

Canadian Prairie Lily Society ***Newsletter***

December 2004

Number 106

Canadian Prairie Lily Society



Growing, showing and enjoying Lilies here on the Canadian Prairies
Click on the Lily to enter



CPLS web site by Ed Driver

The portion of the page above the caption is the "front page" of the CPLS new web site. The site is up and running albeit minor corrections and additions will be forthcoming. The site can be reached at <http://www.prairielily.ca>. I would like to thank Bob Caldwell, Art Delahey, Margaret Driver, Stan and Nell Dunville, Oscar Mitchell, Sharon Newton, and Jim Sullivan for the many photographs. Special thanks to Art Delahey for several articles for the site, these Margaret also has included in this Newsletter. To all members who wish to contribute five to seven photos of your gardens they will be included in the "Our Gardens" page on the web site. If you have suggestions and /or contributions please feel free to mail or e-mail me.

Cultural Techniques for Lilies by Art Delahey

SOIL

Lilies grow best in a well-drained soil. Heavy, poorly drained soil will cause lilies to develop problems which ultimately lead to their demise. Heavy (clay) soils can be amended with plenty of fibrous material (straw, wood-chips, etc) and /or sharp sand, washed gravel or crushed rock worked DEEPLY into the topsoil. Regular applications will gradually improve the soil's friability.

The lighter sandy loam soils provide nearly ideal condition for the deep-rooted bulbs, except for their lack of humus. Adding compost, well-rotted manure, leafmold or other fibrous material will improve the moisture-holding capacity and add nutrients for the bulbs. Under no circumstances should lily bulbs be planted in close contact with rotted manure.

SITE

Lilies prefer to be in the sunshine, but will do well if they receive at least six hours of full, mid-day sunshine. A sheltered southern exposure works best, although they will perform well on the east or west side of a north-south fence. Shelter from wind will let them attain their normal height, yet they should be open to prevailing breezes to allow air circulation to dry the foliage.

PLANTING TIME

Because lilies put their roots down in the fall before the soil cools down, it is best to plant bulbs in mid to late September. Bulbs planted later or in the spring will wait until the soil warms up to put roots down, thereby delaying their blooming period and somewhat reducing their performance.

PLANTING TIPS

Plant in small groups of three to five bulbs, situated about 8-10" apart. This will allow room for blossoms and still provide a small mass of bloom. Refrain from planting close to trees and shrubs as their roots will interfere with future digging of the bulbs. On lighter soils the bulbs should be planted at a depth three times their diameter (usually 5-6" deep). On heavy soils

two times the diameter or 4-5" deep is adequate.

Dig the hole about two inches deeper than required and sprinkle a couple of tablespoons of a good lawn fertilizer (16-20-0 or 11-52-0) in the bottom, cover with 2" of soil and then set the bulb. Water thoroughly and, for the first winter, mulch the plantings. In the fall remove the stems by standing astride them and giving them a sharp, twisting tug, or by cutting them off at the soil surface with a sharp hoe or spade.

REPLANTING

After a few years lilies will need to be dug up and reset. A good rule of thumb is to dig them in the fall after the first frost and when six or more stems are growing where the original stem showed during the first year. Some varieties reproduce quite quickly while others take forever to produce some new bulbs. Lift the entire clump, break the bulbs apart, replant the largest as above and become a hero by giving the balance to your neighbour.

IRRIGATING

Lilies do best when they are not over-watered. Only in hot, dry spells will they really require much moisture. Water in the morning so that the stems will dry quickly, or better yet, flood-irrigate so that the stems and foliage do not get wet. Prolonged periods of damp or humid conditions foster the development of botrytis which results in dead, brown leaves and stems, thereby weakening the bulb and reducing the bloom size.

A Review of Sara Williams talk - "Perennials- A Gardener's Choice" by Jim Sullivan

Our members were given the special opportunity of meeting and listening to Sara Williams, a foremost author, speaker, and member of the prairie horticultural community this past October 27th. Sara gave a slide show presentation entitled Perennials: A Gardener's Choice. As many of you may know Sara Williams has written or co-authored several books on prairie gardening. Prior to Sara's presentation she was signing books purchased by members of the CPLS, Saskatchewan Perennial Society and members of the public in attendance.

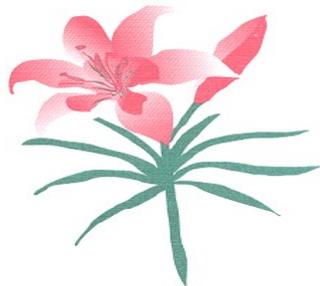
Sara's presentation was a pure delight. It was well prepared and was presented in such a way as to allow for questions to be asked and answered during the slide program. The presentation included aspects of design as well as the use of colour and foliage in the perennial border. Of particular interest, were the many plants we can and do grow here on the prairies and proof of the latter were slides of gardens right here in Saskatoon. Some of the plants were new and little known perennials. There were, of course, many familiar plants although these were shown in new and interesting settings.

Sara started her presentation with a discussion of the spring season of perennials such as marsh marigolds, primroses and pulmonarias. From there she went on to describe the perennials for sun, shade, and rockeries. Of special interest to me and I'm sure others, were the descriptions of plants which can be used as ground covers. Although, I thought Sara could

have gone on and expanded this section, which was most interesting, I happen to know that Sara is going to co-author a new book on this very subject, I believe this new book will also include vines. It should be very interesting and I definitely will be putting my name down for a copy.

I would like to thank Sara Williams on behalf of CPLS and especially on behalf of all those in attendance for a very enjoyable evening on a subject many of us just can't ever get enough of. I am sure many of us will use some of our newly acquired knowledge to plan new ideas for next season's garden. Oh by the way, lilies were prominent in many of the slides in the presentation.

Books available by Sara Williams and Co-authors:
Best Trees and Shrubs for the Prairies- Hugh Skinner and Sara Williams
Creating the Prairie Xeriscape- Sara Williams
Perennials for the Prairies- Ed Toop and Sara Williams



Presidents' Message

Another year is rapidly coming to a close, it is hard to believe how quickly time flies. Our Society has been busy this year with spring and fall meetings, our annual show and bulb sales. Thanks to all members who helped make these events possible without their help these events could not happen. A special thank you to all the executive and directors for the great job they have done this year.

If you have not been able to participate in the events of 2004, 2005 is rapidly approaching and your chance to help out is just around the corner!

The year 2005 will be a busy one. Your executive is planning for events in 2005. We hope to feature the Martagon lily at the annual general meeting in April, more information will appear in the March/Spring newsletter. July is show time on the prairies. Besides the shows held by the various lily societies on the prairies there is special event on the 2005 show calendar- The North American Lily Society Show will

be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba. So check your coming newsletters for details concerning all lily shows on the prairies. You can also look forward to the bulb sales in Fall. If this is not enough there is all spring, summer and fall to garden ! There is never a dull moment when lilies are your passion!

CPLS is now on the World Wide Web. Ed Driver has created our web site the good old fashion way one line at a time . It is a site worth a lengthy visit! Your can find CPLS on the World Wide Web at: www.prairielily.ca

Best wishes to you all this Festive Season. Great Gardening in the New Year!

Margaret Driver.

Vegetative reproductive techniques by Art Delahey

Most modern-day Asiatic lilies tend to exhibit vigour and excel in reproducing themselves. Many varieties will need to be lifted every second year as they tend to produce many stems and the small bublets start to crowd the original bulb. However there are some varieties which have trouble multiplying, and which are in real trouble if mature turns unkindly. to offset the possible elimination of these varieties there are a few tricks that come in handy and which are easily accomplished:

BUBLET FORCING - (a somewhat desperate method) - during midseason dig down alongside one side of the stem and bulb and very carefully cut the stem completely through just above the bulb with as little disruption as possible. This will leave the plant still growing but, without the bulb to nurture, it will usually produce a number of small bublets by fall.

They can then be taken up in September and reset for growing-on.

SCALING - This method of quickly increasing a variety that is used by many commercial growers. It is also good practice to use when a purchase is made of a rare and/or expensive bulb. Rather than leaving the one bulb to Nature's vagaries try scaling it so there will be back-up bublets if something goes wrong with the parent bulb. Scaling is best accomplished in the fall when mature bulbs are normally planted or dug and reset. By gently snapping the outer ring of scales off at the basal plate one will often get anywhere from 5 - 10 scales. It is essential that the entire scale, and particularly the bottom portion of the scale, is taken. Any scales showing hints of disease or damage should be tossed out as they are unlikely to reproduce. Refrain from taking more than the outer ring as the

bulb will be weakened. Put the scales in a small plastic bag containing peat moss damp enough to maintain a ball when squeezed. It helps to add about 1/2 teaspoon of a bulb fungicide to the scales and then shake the scales through the peat moss. Tie the bag tightly and then put it in another plastic bag. If the scale package is put in the refrigerator crisper in September or early October for vernalization it can be taken out in late December (Some varieties do not even require this step but it is the most reliable method.) Place in a warm and usually dark place (furnace room is ideal), check once during the winter to make certain that the peat moss is still somewhat damp, and watch for tiny roots to start showing inside the bags. There is no need to do anything further unless green shoots start to appear. This indicates that the bulblets are growing and will either have to be planted up or put back in the fridge to await spring planting. When the time comes, separate the mass of roots and bulblets and plant them about 1" deep. Occasionally first-year bulbs will produce a bloom or two, but generally it is the second year that they start

to flower and may even have a mature-sized bulb below. (It should be noted that in some cases the same scales be used a second time to produce bulblets, but generally the scale is desiccated as the nutrients in it are taken up by the developing bulblet(s).)

STEM BULBILS - Varieties with *L. tigrinum* parentage will grow stem bulbils in the leaf axils. While most 'Tiger' varieties reproduce readily, these stem bulbils offer an opportunity to rapidly increase stock. As the plant matures in late summer remove the bulbils and simply plant them about 1" deep. The next spring will see shoots emerging as the new stock of lilies develops.

Update Executive and Directors List

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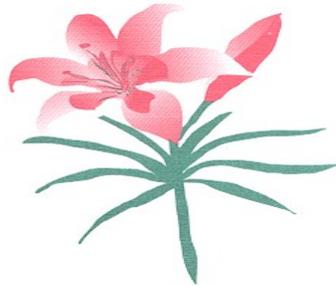
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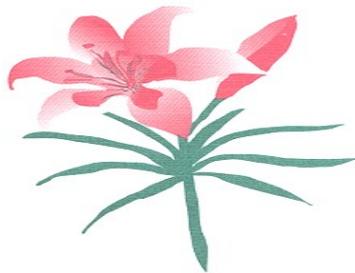
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In Memoria.....

Lily Meece of Mannville, Alberta a charter member of the Canadian Prairie Lily Society passed away July 6, 2004 at the Mannville Extended Care Facility at the age of 93. Lily greatly enjoyed her lilies - growing and showing her beautiful lily stems. Her favourite lily being the martagon. I was privileged to meet Lily at several lily shows and share some "lily chat" with her. [Margaret Driver.]



CPLS questionnaire

Over thirty years ago several people interested in lilies got together and the Canadian Prairie Lily Society came into being. Our Society has certainly grown over the years. Now may be the time to once again to send out a "letter" to measure the interest. As your current president, I sincerely hope you will take the time to respond to the survey. **Please return** your completed survey by **January 15** to: CPLS Survey, 182 Dore Crescent, Saskatoon, SK, S7K 4X7.

1. Which activity(s) interest you most? Use 1-5 to grade your answer where #1 is the MOST interesting and # 5 is the LEAST interesting.

Meetings/Seminars____; Bulb sales____; Lily show____. Other (please list)
_____.

2. Are you interested in attending meetings, seminars, workshops? Circle your interest(s).

CHECK one that best fit your needs: DAYTIME____; EVENING____; WEEKDAY____; WEEKEND____ - HALFDAY____; FULLDAY____. What TOPICS _____.

3. What kinds of lily bulbs would you like to see in our sales? _____

4. Are you willing to assist with the - newsletter ____? society projects____? bulb sale prep__? Plot maintenance____?

----- cut along this line -----

CANADIAN PRAIRIE LILY SOCIETY

Use the handy form below to submit your membership dues for 2005.

Renew My Membership, Please. INDIVIDUAL -\$7 for 1 year OR \$18 for 3 years; SUSTAINING - \$10 - \$25/year).
Make cheque payable to: Canadian Prairie Lily Society.

Renew My Membership(individual) for ____ year(s). Total: \$ ____

Renew My Membership(sustaining) for ____ year(s). Total: \$ ____

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY/TOWN: _____

PROVINCE/STATE: _____

COUNTRY: _____, POSTAL/ZIP CODE _____ TELEPHONE: _____

e-mail: _____

Mail completed form and check to:

Mr. A.E. Delahey, Treasurer
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