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Bulbs for Spring Planting



BULBS MAY NOT have been devised to meet the needs of lazy garden-makers, but it is certain that no other class of flowers can be raised with so little effort. One merely deposits the bulb at the proper depth in good soil and waits in lively expectation until the stalks grow and the flowers unfold. Of course, one can do more; a little extra care will result in larger and finer flowers, especially with such tubers as the dahlia, which always likes encouragement.

The popularity of the dahlia has grown with leaps and bounds. It is grown everywhere now, and has been improved and made over until there are half a dozen types and hundreds of varieties. Dahlias may be grown from seed with fair prospects of flowers the first year; but the common practice is to set out tubers in late May or early June. The ground may well be enriched with a little well-rotted stable manure, or with pulverized sheep manure—an excellent fertilizer, by the way, which may be bought in small quantities at the seed stores.

Gladioli should go into the ground every two weeks from the first of May until the first of July in order to have a steady crop of flowers. They like a rather rich soil, but will grow and bloom satisfactorily in any garden. When planted for effect, the plants should stand four to six inches apart; but when

grown for cutting, they are better in rows a foot apart, so that they may be cultivated easily. Manure water once a week helps them along.

Montbretias, handsome flowers which resemble gladioli, should be grown in masses. Among the good varieties are Germania, Etoile de Feu and Rayon d'Or. Unlike gladioli and dahlias, the bulbs do not need to be lifted. With a light covering of leaves, the plants will survive the winter and continue to bloom year after year.

Many of the lilies are best planted in the Spring. They like a sandy soil, and if such is not available, the bulbs may be deceived by digging a hole and filling it with sand before planting. Lilies need to be set deeply—from eight to twelve inches—and about a foot apart.

It is best to start Tuberous rooted begonia in the house in March or April, and to plant them out about the end of May. Although they do not pine for the sun, they are exacting as to soil, which must be very rich and moist. Many soils are improved by spading in sand and old cow manure or pulverized sheep manure, and plenty of water should be given throughout the summer.

Tuberose usually are set out about the middle of May, but will flower much earlier if started in the house in March and set out late in May. Liquid pulverized sheep manure once a week will push the growth.

Garden Wrinkles

A farmer friend has just presented our family with a gourd dipper that has a knot in its handle by which one may hang it on a hook or nail. The knot was literally grown there, as the string was slipped on to the gourd when the latter had newly appeared on the vine. The tying did not seem to retard the growth of the gourd, beyond causing it to produce more neck than it would otherwise have done. Certainly it renders the dipper much more useful, and the oddity of it will cause it to be preserved for a long time.—L. M. C., Birmingham, Ala.

I had such fine tomato plants last year that I want others to know my method of starting them. Small turnips were scooped out, leaving a thick shell, which was filled with rich soil. The seed was planted in this, and when transplanted the turnips were placed in the ground without disturbing the roots of the young plants. The shells then made good fertilizer for the tomato plants, which thrived unusually well and formed a fine, stocky growth.—P. K., Indianapolis, Ind.

A very simple and effective cure for poisoning from sumac, poison ivy, or poison oak is obtained from Boracic acid. Bring a solution of the acid to the boiling point. Wring woolen cloths out of it and lay upon the affected part as hot as can be borne, covering with another woolen cloth to keep in the heat. When cool, repeat. Keep this up for twenty minutes; then, wait two hours and repeat again. This helped my husband in a very severe case when everything else had failed, and the second day we were obliged to use it only three times. It does not burn as might be expected, but stops both the burning and the itching, and is very soothing.—I. B. M., Pasadena, Cal.

I have found a very satisfactory way of holding potted plants along porch rails so that there is no danger of their falling off, and so that the water will not drip down on the porch. Take a piece of wire about the weight and length of wire used for croquet sets. Bend the two ends of the wire under the porch rail for about three inches. Then, bring the wire up and over the porch rail and form a loop projecting out from the porch. Into the loop set the flower pot, which will be held securely. Of course the loop may be made larger or smaller for pots of different sizes.—Miss A. L. F., Cushman, Mass.

The way to keep the pansy bed in bloom all summer is to pick the blossoms

before they fade, give liquid manure freely after midsummer and remove a part of the plant with the blossoms after the season is well advanced.

Almost any kind of bright wood berries may be preserved for decorative use in the house by dipping them in melted paraffin and putting away in a cool place until needed. Treated in this way, they will retain their brightness and shape for months and will make an effective decoration.—R. E., Janesville, Wis.

To prevent the soil from forming a crust on the top of flower pots, as it tends to do, thus preventing the seeds or plants from thriving well, sprinkle a thin layer of white sand over the soil wherever there are seeds. This also helps to retain the moisture.—R. S., Madison, Wis.

If the garden-maker wants to keep close track of plants, shrubs and trees, he should carefully label them. Labels made from zinc cut into strips are permanent, and the name of the variety will not be rubbed off if written with an ordinary lead pencil.

When cut worms feast on the asparagus, plant lettuce among the plants. The worms will usually not molest the asparagus so long as the lettuce holds out. This may seem like compromising with the pest, but it is sometimes worth doing.

If the sprinkling can is found to leak just when you want to use it, the annoyance will be great. Keep a little solder on hand, but in an emergency use soap for a makeshift.

Instead of pulling lettuce up by the root, cut it off above ground. It will grow the second time.—Miss M. M., Waxahachie, Texas.

Often, in baking apple pie the juice runs out and leaves the pie dry. This can be remedied by stewing the apple skins with a little sugar and pouring the syrup obtained from this over the pie-crust.

If you want to utilize left-over boiled potatoes, cut them up, add a slice of bread cut into dice, and fry all together. The resulting dish is delicious, and helps to make a few potatoes "go around."

To remove ink stains from the hands: Rub the inner surface of a banana peeling vigorously over the ink spots, for a few minutes, and no trace of the ink will remain.

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