

Canadian Prairie Lily Society Newsletter

March 2015

Upcoming CPLS Events:

CPLS Booth at Gardenscape

March 27, 28 and 29, 2015

Volunteers are needed for our booth. If you can help with this, please contact me at 306-947-2830 or by email. You'll receive a free pass for Gardenscape for the day that you work and your name will be entered in the 2015 Volunteer Appreciation Draw.

CPLS Annual General Meeting

Tuesday April 14, 2015

Multi Purpose Room, McClure United Church,
4025 Taylor Street E, Saskatoon

7:00 p.m. AGM

8:00 p.m. Speaker Barb Stefanyshyn-Cote

"Developing the Gardens at Tierra Del Sol"

Refreshments

Volunteer Appreciation Draw

-Names of all of those who volunteered for CPLS in 2014 will be entered in a draw for three \$75 gift cards from The Mall at Lawson Heights

CPLS Annual Lily Show

July 23rd and 24th, 2015

The Mall at Lawson Heights, 134 Primrose Drive, Saskatoon

CPLS Fall Bulb Sale 2015

October 2nd, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

October 3rd, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Mall at Lawson Heights, 134 Primrose Drive, Saskatoon

Other Upcoming Events:

North American Lily Society Annual Show

July 15-19, 2015

Calgary, Alberta

For more details visit the website www.NALS2015.com

President's Message

I noticed in my President's message from September that I had optimistically hoped that winter would pass by as quickly as summer had. Well, I was wrong! This winter has seemed interminable and up until this last spell of warm weather, I felt like I was going nutty waiting for spring.

Winter seems to leave some of us gardeners particularly prone to what a friend of mine refers to as Seed Acquisition Disorder (SAD) and I have been suffering from an acute case over the past few months! As a result, I now have several hundred lily and daylily seedlings growing under florescent lights in my basement. That in itself isn't a bad thing, and the opportunity to do some "winter gardening" definitely lifts my spirits. However, I've made a lot of work for myself as I will need to find or create planting space for all of these seedlings once summer arrives.

On a sad note, our lily society lost a friend and long time member with the recent passing of Diann Putland. Diann was a "champion" of lilies... in promoting them, in ensuring that they were accurately identified, and in winning just about every award possible. She was a wonderful asset to our society and leaves us with many great memories.

You'll notice in the list of upcoming events that our Annual Lily Show will be taking place a week later than usual this year. The North American Lily Society Show is happening in Calgary during the time when we usually hold our show, so the CPLS Executive decided that a later date for our show this year would allow people to attend both shows, should they so choose.

Gardenscape is coming up later this month, a sure indicator that spring will soon be here. As usual, we are in need of volunteers for our booth, so if you are able to help with this, please call me at (306)947-2830, or send me an email .

Thanks in advance for volunteering and here's hoping that we have a good lily year in 2015!

Barbara Adams Eichendorf

In Memoriam Diann Putland

Diann Putland, a long-time member of CPLS passed away on Feb.19, 2015 at the age of 72. Over her many years of involvement with CPLS, Diann served in numerous roles, including Librarian, Vice President and Director. She was a fierce competitor at many horticulture/flower shows, including CPLS, NALS and Manitoba Lily Society shows. She won countless awards with her well-grown and meticulously groomed lilies.

Diann was active in the lily world in so many ways. She was a very talented floral artist, creating floral arrangements for many occasions, including CPLS and NALS shows. She was a very informed speaker and did seminars for different garden related organizations as well as for CPLS. Her business, Hillcrest Harmony Flowers, was a reliable source for great lily bulbs, and she was very particular about the quality of bulbs that she supplied. She also sponsored an award in the CPLS Decorative Section for many years.

Diann opened her yard for tours in summer when the lilies were blooming, and would also give friends a tour if they stopped by. She was involved in hybridizing lilies and registered a few of her own introductions. Diann loved flowers, and had a special fondness for yellow lilies, so I've included a photo of one of her introductions, 'Phyllis Irene'.

Diann had many friends throughout the lily world, and she will be missed. Our deepest sympathies are extended to her husband Denis and family.



Membership Renewal

For those of you who receive this newsletter by mail, your membership expiry date is shown on the address label.

For those of you who receive this by email, you'll be receiving an email to let you know that your membership has expired or will expire shortly.

To renew your membership, stop by the CPLS booth at Gardenscape, or mail your cheque made out to CPLS to :

CPLS Treasurer

Norman Waters

114 Cooper Crescent

Saskatoon SK S7M 4L3

Membership dues are \$7.00 per year or \$18.00 for 3 years.

Elections at the CPLS Annual General Meeting

Serving on the CPLS Executive is a fun way of getting to know experienced lily growers and of sharing your interest in lilies. There are four executive meetings per year, so it isn't a huge time commitment.

If this is something that may be of interest to you, please contact me for more details. (Barb 306-947-2830)

Cinnamon and Other Measures for Controlling Damping Off

If you've ever started plants from seed indoors you may have had experience with "damping off". This is a fungal disease that causes seeds to rot or seedlings to topple over and die just as you thought they were starting to look good. It's a very frustrating disease in that it is very hard to control once it has started. Prevention is key in ensuring that seedlings make it to maturity. This seemed to be an appropriate time for a discussion about this problem, as some of you may be thinking about starting seeds

indoors in anticipation of spring. Perhaps sharing my experience may be of help if this is something you're dealing with.

I've grown many plants from seed, but have been concentrating on lilies for the past twenty years, and a little bit on daylilies for the past couple of years. But, I think that even though my experience is with these specific seeds, the techniques could be applied to most seeds.

For many years there was a good fungicide on the market called No-Damp, which worked well as a preventive soil drench, used at a fairly weak rate. As this fungicide is no longer available, I've had to resort to other methods of keeping this problem at bay. This is probably healthier for both me and the environment, but it is a bit more inconvenient.

And before I share my successes with you, I first have to share what I consider a failure. During the winter of 2013/14 I tried watering with chamomile tea as a preventive for damping off. I had read that this was an effective treatment but I was really disappointed with the results. I tried a couple of different brands of tea, I tried different strengths, and nothing worked. So I did more research to see what other solutions I could find.

I've always followed the advice of planting in sterile potting medium, and using either new pots or pots that had been washed in a 10% bleach solution. For many years I had no problems with damping off, but since moving to a house where the humidity is higher, it seems to be a problem lurking at the edges just waiting to kill those tender little seedlings.

So, I've continued with those clean practices, and after doing some research, have added a few more measures that seem to help. First, the lily seeds are given about a five minute soak in a 10% bleach solution just before planting. In theory, this will kill any pathogens that may be clinging to the seed coat.

Next, watering is done using a very weak hydrogen peroxide solution. The recommended solution is 2 to 3 teaspoons of regular 3% hydrogen peroxide per gallon of water. There seems to be some varied opinion on what the strength of the solution should be, and I've come across suggestions that a stronger solution works fine and doesn't damage the plants. My take on this is that I'd rather start out with a weaker solution and see how it goes. I

have the same philosophy regarding fertilizer. Lower doses applied more frequently give better control and reduce the risk of overdoing it.

The hydrogen peroxide solution doesn't hurt the seeds or the young seedlings. It apparently helps by increasing the amount of dissolved oxygen available to the plant roots, and helps to fight off diseases by killing infectious spores and pathogens which might cause disease. I try to do the watering during the day, so that the soil surface has a chance to dry a bit before night, when the air temperature cools. Also, watering the potting medium and avoiding wetting the plants' leaves is a good practice.

I've also added an oscillating fan in my basement plant room which runs 24/7 and dries the soil surface after watering. This has the added benefit of moving the leaves which tends to make them stronger. It does, however, make it necessary for me to check the seedlings daily (which I'd do anyway, because in the middle of winter who doesn't like to look at green plants growing happily!) and I sometimes give the ones nearest the fan a little extra water to see them through to the next regular watering.

And, the final touch is a little cinnamon sprinkled lightly on the soil surface as soon as the seeds are planted and after every watering. There are apparently a few spices that can aid in preventing damping off, and as cinnamon is relatively inexpensive and readily available, that's the one I chose.

I'm willing to try whatever might work, and so far, this combination of treatments seems to be working well!