

Canadian Prairie Lily Society

Newsletter

December 2007

Number 118

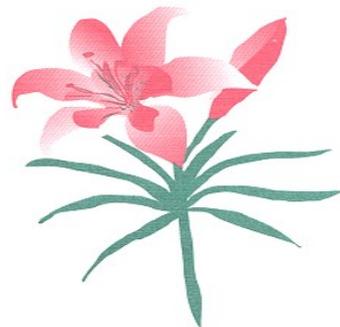
President's Message

The gardening season lasted well into this fall. Late asters were still nicely in bloom near the end of October but Saskatoon is now covered in a blanket of snow. This is good! The perennial beds are protected from the cold temperatures and the plants are getting ready for spring. The Thompson & Morgan Seed catalogue has arrived and there are some interesting items to consider for spring. The winter months give us time to sort through our photos of last summer and get them ready for the Show in July 2008, this section of the show is gaining in popularity so give it some thought. Winter will also give me more time to catch up on my needlework projects, reading and just being lazy!

CPLS had a busy successful year. The success of the society depends on the volunteers who make the activities possible. I would like to extend a special thanks to the committee chairpersons – Jim Sullivan (Gardenscape), Barbara Adams- Eichendorf (Annual Lily Show), John Bond, Stan Dunville, Art Delahey (Lily Plots), John Bond (Bulb Sales), Ed Driver (website & newsletter), Bob Caldwell (volunteer organizer) for riding herd on these activities. Also a special thank you to all the members who gave their time to manage our sales, show, and information tables; digging bulbs, packaging bulbs and printing labels for the bulb bags and countless other jobs that need to be done.

CPLS is looking forward to another eventful year in 2008 – the annual general meeting (April), Gardenscape'08 (March), Expanding Our Borders (June), the annual lily show (July) and bulb sales (September). There will be more information regarding these events in upcoming newsletters. If you can spare sometime to help out with our activities it would be greatly appreciated.

Best wishes to you all this Festive Season. Great Gardening in 2008! MED.



Editor's Desk.....

Once again your editors of this newsletter are requesting articles, letters etc, from the membership to help make the newsletter an informative one. We know that many of you have a good deal of knowledge to share with your fellow lily growers about growing, showing and/or hybridizing lilies. The one fast and easy way to share this knowledge is through this newsletter. So get your thoughts on paper or send them flying through cyberspace so we can share and enjoy your experiences with lilies.

All articles, letters, etc., will be considered for

publication. Please include your name and complete address with your article. Newsletter **DEADLINES** are February 15, May 15, August 15 and November 15.

Mail to: **CPLS NEWSLETTER EDITORS**

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WWW.prairielily.ca the CPLS Website.....

I would appreciate receiving articles and photos from members. Many society members grow more than lilies; photos of your gardens are most welcome as are your comments about the companion plants that you grow with your lilies. Thanks to all that have helped with photos and articles to date!

You can contact me at webmaster@prairielily.ca or at edriver@sasktel.net or by mail at 182 Dore Crescent, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7K 4X7.

Kind regards.
Ed

Membership Renewal Time.....

For all members whose memberships expire December 31, 2007, and are not renewed, the last issue of the newsletter will be the December 2007.

time to renew! To make renewal of your membership easy please use the renewal form included in your newsletter.

If your mailing label is **HIGHLIGHTED** it is



NALS Membership.

Stephanie Sims is now the NALS Executive secretary. She will be handling all of the memberships which include the Canadian renewals and new memberships. All memberships are to be paid in \$US funds. This does give Canadians the option of paying by credit card, money order, or check, for those having \$US accounts. There is also the option of using the NALS web Site www.lilies.org as a means of paying

membership with "pay pal". Individual or Family memberships for one year are \$20 US funds and \$55 US funds for three years.

Contact: Mrs. Stephanie Sims – P.O. Box W, Bonners Ferry, ID 83805. 208-267-7257 or Stephanie@lilies.org

Growing Lilies in the Northwest Territories.....

.by Darm Crook, Hay River, NWT

When I first moved to the NWT (North West Territories), spring of 1969, everyone said lilies can't grow here only the tiger lily will survive in the North. In the fall of 1970 I brought up a couple of bulbs of each Asiatic hybrid cultivar I had been growing in Saskatoon prior to my move. I planted them eight to 10 inches deep to the top of the bulbs. They wintered well and came up to provide their display of beauty the following summer. In my mind the winters in Hay River, NWT are no worse than Saskatchewan's just a couple of weeks later for the spring to arrive and three weeks earlier for the fall. We don't really have a fall we just go from summer at the end of September to winter by the middle of October.

Over a period of three to six years late flowering lilies including Asiatics tend to slowly decline in our environment. They just don't have enough time to properly senesce and provide adequate nourishment and anti freeze for the bulb to remain healthy and strong. To any rule there are always exceptions and to my above statement the tiger lily and *Lilium henryi* are the exception. Even though late flowering they both do well here; some years they freeze down while still in bloom. In the NWT the best lilies to grow are those classed as early and midseason for gardens on the prairies. This covers a large range of Asiatic lilies and quite a few lily species. I have never been able to winter over a Trumpet hybrid but have had some Oriental hybrids last five or six year with winter mulch. Orientals flower much too late to ever set seed up here.

At present I am successfully growing around fifty various lily species, about two hundred named lily cultivars and somewhere between 600 to 700 of my own lily hybrids. From around two thousand seeds, planted this winter 2003-2004, most of them from my own crosses, there are about 1200 seedlings currently growing. They will get planted out in middle of June. If my seedling survival average continues to hold, somewhere between six and seven hundred of these seedlings should survive and grow to maturity. Some of them, about twenty percent, will even flower in 2005.

I started hybridizing lilies in the mid 1980's; on a very small scale but over time it has grown substantially. In this area very few lilies flower early enough to set seed which will ripen before the first damaging frosts in mid to late September. To over come this I have six raised lily beds that the snow is generally shoveled off of each year on April 20th. They then have a cold frame placed over them to thaw and heat the ground as well as protect the lilies from frost when they sprout. This gets the lilies I use as seed parents up at least three weeks earlier than any others. That three weeks gives them time to grow, flower, set and mature seed before the fall frosts set in.

Most of my lily seed comes from my own hybrids or species but I still use a few other hybrids because of their hardiness and early flowering. Some of these are a few of Dr. Cecil Patterson's, Dr. Porter's and Fred

Fellner's hybrids, 'Marlene' and 'Hollandicum' [a very tough durable lily]. A couple of Dr. Patterson's lilies that I use deserve mention; 'Red Strap' is an excellent pollen parent and also does set some viable seed. I believe it is a triploid. Another excellent parent is his Mauve 51-110-7 it sets large quantities of seed and is a good pollen parent as well. 'Marlene' is an exceptional pod parent but it produces so many flowers that you must control the amount of pods that grow to maturity, if you don't the plant suffers the following year. 'Hollandicum' is disease resistant, virus tolerant, will grow in any soil type, and is the earliest flowering Asiatic hybrid lily in my gardens. Right behind the Martagons and *Lilium pumilum* it is the first Asiatic to flower. It sets seed without help of a cold frame to give it an early start.

Our growing zone is somewhere between 1 and 1.5. However, over the years I have found that just about anything that can be grown in Saskatoon and north of there can be grown up here. It is my belief that many plants have not been rated for our area as they have not been test grown under these conditions. As well as lilies I grow and winter fifty or so perennials, such as a Tea rose and a David Austin rose both for at least six years, various Parkland, Morden, and Explorer roses, a few Irises and Day lilies, Delphiniums, true Geraniums, and Monkshood. As well as the many perennials, we grow a full vegetable garden and a hundred or more annual flowers of which many produce seed year after year. From mid May to mid August the long summer days give our gardens sun from 2 a.m. until 11 p.m. and day light for the remaining three hours. To this I attribute the various perennials ability to grow and do well north of the 60th parallel. On top of the long days we have very few plant diseases and predators when compared to gardeners on the prairies. The lack of these I attribute to our winters. I sincerely believe that even with our shorter growing season we have a large advantage over southern gardeners, mainly because of the lack of plant diseases and pests. For instance, since I have lived in the north, I have never had any borers in my Irises or Columbines, no black spot in any of the roses, no rust in my Hollyhocks or fusarium in my lilies.

Although gardening has it's challenges in Hay River with a little effort and perseverance a great gardening experience can be had. The time spent doing it is the most peaceful, harmonious and pleasant time of the day. At the day's end you have something that can not be lost – fulfillment, satisfaction and peace of mind.

In the last eight years or so the gardening experience in

Hay River has really caught on; Hay Riverites have been beautifying their yards and businesses like never before. I attribute this to a very aggressive campaign by our local horticulture society. They actively promote gardening and community beautification, judge yards and award yearly prizes. The society has even succeeding in getting the town council in to the spirit of gardening.

Darm Crook
Zone 1
Hay River, NWT

[Ed. Note: This is a wonderful article about gardening in general but it also has many good ideas for growing and hybridizing lilies. Darm's work will take us through the winter and maybe trigger plans for our gardening this coming spring. Maybe building a cold frame to get things going earlier! Although the article is dated 2004 Darm is still gardening in Hay River, NWT. You can look forward to more of his writings in up coming newsletter.]

