants. The most basic decisions about soil mixes were a major downfall and sometimes still are! Then there are the mostly frustrating experiences of trying to grow primroses from seed.

I may not be able to tell anyone how to grow primroses, but I can certainly tell folks how NOT to grow them! It does help to water them with reasonable regularity and give them fertilizer, especially in spring. One procedure I've attempted to better discipline myself with is dividing primroses. Mine are mostly in pots and dividing them is critical to their health and ability to bloom. It also allows me to find any nasty insects to which they seem to extend an open invitation. I'm thinking of root weevils and woolly root aphids...

The part about dividing auriculas truly stumped me for several years before at last reading mention in an APS article about how to divide them. First off, I learned to separate the rooted offshoots, but I would keep knocking off perfectly good buds. So then I discovered I could plant all these not-yet-rooted offshoots, several to a three or four-inch pot. They rooted fairly readily so that was very exciting, but then I was left with these long naked mother plants so gawky they were ugly. On a whim, I planted them so deeply only the leaves were above the soil. That seemed to work anyway.

However I did learn that it was sometimes best if an offshoot with only one main root would be planted with two or three such offshoots in one pot in case I was a little too careless with overwatering or not enough gravel, causing them to rot. Then it gradually became obvious that these hybrids needed pretty frequent division, as in every year or two, or they would flower well enough but look ridiculously gangly, like a half-grown teenager.



I did discover that it was safe to take scissors to the roots and whack them off to about two or three inches in length before repotting. At least it didn't seem to kill the plants. Cutting the

roots also made it much easier to transplant them. But don't tell anyone, because that may not be exactly acceptable practice...

Living on the southwest coast of Oregon (or now that I've moved inland about 12 miles), I've been able to get away with rather careless and inconsistent watering, but there is payback involved and I'd really recommend a little more diligence or that precious treasure you found at a plant sale may not be revivable. For I've also discovered that the really cool and different auriculas and marginatas don't grow on trees. I suppose mail ordering plants is my act of desperation because I'd rather see them in the flesh before I buy.

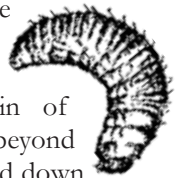
Then there are my attempts to grow primroses from seed. At this point in my story, I have to sigh because this has truly been a prolonged and frustrating experience. I am getting better, as long as I sow the seeds and keep the pots at eye level and remember to check them often to keep the seed moist. I can grow *Primula florindae* - I want you to know that, just in case you think I'm totally incompetent!

And I have finally succeeded in growing *Primula auricula* itself, I think. I need to go find that pot again, but right this minute I have *Primula rusbyi* sprouting. Mind you, the seed packet had the date 2012 on it, so we'll see what happens as long as I don't lose track of it. I have always kept all my seed in sealed zip lock bags or tight-fitting plastic containers in the refrigerator, so perhaps that helps with older seed. There doesn't seem to be a lot information about less common seeds and the length in years of their viability, so I just sow them anyway having been rather slipshod at sowing seed every year.

The pricking out of these tiny plants is a trick in itself and I usually - after many failures - pot a little clump of tiny seedlings in a rose pot (about two inches square and three inches tall), rather than trying to pot one or two seedlings in a pot which promptly flop over and drown.

Ah, yes, the pests - the root weevils, for which primroses are the very best dark chocolate and woolly root aphids which form little masses of woolliness around the roots, but when squished reveal tiny wormy things. The pain of discovering the damage these creatures caused is almost beyond comprehension! My first encounter occurred when I looked down and saw one pot of auriculas looking dreadfully limp and off color.

It was outstandingly conspicuous! I carried it to the potting bench, emptied it out onto the bench and saw these little off-white wormy slugs with copper-colored heads wiggling around. Oh, and the roots



fell away as I emptied the pot.

After that discovery, I tried to pay closer attention, but somehow there always seemed to be a few pots that looked off. At that point I started repotting all the primroses in March (I know you're supposed to do it in fall but...), throwing the soil in the garbage can, not recycling it. That procedure helped a lot, although this still happens from time to time. I've also found a pesticide that's granulated and meant for grubs in lawns that works quite well so as I repot, I add some to each pot. This isn't a miracle cure, but it does keep these critters under pretty good control.

The other pest encounter I had was with the woolly root aphids. That solution has been more difficult. Apparently they infest your plants in two common ways. You buy a plant and fail to immediately pot it on into your own soil mix, thereby allowing the aphids to grow and spread, or in some areas of the country, it's in the soil and migrates into pots sitting on the ground. Two solutions that are not perfect but help: avoid setting flats of plants directly on soil, and repot, rinsing the roots vigorously as well as rubbing off the white bits you can see. When repotting, I use the same granular pesticide I use for root weevils. I've

just about eliminated these woolly nasties and only rarely come across them. The moral of the pest story is to watch your plants and when you see unhealthy colored leaves, floppy leaves or pots where plants have dwindled to two or three leaves, check the roots.

So, slowly I'm learning but having started later than most folks, I have some catching up to do, and freely admit I'll never be an expert. However, I'm having lots of fun, am never bored, and am so fascinated by the incredible variation of flower colors of these primroses that I'll not only never learn everything I want to learn, my bank balance will always hover close to zero.

## ***Botanophilia* LLC**

***For people who love plants!***

*Specializing in a range of  
interesting plants for shaded  
gardens, including Primula.*

*[www.iloveshadeplants.com](http://www.iloveshadeplants.com)*







*Selected by* JANE GUILD

I chose this article from the July 1985 issue of *Primroses* because it is a great refresher for all things *Primula*.

## The First APS Round Table

### Raising Primulas From Seed

by Richard Critz  
Rosemont, PA

The following represents a 'verbatim' report of a Round Table discussion which never actually took place at all! Information and material for it was solicited last fall, by mail, and the responses were woven into the make believe dialogue you will read here. The actual words of each 'speaker' however are used exactly (whenever possible) and are always enclosed in quotes. Preparing this report has been arduous, but we hope you will both enjoy it and find it a useful future reference. If your response is favorable we may attempt other Round Tables in later issues. Why don't you write and let us have your comments on this one, as well as your suggestions for topics and participants next time?

RLC: Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to our round table on seeding methods for primulas. We all appreciate your willingness to share, we really do, and look forward a little later to your words of wisdom.

But before introducing our impressive panel of experts I'd like to take just a few moments to tell both you and our audience why we are here just now and what we would like to accomplish.

The genus *Primula* contains more than 500 species, and a much larger number of hybrids. All species can be raised from seed (if available) and even many of the hybrids come true with sufficient regularity to make seeding a worthwhile method.

To those who decide for the first time to experience the satisfaction of raising primulas from seed, it is confusing to discover that hardly any two agree on the proper 'modus operandi.' In such matters as seeding, choice of containers, pre-treatment of seed, time for planting, etc. etc. etc. of the process there are wide differences of practice. I have heard of lovely primulas once said right out loud, "I'd just as soon grow an apple tree and let it grow." And I have heard of growing from seed.

To read the full article, go to the APS website, at:

[www.americanprimrosesociety.org](http://www.americanprimrosesociety.org)

On the top menu bar of the home page click Quarterly

> Quarterly Archives > Volumes 41-45 > Volume 43 >

[Vol 43.3 July 1985](#). The article begins on page 3.



---

# WHERE DO I START, WHERE DO I BEGIN?

DEAN WIEGERT, SECRETARY

In 1971, Ralph Balcom explained a procedure for germinating *Primula* seeds on bricks as a foolproof way of preventing them from drying out. In 1964, in an article about pollinating double auriculas, he explained why it may be advantageous to repot your auricula 2-3 days prior to pollinating.

The American Primrose, Auricula and Primula Society (APS) has published a periodical since July 1943. That is a significant achievement for a plant society and represents a treasure trove of information. There have been several attempts at indexing the periodical over the years, but no comprehensive index of subjects has been accomplished. Yet. I began work on the APS Quarterly indexing project in 2017 after seeing Michael Plumb's (then society Secretary) notice in *Primroses* that he could use help with the project. Michael had begun the most recent indexing project about 15 years ago.

With the use of Dropbox, a file hosting service, Michael was able to share his files with me online. I quickly became aware of the amount of time and effort Michael had already devoted to this project, not only in the actual work of indexing, but in setting up the project from scratch. Michael realized that the enormous amount of information contained in the Quarterly publications would be useful for many different reasons and he created over 30 different index categories and sub-categories. Once completed, the would-be reader or researcher will eventually be able to search for topics ranging from individual primula species to biographical information to gardens mentioned in the publications.

Organizing and cross-referencing all of this information is a painstaking process. It involves the indexer reading each and every article published and then asking, what information here is valuable and how would a reader or researcher look for this information. Using the index subjects Michael created, an entry can be created in one or several indices for each important piece of information that the article

contains. This means any one article could result in numerous entries in various indices. Michael also created a key that was necessary to be able to catalog all these entries in a systematic way.

Ideally, this resource could be added to the APS website for members' use. But we've got a ways to go before it is ready for that. Michael was able to index from Volume 1 through part of Volume 13. I started with Volume 14 and am currently started on Volume 17. Like many of you, I lead a busy life and have found limited time available to devote to the project. Since I began in 2017, I've only been able to complete the indexing of about 12 issues.

The process of reading the back catalog of Quarterlies is fascinating and a good way to obtain an understanding of the society and the vast store of knowledge the members contribute. If you have an interest in joining the project, I suggest you contact Michael Plumb <michaellplumb@yahoo.ca> to discuss how you might participate.



*This is a sample from the beginning of the new species index which is similar to the Species Index (completed through to Vol 34) which can be found online at [americanprimrosesociety.org/resources/species-index-vol-1-through-vol-34-issue-no-2](http://americanprimrosesociety.org/resources/species-index-vol-1-through-vol-34-issue-no-2) (found under 'Quarterly' in the main menu)*

**SPECIES, CULTIVARS AND NATURALLY OCCURRING HYBRIDS -  
ALPHABETICAL**

**[Names which are valid according to Richards (2003) are given in bold type. Where possible, defunct names have been given their valid synonym. Naturally occurring hybrids with valid names are also in bold type. Where Richards (2003) was silent, use was made of Halda (1992) and Richards (1993).]**

*P. acaulis* - See *P. vulgaris*

***P. advena***

Letter from Keillour Castle, Scotland [Mary Knox Finley] (Growing conditions of Sections Sikkimensis and Nivales) 11:1:14

*P. aemula* - See *P. szechuanica*

***P. aerinantha***

"Pictorial Dictionary" [?] (P) 12:1:3

***P. agleniana***

**var. *thearosa*** (the tea rose primula)

"Hunting for Primulas with Capt. F. Kingdon Ward" [Caroline Morse Lord] 3:1:6-7, 14

"The Magic of Primula" [F. Kingdon-Ward] (The use of plant hunting - Very interesting) 11:1:8-9 (PP - of Kingdon-Ward a short letter, and *P. florindae*)

Letter from Keillour Castle, Scotland [Mary Knox Finley] (Growing conditions of Sections Sikkimensis and Nivales) 11:1:14

"Pictorial Dictionary" [?] (P) 12:1:3

---

# VERA MAUD PRIMROSE

MAEDYTHE MARTIN

Barnhaven introduced a strain of *Primula* x *Juliana* some years ago in 2006. Seed is available some years from the APS seed exchange. I happened to get a package last year and started the seeds. They germinated and I managed to pot them on at the appropriate time. I was delighted when they started to bloom for me in February 2020 – one year from seed sowing.

In the book on *Primula* from Barnhaven, *The Plant Lover's Guide to Primulas* by Jodie Mitchell and Lynne Lawson (Timber Press, 2016) there is a description: “This lovely Juliana hybrid strain has dark red stems and flowers in delicate shell-pink shades. Many of the flowers have a darker pink edge and dark Juliana-type compact leaves.” Under Origin they mention: “These little beauties are dear to our hearts and named after Lynne’s Aunt Vera.”

In recent correspondence with Lynne at Barnhaven she told me the following:

*“Vera Maud’ is a favourite of mine. The leaves are usually pretty dark. The strain came from a chance cross that Angela Bradford made using two white juliana primroses and one or two came up pale pink with a pink edge. We took over about that time so I carried on crossing the pink edges together until we had a fixed strain. Recently we’ve been getting a few cream ones with the same pink edges so I’m playing around with those too.”*



We are so fortunate that Barnhaven is still able to provide seed to the primrose world of some superb plants such as this one.





'Vera Maud' displays flowers in color variations from deep pink, above, to pale pink, below.





Wendy Carmichael's three-year-old primrose (likely 'Drumcliff') with its dark foliage and pretty yellow-eyed pale pink flowers, has grown to remarkable size in Victoria, BC.



# The three-year chronology of a grocery store primrose

JANE GUILD

I bought this little primrose on a whim at a Big Box store in 2018 as it was quite different than the other large-flowered, neon-colored ones.

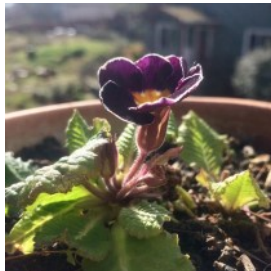


Over the course of 2018, it bloomed semi-constantly. Shown above is it blooming in March, August, and December (in my greenhouse).



In 2019 I put the pot back on my deck, but evidently in too much sun as it entirely bleached out the leaves, seen far left.

The accompanying photo shows it back in its happy place - shade.



I left it on the deck over the winter of 2019-20, and when it came back, the buds were conspicuously more blue than before. As the flower opened, it morphed color through blue-purple and finished at a deep magenta-red.



Cy Happy, left, seen in the *Perennials* volume of the *Time Life Encyclopedia of Gardening* (1972), is the creator of 'Dusty Double,' above

**Exciting  
Perennial varieties  
from seed**



PRIMULA auricula ssp. bauhinii

*Jelitto*

STAUDENSAMEN · PERENNIAL SEEDS · GRAINES DE PLANTES VIVACES

Production · Breeding · Seed Technology

USA Office: 125 Cheroweth Ln. · Louisville, KY 40207  
Phone (502) 895-08 07 · Fax (502) 895-39 34 · <http://www.jelitto.com> · [maryv@jelitto.com](mailto:maryv@jelitto.com)  
German Headquarters: P.O. Box 1264 · D-29685 Schwarmstedt  
Phone 01149-5071-9829-0 · Fax 01149-5071-9829-27 · [www.jelitto.com](http://www.jelitto.com) · [info@jelitto.com](mailto:info@jelitto.com)



# The Smaller Auriculas



Above, deep purple buds of a new *Primula x pubescens* seedling.

Left, 'Harlow Carr', a *Primula x pubescens* that has been in cultivation for decades. It was originally from Holden Clough Nursery in England and in Victoria, BC is known as 'Appleblossom'.  
Photos: M. Martin



Above, Edelweiss's 'Petite Tootsie'  
Below, Maedythe Martin's 'Faldonside'





Above, *P. pedemontana alba*, photo by K. Leeming, 2001, can be seen on the [NAPS website](http://www.auriculaandprimula.org.uk/galleries/primulas/european_species/pedemontana_alba.html): [www.auriculaandprimula.org.uk/galleries/primulas/european\\_species/pedemontana\\_alba.html](http://www.auriculaandprimula.org.uk/galleries/primulas/european_species/pedemontana_alba.html)  
Below, 'Hemsworth Ember' grown and photographed by Maedythe Martin





Above, 'Victoria',  
an old *P. x  
pubescens*, grown  
and photographed  
by Maedythe Martin

Right, 'Balcom's  
Petite' from  
[edelweissperennials.  
com](http://edelweissperennials.com), a great  
source for *P. x  
pubescens* plants



# THE SMALLER AURICULAS

MAEDYTHE MARTIN

I find I return to the sources of information on auriculas that I know and have used many times over the years. Mary Robinson's book *Primulas, The Complete Guide* has a section called: "The Smaller Hybrids of the Auriculastrum Section (including those popularly called the Pubescens)". I must confess I have a soft spot for these plants that come early in the season and grow easily if treated as an alpine plant. Many of these come originally from the Alps and while there has been a lot of hybridizing over the years and their pasts may be murky, they demonstrate many of the same characteristics that make them so useful in the rock garden, or a trough, or just in pots in the greenhouse: they tend to be smaller than the regular auricula plant, they bloom in February or March, and they provide color early in the season.

And we in North America don't have to long for plants that are seen in pictures in Europe or Britain. Many of these little plants are available in North America. April Boettger had some from Herb Dickson when he closed his nursery, and there are still plants around among those of us who bought plants from her in the 1990s. A couple of the on-line nurseries in the Pacific Northwest, like Eidelweiss Perennials and Sequim Rare Plants have some of these, as does the Wrightman Nursery in the Maritimes. And if you wanted lots of plants, there have been seed of these *P. x pubescens* in the past few seed exchanges. Worth a try.

Here is a list of some of my favorites:

*P. x pubescens* seedling, just coming into bloom, has a good deep color. This is a seedling from 'Harlow Carr'. *Primula x pubescens* was introduced into Europe in the 1600s. It is cross between *Primula auricula* and *P. hirsuta*. There are now many forms and colors.

'**Harlow Carr**' has been in Victoria for over 50 years. It was offered for sale by Ed Lobrunner, a famous nurseryman in Victoria BC, but under the name 'Appleblossom'. This is quite appropriate, as it opens white

---

but gathers a pink tinge as it ages. It is another semi-double and has a charm all of its own.

*Primula x pubescens* ‘**Petite Tootsie**’ is an introduction by April Boettger, who did a whole series of ‘Petite’s.

*Primula x pubescens* ‘**Faldonside**’ The brilliant magenta of this plant indicates that one of its parents was likely *Primula hirsuta*. It is a classic now, often seeming a bit sickly or virused, but fed well and with a bit of limestone in the soil, it can still make a pretty display.

*Primula pedemontana alba* This is a pretty little white flowered plant that grows in the Alps. It is a relative of *Primula hirsuta*, as you can tell by the slightly sticky texture of the leaves. The size makes it a good one for pots and troughs.

*Primula x pubescens* ‘**Hemswell Ember**’ There is a picture of this plant on the cover of Mary Robinson’s book. I never thought I would have it, but found it at one of the NAPS plant sales over 15 years ago. It lived for years in this little pot, putting on a great display each spring, with its curious yellow fading to ember colored flowers.

*Primula x* ‘**Victoria**’ is a miniature Dusty Miller (which is an old name for auriculas), according to Mary Robinson (*Primulas*, 1999), and has been around for decades.

*Primula x pubescens* ‘**Balcom’s Petite Double**’ was raised by Cy Happy from a cross made by Ralph Balcom, a gifted hybridizer in the Tacoma area. This was introduced into commerce by April Boettger. It has a charming white semi-double flower.

---

## Correction

In our last Quarterly (Winter, 2020) on page 18, credit for the photo of *P. watsonii* was mistakenly printed as Yvonne Jeffries. It should have read Yvonne Rorison. Our Apologies.



# A LIFETIME OF GARDENING

ANNE HOGUE

Gardening is so much a part of me I can't imagine life without having my hands in the soil each spring. As soon as that first primrose is in bloom until the last of the apple harvest, I can be found in my small garden. Winter with its downpours isn't enough to stop me thinking about gardening. I usually have my nose in a mail order catalogue planning any changes for the coming year.

My earliest memories have to do with flowers. At five years old, my Grandmother and I would take walks along a long winding road that led down to a train station along the Hudson River to enjoy the wildflowers. On the way we saw purple violets in abundance, native ferns of various types, and Jack in the Pulpits. There were several small waterfalls along the way. We would listen to the cool water splashing on the mossy rocks.

It was a decade and a half later that I was to have my first garden shortly after I married. I developed an interest in *Primula*, 'Wanda' being the first. Not long after, I was interested in Alpine and Garden Auricula. I came across a mail-order nursery and sent off for more *Primulas*, 'Andrea Julie', 'Gordon Douglas', 'Argus', 'Dales Red', 'Paradise Yellow', and the incredible 'Sirius'. Many of our favorite plants have moved with us to each new location.

A lot of years have gone by since that first garden, and I have had 'Wanda' with me in the garden for forty-five years. I feel she is an old friend, and very dear to me.

We have put in and taken out various *Primulas* over time. I have had great luck with some, others not so much. I have found some to thrive even with neglect. I have found that the group *P. marginata* thrives in our gardens during drought and heat waves. My favorites are 'Linda Pope', 'Herb Dickson' and 'Mauve Mist'. Others to thrive for me are the double mauve primrose 'Quakers Bonnet', the charming pale yellow common English primrose (*P. vulgaris*), and the English Cowslip (*P. veris*)

I am grateful for all the years I have had with my gardens. No matter how big or small, they have all been a great source of joy.



---

# MISS WINNIFRED WYNNE

MAEDYTHE MARTIN

Miss Wynne has come back into my life recently. I used to think about her a lot in the 1990s when I would visit growers in England. The old striped garden auricula she rescued from an Irish garden, ‘Mrs. Dargen’ held such historical significance as did the ‘Old Double Green’. I did have ‘Mrs. Dargen’ for about 5 years, but sadly she was not strong, and succumbed.

I came to know of Miss Wynne through Cy Happy, my primrose mentor from the 1980s. He came up to judge the Primula benches at the large rock and alpine show held in Victoria each spring. Once he found I was growing auriculas he would bring me plants each year. Some of these he had raised from pollen sent to him on blossoms in airmail letters from Miss Wynne. They corresponded for over a dozen years, and you can read some excerpts from her letters to Cy in my article “Miss Wynne’s Letters” in the spring 2011 issue of the APS quarterly, p. 8 to 10.



Imagine my surprise and delight when I recently opened the 2019 Argus Yearbook of the National Auricula and Primula Society, Midland and West Section to find an article by Brian Coop in England about Miss Winnifred Wynne. (“Winnifred Wynne of Avoca”, Argus 66, 2019, p.37 to 43) This is a detailed article about her life and background with references to the plants she grew. Many quotes from correspondence to and from Miss Wynne are included. Brian was able to find material on her from many sources not easily available to us in North America. Some of the old yearbooks from the Northern and Southern NAPS societies in England yielded some bits of information on Miss Wynne’s activities.

Brian also refers to an article on double auriculas by Lawrence Wigley (From the Societies History – Lawrence Wigley – Part three -- The Double Auricula 1877 – 1979.” NAPS Southern Yearbook 1979.)

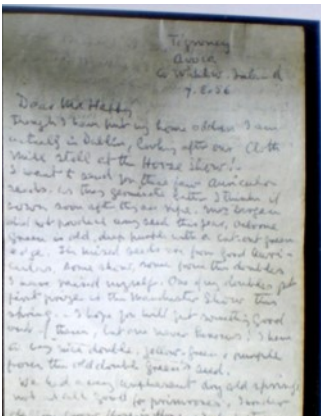


Lawrence's article included information on Winnifred, mentioning at one point her double auricula introductions, 'Old Double Green Avoca', 'Avoca Apricot', and 'Avoca Tawny', these plants winning first prize awards in London shows. Her double auricula strain came from double auriculas she had purchased from Dr. McWatt in Scotland. She crossed these with the old auriculas she had rescued in Ireland to create these new doubles.

There is even a reference by Brian to an article Miss Wynne wrote for the American Primrose Society quarterly (I expect at Cy Happy's request) called 'Old Irish Double Auriculas, A Member from Ireland Talks About Her Doubles' (APS quarterly 1957, Winter, p. 6.) This in turn refers to the article in the NAPS Northern Yearbook (1951-52), which was where Cy learned about Miss Wynne and decided he had to contact her about raising auriculas. So much auricula history resulted from Cy contacting Miss Wynne.



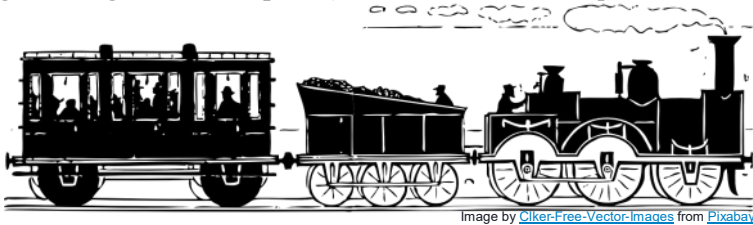
Other authors of books on auriculas acknowledge Miss Wynne's legendary fame. Auriculas by Gwen Baker and Peter Ward, B.T. Batsford, London, 1995, mentions her sending seed and pollen to America. You can see Cy Happy and some of the plants he raised from pollen sent to him in airmail letters from Miss Wynne in the APS quarterly, Spring 2011, p. 20. I was able to summarize some of these letters, when Cy lent them to me, and we learned more about their correspondence over the dozen or so years they were in touch. ("Miss Wynne's Letters", p. 8 – 10, APS quarterly, Spring 2011). There is also a photo of one of



---

the letters on p. 21.

Elizabeth Lawson, APS President, includes information on Miss Wynne in her recent book *Primula* (Reaktion Books, 2019) on p 105 in a section titled “The Amateur Breeders and Collection Holders”. Miss Wynne would take her plants to shows in England to promote them. There is a lovely note in Elizabeth’s book: “In her diary of 1916, she recounts the difficulties of travelling to an alpine garden show by train, with her show plants and 12 pieces of luggage, two dogs, one canary, eggs and bags of moss.” (p. 105). She must have been quite a character.



One of the most interesting plants Cy raised from Miss Wynne’s pollen was ‘Dusty Double’, shown on page 16. There is a great picture of it by Cy in the 50th Anniversary Issue of the APS quarterly *Primroses*, Fall 1991, p. 22. It is lavender green, striped with silver, with meal dusted over all the petals. I have used this in various crosses and am getting what I think of as ‘Painted Ladies’ – plants from the 1700s, striped and shaded and with meal all over the petals. Miss Wynne’s heritage continues in these modern day auriculas.

Brian ends his article on Miss Wynne with a quote from NAPS Northern Yearbook 1966, Part 2 “Auricula History in the USA – Cyrus Happy – p 48”:

*“And now it is time to express my thanks to the many kind and generous of our fellow growers on both sides of the Atlantic in sharing their precious plants and seeds with me. First on my list is a truly great lady of gardening (now in her 90s, Winnifred F. Wynne of Avoca, Ireland. From her I have had auriculas, laced pinks, primula and alpines...”*

I, too, am so grateful for the generous lady who sent seeds, pollen and plant slips to Cy Happy all those years ago. And to the many auricula friends in England who have sent me seeds in the past few years to grow on here in North America. I remember her and them with such pleasure every time I look at my auricula plants.



# AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY

## MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2020

**The meeting was held online Quorum and start at 6 p.m. EST.**

**Board members present:** Elizabeth Lawson (President), Jon Kawaguchi (Treasurer/Webmaster), Dean Wiegert (Secretary), Jane Guild (Editor), Julia Haldorson (Director, Membership Secretary), Rhondda Porter (Past President), Amy Olmsted (Director), Pat Hartman (Director, President of Juneau Chapter), Janice Anthony (Director)

**Regrets:** Mark Dyen (VP), Ed Buyarski (Director)

1. Approval of the Agenda. (Amy/Pat)
2. Approval of the Minutes of November 24, 2019 (Pat/Rhondda) as presented.
3. Treasurer's Quarterly Report (emailed prior to the meeting)
  - Income less expenses September 1 to December 31, 2019: \$1,745.63
  - Income less expenses January 1 to December 31, 2019: \$525.64
  - Total liabilities and equity as of December 31, 2019: \$29,679.81
  - Motion (Dean/Rhondda) to accept the treasurer's report. Carried.
  - Jon noted that the advertisers have not yet paid for 2020 advertising. Beginning in 2020, the Quarterly editor honorarium increases from \$1,800 to \$2,000. Budgeted expenses 2019 for Quarterly printing and mailing: \$4,300 - \$3,023.25 (actual expense) = \$1,276.75 savings for 2019.
4. Business arising from the minutes of November 24, 2019 and old business.
  - A. Discussion of renewal status and 365 day membership.
    - Jane announced that with introducing Jon to the website as new webmaster, they believe they can now combine membership duties into the treasurer's position with the use of the 365 day platform. Members can pay through the website and Jon will add those who pay by check. All existing members will be on calendar year renewal. Going forward with a 365 day membership, all new members can join any time and would renew on that anniversary. This will streamline the membership process.
  - B. Development of plan to bring more advertisers to Quarterly.
    - Elizabeth sent an email prior to the meeting regarding Amy's suggestion of increasing ads in other Plant Society publications. Elizabeth mentioned she has donated her speaking fee from a NARGS talk on Primrose to APS and thought this donation could go towards placing ads in publications that charge fees. Amy mentioned that we could set up more reciprocal ads in the journals of other societies. These ads are free.
    - Elizabeth emailed a president's report prior to the meeting; in it she outlined her development of a solicitation email template that she will use to send to potential advertisers in the hopes of at least a 1% return. Advertisers will then purchase ad space online and Jane will work with advertiser to create ad.
    - ACTION: Elizabeth asked that board members send her suggestions for prospects. Rhondda will send Elizabeth a list of past contacts for advertising.
  - C. Amendment of the Constitution to allow online Annual General Meetings.
    - Dean's proposal for the change was emailed by Elizabeth prior to the meeting. This concerns Article V of the Constitution. The proposed language would allow AGMs to be held online in the event that an AGM at the National Show isn't possible.
    - Motion (Pat/Amy) to accept the change as presented. Carried.
    - ACTION: Dean will draft a notice of the proposed change and submit to Jane for publishing in the Spring Quarterly along with a ballot to allow members to vote on the change.
  - D. Postponing a date for online chat regarding society financial matters.
    - The board discussed putting off the discussion until later in the year, settling on August when the discussion can be done in light of the budget for 2021.
  - E. Addition of website links to publishers, botanic gardens, etc.
    - Elizabeth asked about process for getting this information onto the website. Jane stated that a page could go up easily if everyone sent her links. Rhondda explained that on the old website, there were a few links with pictures and brief descriptions and that the society relied on the board and APS members

---

to send names of places to see *Primula*. Amy suggested a post on Facebook would result in lots of suggestions of where to see *Primula*. Rhondda commented that links to publishers could be a source of revenue. It was agreed for now that there will not be free links to publishers. Pat suggested a donation link on the website for those who appreciate the garden links. Jane said a donation button will happen.

ACTION: Amy will create a post on the APS and the Primula Lovers Facebook pages asking for suggestions of botanic gardens, public gardens and other places to see *Primula* and forward these to Jane. Board members will send links to Jane.

## 5. Committee Reports

### A. Membership.

Julia emailed report prior to meeting.

As of February 6, 2020 we had 199 members. There were 17 new members between October 2019 and January 2020. Renewal notice was posted on website, and a renewal email was sent on December 23, 2019. Pat asked Julia to send a list of the current Juneau members so that she can work on renewals.

### B. Website

Jane emailed Website report prior to meeting. There is now an official email address for each officer. All pages and forms for the Spring 2020 election are ready to go up, including online voting. Jon reported his new position as webmaster is going well. Julia asked if website inquiries should be directed to Jon, he said yes.

### C. Editorial

Maedythe emailed the editorial report prior to meeting. Winter 2020 Quarterly is late, but the Spring issue should be on time.

### D. Seed Exchange

Amy sent Seed Exchange report prior to meeting. As of February 9, 2020 Amy had filled 74 orders with total revenue of \$1,218.00. Total expenses \$1,170.17. Lucky Dip is underway with 15 Lucky Dip orders so far. Jon commended Amy for a well-run exchange. Amy cautioned that the Lucky Dip is where we could lose money due to postal rates for the UK and Canada. Amy will send rack card with seeds to encourage membership. Jane asked if sending an email to encourage membership would help. Amy said yes. Elizabeth has encouraged membership and seed exchange at the talks she is giving.

ACTION: Dean will send membership solicitation email to non-member Lucky Dip participants.

## 6. Chapter Reports

### A. Juneau

Chapter meeting was held on February 13, 2020. Merrill Jensen presented on climate change effects at Jensen Arboretum. Next meeting in May. Chapter has a booth at a garden conference in March and linked APS website to Master Gardener site. Dean asked if Pat could check with Merrill about turning his presentation into an article for Quarterly. Pat will also produce article on her travel to Bhutan and Nepal.

### B. New England

Amy is spring show manager for the NE show at Blithewold Mansion in Bristol RI. A planning meeting was held in January. There will be a talk on *Primula* growing with a sieboldii emphasis. More information will be on the website.

### C. BC Primula Group.

Maedythe emailed report prior to meeting. National show dates in Portland at Hortlandia Plant Sale are April 10-12, 2020. More details will be on website. Dean asked about having the Annual General Meeting at the National Show. Jane said last time the show was in Portland a group of APS members had the AGM at the Best Western Restaurant.

## 7. New Business

Spring Election 2020 will open on February 17, 2020 and close March 27, 2020. We have the Treasurer seat and one Director position up for election. Jon will stand for re-election, Lucy Coles of the NE Chapter is standing for the Director chair. Voting is accepted online, by email, by printing a mail-in ballot from the website, or requesting a mail-in ballot from Dean. Results will be available by the AGM.

## 8. Date of next Meeting

Elizabeth suggested May 17, 2020, 6p.m. EST, for next Board Meeting. The AGM will be held by those members available at the National Show in Portland.

ACTION: Dean will follow up with Maedythe to see if AGM can be held partly online at the National Show.

## 9. Adjournment (Dean) 7:30 EST.

# PROPOSED REVISION TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY – 2020

## Dear Members of the American Primrose Society,

Our Constitution requires that the Society hold an Annual Meeting of members. The current wording of the Constitution states that the Annual Meeting shall be held in the same vicinity as the National Primrose Show. This was traditionally the place and time that many society members gathered. The American Primrose Society is truly an international society with members from Canada to New Zealand. The present Board recognizes that the time may be right to amend the Constitution to allow the Annual Meeting be held online, rather than requiring it to be at the Annual Show. To that end, the Board has agreed to a change in the wording of Article V of the Constitution regarding the Annual Meeting.

Here is the current wording of Article V of the Constitution with proposed changes underlined.:

## ARTICLE V – ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the society shall be held during and in the same vicinity as the National Primrose Show, when possible. The local chapter or affiliated society sponsoring the show will be host to the national society for the annual meeting. In the event this isn't possible, the annual meeting of the society may be held online at a different specified time to be determined by the President. Advance notice of a scheduled online Annual Meeting shall be posted on the society website.

Our Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members. Please review the Board-approved change above and submit your vote. You may vote on the website or you may copy the ballot as printed and return to the Secretary, Dean Wiegert, 3708 E Norport Dr, Port Washington, WI 53074, USA.

**Please vote by May 15, 2020.**

You may fill in and tear out this page to mail to the Secretary, or copy it and send in. Online voting will also be available

### American Primrose Society Ballot

2020 Amendment to the Constitution to allow online Annual Meetings

I approve of the proposed amendment as described above.

Yes       No

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a member in good standing with The American Primrose Society.



## North American Rock Garden Society

Yes, I am interested in a seed exchange, discount book service, slide library, field trips, fact-filled Quarterly, garden visits, and plant sales.

Sign me up!

Membership:  
USA, Canada: US\$30  
Overseas: US\$35

Please contact:  
**Mr. Bobby Ward**  
Executive Secretary, NARGS  
PO Box 18604

Raleigh, NC 27619-8604  
Make checks payable to  
North American Rock Garden Society

<https://www.nargs.org/info/smembership>.

## Join the National Auricula & Primula Society

*Midland & West Section*

[www.auriculaandprimula.org.uk](http://www.auriculaandprimula.org.uk)



£10.00 Overseas Membership.

to: The Honorary Treasurer, Tracey Pockett,  
'Majutora', Longney, Gloucestershire,  
GL2 3ST, United Kingdom.

## NATIONAL AURICULA AND PRIMULA SOCIETY

**SOUTHERN SECTION**

[www.southernauriculaprimula.org](http://www.southernauriculaprimula.org)

The National Auricula & Primula Society - Southern Section was founded in 1876 by and for enthusiasts who raised and exhibited Auriculas, Gold-Laced polyanthus and other primulas.

The Annual subscription is £7 (UK) for single or family membership, Overseas £15.00  
Members receive an illustrated Year Book and a Newsletter - Offsets - containing interesting articles on growing and raising Primulas together with their history and cultivation.

Applications for membership of the N.A.P.S. Southern section should be made to:  
The Honorary Secretary, Lawrence Wigley,  
67 Warnham Court Road, Carshalton Beeches,  
Surrey, SM5 3ND.

## NATIONAL AURICULA AND PRIMULA SOCIETY

**NORTHERN SECTION**

Please consider joining the National Auricula and Primula Society - Northern Section.  
Overseas memberships are some of the best ways to learn more about your favorite plants.  
Benefits include publications and more.

Write: D. Skinner, Treasurer, Nanny Lane,  
Church Fenton, Tadcaster, N. Yorks. LS24 9RL.

Overseas membership £15

Please make checks payable to NAPS.  
[www.auriculas.org.uk](http://www.auriculas.org.uk)

## New Members

### January 29 - April 15, 2020

<b>Year of Expiry</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>
2021	Kenneth	Everding	145 Good Hill Road, Weston, Connecticut 06883 USA
2021	Andrea	Flint	14350 Northwest McNamee Road, Portland, Oregon 97231 USA
2021	Philip M.	Gilmartin	Lower Botany Road, Green End Road, West Yorkshire BD20 5UA UK
2021	David	Helgeson	Volunteer Park Conservatory, 3140 - 35 Avenue South, Seattle, Washington 98144 USA
2021	Nancy	Hillegas	17 Bradshaw Road, Dryden, New York 13053 USA
2021	Ellen	Hopkins	P. O. Box 108, Farmington Falls, Maine 04940
2021	Susan	Littlefield	1803 Flemming Road, Greensboro, North Carolina 27410 USA
2021	Wendy	Robertson	870 Ringwood Road, Ithaca, New York 14850 USA
2021	Gina	Strecker	920 Lansing Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19111 USA
2021	Jeff	Tucker	45 Spencer Street, Millis, Massachusetts 02054 USA
2021	Julie	Vance	4855 - 18th Avenue Southwest, Seattle, Washington 98106
2021	Karen	Winter	402 Lower Styx Road, Christchurch New Zealand 8083 NZ

Should there ever be a question about your membership, please contact:  
*Julia L. Haldorson, APS Membership*  
 P. O. Box 292  
 Greenbank, Washington 98253 USA  
**[membership@americanprimrosesociety.org](mailto:membership@americanprimrosesociety.org)**

### OFFICERS OF THE CHAPTERS

#### **British Columbia Primrose Group**

Maedythe Martin, President  
 951 Joan Crescent  
 Victoria, BC V8S 3L3  
 (250) 370-2951  
[martin951@shaw.ca](mailto:martin951@shaw.ca)

#### **Juneau Chapter**

Pat Hartman, President  
 17060 Island View Dr  
 Juneau, AK 99801-8357  
[patricia.hartman4@gmail.com](mailto:patricia.hartman4@gmail.com)

#### **New England Chapter**

Mark Dyen, President  
 132 Church Street  
 Newton, MA 02158  
[mark.dyen@csggrp.com](mailto:mark.dyen@csggrp.com)

