



Lilac Newsletter

Vol. VIII, No. 6, June, 1982

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

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.

LILAC'S COMPANION PLANTS

We may plant our gardens around lilacs according to three themes -- taxonomic, ecologic, or phenologic. These themes will give distinctive qualities to our grounds or park no matter what scale the garden, estate or arboretum affords. A small suburban backyard plot requires more careful selection of plants than an expansive country estate or municipal park. However, we can achieve unity provided we stick to the theme.

Taxonomic Theme

The taxonomic or strictly botanical theme calls for lilacs alone (usually Syringa vulgaris and its cultivars) and may also include its cousins of the olive family (Oleaceae: golden bells, privets, olive, osmunthus, ash, white fringe, and abeliophyllum among others). Such a garden gives a monotonous appearance and in actuality is but a collection of alike plants. True, there is much diversity of plant form, size, bloom and succession of interest, but basically this type of garden requires an acre or two because all the plants are rather large shrubs or forest-size trees.

The sequence of bloom extends over a prolonged season from earliest spring to early summer and even some species bloom in the fall. Colors range from white (Abeliophyllum, Chionanthus, Fraxinus, Ormus, Ligustrum) to yellow (Forsythia) to pinks and lilac (Syringa vulgaris).

And of course the garden of lilacs does provide year 'round interest and enjoyments from the wildlife it attracts and harbors as well as the changing aspects of twig, foliage and fruits throughout the several seasons. One caution, however, since the constituents are closely

related, the incidence of insect pests and diseases is heightened demanding careful attention lest disaster descend upon the garden and sweep away the grandest dreams of its owner.

Ecological Theme

In one sense the ecological or natural garden is the obvious insurance against high risk. Here the community is symbiotically adjusted and stable, the common denominator being that each constituent plant or organism (animal) has its separate niche which allows the garden to exist in natural harmony.

Plants forms vary markedly (woody plants alongside herbaceous types.) The underlying feature is good garden soil of reasonable fertility and adequate drainage, plus of course, abundant sunshine.

An example of the natural community, although partially manmade, would be a border of common lilacs faced down by little-leaved lilacs, themselves interspersed with a selection of herbaceous plants and spring-flowering bulbs set in a fine turf, the whole backed by a Japanese tree-lilac. Flowering shrubs of the gardener's choice may be substituted along the foliar wall while summer flowering annuals could supplement the perennials for a succession of attractiveness. Even a small conifer might be introduced for accent.

Phenological Theme

The phenological or highlight garden is strictly a one-shot proposition. Like a bride's garden it could consist entirely of white flowering plants: Lilacs, tulips, babysbreath, pansies. Or it may be a pink, or blue, or mixture of colors harmoniously selected to focus attention on a special section during the lilac blooming season.

Such a planting has decided limitations because of its seasonal (occasional) importance. I would not suggest planting this type of lilac garden unless adequate space is available or if the family chooses to hold a garden party featuring plants at peak of perfection.

-Lilacs-

DID YOU ENJOY THE 11TH ANNUAL I.L.S. CONVENTION IN OTTAWA, ONTARIO? IF SO, WRITE YOUR IMPRESSIONS AND MAIL THEM TO MARY SMITH, I.L.S. EDITOR FOR INCLUSION INTO THE NEWSLETTER.

MAY 13TH & 14TH 1983 ARE THE DATES OF OUR NEXT, 12TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY CONVENTION AT MEDISON, WISCONSIN.

PLAN TO ATTEND

LILACS IN MAINE

A BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

The need for a Maine state arboretum has been long recognized by a large group of our citizens. It was indeed fortunate when in the late 1970s that approximately 180 acres of State owned land in the capital city of Augusta became available for such a purpose. Equally fortunate was having the interest and support for this use of the top administration of the Department of Forestry and Conservation which controlled it.

The project was begun by making soil tests and the drawing of preliminary landscaping plans. Funds were available in 1980 to purchase over 100 selected trees for planting in the spring of 1981. Work continued through the summer with putting up fences building bridges, cutting trails, defining drainage patterns, making plant labels and cleaning up unsightly areas.

While the State was instrumental in establishing and starting the arboretum, it was never intended that its operation become a State function. In 1982, the Advisory Committee elected a temporary Board of Directors to formally organize and charter a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation to be known as the "Pine Tree State Arboretum". It is expected that this will be accomplished in 1982.

The site of the new arboretum was until the mid-1940s a productive farm and woodlot. It provides a remarkable diversity of elevation, drainage, soil conditions and terrain. More than half of the acreage is rolling farm land backed by out-croppings of granite ledge. There are several small ponds fed from springs that rarely go dry.

As might be expected, landscape plans were carefully drawn to accomodate a significant number of lilacs. The first plants will be going in this spring during the celebration of Arbor Day to be held on the grounds. Specimen material is being donated by Maine members of our Society who will oversee the growth and development of the collection.

We are pleased and privileged to represent the Society in the planning of this exciting and challenging project. Our goal is to demonstrate at our Annual Convention in some future time what we have known all along - Maine does indeed grow the best lilacs.

Walter W. Oakes
3/16/82

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As of last printed list of ILS membership the following members join the society:

BROCKHOFF, Mrs. Dorothy A., 860 Alanson Drive,
St. Louis, MI 63132

DADARRIA, Ms. Kathy, 326 Richbell Rd.,
Mamaroneck, NY 10543

HUTCHINSON, Mrs. Anne, Box 6177, Lake Charles,
LA 70606

LIBRARY, The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx,
New York 10458

TECTOR, Alfred J., M.D., 9170 N. Range Line Rd.,
Milwaukee, WI 53217

TOZER, Eliot F., Jr., 74 Hickory Hill Road,
Tappan, NY 10983

Syringa in Bean's

Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles

ed. 8¹, reviewed from a taxonomist's standpoint

To British horticulturists, Bean's Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles is as standard a reference as Rehder's Manual of Cultivated Trees and Shrubs is in North America. Its functions are comparable to Rehder's Manual and Wyman's Trees and Shrubs and Vines for American Gardens combined. Since the publication of the first edition, by the late William Jackson Bean, in 1914, this encyclopedic work has grown to four large volumes. The eighth edition, published 1970 - 1980, has been updated by numerous specialists under the general editorship of Sir George Taylor. Much of Bean's original wording has been retained; all use of the first person refers to Bean's own observations and experiences. The integration of the old and new text has generally been smooth, but there are exceptions. For example, material on the propagation of Syringa vulgaris appears in a brief, rather obsolete note by Bean on page 529 and again in an up-to-date paragraph by a later author on page 546.

The "botanical section" of the treatment of Syringa was revised by P.S. Green of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, a noted scholar of the Oleaceae. This treatment of Syringa is one that I, as a taxonomist, should be very pleased indeed to see used as a standard reference for nomenclature and classification. The division of

¹Bean, W.J. (Taylor, G., ed.). 1970-1980. Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles, ed. 8. London: John Murray (Publishers)Ltd. 4 vols. (Syringa in vol. 4. 1980.)

the genus into subgenera and series follows Rehder, and therefore is familiar to and widely used by members of the I.L.S. Ample and accurate descriptions are given for each species, along with information on their natural ranges and their history in cultivation. There is no key, but the differences between closely related species, such as S. josikaea and S. wolfii, are pointed out. The nomenclature of the species, botanical varieties, and inter-specific hybrids incorporates the results of the latest published studies (including, much to my own satisfaction, my recent papers in Baileya and Lilacs), and is up-to-date in synonymy, orthography, and citations of authorship.

Numerous recommended cultivars of the "Vulgaris group" and the "Villosae section" (sic) are listed, grouped according to whether the corollas are single or double and white, pale or dark. Among these I am pleased to see many that I, too, consider superior. Some of my favorite cultivars are not listed, but such omissions are generally of recent introductions, mostly from Canada or the U.S.S.R., that are not readily available in the U.K., their omission is therefore justified on pragmatic grounds.

In summary, this work is a rich source of information on lilacs and a modern, reliable standard in matter of nomenclature, most gratifying to encounter in a reference destined for wide-spread use among horticulturists in Britain and elsewhere.

James S. Pringle
Royal Botanical Gardens
Hamilton, Ontario

LILACS IN INDIANA

Let us welcome new member Charlotte Bass. Charlotte is founding President of the Marigold Society of America and she has talked and promoted marigolds from one end of our country to the other in her efforts to make the marigold our National flower.

I am sharing with you parts of a letter received from her so that you can see what a dynamic person leads the MSA. Just give her a little reason, a few hints and she will be a dynamic member of ILS too.

Dear Mary,

As much as I love the marigold I have given orders to be buried in a lilac casket when the time comes! Or, I'll come back and haunt someone! Since I was a little girl the color and the flower have been a part of my life. My father, Hans Christiansen from Sarpsborg, Norway, loved the lilac as a boy 'in the old country' and transplanted this love to America.

Our farm here in Stillwell is well evidenced by this...and to honor his love and ours -- we have called our home LILAC MANOR FARM --and thanks to Mrs. Everett Mckinley Dirkson's suggestion we added "ON MARIGOLD LANE": She was chagrined about my using LILAC when my world was MARIGOLDS...also.

Yes, our home is all lilac inside. We built a House Beautiful History Home, duly decorating it lilac inside...with lilac carpeting. AND, you'll love this -- even though horticulturally speaking plastic flowers are no-no -- but in our home we have LOTS of lilacs -- year roundWhen I can time everything just right I always have lilacs in abundance for all to enjoy for odor and color. Then, I have huge buckets of them on the front porch for folks to take home when leaving.

I couldn't tell you what the specie is ... they are as a wind-break for what is now the National Headquarters for the Marigold Society ...and it is gorgeous out here in May... usually around Mother's Day. I do also have a couple of varieties that please me... a gorgeous double white which we dug out from a house we bought in town.

We also have a lot of rosebushes all protected by marigolds to keep June-bugs and aphids away.

My wedding was in lilac; my daughters want the color; and every home we have ever lived in and there were many being a retired Air Force Colonel's wife, we tried to have a lilac room. My father said flies refuse to sit on the color as the violet hurts their eyes!!! It's true.

I feel that lilacs are a refreshing, relaxing, joyful, happy, thoroughly grateful bush flower. I wish they would last longer. And I understand from a fantastic lecture I heard while attending a national meeting in Boston -- by Dr. Owen M. Rogers, U of NH, there is a chance we can have year round lilacs! This is great. I'll have some.

Dr. Roger's enthusiasm was like onto my own regarding the marigold. He separated the men from the boys at this meeting. And it is because of this that I would love to do a story on this wonderful subject. I am not, by any means, crossing over to the lilac, the marigold and are in equal in my world. --each in its place.

Our farm is 41 acres -- soybeans and corn and grass and marigolds and lilacs! We have a never freezing creek which crosses it with a bridge which was washed out for the first time in 100 years when 7 inches of rain hit in July this year.

We built Lilac Manor in the middle of a soybean field. People thought we were nuts. I have transplanted lilacs here and there, but as

you know it takes quite a while. But it will come.

Sincerely,
Charlotte Bass.

To other new members:

Any of our members who have attended an ILS convention can tell you that we are one big happy family and there is never a dull moment at the meetings what with visiting and exchanging information.

We would all like ot know our new members so do write and tell us a little about yourselves. Tell us about your lilacs, your favorite lilacs and about those you do not care about and why.

Let me hear from you. Thanks.

Editor