

Primroses

Winter 1996
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Primroses

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American Primrose Society
Winter 1996
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All photos are credited.

**Remember to cast your
ballot in the APS election**

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ON THE COVER

The North American native, *Primula suffrutescens*, can be a challenge to grow. Rick Lupp tells how to succeed on Page 13. Photos by Jay G. Lunn

In this Issue - Happy Reading!

The “quiet” season is upon us here in the Northwest — activity in the garden has slowed to a slug’s pace. Most potted plants have been moved under the eaves to overwinter in relative protection, while the more tender plants have been moved under lights in the garage. Water worries fall into two categories: keeping the outdoor plants dry enough and keeping the indoor plants wet enough. Last weekend’s chores included cutting up and shredding a 70 foot Douglas fir that came crashing through the back fence, and rescuing some *Primula clarkei* that my neighbor’s Newfoundland stepped on when he spotted a cat on my front porch. Yes, it’s definitely the “quiet” season!

Now is an excellent time to hit the books — catalogs, that is. If your mailbox is like mine, it’s piled high with tempting seed and plant catalogs stuffed with pictures and descriptions to drool over. On Page 18, we’ve updated our listing of primula seed and plant sources that Marie Skonberg put together a few years ago. We’ve tried to be accurate, and would appreciate any corrections, additions, or comments.

In my garden, seeds of most hardy

perennials get sown in pots in November and December (with some protection) so that nature stratifies those varieties that require treatment. Less hardy seeds wait until February or March. With warm spring weather comes the hectic task of pricking out seedlings. On Page 8, Ian Scott comes to the rescue with a timely suggestion about planting in plugs.

This time of the year is ideal for planning your garden. It is easy to study the structure of your garden when the deciduous trees and shrubs are bare, and herbaceous perennials have shrunk back into their crowns. You can check on drainage problems and leisurely work out solutions, unhurried by pending gardening chores. To help with your planning, we have the final installment of Geoffrey Charlesworth’s excellent article on growing primulas in the garden.

And finally, even in winter we must be vigilant against garden pests. Who knows what may be lurking in all those pots you’ve so carefully sheltered? On Page 11, Steve Doonan offers hope of gaining the upper hand on that particularly obnoxious pot pest, the root aphid.

Happy reading! ❁

Are You Online?

I am often tempted to discount the "Internet Revolution" simply because of the media hype surrounding it. But there really is a growing number of computer users who have discovered the enjoyment of being online. Are you part of that population? If so, send e-mail for an informal poll of our readers to the editor, Claire Cockcroft:

ccrft@halcyon.com

Primulas in the Garden - Part 2

by Geoffrey B. Charlesworth, Sandisfield, Massachusetts

Continued from *Primroses*, Volume 53, No. 4, Fall, 1995. Part 1 introduced techniques for growing primula in woodland conditions, particularly in New England.

STREAMSIDE AND BOG CONDITIONS

If you have a mountain stream you may be able to grow *Primula parryi*. Some people are lucky enough to have a stream on their property. One gardener in the Czech Republic has a stream coming from the near-by mountains just after it has lost its torrential quality. He can grow *P. rosea* on a rocky mud bank in the middle of the stream. Another gardener living on the banks of the St. Lawrence uses a constantly wet area close to the river to grow candelabra primulas. This can be done near any quiet stream or one with a flood stage that is not too destructive. Such naturally moist places are ideal for *P. japonica* and *P. bulleyana* but you could then grow *P. helodoxa* (*prolifera*) and *P. florindae* satisfactorily.

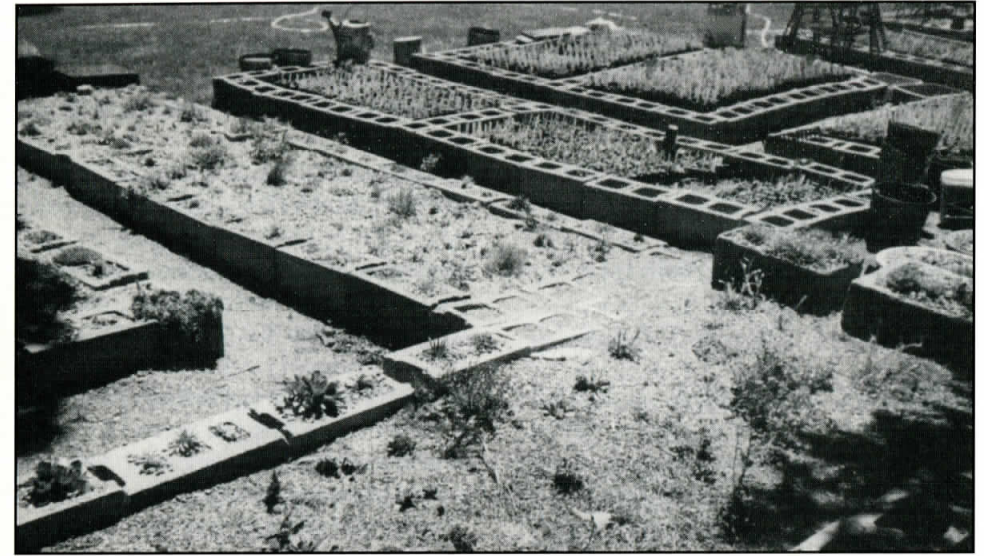
Three other choices are available for growing moisture-lovers. You could grow them in ordinary rich soil in an area shaded from midday sun, keeping them watered in droughts. I have grown *P. parryi*, *P. ellissiae* and *P. rosea* and obtained a good idea of what they look like without achieving either permanence or magnificence. This can be a satisfying experience if you don't set your sights too high. Or you can make an artificial pool and grow moisture lovers in the muddy overflow. This is possible even in a city

garden. A third way would be to improvise a container embedded in peat-moss or fiber in a non-draining plastic container (a washbowl?). This would be a transportable model of a bog. This wouldn't be much good for large plants but perfect for the moisture loving *Aleuritia* section: the bird's-eye primulas *P. farinosa*, *P. frondosa*, *P. modesta*, *P. scotica*, *P. laurentiana*, *P. mistassinica* etc. I have made various attempts at making a bog without a pool by introducing plastic sheets into a natural hollow in the garden. These have always been a total failure and the struggle to remove the plastic after you realize that all you can hope for is a bowl of weeds far exceeds the original effort. Other people may understand plastic's idiosyncracies, but my advice would be: never bury plastic in the garden to test a theory or for any other reason.

THE PERENNIAL BORDER

There are very few primulas you would want to grow in a perennial border. The obvious ones are the hybrids of *P. veris* and *P. elatior* usually called *P. x polyantha*. These bloom so early in the spring that nothing else is in flower except spring bulbs (and *Symphytum*, *Pulmonaria*, etc. which wouldn't be in a border anyway). In theory it is possible to produce the kind of effect that border-lovers seem to value using bulbs and primulas. But what do you do with them when the display is over? Throw the primulas away with the tulips to make room for summer annuals and perennials? That would be a profligate and disrespect-

Photo by Geoffrey B. Charlesworth



Cinder-block planting beds in Mr. Charlesworth's garden.

ful way to treat plants — only worthy of a prosperous bank or a municipal park. There is no question that primulas in a mass display on a cold, damp day in March do a lot to raise the spirits, but I wonder whether my own garden needs that kind of gross explosion. The point is moot as chipmunks invariably get every tulip I ever plant. Supermarkets can now supply us with pots of large-flowered brightly colored primroses every spring. This has the double effect of making us love supermarkets more and value primulas less. But in a shady border one could plant a few *Primula elatior* as a permanent group that will remain green all summer and with luck not look too tacky just as the daylilies are coming into their own. You could do the same with *P. denticulata* forms. A border is the only place where good *P. x polyantha* colors will look right. In the woodland or wild garden they would be too sophisticated, too brassy or too subtle.

CINDER-BLOCK BEDS

If you want to protect a few good plants from the hurly burly of the rock garden make a cinder-block bed. Nothing made with cinder-blocks is beautiful but they are serviceable, buildable, removable, reusable, and cheap. For primulas you can fill it with rotted leaves and coarse sand. It lends itself to easy winter protection, with boughs for instance. Here you could grow the European auricula section and amuse yourself trying to identify all those species which seem to grade into each other: *P. hirsuta*, *P. spectabilis*, *P. latifolia*, *P. villosa*, *P. integrifolia*, *P. glutinosa*. And the ones that are distinct: *P. marginata* (mauve) and *P. auricula* (yellow). There are a number of natural crosses, too, such as *P. belluensis* and *P. x juribella*. Also the *Aleuritia* section can be grown provided

Primulas in the Garden continued

you can water liberally as needed. They may not self-sow and the usual way to keep them going is by seed.

RAISED BED WITH OR WITHOUT ROCKS (DECORATIVE OR FUNCTIONAL)

The aim would be to provide a rich scree. It would have to be in the shade at least during the hottest part of the day. A small version would be ideal for *P. minima* or *P. allionii* where you could see the plants separated from competing mats of more vigorous alpines. A larger example could be the home for the larger clumps of *P. marginata* or *P. hirsuta*. Good companions would be the spring and fall gentians (not the leafy summer types), androsaces, douglasias and saxifrages. If the raised bed has a supporting wall, a good plant to grow in the wall would be *P. marginata*. Although it can be kept neat and mat-like by taking rooted cuttings, it can also be left to age naturally with woody stems and a gnarled look. A tufa wall would be an elegant home for most alpine primulas.

MORE CINDER-BLOCKS

You can make a cinder-block bed tolerable by planting in the holes. This assumes that your enclosure is one block high with the holes placed vertically. Each hole can contain its own soil mixture so it is a good way to experiment with different ratios of soil-less peat-based mix, turface, sand, gravel, loam, leafmold, or whatever. Better-looking

containers also serve the same purpose: anything from a hollow log to a high-fired frost-resistant decorative pot, including all those multi-recipe portable and immovable hypertufa troughs. My most successful example is even uglier than a cinder-block, but the happy plants beguile the eye into accepting the container. In these holes and containers you can plant the real prizes of your collection: *P. minima*, *P. x bileckii*, *P. allionii*, and if you have the skill *P. angustifolia* and *P. suffrutescens* from the US mountains. Many of the rarities from seedlists come with so few seeds that even if you can germinate and raise something to plantable size, it will usually be a single specimen or maybe two. Then it is imperative to find a place in the garden, such as a container, away from competition, where you can watch it daily as it journeys from promising seedling to premature demise. It may even justify your care and concern by flowering.

CREVICE GARDEN

If you build a crevice garden it will have a shady side. Try any of your precious primulas in such a position. The European primulas are the most likely to succeed but anything good you can spare is worth a trial. Planting in a crevice is usually a final position and the flexibility of container planting is lost. Czech gardeners have perfected this technique and the 'natural' look is very handsome.

GROWING PRIMULAS WITH PROTECTION

Some plants require the protection of an alpine house against rain as well as extremes of temperature. At this point the idea of growing 'in the garden'

becomes rather fuzzy. Before you embark on any adventures with glass, wood, plastic, and concrete take note: Any structure in the garden is a focal point for plant disease, a magnet for plant pests, and a sitting target for natural and man-made disasters. More than likely it is also ecologically incorrect.

However, you can then do things you otherwise couldn't. You could grow primulas, especially Auriculas, in an Alpine House. Possible here are the show types. You couldn't grow these beautiful green, plum, buff, ringed and powdered art-forms outside, the farina on the petals would be washed off by the rain. It is common wisdom that *P. allionii* needs protection from rain. Probably the named forms must have protection. In any case a plant so beautiful benefits from being at eye-level and protected from mud splashes. Growing primulas in alpine house conditions requires sinking the pots in sand, so a sturdy bench is necessary. This is also a good way to have plants for the show table. Showing isn't my idea of gardening, but many people get pleasure from the activity. It is a way of sharing one's plants and showing off one's skills without taking along the whole garden.

MORE SPECIAL METHODS

Many of the plants brought back from Southeast Asia at the end of the last century and by Forrest and others at the beginning of this century need protection in the winter and cool summers. Many have been lost to cultivation. In the process species were first tested in greenhouses. Nowadays *P. obconica* and *P. malacoides* would still be grown with heat in most places. In the 1930's Mrs.

Katherine Taylor in Massachusetts had a pit house built to grow many of the primulas we now think of as tender. A pit house would still be a good way to grow difficult primulas. An alpine house could be used as a permanent home for primulas by planting directly in the benches. This is possible only if summers are cool enough or if air-conditioning is used.

Or you could have a raised bench with open sides and overhead cover. This would require winter protection in very cold regions. A frame could be used as a planting area as an alternative to an alpine house. A single plant of *P. whitei* could be protected from the elements by a plate of glass supported over the plant. This ugly contraption would be unlikely to succeed in New England, where high winds and heavy snow are frequent, but it might work in a sheltered garden in the Northwest.

If you combine a few highpowered methods, you can grow prized plants in a tufa wall in an alpine house. Michael Kammerlander does this in Wurzburg, Germany, where he grows *P. edelbergii* to perfection. This is a rare primula from Afghanistan discovered in 1948.

But this is a far cry from a 'real' garden. We never condemn the lengths to which other gardeners go to grow the plants they love. We watch their struggle with admiration and sometimes pity, and then go back to our own follies. How will you want to grow primulas is entirely your own choice and there are no rigid rules; only rules that work. ✿

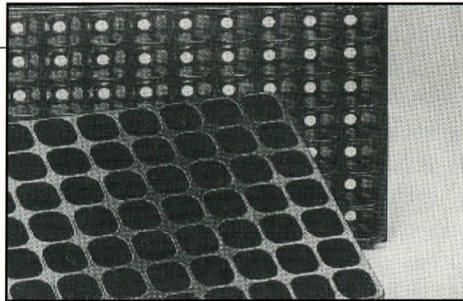
Primroses in Plugs

By Ian D. Scott, Fife, Scotland

Do you lose too many precious plants when attempting to prick out seedlings at the two leaf stage? Do you suffer whole trays of seedlings damping off? Do you wish you had more space in your cold frame? Do you wonder how some people can get their primulas to flower only eight months after sowing the seed? If the answer is "yes", then perhaps you should try plug trays.

If you think that primulas are difficult to prick out, then you would despair with meconopsis. They germinate like mustard and cress, only to keel over as soon as they are pricked out. All it needs is the slightest of root damage and the plant is a goner! We were just about at our wits end with a failure rate in excess of eighty percent, when we read an article about the use of plug trays. Now at this time, plug trays were only available through the trade. So we suddenly became an alpine nursery, ordered a range of materials (including plug trays) from a big supplier and no questions were asked. Now, I am glad to say, you can obtain a couple of plug trays at the local garden centers, with no need to buy them by the hundred.

Each sheet is made of fairly rigid black plastic, and the P180s that we use consist of an eighteen by ten array of tapered 15 ml cells. Each cell has a punched hole in its base for good drainage and easy ejection. A sheet this size is too large for our use, so we cut them down to seven by ten using a scalpel. This is just the right size to fit a normal



watering tray. The cells are gently filled with a peat based compost and left to soak. Seeds are surface sown with a single seed in each plug. The plug trays stand in sufficient water to keep the compost permanently moist. Thus one tray could provide you with seventy plants — or ten plants of seven different types, which is well worth thinking about if you have only a small cold frame.

The plants grow quickly without competition from other seedlings and soon form sturdy root systems. When the roots start to emerge from the bottom of the cell, the plantlet is easily ejected by pushing the end of a pencil up through the punched hole. The ejected plant with its compact root ball is transplanted into a 7 cm pot without any root damage. Instead of taking two or three weeks to recover from being pricked out, it immediately starts to grow without any setback. Alternatively, the plantlets can remain in the plugs almost indefinitely, until they are required. We have one plug tray of mixed auriculas that are now three years old. They have remained in limbo as small plants all this time, but as soon as they are required and potted up, there will be no stopping their growth.

Another significant advantage of plug trays is that as the cells are all

separate from each other, infections are slow to invade the whole tray, minimizing your losses. With this growing method, we would expect to have *Primula scotica* in flower by autumn from a spring sowing. Indeed, it is not unusual for primula to flower the same year, but the record must be held by a *P. floribunda* seedling (CHAD 1338) that was sown in February, 1994, germinated in April, and had its first flowers in mid-summer!

Now I must admit that I do not know of anyone else using this method, but others have shown some interest and are now carrying out trials, especially with rare or difficult seed. But using this

method, and without too much effort, we raised six hundred *P. reidii* plants last year. It has certainly revolutionized our production methods; it could do the same for you.

Editor's Note: Plantpak Plug Trays are available at nursery supply houses in England and Australia. In the US, numerous look-alikes are available from mail order greenhouse supply houses, including:

*Charlie's Greenhouse Supply
1569 Memorial Hwy.
Mt. Vernon, WA 98273
1-800-322-4707
Plug tray to fit standard flat:
3/\$4.50 ✿*

Annual Meeting at National Show

March 30-31, 1996

The Valley Hi chapter and the Oregon Primrose Society will co-host the American Primrose Society National Show at the Beaverton Mall, 3205 S.W. Cedar Hills Blvd., Beaverton, Oregon. Show times and dates are 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday, March 30, and 12 noon-5 p.m., Sunday, March 31, 1996. Judging starts at 11 a.m. on Saturday, ending with the judges luncheon at 1 p.m. There will be a Board of Directors meeting on Saturday at 4 p.m. in the Community Room of the Beaverton Mall.

APS members get together once a year during the National Show for a general meeting. This annual meeting is a good time to get acquainted with other APS members, learn about the issues that we face today, and have some fun, too. The slate of officers for the upcoming year will be presented by the Nominating Committee. All APS member are invited to attend.

This year's festivities, on Saturday, March 30, 1996, begin with a no-host social hour at 6:30 p.m. at the Northwest Bistro, Hall Boulevard & Denny Road in Beaverton. A banquet begins at 7 p.m., with the annual meeting immediately following. Maedythe Martin, past *Primroses* editor, will be the featured speaker, telling us about show auriculas.

If you wish to have any items placed on the agenda, please send them to the APS Secretary, Dorothy Springer. Information about the banquet arrangements can be obtained by contacting Thelma Genheimer, 7100 S.W. 209th, Beaverton, OR 97007.

Quarterly Librarian Report

by Cheri Fluck, Juneau, Alaska

The sales from the quarterlies have created income of \$624.91 to date. The funds have been sent to the APS treasurer to be used for color pictures in *Primroses*.

The following twenty-nine issues are lost to us forever unless someone knows where there are other copies:

Volume 1	Issues 1,2,3,4	1943-4
Volume 2	Issues 1,2	1944-5
Volume 3	Issues 3,4	1946
Volume 4	Issue 3	1947
Volume 6	Issues 3,4	1949
Volume 10	Issue 2	1952
Volume 12	Issues 2,3	1954
Volume 13	Issue 1	1955
Volume 14	Issue 1	1956
Volume 25	Issue 3	1967
Volume 26	Issues 1,2	1968
Volume 27	Issue 1	1969
Volume 33	Issue 1	1975
Volume 34	Issue 1	1976
Volume 35	Issue 3	1977
Volume 36	Issues 1,2	1978
Volume 42	Issue 1	1984
Volume 46	Issues 2,3	1988
Volume 47	Issue 2	1989

The price of Volume 48, 1990, has now dropped to the 25¢ per issue and this volume has been added to the \$40 set which will run through 1990 with the exception of those issues listed above.

I have sent quarterlies to Australia, Denmark, Edmonton and Vancouver, Canada, West Virginia, Washington, Oregon, California, New York, and Connecticut. Postage for the full set costs

about \$50 to countries overseas, from \$20 to \$50 to Canada (depending on how far), and from \$9 to \$12 to the US. At least now I have a better idea of the shipping costs than when I started! Orders by fax worked very well.

Most people pay for the books in advance, so I include a note that they must look on the box for the postage to reimburse me for it personally. Four people did not send the postage and I assumed the boxes had been tossed and they had forgotten. So I mailed a reminder. I will not tell you who, but he will recognize the story: by return mail I received a check for \$20.00, when the balance due was only \$8.89. There was a very nice card apologizing and saying there were probably others who had forgotten and that he was sending extra to make up for them. On the check in the description line was written "misdeeds". I appreciate this and will use it to make up a couple of small shortages in the foreign exchange rate. The rest will go to the APS to keep those quarterlies coming!!!!

I later received a second postage check with an overage. The note with it said, "It is a small amount to pay for the service rendered".

If you saved your quarterlies but do not have family members or friends who would like them, please let your family know that the society would be glad to have them back. None of us is getting any younger. Maybe slip a copy of this report in amongst the quarterlies.

For those of you who have ordered I appreciate your notes! ❀

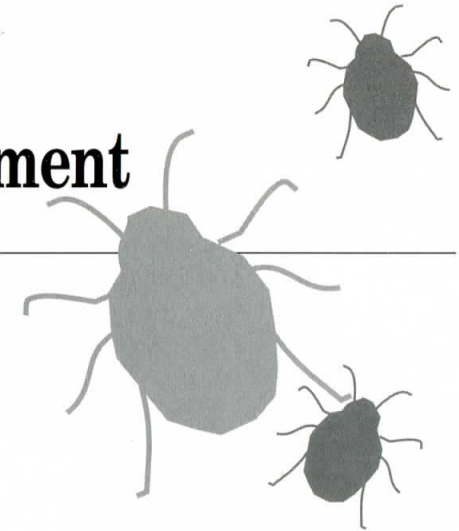
An Effective Root Aphid Treatment

By Steve Doonan, Issaquah, Washington

"Why is there always a fly in the ointment?", ask primrose growers. The section of primroses known as *Auriculastrum's* are very beautiful and easy to grow. The problem with their culture is caused by a subterranean insect of the woolly and gall-making aphid Family (Eriosomatidae). The *Primula auricula* root aphid (*Pemphigus auriculate*) forms large infestations on the primula plants that greatly weaken them so they look sickly and fail to grow and flower; the plant eventually dies if not treated.

The Root Aphids produce a woolly mass of wax that covers their body and the cavities they inhabit. The wax makes their bodies repellent to moisture and hence difficult to wet with liquid insecticides. Not much information is available about this species, because it doesn't attack important agricultural crops and therefore hasn't merited more study. Most of the life-cycle is spent underground and the aphids' presence generally goes unnoticed until severe damage to the host plant has been done. Established colonies persist from one year to another. They produce winged colonizers in the late summer and early fall that fly about in search of additional suitable host plants. The root aphid is well established on other members of the rose, buttercup, and certain grass family members; the source for the root aphids can be from plants in your garden or the neighboring fields or hedge-rows.

The root aphid is a distinct form of the common green (or brown, or black)



aphid that belongs to another family (Aphididae) of the Superfamily Aphidoidea. The auricula root aphid generally is hidden from sight under the soil on the main stem and roots. The first clue of infestation is the overall sickly appearance of the plant. The aphid can generally be detected by lightly digging around the crown with a finger; a whitish, cotton-like substance that readily stands out from the soil color is diagnostic. Turn a suspected plant out of its pot and examine the roots for occurrences on the roots lining the pot. A hand lens may be necessary to see the aphid proper. Individual insects are not readily discernible from the wax masses.

Once you determine that a plant has a root aphid infestation, it is well to inspect other susceptible plants. It is best if treatment for their control can commence early on. The laborious removal of soil and washing the crown and roots will not guarantee control of these difficult pests; plants so treated may be reinfected again in a short period of time.

One method that has proven effective has been the drenching of the soil with an

Root Aphid Treatment continued

insecticide and a surfactant mixed together. The surfactant, such as Safer Insecticidal Soap or a spreader sticker, will help break down the surface tension of the waxy material surrounding the aphid's body. The wax protects the aphid from wetting, and without a surfactant, the insecticide doesn't contact its body. The common green aphid can easily be killed with just Safer soap, but the root aphid needs the combination of both a poison and a wetting agent. The insecticide should have a residual effect and not readily breakdown on contact with the soil. One product on the market is MAVERICK, a synthetic Pyrethrum.

The plants should be thoroughly watered a day before treatment so that soil is moist and has no dry areas in it. The plant will absorb water before treatment begins, lessening the chance of insecticide chemical damage to the plant.

Mix the recommended rates on both the insecticide and the surfactant. The application of drench can be applied by a backpack sprayer or small pressure sprayer. The sprayer nozzle can be placed in close to crown under the leaves, so that it can thoroughly wet the crown of the plant where the majority of the aphid population will be found. Apply treatment in the late afternoon and in a period of cooler weather. The spray will then stay effective longer and have less adverse effect on the plant.

More recently I have had great success with immersing the whole plant in a solution of Rotenone-Pyrethrin for 15 minutes and then letting the excess solution drip back into the treatment container. Plants so treated made a major burst of growth and are healthy green. Vigilance for reinfection will always be necessary and a continued spray maintenance program required. ❁

American Primrose Society Bookstore

APS members are able to get special prices on these beautiful books:

Auriculas, by Gwen Baker & Peter Ward, 1995 - \$25US

Primula, by John Richards, 1993 - \$36US

The Genus Primula, by Josef Halda, 1992 - \$20US

A Plantsman's Guide to Primulas has been sold out at the publisher; we are conducting a book search to locate additional copies. The first printing of **Auriculas** by Brenda Hyatt has also sold out at the publishers; we are expecting a second printing in England.

Address your orders and inquiries to:

Thea Oakley, American Primrose Society Librarian
3304 288th Ave. NE, Redmond, WA 98053 USA

Orders must be prepaid in US dollars by check on a US bank or by international money order, made out to **Thea Oakley, APS Librarian**. Postage and handling: in the US add \$3 for the first book and \$1.50 for each additional book, or outside the US add \$5 for the first book and \$2.50 for each additional book.



Under The Overhang

by Rick Lupp, Graham, Washington

Photos by Jay G. Lunn



Primula clarkei.



Primula juliae.

SMALL PRIMULA FOR CONTAINER CULTURE

Many of the smaller primula make wonderful subjects for container culture in the cold greenhouse, alpine house, or coldframe. The following are six of my favorites that over the years have provided me with a great deal of pleasure and aggravation for both the short and long term.

Primula scotica is one of the smallest and most endearing of the farinose group of primula from Section *Aleuritia*. It is found in only a very small area of northern Scotland and the Orkney Islands where it grows in cool, moist, grassy areas, and is still only rarely seen in cultivation in America where it has a reputation for being difficult and short-lived. We have had good success with this plant when we move an entire pot of seedlings right up into a six inch pot after growing the seedlings for one full year in the seed pot. The plants seem to prefer to

be rather crowded as they grow along and do best for us in a mix of 50% peat with the remainder of the mix made up of sand and grit [pumice]. Grow the plants in a cool, well-ventilated position and they will reward you with a twice yearly bloom of rich, dark-purple and will make a reliable seed set.

Another of our favorite container grown primula is *P. clarkei*, which is a miniature relative of *P. rosea* and makes a slow spreading mat of more or less evergreen foliage with many almost stemless blooms of rose pink with a yellow eye. While this native of northern India and Pakistan is reported to be very hardy, we have found that we lose the plant when the temperature drops much below zero without the protection of an alpine house or frame—which is all the more reason to grow the plant in a container that can be easily protected

Under the Overhang continued

from the elements. A potting mix containing 50% peat works best for us with this primula which enjoys plenty of moisture and food during the spring with a bit of drying off during summer.

Resume normal watering in the fall and keep the plant out of the hot sun at all times. Seed is rarely set in cultivation so propagation is accomplished by division.

Primula warshenewskiana is very similar to *P. clarkei* and takes much the same care with the exception of the summer dry period, which should be avoided as *P. warshenewskiana* needs constant moisture at the roots to maintain good health. It is also a hardier species that needs no special protection in the winter. This native of Afghanistan looks much like *P. clarkei* only without the yellow throat and makes a fine container plant as long as it is given a yearly repotting.

If you are looking for a challenge there are two North American primula which will be glad to oblige. *P. suffrutescens* is a true alpine primula found at 10,000 ft. plus in the Sierra Nevada range of California, where it grows in granitic rock and sand. We grow the plant in a very gritty mix that contains enough peat to keep from totally drying out during the growing season and we keep the plant on the dry side during winter when it goes partially dormant. The plant is under snow during winter in nature and does not seem to be able to take temperatures much below zero

without some protection. We have lost large pots of this in the past apparently due to insufficient winter protection. The quality of plants grown from seed varies greatly; thus it is a good idea to grow seed whenever it is available and select good forms.

Another closely related and challenging species from the same section is *Primula cuneifolia*, which ranges from Japan to Alaska. The Alaskan form is a tiny primula with dentate, wedge-shaped foliage topped with almost stemless blooms of rich magenta with a small yellow eye. This arctic gem is found in wet areas along streams and seeps from low elevations up to the higher elevations of the coast range. We grow the plant in a 50% peat mix with good success as long as it is kept cool at all times during the growing season. Two to three years is about the average life span in cultivation for this primula judging by our experience; however, seed is set freely and is easily germinated to provide replacement plants. We have found the Japanese form of this plant larger but easier to grow.

Primula juliae is not only a complete charmer but is also of the easiest possible culture, asking only for an open, gritty mix with plenty of room to run about and form a carpet of creeping rhizomes which will be covered by short-stemmed blooms of bright violet in spring. Every alpine house should be adorned with a pot of this first rate primula, which is one of the parents of the *P. x juliana* hybrids—one of which is the ubiquitous *P. 'Wanda'*, one of the most widely grown primulas in the world. Once again, repot once a year for best results.

Try a pot or two of these wonderful primula and you will be rewarded for many years to come. ❀

Plant Portrait

by Ann Lunn, Hillsboro, Oregon

PRIMULA HIRSUTA

For the gardener and primula connoisseur, there is no more versatile species than *Primula hirsuta*. It is one of the easiest of the Auricula Section to grow and will adapt itself to a variety of conditions. It also crosses easily with some of the other members of the section to create new and unusual hybrids.

Primula hirsuta is widespread in the European Alps and Pyrenees where it is found in rock crevices or stony meadows almost exclusively on granite or schist, not limestone. In these areas, it is a mat forming species with stout, branching rhizomes. Individual rosettes are about three inches in diameter with the flower stem rarely exceeding three inches. The leaves are covered with red or gold glandular hairs that give the leaf a sticky feel. At one time or another, this species has been called *rubra* for the color of the glands, *viscosa* for its sticky touch and *ciliata* for the presence of hairs.

In nature, the plants are quite variable in appearance. The variation may occur in flower color from rose-pink, purple-pink to rarely white. The flowers invariably have a white eye and broadly notched petals. The leaves may be round to elliptic with long to short petioles and coarsely to finely toothed margins. There are two forms found in cultivation—var. *exscapa* with stemless flowers and var. *nivea* with compact, white umbels of flowers.

In the garden, *P. hirsuta* needs rich soil with grit added for good drainage. Water should be amply supplied during the growing season. During the winter it

should be relatively dry, particularly around the crown. Given these conditions, it is a perfect addition to a trough, scree or rock garden. In the rock garden, a site on the north side of a rock provides the shade and coolness the plants prefer. Plants also do well in pots in a cool greenhouse or alpine house.

Primula hirsuta is easily grown from seed. As mentioned previously, its ability to hybridize with other members of its section has resulted in many hybrid forms. For this reason, it is best to initially start with wild collected seed. The seed should be planted in January or February and placed in a protected spot out of doors to provide natural stratification. If there is no germination the first year, save the seed pots for at least another season. Often this species germinates better the second year. Plants may be propagated by division in the spring. Cuttings can be placed in sharp sand at that time for good rooting.

For the hybridizer, *P. hirsuta* makes an ideal parent. All hybrid garden auriculas stem from either this species or *P. auricula*. Many naturally occurring hybrids have been found: *x pubescens* (*auricula x hirsuta*), *x berninae* (*latifolia x hirsuta*), *x forsteri* (*hirsuta x minima*), *x heerii* (*hirsuta x integrifolia*) and *x seriana* (*daonensis x hirsuta*). In cultivation, it has also been successfully crossed with *P. villosa*, *P. pedemontana* and *P. allionii*.

All primula growers should have this versatile, high alpine species in their collections!

Plant Portrait continued

SOURCES

Richards, A. J. (1993).

Primula. Batsford, Ltd., London.

Halda, Josef (1992). **The**

Genus Primula. Tethys Books, Englewood, Colorado.

Smith, Burrow and Lowe (1984). **Primulas and Europe & America.** The Alpine Garden Society, Great Britain.

This Plant Portrait is submitted by the Oregon Primrose Society in lieu of a chapter activity report. ❀



Primula hirsuta.

Photo by Jay G. Lunn

Slide Library

by John A. O'Brien, Sr., Slide Librarian, Juneau, Alaska

APS members now have five slide programs from the Slide Library available to them, of about 80 slides each:

- #1 **Standard APS Slide Program** showing many different kinds of primroses.
- #2 **Wild and Tame Primulas of Alaska.**
- #3 **Auriculas.**
- #4 **Tall, Mid-Summer Blooming Primroses.**
- #5 **Sieboldii Primroses,** with slides and information from the Japanese Sakurasoh & Primula Club.

Additionally, we have several videos available of presentations at the 1992 Worldwide Primrose Symposium. I'll report in more detail on those for the next issue.

Rentals for slide programs are \$10 each; videos are \$5 each. For overseas requests, please write or call due to higher postal costs. All programs must be returned within two weeks of receipt; return postage will cost approximately \$10.

To order, please send the program name and the date it is needed, along with a check or money order for \$10 US (payable to the APS Slide Library) to:

John A. O'Brien, Sr., APS Slide Librarian
9450 Herbert Place
Juneau, Alaska 99801

An Instant Cure for Winter Blues

By John Kerridge, Vancouver, British Columbia

As the accompanying photograph shows, Renee Oakley is in her element — surrounded by thousands of primula at Westwind Nursery in Richmond, near Vancouver, B.C. To go there is surely akin to dying and going to heaven. It is also a sure cure for the winter doldrums.

Dennis Oakley and I had both come up with the same idea — to search for

doubling tendencies, and surprisingly there were only about a dozen. (These have been self-pollinated and have set seed nicely.) The nursery owner was very helpful and kind in letting us visit in late winter. Within a couple of days all of these plants were gone, to be sold in stores and garden centers. The strain is Danova Mix Acaulis.

Photo by John Kerridge



Renee Oakley in a sea of primroses.

Primula Seed Sources

Compiled by Marie Skonberg, Ouzinkie, Alaska, Updated by the Editor

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETIES THAT OFFER SEED EXCHANGES WITH PRIMULA SEED

- American Primrose Society
Addaline Robinson, Treasurer
9705 S.W. Spring Crest Drive
Portland, OR 97225
- Alpine Garden Club of B.C.
Joy Curran, Membership Chairman
R.R.#1 B38, Bowen Island, B.C.
Canada V0N 1G0
- The Alpine Garden Society
The Secretary, AGS Centre
Avon Bank, Pershore
Worcestershire WR10 3JP, England
- Dansk Primula Klub
J Vagn Jensen, Danmarksvej 43B
2800 Lyngby, Danmark
- National Auricula and Primula Society,
Northern Section
Mr. D.G. Hadfield
146 Queens Road, Cheadle Hulme,
Cheadle
Cheshire SK8 5HY, England
- National Auricula and Primula Society,
Midland and West Section
Mr. P. G. Ward
61 Lawson Close, Salford
Bristol BS18 3LB, England
- National Auricula and Primula Society,
Southern Section
Mr. L. E. Wigley
67 Warnham Court Road,
Carshalton Beeches
Surrey SM5 3ND, England

- North American Rock Garden Society
Jacques Mommens, Exec. Secretary
P.O. Box 67
Millwood, NY 10546
- The Rock Garden Club Prague
RNDr. Eva Hanzlíková
Pasteurova 5
Praha 4, 142 00 Czech Republic
- The Scottish Rock Garden Club
Hon. Subs. Sec'y Miss K. M. Gibb
21 Merchiston Park
Edinburgh EH10 4PW, Scotland

COMMERCIAL SOURCES FOR PRIMULA SEED AND PLANTS (MAIL ORDER)

- Albiflora Inc.
P.O. Box 24
Gyotoku, Ichidawa,
Chiba 272-01 Japan
- Appalachian Wildflower Nursery
Route 1, Box 275A
Reedsville, PA 17084
- Jim and Jenny Archibald
'Bryn Collen' Ffostrasol, Llandysul
Dyfed, SA44 5SB Wales
- Arrowhead Alpines
P.O. Box 857
Fowlerville, MI 48836
- Ashwood Nurseries
Greensforge, Kingswinford
West Midlands DY6 0AE, England
- Barnhaven Primroses
Langerhouad, Plouzelambre
France 22420
- Bijou Alpines
P. O. Box 1252
Graham, WA 98338-1252
- Carroll Gardens
P.O. Box 310
Westminster, MD 21158

- Chehalis Rare Plant Nursery
19801 Julie Road
Lebanon, MO 65536
- Chiltern Seeds
Bortree Stile, Ulverston
Cumbria LA12 7PB, England
- Chadwell Himalayan Seed
(Chris Chadwell)
81 Parlaunt Road, Slough
Berkshire SL3 8BE, England
- Collector's Nursery
16804 N.E. 102nd Ave.
Battle Ground, WA 98604
- Colorado Alpines, Inc
P.O. Box 2708
Avon, CO 81620
- Cravens Nursery
1 Foulds Terrace, Bingley
West Yorkshire BD16 4LZ, England
- Cricklewood Nursery
11907 Nevers Road
Snohomish, WA 98290
- Donington Nursery
Main Road, Wrangle, Boston
Lincs. PE22 9AT, England
- Edrom Nurseries
Coldingham, Eyemouth
Berwickshire TD14 5TZ, England
- Ernst Bentry
Potsfach, P.O. Box 1127-D-3510
Hann, Munden 1, Germany
- Euroseeds (Mojmir Pavelka)
P. O. Box 95
Novy Jicin 741 01, Czech Republic
- Exquisite Alpine Seeds (Josef Jurasek)
Lamacova 861, Praha 5
152 00, Czech Republic
- Field House Alpines
Leake Road, Gotham
Nottingham NG11 0JN, England
- Gardenimport Inc.
P.O. Box 760,
Thornhill, Ont.
L3T 4A5, Canada

- G. Ghose and Co.
Townsend, Darjeeling, India
- L.S.A. Goodwin & Sons
Goodwins Road, Bagdad South
Tasmania 7030, Australia
- Josef J. Halda
P.O. Box 110, Hradec Kralove 2
501 01, Czech Republic
- Heronwood Nursery Ltd.
7530 288th St. NE
Kingston, WA 98346
- Holden Clough Nursery
Holden, Bolton-by-Bowland,
Clitheroe
Lancashire BB7 4PF, England
- Brenda Hyatt Auriculas
1 Toddington Crescent,
Bluebell Hill, Chatham
Kent ME5 9QT, England
- Inshriach (Jack Drake) Alpine Plant Nursery
Aviemore, Inverness-shire
PH22 1QS, Scotland
- Jelitto Staudensamen GmbH
P. O. Box 1264
D-29685 Schwarmstedt, Germany
- Joy Creek Nursery
20300 N.W. Watson Rd.
Scappoose, OR 97056
- Karmic Exotix Nursery
Box 146
Shelburne, Ontario
L0N 1S0, Canada
- Lamb Nursery
Rt. 1, Box 460B
Long Beach, WA 98631
- Mary's Plant Farm
2410 Lanes Mill Road,
Hamilton (McGonigle), OH 45013

Primula Seed Sources continued

- Milaeger's Gardens
4838 Douglas Avenue
Racine, WI 53402-2498
- Mt. Tahoma Nursery
28111-112th Ave. E.
Graham, WA 98338
- Nature's Garden
40611 Highway 226
Scio, OR 97374
- Park Seed Co. Inc.
Cokesbury Rd
Greenwood, SC 29647-0001
- Perennial Pleasures Nursery
2 Brickhouse Rd.
East Hardwick, VT 05836
- Plants of Distinction
Dept. POD-9, 9 Abacus House,
Station Yard
Needham Market IP68AS, England
- Plant World
St. Marychurch Rd., Newton Abbot
S. Devon TQ12 4SE, England
- A Plethora of Primula
244 Westside Highway
Vader, WA 98593
- The Primrose Path
RD 2 Box 110
Scottdale, PA 15683
- Rainforest Gardens
13139 224th St. R.R.#2
Maple Ridge, B.C.
V2X 7E7, Canada
- Rosetta Jones
E. 170 Dunoon Place
Shelton, WA 98584
- Russell Graham, Purveyor of Plants
4030 Eagle Crest Road NW
Salem, OR 97304
- Sahin, Zaden B.V. Postbus 227
Gerald Doustaat,
32400 AE Alphen a/d
Rijn, Holland
- Sakata Seed Corporation
P.O. Box Yokohama Minami No. 20
1-7 Nagata Higashi 3-chome,
Minami-ku
Yokohama 232, Japan
- Saltspring Primroses
4660 10th Ave. W, #1102
Vancouver, B.C.
V6R 2J6, Canada
- Seedalp Switzerland
P.O. Box 282
Meyrin, Geneva
CH 1217, Switzerland
- The Seed Guild
P.O. Box 8951
Lanark ML11 9JG, Scotland
- Siskiyou Rare Plant Nursery
2825 Cummings Road
Medford, OR 97501
- Southwestern Native Seeds
P.O. Box 50503
Tucson, AZ 85703
- Stokes Seed Co.
Box 548
Buffalo, NY 14240-0548
- Surry Gardens
P. O. Box 145
Surry, ME 04684
- Thompson & Morgan, Inc.
P.O. Box 1308
Jackson, NJ 08527-0308
- André Viette
Rte 1, Box 16
Fisherville, VA 22939 ❀

Journal Report

by Mary Frey, Kent, Washington

SOLDANELLA AND DIONYSIA

Peter Hood describes his experiences with soldanellas in the September 1995 *Quarterly Bulletin* of the Alpine Garden Society. Although APS member Karen Schellinger gave better cultural tips for these plants in *Primroses* (Summer 1995), Hood does offer a brief glance at their wild nature. During his Romanian visit to the Retezat Mountains he comes across lush clusters of several species including *Soldanella pusilla*, *montana*, and *hungarica*. Above 4000 feet, he finds *S. pusilla* flourishing in rock fissures with *Primula minima*. Hood observes that soldanella produces few seeds whether the species is a cultivar or wild. Like Schellinger, he points out that your sodanella plants need sun to flower well. In addition, they require abundant water in the spring, because flower stems can reach full height in a week.

In the same issue, Pat Nicholls concludes his informative three-part series on dionysias. His article describes not only the methods of propagation but its virtues as well. "It is often said", he insists, "that the best way to keep a plant is to give it away There has ... been too much of the 'I have got it and nobody else has' attitude."

Nicholls advocates rooting cuttings from mid-April all the way through September and even, for the rare species, in mid-winter. More cuttings ensure a higher percentage of rooting success. He also reviews seed propagation. These require stratification to germinate properly. However, few species set seed without help, so Nicholls illustrates hand-pollination techniques similar to those used for primulas.

FANCY PLANT

Lewisia rediviva is a plant portrait featured in September 1995 *The Rock Garden* of the Scottish Rock Garden Club. Fred and Monika Carrie extol the virtues of this brilliant North American flower. Surprisingly, they assert it has better color clarity and is more sophisticated than "the best forms of *Lewisia tweedyi*". They report *L. rediviva* is an easy plant to grow. It is not fussy about soil and it simply needs a dry dormant period to flower well.

ANIMAL DO AND DON'T

The September 1995 *Hortideas* includes several worthy gardening ideas. U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists added shredded newspaper to poultry manure to create an effective fertilizer. Tests disclosed that nitrogen losses decrease by fifty percent and soil micro-organism activity increases when this mix is used instead of commercial fertilizers.

Two new animal repellents are now available. Get Away Animal Repellent repels deer, rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, dogs, and cats. Get Away Squirrel and Raccoon Repellent wards off squirrels and raccoons from feeders, garbage, and gardens. Both sprays have an inoffensive odor to humans. They include mustard oil as an odor repellent and hot chili extract as a taste repellent. A bonus: Get Away products have a money back guarantee. Contact IntAgra, Inc. at 8500 Pillsbury Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55420 or phone 1-800-468-2472.

continued on page 23

**FOR A REVIEW OF *AURICULAS*,
A NEW BOOK BY GWEN BAKER AND PETER WARD, SEE PAGE 24.**

Board of Directors Meeting

Held October 14, 1995 at Mary McCrank's Restaurant, Chehalis, Washington

Present:

John Kerridge, Addaline Robinson, Dorothy Springer, Claire Cockcroft, Thelma Genheimer, Dan Pederson, Rosetta Jones, Flip Fenili, Thea Oakley, Allan Jones. The meeting was called to order by President John Kerridge at 10:40 a.m.

Minutes of the July 1995 Board meeting were accepted as printed.

Business arising from minutes:

A discussion was held regarding the effective date for the dues increase. Dues are due November 15, 1995 and are effective January 1, 1996.

April Boettger volunteered to serve as membership chairperson. Duncan McAlpine is working on a membership brochure. Claire Cockcroft suggested the printing be done by a professional print shop after some cost comparison shopping.

Treasurer's Report:

Addaline Robinson explained her written report which was accepted and will be filed for audit. Addaline read a letter from Washington State Chapter members who donated \$500 for color printing in the Quarterly.

Editor Report:

Claire-Cockcroft said the 40 page Fall 1995 issue will have a self-cover and a color insert. She had had good response from article donors. Quarterly authors must be contacted for their permission to

reprint their articles in other publications. A three month time lag will be required before reprinting from the Quarterly.

Nominating Committee:

Allan Jones said no slate has been selected yet.

President's Report:

John Kerridge described his recent trip to England. He was the guest of Peter Ward and the Midland and West Section of the National Primula and Auricula Society Annual Meeting. John also told of the Van Dusen show in Vancouver, B.C. this past spring. John has primula seed for the seed exchange and asked board members to take seed to grow on for the APS plantings at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden.

Thea Oakley brought up the possibility of changing the APS name to the North American Primula Society because of the large number of members in Alaska and Canada. A discussion will be held at the January board meeting after discussion in the various chapter meetings. John has written again to his Japanese contacts, still without reply.

Reports from committee chairpersons:

Seed Exchange — Marie Skonberg sent a written report indicating she has received seed from 12 donors to date.

Librarian — Thea Oakley has the Baker/Ward auricula book available and is finally in the black financially.

Judges — Rosetta Jones has had no response from those taking the judging course last spring.

Round Robin — No report submitted.

Slide — A written report from John O'Brien indicated he has had requests from England for a slide program and he would like better pictures of Alaskan plants. He is working on a Sakurasoh program.

Archives — No report submitted.

Corresponding Secretary — No report submitted.

Quarterly Librarian — A written report from Cheryl Fluck indicates she would like to drop the price on 1990 Quarterlies. She would like to add the 1990 volume to sets of Quarterlies that sell for \$40. Cheryl has \$500 from sales of old issues. The Juneau group will have some funds toward color printing in the quarterly.

Reports from chapters:

Washington State — Their show will be at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in 1996.

Eastside — Visits member gardens instead of having speakers.

Tacoma — Steve Doonan presented program for last meeting.

Journal Report

continued from page 21

SAVE WATER WITH WATER

In the September 1995 *Gardens West*, Mike Hutchins describes a simple moisture garden and illustrates how to construct one. Hutchins asserts that a fully saturated moisture garden requires less water to maintain than perennial beds or lawns and "may actually save water". Accompanying photos include primulas. ❀

Doretta Klaber — Had a bad summer weather wise and needs seed for their seed planting workshop.

April Boettger told of plans for the Washington State show at the Rhododendron Species Garden on April 20, 1996. She suggested the APS national show might be held there in the future.

1996 National Show: A discussion was held regarding the choosing of dates for the show. Thelma Genheimer reminded board members that the date for the national show takes precedent over other show dates. Claire Cockcroft made a motion to hold the APS national show each year on the second week of April, except those years when Easter falls during that weekend. This would go into effect in 1997. Motion seconded by Thelma Genheimer. Motion approved.

Thea Oakley requested that APS become a Visa merchant to eliminate foreign money problems. Discussion held. Motion made to apply for an APS Visa card by Thea Oakley seconded by Rosetta Jones. Motion carried.

John Kerridge suggested we look into direct debit at banks for dues payment. Board will think about it and discuss at the January 1996 meeting, which will be held at Mary McCrank's restaurant January 13th at 10:30.

Motion made to adjourn by Allan Jones, seconded by Thea Oakley. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Dorothy Springer
Recording Secretary ❀

Book Review

by John N. Gibson, Yorkshire, U.K.

AURICULAS

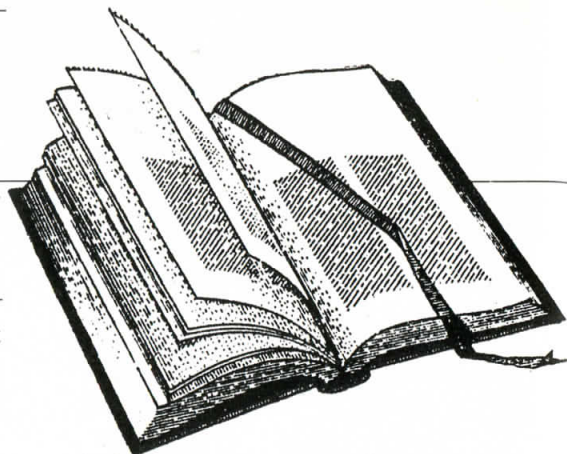
by Gwen Baker & Peter Ward,
Batsford, London, 1995

When I heard that there was to be yet another book on auriculas I wondered what more could be written on the subject. When I discovered who the authors were I knew that it would be a good read.

The authors, Gwen Baker and Peter Ward, have between them held every office in The Midland and West Section of The National Auricula and Primula Society. Both have exhibited, judged, and hybridized auriculas and primulas and each has an encyclopedic knowledge of their chosen subject.

The first chapter is on the origins of florist auriculas and gives details of *Primula hirsuta* and *P. auricula* and the parts they played in the breeding of auriculas and goes on to explain florist terminology. The authors' attention to detail and obvious enthusiasm set the standard for the rest of the book.

There are extensive lists of plants, many of which will be unheard of in North America but all are varieties which are still grown in the United Kingdom; in many cases the parentage is recorded and the hybridizers are all credited along with the year of introduction. In Chapter Four,



Double Auriculas, the authors have given a short but easily understood lesson in genetics which must be of help to future hybridizers.

Cultivation is discussed at some length and various composts are described. There are several recipes from top class growers including that used by the Douglas family at their famous nursery. The last chapter is devoted to auriculas in America.

Auriculas will become the standard by which future florist books will be judged. It has already eclipsed those that have been published in the past. The excellent text is complemented by 60 glorious color photographs and 12 superb line illustrations by David Tarver. It will be the text book for many years to come.

Auriculas,

by Gwen Baker & Peter Ward
B.T. Batsford Ltd.
4 Fitzharding Street
London, W1H 0AH
ISBN 0 7134 7366 5
£18.99 ❀

News from the Chapters

A summary of chapter meetings

ALASKA

John O'Brien, Sr. reports that members of the Juneau-Douglas Group held a productive first meeting of the fall season, with good plans and good volunteers for the future:

"Forty percent of last Spring Plant Sale proceeds will be sent in to the APS Treasurer in support of color printing in the quarterly. The amount approved is \$622.70. The Alaska Group has been an early and strong supporter of color in the quarterly.

Additionally the group plans to have speakers in for two of this season's meetings. They hope to have the Ketchikan City Gardeners speak on primrose growing at the February meeting; and Past President Cy Happy III as speaker at a late April meeting. Also the Alaska Group will have an APS Booth at the Garden Conference in Juneau at the ANB Hall on May 3rd & 4th.

Requests were made and filled for a number of volunteers to meet the Alaska Groups coming needs: Rosemary Hagevig and Doreen Pusich will co-chair for the Garden Conference APS Booth planning; Lee Sandor and Carole Eastaugh will be co-chairs for Publicity and Telephone Committee this season; and Jean Eichman will be chairperson for the main Plant Sale which will concentrate this year on later blooming primroses. Jean is also the new contact person for the Alaska group.

Misty Haffner asked to be relieved as Regional Editor as she has held the post for about a year; and Patricia Wilson

volunteered for the position. All forthcoming articles and submissions to the Editor of *Primroses* should be submitted by Alaska members thru Patricia Wilson to avoid duplication.

We are hoping also to have Clay McDole give a talk and submit an article on his now having 130 different named auricula primroses in his garden and alpine house at Douglas, Alaska, a sister co-unity to Juneau. It is believed that Clay's collection may be the largest collection of named auriculas in North America, but of course we don't know that for sure."

Cheri Fluck adds:

"I wanted to thank all of the donors for the success of the (Spring Plant) sale. The line up was incredible and the happy customers were great. We were nearly sold out by 9:30 a.m. and could have sold double the amount of plants. There were only four people to handle all the buyers: Misty Haffner, Roger and Jean Eichman, and myself. I am surprised folks didn't get angry waiting so long to pay, and I'm sure we could have recruited more new members by having more workers to talk to the people in line. There were lots and questions about growing and how to plant, etc."

Cheri also contributed half of her profits as a grower in the sale to help make *Primroses* more colorful.

*News from the Chapters continued***PENNSYLVANIA****Doretta Klaber Chapter**

Meets four times a year. Contact Dot Plyler, chapter president, for details. Dot reports:

"We've had some good rains now; the drought restrictions have been lifted and we've even had flood warnings! The grass is green once again and the gardens have plants coming back to life that we thought were gone. Things are not completely rosy, but they're certainly much better. We've been told that some of the trees may continue to suffer next summer and that we should prepare for more losses. Time (and weather) will tell."

WASHINGTON**Washington State Chapter**

Meets the second Friday of each month, except July and August, at the United Good Neighbor Center at 305 S 43rd Street, Renton, (across the street from Valley General Hospital) at 7:45 p.m. Guests are welcome.

At September's meeting, the chapter designated a \$500 donation for color printing in the quarterly. The evening's program featured a videotape from the 1991 Primula Symposium: Frank Cabot's presentation, "Primula and Friends", about his garden on the St. Lawrence River in Quebec.

October's meeting was a "Fall Harvest Auction", featuring plants, produce, and baked goods. Another videotape from the 1991 Primula Symposium was viewed at the November meeting: Cy Happy and Sybil

McCulloch's presentation "Primulas of Many Springs".

Eastside Chapter

Meets the first Monday of every month at First Interstate Bank, 6615 132nd Avenue NE, Kirkland, at the Bridle Trails Mall at 7:30 p.m.

September's meeting was a potluck lunch; in October the chapter held a plant auction following their regular business meeting.

In November, Steve Doonan of Grandridge Nursery gave an excellent presentation on cyclamen species, their culture and special requirements, pests and controls.

Seattle Chapter

Meets four times a year. Contact June Skidmore, chapter president, for details.

At the October meeting, Scott Vergara, the Executive Director of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, showed slides from his trip this summer to Tibet. Lew Micklesen described the plant of the month, *Primula cusickiana*. The meeting ended with refreshments and a plant exchange.

Tacoma Chapter

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

Steve Doonan of Grandridge Nursery gave a fine program in October, showing some of his favorite plants and telling about their culture.

November's meeting featured a talk by Steve Hootman, president of the Mt. Tahoma chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society, about his plant finding expedition to China this summer.

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Notes from the Editor

By Claire Cockcroft, Redmond, Washington

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A big thank-you goes to Allan Jones, Nominating Committee Chairman, and Committee Members Rosetta Jones and Flip Fenili for their hard work recruiting nominees for our 1996 ballot. When a society is as small as the APS, the pool of potential candidates can be very small indeed. Then the job of the nominating committee becomes even more difficult and correspondingly more important. The continuity of our society depends on their being able to recruit qualified candidates for each position. Good work, team!

THE GOODNESS OF LEAF MOLD

John Kerridge shares this suggestion from Peter Ward in Bristol, U.K.:

I would suggest leaf mold be explored as a possible alternative [Ed.: for potting bark]. We had a society visit to Ashwood's Nursery earlier this year and Philip Baulk, the senior Ashwood propagator, demonstrated how they utilize leaf-mold for growing lewisia's (they hold the national Collection) and many other plants including primulas. The leaves, preferably oak or beech, are collected in the Autumn and put in black Polythene bin bags. The leaves are just damp and a few holes are made in the bag which is tied up and placed in a shed. After several months the leaves, which are half-rotted, are put through a shredder. The resulting shredded leaves are used in composts at a ratio of 25%. The plants at the nursery, utilizing this type of compost, looked fantastic.

When I first grew auriculas, in

Oxfordshire, I used the Buckley formula, which included half-rotted shredded leaves. The plants grew very well and following the visit to Ashwood's I have now reverted to using shredded leaf-mold. I appreciate you may not have access to beech but you do have oak I believe and there are other broad-leaved trees that provide suitable leaves. It is certainly worth a try because the amount needed, for the average collection in pots, is quite small.

AMERICAN SAKURASOH ASSN.

Paul Held offers some good advice on separating chaff from seed in his newsletter for the American Sakurasoh Association. Paul suggests limiting the amount of chaff by selecting only large or medium size seed heads, and then carefully plucking them so that only the seed capsule and its contents are spilled into your winnowing tray.

Several ASA members reported receiving their "buds" of two named varieties and were pretty excited. Now all they have to do is follow Paul's directions or their own experience to overwinter the buds and get them growing next spring.

A CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Misty Hafner, as the Alaska regional reporter, has done a marvelous job of sending the news and convincing writers to share their articles with us. She has

Notes from the Editor continued

also shared her own line drawings of primulas in *Primroses*. Now she is passing the baton (or pencil, in this case) to Pat Wilson of Juneau, Alaska. Pat "inherited" lots of beautiful primroses when she moved into her house five years ago, and has since become involved with Primrose Society meetings to learn more. Thank you, Misty! Welcome, Pat!

SAKURASOH UPDATE

Dot Plyler writes about the Sakurasoh plant, Border 2-37X, that she

received at the 1991 Primula Worldwide Symposium:

The plant was in fine condition in the spring (1995) and bloomed well. Individual thrum flowers were small, an inch across or less, but they formed a cluster 2 1/2 inches across. Petals were white on their edge with purple/red centers. Backs of petals were cerise. This was a healthy plant with four crowns, although it was smaller at 8 1/2 inches than surrounding *Primula sieboldii*. Leaves were four inches long and about 2 3/4 inches broad. ❀

**DON'T MISS THE NATIONAL SHOW AND ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 30-31, 1996 - SEE PAGE 9**

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National Auricula and Primula Society

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Lawrence E. Wigley

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News from the Chapters

continued from page 26

OREGON**Oregon Primrose Society**

Meets the third Friday of every month from September through May at 1p.m. at the Milwaukie Community Club, 42nd and Jackson Sts., Milwaukie OR. Contact Ann Lunn, chapter president, for details.

Valley Hi Chapter

Meets the second Monday of the month from September through November and February through May at 1 p.m.

at Thelma Genheimer's house, 7100 SW 209th, Beaverton, OR. Contact Thelma for details.

BRITISH COLUMBIA**BC Primrose Group**

Meets on the third Wednesday of September, November, January, March, and May, at 7:30 p.m. at the Thomas Hobbs Southlands Nursery, Vancouver. Call (604) 274-0551 or (604) 224-7813 to confirm. ❀

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Dues for individual or household membership in the American Primrose Society, domestic and foreign, are \$20 U.S. per calendar year (\$21 for renewals postmarked after January 1); \$55 for three years; or \$275 for an individual life membership. Submit payment to the treasurer. Membership renewals are due November 15 and are delinquent at the first of the year.

Membership includes a subscription to the quarterly **Primroses**, seed exchange privileges, slide library privileges and the opportunity to join a Round Robin.

PUBLICATIONS

Manuscripts for publication in the quarterly are invited from members and other gardening experts, although there is no payment. Please include black and white photographs if possible. Send articles directly to the editor.

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