

Capital Journal HOME PAGE

For Flowers This Winter, Sow or Set-out Annuals



Parasies enjoy a cool, moist environment.

Growing flowers in the middle of winter is a horticultural feat more or less restricted to mild climates. An intelligent selection of plants is also necessary. You can sow seed or transplant seedlings now and produce flowers during the winter months.

Annuals are about the only garden subjects that can be seeded now with expectation of bloom during the near future. They have a comparatively short growing season and thus attain maturity much faster than perennials. Several varieties, as a matter of fact, will come into flower just several weeks after being seeded.

Winter flowering annuals can be grown either from seed or from established transplants available at all leading garden supply stores. The former method is slower but less expensive. A packet of

seed costs but a few cents, yet will produce hundreds of flowers. On the other hand, the transplants cost more but flower faster. Frequently they are about four or five weeks old when offered for sale and may even be in flower at the nursery.

One of the most popular winter flowering annuals is the stock; perhaps the best variety for starting now is the Giant Winter Nice type, so named because it thrives during the winter and blooms in about 10 weeks. The plants are pyramidal in shape and about 18 inches tall. Waved varieties are available in rose, light blue, yellow, crimson, blood red, white and several bi-colors. Other possibilities for mild winter conditions are: calendula, pansies, snaps, primulas and African daisies.

Modern Roses Withstand Cold

How hardy are modern roses? Can gardeners in severe climates expect good results from their prize plants?

All-America-Rosee Selections, an association of the country's leading growers and introducers, reports that modern roses are surprisingly hardy and standards are expected to improve steadily.

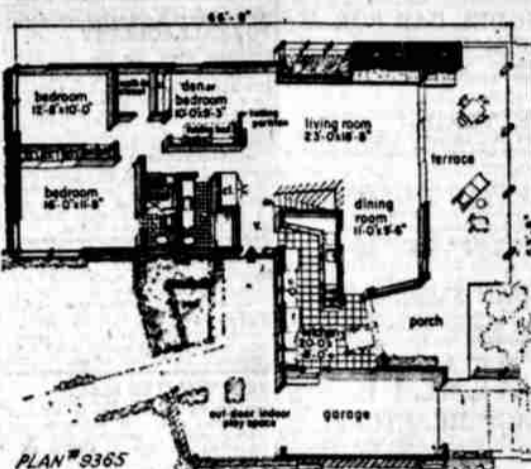
Tests conducted by a mid-west Rose Society report on more than 2,500 plants observed under the most difficult conditions with no special protection show, that very few plants were killed by the severe temperatures.

Of 16 All-America varieties tested, only 27 plants were lost out of a total of 355 tested, a 7 per cent loss. Fourteen other varieties selected at random showed a 13.7 per cent loss with 49 killed out of a total of 357.

Violent fluctuations in temperature subjected the roses to the most difficult conditions imaginable. Within a space of two and one half weeks, the thermometer went from a balmy 60 degrees Fahrenheit to 13 degrees below zero. Snow, sleet and wind also were prevalent during most of the testing period.

Sidney B. Hutton, president of AARS emphasized, however, that winter protection in cold areas should not be abandoned by any gardener. "The chances are," he said, "that not a single plant would have been lost had protection been applied. These tests prove that with simple precautions, the home gardener can protect his prize plants even under the worst conditions."

HOMES FOR AMERICANS



Indoor-Outdoor living is exploited in this plan for a house erected by the Long Island Home Builders Institute and AFL building trades unions as a contribution toward raising funds for 13 community hospitals. Materials, equipment and services were donated by more than 150 associate members of the institute. The house is offered as a prize in a hospital fund raising campaign. Features include doors at both ends of the garage to create covered play space for children in bad weather. A picture window adjoining the living room fireplace extends into the finished basement, where plants and vines grow up from the basement through the living room level. Sliding glass walls, merge living room and terrace, where a barbecue fireplace is provided in the massive multiple chimney. The house covers 1,585 square feet without porches and garage. It was designed by Matern & York, architects, 90-04 161st St., Jamaica 2, N.Y.

Amaryllis Gives Fine Results In Flowers for Least Care

By MARK M. TAYLOR

Of the many striking beautiful house plants available, perhaps the Amaryllis gives the biggest and boldest flowers for the least care. Amaryllis is a genus of South African bulbous plants that bear single, large lily-like pink, white, rose, red or purple flowers on a single solid stem. The true member of this genus is the so-called Belladonna Lily which grows out of doors in warmer climates. For indoor flowering it likes a soil composed of fibrous loam, leaf-mold and sand in about equal parts. It is a gluttonous feeder and during blooming period must be given frequent applications of a liquid fertilizer.

One of the best things about the Amaryllis is that with good care most bulbs will live from 15-25 years, or even longer! When potting a newly purchased bulb, allow an inch of space around the side of the pot to allow for growth of the bulb and roots. Be sure drainage is good in the pot or else the bulb may rot. Set the bulb so at least half of it shows above the soil line. If a Christmas blooming variety set the pot in a warm place. Others should be kept about 55-60 degrees F. Never allow the soil to become dust-dry. When you see a bud pushing its way through the bulb, set the Amaryllis in an east or south window. Give the pot a half turn every day so that the light is evenly distributed to all parts of the plant. If necessary, you may have to use pot sticks to hold these tall, heavy-laden stems erect. In the summer the pot can be sunk in the garden to extend the lives of the flowers and to ripen the bulb.

Different Species
Of the different species of Amaryllis, the following are important:
Equestris—A soft pink that grows abundantly in Florida and the south.
Formosissima—Sometimes called Jacobean Lily, a native of Mexico with bright crimson flowers.
Halli—Really Lycoris Squamiger and mistakenly called an Amaryllis.
Johnsoni—Large red flowers with white veins (often referred to as Hippeastrum) and a native of South America. Usually without fragrance and available in single and double flowered sorts.

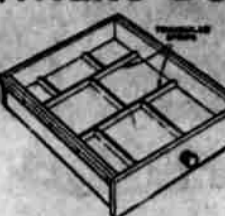
should be potted by the end of October for March and April bloom. Callas do best when kept at a temperature of 70 degrees. Potted bulbs should be kept in a dark location and slightly on the dry side until the roots begin to form. Feed with a liquid fertilizer and keep at a moderately warm temperature from the time the stalks appear. After through flowering, gradually withhold water and store in a dark, cool place. Of the various callas, Elliottiana or Golden Calla, is the best for indoor pot culture, although Zantedeschia Ethipps, the white calla of the florists will perform very well. Gift plants of this calla can be readily transferred to the garden after having performed indoors. They must rest a month or two, however, after blooming indoors, before being set outside in a rich humusy soil and in a sunny spot. There is also a so-called black calla, Arum Palaestinum and a red calla, Saurostromum Guttatum. Callas are often called Calla Lilies erroneously as they are not lilies.

Some good general rules for all house plants: 1, not to over-pot by placing small plants in large pots; insure proper drainage in pots; do not fill the pot with soil, leave at least a half inch of space between top of soil and rim of pot to allow for watering; keep faded flowers picked and remove any seed pods that might form.

Plants for House
Some good pot plants for the house besides the ever popular African Violet include: Poinsettia, Cyclamen, Gloxinia, Primroses and the popular bulbs—tulips, daffodils and hyacinths. Even gardenias, dwarf lemon trees, etc., have gained a lot of favor as house plants in recent years. Other suitable plants in varying favor according to one's personal tastes include: Wandering Jew, Serpentine, Rubber Plant and the large group of cacti and succulents and, of course, a wide variety of ferns.

Of the many house plants available to add color to the home, I think that many of our

Make Do



Drawer partitions for storing small items neatly can be made with irregular wood strips, nailed, glued or screwed to the drawer bottom. Small items slide easily up the sloping faces of the strips, instead of catching in corners.

dwarf flowering shrubs are the most attractive. Azaleas and miniature roses come in this category.

The secret of success with them is plenty of light and a free circulation of air and a daily watering.

We have discussed here only the blooming plants or ones with colorful leaves. There are many other plants grown, principally for their foliage or exotic shapes such as Ivy, Sansevieria, Philodendron and Rex Begonias.

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Your Garden Notebook

BY MARK M. TAYLOR

1. That Japanese Spurge or Pachysandra, is one of the best evergreen ground covers available for shady locations?
2. Shore Juniper (Juniperus Conferta) does best in a dry sandy situation at the seashore, making an excellent evergreen ground cover?
3. That one of the most recently discovered in a native shrubs of Oregon is Kalmia Leachiana, a diminutive evergreen adaptable for rock garden use? It prefers a humusy soil and a sunny location.
4. That the Sweet Bay, or Laurel, has been used in ancient Greece and Rome?
5. Oil from the fruit of Laurel is used in making perfume.
6. That the seeds of hollies take two years to germinate, and sometimes three years?

7. The Salt Tree (Holmoeodendron) is a recommended shrub with pale purple, fragrant flowers in clusters that does extremely well in heavy limestone soil or near the seashore.
8. The Franklinia shrub or tree was found growing wild in the 1770s but has never been found in the wild since, all plants being descendants of the original "find"?
9. That the flowering cherry trees this fall have taken on brilliant tones in their coloring?
10. Redrein Enkianthus is a fine shrub for the arid soil garden, with yellow or orange, bell-shaped flowers in pendulous clusters, having brilliant red autumn foliage and not enough used in our gardens.

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Question Box

By MARK M. TAYLOR

Q—I have some Cypress plant seeds sent from Texas. I planted one in a pot. Growing nicely but look new like they were set for winter. Do you have any tips on this? Are they a climber vine or trailer vine, and should I keep them in cool, dry place of plants outside now. I have asked several of my friends about this, but no one seems to know anything about them.—M.P.

A—It is difficult to tell which of the several species of Cypress you have as there are trees, shrubs, creeping ground covers and vines. The vine type is an annual of the Morning Glory family. Apparently your trouble in starting the seeds is the common one of "choking off" which could be prevented by sterilizing the soil in the flat before planting by running boiling water through it or by using a chemical soil disinfectant. Did a light spraying now with a weak solution of a common household chlorine disinfectant may clear up your trouble, but chances are these seedlings are beyond recovery. If you have seeds from the Arizona Cypress, which is native to Texas, too, the chances are they will still come through if you plant them into a protected location to avoid the cold nights.

Q—Will Pampas Grass survive seashore location?—D. E.

A—Yes, though it may winter kill. There is a good substitute, however, in Pampas Grass, Zebra Grass might also be Pampas Grass, sometimes the hardy one.

Q—Is this the right time to move two small trees to a new location?—Mrs. E.

A—Yes. They are dormant when the leaves have fallen and may be safely moved. Be sure to get all of the roots. Make the new hole one foot larger than the spread of the roots, set tree at same depth in well and support, if necessary, by sure to stakes driven in ground nearby. Rip out wires through a section of old hose where it loops around tree trunk to prevent binding or chafing.

Q—Should evergreen trees be fertilized now?—H. E.

A—Delay extensive fertilizing until spring. New growth should not be stimulated now or a sudden cold snap could do much damage.

Q—What can I do with chrysantheums still blooming but, having no protection, are being damaged by wind and rain?—Mrs. E.

A—Either provide a covering to shield from wind and rain or you can still pot them up and move to a protected spot. Some of them are very effective as house decorations if plants are shapely.

Q—Is there any chemical that will kill weeds before they emerge from the ground, or are broadleaved weeds the only ones affected after growing has begun?—H. E.

A—There is a new chemical—Naphthyl Pthalosulfonic Acid, which is reported to be effective on sprayed weeds, quackgrass, chickweed, the weed, carpet weed, crab grass and other common weeds. It is a bit toxic to animals so should be used with caution. Further experimentation may determine a more effective and safe method of application.

Q—Is it too late to plant a lawn now?—C. K.

A—Probably, for good seed germination as we may have pretty heavy frosts soon. Better to wait now until Spring

and be sure. However, you can prepare the ground, letting what weeds will grow and remove them or kill them, thereby reducing your task in the Spring.

Q—Lawn has spots of slimy stuff underneath grass. What is this and how can you control it?—M. E.

A—This is a condition due to the decomposition of waste matter such as grass clippings which may have filtered down through the grass leaves next to the soil. Spraying the spots with D.D., a soil disinfectant may solve your problem or the use of a sulfur spray, if possible, rake out this material before spraying.

Q—I have a holly tree 12 years old that has never borne berries. Why and can I help it to do so?—Mrs. J. M.

A—Hollies require pollinating to produce berries. Male and female plants must be planted to insure berries. Plant a berry bearing holly nearby and you will probably have success, or graft a berry-bearing branch to your present tree. Your nurseryman can help you on this score.

Q—I have read of a spray material that can be applied to trees or shrubs when transplanting to prevent transpiration by excessive drying. What is this?—E. D.

A—These are wax emulsions not plastic as many people believe. It is transparent and permits unhampered growth when the growth starts.

Q—Have some Achimenes growing in pots. They are through flowering now. How should they be handled?—Mrs. E. V.

A—Remove the water and store tubers in the pots they were grown in. Report in Spring or plant outside if you wish.

Q—How should tree roses, or grass, be protected for the winter?—Mrs. O. Y.

A—Fortunately, our Winter are not severe that we must bend them down and cover them as is necessary in many places. However, wind damage is prevalent, so a windbreak of some sort is worth constructing.

Q—We are planning shrub plantations around our new home. Please suggest flowering shrubs in yellow and orange colors.—Mrs. E. W.

A—For yellow flowers try Forsythia, Jasmine, hybrid brooms or Kerria. For orange flowers try azaleas, flowering quince, pomarine.

Q—What is Polinacina and will it grow here? I have read of this and am curious about.—Mrs. C. T.

A—This is a small tree or shrub of the Pea family native to warmer climates so will not succeed here.

Q—Will the Bird of Paradise grow here?—Mrs. H. E.

A—Not usually successful, though I have seen plants that survived a mild Winter and bloomed well. Basically, it is a tropical plant. It can be grown in the home greenhouse.

The Wright brothers' first plane was damaged after its fourth flight and never flew again.

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