

# BULLETIN

of the

## AMERICAN DAHLIA SOCIETY

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TRI-COLOR ARRANGEMENT. Winner in the Garden Club Section of the last A.D.S. Show—Another triumph for Mrs. George Green, who glorifies white miniature cactus Dahlias.

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Issue of May, 1949 . . . . . Second Quarter

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## RUSCHMOHR PRESENTS

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Roots \$15.00  
Plants \$7.50      3 for \$20.00 Net

Winner of 4 American Home Achievement Medals, at The Midwest Show in Milwaukee, Central States Show in Chicago, Tri-City Show, in Moline, Ill. and The Southern Dahlia Conference Show at Chattanooga. Winner of Gold Medal as best seedling, in Madison, Wis. Winner of 3 largest and best blooms in Southern Conference Show at Chattanooga. Winner of the Derrill W. Hart Medal with an average score of 85.5 in 3 A.D.S. Trial Grounds. Being certified at Atlanta 86, East Lansing 85.5 and Cincinnati 85.

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**NEW LOOK** (Guttler) S.C. Empire yellow, very large blooms, running 12-14 inches. Long stiff stems. Bushes 6 ft. tall. Winner of The American Home Achievement Medal in American Dahlia Society Show in New York, also in N. E. Penn. Show in Scranton, Pa. and L. I. Dahlia Society Show in Jamaica, N. Y. Winner of Meritorious Award Ribbon in Seedling Class at Midwest Show in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Winner as largest and most perfect bloom in L. I. Dahlia Show in 1947.

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Rockville Centre, N. Y.



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# BULLETIN

of the  
American Dahlia Society

## Contents for May, 1949

SERIES XXII, No. 2

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# Plans Complete for a Great A.D.S. Show

Before the vases were tucked away, closing our 1948 Show, President Leo Pollak was busy with his Committees in preparation for this year.

Practically all details have been worked out. Our Show Manager, Henry Olsen, is planning another smooth, efficient job.

The Schedule and Premium List have been mailed out, together with the Classification List, all in ample time to permit you to plan your garden in exact requirements of the Show table.

## Court of Honor Award

As we go to press, one of our officers informs us that through an inadvertency we neglected to mention in our A.D.S. Show Schedule that the beautiful East St. Louis Dahlia Society Trophy will again be awarded to the winner in this class. Dr. Fred J. Knocke now holds the trophy, having been its first winner at the New York Show last Fall.

A grower must win it three times in order to receive permanent possession.

Entry form will be found on the back cover of the Schedule. Won't you mail in your entries to Henry A. Olsen, 189-23 44th Ave., Flushing, New York, two weeks in advance of the Show date, September 21st and 22nd at the Hotel Statler (formerly known as the Hotel Pennsylvania) 7th Ave., and 33d St., New York City.

## Present Day Problems to Classification

In discussing the classification of dahlias it is well to conserve the values of the past and consider some of the most important questions of our own times. In a general way and in the short space of a single article, we may consider color distribution and botanical transformations.

If we are to give color its due consideration, let us think of it in a specific relation to flowers. There are so many things to be said about color. It is all very well to understand the physical aspects of color and to have a fair idea of the principles of the spectrum. Color covers a wide field, becomes a little intricate in spots, but, for our purposes, its apprehension and evaluation is comparatively simple. Whence color in flowers? Historically, expert botanists have demonstrated highly specialized cells within the plant structure, which impart color hues in various degrees of color blend and saturation. At this point, we might as well toss in a few trick terms. Plastids are a conspicuous part of the plant structure, of which chloroplasts are a common example and significant because they have been demonstrated in the bright petals of flowers. Briefly, we may also mention a few of the pigments that are found in plant life. They are known as carotin, chlorophyll, xanthophyll, and the blue and red anthocyanins. These pigments are in solution and

flow within the cell structure, within their vacuoles and are a component part of the above mentioned highly specialized cells which are capable of absorbing and reflecting light waves. They are found in the cell sap and find an ultimate abode in the leaves and petals.

It is true that color exists in nature in an impure state, that it is a blend of more than one color. Many harmonious blends and suffusions exist. The higher degrees of brilliance are obtained through a mixture with white, and, medium and lesser degrees of brilliance through a series of gray to black. In the botanical world there is a definite approach to the study of color and we may refer to the color division by De Candolle, who separated color in nature into two great groups, viz., the zanthic or yellow blends, and the cyanins, or the blends of blue. Harmonious blends occur in both groups and through hybridization mixtures of both groups are found in dahlias. Either groups may throw white or reds. Hence, we may see a white with a faint dilution of yellow, or a red with a yellow base. On the other hand we have white with a faint lavender hue, and some blue-reds, which have been under discussion for the last year or so.

In the work of the Joint Committee, color was given careful consideration. This committee decided to continue the grouping of colors and was convinced that this is still the most practical way to treat color. The future of color distribution with special reference to the dahlia is secure; the Mendelian theory of heredity still prevails. It may, therefore, be stated that any decided change in the general color distribution of color in dahlias is hardly to be expected. Hence, our approach to the solution of color groups was more toward the conservative side. It may seem to some that these variations in color is just a haphazard occurrence, or, that it happens by chance. This is far from the truth. These color blends and shades appear in fairly regular proportions. Each variety has inherent cells which determine the color pattern of each succeeding generation. These definite biological and chemical reaction are usually constant in a given variety, except in the rare case of a color "sport." Nature runs riot in color at times. We may expect a color mutation which is a new distribution of color, quite unlike any hitherto combination or distribution. Until such time as these mutations become numerous, they may be assigned with other groups. When enough varieties exist to form a new color group this new group will be defined as in the past.

In nature we have certain problems which deal with impure color. We are not dealing with color bands, or trying to keep certain color classes clean, as an artist would paint a picture. There are color characteristics which must be recognized. Nature adorns yellow with a touch of green or red. It makes white more brilliant by the addition of yellow. Color suffusions are tanned or buffed and shaded with gray. Colors are mixed in an evident blended series. The shaded blends and suffusions have been placed into a new Autumn class. The zanthic blends have been separated into a class by themselves. The remaining blends constitute the final subdivision, which also included the so-called two-toned varieties.



In our classification pinks are dilutions of red including the yellow-reds; lavenders originate on the cyanis side and are dilutions of purple. Creams and ivory are grouped with whites. A true white colored flower probably never existed. Faint unsuspected but highly attenuated dilutions of other colors affect an inevitable departure from pure and flawless white. The same may be said of the other solid color groups. Blends as we know them contain intermingling colors of more than one group and are sufficiently abrupt to detect at six feet. Their present day assignment will depend upon the color combinations.

The botanical aspects of classification are set by authority. The general plan of the dahlia is listed from tuber to blossom in all of its variations. It is not an easy chapter and its entire significance cannot be grasped by the beginner. However, the various deviations are classified according to botanical standards, and, these respective types have become very well known and are understood by the dahlia fraternity at large. At times, it is necessary to study the modifications and transitions of parts of the inflorescence. Stamens and pistils change to petals. There are various modifications of the disc. Deviations in form could become extensive. These future changes must be followed by a person well qualified to render decisions. The botanist can trace these transformations. He knows their source and understands how the reproductive elements of the plant may be affected. He knows and recognizes the principle modifications and classifies them in a convenient manner. The insignificant differences are noted in the record of a plant analysis. Laciniation of a ligulate corolla would come under this latter heading, as it is merely a separation of the terminal ligule into partial lobules, but, not a significant deviation which would alter the species. All of these modifications of type together with their official classification belong to authority. The American Dahlia Society has always followed this general plan. This authority was further recognized by the Joint Committee and some of the general terms were simplified and arranged into a ready reference glossary as a part of the 1949 Classification of Dahlias, sponsored jointly by the American Dahlia Society and the Central States Dahlia Society.

As an off-shoot of this work, the Maytrott Color chart came into being. The author offers it as a guide to color and an aid in classification. It has been endorsed by the American Dahlia Society.

This is a brief, short sketch of some of the phases of classification. There are many problems not set down here. You, who are well versed in this work, may do your society a favor and write in. This writer welcomes personal observations. Some of these problems happen in your backyard. The next, immediate future modification may be yours. We welcome these reports. The writer also knows the humane side of this work, of the many toilsome hours by so many volunteers; of the tedious, steady grind. Hats are off to the officers and members of the above societies, who made this unselfish attempt to correlate "head, hand and heart." In maintaining these modern principles of precision, we have not forgotten the average member. It's true, maybe, that some of his concepts may be a little hazy; that he gets balled up at times on color and form. But, he is the guy who communes with nature. He follows his hobby. He reads more and more about it, dissects a plant once in a while, and, even attacks the abstract problems of theoretical

science. These individuals are a part of classification. They are qualified and can give an opinion on some of the phases of this work. His ends will be served by following the general plan. He hybridizes species. He offers new and perplexing blends. He is the fellow who keeps the Classification Committee on their toes.

EDWARD F. McDADE, M. D.

## Dahlia Culture for the Novice

Soil preparation is so capably explained in a feature article of this issue, we will consider first, the setting of posts. We prefer one by one stock; six feet long for large flowering Dahlias, five feet for small. Drive the posts fifteen inches in the ground. If you have space, set them four feet apart in each direction. They can be grown three feet apart if necessary.

Open the hole by finally working the soil. Place the tuber flat, eye up approximately five inches below the surface level. Fill in two inches of soil. After the plant begins to grow, the balance of the depression may be filled in. Set green plants, so the top of the ball of earth is four inches below surface level.

Once a month thereafter, rake in a handful of good balanced fertilizer, preferably one of organic nature in a circle whose radius from the stalk is fifteen inches.

Spray the plants once a week with a good general garden spray such as D-X. (We like to add to it the recently introduced 'Parathion'.) Several times during the season, as the plants grow, tie securely to stake.

**LARGE FLOWERING VARIETIES:** When plant is a foot tall, pinch out the top; this will encourage four to six lateral branches to grow, producing a fine bush growth. Five or six weeks later, when buds begin to form, pinch out the side buds, permitting only one strong bud on each branch. Also pinch out the top two sets of lateral branches which grow in the axils of the four top leaves. After the initial flowers bloom, new branches from the lower portion of the plant will bud up and may be handled in similar manner as the first set.

**SMALL FLOWERING VARIETIES:** When plants are a foot high, pinch out the top. Then when the branches are several inches long, pinch each out again. When buds set, the plant will have splendid bush formation with many flowering tips. Do not disbud.

Digging and storage will be discussed in our next issue.

## Open Executive Meeting June 10

All members are invited to join with your officers at the June 10th meeting.

Dr. Oscar T. Eichmann of the State Institute of Agriculture, Farmingdale, L. I. will address us on the subject "Soil Preparation."

Those who heard the February lecture will surely be on hand and they recommend that all members who can attend, should not miss this one.

Friday, June 10th, Hotel Statler, New York City, Parlor 2, Ballroom Floor, 7:30 P.M.

# The American Home Achievement Medal

E. L. D. SEYMOUR,

Horticultural Editor, The American Home Magazine

The year 1949 has brought me two gratifying and unprecedented experiences, in connection with my stewardship of the American Home Achievement Medal. The first was the privilege of attending the annual A. D. S. banquet and there meeting both old friends and new ones. The second was receiving a request to write something for the A. D. S. Bulletin, which I am glad to do. I might mention as a third thrill, the recording, early in May on the closing date for applications for the Medal, of requests from 54 organizations for the trophy in 1949. This figure ties the all-time record set in 1940 and again in 1941. So apparently interest in the Medal is still keen.

As usual, the majority of the applications (32 out of the 54) came from Dahlia societies. Twenty-one were from gladiolus organizations, and one from the American Peony Society. A similar condition obtained last year, when 53 Medals were asked for, and 47 of them awarded,

32 going to Dahlias, 13 to gladiolus novelties, and two to peonies.

It may not be generally realized that the Achievement Medal dates back to 1920 or even earlier. This gives it, I think, one of the longest continuous histories of any of the current, important horticultural awards. At first it was "the *Garden Magazine* Achievement Medal." As such it went to a Dahlia—*Kennedy's Tribune Elite*—in New York in 1925; and to four varieties at four different shows in 1926. In 1928, when the *Garden Magazine* became *The American Home* and entered a broader field, the Medal assumed its present name and began to be asked for and awarded in increasing numbers. In 1930, when 16 Medals were given, nine of them going to Dahlias, its nature and purpose were editorially described as follows:

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Presentation  
of the  
American  
Home  
Achievement  
Medal  
to  
Martin Guttler  
watched by  
A.D.S. officials.  
Rear, l. to r.,  
Sec. A. J.  
Mulcahy,  
H. Dewey Mohr,  
L. B. Dudley;  
front,  
Gordon F. Waaser,  
Mr. Guttler,  
E. L. D. Seymour,  
Horticultural  
Editor of  
American  
Home.

•





"Cooperating with organized activities for the promotion of horticultural interest, the *American Home* places at the disposal of a certain number of selected organizations its Achievement Medal created for the purpose of rewarding personal effort and stimulating further interest in plant cultivation. The American Home desires particularly to give recognition to the discovery or development of new plants or new varieties of outstanding merit in groups of popular garden flowers; also as occasion may determine, to recognize exceptional cultural skill or outstanding effort in garden activities."

In 1936 when I succeeded the late Dr. Leonard Barron—one of the best friends the Dahlia ever had—as horticultural editor, I had to quickly become familiar with the interesting but complicated show records of that year, so as to prepare the summarizing report which is regularly published in each April issue. To indicate what this involves, our records for the past ten years, including 1948, show that 467 Achievement Medals were offered and 352 awarded, 115 having been withheld because of a lack of entries up to the high standards that judges have invariably—or almost invariably—associated with this award. Of the 352 Medals given in that period, 243 have gone to Dahlias. Some day, if I ever find the necessary time and energy, I would like to review those awards and study the subsequent history of the Medal winning varieties. My impression is that they stand high in the list of consistent good performers.

Fundamentally, the policies governing the trophy have changed little if at all since it was established. But there have had to be improvements in the manner of securing and handling the necessary data. Under our present system, early in January we send out a form letter to every organization that has offered the Medal at a show asking if it wishes authorization to include the trophy in its schedule for the current year. The letter continues:

"If so, the application below, and a copy of your society letterhead, must be received by The American Home on or before May 1. If it is approved, we will send you an official report form which must be filled out and returned within two weeks of the closing date of the show. If you can also send a photograph of the winning variety and its originator, we will be glad to see it. By filling the application, you agree to conform to all rules and regulations governing the Medal, as stated herein and on the other side of this sheet, which you should retain as your part of the agreement."

For every application received, a card is made and, as the official reports are received, the data is recorded. When the season ends, the information is compiled, and the Medals are engraved and sent to the several recipients. All this sounds simple enough no doubt, and it would be if the information came in promptly and accurately. Unfortunately, one of our greatest headaches has been unexplainable delays in receiving the forms. Rarely have we been able to complete our records until January—and even then we have had, more than once, to note "No reply from one (or more) societies" notwithstanding telegraphic requests! Also there is frequently surprising variation in the spelling of the name of a variety, or of its originator, or in his address, when the same winner is reported from different shows. And even the color and type descriptions do not always coincide. Why this is, is beyond me.

Our new system, we feel, asks nothing impossible or unreasonable. Under it, we can—and will have to be—more

hard-boiled. If a report is not received within two weeks of the close of a show (or reasonably soon thereafter) we will have to close our books and withhold the Medal from that particular organization for that year. You members of the A. D. S., especially you who carry the burden of show management, can help us and those to whom Medals are awarded by making sure that full reports are sent in promptly.

Occasionally other odd problems arise, such as the request, a few years ago, from one show committee for two Medals instead of the one that had been asked for. The reason was that 22 judges had judged the Achievement Medal class and had split 11 to 11 in favor of two competing entries. No one would budge and the committee hoped we would provide duplicate awards! Needless to say, we didn't. That particular problem was, of course, up to the organization, as are all details of the actual judging of the Medal class. All we require is that the regulations governing the Medal be compiled with, and the established high standards set by the Medal over the year be upheld. Perhaps, at the risk of repetition, it would be logical to end these notes by quoting those regulations, in connection with a cordial invitation to interested societies to write to me for any further information desired. The regulations and rules are as follows:

"1. The American Home Achievement Medal is offered for award to the originator, amateur or professional, of the most worthy undissemated, but named, variety of Dahlia, at least three years old, (or of Peony, Iris or Gladiolus) whether shown by the originator or someone else. At least three blooms (or spikes, or sprays) must be shown, and entered specifically in a separate, clearly designated class provided in the schedule.

"2. The award shall be made only to a new variety of adequate merit, distinction and novelty; one having distinctiveness as compared with existing varieties. It cannot be made to an unnamed seedling; in the event of a successful competing variety being without a name at the time of judging, the award will not be confirmed until a name, satisfactory to, and approved by, the national flower society concerned (A. P. S., A. D. S., etc.) has been given.

"3. The winning of this Medal automatically renders the variety winning it ineligible to compete for it in any future year.

"4. Before the Medal is included in the prize schedule of any Show, the organization wishing to offer it must file a formal application for authority to do so, accompanied by its letterhead; and this application must be approved by the AMERICAN HOME. Filing of such an application automatically signifies agreement to conform to these conditions.

"5. A report by the secretary or other regular officer of the organization offering the Medal must be sent to the AMERICAN HOME within two weeks of the close of the show, whether or not the award is made. This report must be on a special form to be provided by the AMERICAN HOME when the application is approved.

"6. The conditions stated in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above must be included in the class description in the prize schedule of any show at which the Medal is offered."

# Plans for the 1949 Mid-West Show

By George R. Currie

The sixteenth annual Mid-West Dahlia Show will be held at Garfield Park Conservatory in Chicago on Saturday and Sunday, September 17th and 18th, with the Central States Dahlia Society as host society. This show will also be the eighteenth annual show of Central States Dahlia Society.

Mr. Glenn L. Pierce of Villa Park, Illinois, has been selected as show chairman. Not only was Glenn chairman of the 1948 Central States Dahlia Society show, but he has also served as show chairman of shows for other floral societies, and is excellently qualified both by experience and ability for the task. Anyone desiring a premium schedule should write for the same to Mr. T. L. Pierce, 436 Summit Avenue, Villa Park, Illinois.

Like the situation which prevailed at the 1945 Mid-West show at Cleveland and the 1946 Mid-West show at St. Louis, there is no suitable hotel within walking distance at Garfield Park Conservatory to serve as convention headquarters for out-of-town visitors to the show, so the show committee has selected the LaSalle Hotel as such headquarters. All who are planning on attending are urged to write Mr. S. J. Fairhead, 10411 S. Wood Street, Chicago 43, Illinois, for cards on which to request hotel reservations. Mr. Fairhead already has these cards, and they will be promptly mailed upon request. It adds much to the enjoyment of attending a Mid-West show to stay at the hotel selected as headquarters. Good street car accommodations over the Madison Street line are provided from the LaSalle Hotel to the show. Get off the street car at Central Park Avenue (as I recall, it is 3600 West) and walk north three short blocks on Central Park Avenue. The first building on the left is the gold domed Administration building of Garfield Park, and after reaching this you will see the glass roof of the Conservatory to the north and also on the left (West) side of the avenue.

For those who drive and wish to go directly to the Conservatory, upon reaching the vicinity of Chicago, it is advisable to stop at a filling station and secure a map of Chicago and have the attendant point out the map Washington Boulevard and Garfield Park. Washington Boulevard is one of the finest East and West Streets in the city for automobile traffic, with no street car tracks to contend with, and passes right through Garfield Park. In approaching Washington Boulevard on a North and South street, one will find it easily if he will remember that it is 100 North (one block North of Madison Street which is zero). Upon entering Washington Boulevard keep on this street until reaching Central Park Avenue (3600 West) and then turn north on the latter street two blocks and you are at the Conservatory. There is usually ample parking space along the curbs of the streets near the Conservatory, and, if you bring blooms, there is a convenient parking location just to the West of the Conservatory (the opposite side from Central Park Avenue).

The host society is not sponsoring any tour of gardens in connection with the show, because of the great dis-

tances involved in reaching many of the suburban gardens, and for the further reason that early Sunday morning is the best time for dahlia fans to see the show under the most favorable conditions before the aisles get too crowded by throngs of people that flock to the show from late Sunday morning until near closing time in the evening. No admission is charged and the total two day public attendance is certain to exceed 20,000. However, realizing that many growers purposely arrive the day before the opening of the show in the hope of visiting some of the dahlia gardens in the vicinity and meeting and visiting with other dahlia "bugs," Mr. Lewis J. West and Mr. Jesse Strauss are personally arranging a tour for Friday afternoon, September 16th for the benefit of such early arrivals. They will meet such visitors during the noon hour at the LaSalle Hotel and will each have his automobile in order to provide transportation to those who have arrived by plane, train or bus. In order to make the tour a real success they will need the cooperation of all those who have come by automobile by such visitors emptying their own cars on the tour and making any empty seats available to others in need of transportation.

The tour will leave the LaSalle right after lunch Friday and visit Mr. West's garden at Evanston, Mr. Strauss' garden at Glencoe, and then the exhibition gardens of Mr. Ellis J. Asther's Northbrook Dahlia Gardens at the Village of Northbrook, the largest commercial dahlia grower in the Chicago region. Any who arrive in the city after the tour has left the LaSalle can join up with the party later in the afternoon by driving directly to Mr. Asther's place at 1428 Shermer Avenue in the village of Northbrook. As a fitting conclusion to the tour it is planned that the group will have dinner together at some good suburban eating place. Anyone wishing to make advance arrangements for getting in on this tour should write Mr. Lewis J. West, 2300 Hartrey Avenue, Evanston, Illinois.

The first thing on the program for Saturday, the 18th, is the box luncheon served at noon at the rear of Exhibition Hall in the Conservatory, for the judges and show workers. The out-of-the-state visitors who assist with the judging will be the guests of the host society at this luncheon. Judging will get under way shortly after the conclusion of the luncheon.

At Chicago shows the winners of "specials" as most perfect bloom and largest bloom in each of the competitive sections, are brought to a Court of Honor at the end of Exhibition Hall where a special team of judges selects from among them the most perfect bloom in the show and the largest bloom in the show. By that time the judging of the show has been completed except for selecting these two grand champion blooms and an interested throng of judges and exhibitors is sure to be on the sidelines to watch this final judging event.

In the class for seedlings 3 years, or older, it has been decided to follow the precedent established at Milwaukee last year of eliminating type formation classes and for the judges to award as many "meritorious award" rib-





Garfield Park Conservatory at Chicago, where the 1949 Mid-West Dahlia Show will be held. The conservatory proper and the propagating houses have 184,765 sq. ft. of glass and 134,462 sq. ft. of floor area, and it is the world's largest conservatory under one roof.

bons as they deem there are worthy entries. This class will be a strong one this year. Two entries almost certain to be there are Lew Sarett's white S. C., *Madonna*, and Jim March's red I.D. on a gold background, *Pirate Treasure*, both having immense size and both of which the writer has watched with admiring interest for the past two seasons. In addition to these two worthy contenders, there undoubtedly will be a number of other good entries, because most of the leading seedling growers of the country have arranged for their 1950 hopefuls to be grown on trial in the vicinity of Chicago and exhibited at this Mid-West show.

Chicago shows are always interesting shows. It is primarily a show of competition between amateur growers. Furthermore, many of the growers in this region go in for growing the current year's introductions and most of the 1949 Honor Roll varieties are likely to be seen on the show tables. There are also a number who import the new ones from Holland each year, although as yet proper show classes haven't been set up for showing up these Holland importations to advantage in the Chicago show, most of which are of B size. This can only be accomplished by setting up separate color classes for B size blooms and adopting a show rule preventing B size blooms from being exhibited in the same classes with A dahlias. The Cleveland and Milwaukee shows are notable examples of shows which have developed strong classes for B dahlias, and exhibitors whose interest centers on such classes.

The special classes for six and ten bloom entries, each bloom in the entry of a different variety, are always a feature of the Chicago show, with the keenest of competition, and some of the topnotch specimen blooms of the show will be sure to be seen in these entries. The artistic arrangement classes are a great source of strength and interest in this show, and are the magnet which attracts the attention of the lady show visitors.

The annual business meeting of the Mid-West Dahlia Conference is scheduled to take place at 5:00 P.M. Saturday in one of the rooms at the Conservatory. The chief item of business is always that of fixing the location of the Mid-West show for the ensuing year. The Minnesota Dahlia Society has already extended a formal invitation for holding the 1950 show at Minneapolis, and there is a rumor afloat that the Toledo Dahlia Society may also extend an invitation.

The banquet and ensuing program will be held at the LaSalle Hotel at 7:00 P.M. Saturday evening. The nature of this program hasn't yet been announced but it is certain to be good.

The attendance of out-of-state growers at these Mid-West shows has been growing year by year since the ending of the war, and all signs point to the best attendance ever at Chicago this September. Better make your vacation plans now so as to include this great show and its attending goodfellowship, which you will find will exceed even your fondest expectations!

### The Ohio Valley Dahlia Association

An outstanding event of the year was our meeting of March 10th, held at the Y.W.C.A. A dinner preceded the meeting and a total of seventy-five members and guests attended. In spite of a spring blizzard, members from as far away as Indianapolis, Indiana and Maysville, Kentucky, were present. After the dinner Kodachrome slides of new foreign dahlias and Honor Roll dahlias were shown.

Our Show Committee is working very hard to have the 1949 show the best on record. Our show chairman, Mr. Andrew Doermann, North Trevor Ave., Cheviot, Cincinnati, 11, Ohio, will be very glad to send a Schedule, to any one desiring same.

The O.V.D.A. extends a cordial invitation to members of all Dahlia Societies to attend our show, which will be held September 24th and 25th, in the lobby of the Paramount Theatre, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Alice Mattick, *Secretary*.

### Orange County Dahlia Society

The following officers were elected to serve in 1949:

President—Dr. G. Emmett Raitt.  
1st Vice President—L. O. Archibald.  
2nd Vice President—Elden McNeil.  
3rd Vice President—Hayward Allen.  
Secretary-Treasurer—Wanda Bose.  
Show Manager—Hobert Jordan.

# The Way to Better Dahlias— Some Thoughts From Australia

By M. I. FITZGERALD

85 Nicholson St., Coburg N. 13, Victoria, Australia

May we take this opportunity to wish all readers of the BULLETIN a very good New Year and may the dahlias of 1949 be bigger, better and brighter than ever before.

In this present article we intend to discuss briefly several matters which we believe may contribute to the improvement of dahlia knowledge and dahlia lore, and we will conclude with a few brief comments on some exceptionally fine dahlias which appeared in many far-flung dahlia growing points of this continent of Australia.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT DAHLIA GROWING? At first sight this question may seem easy to answer . . . we may be tempted to reply glibly that so much has been written about dahlias that little more remains to be said. Analysis of the question, however, tends to show that true scientific dahlia knowledge is full of gaps, doubts and fallacies with plenty of old wives tales thrown in for good measure. Admittedly the textbooks cover the rudiments of culture, such as general feeding, planting, digging of roots and so on. Admittedly also the dahlia magazines of the world carefully list and describe the new winners at the shows. But we have in mind something more. We believe that there is a great need for a dahlia forum which does more than answer questions. We would like to see a section in each dahlia journal and each dahlia society where all growers are asked and encouraged to give their personal observations and evidence to expert committees who would then sift all the data, no matter how scattered and fragmentary. They would then compile an encyclopedia of dahlia lore which would contain every scrap of real dahlia growing information. This committee would also supervise actual experiments and tests to prove or disprove the very many ideas on dahlias which at present are only theories which may or may not be fallacies. The compilation of this "DAHLIA ENCYCLOPEDIA" would be a big job, and would require the services of scientists, statisticians, amateur and professional growers, writers and in fact all those interested in furthering the interests of the dahlia. Let us now turn to the consideration of some of the matters which would appear in the great book.

## FACTS, FALLACIES AND QUESTIONS

### 1. *Why do the clumps from red dahlias shoot late?*

It is our repeated experience that purple and red dahlias produce clumps which shoot from 4 to 8 weeks after yellow dahlias; and the latter shoot before the orange and bronze types. This is a general rule and we appreciate, gentle reader, that you may have different ideas. We merely set down our experience. It is an important point because the whole question of timing of blooms is bound up with the date on which the clumps shoot, this being of special moment to exhibitors. Correlated to this matter is the fact that yellow dahlias are prolific shooters whilst the reds and purples are not only late but are often shy in shooting. Think it over and check from your own data.

### 2. *Have you noticed that small cuttings root quicker than large ones?*

We know this is no new point. But we are not convinced that small cuttings always root quicker than large ones, and where they do, the growth of the cutting itself is often slower than from a larger cutting. The disadvantage of large cuttings is that the flop, apparently due to evaporation unless the leaves are cut in half, cross-wise. If this is done they will not flop even on a hot day. We feel that the optimum cutting is neither small nor large but rather the medium size is best, taking all things into consideration. What do you find, in practice, to be the best? We know what you have read, but is it borne out by actual experiment? And do you really get a blind clump if the embryo buds at the base of the cutting are removed? We doubt that one too!

### 3. *Why do clumps fail to winter successfully?*

Here is a question that very many dahlia lovers want answered in definite terms. Assuming that the freezing bogy is removed, there still remains the problem of shrivel, collar rot and tuber decay. Heavy manuring will give plump tubers but we believe it also leads to collar rot. Digging too early will cause shrivel and so will "drying out." There is still much to be written about the way to produce the best and toughest clumps, as well as good flowers. Of course we observe that some varieties are naturally poor producers of tubers and give little more than elongated roots. Then there is the question of pot roots which the Europeans favour so much. This question can be finally disposed of, by actual experiment but not by mere theory and guesswork.

### 4. *How can the life of blooms be prolonged?*

If the dahlia has one weakness it is that blossoms often fade too soon. The Europeans have done some research on flower preservation and they give special prizes to types with long lasting qualities. Perhaps the only way to prolong the life of flowers is to select suitable ancestors, as we humans must do if we are to live beyond the average span. In short there may be no elixir or rejuvenator for flowers any more than for humans. But intensive study of breeding characteristics on the one hand, and various blossom preserving aids on the other hand, should lead to definite improvement in one of the most important but most neglected of all aspects of dahlia growing. There is still some doubt even as to the best time of day to cut the blossoms to achieve maximum life of flowers.

### 5. *How do sports arise and how can they be induced?*

Such drugs as colchicine, which is poisonous and dangerous, may be part of the equipment of the hybridist of the future. But at present this problem of mutation is little understood. It is a fascinating aspect well worthy of wide experiment by those with time and space to grow very many plants.



### 6. How can we breed new and better colours?

This of course is an ancient problem which we will not fog. But is it not surprising that so little is as yet known or at least published as to scientific or controlled dahlia breeding. With most less complicated plants, breeding techniques are well established and well known. We have yet to learn how a blue, a red or a white dahlia may be produced at will.

### 7. Is there a time of the propagating season when cuttings root quicker than any other time?

We say yes. About the middle of the Spring weather we find cuttings root in a few days from some varieties. We also find that there is a greater tendency to "black off" or dampen off, so far as cuttings are concerned, late in the season. Also unless exposed to direct sun, we find that cuttings dampen off fairly quickly. Again, if sharp pebbly sand be used, the tendency to dampen off is greatly reduced.

### OUR AIM

In posing the above problems we have mentioned only seven aspects though we can think of 107. Our aim is to show the urgent need for real research in practical problems. This means work and different work casually in the garden or even for shows. It is essential that every grower do his bit in observing carefully and making known his observations and conclusion. There is no more suitable vehicle in the world than the leading dahlia magazine . . . the A.D.S. BULLETIN.

### A GLIMPSE AT SOME NEW AUSTRALIAN DAHLIAS

During the war years, a great number of new dahlias were originated in Australia and the best of these are only now beginning to trickle across the world, to England, to Europe, to South Africa, to New Zealand and of course to the United States. The best of these new ones come from our three great dahlia growing states—New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria. The dahlias mentioned below include champions from each of these states.

\* \* \* \*

From New South Wales comes the small cactus, *Sunrise* which is very fine; and *Fay Marsh*, the medium crimson is a sensation over there. *Cynthia*, a large pillar-box red dec is also sought keenly, whilst the demand for the medium decorative, *Janis Anne* is very firm, so we are told from the Northern state.

There are a large number of others which are coming across the border from New South Wales to Victoria and they include many cactus and decoratives of world class.

\* \* \* \*

From South Australia we may mention the spectacular *Brooklyn Coralie*, rated one of the best coral pinks of the decade.

*Betty Broster*, the burnt orange dec, and *Miss Doris Brand*, the mahogany red are worthy representatives of the Southern state. Other new ones are *Robyn Jones* and *Peggy Ray*.

\* \* \* \*

From Victoria comes *White Gull* (a glorious white Cactus), *Gala Chief* (a championship winner of Lincoln

red or vermillion), *Seashore* (a stiff stemmed long-petalled cactus of clearest bolden yellow), *Sheila Reeves*, (a sort of opalescent glowing apricot), *AAA* (a deep red decorative), *Skymaster* (termed "the improved Kelvin"), and *William Buckley* (an old but nice cactus of pink and cream). We could mention many more, but this is just a brief idea of some new names of really good ones from Victoria.

\* \* \* \*

So much for our notes for this article. In our next budget of news we will be able to give the show winners of the main exhibitions of the Commonwealth, as our shows take place in March and April.

### Special Notice

Dr. Oscar T. Eichmann of the State Institute of Agriculture on Long Island (Farmingdale) has accepted our invitation to address us at 7:30 p.m., on June 10th, 1949, Hotel Statler, N. Y. C.—Parlor No. 2—Ballroom Floor.

The doctor's lecture will cover soil conditioning, preparation, fertilization, etc.

Some of us heard him give a similar lecture last February and it was most interesting and instructive. We hope that every member will arrange to attend, and trusting to see you on Friday, June 10th, 1949.

ANDREW J. MULCAHY,  
Secretary, A.D.S.

## DAHLIAS

If you want your garden to look beautiful this fall, give it some thought now.

For example, some lovely miniature or pompon. These make a wonderful showing. Also the large type and single. We still have a limited supply on hand.

If you are nearby drive up to our place and you will not be disappointed.

Send for our free illustrated catalogue listing nearly 300 varieties.

### PARRELLA DAHLIA GARDENS

3380 Ely Avenue

Bronx 66, N. Y.

# Dahlia Shows — 1949

- August 4th-7th**—Pacific Dahlia Society, Municipal Auditorium, Long Beach, California.
- August 13th-14th**—San Diego County Dahlia Society, Silver Gate Masonic Temple, Utah and Wightman Streets, San Diego, California.
- August 20th-21st**—Orange County Dahlia Society, Y.M.C.A. Gym, Santa Ana, California.
- August 20th-21st**—Orange County Dahlia Society of California, Santa Ana YMCA Gym, Santa Ana, Cal.
- August 20th-28th**—Wisconsin State Fair, Horticultural Bldg., Wisconsin State Fair Grounds, West Allis, Wisconsin. (Dahlia entries on August 20th, 23rd and 26th.)
- August 27th-28th**—Inglewood Dahlia Society, High School Study Hall, Inglewood, California.
- August 27th-28th**—Snohomish County Rose and Dahlia Society, Floral Hall, Forest Park, Everett, Washington.
- September 3rd-4th**—Washington State Dahlia Society, Tacoma, Washington.
- September 4th**—Yukon Growing Grounds Show, 17240 Yukon Avenue, Gardena, California.
- September 4th-5th**—Badger State Dahlia Society, Madison Community Center, 16 East Doty Street, Madison, Wisconsin.
- September 9th-10th** — Northeastern Pennsylvania Dahlia Society, Y.W.C.A. Auditorium, Scranton, Pennsylvania.
- September 10th-11th**—Dahlia Society of New Jersey, Branchbrook Greenhouses, Branchbrook Park, Newark, New Jersey.
- September 10th-11th**—Dahlia Society of Toledo, Show Rooms of Jim White Chevrolet Co., 13th and Monroe Streets, Toledo, Ohio.
- September 10th-11th**—Dahlia Society of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Gas Light Company Building, 626 E. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- September 11th**—Rochester Dahlia Society, Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences, 657 East Avenue, Rochester, New York.
- September 12th-13th** — Minnesota Dahlia Society, Northwestern National Bank Lobby, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- September 12th-13th**—Dahlia Society of Ohio, Higbee Auditorium, Cleveland, Ohio.
- September 16th-17th**—Burholme Horticultural Society Dahlia Show, Burholme Motors Showroom, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- September 17th-18th**—1949 Mid-West Show under the auspices of Central States Dahlia Society, Garfield Park Conservatory, Chicago, Illinois.
- September 17th-18th**—The Greater Pittsburgh Dahlia Society at Phipps Conservatory, Schenley Park, Pittsburgh, Pa.
- September 18th-19th**—Baltimore Dahlia Society, Sears Community Building, North and Harford Avenues, Baltimore, Maryland.
- September 17th-18th**—East Liverpool Dahlia Society, Memorial Auditorium, East Liverpool, Ohio.
- September 17th-18th** — Portland Dahlia Society, Sunken Ballroom of the Masonic Temple, Southwest Main and West Park Street, Portland, Oregon.
- September 17th-18th**—Bergen County Dahlia Society, Lincoln School, Englewood, New Jersey.
- September 17th-18th**—Irvington Dahlia Society, Clinton and Linden Avenue, Irvington, New Jersey.
- September 21st-22nd**—American Society, Hotel Statler, New York City, New York.
- September 23rd-24th**—Camden Dahlia Society, Vocational School, Merchantville, New Jersey.
- September 23rd-24th**—Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society; Raymond Scott Lincoln—Mercury Show Rooms, Route 30, Ardmore, Pa.
- September 24th**—The Long Island Dahlia Society, Plattdutsche Park Hall, Franklin Square, Long Island, New York.
- September 24th-25th**—Wellsville Glad - Dahlia Club, Beacom Memorial Gymnasium, Wellsville, Ohio.
- September 24th-25th**—Dahlia Society of Kentucky, Kentucky Hotel, Louisville, Kentucky.
- September 24th-25th**—Southtown Dahlia Club, Hamilton Park Field House, West 72nd St. and South Normal Blvd., Chicago, Illinois.
- September 24th-25th**—Ohio Valley Dahlia Association, The Paramount Theatre Bldg., 930 East McMillan St., Cincinnati, Ohio.
- September 24th-25th**—The National Dahlia Society, U. S. Botanic Garden, Maryland Avenue and 1st St., S.W., Washington, D. C.
- September 24th-25th**—Tri-City Dahlia Society, Masonic Temple, 420-18th Street, Rock Island, Illinois.
- October 1st-2nd**—Southern States Dahlia Association, Administration Building at the Southeastern Fair, Atlanta, Georgia.
- October 1st-2nd**—Indianapolis Dahlia Society, Brookside Community House, Indianapolis, Indiana.
- October 1st-2nd**—Greater St. Louis Dahlia Society, Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, Missouri.
- October 8th-9th**—Dahlia Society of Alabama, Thomas Jefferson Hotel, Birmingham, Alabama.

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## Norman L. Wright

It is with regret that we inform you that Norman L. Wright, our representative on the A.D.S. Executive Committee, died on April 4th in the Montgomery Hospital, Norristown, Pa., of injuries suffered in a fall from a smoke stack.

Norman was the owner of the Ivy Ridge Dahlia Gardens, Philadelphia, Pa. and one of the organizers of the Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society. He is survived by his wife, Isabelle A. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

F. A. ALLEVA,  
Acting Branch Editor.



# Soils for Dahlia Culture

DR. OSCAR T. EICHMANN

Long Island Agricultural and Technical  
Institute, Farmingdale, L. I., New York

Our garden soils represent a mixture of mineral matter, organic matter, gases and water. The mineral matter consists of sand, silt and clay. The ratio in which these three ingredients are found determines the type of soil we handle. Light soils are rich in sand, good medium soils contain about even amounts of sand and silt with some clay, and heavy soils contain considerable amounts of clay. The difference in the action of sand, silt and clay is caused by the difference in the amount of surface area exposed. Sand is coarse since each particle is rather large by comparison to silt and clay. Silt is much smaller and clay still smaller than silt. Smaller particles expose a much greater surface area than the larger particles. This explains the fact that sandy soils do not have the ability to retain water as well as the medium and heavy soils. The silt has a tendency to keep the soil in good workable condition. Silt particles do not adhere to each other but are small enough to retain water very well. The clay represents the smallest particle size of the soil. Various amounts of clay particles in a soil may be found in such small sizes that they display specific powers which are very valuable to all soils. That is the ability to hold on to certain plant nutrients.

Electrical forces make it possible for the fine clay particles (clay colloids) to hold on to calcium, magnesium, potassium, ammonium and others and prevent their leaching from the soil. A more even distribution of these nutrients is therefore possible. In light soils the presence of clay colloids is very desirable. In heavy soils the colloidal clay, if present in large amounts, can become detrimental. Proper soil management can correct this condition. The application of lime or gypsum causes many of the small clay particles to combine and form larger granules thereby improving the aeration and the speed of water movement. Many of our soils are of the lighter type and are to be preferred for the culture of dahlias. Our soils are often low in their silt content. Fortunately this may be overcome by the substitution of the silt by organic matter in the form of humus.

## *The Functions of Organic Matter*

Organic matter is an indispensable part of soils used for the culture of dahlias. The organic matter effects many functions of the soil in relation to plant production. It is responsible to a large extent for the maintenance of ideal texture and structure of our soils. This in turn will help in the proper movement of the soil water and its distribution thru-out the growing season. Soils depleted of silt and organic matter will permit the water to drain off too fast. Frequent watering becomes necessary. This in turn hastens the depletion of the needed plant foods thru leaching.

Organic matter is the only type of microbial food that may be used economically in soil management. In contrast to the plants, which derive their energy for

life from the sun, the microbes must draw on the organic matter in the soil for energy food. The organic matter content of soils therefore regulates the extent of microbial activities. The soil can only maintain the number of microbes that can be fed. To raise microbial activities, it is necessary to raise the organic matter level.

## *The Organic Matter Cycle*

Under natural conditions we find that plants growing on a soil are selected and restricted by soil and climatic conditions. After the plant has reproduced itself, the plant material produced during the growing season usually dies off, falls to the ground and becomes gradually part of the soil complex. Further study shows that this organic matter periodically incorporated in the soil is found in different forms.

1. The undecayed form. In this state the organic matter and its origin can be distinctly recognized as a leaf, a stem or a root.

2. The decaying form. In this state the organic matter has lost its shape and form and has become subject to attack by many organisms found in the soil.

3. The decayed form is often referred to as humus. In this state the organic matter has been broken down into very small size, it has become colloidal and has gained new powers very similar to the powers attributed to the clay colloid. In water and nutrient holding capacity, the organic matter colloid is six times as powerful as the clay colloid.

4. In a well functioning soil the humus will be destroyed, lose its organic nature and will furnish the soil with the mineral matter originally incorporated in the organic matter. The minerals included are all the minerals needed for the growth of a plant. On a virgin soil (under natural conditions—without interference by man) plant life can reproduce itself on the same soil year after year without deficiencies.

It is important to note that organic matter can not be expected to last indefinitely. Organic matter burns out of our soils and must be replaced, if we expect to have its benefits, just as nature replaces it year after year. It has been estimated that the loss of organic matter under Long Island conditions is equivalent to 2-3 bushels per 100 square feet of a productive area. The turn-over is faster and greater on the lighter soils. Climatic conditions also influence the speed of this process. Longer growing seasons bring about a greater turn-over than shorter seasons. This loss of organic matter is very natural and is desired for good culture. Organic matter accumulation is found only under conditions unsuitable to most plants—like peat bogs.

During the changes, effecting the organic matter from its undecayed form to humus, many types of acids are

(Continued on page 14)

## SOILS FOR DAHLIA CULTURE

(Continued from page 13)

formed. These acids are the product of microbial function stimulated in the presence of organic matter. This has an effect on the soil reaction, a tendency to solidify the soil. However, in the process of burning the humus, in the formation of mineral ash this function is reversed. The ash formed is strongly alkaline. A soil rich in organic matter is therefore found to have a very stable and balanced reaction.

### *The Soil Reaction*

The understanding of the effect of the soil reaction is of value to the grower since it has a decided influence on the availability of plant nutrients and on the microbial population and function of the soil. It has no direct effect on the plant. With increasing acidity, the calcium and magnesium availability levels decline very fast. The availability of the nutrient potassium, so essential for healthy development of plants, depends to a great extent on the presence of available calcium. Therefore with increasing acidity this nutrient becomes restricted. The availability of the nutrient phosphorus is closely linked to the soil reaction. With a lowering of the soil reaction, it has been found that aluminum and iron become available and active in larger amounts. These elements react with the phosphorus and form iron - aluminum - phosphates which can not be utilized by the plant.

A higher reaction (alkalinity) again causes chemical changes which restrict the availability of potassium and phosphorus. In cases of extreme alkalinity, calcium becomes available in amounts large enough to be detrimental (toxic) to plants. This is also true for the element aluminum in cases of extreme acidity.

The release of the nutrient nitrogen is closely linked to the action of the soil microbes. Nitrogen applied in chemical form is not effected. The nitrogen applied to soils with the organic matter or in the form of organic fertilizers is present as protein-nitrogen. Plants are unable to absorb nitrogen in this form. Proteins are utilized by the soil organisms and nitrogen-waste products are formed. In nature, this form of nitrogen is the only available form to plants. It indicates a very close relationship between the plant and the soil microbe. Plants are obviously adopted by nature to receive much of their food in the form of waste products of soil organisms. The soil reaction has a very definite influence on the development and behavior of the soil population. Under acid conditions, the activity and development of fungi is encouraged. The waste product of fungi is primarily ammonia and ammonium compounds.

In the absence of bacterial action these compounds represent the nitrogen waste product and the plants have to be content with this form of nitrogen. Bacteria require less acid conditions. Bacteria are responsible for the transformation of ammonia into nitrites and nitrates. In the presence of bacteria therefore, the waste products formed may be the thought of a nitrate-nitrogen. Dahlias are primarily nitrate feeders. If bacterial action is restricted or stopped, optimum development and even normal growth of dahlias can not be expected.

### *The Measure of Soil Reaction*

The chemistry of soils is closely linked to the study of ionization (dissociation) of compounds in solution.

In the process of ionization, compounds split temporarily (dissociate) and form positive and negative ions. (electrical charges). The active factor of any acid is the hydrogen ion which carries a positive charge. The measurement of the reaction of solutions and soils is based on the determination of the amount of hydrogen ions found to be present. The amount of hydrogen ions found in pure water has been taken as a measure of neutrality. The amount of hydrogen ions found in pure water is known. An increase in this concentration indicates acidity and a decrease in this concentration indicates alkalinity. Just as we have a way to express the temperature in degrees of Fahrenheit—a standard measure has been established to express the degree of acidity alkalinity. Neutrality is expressed as pH 7.0—a lower number like pH 5.0 expresses acidity—a higher number like pH 8.0 expresses alkalinity.

Most plants thrive in slightly acid soils. In a pH range from 5.8-6.8, we find the availability of most essential elements to be most favorable for many plants. This range is suitable for the culture of dahlias. The optimum reaction for dahlias has been found to be pH 6.5

### *Program of Fertilization*

In our fertilization programs we have come to think in terms of feeding the plants for optimum growth. It would be better if we would think in terms of feeding the soils to make it possible for the plants to absorb from the soil that which is needed. Many of our feeding programs represent a series of shock treatments. At the time of fertilizer application and directly following that period, very often too much plant food is present causing at least some harm. This is followed by a period of lack of or low nutrient levels. That kind of program does not lead to stable growth and optimum production. The effect of fertilization with chemicals is especially pronounced in light soils deficient in organic matter. These soils are the very soils in need of supplementary feeding. This condition may be overcome by increasing the organic matter content. The organic matter has a buffering effect on all sudden changes brought about by fertilization, liming, heat, etc. Greater stability of production can and should be achieved. Better distribution of water, plant foods and resistance to changes in soil reaction lead to better production.

The grower handling a soil rich in organic matter is in much better position to make use of supplementary feeding. The element nitrogen, one of the most critical elements in handling of dahlias, will be available to the plant thru-out the growing season if present in the soil in the form of protein-nitrogen. Its availability will be regulated by the action of microbes. Thereby nitrogen becomes available to the plant when the plant is in need, since the action of the microbes increases under the same conditions which will increase the activity of the dahlia under outdoor growing conditions.

### *Preparation of Soils and Fertilization for Dahlias*

A simple soiltest will indicate the soil reaction. The reaction should be adjusted as nearly to pH 6.5 as possible. On light soils this may be done by the application of finely ground limestone. On heavier soils the application of air-slackened hydrated lime is recommended. If lime has not been used for many years, we suggest the use of dolomitic forms of lime for their magnesium content in addition to the calcium. The heaviest application of lime-



stone recommended to be made at any time should not exceed 5 lbs. per 100 square feet. Work the lime into the soil and mix well thru the topsoil. Apply the required amount of organic matter and work into soil. We recommend the use of well-rotted manure and a woody type of peatmoss (granulated) at a ratio of 1-1. The amounts to be used may be regulated to fit climatic and soil conditions. We find that two bushels of organic matter applied per 100 square feet are about sufficient to maintain (not to build up) the existing organic matter level.

Apply 4 lbs. of 20% superphosphate per 100 square feet of area. The superphosphate may be applied at planting time directly under the plants and lightly mixed with the soil. It will not injure the plant but will stimulate the formation of roots. Fertilize the plants by side-dressing four weeks after growth has started with a fertilizer of the formula 5-10-5 at a rate of 4 lbs. per 100 square feet. The type of fertilizer suggested, contains at least 50% of its nitrogen in the form of protein (organic). This will give a much better distribution of this nutrient. When flower buds are forming apply  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. of potassium nitrate per 100 square feet. The requirements of dahlias for potassium at that stage of growth is great. More unfavorable observations have been made and found due to over-fertilization than to lack of fertilizer.

### Dahlia Test Garden at the L. I. Agricultural and Technical Institute Farmingdale, New York

By Christian Rissmeyer

Instructor in the School of Horticulture

For two years the Long Island Dahlia Society and the School of Horticulture of the Institute have cooperated in testing dahlias on the campus of the Long Island Agricultural & Technical Institute at Farmingdale, Long Island. The initial test garden in 1947 was established at the request of the late Mr. Tooker of Rockville Center and some of his friends from the Long Island Society. Sixty seedlings were tested and the project proved so successful that it stimulated a great deal of interest and a request for an expanded garden in 1948.

While the test area used in 1947 was very satisfactory a larger plot 100 x 50 ft. was necessarily located in a different place. The soil, a medium loam, was tested for organic matter and chemical reaction and the recommendations based upon this test were followed. A generous application of cow manure was applied and mixed into the soil and no lime was used since the soil was found to be slightly acid with a pH of 6.5. After the land was fitted, the planting was done during the last week in May and the first week in June. A handful of complete fertilizer with a formula of 5-10-5 was mixed with the soil as each plant was set.

Three plants each of twenty-five unnamed seedlings and 150 of named varieties were planted. The stock consisted of rooted cuttings and tubers. Each plant was labeled and staked. The distance between plants was three feet in the row and four feet between the rows. During the early part of the summer the plants made exceptionally healthy growth so that the 90° temperatures

during the month of August had no ill effects. Watering was done by soaking the soil only when it was needed.

To control the normal insects and diseases, the plants were sprayed every ten days with a complete spray. The spray material consisted of 150 grams wettable sulphur, 75 grams of DDT (50%), 2.4 ozs. of Vapatone and 1 oz. of spreader to 15 gallons of water. This spray schedule rendered the plants relatively free from plant pests.

On August 15th each plant received a handful of Sodium Nitrate and this was immediately watered into the soil to make it readily available. The one feeding proved adequate for the balance of the season.

Previous experience taught that our greatest enemy, the Japanese beetle, invaded the dahlia garden at blooming time. While spraying did a good job, further insurance was necessary and a covering of netting was placed over a frame at the first appearance of Japanese beetles. As a frame cedar posts were spaced 16 ft. apart and each post was 8 ft. above the ground. No. 9 wire formed the support for the screen cloth covering. The sides were covered with Scrim and the top with onion cloth. The screening was put up on August 15th and removed on September 15th. This cloth had little influence on the growth of the plants but gave them adequate protection from the insects. After the first frost in October the tubers were dug and returned to their owners.

While the stock was furnished by members of the Long Island Dahlia Society, all gardening was done by the senior students in the floriculture division of the Long Island Agricultural and Technical Institute under the direct supervision of Stanley Duskotz.

In the opinion of Dahlia enthusiasts, the plantings proved eminently successful and produced an abundance of top-grade flowers which were enjoyed by many visitors.

O. J. AUMULLER, Secretary.  
The Long Island Dahlia Society.

### V. A. Hospital Seeks Surplus Dahlia Stock

I am a chief gardener at Halloran V. A. Hospital on Staten Island, N. Y. I am writing in reference of a donation of dahlia Bulbs. We have three buildings occupied by Paraplegics. These buildings have no foundation plantings around them, these buildings are bare, these boys would appreciate it very much if they could get some dahlias planted in front of them. I wonder if some of your members would have a surplus of dahlia bulbs after June 10, and would make a contribution, to this worthy cause. These boys would appreciate it very much. When the bulbs are planted the boys can watch them grow, and take cut flowers in to their wards. They will appreciate any amount received. If any of your members would like to make a contribution kindly send them in care of Chief Gardener, Conrad A. Heitman, Halloran Vets. Adm. Hospital, Staten Island 2, N. Y.

Thanking You,

Yours sincerely,

CONRAD A. HEITMAN.

[Ed. Note: This is the hospital where our Mrs. Leo Pollack has accomplished such outstanding results in plastic surgery during and since the war years. Let us make an earnest effort to send Dahlia stock to these courageous Vets.]

# The American DAHLIA SOCIETY, Inc.

ORGANIZED MAY 10, 1915



"The Society is formed for the purpose of stimulating interest in and promoting the culture and development of the Dahlia; to establish a standard nomenclature; to test out new varieties and give them such recognition as they deserve; to study the diseases of the Dahlia and find remedies for same, and to disseminate information relating to this flower; to secure uniformity in awarding prizes at flower shows, and to give exhibitions when deemed advisable."

LEO L. POLLAK, *President*

Upper Mountain Ave., Upper Montclair, N. J.

GORDON F. WAASER, *Editor*

378 Pennsylvania Ave., Freeport, New York

ANDREW F. MULCAHY, *Secretary*

20 Marshal Ave., Floral Park, New York

HENRY A. OLSEN, *Treasurer*

189-23—44th Ave., Flushing, New York

## Editorial

The members have received copies of our Fall Show Schedule as well as the Classification list. We are sure that you join with us in expressing appreciation to our Committees for such splendid work.

Plan your gardens with the thought of entering as many blooms as possible in the National Show as well as your Local Shows. Without your wholehearted support, none could succeed.

Will you also help the Classification Committee by reporting to them any corrections or additions you might suggest for the preparation of the 1950 list. The list you have just received has been very carefully compiled . . . nevertheless there will surely be some corrections in the light of our experiences with these hundreds of varieties as we view them afresh in our gardens and at the Show tables. Your co-operation is urged.

Additional classification lists may be had at fifty cents each or in lots of a dozen or over at \$3.00 per dozen. Write Secretary A. J. Mulcahy, 20 Marshall Ave., Floral Park, N. Y.

ALL MEMBERS ARE INVITED . . . The A.D.S. Executive Committee meeting of June 10th will be an open meeting. We are privileged to have as our guest, Dr. Oscar T. Eichmann of the State Institute of Agriculture at Farmingdale, Long Island. Some of us heard him lecture on Soil conditioning, preparation, fertilization, etc., and we have persuaded him to repeat this lecture for the benefit of our Membership. Parlor No. 2 . . . Ballroom Floor, Hotel Statler, New York City, 7:30 p.m.

Several of our Branch and Affiliated Societies are delinquent in their dues. Will the treasurers hurry their remittances, as we do not want to withhold Bulletins from your membership. Henry A. Olsen is one of the finest Treasurers in A.D.S. history . . . is doing a grand job. Won't you co-operate with him by mailing your dues at once? His address: 189-23—44th Avenue, Flushing, Long Island, New York.

## Dahlia Society of San Leandro

The San Leandro Dahlia Society has completed a very successful year with new members for this year's show, which will be held August 27-28 in the Veterans Memorial Building.

The election of officers was held at our January 4th meeting.

President—Mr. Chas. Perry.

Vice President and Publicity—Mr. J. Sparre.

Secretary-Treasurer—Mrs. Eleanor Bolesworth.

Show Manager—Mr. Chas. Garrity.

Membership Chairman—Mrs. J. Sparre.

Refreshment Chairman—Mrs. Grace Harter.

Plant Sales—Mr. P. Harter.

Directors:—Mr. Ted Sjoberg, Mr. David Webb, Mr. A. Arbini, Mr. George Perry and Mrs. J. Sparre.

MRS. ELEANOR BOLESWORTH,  
Secretary.

## The Greater Pittsburgh Dahlia Society

On March 17th, the members of The Greater Pittsburgh Dahlia Society gathered at the Garden Center for the first meeting of the year.

Mild spring weather brought out a goodly crowd and the meeting and entertainment which followed was enjoyed by all.

Plans are well under way for our Twelfth Annual Show which will be held at Phipps Conservatory, Schenley Park, Pittsburgh, Pa., on Saturday and Sunday, September 17th and 18th. We shall welcome attendance by members of other Societies.

MRS. H. N. MACROBERTS,  
Secretary.



## Emphasis on Dahlias As Ideal Garden Flowers

Mr. Chas. H. Connors,  
Rutgers University,  
New Brunswick, N. J.

Dear Mr. Connors:

Having just read your article in the Garden Section of the Herald Tribune, I am dropping you a line to express my complete accord with your handling of the subject. Coming, as it does, from one of the "unknowns" in the dahlia world, this compliment is not expected to raise your spirits to any marked degree.

The writer has been a dahlia hobbyist for a half a dozen years or so and for some time has been genuinely disappointed both in noting how few dahlias are generally grown and in the apparent unconcern with the situation among dahlia devotees. Too often, it is treated in the magazines, newspapers, etc. as a flower suitable only for the hobbyist. Insofar as I can recall, yours is the first I have seen which recommends the dahlia as a worthwhile addition to any flower garden.

Getting more people to grow dahlias is to me the most important matter confronting the dahlia world, today. There are a number of fronts on which we might go forward. Undoubtedly, you have hit upon one of these. The future of the dahlia lies not in more new introductions but in more new growers.

But before a program looking toward this end can even be entertained, we must settle upon some simple method of root storage, generally suitable for the casual grower. The American Dahlia Society has just recently renewed their interest in the whole matter of root storage and it is hoped they will eventually have something for us on this score.

Since I have been making a study of this matter of expansion in the ranks of dahlia growers, I would be pleased to hear from you with any thoughts you may have along this line. Again, congratulating you on your fine article, I am,

Sincerely yours,

J. RALPH BERRY.

P.S. If you are not on the mailing list of the National Dahlia Society of England, it may be of interest to you to know I just received a circular letter from them advising, that because of over-lapping, they are combining the F.D. and I.D. classes and the C. and S.C. classes.

## Michigan Dahlia Show

At a recent meeting of the Michigan Dahlia Association, members of the group voted to hold the state dahlia show at East Lansing, Michigan, September 9 and 10. This will be the first time since 1932 that the show has been held at East Lansing.

Prof. C. E. Wildon, chairman of the show, is forming an organizational group of dahlia growers in the Lansing area. He has requested help from both the Jackson and Battle Creek dahlia societies and has asked that all dahlia growers in the Lansing area contact him.

## Dahlia Society of New Jersey

The Dahlia Society of New Jersey, held its regular meeting at the Trinity Church Parish House in Newark on Saturday April 9, 1949.

About sixty members and guests attended the meeting. Mrs. C. V. Smith, Chairman of the membership Committee reported eight new members.

Most of the meeting was devoted to discussion of this year's Dahlia Show which is being planned in conjunction with the Essex County Park Commission, at Branchbrook Park on Sept. 10-11.

The members are quite interested in the plan to supply the members of the 4 H Clubs of Passaic, Essex and Somerset Counties, with Dahlia Seeds and in a class or classes for these growers, in this show.

Mr. De Kamp, Flower Show Chairman has called a meeting of the Show Committees for Tuesday, April 19.

Mr. Leo Pollak, Chairman of the Show Schedule Committee reported that the show schedule has been completed and will be ready for distribution soon. Anyone interested in obtaining a schedule may have one by writing to Mrs. H. D. Thomas, Secretary, 292 Lakeview Ave. Paterson 3, New Jersey.

Before the meeting adjourned for refreshments the Entertainment Committee awarded twenty Dahlia clumps as door prizes.

The next meeting will be held on June 18, 1949, at Trinity Parish House, Newark. Everyone interested in Dahlias is cordially invited to attend this meeting.

## GIANT BALLAY DAHLIAS

— Since 1920 —

### Our New Introductions for 1949

**FORTY-NINER**—Semi-cactus. Bright yellow. Very large full flower with all petals definitely incurved. Attractive fern-like foliage. An early and free bloomer that is easy to grow. A good new yellow semi-cactus on the show tables should be interesting.

**KING OF THE WHITES**—Informal decorative. Purest white. Extra large well formed flower with pointed petals. Very free bloomer with all blooms perfect, and best of all it is a white that is not soiled by bright sunshine or moisture. There have been a number of new whites, but everything considered, this seems to be easily the best performer.

**MAYFAIR**—Informal decorative. Bright true pink with white center. Fairly large flower of unusual form, having lacinated petals, and the color is very striking. Truly a beautiful flower.

**SAVINA**—Incurved cactus. Bright salmon with gold center. A rather low but vigorous grower with nice stems, that is a very prolific bloomer. A fine color combination that will be found most useful.

Price per strong division, \$15.00 net, or one strong division of all four for \$50.00 net.

New illustrated catalogue, giving full descriptions of these and many more leading varieties, is free on request.

## BALLAY DAHLIA GARDENS

4309 EL CAMINO REAL, PALO ALTO, CALIF.

## Alabama Dahlia News

The Dahlia Society of Alabama is again looking forward to a year of better dahlias and their 14th Annual Show. The 1949 Show will be held at the Thomas Jefferson Hotel in Birmingham, October 8th and 9th. The entire second floor of the hotel has been engaged for this and plans are in the making for a really fine show. Mr. Frank M. House, president, Mr. W. H. Howard, show chairman, along with an enthusiastic executive board are working toward this goal. A feature of this year's show will be a new award in the seedling class. A very handsome trophy, generously given by the Walter Thompsons will be awarded for the best bloom of a dahlia grown from seeds planted each current year. The trophy will have the winner's name engraved on it and will be held for one year.

Early in the year, a membership drive was begun. Sides were chosen and the race was on. This will end with a barbecue given by the losers at the home of the Lefkovits in Bessemer. Winner or loser all are looking forward to this with great anticipation.

Programs at the regular monthly meetings have been both interesting and instructive. Several meetings have featured colored slides of dahlias grown north, east and south. Mr. Nelson Crist of Atlanta, president of the Southern States Dahlia Association was guest speaker at the March meeting. The society is looking forward to having Mr. Charles Hudson of Atlanta as speaker at the June meeting.

April 3d found a group from the Alabama Dahlia Society in Atlanta, Georgia attending the spring meeting of the Southern States Dahlia Association. It was a great time for seeing friends from Georgia and Tennessee again and also enjoying the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Faust.

Again in 1950, the Southern States Show will be held in Birmingham. Looking forward to this, committees have been appointed, the Thomas Jefferson Hotel reservation made and plans are humming.

It is hoped that the visitors from north, east and other sections going to the Southern States Show in Atlanta this Fall will come by Birmingham and visit our show October 8th and 9th. The latch string is on the outside, please use it, a cordial welcome awaits you.

M. GOODWIN,  
Reporter.

Please list Dahlia Society of Alabama Show. October 8th and 9th at Thomas Jefferson Hotel, Birmingham, Alabama.

## Camden Dahlia and Horticultural Society

Plans are being formulated for the Twenty-fifth Annual Exhibition of the Camden Dahlia and Horticultural Society which, as usual, is to be held in the Camden County Vocational School, Browning Road, Merchantville, N. J. The dates selected for this event are September 23-24. Many new and enthusiastic members have joined this society since the 1948 Show. This society numbers among its exhibitors many of the best dahlia growers in this section of the State and nearby Pennsylvania. Already there are indications that there will be keen competition for honors in 1949. A real spirit of optimism prevails and another fine show is anticipated.

WATSON CONOVER,

## Resolution of Respect

We desire to express our deep sense of loss and sorrow over the passing on February 25, 1949, of our fellow member and friend, William Jobs; and to pay tribute to his memory.

The East Liverpool Dahlia Society has lost a loyal member and faithful worker. He was devoted to the Society in all of its activities, laboring without reserve to perform numerous tasks which he willingly accepted. His particular fondness for Roses prompted him to lend a real hand in the Rose divisions of our shows.

We recall that he had the desire to see the community a more beautiful place in which to live. To that end he fostered the planting of Rose Gardens. A few years ago he remarked to a member of this committee that he hoped upon retiring from the pottery, to spend his extra time planting roses and caring for them for his friends. The community has suffered a loss.

We shall respect and treasure the memory of his pleasant manner, his kind friendship, his wise counsels, and sound judgment. Our loss is keenly felt.

And, Be it Resolved, that this record of appreciation of William Jobs and his many services be spread upon the minutes of the Society and that a copy be forwarded to his late home.

Committee:

FRANK N. RICHMOND  
CLARENCE LEWIS  
A. M. FISHER  
G. F. McCULLOUGH

This Resolution of Respect was presented to the East Liverpool Dahlia Society meeting in regular session Monday, April 4, 1949 and was duly adopted. The Secretary was also directed to forward a copy to The American Rose Society and a copy to The American Dahlia Society.

MRS. FRANK SHONE,  
Secretary.

## Burholme Horticultural Society Burholme, Philadelphia, Pa.

The 29th Dahlia Show of the Burholme Horticultural Society will be held September 16th and 17th, 1949 at the Burholme Motor Showrooms, 7253 Rising Sun Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa.

There will be sectional classes devoted to amateur, private gardeners, institutions, commercial growers, and open to all. Sweepstake prizes will be offered in each class.

The American Home Achievement medal will be offered as an award to the most worthy undisseeded dahlia. At least three blooms on long stems must be shown and must be entered especially for this award.

There will be valuable prizes in all classes, with cash prizes for the private gardener.

The Burholme Horticultural Dahlia Show is one event everyone should attend if possible. Anyone interested in exhibiting, may obtain a Show Catalog by writing Mrs. David S. Chambers, 821 Knorr Street, Philadelphia 11, Pa.

MRS. DAVID S. CHAMBERS,  
Show Secretary.



### Report of the January and February Meetings of the Dahlia Society of Tennessee Chattanooga, Tennessee

The January and February meetings of the Dahlia Society of Tennessee were held in Chattanooga at the Hotel Patten. Mr. Volney Cox was elected President for 1949; Mr. Harry Brady, Vice-President; Mr. Abe Siskin, Treasurer; Mr. T. G. Hixson, Secretary. The Executive Board members will be Mr. W. A. Luther, Mrs. H. M. Schmitt, Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Miller, Mr. T. J. Jett, and Mrs. T. G. Hixson.

Our society is represented by the Executive Board of the Southern States Dahlia Association and the four members will be composed of Mrs. W. H. Simmonds, Mr. Clarence Callquist, Mr. Harry Brady, and Mr. Arnold Burnette. This group is looking forward to the semi-annual meeting to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, to give any assistance or suggestions toward making the Southern States Dahlia Show a success. The show is to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, on October the first and second, 1949.

The Tennessee Society is contemplating having a municipal dahlia garden to be supervised by members of our own society, providing enough interest is shown in the project. Our plans are not to make this a trial garden, but to make it on a small scale, located in a strategic spot where it will draw a lot of visitors, trying to interest more men in raising the dahlia.

If any other group in the United States has ever undertaken a project of this kind, we would appreciate correspondence from them on this subject. If any other group has ever undertaken a civic project of any kind, we would appreciate correspondence on this also.

We are trying to have the group work as a civic organization and to take more interest than that of just having a meeting to attend and staging an annual show.

We were fortunate in having one of our own members, Mrs. W. H. Simmonds attend the annual meeting of the A.D.S. and make us a report of the trip. Before too many years have gone by, others in our group hope to have the privilege of also attending one of the A.D.S. meetings.

ARNOLD A. BURNETTE,  
Publicity Chairman.

### Inglewood Dahlia and Floral Society

Since the report sent you relative to the new officers of our Inglewood Society for 1949, it was deemed necessary that a corresponding secretary be elected. So, if possible, we would appreciate a notice to that effect.

Murray Minehart, 3618 West 59th Street, Los Angeles 43, California was elected, and it is our wish that all correspondence be addressed to him in the future.

It may make a news item for you to know that we will have a booth in the California International Flower Show in Hollywood Park Race Track, March 26th thru April 3d, and will also be given time in the projection booth for the display of color slides of dahlias from our own gardens. Our president, Harry L. Marshall, will act as one of the judges in the show.

MURRAY MINEHART,  
Corresponding Secretary.

### Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society

Sixty Eight members of the Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society attended the first annual banquet held in the Bala Country Club, Philadelphia, Pa. on February 24th.

After a short business meeting, our President John McMenamin, turned the proceedings over to our genial Master of Ceremonies Harold Graham. Harold called on E. A. Smith, Vice President of the Pennsylvania Railroad; Joseph P. McKenna, Agricultural Research Chemist; Frank Deichler, President of the Delaware Garden Club; and others.

Show Superintendent, Fred Moore, announced September 23rd & 24th as the dates of our show and the Raymond Scott Lincoln-Mercury Show Rooms as our show place. He pointed out that the show place is conveniently located in Ardmore, Pa. right on the Main Street of America (U. S. Route 30). It can be approached from all directions without having to go through the heavy Philadelphia traffic. He stressed the convenience of parking on the lot adjoining the building.

He announced that several medals and trophies would be awarded, in addition to Five Hundred dollars in cash awards. He also informed us that our Society would cooperate with the new A.D.S. Show Seedling Sweepstakes Awards. He asked that we extend an invitation to all interested to show or visit us on Sept. 23-24 and that further details may be obtained by contacting Fred Moore, P.O. Box 386, Haverford, Pa. or the Society's office, 1139 Lancaster Ave., Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Before closing the meeting, Kodachrome slides of the newer varieties were shown by, Stanley Johnson, Walter Strobel, Frank Deichler, Norman Wright and Fil. Alleva.

F. A. ALLEVA,  
Acting Branch Editor.

### East Liverpool Dahlia Society

At our last regular meeting on the evening of March 7, 1949, the Officers for the year of 1949 were finally completed, and are as follows:

President—Frank Richmond.

1st Vice President—Mrs. Marie White.

2nd Vice President—Frank Shone.

3rd Vice President—Leo Laurence.

Corresponding Secretary—William C. Craine.

Recording Secretary—Mrs. Bertha Shone.

Financial Secretary—Mrs. Nell Gallimore, 1309 Smithfield Street, East Liverpool, Ohio.

Treasurer—Edwin Rountz.

Show Manager—Mr. George Schepp.

The members old and new are showing a lot of enthusiasm and plans for a larger and more keener completion for the 1949 Show are in the making.

Some new sections will appear in the schedule which is near completion. Show rates are September 17-18, 1949, and we extend invitations to all who care to attend.

WILLIAM C. CRAINE,  
Corresponding Secretary.

A.D.S. Show — Hotel Statler, New York City,  
Sept. 21 and 22.

## UNIFORM COLOR STANDARDS

Much has been accomplished in Color Nomenclature and Classification the past year. Dahliadel Pocket Edition has been completed and used in practically all the large Dahlia shows. The color classes, as arranged in our Pocket Edition, as well as size and type classes have been approved by the American Dahlia Society and the Central States Dahlia Society. This will simplify judging throughout the country.

Dahliadel Pocket Edition of the **HORTICULTURAL COLOUR CHART** contains 175 color blocks arranged in the spectrum order, primarily for the American Dahlia Society with a definite color range on each set of pages. Autumns have been added to make the color range more complete. It is a complete chart for other flowers with the addition of violets, and the omission of the greens and few blues.

Darker shades are in columns to the right with lighter tints to the left. Pages are covered with Cellophane and in a standard  $6\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$  binder. **Pocket Edition in Loose Leaf Binder \$15.00.**

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## HORTICULTURAL COLOUR CHART

(Published by the Royal Horticultural Society of England)

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Above Horticultural Chart with $\frac{2}{3}$ of the color blocks cut out that are used in the Pocket Edition (635 blocks untouched, 165 with $\frac{1}{3}$ block left in) in 2 Loose Leaf Binders .....	\$ 7.00
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