



Primroses

The Quarterly of the American Primrose Society

Winter 2020

Vol. 78

No. 1



Primroses

The Quarterly of the
American Primrose Society

Volume 78 No. 1

Winter 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
National Show Schedule	5
New England Show Schedule.....	6
Vintage Bits.....	6
Trekking & Learning about Asiatic Primulas by Claire Cockcroft	7
Something You May Not Know About Primula kisoana by Jay Lunn.....	11
Species Primula and the Lazy Propagator by Tim Chipchar.....	21
Dodecatheon dentatum	
2020 Spring Elections	25
by Robin Hansen.....	26
Minutes September 15, 2019.....	28
New Members	31
Officers of the Chapters	31

Credits: Photos and text reproduced with permission.

Front Cover: Claire Cockcroft's photo of *P. concinna*

Back Cover: Candelabras allowed to cross-pollinate at Hatley Park, Victoria, BC. Taken by Jane Guild

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 2019

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

In Ithaca, New York, as I write in mid-January, there are primroses blooming in my garden, mostly *Primula* 'Yellow Wanda,' which I planted late in the fall—they were orphans that had not sold at my husband's garden center. I am happy to examine them closely at this time of the year. The flowers when half open look like fluted vases and I marvel at their "laser-cut" petals to use the words of poet Ted Hughes. Temperatures were in the 60s last week and tonight the forecast is for 5–10 degrees. I am always amazed at the ability of primroses to flower at a moment's notice and then quickly re-adopt the waiting game as needed. Their resilience may be one of their greatest attractions.

At this time of the year, there are several important reminders to review. Hopefully, everyone has renewed their membership and has visited or plans to visit the Seed Exchange List on the APS website (also available as a printed form from Amy Olmsted, 421 Birch Road, Hubbardton, VT 05733). In dipping into the APS 2005 publication *Alice Hills Baylor and Primroses for Eastern Gardens*, I found this statement by Alice: "There is great pleasure in growing plants from seed. It is also a way of enjoying gardening for a longer period of the year. One can observe growth and become an expert in knowing what is needed if the seedlings are not growing properly." Her point about learning from observation of growth day by day is important. She was a proponent of using fluorescent lights for the

process, which I have also found a successful method.

It is a thrilling moment to go into the basement to visit the fluorescent light stand and see the first bright green signs of germination. Henry David Thoreau in his posthumous work *Faith in a Seed* wrote: “Though I do not believe that a plant will spring up where no seed has been, I have great faith in a seed. Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect wonders.” In other words, one has to find seed and sow them. We are fortunate the Seed Exchange is at hand.

It is also time to thank those who have kept the society together under proper board protocol as required for a registered society. First, of course, Rhondda Porter and Michael Plumb. Rhondda stepped down in May as President. She graciously offered complete support to me and fortunately, she still attends board meetings, which provides continuity. Michael has now stepped off the board after serving the society as a volunteer in many positions for many years - as Webmaster, Secretary, and more. Thank you, Michael! The society owes you a huge debt of gratitude. Jon Kawaguchi, who has served mightily as Treasurer, will continue to do so, but has also agreed to take on the Webmaster position. We are very fortunate.

And I am grateful for APS’ new Secretary Dean Wiegert. As the newest members of the board, we consult frequently about what we have yet to learn, and he pursues the answers patiently and politely. Please read his carefully written Minutes at the end of each issue. I must confess I never read minutes before I was on the board. Now I find them very interesting! Also, take note of the chapter reports. They describe primrose activities in various parts of the country. In this issue I am looking forward as well to reading Jay Lunn’s article on *P. kisoana*, so lovely with its downy, soft green foliage. Some call it a “thug” but I think that is unfair. It reappears, and I am grateful.

And last but not least, please let us thank Maedythe Martin and Jane Guild for producing a new issue every quarter. It’s hard work. The Quarterlies represent an invaluable archive of primrose lore and practical information, as well as the stories of the people who have dedicated much of their lives to primroses, which is important social and cultural history. Historians may even read the Minutes to study how plant societies survived in a difficult 21st century!



2020 NATIONAL SHOW SCHEDULE

Portland EXPO Center 2060 North Marine Dr.
Portland, OR 97217

April 10 - 12th 2020

IN CONJUNCTION WITH HORTLANDIA'S 32ND YEAR

Friday, April 10

Staging 10-12

Judging 1-4

Dutch Treat Dinner



**SHOW OPEN SATURDAY AND SUNDAY
10AM-3PM**

Saturday, April 11

Show Banquet 6pm



Sunday, April 12, 2020

Clean-up after 3pm

**Please check the APS website for more information as it
becomes available**

CORRECTION

In our last Quarterly (Autumn 2019) on page 13, Dean Wiegert was mistakenly given credit for the *P. elatior* plant in the top right photo. That plant was, in fact, Bruce Lockhart's plant.

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER SPRING PRIMROSE SHOW SCHEDULE

Blithewold Mansion, 101 Ferry Rd, Bristol, RI

Friday, May 1st

10-3: Set up show and bench incoming plants

*Anyone benching plants or helping to set the show up will be waived an entry fee to Blithewold, others pay the regular \$15.00 entry fee to Blithewold. This might encourage more people to enter plants in the show.

*there should be lots of help for show newcomers and anyone that needs a hand.

*Vendors can set up in the wedding tent and start selling plants as soon as they are ready.

12-5: Self-guided tour of 2 special gardens in Little Compton, RI:

Sakonnet Gardens of John Gwynne and Mikel Folcarelli

510 West Main Rd.

www.sakonnetgarden.net

The gardens of NEAPS chapter member Gioia Brown

79 Peckham Rd

5-7:30: Show attendees have the option to stay for a garden party at Gioia's after the garden tour. (\$15.00pp)

Saturday, May 2nd

8-9:30: Last-minute plant benching

10-11:30: Judging - Kris, Mark, Mary & Debbie

10-4: Tour Blithewold & grounds

*Visit vendors

11:30-4: Enjoy judged *Primula* in the breakfast room

12-2: Pre-ordered boxed lunches available for picnics on the grounds (\$15.00pp)

2-3:30: **Talk & slide show on growing *Primula* with an emphasis on Sakuraso of Japan**

in the welcome center

*Paul Held, an expert grower of *Primula sieboldii*/Sakuraso*

4:00: Breakdown of the show and say good-bye

Specialty Plant Vendors

Issima Nursery, RI..... www.issimaworks.com

Primrose Hill Woodlanders, VT.... www.primrosehillwoodlanders.com

Mountain Brook Primroses, NH

The Bunker Farm, VT..... www.thebunkerfarm.com

All Things Sakuraso, CT

Van Berkum Plants, NH

TREKKING & LEARNING ABOUT ASIATIC PRIMULAS

CLUES TO GROWING PRIMULAS AFTER SEEING THEM IN THE WILD

CLAIRE COCKCROFT

These are edited notes from a talk presented by Claire in Victoria, BC in September 2019. Claire has spent the past few decades visiting Primula in the wild on many trips and then learning how to grow them in her garden. I have focused on the Primula most likely to grow in our gardens, though the pictures of the difficult and fleeting ones are very compelling.

China, 2007 – 6,900'-15,200'

Sichuan – 6,900' – steep, moist cliffs

Primula kialensis was often found sheltered by overhanging rocks

Nearby plants: *Neillia sinensis* var. *ribesoides*, *Arisaema* aff.

propinquum, *Saxifraga rufescens*, *Paris polyphylla*

Weedy bank: *Primula fernaldiana*

Sichuan – 8,400' – very wet areas near streams

Primula munroi ssp. *yargongensis*

Primula hoffmanniana (introduced as *P. moupinensis*)

Nearby plants: *Arisaema consanguineum*, *Helleborus thibetanus*,

Anemone rivularis

Sichuan – 12,450' – hills forested with rhododendrons

Primula palmata was found in damp woods

Primula tangutica grew nearby at the bottom of the slopes in slightly drier spots and was also found at higher elevations

Primula soongii grew in open areas in deeper soils

Primula sonchifolia was always found at the base of rhododendrons or other shrubs

Sichuan – 10,660' – stream-side

Primula cockburniana ***This is one Claire has grown and has even developed a hybrid.***

Sichuan – Zhedou Pass – 14,100' - very rocky, steep hills, hot and dry at higher levels with wet seeps lower down

Primula amethystina ssp. *brevifolia* was found in open aspects

Primula graminifolia

Primula melanantha was always found among large rocks. ***This is the fabulous black primula discovered not that long ago. Unfortunately not***

easily grown in gardens.

Primula florida

Primula stenocalyx

Primula fasciculata grew in cool, wet seeps, along with *Pinguicula* aff. alpina

Sichuan – Tuer Mountain – 15,200' – cold, wind-swept area

Primula aff. *orbicularis*, *P. walshii* (no picture)

Sichuan – Road to Xiangcheng – 14,400' – huge boulder field

Primula lilacina

Yunnan – Derong to Deqin – 13,300' – often cloud-covered, misty

Primula secundiflora and *P. sikkimensis* covered the hillside, growing on a wet slope

Paraquilegia anemonoides hung onto wet rock, splattered by mist coming off the river

Primula minor was found in wet turf

Primula chionantha ssp. *sinopurpurea* grew in drier spots, often at the base of rhododendrons

Primula nanobella was found on shady slopes. *Another very appealing tiny gem that is hard to grow in cultivation.*

Primula watsonii was found in deep shade in woody soil.

This gorgeous one can be grown in our gardens.

Yunnan – Bai Ma Shan – 14,400' – the "alkaline" side of the road

Primula zambalensis was seen along the road and was found next to running water
Primula chionantha ssp.

sinopurpurea was again found growing with rhododendrons. *This is one that is occasionally seen on the show benches and is very handsome. Well worth the try.*

Yunnan – Road to Shangri-La - 13,125' – slope of dying Rhododendron aff. *taliense*

Primula calliantha, *P. nanobella*

Yunnan – Shangri-La – 10,350' – wet meadow

Botanophilia LLC

For people who love plants!

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

www.iloveshadeplants.com

Primula poissonii, along with a few *P. sikkimensis* plants. ***This is a reliable plant in gardens and an attractive, upright, large plant and flower stalk. Worth growing.***

India : Himachal Pradesh, 2011 – 9,850 -14,000'

Ranglati camp – 12,139' – above the treeline, near the confluence of two rivers

Nearby plants: *Iris kamaoensis*, *Meconopsis aculeata*, *Cyananthus lobatus*, *Androsace muscoidea*

Primula munroi grew in damp ground near streams; lots of color variation

Below Nalgan Pass – 13,200' – turf and damp rock ledges

Bergenia stracheyi

Primula obtusifolia, always found in shallow caves

Primula elliptica

Primula macrophylla var. *moorcroftiana*

Primula minutissima

Primula reptans

Nalgan Pass – 14,435' – open slopes, steep screes and rivulets of snowmelt

Primula stuartii, very fragrant. ***Hard to grow in cultivation.***

Rohtang Pass – 13,060' – steep, rocky slopes

Primula reidii was found on damp cliff ledges. ***This is a classic alpine house plant grown by specialists.***

Primula denticulata was found in open areas. ***Certainly one to grow in your garden. Does very well in Alaska.***

Primula macrophylla was found in rocks

Primula rosea was found near running water. ***This one is sometimes seen in the Pacific Northwest. The true aficionado will grow it standing in a tray of water for the season.***

Dry side of Rohtang Pass – 12,630' – flat valley with short turf

Primula macrophylla var. *moorcroftiana*

Primula minutissima

Primula rosea grew in a field with the water table at ground level

Turkey, 2012 – 7,000-8,500'

Below Zigana Pass – 8,500' – turf-covered hillsides

Primula vulgaris with both yellow and white flowers. ***Here are the ones we know and grow. Some in this group are actually easy!***

Primula veris was abundant in pine woods

Near *Caltha polypetala* in damp turf, *Primula elatior* ssp. *pallasii*

Palandoken Mountains - 8,000' – damp turf on open, gentle slopes

Gentiana verna ssp. pontica

Primula auriculata

Outside Erzincan – 7,090' – wet meadow

Primula elatior ssp. pallasii

Primula auriculata

China: Sikkim, 2017 – 11,000'-16,160'

Northeast of Lachung – steep, damp hillsides – 11,860'

Primula elongata

Primula sikkimensis grew in large swaths

Rocky paths – 13,300'

Primula primulina was common all the way to 16,000', growing as solitary specimens

Alpine meadow – 14,500'

Primula sapphirina grew in moss

Primula calderiana was abundant along the path

Rhododendron "forests" – 14,990'

Rhododendron anthopogon, Rh. setosum, Rh. campanulatum ssp. aeruginosum, Rh. wightii

Primula klattii. *A tiny jewel. Great to even see the photo of it!*

Northwest of Lachen – steep, rocky slopes along the

Zemu River – 11,350'

Primula denticulata was seen in leaf at lower elevations near Lachung

Glacial moraine – 14,200'

Primula capitata, the most abundant primula, grew in wet meadows along the Zemu River

Green Lake camp – 16,160'

Primula concinna, almost too small to find (photo p. 13)

Primula macrophylla grew in the shelter of large boulders



Barnhaven
Primroses

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

f PayPal MasterCard



SOMETHING YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT *PRIMULA KISOANA*

JAY LUNN

In the “A dazzling Japanese *Primula*” portion of the Alpine Garden Societies’ *PLANTS FROM OUR SHOWS* article compiled by Robert Rolfe in their December 2017 Journal ¹, some interesting information was written about *Primula kisoana*. The author (or authors) wrote about the introduction of *P. kisoana*.² *Primula kisoana* is native to southern Japan. Originally found on the alpine and subalpine slopes of Mt. Kisokoma (Honshu Island). Mount Kisokoma (Kisokoma-ga-take) is a mountain located in Miyada, Kamiina District, and Kiso and Agematsu, Kiso District, Nagano Prefecture, in the Chubu region of Japan. It is the tallest peak in the Kiso Mountains at 9,698 ft. (2,956 m) tall. The species might no longer occur in the mountainous district from which it takes its name, Kiso, on the border of Gifu and Nagano Prefectures, and is predominantly rose-pink or mauve to near-magenta. Although limited in distribution, it does still grow in neighboring mountains.

In the late 1950's, Orihara Suteo negotiated the hairpin bends of a road that traverses Misaka Pass, between Matsuyama and Kochi on Shikoku, riding a motorbike, skidding in the ruts and dodging terrifyingly overloaded logging trucks, finding a white-flowered variant in an open situation, exposed to all the winds that blow from Asia and blanketed with snow in spite of its southerly location. It appears that no record of another white *Primula kisoana* (other than this chance discovery is responsible for all the plants now in cultivation, which demonstrate what is sometimes termed 'albino vigor.' This is not so of the type (pink), whose increase is modest.

The white-flowered form certainly arrived in Britain by the late 1970s because a plant grown by Joyce Bacon received an RHS Preliminary Commendation when exhibited in March 1981. Bacon doubted its hardiness and found viable seed hard to obtain, “so that the only practical means of propagation is by careful division of the short rhizomes just before growth commences in late winter or early spring.”³

It appears that the pink form was in the Pacific Northwest as early as 1981, but the white-flowered form appeared there later. The Berry Botanic Garden in Portland, Oregon obtained the white *P. kisoana* 'Alba' (also known as *P. kisoana* var. *shikokiana* f. *alba*) from Margaret Mason, who undoubtedly obtained it from her Japanese friend Kazuo Mori. The pink *P. kisoana* at the Berry garden came from Ruth and Larry Korn.

Primula are protogynous, that is the female stigma is receptive well before the male pollen is mature, which is a barrier to self-fertilization. I understand that there is much concern about the seed production of *P. kisoana* in its natural habitat. I find that *P. kisoana* in the garden sets little seed on its own accord and it is difficult to get things right when trying to hand pollinate their flowers. I have donated some seed of *P. kisoana* 'Margaret Mason' that produced some seed this year (2019) without any help from me. I don't know who may have named this clone 'Margaret Mason' but a friend gave us a start accompanied by that name. It may have been someone who got a start from Margaret and wrote it on the label.

Of the *P. kisoana* I know of growing in my part of the U.S., all seem to be pink *P. kisoana* pin and white *P. kisoana* thrum morphs. That seems to be the case for many of those shown on the Internet. Some forms sold by Edelweiss Perennials in Oregon and Barnhaven in France are exceptions to this. Both sell the thrum varieties 'Iyobeni' (red) and 'Noushoku' (pink). Barnhaven also offers its own variety 'Barnhaven Blush' which is a cross between *P. kisoana* 'Alba' and the red variety 'Iyobeni' and it is pink.

When I made the crosses between *kisoana* (pink pin) and *kisoana alba* (white thrum) for my donations to a few of the APS seed exchanges, my intent was to produce clones of each flower color with different morphs. From the seed I withheld from the exchange for my own use, I obtained two pink thrum plants, but no white pin plants. I suppose it is necessary to re-cross the resulting plants to obtain one of the latter. Of the two pink thrum plants, I gave one to a friend and kept the other. We both lost them, although I did find a third one that bloomed last summer, years after the original planting.

1 *The Alpine Gardener* – 1 *Journal of the Alpine Garden Society*, December 2017 (Vol. 85, No. 4), Pages 470 - 473

2 Japanese common name kakko-sou (meaning: kakko weed (the meaning of kakko is unknown), kiso-zakura (meaning: Kiso region cherry flower), kiso-kozakura, (meaning: Kiso region tiny cherry flower)

3 *AGS Bulletin*, volume 49, page 347

PRIMULA KISOANA



"Of the *P. kisoana* I know of growing in my part of the U.S., all seem to be pink *P. kisoana* pin and white *P. kisoana* thrum morphs."



Photos by Jay Lunn

In the late 1950's, Orihara Suteo ... finding a white-flowered variant in an open situation ... blanketed with snow..."



Trekking & Learning about Asiatic *Primulas*

EXOTIC ASIATICS YOU CAN GROW IN YOUR GARDEN



Primula concinna, photographed by Claire Cockcroft at Green Lake camp in Sikkim, China at 16,160'. In the top picture you can compare the size of the plant with the handle of Claire's hiking pole.

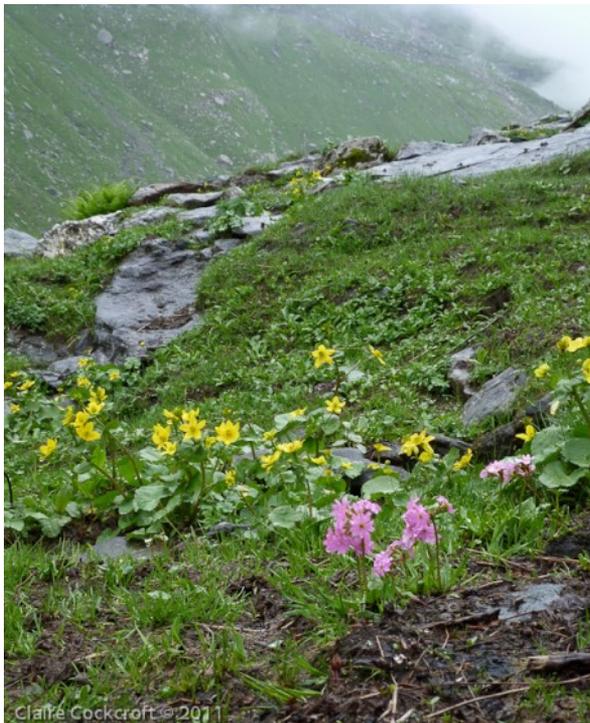


P. cockburniana in the wild - Danba to Kanding, China, above *Primula denticulata* near Marhi below Rohtang Pass, 3300 m, Himachal Pradesh, India below





Claire Cockcroft © 2011



Claire Cockcroft © 2011

Primula reidii
located
between
Manali &
Rohtang Pass
~3000 m,
Himachal
Pradesh,
India.

P. rosea near
Marhi below
Rohtang Pass,
3300 m,
Himachal
Pradesh,
India.

Photos by
Claire
Cockcroft



Dodecatheon dentatum "...is definitely a shade lover...I don't mean the dense, dark shade of the deep forest, but shade with plenty of light. In the garden, this might mean under trees or tall shrubs that have been limbed up or a shady place under shrubs that aren't total water hogs."

Photo by Robin Hansen

Exciting Perennial varieties from seed



PRIMULA x pubescens 'Kaleidoscope'

Jelitto

STAUDENSAMEN · PERENNIAL SEEDS · GRAINES DE PLANTES VIVACES

Production · Breeding · Seed Technology

USA Office: 125 Chenoweth Ln. · Louisville, KY 40207
Phone (502) 895-08 07 · Fax (502) 895-39 34 · <http://www.jelitto.com> · maryv@jelitto.com
German Headquarters: P. O. Box 1264 · D-29685 Schwarmstedt
Phone 01149-5071-98 29-0 · Fax 01149-50 71-98 29-27 · www.jelitto.com · info@jelitto.com

Species *Primula* and the Lazy Propagator



Left: *Primula watsonii* photographed by Yvonne Jeffries in Beima Shan, Yunnan, China, which failed to germinate for Tim Chipchar in his *Primula* propagation trials.

Below: *Primula sikkimensis* by TANAKA Juuyoh (田中十洋) - Himalayan Cowslip / *Primula sikkimensis* / プリムラ・シッキメンシス, CC BY 2.0, [Link](#)



Tim writes, "Many seedlings made it out into the garden and were quickly consumed"





Above, *Primula capitata* is a well-know and reliable species with fast growth after germination

Credit: By Ghislain118
<http://www.fleurs-des-montagnes.net> - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=12753963>

Right, *Primula bullata* var. *forestii*, located in Bai Shui (Gang Ho Ba), Yunnan, China taken by George and Liz Knowles



George and Liz Knowles © 2011



Tim Chipchar's plants

Primula bullata
var. *forestii*, left,
performing
fantastically in
the unlikely
location of a
cacti house.

P. bulleyana
hybrids and *P.*
vialii in a moist
part-sun bed at
UBC Botanical
Garden, below.



SPECIES *PRIMULA* AND THE LAZY PROPAGATOR

TIM CHIPCHAR

What I find most compelling about the genus *Primula* is its diversity. There are somewhere around 500 known species and each occupies its own niche in equally diverse ecosystems across the Northern Hemisphere (save a few stray southerners), from high wet Himalayan plateaus to limestone crevices in the Alps and humble Boreal fens. Despite this richness precious few species have made their way into the nursery trade and few have persisted. Here in Vancouver, apart from the ubiquitous polyanthus hybrids and the occasional border auricula, retail nurseries are generally devoid of *Primula*. Even at better specialty nurseries, the offerings extend only to varieties of *P. denticulata* and *P. japonica*. So if I was going to explore growing the genus I really only had one option, fumbling my way through propagation from seed. Few resources exist for the culture of specific species *Primula*, although a handful are known to be relatively easy. In this little article, I'd like to anecdotally report some of my successes and failures in the hopes of starting a dialogue and eventually producing an open resource. My bias towards the "Asiatic" species should be immediately apparent.

My Methods:

I'm a landless urban millennial in my early 30s so I entirely lack personal facilities appropriate for *Primula* propagation. Thankfully I'm currently in the employ of UBC Botanical Garden and my annexation of a small amount of cold frame real estate has been well tolerated. I also have access to an alpine garden curator, the horticultural tour de force Laura Caddy, who rarely rejects the seedlings I abandon on her desk.

Sowing instructions for *Primula* are fairly straight forward and readily found online (and I'm sure in countless prior APS articles). I use a soilless peat-based seedling media in 4-inch plastic pots, though I have also used cedar nursery flats for large amounts of seed. Small seed means either surface sowing or using quite a fine grit to cover. Fine grades of chicken grit are hard to come by in the city so I sieve my own from small grade pea gravel. The final particle size is maybe around 1 mm. I then wash and bake the grit to sterilize. It's important to ensure the media is

moist prior to sowing as dry hydrophobic peat can lead to the pooling of water and displacement of carefully spread seed. Some people like to sprinkle seed over a thin layer of grit and water it in. I generally sow my seed and vary the coverage of grit based on seed size. Thicker for larger seed, thinner for smaller. I then soak the prepared pots with either a spray bottle or nozzle with a mist setting, throw them into a clear plastic bag, set them in the cold frame and forget about them (for a short while at least).

Some resources claim that *Primula* require a cold stratification to germinate. I've found this to be untrue for most of the species I've tried (though seems to be truer for European species). If seeds are sown too early in fall, you can end up with delicate seedlings that need to be babied until spring. I've learned to leave sowing until winter's proper arrival.

Germinating plants in a cold frame is an effective and satisfyingly passive technique, and in the cool, mild, wet, perpetual spring of a PNW winter, they work particularly well for *Primula*. Issues of damping off, common indoors, are generally avoided in the lower, fluctuating outdoor temperatures. Some species I've tried have germinated after only a couple weeks at very low temperatures but most wait until early spring. Some are erratic, germinating a few a day over weeks and others all pop together in a single night. When it looks like enough seedlings have emerged the pots come out of their poly bags to be grown on and after a bit of time to harden off they get a bit of weak fertilizer.

Once seedlings have developed a few true leaves it's time to go cross-eyed pricking out. This I do into Pro Mix high porosity media in nursery flats or 2.5" pots and this is usually when the shortcomings of my generalized approach to propagating become apparent and things start to go south. I've found many species respond poorly to being transplanted. They stall, sulk and slowly begin to fail. A full flat of seedlings can dwindle to just a few of the strongest plants. I believe they are mainly succumbing to fungal rot in the warmer spring weather. In the future I may try sowing difficult species into smaller pots, thinning seedlings to one, and avoid pricking out entirely. I'll also experiment with adding additional perlite to the media to make it even more porous.

The final trial all these *Primula* must face is the appetite of Vancouver's slugs. It's incredible that such a range of palatability can exist within a single plant genus. Some species experience nary a nibble while others disappear overnight.

I think these differences in culture are worth exploring and plan on

continuing to fail in the name of horticultural exploration. So here are some very unscientific summaries of what I've discovered so far. I'd love to hear about your failures too.

Section *Proliferae* (the "Candelabras")

In general one of the easiest groups. Long bloom period. Need a consistently moist site. Warm germinators.

P. bulleyana and hybrids – Quick growth, easily divided, performed very well when planted out at a small size, moderately slug resistant, flag in full summer sun

P. beesiana – Similar to above

P. x anisodora – Similar to above but virtually slug-proof, coarser leaves hold up better in full sun

P. japonica – Slower growing in first year and more attractive to slugs but robust enough to survive and grow vigorously in the second year, produce fewer offsets than other candelabras, wild type seed difficult to find

Failed to germinate (for me) – *P. prolifera*, *P. cockburniana*, *P. secundiflora*

Section *Sikkimensis*

I want to call these intermediate grower's plants, reasonably successful propagation, somewhat erratic warm germinators, mostly poor garden performance

P. florindae – Easiest in the section (so far), fairly slug resistant though they love the flowers, pretty slow and relatively difficult to divide

P. sikkimensis – Many seedlings made it out into the garden and were quickly consumed

P. waltonii – Relatively poor germination, quite popular with slugs but surviving in a tattered state

Section *Cortusoides*

A favorite group of mostly woodlanders, mainly warm germinating, some erratic, generally slug resistant

P. cortusoides – Very hardy (I've grown it in a zone 2b garden), seeds around politely, tolerates a fairly exposed site

P. mollis – Good germinator, easy to grow on, few losses after plant out

P. jesoana var. *pubescens* – erratic germinator, responded poorly to pricking out, lost most seedlings

Failed to germinate (but I'm holding out hope they just need a second winter) – *P. palmata*

The Others

P. bullata var. *forestii* – surprisingly easy from seed, slug-proof, currently growing happily in both moist semi-shade and in a crevice in a cacti house at UBC Botanical Garden, although reputation would suggest the latter will be the better long term home as they aren't fans of winter wet

Primula bullata var. *forestii* performing fantastically in the unlikely location of a cacti house

P. capitata – a well-known reliable species from seed, warm germinator, very fast growth, some blooming first year, slug-proof, short-lived in the garden, most gone after year two, fair a bit better in a more well-drained site

P. longipetiolata – few but strong seedlings, immediately devoured by slugs

P. grandis – Very good germination and robust seedlings, performing well in moist semi-shade, superficial but unsightly slug damage

P. chionantha – reported to be one of the easier “nivalids”, erratic germination at relatively cool temperature, responded poorly to pricking out, high losses, remaining plants doing reasonably well in moist soil near a pond, no slug damage

P. munroi – good germination, easy to grow on in pots, first-year plants fared poorly against slugs when planted out, second year much better

P. fangii – another surprisingly easy species from seed, rapid germinator at low temperatures (highs of 5 degrees Celsius), easy to grow on, performing well in a moist well-drained site, minor slug damage

P. blinii – Rapid germinator at cool temp, many seedlings, tiny rosettes very difficult to prick out, high number of losses, plants that made it into ground performed reasonably well until hot weather hit, then failed, perhaps need a cool site

P. tangutica – Good germination, responded poorly to pricking out, performing reasonably well in ground, no slug damage

P. vialii – easy warm germinator, slug-proof, reported to be short-lived but most plants are performing well in their third year, quite late to emerge in spring so easily disturbed

Failed to germinate – *P. woodwardii*, *P. watsonii*, *P. tanneri*

If anyone would like to commiserate and share any tips I'd love to hear from you. You can reach me at tim.chipchar@ubc.ca

Seed Sources:

Yuzawa Engei <https://www.yuzawa-engei.net/07Overseas/>

Jelitto <https://www.jelitto.com/>

Chinese Alpines <http://www.chinesealpines.com/>

APS Seed Exchange <https://americanprimrosesociety.org/>

2020 Spring Election

The Spring 2020 Election will open on February 17, 2020 and will close on March 27, 2020. For general information on the society's elections, including information about board positions and on nominating candidates, go to the APS website, choose Members from the main menu and click on Elections.

There are two board positions up for election, the Treasurer and a Director. Candidate biographies are available on the APS website and printed in the Winter Quarterly. To vote in the Spring 2020 election, your membership must be current.

You may cast your vote in one of several ways. You may vote **online** at the APS website by visiting the Elections page and following the voting instructions. You may **print your own** paper ballot from the website and send it to the Secretary as indicated on the ballot. You may **request a paper ballot** be sent to you from the Secretary, and return it within the guidelines below.

If you would like a paper ballot, please contact Dean Wiegert, Secretary, by one of the following methods:

Email: secretary@americanprimrosesociety.org

Postal Mail: Dean Wiegert, 3708 E. Norport Dr., Port Washington, WI 53074 Telephone: 262-689-6214

Deadline for requesting a paper ballot is March 6, 2020.

Deadline for mailing paper ballots and online voting is March 27, 2020.

STANDING FOR RE-ELECTION

Jon Kawaguchi, Treasurer

I have been Treasurer of the APS since July 2007. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Plant Science specializing in Environmental Horticulture and a teaching credential from the University of California, Davis. Post graduate studies at California State University, Hayward specializing in accounting. I have worked in the horticulture and landscaping field and teaching horticulture. My horticultural hobbies include primroses, daffodils, subtropical plants, succulents, dwarf conifers, and perennials.



Dodecatheon dentatum

ROBIN HANSEN

I grow several Dodecatheons but Dodecatheon dentatum has become my favorite. Firstly, it's not a rank grower; at least mine are only six inches or so. It seems to be one of the later flowering dodies, with showy white flowers and soft green dentate leaves in a central mound. It has consistently flowered in my shade house for several years so I'm anxious to plant it in two or three shady areas here at my new home.

Dodecatheon dentatum prefers wet areas in its natural habitat which ranges from northern Oregon through Washington, British Columbia and into Idaho. Specific areas where it may be found include stream sides, near waterfalls where it is exposed to mist, wet cliffs and along the edges of lakes. It is definitely a shade lover, but if all you have is afternoon shade, watch your watering. In this case, when I refer to shade, I don't mean the dense, dark shade of the deep forest, but shade with plenty of light. In the garden, this might mean under trees or tall shrubs that have been limbed up or a shady place under shrubs that aren't total water hogs.

Coquille, where I now live, is about 10-12 miles from the Pacific Ocean in the midst of the Coast Range in southern Oregon, both noticeably hotter and colder than my previous garden. Consequently, watering can be necessary in mid- to late summer. And watering advice is difficult to give. My soil here is Coquille silty loam; when wet it is sticky and clumps a bit but nothing like having clay. Having spent some twenty years dealing with very sandy loam, this is quite an adjustment!

Dodecatheon dentatum is one of the shortest Dodecatheons in the *Primula* family, (*D. alpinum* being shorter), and one of the longer blooming species. The only other typically grown white species is *D. meadia*, which can also be pinky magenta. I have both these colors and this is a much larger plant and quite a bit earlier to flower, often in late February or early March, whereas *D. dentatum* will begin in mid- to late April. Typical of these plants, the seed capsules are a hard tan and when fully dry pop open scattering seeds around the mother plant. The capsules can also be hard to squeeze open all the way. If you are a

greedy seed-a-holic like me, you want every last seed you can find. The use of a sharp pin or similar sharp object to pry the bottom-most seeds free is sometimes necessary.

The seeds are a decent size, i.e. not dust-like, and easily sown. I use my standard nursery potting mix augmented with about a fourth of 1/4 10 gravel but similar size granite or pumice would work. The down-side to pumice is that it moves around much too easily compared to the other media. I then top-dress the pot of soil mix with about 1/4 inch of gravel, and scatter the seeds on top as they need light to germinate. Watering can be done from the bottom – I use a big square poly tray meant to be put under water heaters, although if I'm in a hurry I'll use a watering can with a fine rose very carefully. Then the pots are either kept outside in a protected location or, for the first time, I'm trying out a garden window, of which I've been blessed with two! I like to leave the seedlings in their original pots for at least two years, adding a little fertilizer during that period, then transplanting two or three to a two-inch rose pot or a 3 3/8-inch pot if they sized up nicely.

Division is easy and I recommend doing so in late winter or very early spring. You will find that pieces of the root clump will fall off unless very carefully handled. I used to panic when this happened, but have since discovered after looking closely at the pieces, that most have the beginning of a bud at the top. I'll put several of these separated pieces, bud up, in a pot to give them a year of growing on, before transplanting to their own individual pots. Even little nubs found broken off are transplanted and most often form new plants even if they look quite doubtfully viable.

A note about labels – always put at least the following information on them: name, source and year of receipt, and date sown. Add anything else you might consider necessary. I use plastic nursery labels so all information is written with a No. 2 pencil. The very next most important step is to write the plant name at the bottom of the label so that even if the top part is broken off, you can always identify your seedlings. This extra step has saved me from cats fighting on top of flats, dogs careening through the can yard or greenhouse, and my own clumsiness so many times I've lost count.

Many of us live in suitable climates to grow a number of *Dodecatheons*, and *D. dentatum* is suitable for larger troughs, although it will occasionally need dividing. I have not noticed any fragrance with this little dodie, but have noticed sometimes a very light fragrance with some of the other species.



AMERICAN PRIMROSE SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2019

The meeting was held online. Quorum and start at 6:03 pm EST.

Board members present: Elizabeth Lawson (President), Mark Dyen (VP), Dean Wiegert (Secretary), Julia Haldorson (Director, Membership Secretary), Michael Plumb (Webmaster), Rhondda Porter (Past President), Amy Olmsted (Director), Pat Hartman (Director, President of Juneau Chapter), Janice Anthony (Director)

Regrets: Jane Guild (Editor)

1. **Approval of the Agenda** (Rhondda/Amy)
2. **Approval of the Minutes of September 15, 2019** (Pat/Janice) as presented.
3. **Treasurer's Report** (emailed before the meeting).

- a. Income less expenses July 1st to September 30th, 2019: (\$1,013.45) (loss)
- b. Income less expenses January 1st to September 30th, 2019: (\$1,219.99) (loss)
- c. Total Liabilities and equity as of September 30th, 2019: \$27,907.68

d. Motion (Dean/Amy) to accept the treasurer's report. **Carried.**

Elizabeth suggested that we note the loss for the quarter, asked if anyone had discussion points. Elizabeth also proposed we have a discussion by chat in the new year and that she has ideas/suggestions/proposals when the time comes. Pat asked if it was normal to have a loss for 3rd quarter and Dean stated that he believed some of the reasons are the new mailing costs now that the printer does the mailing and declining membership. Janice asked if other societies had declining memberships and Amy stated yes that other societies are struggling with membership. **Action:** Rhondda suggested we should ask Jon if he wanted the board to pass a motion to move funds out of the reserves. Dean said he would do that.

4. **Business Arising from the Minutes of September 15th, 2019**

A. Discussion of renewals and 365-day membership. Elizabeth and Dean both thought it best to move onto the next topic since Jane wasn't available to comment. Julia noted she wanted to be included in any discussion of renewals.

B. Development of a plan to bring more advertisers to the quarterly. Elizabeth noted that no one had yet volunteered to take the role of working with advertisers. Pat asked if there was only \$218 in advertising revenue for the year. (That is what the Treasurer's Balance Sheet shows.) Rhondda noted that internet searches allow companies to forgo print advertising and that in the past APS offered advertisers a link and a profile on the website in exchange for a certain number of paid ads in the quarterly. **Action:** Elizabeth suggested she draft a document outlining what is needed for the role of working with advertisers based on information from Jane and Maedythe along with a template to use in contacting new advertisers.

C. Amendment of the Constitution to incorporate online AGM (Annual General Meeting).

Rhondda stated that there is a question of whether the registering state (OR) will allow an online AGM. Michael stated that an in-person AGM at the National Show with online access for members who are not present works well as long as the venue can provide reliable Wifi. Dean stated that since we can't always be sure of reliable Wifi at venues, then it could still be desirable to have the option of an online AGM. **Actions:** Dean will check with Ann Lunn in OR who registers changes for APS to check on AGM requirements. Elizabeth suggested a date of February 1, 2020, for suggestions on how to write this and other changes to the constitution that the board may find necessary.

D. Setting a date for an online chat regarding the financial situation of APS. Elizabeth proposed we table this discussion until Jane and Maedythe as Editors are available to join the discussion.

E. Placement of ad in Horticulture magazine to increase membership.

Dean sent an email to the board prior to the meeting with Horticulture's advertising rates. Elizabeth suggested we not purchase ads until we can increase revenue. Patricia, Julia, Rhondda, and Dean agreed. Janice thought Horticulture should do an article on primroses and a link to APS.

F. Addition of website links to publishers, botanic gardens, etc.

Elizabeth brought up a suggestion from a past meeting that perhaps only advertisers and members should get links on the website. Elizabeth thought that the person who takes on the advertising role

could suggest links for the website. Rhondda stated that the old website had written profiles and pictures of places to see *Primula* and that that feature has disappeared from the new website. Elizabeth suggested there could be a website page devoted to travel opportunities to see *Primula*. Dean suggested APS ask Merrill Jensen to write a profile of the Jensen-Olson Arboretum and *Primula* collection. Julia stated that a number of botanic gardens affiliated with educational institutions have memberships. Janice suggested nurseries near these botanic gardens might want a membership and be included in these links. Elizabeth suggested APS could invite members to submit photos of visits to these places.

G. Update on handling of back issues. (and policy on President's set).

Elizabeth noted that she, Michael and Dean had been emailing about the President's set of quarterlies. Michael noted that although he had stated previously that he had the President's set, he is now not sure if it could instead have been John Kerridge's (past president) personal set. But that he would pass it on to Elizabeth to use for the President's set at the National Show in Portland except for issues after 1998 which would be his own personal issues. Dean stated that he had boxes of back issues from Alan Lawrence and could probably fill in some missing issues.

5. Committee Reports

A. Membership: Membership Report prepared for September 15th meeting showing 221 as of August 12th was forwarded by Julia before this meeting by email. Julia stated that renewals were coming in and asked for questions. Rhondda stated she wasn't sure if she and Michael were up for renewal. She said Jane was going to set up a system of automatic renewal notices. Julia said she thought the automatic renewal was a work in progress but that she (Julia) sends out email renewal notices by early December to members who's subscriptions are expiring in the current year and the Autumn Quarterly has a Membership List showing expiry year. Elizabeth mentioned that process for gift memberships wasn't clear on the website, Julia said that you can request a gift membership in the "Notes" section of the application form and that gift membership recipients receive a card telling them of the gift.

B. Website: Michael resigned his position as webmaster due to the fact that he has been unable to navigate the administration of the new WordPress site. Rhondda believes that unlike the old Joomla website, WordPress is not user-friendly. Rhondda stated that there are still many problems with the website that only the designer can fix. Elizabeth stated that perhaps we should pay someone to take over Michael's webmaster duties. Rhondda informed Elizabeth that the designer of the website has been paid but that the website has not been finished. Julia mentioned that the issue of manual or automated membership must be decided. Rhondda stated that she will continue to contact Jane with problems she finds and parts of the website that don't work and encouraged everyone else to do the same.

C. Editorial: The co-editors were not able to attend the meeting and this topic was passed over.

D. Seed Exchange: Amy sent a report by email before the meeting. Seed donations and purchased seed are still arriving. She's received donations from some who haven't donated before but has not received seed from some regular past contributors. She reminded that seed can still be sent for distribution in the exchange. Purchases of seed and supplies are \$994 so far. The final seed list will be posted in late December. Amy noted that she believes all board members should be seed donors.

6. Chapter Reports

A. Juneau: Pat is planning next year's chapter meetings and plans to email chapter members to remind them to renew. She is also handing out chapter brochures to interested people.

B. New England: Amy and Mark informed the board that the NE chapter is planning to hold their spring show at Blithewold in Bristol, RI, hoping to attract new members and sponsors. Amy added that in addition to the Blithewold gardens, there will be two great gardens open for viewing. The show is the first Saturday in May.

C. BC Primula group: no report available.

7. New Business: Susan Haddock from MI contacted Dean prior to the meeting to say she has put together a talk on *Primula* and APS that she is able to offer to regional groups and perhaps at the AGM in Portland. Rhondda suggested Maedythe be notified because the conference room at the convention center would need to be booked. **Action:** Dean indicated that he would follow up with Maedythe about booking a room for a talk.

8. Date of next meeting: Sunday, February 16, 2020, 6:00 p.m. EST

9. Adjournment: (Dean)

Submitted by Dean Wiegert, Secretary



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/membership>.

Join the National Auricula & Primula Society

Midland & West Section

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

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 Beches,
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

New Members

October 12, 2019 - January 28, 2020

Year of Expiry	Name	Name	Address
2020	Laurel	Chute	23 Reservoir Rd, Westhampton, Massachusetts 01027 USA
2020	Kay	Dye	4017 S Autumn Dr, Mapleton, Illinois 61547 USA
2020	Patricia	Frawley	Rutgers Master Gardeners of Mercer County, 43 Jefferson Rd, Princeton, New Jersey 08540 USA
2020	Nancy	Gluek	202 West St, Granby, Massachusetts 01033 USA
2020	Mark	Heffron	4515 N Sheffield, Shorewood, Wisconsin 53211 USA
2020	Marcel	Jouseau	43 Chatsworth St N, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104 USA
2020	Sherrie	Kamm	4549 Harriet Ave, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55419 USA
2020	Marjorie	MacRae	645 Lake Simcoe Close SE, Calgary, Alberta T2J 5H7 Canada
2020	Judy	Millicheap	541 Pioneer Crescent, Parksville, British Columbia V9P 1V1 Canada
2020	Isi	Nethercutt	2817 - 128th St SE, Everett, Washington 98208 USA
2020	Patti	Pitcher	8323 Moon Valley Rd SE, North Bend, Washington 98045 USA
2020	Mark	Rose	Flannery Fork Botanical Garden, 1075 Rocky Creek Rd, Boone, North Carolina 28607 USA
2020	Russell	Stafford	Odyssey Perennials, 43 Nisbet Street, #3, Providence, Rhode Island 02906 USA
2020	Tristan	Tomlinson	52 Madison Street, Hamilton, New York 13346 USA
2020	Michael	Westwind	835 SW Ashwood Ave, McMinnville, Oregon 97128 USA
2020	Stephen	Willson	13514 Bisquet Ridge Lane, Bow, Washington 98232 USA
2020	Rudy	Yarbrough	631 Kingwood Dr NW, Salem, Oregon 97304 USA

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

OFFICERS OF THE CHAPTERS

British Columbia Primrose Group

Maedythe Martin, President

951 Joan Crescent

Victoria, BC V8S 3L3

(250) 370-2951

martin951@shaw.ca

Juneau Chapter

Pat Hartman, President

17060 Island View Dr

Juneau, AK 99801-8357

patricia.hartman4@gmail.com

New England Chapter

Mark Dyen, President

132 Church Street

Newton, MA 02158

mark.dyen@csggrp.com

