

Sub-Tropical Plants Bring Unusual to Gardeners of NW

Flowers Adapt Themselves To Area

By MARK M. TAYLOR
Capital Journal Writer

The gardener, wishing to achieve the unusual in his garden, will delight in experimenting with the growing of the so-called sub-tropical plants.

The name sub-tropical, applied to a plant, means a plant that is indigenous to an area that borders on one of tropical climate. The plants are not entirely tropical but have adapted themselves to an area with lower winter temperatures and frosts of varying intensity than is found in the tropics.

Logical Next Step

While Florida and California and certain parts of the Gulf states are considered in the sub-tropical zones, the moderate temperatures predominating in the Pacific Northwest makes this region the logical next step for the sub-tropical plants in their northward trek.

Not too many years ago the following shrubs and trees were not considered hardy enough for use in the western part of the Northwest but are found in many home gardens today, where they are thriving: Abelia, Azalea, Camellia, Nandina, Viburnum, Albizzia, Bamboo, Ilex, Jasminum, Lonicera and many others.

While the truly sub-tropical areas in the United States are confined, largely, to the warmer parts of Florida and California with portions of the Gulf states, it is equally true that the western part of the Pacific Northwest, with its abundant rainfall and moderate climate, constitutes another phase in the transition of true tropical plants to the colder regions. Likewise, the Northwest becomes the first step in the conditioning of cold climate plants for use in warmer regions.

Summer Greenery All Year

Sub-tropical plants have the characteristic of full foliage and summer greenery the year around.

We have but only to look at a few home gardens locally, to find many of the so-called sub-tropical plants, listed above, growing and flourishing.

It is equally enlightening to note in many home gardens, the use of plants long considered possible of culture in the colder regions.

The use of sub-tropical plants in the home garden in this area is not only possible, in many cases, but adds a touch of the exotic unobtainable with any other plant material.

Among the plants now found in some home gardens in the Northwest that have, heretofore, been considered sub-tropical character but which have survived the rigors of our winter are the Hibiscus.

Five Petals on Hibiscus

There are many species of Hibiscus all with the characteristic bell-shaped flowers of five petals. Usually, though, the Hibiscus is thought of as the tropical shrub found in tropical Florida and in Hawaii. It has the botanical name of Hibiscus rosa-sinensis. It will stand no frost.

Hibiscus rosa sinensis has a northern counterpart in the shrub too often advertised simply as Hibiscus when it is, perhaps, better known as Althea or Rose-of-Sharon. Technically, it is a species of Hibiscus known as syriacus.

The species of Hibiscus more nearly like the tropical species but which has proved hardy locally is Hibiscus moscheutos, sometimes called rose mallow. Its flowers are large, four to seven inches across in white, pink, yellow or red. It is a perennial plant that, in this writer's experience, has survived to ten degrees below zero without protection.

Hibiscus grandiflorus is similar to moscheutos except the flowers are larger and is hardy only in sub-tropical regions. Breeding of the two species will, in all probability, develop hardiness in this species also.

Silk Tree

Another sub-tropical of local interest is Albizzia julibrissin, commonly known as the Silk tree, a tree not over thirty feet tall with a spreading crown which has light pink flowers in compact heads in Spring. This tree is often incorrectly called mimosa. An excellent example of this tree's beauty is the tree on the State Street side of the post office just east of the driveway in mid-block. While, usually, not considered hardy below twenty degrees, this tree has stood a temperature of ten below zero without appreciable damage.

Looking at the more tender sub-tropicals, we find gardeners throughout the Northwest desirous of raising gardenias, which are, usually only raised in the greenhouse in this area, yet there are gardenia shrubs of good size growing out of doors in home gardens in Portland, which indicates that it should be possible to raise them here too. The one recommended for local use is Gardenia florida, variety mystery. The culture of this beauty is the same as that for the Camellia or Rhododendron.

Bougainvillea, one of the handsomest ornamental vines of sub-tropical regions is not recommended for planting out of doors in this locality.

Crape myrtle, another familiar shrub of sub-tropical areas, has survived the winters of the Northwest. The colorful blooms from June to October make this shrub a welcome addition to any garden.

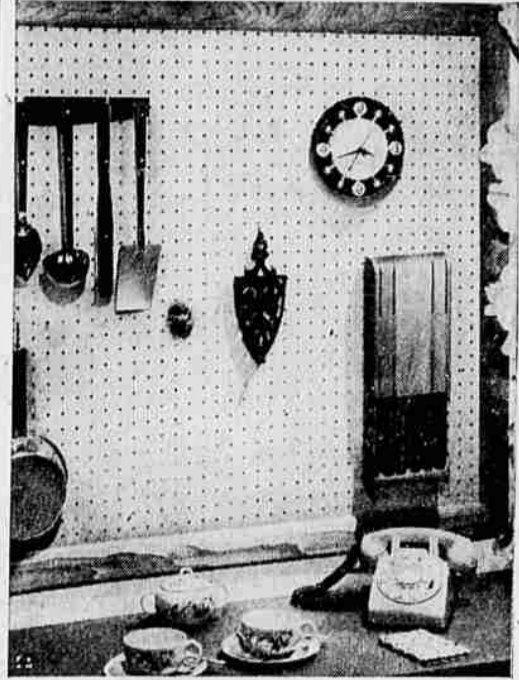
It should be thoroughly under-

Planning for Utility Prime Kitchen Arrangement Goal

Peg Board Help In Getting Best Use

By VIVIAN BROWN
AP Newsfeatures Writer

HOW TO GET the most out of your kitchen: That is the question.



For convenience frame a panel of peg board to hold accessories like this which features an electric clock in snowflake pattern. The cord is pulled through board.

The idea is to make good use of all space, even walls. A kitchen is not to live in. It should be planned for utility—a place where food preparation, freezing, storing and cooking may be done in a minimum of time.

Big or little, kitchens have problems, because most times they are planned by people who never work in them.

The idea is to make good use of all space, even walls. A kitchen is not to live in. It should be planned for utility—a place where food preparation, freezing, storing and cooking may be done in a minimum of time.

If you can't have everything at your arm's reach, locate it nearby. Cabinets or shelves above the refrigerator may hold ice box containers, seldom-used kitchen ware; casserole dishes and pots may go above the stove or oven cabinet; canned foods and bread-stuffs may be put in an out-of-the-way spot, perhaps above the washing machine.

One wall or corner may get peg-board treatment, in hold useful items that never seem to be available readily when needed. These include sharp knives for carving, dippers, spatulas (now in attractive sets), pickins, molds, chicken shears, table tiles, trays. It's a good place to put your electric clock, too. Choose one of the new designs, snowflake pattern or what have you for special wall flattery.

HOME OWNERSHIP UP

Home ownership has increased five per cent during the past year, according to new surveys. About 60 per cent of Americans own their own homes today, compared to 55 per cent in 1955. Increase was greatest in the north central states and lowest in the northeast.

BETTER HOME DESIGN

A booklet on the principles of good home design has been prepared by the United States Savings and Loan League, which represents 4,300 associations. The purpose of the study is to promote more livable houses to offset cutting down on room sizes under rising costs.

stood when planting one of these plants, ordinarily considered of sub-tropical nature, that there may be failures, especially if unusual weather prevails. However, where a plant becomes permanently established by virtue of several years without unusually cold winters, the plant has an excellent chance for survival when unusual cold does strike.

Capital Journal GARDEN PAGE On the House

By DAVID G. BAREUTHER
AP Real Estate Editor

EXCESSIVE DAMPNESs can attack and undermine the livability of virtually any type of house, whether it is built over a basement, a ventilated crawl space or on a concrete slab. Only proper vapor sealing can adequately protect a house against dirt, rot, mildew, warpage and other problems.

You'd think that a house built over a thoroughly ventilated crawl space with relatively dry earth underneath could be free from moisture troubles. But this is not always the case. Engineers have found that soil can act as a wick and evaporate more moisture than a surface of water. If you build a house on stilt over the

edge of a river or lake, you'd expect some dampness. So with granules of soil multiplying evaporation surfaces by the millions, you stand to get even more dampness. You must seal that soil surface.

Highlighting the urgency of this problem is a letter just received from Mrs. C. H. P. of Monroe, Mich. "Believe me, she writes, 'when we brought our home last April it looked beautiful. But dampness has become so bad that it has made our hardwood floors wavy. The house is built over a crawl space about 36 inches deep. The ground is damp, but not soggy.'

There is a case for a vapor barrier. Heavy asphalt roofing paper widely overlapped or polyethylene plastic film can do this job effectively and apparently permanently. Smooth the ground as well as possible, stretch the vapor barrier carefully over the surface allowing wide overlaps and scatter a little dry sand on top of it to hold it down. Even houses with so-called heated crawl spaces should be sealed against ground moisture.

FOG AND FROST on cold window panes have inspired a lot of advice on controlling indoor moisture. Cooking, laundering and bathing are said to add from two to four gallons of water to the air in a house within one day. People add still more moisture from their lungs and skin surfaces—as much as 11 to 12 pints daily for a family of four. But one expert says this all amounts to a drop in a bucket compared with the moisture that comes into houses from the outside. He is G. A. Voorhees, technical secretary of the National Warm Air Heating and Air Conditioning Assn.

In a formal report for architects and engineers, entitled "Moisture Problems in Crawl Space Houses," Voorhees gives comprehensive reasons for the wick action of the soil can contain from one pint to one quart of water, depending on the clay, silt or other "finer" in the soil.

A small house with 850 square feet of crawl space is examined. If this house is built over bare earth of a high moisture content, 16 1/2 gallons of water may be evaporated under the house in 24 hours.

If the same house is built over water the evaporation at the same temperature would amount to only 1 1/2 gallons.

If the earth surface is covered with 55-pound roll roofing, less than one pint of evaporation will occur.

"TOO OFTEN," says Voorhees, "we hear the statement 'Oh, I don't need any vapor barrier on the floor of this crawl space because the ground water level here is at least 12 to 15 feet below the surface.'"

The findings of government engineers show that the moisture content of soil at the surface of the earth in a crawl space remains substantially the same regardless of whether the ground water level is as little as 8 feet or as much as 20 feet below the level of the crawl space floor.

Do you have a recipe for potpourri? Mrs. E.D.

Yes. Take two quarts of rose petals and buds, spread on paper to dry; sprinkle with table salt; add Sweet Geranium or Lemon Verbena leaves; add any sweet smelling flower blossoms or herbs, when thoroughly dried. When mixed and dry, add one-quarter ounce each of powdered cloves, mace, cinnamon and allspice. Mix well, thoroughly with the above and bag with a bit of brandy and a drop or two of oil of roses. Put in a

crocker jar, keeping it tightly closed for several weeks, stirring occasionally. Put in open bowls to add scent to rooms.

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Questions Answered

By MARK M. TAYLOR

How can you successfully transplant Kinickinick?—E. S.

Where this plant is native, along the Oregon coast, you can take it up in sods rather than try to move the plants bare-rooted. Where you plan to plant this, excavate to three or four inches, then scatter peatmoss over the area with a sprinkling of sand over that. Place the sod in this prepared base and fill in the spaces between the sods with sand. If collecting sod is not practical, some nurseries offer pot grown plants which are set in place on a similarly prepared base, removing the entire soil ball when emptying the pot.

Heavenly bamboo has been recommended to me as a useful shrub, but I understand most bamboos are vigorous growers, sending out long roots that send up new shoots in the most unlikely places. What is your opinion?—Mrs. C. W.

Actually, Heavenly bamboo is not a bamboo, nor has any relation thereto. It is, properly, Nandina domestica, a most useful and attractive shrub, evergreen, slow-growing, has creamy-white or light pink flowers followed by scarlet berries. It likes shelter and some shade, though it will do well in the sun. Its erect, notched, cane-like branches make an effective pattern against a wall or in a corner planting. It prefers an acid soil such as predominates here and serves admirably for a thick, bushy, hedge purpose.

Should lawns still be mowed if not too wet? M.H.

Yes, the experts tell us that lawn grasses should not go into winter with more than two inches of growth.

Have a load of Lily of the Valley that has been undisturbed for years. How should it be renovated for best results? Mrs. S.B.

Dig up the plants and re-set them one and one-half ins. deep, and about six inches apart. Bone meal and well-rotted manure worked into the soil first will get them off to a good start.

Can Mock Orange be started from cuttings? When and how? Mrs. W.D.

Yes, they root quite easily in the Spring. Simply take cuttings now and store for the winter in damp sand in a cold frame or cool basement until Spring.

How long does it take for paper white Narcissus to come into bloom. I want them in bloom for Christmas. Mrs. J.M.

Should be planted immediately to get bloom by Christmas as it takes about 40 days, sometimes less if sufficient sunlight.

Should Hollyhocks be planted now? Can they be started from seed or is it best to procure started plants? Mrs. A.T.

Seeds are sown in July and August, the seedlings wintered over in a coldframe and the plants set out in the Spring. However, you can sow seed in February or March in a greenhouse or a window ledge and by the time planting out season arrives they will be the proper size. They will bloom the same year. Starting Hollyhocks from seed is so simple there is no need to try to get started plants and, anyway, very seldom are they offered.

Is it necessary to prune roses when planting or transplanting? S.O.

Yes, unless planted from pots and are still in active growth. There is a certain amount of energy loss any time a plant is disturbed, especially if the moving bares the roots. Always prune off any broken, bruised or diseased canes as well as any broken or bruised roots, then, cut back each cane about one-third to compensate for transpiration.

How late can tulips and lilies be planted to get bloom next season? R.A.

Tulips may be planted any time this is planted in a December. Lilies are planted as long as the ground is workable, but, as they delay as lily bulbs deteriorate when kept out of the ground too long.

Can I start Sweet Peas now or is it too late? Mrs. R.H.M.

Sweet Peas may be sown in the open even now. In deep trenches, or, may be sown in pots and kept over winter in a cold frame. For ease of handling, however, why not prepare the ground for them now and avoid any extra effort later?

What would I plant in window boxes, now empty of summer flowers, for winter color? Mrs. F.R.

Small evergreens are suitable. Some of the evergreen Azaleas or Dwarf Rhododendron would give winter greenery and a spring bloom.

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One might call the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Ellis at 2890 Pioneer Dr., a "do it yourself" home for much of the work on the house was done by the Ellises, themselves. Top is the front of the Ellis home, which at the back has two levels. Below is a view of the interior looking into the dining and kitchen area from the living room and onto the balcony, which is separated from the dining area by sliding glass doors. Mrs. Ellis, holding Boots, their cat, is seated in front of the brick wall separating the living room from the kitchen and into which the living room fireplace has been built. The Ellises built the wall and the fireplace.

HOME OF THE WEEK Building 'Do-It-Yourself' Residence Proves Successful

Gordon Ellis House on Hillside

By MARGARET MAGEE
Capital Journal Writer

Building a home as a "do it yourself" project is not advisable for all persons planning on having a new home, but for the Gordon Ellises at 2890 Pioneer Dr., it was a most successful project.

After drawing their own plans and having blue prints made, the Ellises got the actual construction underway in February, 1955, with the digging of the basement. From then on the house claimed their time on week-ends and days off and during part of Ellis' vacation last summer. They moved into the new home in September of this year, but are still working on the finishing of parts of the house.

Building of the framework, the brickwork, including fireplace and an interior wall, shanking the house, cabinets and built-ins and painting, both interior and exterior, were all on the "do it yourself" list for the Ellises.

Located on a hillside, the house, like so many modern homes, has two levels with the lower level below ground on the front and at ground level in back. That part of the house not having brickwork is covered with shakes. Brickwork extends across the front from the double garage below the high windows of the bedrooms and the bath to the front entrance and then is from the roof to the ground.

The front door of the house has an interesting treatment of three panels of panes of Meta glass (it is a Belgian glass). Panes of the same glass have been used on either side of the door for additional natural light in the hallway.

The living room has windows on three sides and on nice days one can see to the east and the north. A brick wall into which the living room fireplace has been built, separates the living room from the

kitchen and the dining area. Interesting feature of the Roman brick wall and the fireplace with its raised hearth are the little what-not shelves, built of brick right into the wall.

The Ellises had help in laying their all-over broadloom Wilton carpet in the hallway and living room, but the drapes were one of Mrs. Ellis' projects.

These hang at the side of the windows and covering the rest of the window in the living room are draperon curtain pieces. Walls of the living room are in a light green. Wood paneling of furniture are in blonde with most having been made by Ellis.

The dining area opens onto a high balcony with sliding glass doors—the outer edge of the balcony, which overlooks the city and mountains to the east, has a corrugated plastic roof and there is an iron rail along the porch and down to the steps going down the side to the lower level and patio.

Separated from the kitchen by a bar into which the units of the electric stove have been built, the dining room in coloring—walls are painted a bright coral—is part of the kitchen, but because of the large opening between it and the living room appears also to be part of the living room.

Natural birch has been used in the kitchen cupboards and cabinets and all doors have touch latches on them. Indirect lighting has been used above the cabinets here, as it was used above the brick wall in the living room.

Above one of the cabinets is another project of Ellis, a modern type electric clock, which has its hands and bright chrome dots denoting the numerals placed right on the natural birch finish.

Green vinyl tile has been used on the floor and Formica is used in the kitchen as covering for the counters and drainboards. The counter beneath the open shelfwork at the end of the brick wall has been built for use as a breakfast counter, and the built-in oven instead of being near the stove is on another wall near the entrance into the hallway.

The Ellis home has three bedrooms, one still incomplete and to be used also as a den. This is done in yellow and will, when completed, have two walls of mahogany and a built-in bookcase. The second guest room, which this winter is occupied by Mrs. Ellis' parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Messer, visiting here from Minnesota, is in yellow.

The master bedroom, like the dining room, opens onto the back balcony. A glass door with windows on either side is used here. This room has been done in pink. The half bath connected to the master bedroom has pink fixtures and green plastic tile, laid by the Ellises, has been used in there, while the full bath with light green fixtures has wine tile.

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Do It Yourself Home



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Home Repairs Dos... Don't's

AP Newsfeatures

DO . . . caulk the seams around outside window frames to prevent the entry of moisture and rain that can cause expensive trouble on the inside of a house.

DO . . . use regular caulking compound, which never gets completely hard and thus expands and contracts with the material next to it.

DO . . . apply the compound with a putty knife or caulking tube (much better) or caulking gun (best of all).

DO . . . in the case of large gaps between the window frame and the house, pack oakum into the opening, then apply the caulking compound.

DO . . . get best results by doing the caulking on a warm, dry day.

DON'T . . . apply the new caulking compound until all loose or battered old compound has been removed.

DON'T . . . forget that, while most caulking material usually is white, it is available in many stores in various colors.

DON'T . . . forget, too, that black caulking compound is extra-resistant to the sun, but should not be painted over unless the directions say that it can be done; most black compounds contain asphaltum, which often bleeds through paint.

DON'T . . . paint any caulking compound until it has dried for at least a day, an interval necessary to permit it to get a thin outer coat over the flexible inside.

Writing Board Answer Given

If your child needs some sort of a writing board in his room for homework and to give vent to his artistic bent, a door panel in glossy white Marlite predecorated hardboard may be the answer.

This does away with chalk dust from the ordinary blackboard, for Junior can use a grease pencil or wax crayons and the marks are easily removed by using a damp cloth.

The plastic coated paneling can be fastened to either a flush door or an old fashioned door with panels by using a special wall-board adhesive. However if it is to be used on the panel-type door, the depressions in the door should first be filled with insulation board to muffle the sound. The door can be given a finished appearance by applying matching edge molding.

MORE HOMES FOR U.S.

Half of the 2 1/2 million new homes built by the 13 principal nations of the western world in the past 30 years were built in the United States, according to figures of the Bank for International Settlements. The American population is less than 40 per cent of the 13-nation total.

USE MORE 'JUICE'

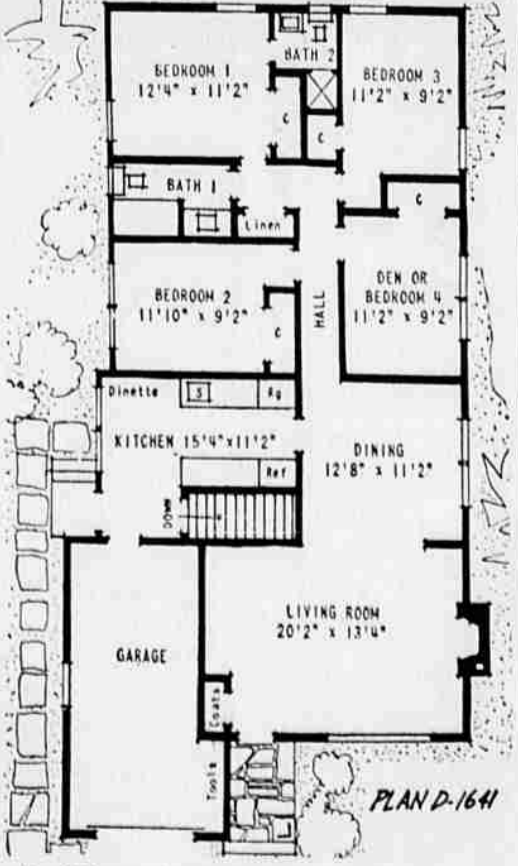
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HOMES FOR AMERICANS



Four bedrooms and a built-in garage designed to fit on a 40-foot lot make this plan the answer to family needs in centrally located neighborhoods where land is an item. With a floor area of only 1,250 square feet, this should be an economical house to build. Width including garage is only 31 1/2 feet; depth 38 feet. This is plan D-1641 by Leslie Cohen, Architects' Home Plan Bureau, Box 141, Bethlehem, Conn.