



Primroses

THE QUARTERLY OF THE AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY

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Primroses

*The Quarterly of the
American Primrose Society*

Volume 65 No 2

Spring 2007

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 dissemination information about *Primula*.

Contents

President's Message by Ed Buyarski	3
Herbarium Memories by G.K. Fenderson.....	5
Growing <i>Primulas</i> from Seed by Claire Cockcroft	8
Seed Sources by Maedythe Martin	10
Seed Exchange Musings	11
Pins & Thrums	12
Vintage Bits by Michael Plumb	13
Soldanelloides by Ian Scott.....	14
APS Photo Contest Winners	20
National Show in Alaska.....	22
Plant Portrait - <i>P. albenensis</i> by Joyce Carruthers	25
Surprising Primulas by David W. H. Rankin	26
Tiny, Influential <i>Primula juliae</i> by Judith Sellers	29
Chapter News.....	31
Minutes	33
2007 Ballot.....	37
Officers of the Chapters	39

Front Cover: Becky Carl's Winning Photo in the 1st Annual APS Photo Contest. The shot captured the pristine beauty of a simple white *primula denticulata*, and showed cultural perfection.

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Manuscripts for publication in the quarterly are invited from members and other gardeners, although there is no payment. Please include 300 dpi digital shots (to final print size). They will either be converted to black and white, or used in color. Photo prints on paper, transparencies, or slides are also accepted. Send articles directly to the editor at mmattus@charter.net. Articles composed in Microsoft Word are preferred. APS reserves the right to use submitted articles and pictures for other official APS uses.

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President's Message

ED BUYARSKI

Greetings folks; this is my last President's letter after six years as your beloved leader. It is definitely time for some new leadership to take the Primrose Society to another level.

Technology has helped us communicate better in some ways through online forums, chats, and board meetings with members from all over the world. We can submit our articles and photos via electronic files to our editor and have our questions answered more quickly by distant experts. At the same time we may be missing out on more of what is happening in the real world away from our computers and out in our gardens or greenhouses. Of course some of us may even carry our gadget filled cell phones out to the garden and take a picture to send off with a question on the spot: "What primrose is this?", "What chemical can I use to treat this disease?", or "Why are my leaves yellow?"

Still, it is great when we can have a few people visit us to talk about our plants in person in our garden so we can smell the fragrant flowers or fondle the nice soil we have prepared to grow our favorite plants. Maybe someday there will be a smell sensor on those new high tech cell phones that can transmit that spicy scent of *Primula florindae*, fragrant lilacs, or the aromatic smell of sticky cottonwood buds that is a sure sign of spring in Alaska.

Just a few days after the Vernal equinox we have 5 feet of snow on the ground here in Juneau and we just set a new record for seasonal snowfall of 195 inches! If you visit us for the National Show in May, I anticipate still having some piles beside my driveway that are now 10-12 feet high! This is great for all the plants that are insulated by it and we hope for nice

warm spring sun and rain to melt it. Last year at this time my snowdrops were in bloom and crocus were showing color. I have started to shovel snow away from my trees and shrubs so that the settling layers of heavy wet snow do not break off so many of the lower branches.

The Juneau Chapter plans to put on a good National Show on Saturday May 19th followed by Garden Tours on Sunday May 20th. Our Saturday Banquet speaker will be Marilyn Barker, a retired Professor of Botany from the University of Alaska. She has traveled extensively around the state of Alaska researching tundra and alpine plants and their relationships including our native *Primulas*. She also enjoys growing the more domesticated varieties and should give us a good talk. A special treat only for APS members and guests will be an Alaska picnic and tour of Caroline Jensen's garden which were donated to the City of Juneau as the Jensen Petersen Arboretum. Many pictures of her garden have appeared in past Quarterlies and she did so much for gardeners and primrose lovers in Juneau! We also plan to have a seminar on primrose basics on Saturday afternoon along with a board meeting before the Banquet.



APS National Show plant sale Photo: Robert Tonkin

To reserve Saturday Banquet seats and Sunday Garden Tour tickets you may visit the new Juneau Chapter website at www.alaskaprimroses.org. Robert Tonkin has done a fine job of putting up our website and it will be linked with the APS site at www.americanprimrosesociety.org also. A limited number of motel rooms in Juneau for this event have been reserved through Gullivers Travels and are available by calling 1-866-807-7386 Ext. 2028. Tell Sheri that you are coming for the Primrose Show.

Coming to you under a separate mailing is the Election Ballot with Constitutional amendments and Candidates for APS officers and Board members. Please take the time to vote, this is an important election.

On one last note, Matt Mattus has resigned from the Editor's position for the quarterly *Primroses*. Matt has done a beautiful job putting it together for several years and we understand he must devote more time to his real job and life. Thanks Matt.

Ed Buyarski

Herbarium Memories

G.K. FENDERSON

In the late 1980s and mid 1990s I was in the process of completing my book *A Synoptic Guide to the Genus Primula*, and doing most of my research for it at the Harvard University Herbaria in Cambridge, Massachusetts. At the national APS meeting last year I was recounting to a group of friends some of the pleasures of doing herbarium related research and was urged by them to put together a short article for the bulletin.

Herbaria are collections of dried, pressed plants mounted on large sheets of paper and stored in insect proof cabinets. Plants so prepared and preserved are remarkable sources of information and under the correct storage conditions can last for hundreds of years. Harvard University in its collections houses one of the most significant collections of such dried specimens in the world, important not just for its mass (over 5 million specimens), but significant in that many of the specimens are of great historic importance. Some specimens can have purely historic significance, for example collections made by Henry David Thoreau, or by famous 19th century exploratory expeditions. The collections can also become much more significant when those specimens become citations in botanical works.

Type specimens (96,000 or more at Harvard) are those actual dried specimens that were cited in botanical descriptions. They do not have to be, and often are not, the most “typical” form of the plant, but frequently do include first collections. Unless there is a curatorial error discovered, those plants remain associated with that initial description in perpetuity, despite changes in nomenclature, or regardless of what their eventual botanical status might become. Because of their significance such recognized type specimens are usually stored in special easily identified folders in separate parts of the general collection for quick removal in case of an emergency.

In the course of my work at Harvard as a research associate I came to use all these collections and felt myself incredibly privileged to have access to them and to the gifted and dedicated people who curated them and used them in their researches.

A great Herbarium receives vast numbers of dried plants every year over many decades: some recent, well documented and identified; some unmounted with just collector’s numbers attached to them; and others the residue of older collections, sometimes from institutions that no longer exist. In some instances these residual specimens are all that remains from the tragic destructions of war, such as the Manila Herbarium in the Philippines, or the world renowned Berlin Herbarium in Germany. The process of mounting, sorting, cataloguing, classifying, and reclassifying these specimens becomes literally a never ending process as new information, and new research techniques come to the fore. Some collections can lie uncurated or

unidentified for decades awaiting their discovery by a specialist in a particular plant group. To some small degree that was the case of *Primula* at Harvard when I arrived.

As I worked on my book, for illustrative purposes, I sought to compare as broad a collection of samples as possible, to give me some sense of variation of size and appearance within a species. I discovered that specimens can vary dramatically, almost to the point of being unrecognizable depending on such factors as age of the plant, or the altitude, or time of year of collection.

Herbarium specimens can vary from tiny poorly preserved dry brown scraps, to large magnificent plants still showing colorful inflorescences. Part of my great pleasure was examining large beautifully preserved plants of the high Himalayan and Chinese Petiolarid and Nivalid *primulas*, plants I probably would never see in the wild or in cultivation, at least in such splendor. I also recall dramatic huge dried cushions of such rarities as *Primula dryadifolia* and infinitely small perfect specimens of the Sections Amethystina and Minutissima. A huge plant of *Primula forrestii* with what appeared to be a decades old woody tap root was also memorable. In one office I found what was presumed to be a big part of Joseph Rock's unmounted personal reference collections of plants of many different genera (including *Primulas*) from the alpine areas of western China... they had collector's numbers and nothing else. For a good part of one winter I was fascinated by the process of determining their identities, and creating labels for them.

As I examined all these collections and compared them with the botanical literature I became increasingly aware of how rich the Harvard collection was in hitherto unrecognized duplicate type specimens. Consequently I sought to identify, curate them, and label them for insertion among the recognized type specimens. It was that process that gave me some of my greatest pleasures.

Among the already identified specimens was the type specimen of *Primula japonica* collected by Charles Wright on the first American exploring expedition into Japan in the early 1850s and described by the famed Harvard botanist Asa Gray. To handle the first specimen of what is now such a common garden plant and read the handwriting of such an illustrious friend of Charles Darwin and English botanist J. D. Hooker gave me a feeling of incredible awe.

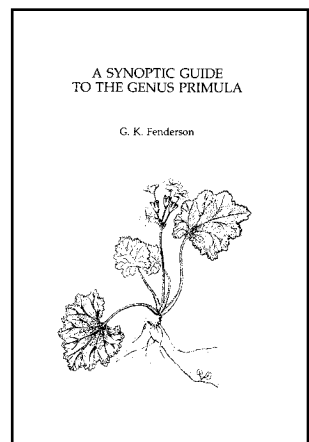
Similarly, it was equally exciting to suddenly come across unrecognized duplicate types of many Himalayan species collected by Hooker himself on his trip to the Himalayas in the 1840s. The list goes on: sheets of plants collected in the mountains of western China in the late 19th century, by the French missionaries, (some of whom were to lose their lives in violent murders), the first collections made of our most familiar and beloved garden primulas gathered by, and annotated by, such luminaries as George Sherriff, F. Kingdon-Ward, George Forrest, Reginald Farrer, Joseph Rock, and Ernest Wilson. American collectors, like Charles Christopher Parry, who is

commemorated in *Primula parryi*, were also well represented and the sense of history and connectedness in handling the very plants they all collected, often under circumstances of great physical hardship, and reading their handwritten notes was daunting. The process of my adding my own annotations to theirs was both exciting and very intimidating.

In addition to the wealth of specimens and archival resources, working in one of the world's great Herbaria had other advantages. I was greatly privileged to have had almost daily and very cordial access to some of the world's most respected botanists and researchers. In particular I remember the indomitable Dr. Bernice Schubert, the first woman allowed to become a member of the New England Botanical Club, Dr. Richard Howard, former director of the Arnold Arboretum and world recognized tropical botanist. I frequently encountered the elderly and distinguished Dr. Richard Evans Schultes, whose publication, which included much first hand knowledge "The Golden Guide to Hallucinogenic Plants", had achieved something of a cult status in the 1960's. He was often seen padding around the halls in his bedroom slippers and long white lab coat. Others were Dr. Shiu- Ying Hu, one of the first women to be granted a Ph.D. in Botany by Harvard, and Dr. Lily May Perry who had worked with Elmer Drew Merrill and described to me a letter from him describing the devastation he felt at the destruction of much of his life's work in the bombing of the Manila herbarium. It was Dr. Perry, who I would sometimes go to, to seek answers to botanical questions. She was a tiny, elderly, extremely demure woman who had a penchant for having long wonderful fully audible botanical conversations aloud with herself while working on specimens alone at her desk. Still professionally active many years after her retirement, she continued to have lunch alone as she had done decades earlier when women, even those with degrees, were not altogether welcome in the then male dominated world of Harvard botany. One day I had a question that involved the Austrian botanist Handel-Mazzetti who had worked on Chinese *primulas*. She led me into the library stacks and showed me an important reference work, unknown to me, relating to Chinese botany that he had authored. She said, as though she were speaking of close personal friend, "He was a very careful worker." And then added, "If you are careful, history will remember you, too.... If not, they will remember that as well." I shall always remember her... it was all part of the great satisfaction of being a small part of the history of that great institution.

For those who are interested in seeing some of these collections on line, I would direct them to <http://cms.huh.harvard.edu/databases/specimens>.

Kris Fenderson's book, *A Synoptic Guide to the Species Primula*, Lawrence, Kansas, Allen Press, 1986 contains line drawings of herbarium specimen and is available from antiquarian book dealers.



Growing Primulas from Seed

CLAIRE COCKCROFT

Growing *primulas* from seed is rewarding for several reasons: seed packets are an economical way to produce a large number of plants; seeds are often the only way to acquire some *primula* species; and finally, seed growing can be quite dramatic. Yes, dramatic! Think of the joy of watching your seedlings come up, the wrath toward pests that tromp through your precious seed pots, the anguish accompanying the dreaded words “damping off”, the triumph of seeing mature plants that you’ve grown from tiny seeds!

I have been growing *primula* species from seed for the past 15 years. My methods have evolved over time as I learned techniques shared by other growers. Luckily, I started with *Primula japonica*, a candelabra that is an easy and reliable grower. In general, though, most primulas are relatively easy to germinate if the seed is fresh or has been stored with care.

Society seed exchanges are excellent sources of primula species and usually ship seeds to their members in early January. I sow primula seed as soon as it is received to take advantage of the cool, damp weather here in the Pacific Northwest. Any seeds received after the first of March are stored for fall sowing in screw-topped jars in a refrigerator (not freezer) to keep them cool and dry.

The very first step I take in sowing seeds is not to prepare pots or sprinkle seed. It is to record what I am planting plus the seed source and other pertinent details, and to make my labels. I use a computer and spreadsheet for this, as they suit my needs well. In the spreadsheet I include a plant’s cultural requirements as an easy reference for when it comes time to pot up or plant out. In the process, I also gain some hints that may help me grow the primulas on more successfully. I prepare my plant labels using the information from the spreadsheet. As I often sow more than a hundred pots of seed in a year, making plant labels is a tedious task. Nowadays I automate the process by using clear laser address labels on plastic plant markers. Each label has the primula name, source, brief description, some cryptic cultural notes, and the date sown.



Photo: Claire Cockcroft

I use 4”Wx4”D plastic pots; these square pots fit nicely into nursery flats and don’t dry out quickly. An added bonus is that the pots are big enough to accommodate many primulas for a full growing season, allowing me to delay repotting until the young plants are larger and more robust. I use a commercial growing medium. Of the many seed and growing mixes available, look for ones that are loose and quick-draining and avoid ones that are heavily fertilized. If additional fertilizer is needed because you delay repotting, you can easily meet the



Photo: Claire Cockcroft

primulas' needs by using a dilute solution of liquid fertilizer during the growing season.

I like to prepare all the seed pots at the same time, filling the pots within a half-inch of the rim and tamping the mix down lightly. Primula seed needs light to germinate, so I top each pot with a thin layer of coarse granite grit before sowing the seed. The grit serves several purposes: it keeps the planting mix damp and in place; I've read it can reflect light onto the seeds; and it seems to slightly inhibit the growth of moss. You can presoak the planting medium by placing the prepared pots in a shallow tray and watering them from the bottom. I will admit I don't always take the time to do this.

Over the years I've learned the foolishness of my ways in sowing seeds too thickly. Crowded seedlings damp off more readily and are difficult to separate. Nowadays I am careful to scatter the seeds evenly and relatively thinly over the grit. After sowing, I set the pots in a shallow tray of water until the planting mix is saturated. I then remove the pots to a nursery flat and sprinkle the grit with a light spray of water. Some growers use a dilute fungicide for this sprinkling as a prophylactic against damping off, though I do not.

After watering, I place the nursery flats on a sunny deck and loosely cover them with a row cover such as Remay®. A row cover allows rain to reach the seeds but reduces its force so seeds are not splashed out of their pots. It provides some protection against extremely low temperature and also provides a bit of shade. Lastly, a row cover prevents the birds from eating seeds and pulling up precious seedlings.

Now comes the watching and the waiting. Luckily for us impatient gardeners, many primulas germinate in a few weeks. For example, this year I sowed *Primula parryi* seeds on January 17 and the first seedlings made their appearance five weeks later on February 21. In another year, PP. *alpicola* and *anisodora* sown on January 5 germinated just three weeks later. In most years, about half of the pots show some signs of germination within three months and most but not all will germinate during the first year. A few recalcitrant types take up to 3 years to finally germinate. After that, I'll toss out the pots and admit defeat.

It is important to keep the pots cool and damp but not soggy while you wait. Primulas are able to withstand cold weather fairly well, but will not tolerate drying out and usually will not germinate in hot weather. I bait for slugs and inspect the pots often, both for signs of germination and for cut worms, slugs, and other pests that can ruin a full pot of primulas in a

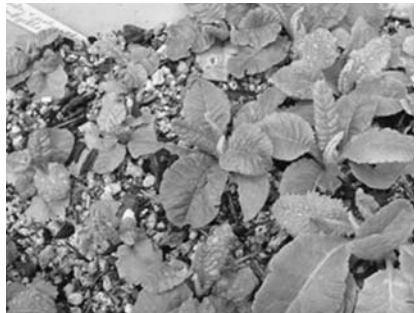


Photo: Claire Cockcroft

single night. When the weather begins to warm, I move my seed pots to a sand bed on the north side of the house where they remain until I prick them out and pot them on or plant them out.

Both Herb Dickson [APS website] and Angela Bradford [APS Quarterly, Volume 55, No. 1, Winter 1997] mention that you may transplant your seedlings when two to four leaves have developed and both mention that some species, especially the small ones, are best left in their seed pots for a full year to give them time to develop. I will add that I find it easier to divide up a pot full of seedlings when the planting mix is slightly damp, not wet. But that is another article for another issue of the APS Quarterly.

Looking for some *Primula* species seeds?

MAEDYTHE MARTIN

Species *Primula* seed is not often found commercially but can be found in many alpine garden society seed exchange lists. Besides the American Primrose Society list, look at the North American Rock Garden Society, the Scottish Rock Garden Society and the Alpine Garden Society in Britain.

If the cost of joining all of these societies is a bit daunting, a few members can join to get one membership, or your local Chapter or gardening group might take out one membership and do a group order. Check out the list below. Many will accept payment on line.

American Primrose Society
Julia Haldorson-APS Membership/Treasurer
PO Box 210913 Auke Bay, Alaska 99821, USA
\$25 per year
<http://www.americanprimrosesociety.org>

North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS)
PO Box 67 Millwood, NY 10546
<https://www.nargs.org>
\$30 per year

The Alpine Garden Society
AGS Centre, Avon Bank, Pershore, Worcestershire,
WR10 3JP United Kingdom
<http://www.alpinegardensociety.net/>

Scottish Rock Garden Club
145 Stonehill Avenue
Birstall, Leicester LE4 4JG United Kingdom
<http://www.srg.uk.org>
Membership 18 pounds or approx \$30

Gardens North
5984 Third Line Road, N
North Gower, Ontario, Canada K0A 2T0
<http://gardensnorth.com/site/>
Check out their list of seeds online.
Printed catalog no longer issued

Karmic Exotix seeds
Andrew Osyany Box 146 Shelburne ON L0N 1S0
Canada

Euroseeds Mojmir Pavelka P.O. Box 95 741 01 Novy
Jicin Czech Republic

Alplains (Western US wild & select garden seeds)
P.O. Box 489 Kiowa, CO 80117-0489
Phone (303) 621-2590 for catalog
www.alplains.com

Franz Hadacek - (wild and garden seeds)
Sindelarg. 14 a-110 Wien (Vienna) Austria
Contact him at <http://www.franz-alpines.org/>

Vojtech Holubec - (wild and garden seeds)
Sidlistni 210, CZ-165 00 Praha 6, Czech Republic
<http://home.tiscali.cz/wseeds/>
email for printed list <holubec@vuvr.cz>
Alternative website - www.soldanella.cz

Josef Jurasek (email for his printed list of wild and
garden seeds) jurasek@nexta.cz

Vladislav Piatek (wild and garden seeds)
Zahumenni 2129 708 00 Ostrava-Poruba
email piatek@worldseeds.cz for the printed list

Seed Exchange Musings

The 2006-2007 seed exchange is over. We shall not bore you with statistics, how many glassine envelopes were used, how many orders were received, details, details. Yet people always want to know who are the winners, who are the losers. The most popular – the most frequently requested -- were the double anything, the blue anything and the anomalous primroses (Jack-in-the-Green, Hose-in-hose). Almost totally ignored were items in the Sikkimensis and Proliferae sections, as well as the Cortusas and Dodecatheons. Only one member requested *P. poissonii*.

But the real winners, those who deserve our praise and our thanks were the donors: Claire Cockroft with *P. marginata*, Maedythe Martin and Rick Lupp with show auriculas, Jay Lunn with his exciting cross *P. polyneura x kisoana*, Ed Buyarski with wild collected *P. cuneifolia*, Arlene Perkins with anomalous primroses and *P. elatior carpatica*, Linda Bailey and Riho Teras with choice Aleuritias, Marty Schafer with blue *P. sieboldii*, A. Lawrence, Susan Gray, M. Kuchel, T. Laskiewicz and of course Ian Scott who always contribute many true to name rare species. A round of applause for these generous individuals!

The seed list was perhaps shorter than usual, and certainly so was the list of donors. A contributing cause was the weather, which last year was not favorable for *Primulas*. We observed the same effect on other seed lists, in particular the fabled seed list of the SRGC that we always look at with admiration, awe and envy. *P. aureata?* *P. edgeworthii?* *P. nipponica?* were offered by SRGC in 2001-2002, not in 2006. But they were offering *P. dickiena*, *P. eximia*, *P. whitei*, and many more such treasures. Of course, we console ourselves thinking that in Scotland they can grow everything! Yet, we have often wondered how it is that APS rarely, if ever, offers *P. allionii*: it is widely grown, and it must be setting seeds if one judges by the number of named forms commercially available.

What is more puzzling is that fewer members than usual requested seeds, and some seemed very hesitant. Yet, growing *Primulas* from seed is easy (bringing the seedlings to maturity and flowering state may be a different story, as we all know.) Old stories persist: 20 years ago, *P. kisoana* had a terrible reputation, it was not setting seed. When it did, the seeds didn't germinate. In an article on that topic, N. Deno had observed one couldn't find seeds of *P. kisoana* in the various seed exchange lists. Nowadays we know differently: just look and recent seed lists!

All the plants listed in a seed exchange list are obviously being grown, and hopefully set seeds. Is there a better way to become the proud owner of exquisite, different or unusual species, and maybe, with some luck, of an outstanding new form or hybrid? Get some seed, sow them, and try for yourself.

-Seed Exchange Committee

Micropropagation

As a follow up to the article on B&B Labs and tissue culture, anyone interested in further reading may like to try to find an article titled, “Auricula Research at Wye College -- a Beginning” by Dr. Frank Taylor, *Yearbook*, Southern Section NAPS, 1989, p.38-44. This has more scientific information on the culture in sterile medium, with photographs.

In Memorium

It is with sadness that we report the death of Dennis Oakley in December 2006. Dennis, with John Kerridge of Vancouver, was one of the founding members of the B.C. Primula Group. He and his wife Renee kept the Group running smoothly for many years. Dennis will be missed.

The Maguire Primrose

Jay Lunn tells me that he has found and photographed *Primula maguirei*, and told us about it at the APS show in Vancouver in 2002 – I should pay attention. At least someone in APS has visited it and photographed it in its habitat!

Staying in Touch

You will see the website report in this issue, and I encourage you to look at the APS web page soon. Susan Gray has done a great job putting it together and there are many features we all can use. If you have not received your PIN number for access to the Member’s Area of the web page, be sure and contact her at briarwood@ns.sympatico.ca. There are special “chats with an expert” scheduled, so be sure to log on to see when the next one is, and if you can, join it.

If you are so inclined, send your e-mail address to the treasurer, Julia Halderson, or to Susan Gray, to be included in a member’s list of e-mails for notification of special items or topics. It was helpful for Susan when she sent out the member’s passwords. The information will be kept confidential to APS.

New website for the Juneau Chapter

The Juneau chapter of the APS has a new website that looks just great. Lots of information and great photos to be found at www.alaskaprimroses.org.



By MICHAEL PLUMB

North American Primulas by Lieutenant-Commander

C. R. Worth, U.S.N.R.,
Annapolis

*Excerpt from Volume 2, Issue 2
(October 1944) - pages 19-20*

Primula parryi

The stalwart of the American species, *P. Parryi*, is found throughout the central Rockies. I believe it has been found in northern New Mexico, and I have seen it on the Frisco Peaks, near Flagstaff, Arizona, where it appears in the most robust of its many incarnations. Its northern limit seems to be in the Tetons, and climbers along the Cascade Trail there, have it for company much of the way, until above the timberline it flows all over the more level spots. An old record of its collection in southern Montana seems unsubstantiated by later explorations. It makes a thick crown from which rise almost upright, but curving over at the tips, long leaves of a rather dark green, and bears on stems that vary from barely a foot to well over two, great heads of inch-

wide flowers of a most intense and vivid crimson, and always seems to flower in great profusion regardless of good or bad season. Sometimes, particularly on the Frisco Peaks, it has a regrettable odor of skunk. In its chosen spots it seems completely indifferent to soil or surroundings, though it usually appears at or just below timberline and does not wander into the true alpine zone, at least in its more southerly stations. But I have found it along woodland streams, in three inches of melted snow above timberline (in the Tetons), in volcanic ash, on granite, on red shale, and even clinging to limestone cliffs. Such a plant one would at once assume to be adaptable to gardens, but that is not its record. Mr. C. T. Musgrave wrote me that one collection of seed had germinated and grown so marvellously that he had given a number of plants to the Royal Horticultural Society, where its freedom of growth was apparently greatly admired. This is in the first season: next season he reported that it was not doing so well, and then silence. I have one plant at home (the only survivor) that still exists in a sand bed after some years, and annually puts out leaves about an inch long. Mrs. G .R. Marriage succeeds with it in her mile-high garden at Colorado Springs, but in an unguarded moment she admitted to me that it makes very poor growth even at such an altitude. This flamboyant giant seems to pine for its heights, and will never become a familiar plant in gardens, I fear.

Soldanelloides or Trying to Grow the Impossible!

IAN SCOTT

It must be admitted, we gardeners are a fickle lot. I was lucky enough to start started growing alpines just as it became possible to explore Nepal and the Himalayas, and collect seed from these remote, exotic locations. Today the focus has shifted towards the floral treasures of China and opportunities to raise ethereal soldanelloid primula are few and far between. I am only aware of six species having been in recent cultivation, namely: *P. reidii*; *wollastonii*; *wigramiana*; *buryana*, *cawdoriana* and *klattii*. And of these, only *Primula reidii* has been in general circulation.

One of the first plants that I bought was *Primula klattii* or *Primula uniflora* as it was being called at that time. The seed had come from the Makalu expedition (EMAK), and the nurseryman allowed only one plant per customer. It flowered well in its first spring, and I still have a photograph of the plant with its three pinky-purple bell shapes flowers. Having only one plant, it naturally set no viable seed, and heavy autumn frosts killed off the winter resting bud. However all was not lost, as the four remaining roots each produced a new bud the following spring, so that by mid summer I had four small plants instead of one. Unfortunately none of them had sufficient vigour to survive a second winter, and I have never seen the species on offer again.

This early experience taught me two things. Firstly, it is more important to keep a colony of plants together so that seed is produced and distributed, rather than to appear generous by passing on a plant or two which will ultimately perish without progeny. Secondly, the possibility of propagation from roots needs more investigation.

The other *Primula* in this group which is stoloniferous, is *Primula wollastonii*, but it must be admitted that this is not easy to satisfy. Although I have managed to get seed-raised plants up to large flowering crowns, I have never been able to produced viable seed and so continue the cycle. The reason for this is that *Primula wollastonii* tends to flower late in the year and, unless you have at least a dozen plants, you are unlikely to have two plants flowering at the same time. In theory this problem can be overcome by storing pollen on a fine paintbrush in the fridge. However, the further complication is that even if pollination has taken place, the seed capsules often rot in the autumn wet before the seed can mature. Under these circumstances the possibility of raising additional plants from root tissue is extremely attractive, even if they are clones of their parent.

I have no idea if anyone has ever investigated which factor (or factors?) makes the roots produce these offsets, but I have seen it happen for two reasons. Firstly, there is an advantage in growing the plants in smaller pots, because, as soon as the roots reach the sides of the pot and change direction they put up leaf shoots. This does not seem to happen unless root growth is impeded, and does not seem to happen in the open garden, unless the soil is very stony. The second occasion is when a plant loses its crown, for instance after flowering. When this occurs in the open garden a fairy ring of plantlets will often appear, surrounding the site of the “dead” plant. The problem is what to do next. The temptation is to separate the plantlets and give them individual pots, but in my experience this is seldom successful. It is probably better to either leave alone, if in the open garden, or if in a pot, transfer the whole lot to a larger container and let it grow on undisturbed for as long as possible. It is worth noting that John Richards argues that this propensity to produce offsets may be the main reason for the poor flowering of this species in cultivation.

Primula reidii, which comes from the relatively drier western Himalayas, is much easier than either of the previous species, and is a delight for its perfection in size, shape and perfume. I have grown over eight hundred plants in a season and the method is quite simple. The seed is surface-sown onto moist peat-based compost in February and left, uncovered, in an unheated greenhouse where usually germinates in profusion by early March. As the first of the true leaves gets to a reasonable size, the seedlings are individually transplanted into 15ml modules. Even at this stage, the root can be up to 2cm in length and may have started to branch, so that care has to be taken during the process, but it is much easier than waiting until later when the roots of several plants have inter-twined. After another six to eight weeks the seedlings are root-bound in their modules, and are easy to remove and transfer to 7cm pots. These spend the summer and autumn in a stock bed lined with moist sand with some net shading during extremely hot weather. By mid October the plants are building up their resting crowns, and at this stage they need to be covered to keep them dry over winter. *Primula reidii* resents any excess moisture at this time. Soggy compost will result in root loss as it freezes, but roots in slightly moist compost will survive -20°C with no difficulty. Soggy foliage immediately causes fungal growth and crown rot, destroying the whole plant.

The variety of *Primula reidii* most often grown is “var. *williamsii*” which has been in cultivation for a long time, and this is a much “better doer” than plants raised from wild collected seed. The reason for this is unclear. Perhaps our method of slowly drying the near bursting seed heads is the reason. Perhaps it is just that over countless years, we have been constantly selecting the better and stronger plants for our seed. Whatever the reason, wild collected seed normally appearing as “var. *reidii*” seems to be trickier. I also have a problem in identifying a real difference between the two varieties. I would like to think that the foliage of “var. *reidii*” was a slightly more blue-green, than the crisper bright green of “var. *williamsii*”, but I

could just be kidding myself. One difference has been in flower colour.

It is reported that “var *reidii*” is always white or cream, whereas “var *williamsii*” in the eastern areas of its distribution is predominantly pale blue. However there is also a white sport of “var *williamsii*” and it is quite likely that the plants now in cultivation are a mixture of these two varieties. I purchased my first plants from Inschriach Nursery in the Scottish Highlands many years ago and these plants had flowers with a deep, rich blue colour. However, I was soon smitten by the desire to purchase a wonderful cream flowered plant as a contrast to the blue. This was a foolishly mistake, and within two years all of my seed raised plants were either white or a pale blue in colour. Although the pale blue is attractive, it is not a patch on the deep colour of its long lost ancestors, and I have been selecting a deep blue line ever since, but it is a long process to get back what I have lost.

Primula wigramiana was a new plant to me this last year. The seed had been a Chris Chadwell collection merely identified as *Primula* species, and as the plants grew I thought that they looked like very sturdy *Primula reidii*. So you can imagine my surprise and delight when they flowered. The flowers are very similar to those of *Primula reidii*, but are heavily toothed rather than notched and most attractive. Certainly they have done well outside, in deep, humus rich soil, partially shaded with rhododendrons. The question is now, whether these mature plants will come through a Scottish winter in the open garden? Some have a glass cloche over them for protection, and others have been left without cover. It is now March, and in a few weeks time we should see the first signs of growth, and our knowledge of their horticultural requirements will take one small step forward.

I have also grown *Primula buryana* from seed on two occasions, but the plants were feeble, and although they flowered, it was obvious they needed a lot more summer mist and winter snow than I could provide. Neither time did the plants survive their first winter, but perhaps I will have more success the next time. Finally I must relate that I just about despair of ever getting *Primula caudoriana* to grow for me. Others have been successful, and Inschriach used to have this species for sale on a regular basis. Its leaves are like a soft felt and the flowers are just amazing: almost crystalline in appearance, as if they were sculptured from pale rosy quartz. The downside is that they seem to be prone to greenfly attack, viruses, damping off, hot summers, bitter winters. In fact anything that does not match its natural habitat.

But then, that’s where we started. We are a right lot of chumps: we revel in the challenge of transposing plants from their high alpine locations and dream that we can satisfy them in our back gardens.



IAN
SCOTT'S
reidii,
wigramiana
& *klattii*





DAVID RANKIN

- surprises at the show and in the field







Photo: Riho Teras

THE AMERICAN

First Annu



Photo: Riho Teras

The First Prize winner of each category will have their photo featured on the cover of the Spring, Summer and Fall 2007 issues of *Primroses*. The photos on these pages are the Second and Third Prize winners for the categories ‘Primulas Grown in my Garden’ and ‘Primulas from Other Gardens’. The following page features thumbnails of the First Prize winners, along with our judge’s three Awards of Merit.

AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY'S 2006 Annual Photo Contest

Page 20

'Primulas Grown in my Garden'

Second Prize

Riho Teras - *P. denticulata*

Third Prize

Riho Teras - *P. alpicola*



Photo: Becky Carls

Page 21

'Primulas from Other Gardens'

Second Prize

Becky Carls - *denticulata* grouping

Third Prize

Becky Carls - primrose border

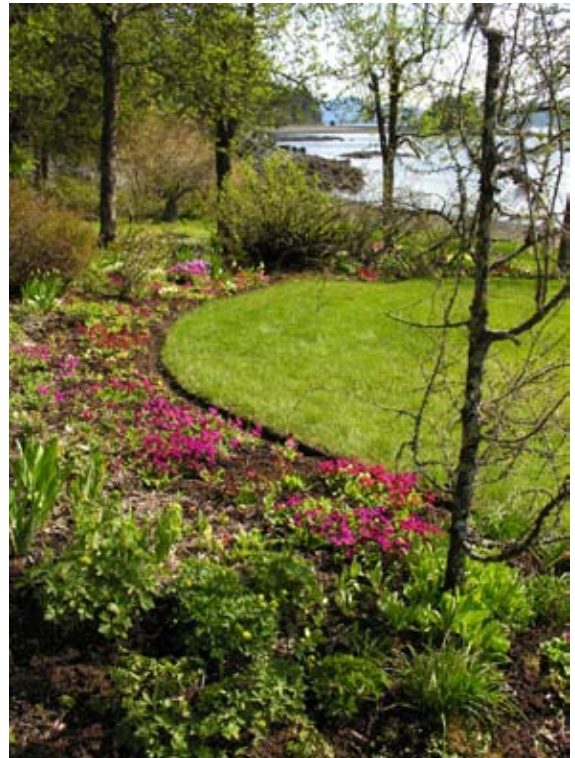


Photo: Becky Carls

Page 23 (following page)

First Prizes (left column)

'Primulas Grown from APS Seed Exchange'

Amy Olmsed - seedling

'Primulas Grown in my Garden'

Becky Carls - *P. denticulata*

'Primulas from Other Gardens'

Becky Carls - Primulas around tree

Awards of Merit (right column)

P. scotica - Riho Teras

P. denticulata and butterfly - Becky Carls

Panorama of primroses - Becky Carls

First Place Winners and Awards of Merit



Photo: Amy Olmsted



Photo: Becky Carls



Photo: Riho Teras



Photo: Becky Carls



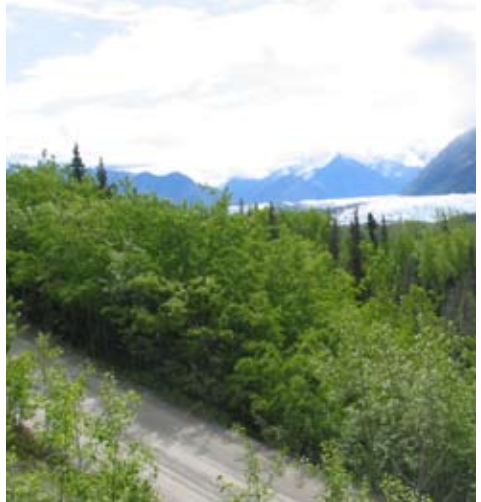
Photo: Becky Carls



Photo: Becky Carls

ALASKA

where the open road meets cultivation



The 2007 American Primrose Society's National Show is being held in Juneau, Alaska, where attendees will find themselves tempted by an array of offerings including not only our National Primrose Show, but a banquet speaker, seminar, plant sale, and garden tours. Visit www.alaskaprimroses.org and follow the link to 2007 APS National Show for more information



All Photos: Robert Tonkin

2007
AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY
NATIONAL SHOW
Juneau, Alaska

PLANT PORTRAIT

Primula albenensis

JOYCE CARRUTHERS



Photos above: Joyce Carruthers

Photos above: Terry Mitchell

The first news about these two new European *primulas* appeared in the Alpine Garden Society *Bulletin*, September, 2001, in an article by Fritz Kummert, an expert on the Auriculastrum Section. This was followed a few years later by an article, also in the AGS *Bulletin*, written by Henry and Margaret Taylor, the famous Scottish rock gardeners. It described their expedition to find and see *Primula*

albenensis and *Primula grignensis*. Zdenek Zvolanek and I were thus inspired to go and find them ourselves.

We travelled to Lake Como in Northern Italy. Since the massif Grigna was more accessible by car to a higher elevation from the west we climbed the highest peak called Grigna Septentrionale in the hope of finding *Primula grignensis*. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful. Then we approached Mt. Grigna Septentrionale from the northeast and, lo and behold, we found it growing on huge limy conglomerate boulders set in meadows of *Helleborus niger* above the treeline. They were growing in north facing fissures and chinks on the boulders. The plants we saw were in seed and rosettes were small, up to 3 cm. The flowers on 3 cm tall scapes are relatively large and pink with a white eye. Seeds from our collection were given to the well-known Canadian nurseryman Roger Barlow. A plant from him grows healthily in my east facing crevice garden in Victoria BC Canada, which is rarely watered. In the second year of cultivation the plant flowered exceedingly well.

A party of Czech rock gardeners climbed Mt. Grigna Meridionale and found it at approximately 2400 m. in northern crevices.

When we set out to find *Primula albenensis*, we made the same mistake by looking for it from the west of Monte Alben. It was an enjoyable but fruitless climb. Our second attempt was from the north and we were successful. The habitat of this saxatile primula was in deciduous forest at approximately 1700 m. elevation. Steep limestone rock walls provided many deep fissures and clefts well populated with *P. albenensis* and *Cyclamen purpurascens*. The cyclamen was in flower and the primula in seed. In some cooler cliffs *P. albenensis* was near the highly regarded *Physophlexis comosa* (the most popular saxatile *Phyteuma*). The population was in summer shade and cool humidity, which accounted for the larger plants with larger summer leaves. This primula has marginate farinose leaves more noticeably farinose in spring at which time the leaves are much smaller. The flowers have a diameter slightly more than 2 cm and are usually purple-violet or violet-blue.

This species is amenable to pot culture and most suitable for competitive shows. The best stock we know is at the nursery of Gert Stopp near Chemnitz in Germany where I saw an albino form of the delightful *P. albenensis*.

NEW MEMBERS since February 2007

- 2009 Les Allen, "Windy Ridge", Llandrindad Wells, Powys LD1 5NY Wales U.K.
- 2007 Pat Anderson, 3849 Apollo Drive, Anchorage, Alaska 99504-4503 U.S.A.
- 2007 Stephanie Aylward, 250 Wood Street, Woodville, Massachusetts 01748 U.S.A.
- 2007 Jean Bettin, P. O. Box 327, Brownsville, California 95919, U.S.A.
- 2007 Nancy Galvin, 52 Sunset Hill Road, Simsbury, Connecticut 06070 U.S.A.
- 2007 Rose M. Gansen, 4149 Hillcrest Drive, Riceville, Iowa 50466 U.S.A.
- 2007 Ursula Ravencraft, 458 East Second Avenue, Colville, Washington 99114 U.S.A.
- 2007 Teal Schneider, 259 Black Cherry Lane, Friedheim, Missouri 63747 U.S.A.
- 2007 Vicki Tomsha, P. O. Box 1418, Deer Park, Washington 99006 U.S.A.
- 2007 Helen Wetherell, 3140 Aladdin Road, Colville, Washington 99114 U.S.A.

Surprising primulas

DAVID W. H. RANKIN

“Maybe one day I will surprise you by letting you have an article before your deadline.” I was writing to let your editorial committee member know that I wouldn’t be able to write something in time for the next issue. You know the problems: we are all busy, and I hadn’t had time to think properly about what would be my subject - perhaps some recent introduction from the wild, but what? So many of them are difficult to grow, and might not interest many of the readers. Or maybe I could write about growing primulas in our Kevock Garden Plants nursery – and torment you all with wonderful plants that we cannot – yet – routinely export to the USA or Canada? Too cruel! Then I realised: why not surprise your editor with something about primulas that have surprised us?

About ten years ago we were walking through a wet meadow in northwest Yunnan in China. There were masses of primulas in flower. There was *Primula sikkimensis*, with its scented, hanging, pale yellow flowers, growing in the wettest places. It is extremely common and widespread, occurring from western China right across to Nepal, and from relatively low altitudes to high, rocky places, at 4500 m or more. Then there were two deep-pink-flowered species. One of them was *Primula secundiflora*, which has hanging flowers on long pedicels, and might be taken to be a member of the Sikkimensis section, but details of its structure show that it is one of the candelabra primulas, in the section Proliferae. The failure ever to find a hybrid with *Primula sikkimensis*, despite the fact that they very often grow together, provides strong supporting evidence for them being in different sections. But the third species, also common, growing there was *Primula poissonii* – another member of the Proliferae. This has really bright pink flowers with a yellow eye, and although its flowering season overlaps with that of *P. secundiflora*, it can continue flowering until late autumn.

As we walked through this sea of pink and yellow flowers, one plant suddenly caught my eye. It was of the candelabra type, a little taller than the other, and its flowers were dark red. Its foliage was like those of *Primula secundiflora* and *P. poissonii* (which are rather similar). Could it be the hybrid? I photographed it, alone and then with its two putative parents. (I have to admit to a little artistic cheating: one of the parents had to be ‘persuaded’ to take part in the photo-shoot.) We didn’t see any other similar plant that day, but found a second one a few days later. Then we got our eyes trained to pick up the dark flowers and taller flower stems, and spotted two more, even (this time) from a moving vehicle.

When we returned home, we got the books out. The hybrid, given the name *Primula* × *dschungdienensis*, had been found and described by Heinrich Handel-Mazzetti,

who had gone to visit China in 1913, but he had been unable to return until the First World War ended. I have not found any report of it in cultivation, either from wild origin or from hybridisation in the garden, nor any more recent record of it in the wild. It appears to be a robust plant, with a colour quite distinct from other candelabras, so perhaps someone with some spare time and a paintbrush could do us all a favour....

The name 'dschungdienensis' is one of many attempts to transliterate the Chinese name of the nearby town into Latin. The same word appears with different spelling in species names such as *Crataegus chungtienensis* and *Incarvillea zhongdianensis*. A much older name for the town is celebrated in *Aconitum piepunense*. Recently, in an attempt to boost the tourist trade, Zhongdian reinvented itself as Shangri La (Xiang Ge Li La, pronounced shee-ang guh lee lah; go on, say it quickly – it's lovely!) And yes, I am sorry to say, some wayward botanist has already applied the epithet *shangrilaensis* to a newly discovered alpine plant.

Hybrid candelabra primulas are common in cultivation. There are some well-loved, named hybrids, such as Primula 'Inverewe' (believed by some to be *P. pulverulenta* × *cockburniana*, and by others to involve *P. bulleyana* and/or its subspecies *beesiana* rather than *pulverulenta*), a vigorous plant with incredibly bright orange flowers. In some places there are great swarms of hybrids, as at Harlow Carr garden in the north of England. Reading the literature one would conclude that the species are so promiscuous that it would be difficult to grow more than one in a garden without them becoming hopelessly mixed up. But although we grow most of the candelabra species in our garden, chance hybrids are surprisingly rare; and when they occur, they are removed. The one most frequently found is *Primula* × *chunglenta* (*P. chungensis* × *pulverulenta*). I don't particularly like it myself, but it is vigorous, and when we included plants in our display at the Gardening Scotland show last year, many people asked for it – in vain! Like Primula 'Inverewe', it is sterile, and so it takes time to build up a stock. In the nursery, where we grow thousands of candelabras from our garden seed every year, hybrids are almost unknown. Once I found something that must have been *Primula secundiflora* × *wilsonii*, but other than that I don't think that there have been any. In the garden we have twice come across plants that we have deduced to be *Primula* × *anisodoxa*. This name is derived from the parents, *P. anisodora* and *P. helodoxa*. Both these names are now out of date, being now defined as *P. wilsonii* var. *anisodora* and part of *P. prolifera* respectively – but the combination in the hybrid name retains its validity. We grew one of these to a large clump, and then split it up and gave most of it away. I doubt whether any still remains.

In the wild, the only other hybrid I have encountered is between what used to be separate species, the orangey-yellow *Primula bulleyana* and the purply-pink *P. beesiana*, and is called *P. × bullesiana*. These appear in colours in the purple – red – pink – orange – yellow range in the wild, and are major contributors to the even

wider range of colours seen in the cultivated strains of candelabra primulas, such as the Harlow Carr hybrids.

Hybrids excepted, wild populations of candelabra primulas usually have quite uniform colours, and one is always surprised to find one that is distinct. I have just once seen a pale pink *Primula poissonii* in the wild, which stood out clearly from its neighbours, and a pale pink *Primula secundiflora* once confounded us by turning up in a batch of plants from wild seed. There are also white-flowered *Primula bulleyana* (subsp. *beesiana* var. *leucantha*) in the wild. But such occurrences are rare, and I have not heard of such anomalies turning up spontaneously in gardens. However, a curious colour break did occur in *Primula cockburniana*. This is a brilliant orange species, much smaller than most of its cousins, and short-lived. In a batch of plants raised from seed we purchased at Inverewe garden in the north of Scotland about twenty years ago, there were one or two with yellow flowers. In all other respects they appeared to be normal *Primula cockburniana*, not hybrids – and they were fertile. Seeds from orange and yellow forms were sown together, and we raised many plants of each colour. Then we kept the yellow-form seed separate, and found that it was breeding true. We have managed to keep the two strains going for decades, and now raise substantial batches of them each year. The plants are small, so they are usually planted five to a pot, which gives a much more presentable product, and keeps the customers happy! I have a vague recollection of reading something about a yellow-flowered form years ago, but since then I have not been able to find any report of it. Was I dreaming? If anyone comes across an old description, please write and let me know about it. Give me a surprise!



Photo: David Rankin

Tiny, Influential *Primula juliae*

JUDITH SELLERS

When we look at the influence *P. juliae* has had on primrose growing and breeding since its relatively recent introduction, it becomes apparent that this tiny member of the *Primula* (*Vernales*) section has been very important in creating many of the best garden plants we have today.

Most sources indicate that *P. juliae* was discovered by Julia Mloskossjewicz (or Mloskosewitsch), the daughter of the Polish aristocrat, botanist, and forest inspector Ludwig Mloskossjewicz, near wet stones eighty miles east northeast of Tiflis in the Eastern Caucasus. Records vary as to whether it was April 20 of 1900 or 1901, but agree that the first documented showing of the plant in England was by a Mr. Baker at the RHS on April 2, 1912 and that the plant was given an Award of Merit. Mr. Baker probably received his plant or seeds from the Oxford Botanical Garden where Prof. Kustensow of the Dorpat Botanic Garden, who first described and named the plant, had sent plants and/or seeds in August of 1911.

The bright magenta color, relative ease of culture and increase, hardiness and distinctive appearance of *P. juliae* attracted the attention of amateur and professional gardeners. *P. juliae* became the most commonly grown species of *Primula*. British and other European hybridizers were soon busy crossing the miniature plant with many of the other species in the *Primula* section, and after WW II, American enthusiasts were doing the same.

The British firm of Waterer Sons and Crispin Ltd. won an Award of Merit for a cross named 'Crispin' in 1916. In 1918 the Austrian head gardener at the Pruhonice Castle crossed *P. juliae* with *P. vulgaris coerulea* and raised hybrids he called *P.x pruhoniciana*. A hybrid cross between *P. juliae* and a crimson form of *P. acaulis* resulted in 'Wanda,' which won the Award of Merit in 1919, and was described as 'the most striking of the many hybrids so far exhibited'. Doretta Klaber said 'Wanda' is 'bright and glowing, like a glass of wine seen against the light.' The vigor, floriferous habit, rapidity of increase, tolerance of sunlight, and attractive color of 'Wanda' led to its extensive use as a breeder's plant, and eventually to an entire strain of plants now called 'Wanda Hybrids.' In 1920, George Arends in Germany bred *P. juliae* with other *Primulas* to achieve an extensive color range of plants he named *P.x helenae*, after his wife, Helen. Even some of the Garryard primroses may have *P. juliae* in their backgrounds. Florence Bellis used *P. juliae* only as a pollen parent, as her plants were grown in too much shade to set seed pods, but some valuable crosses such as 'Fireflies' resulted.

By 1958, Roy Genders described over 90 named garden plants claiming *P. juliae* 'blood', and wrote that there were over 200 kinds grown in gardens at that time, but

that many of those did not retain the true small form of the species. Many of those plants have been lost over time, but in recent years, many more have been bred and registered as having *P. juliae* as a grandparent or great grandparent.

The hybrid crosses from *P. juliae* are known by various names depending on where the original crosses were made. 'Wanda' was bred in Britain. *P.x pruhoniana* came from an Austrian Botanic garden and *P.x helenae* from Germany. Plants with *P. juliae* in their backgrounds are often called 'Wanda Hybrids', 'Julianas', 'Julian Hybrids', or 'Julie crosses'.

A French botanist described *P. juliae* as 'petite, vivacious, rustic, with a rampant rhizome.' The charm of the species lies in its exceedingly neat habit, with finely toothed waxy heart or kidney shaped leaves of only one half to three quarters of an inch long, springing not from rosettes, but from the creeping rootstocks. The foliage has a reddish bronze tint and spreads into a flatish mat when grown well. The rosy purple flowers are borne singly on one-inch stems, and are darker and redder near the bright yellow five pointed star eye. Each petal is heart shaped with a notch at the outer edge.

P. Juliae is now listed as rare or endangered in most of the area where it grew wild, and is protected by law in Georgia and the Northern Caucasus. This species grows well in pots but flowers better when grown in damp mossy ground or on wet rocky slopes. In shade, there will be more foliage, and in sun, more blossom. A cool moist root run (but not dank soggy soil) is essential if the plant is to make enough root growth in the heat of summer to remain anchored solidly during freeze-thaw cycles of winter. A good mulch, half to one inch deep, of sandy leaf mold or grit in spring and again in fall will conserve water and protect the roots in winter. The plants should be monitored for vine weevils among the roots in areas affected by that pest. *P. juliae* suffers if crowded by larger plants but needs only minimal, if any, fertilizing if it is to remain tiny. Division is best done in spring after flowering if more plants are desired or if the roots have become crowded.

P. juliae is not the showiest flower but it is one of the most valuable species of *Primula*. The plants look well in drifts along a border, with other primroses by a cool doorstep, or in the rock garden under high shade with snowdrops, scillas, crocuses and small daffodils, as it blooms in early spring. This little plant has added vitality and color to many a garden, and we thank Prof. Kustensow for Latinizing the discoverer's first name, as we would be unlikely to remember to ask for *P. mloskossjewiczii* from any seed list or nursery.

Sources:

'Quarterly of the American Primrose Society'. Vol 6, #2: Vol 23, #1

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Ward, Peter. Primroses and Polyanthus, B.T. Batsford Ltd. London, 1997

Chapter News

JUNEAU CHAPTER UPDATE

The Juneau Chapter of the American Primrose Society is pleased to announce to the membership the official launch of our Chapter website. We encourage all APS members to log on to www.alaskaprimroses.org and spend some time at our new site. Basic *primula* overviews, soil, growing from seed, and “How To” articles can be found there in addition to a large photo gallery. Alaska native primula, our calendar of events, Chapter history, current projects, Spring plant sale and current information for the upcoming National Show to be held in mid May are within easy reach.

In addition to the articles and photo gallery we have built and are maintaining a Forum to be called “Primula alaskana”. Topics include: New To Growing Primroses; General Discussion Growing Primula for both Southeast and Southcentral Alaska; Garden Design and Landscaping; Primula Identification; Literature Art and History; Seed Propagation; The Show Bench and We Grow Auricula. Registering is easy. We hope you will stop by and say hello or join in an ongoing discussion.

To round out the site you can find our most recent newsletter which lets members know of recent changes and additions to the site. We will make every effort to keep the site current, interesting, informative and fun. Please visit us when you can!

Robert Tonkin
President, Juneau Alaska Chapter

OUR OLDEST CHAPTER: TACOMA

The Tacoma Chapter has been active since the 1950s. It is the only original West Coast chapter still in existence. The co-presidents, Cy Happy and Candy Strickland, have been members of the American Primrose Society for over 50 years, and still maintain their interest in the national society. Cy Happy is a respected and highly experienced APS judge. Both Cy and Candy have done much work as officers of the Society and members of the Editorial Committee of the APS Quarterly.

Members meet the fourth Thursday of each month, except July, August, and December (This year, however, members will meet for the annual Thanksgiving-Christmas pot-luck on the first Thursday in December instead of in November, to avoid conflict with Thanksgiving.). Meetings are held at the home of Candy Strickland at 6911-104th Street East, Puyallup, Washington, beginning at 11:30 am. Members bring a bag lunch and dessert, and beverages are provided.

In March, the meeting will focus on seed planting, transplanting, and dividing.

The annual sale will be held in conjunction with the Chrysanthemum Society from 9:00 am to 4 pm on May 5th at 4101-East 72nd Street in Tacoma, Washington. Among plants for sale will be double acaulis and candelabras.

Currently, members are busy planting the seeds that they have just received from the APS Seed Exchange.

The Chapter presently does not hold an annual show, but I remember the show they organized at the Western Washington Fair's Expo Hall in spring 2000 (See Primroses quarterly, Vol. 58, No. 2, Spring 2000). The hall was shared with a number of other plant societies, but even if I hadn't been a Primula enthusiast, I would have been drawn like others to the splendid benching and superb specimens on display. I was truly inspired. I do hope the Tacoma Chapter will resume holding shows in the near future.

Michael Plumb

Join the
National
Auricula
& Primula
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Midland & West Section



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: Mr. K. Leeming, 3 Daisybank Drive, Sandbach, Cheshire. CW11 4JR
Overseas memberships £7.00,
Please make checks payable to NAPS.
www.auriculas.org.uk

American Primrose Society

Minutes of the Board Meeting

February 24th, 2007

The meeting was held online and by telephone.

Voting board members present: Linda Bailey (Director), Rodney Barker (Director), Ed Buyarski (President), Mark Dyen (Director), Susan Gray (Director and Website), Julia Haldorson (Treasurer), Matt Mattus (Editor), Arlene Perkins (Director), Michael Plumb (Secretary), Judith Sellers (Vice President)

Others present: Maedythe Martin (President of BC Group, and member of Editorial Committee)

Meeting opened at 2:10 Pacific Time

1. **The Minutes of October 15, 2006** Accepted as presented (Mark / Judith)
2. **Treasurer's Report**
 - Total liabilities and equity as of Dec. 31, 2006: \$22,910.55 [Dec. 31, 2005: \$19,678.63]
 - Total income less expenses for the quarter Oct. 1, 2006 to Dec. 31, 2006: (\$589.11).
 - Membership: As of Feb. 2007: 440 [Oct. 2006: 429]. Matt revealed that he had obtained permission from the North American Rock Garden Society to place a free quarter-page ad in their journal to solicit more members. **ACTION:** Matt will design the ad. **ACTION:** Rodney will contact NAPS Southern Section in UK about a free exchange of membership ads. **ACTION:** To further save costs, Matt and Julia will see that membership renewal notices are sent out by email as far as possible.
 - Printing: **ACTION:** Matt will investigate possible savings from a) switching quarterly printing from offset to digital direct-to-plate and b) reducing number of copies. May be possible to reduce costs to \$2000 per issue.
 - Advertising revenue: All has been collected apart from payment from one nursery. Rodney will work with Matt to look after advertising.
 - The Treasurer's report was accepted (Michael / Judith).

3. **Committee Reports**

Primroses Quarterly: Editor's Report (Matt and Maedythe)

- Spring and Summer 2006 have still not been sent outside U.S.A. They will be sent as a package of three with the Fall quarterly.
- Winter issue is ready to go to the printer.
- Matt is unable to continue as Editor. **MOTION** (Judith / Michael): To pay Jane Guild (interim editor of *Primroses* quarterly and non-member) \$1050 for her work on the Fall 2006, Winter 2007 and Spring 2007 issues of *Primroses* (i.e., \$350 for each issue), with the amount of \$350 to be paid for her work on each of any subsequent issues. Carried.

Website

- The Board expressed many thanks to Susan Gray for the high quality of the website.

Seed Exchange

- The Board recognized the excellent work of M. Jacques Mommens in taking over

the Seed Exchange at such short notice after the Juneau Chapter indicated that they were unable to proceed with it. The Board also expressed thanks to Jacques for his interim report on the Exchange. The Board expressed the hope that Jacques would oversee the Seed Exchange for 2007-2008.

- The Board discussed simplifying the pricing of seed. **ACTION:** Judith, Mark, Linda and Michael volunteered to consult with Jacques on this. Susan as Webmaster will be invited to join this group. Group to report at May meeting.

Judging Committee

- Ed has appointed Dorothy Springer to be Chair of the Judging Committee. The Board expressed thanks to Dorothy for taking on this work. Ed said that Dorothy and Robert would bring finalized judging standards to the Board.

4. Unfinished Business

Changes to the Constitution and By-laws

- The proposed amendments had been emailed to the Board prior to the meeting. After some discussion and suggestions for improvements, it was decided to table this matter for a special meeting on March 17 at 2:00 pm Pacific DS Time.

2007 Ballot for Directors and Officers

- Of the Officers, the President (Ed Buyarski) and Treasurer (Julia Haldorson) are standing down. An invitation has been extended to a possible candidate for President, and Robert Tonkin is standing for Treasurer. Judith Sellers (Vice-president) and Michael Plumb (Secretary) are standing again. Four Directors' positions need to be filled, as Susan Gray, Mark Dyen and Arlene Perkins are standing down, and there is still no replacement for Richard Austin. However, Susan and Mark will continue to have a vote as Webmaster and President of the New England Chapter respectively.
- **ACTION:** Ed appointed Judith, Maedythe and Michael to be Nominating Committee. to solicit and accept nominations.

Photo Contest

- There were 18 entries. Ed appointed Matt. **ACTION:** Matt will report the winners to Maedythe for inclusion in the quarterly by March 8.

Upcoming National Show in Juneau - Report

- Ed is Show Chair and Robert Tonkin is Show Judge. As voted last meeting, the show will be for one day only (May 19), with a garden tour the next day.

6. New Business

- **MOTION** (Judith / Matt): To exchange one free membership in the APS for one in NARGS. Carried. **ACTION:** Julia will draw up an official membership certificate for NARGS.
- **MOTION** (Judith / Linda): To allow the use of the APS website by the Primula Chat Group providing it does not interfere with any APS Board use and incurs no additional expense. Carried.
- **MOTION** (Judith / Linda): To grant free membership to the Editor of *Primroses* and to the Webmaster unless they already receive payment for their positions. Carried.

Meeting adjourned (Judith) at 5:15 Pacific DS Time

Next regular meeting: May 20th, 2007, at the Annual Meeting in Juneau.

Respectfully submitted,

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American Primrose Society

2007 Ballot

Vote for Officers and Board Members

For your vote to count your entry must be postmarked by May 5, 2007.

Please be sure to write Ballot on the outside of your envelope.

Please tear out this page, complete the ballot and mail by May 5, 2007 to:

Michael Plumb
9341 Kinsley Crescent
Richmond, BC V7A 4V6

_____ President - Lee Nelson
_____ President - write in candidate - _____

_____ Vice President - Judith Sellers
_____ Vice President - write in candidate - _____

_____ Treasurer - Jon Kawaguchi
_____ Treasurer - write in candidate - _____

_____ Secretary - Michael Plumb
_____ Secretary - write in candidate - _____

_____ Board of Directors Position 1 - Sandra Ladendorf
_____ Board of Directors Position 1
- write in candidate - _____

_____ Board of Directors Position 2 - Marianne Kuchel
_____ Board of Directors Position 2
- write in candidate - _____

_____ Board of Directors Position 3 - Mary Jo Burns
_____ Board of Directors Position 3
- write in candidate - _____

Biographical Information for new members running for the Board

Lee Nelson -- President

I was born in England, where I completed my basic Horticultural training. I have a diploma in horticulture from Penn State, and have worked for 19 years as a horticulture teacher and consultant at Broome Community College and for Cornell University's Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Program in Binghamton, NY, where I was also Curator of the Cutler Botanic Garden. I am a judge for the nationwide America in Bloom Program, and member of many local, national, and international horticultural programs and organizations.

In my spare time, I lead tours of gardens in New England and Great Britain, give presentations about roses and perennials to garden groups, and raise Barnhaven primroses to grow in my own garden.

I first joined the APS in the late 70's, and am currently the Corresponding Secretary for the New England Chapter and have started a Newsletter for Chapter members. I would appreciate this opportunity to serve the American Primrose Society as President, doing my best to consider the desires of members and meet the needs of the Society.

Judith Sellers -- Vice President

Since my first packet of Burpee's Primrose seeds in 1974 grew and flourished, I have become increasingly enthusiastic about Primulas. I now grow, show, photograph and share as many hybrids and species as possible. I am very active in the National APS, having written articles for and worked on the Editorial Committee for Primroses, served on the Board and on many committees and as the current Vice President. I have helped with the seed exchange for four years, attended and benched plants at several shows, and have acted as Recording Secretary for my local New England Chapter since its inception.

I would welcome the opportunity to continue working with other dedicated Primrose people to improve and expand our Society.

Jon B. Kawaguchi --Treasurer

I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area. My father owned two retail nurseries and a landscape company in San Jose, California. When I was in my teens, I worked at one of the nurseries during the summer months. I went to the University Calif. Davis, majored in Horticulture and also received a teaching degree. I taught job training courses in horticulture and landscaping for 15 years. During this period, I attended one of the local state universities at night and took nearly all of the accounting courses. After teaching, I ran a job training program for the disabled in landscape maintenance. My main gardening hobbies are Primulas, Narcissus, and Dwarf Conifers. I was an APS member from ~1989-1993. After 1993, I had to curtail my gardening hobbies to raise a family and do all of the kids' activities with their sports and school functions Around 2003-04, I had more time to spend on my gardening hobbies and rejoined the APS. My main primula interests are Primula polyanthus and doubles, P. allionii, P. marginata, and trying to grow the Auriculas.

Sandra Ladendorf -- Sandra has gardened from Maine to California to North Carolina. She is a distinguished, award-winning writer with two gardening books to her credit. A prolific garden writer, she has written many articles to share her experience gained from time spent in her gardens. As a former president of the North American Rock Garden Society she has experience with the organizational side of the gardening world as well, which she can bring to the American Primrose Society as a director. Her experience as a horticultural lecturer and teacher will also be of benefit to the society. And through it all, she has always had a fondness for primroses which she began raising from seed in the 1960s. Her current shade garden in California has many lovely primrose varieties.

Marianne Kuchel -- Marianne has been a passionate gardener all her life, developing gardens in both tropical and nordic climes. She has a certificate in Landscape Design from George Washington University and completed Vermont's Master Gardener course. Marianne has been a member of APS (and the New England Chapter) since moving to Vermont some ten years ago. APS has furthered her knowledge of primulas and its seed exchange has stimulated her to grow many different species from seed. She has spoken to garden clubs on primulas to further knowledge and interest; she would hope to continue supporting APS and its members as a Board Member.

Mary Jo Burns --A keen primula grower from Anchorage, Alaska, Mary Jo has filled her garden with a wide selection of our favorite garden flower. An experienced plant grower, Mary Jo shares her knowledge of growing primroses and other garden plants as a speaker at many garden club meetings in her area. The APS board would benefit from her knowledge and enthusiasm.

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RICHARD MAY, PROPRIETOR



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Primroses and auriculas in Mary Jo Burns' garden Photos: Robert Tonkin

