



# Lilac Newsletter

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INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY

*INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY* is a non-profit corporation comprised of individuals who share a particular interest, appreciation and fondness for lilacs. Through exchange of knowledge, experience and facts gained by members it is helping to promote, educate and broaden public understanding and awareness.

Articles printed in this publication are the views and opinions of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the editor or the *International Lilac Society*.

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#### MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION

	<u>1980 (\$ US)</u>
Single annual .....	7.50
Family .....	10.00
Sustaining .....	15.00
Institutional/Commercial .....	20.00
Life .....	150.00

\*Mail membership dues to I.L.S. Secretary.

"A Member Writes"

Here in southeastern Wisconsin the common Lilac has been grown since the first white settlers arrived - the only limiting factor to their being more widely used is the normally large size of the shrubs which generally dictates more available room than the average city property provides, thus they are more often found in old farmyards. The winters here are as a rule rather cold, -20 is expected while -30 is rare, but we normally have a good snow cover, so all woody plants do get the advantage of that excellent protection which sort of eliminates the freezing and thawing that frequently occurs only a few miles south in Illinois. Only this past winter (1978-9) we had 36" of snow on the ground for almost three months. Our summers are something else in that the temperatures sometimes reach a high of 100 (sometimes even higher) and more often than not, an extremely prolonged period of dry. Many lilacs succumb to these extremes, particularly when followed by a drouthy spell, but lilacs possess that hardiness quality which allows them to shrug off any combination of these problems.

Lilacs don't like soil that tends to retain an excessive amount of moisture, otherwise they seem to grow in almost any type of soil as long as they are not crowded or shaded. We have ample space for gardening, so, over the years we have acquired more than two dozen different hybrid selections as well as a few species. We have the dwarf lilac S. palibiniana 'Miss Kim' (a cultivar of S. patula) and a cross between S. microphylla & S. meyeri (we think). There are also plants of the hybrid S. x hyacinthiflora 'Turgot' and 'Alice Eastwood' along with specimens of the S. vulgaris group such as 'Adelaide Dunbar', 'Lucie Baltet', 'Annabel', 'Belle de Nancy', 'Edith Cavell', 'Vestale', 'Paul Thirion'. Some miscellaneous odds and ends are 'Fountain', swegiflexa, tomentella, 'Rutilant' (which is a S. x nanceiana selection) and a few Preston hybrids such as 'Isabella Webster' (?) and others whose names have been lost, and last but not least, there are three of the late blooming tree forms: S. reticulata, S. reticulata var. maidschurica x laciniata and pekinensis (which bloom in that order) - these put on their display in July to close out the lilac flowering season.

For the most part the lilacs have been disease and insect free except for a bit of Oyster Shell Scale at times , and for reasons unknown to me, on several occasions in mid-summer a young plant has simply wilted, up and died.

Boerner Botanical Garden (which is a part of the Milwaukee County Park System) has a rather extensive planting of lilacs on one of their drives leading to the main Centre where the display gardens are located. In fact they have the only tree forms (other than ours) that I have seen in this area. I don't see any great number of lilacs in the general landscape around here - seems that most homeowners tend to plant evergreens.

Alice R. Foster,  
Union Grove, Wisconsin.

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BITS OF WIT

If you're too big to learn, you're as big as you will ever be.

Some people count time, others make time count.

One fact is worth a volume of opinions.

A good time to retire is before it's too late to have a good time.

If you always feed your faith in yourself, your doubts will starve to death.

The secret of being a bore is to tell everything.

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# from the ... ... Registrar's Desk

Freek Vrugtman, Curator of Collections, Royal Botanical Gardens,  
Box 399, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. L8N 3H8

Syringa vulgaris 'Stadtgärtner Rothpletz', Froebel 1905  
Some time ago Fr. John L. Fiala drew my attention to the fact that McKelvy (1928) does not state clearly whether the flowers of cv. 'Stadtgärtner' Rothpletz' are single or double. The plant she saw and described was in the collection of T. A. Havemeyer at Glen Head, New York; the flowers were double and purple. However, she quotes from a letter (Otto Froebel's successors, September 1, 1925) that this cultivar has single flowers and that: "The double flowered variety you have seen must have been some other variety." Moreover, Mc Kelvey cites the Froebel catalogue where reference is made to certain similarities between cv. 'Stadtgärtner Rothpletz' and 'Andenken an Ludwig Spath'; the latter has single purple flowers.

In North America 'Stadtgärtner Rothpletz' lilacs offered in the trade by at least one nursery, and it is growing also in several collections. In the catalogues and lists that I found and that include information on flowers being single or double the information given for 'Stadtgärtner Rothpletz' is double.

In Europe cv. 'Stadtgärtner Rothpletz' seems to have disappeared from the nursery trade, I cannot find it in the catalogues available to me. However, Meyer (1952) in his review of the history of the single-flowered red-violet lilacs refers to 'Stadtgärtner Rothpletz'.

Based on the above evidence I suspect that our North American 'Stadtgärtner Rothpletz' and the original 'Stadtgärtner

Rothpletz' introduced by Otto Froebel are not identical. The plant on our Gardens' collection was purchased from the Jackson & Perkins Co., Newark, N.Y., in 1961; its flowers are double.

I would very much appreciate to hear from those readers who have plants of 'Stadtgärtner Rothpletz' whether their plants have single or double flowers.

McKelvey, Susan D. 1928. The Lilac. Macmillan, New York, N.Y. (p.386).  
Meyer, Friedrich. 1952. Flieder. Ulmer, Stuttgart (pp. 62 - 63);

#### LILACS and Where to See Them.

While I have gone to some length in an attempt to put together a list of the many Lilac Collections and Displays in the U.S. and Canada, there is still a considerable number of such plantings for which I have no information. \*

##### Ontario, Hamilton

KATIE OSBORNE Lilac Collection (Royal Botanical Gardens) one of the finest, most outstanding scientific collections in N. America, presently consisting of 640 hybrids and species. Extremely well displayed on a gentle rolling site with the various colors distributed in such a manner as to compliment and set apart the wide range of delicate shades. (May 28 - June 3 - usually).

\* Data such as numbers of plants, peak of bloom period, number of visitors etc. are calculated as average of normal, certain circumstances dictate that these will under adverse conditions vary from one year to the next and should you plan to visit a particular display it is advised that you inquire in advance regarding such specifics.

Ontario, Niagara Falls

NIAGARA PARK DEPARTMENT School of Horticulture (best bloom is usually the last week in May). In the grounds of this institution you will have an opportunity to observe many fine mature plants - although not an extensive collection it is made up of primarily the older hybrids. Well groomed and attractively planted with many complementing spring bulbs and ground cover subjects.

Only a short distance from the N.P.D. School of horticulture is located another fine lilac planting which is still in the developmental stage, however, you will enjoy the extensive array of color as well as the symmetrical 'Wagon Wheel' layout of the garden with the centre-hub raised to afford an exquisite panoramic view of the long vistas.

Ontario, Ottawa

OTTAWA RESEARCH STATION - Agriculture Canada

It is the birthplace of the Preston Lilacs. The collection displays about 200 cultivars and species with the peak of bloom during the first week of June.

Manitoba, Morden

MORDEN RESEARCH STATION - Agriculture Canada displays over 300 cultivars and species; the majority of which bloom during the first and second week of June.

Quebec, Montreal

MONTREAL BOTANICAL GARDENS Has over 100 lilac cultivars, varieties, and species on display with a peak of bloom during the first week of June.

Calif., Leona Valley

MARGARETTEN PARK This is a private, primarily commercial operation - visitation is by invitation, Sunday from 2 - 4 P.M.. The total planting consists of approximately 50,000 plants (about one-half of which will be in bloom this year). There are 350 hybrid selections represented by as few as two plants and as many as fifty plants of any one cultivar. Many hundreds of seedlings are under observation in this site. The bloom period here will extend over the first twenty days in April with the species plants showing about three weeks later.

Calif., Palmdale

PALMDALE LILAC FESTIVAL Open to the public - week -  
end of April 5-6, 1980.

Calif., La Canada

DESCANSO GARDENS Open to the public - here the peak of  
bloom will occur around April 1, with the flowering  
time stretching from March 10 to April 15 - climatic  
conditions, primarily available water dictates the time  
of flowering.

Colorado, Grand Junction(North Ave. & First St. )

The Grand Junction Gardens club women have established  
a very showy planting of some 75 plants. The site is  
not a public park, but rather a sloping spot of beauty  
at the edge of town which the public may enjoy as they  
enter the community.

Illinois, Lombard

LILACEA PARK (110 W. Maple Ave.) located only about 20  
miles directly west of Chicago is one of the oldest  
collections in the middle west. There are several  
hundreds of plants artistically arranged in clusters  
or beds with thousands of Tulips to compliment the Garden.  
Lilac time in Lombard (1980) is May 5 - 20 with a  
Queen being crowned and a Parade on the 18th. There  
is an admission charge to the garden during lilac Days.  
Many thousands of visitors view the Parade and walk the  
winding paths of the garden during 'LILAC TIME'

Iowa, Davenport

"DUCK CREEK PARK" (E. Locust St. on the east edge of  
the city, just a few Blks. off I-74) Here you will  
have an opportunity to observe a developing collection  
(April 20 - June 5 ). At present there are 162 plants  
making up the planting from 89 different selections.  
The garden also includes several thousands of spring  
bulbs, peonies and complimentary ground cover materials.



Iowa, Des Moines

EWING PARK (original planting and design by Dr. John C. Wister in 1940 - McKinley and Indianola Rd., approximately 4 mi. S.E. of city centre) There are several hundred plants in this garden, arranged and spaced in such a manner as to give a maximum color blend during the height of bloom season. Peak of flower display is normally May 12, but account of frequent variations of seasonal temperatures this timing may vary as much as fourteen days, earlier/later. Visitors approximately 20,000 in 1979.

Mass., Amherst

"LILAC LAND" (24 Harkness Rd.) Here you'll have an opportunity to see a wide range of lilac bloom. There are several hundred plants on display and the color begins to appear in late April and usually lasts until the early weeks in June, the peak of color showing about May 15. Upwards of 1,000 visitors enjoy this outstanding collection each year.

Mass., Jamaica Plain

"LILAC SUNDAY" (THE ARNOLD ARBORETUM of Harvard University on the Arborway) (May 18, 1980). An extensive collection of both species and cultivars established primarily for scientific study, but beauty spills lavishly over into paths and driveway in the immediate area. Several thousands of people enjoy this collection during the height of bloom.

Michigan, Mackinac Island

Surrounded by the chill waters of the Great Lakes the Annual Lilac Festival in early June (10th in '79) with the crowning of a Queen, Parade, Horse-drawn vehicles and typical local festivities. At this location one will chance to see a wide variety of plants, but rather some of the oldest and largest plants in N. America.

Ohio, Medina (7359 Branch Rd.)

A semi-private collection of several hundreds of plants (many seedlings under observation) with a named list of more than five-hundred, all of which is normally at the peak of bloom during the third week of May.

N.Y., Clyde

GRAPE HILL FARM Another fine private collection consisting of approximately 350 plants representing some 175 selections - located not too far out of Rochester, several hundred visitors enjoy this display each year. The peak bloom period usually occurs during the last week of May. Guests are always welcome.

N.Y., Rochester

"LILAC TIME" in Highland Park (May 17 - 25) Here can be seen without a doubt one of the finest lilac collections in N. America. Several hundred mature plants as well as the very recent introductions - Rochester strain hybrids, all well spaced on a south facing slope. "LILAC TIME" in this city is a high note of the spring bloom season and is culminated with a Lilac Festival Queen Crowning, Music, Speeches, Awards, etc..

Penna., Lima

JOHN J. TYLER ARBORETUM (515 Painter Rd.) A grassy slope where you'll have an opportunity to observe nearly 100 well spaced beauties standing out in full sun. The grounds here are open from dawn to dusk and the peak of bloom will show the last few days in April and/or the first few days in May.

Penna., Muncy (Donald M. Lupold, 2½ mi. out of town on Rt. 147) On a gentle slope with excellent exposure to sunlight you'll have a chance to compare approximately 140 lilac cultivars here, complimented by numerous specimens of Magnolia, Crabapple, Cherry, Azalea, etc.. Several hundreds of visitors coming from as far away as 50 mi. enjoy the beauty of this flowering hillside each spring. (peak bloom May 12 - 15) This collection is in the process of being rejuvenated (1979 - 80) and all plants will not be in prime condition during this period, however, there will still be a good quantity of bloom.

Penn., Swarthmore

ARTHUR HOYT SCOTT HORTICULTURAL FOUNDATION (Swarthmore College Collection) Here one can see a very fine collection consisting of 150 cultivars and 20 species all showing off their splendor during the last week in April or the first week in May (usually).

JOHN C. WISTER Collection (735 Harvard Ave.) Where the gate is always open, you will not find the great number of plants, (John was in a great measure responsible for the building of the Scott Foundation) but rather you'll enjoy some of these which John considers his favorites, set off among a multitude of spring bulbs flowering Crabapples and many other flowering plants, truly a garden that will linger in your memory for ever and ever.

Wash., Woodland

HULDA KLAGER LILAC GARDENS (located only minutes off Interstate 5)

"LILAC WEEK" (first two weeks of May) is observed here each year. A spot where an abundance of Lilac Heritage lives, a place where more than 250 selections had their beginning. The old Victorian House has been developed into a museum along with the woodshed and carriage house, each of which contains Klager memorabilia.

Wyoming, Chugwater

Mrs. Lowell A. Storm (inquire locally for directions)  
In this 'High Country' oasis you will find a spot of introduced beauty - a spot where persistence and a half century of love for plants has resulted in a place of beauty - a spot where many lilacs, apples, crabapples, tulips and a multitude of other blooming things all blend together and reflect the efforts of Mrs. Storm. When the Tulips are in bloom, just come.

It is not practical to include each and every collection of three, five or ten plants, but when the planting is sufficiently large so as to represent a major collage of color in the landscape, I should with your (IIS Membership) help very much like to expand this listing in a future survey - your cooperation would be much appreciated in this effort.

Editor

P.S. One of the world's largest Arboretum, The Holden Arboretum in Ohio, is hosting the IIS Convention on Saturday May 24, 1980. On display is a large lilac collection which must be seen to be fully appreciated.

If you have not yet registered, do so now and you will be thrilled with what you will see.