Lilac Newsletter

Vol. XIII, No. 7, July, 1987

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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Single annual	$ 10.00
Family	12.50
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*Mail membership dues to I.L.S. Secretary

Cultivar Selection Committee Formed

At the Board of Directors meeting in Denver, a committee was appointed to select a small list of the best lilac cultivars. Roger Vick, Devonian Botanic Garden, U. of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, was named to chair the committee which has as its members the following:

William Heard, Heard Gardens ltd., 5355 Merle Hay Road, Johnston, IA 50131
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Walter Oakes, Box 315, Rumford, ME 04276
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The charge the committee accepted was to provide the 1988 Board of Directors with two lists of top rated cultivars. These are to be the lists:

(a) A short list of the best cultivars readily available through the trade.

(b) A list (of perhaps no more than five cultivars) highly rated but not readily available through the trade

The second list can provide guidance to groups propagating or promoting newer lilacs. Also, only registered lilacs will be considered so any that make the list will have been properly described and recorded.

The committee members were under no illusion as to the difficulties involved in recording "the best" lilacs from hundreds of cultivars. Selections no doubt perform differently in different locations and under different cultural conditions. Nevertheless, with this difficulty acknowledged, the committee expressed enthusiasm for the task on hand, and all agreed that it was a project well worth the effort.

As preliminary lists are developed, they will be published in the newsletter so you can see the progress and respond to the cultivars being considered. This is a herculean task but who better than the International Lilac Society to provide the leadership and promote the best lilacs?

This spring, Eliot Tozer, one of the very best of the garden writers, published a list of east coast lilac collections in Yankee Magazine and I'm going to share his comments about some members of the International Lilac Society from time to time. For example: This is what he said about Bob Clark.

Professor Robert B. Clark, of Birchwood Gardens in Meredith, says, "I like to think that I have the perfect setting for a garden, a couple of acres of wooded land bordered on three sides by Lake Winnipesaukee. But I don't have good soil for lilacs - too sandy and too acid." Nevertheless, Birchwood is worthy of a visit and everyone is welcome.

Bob is a trained botanist, but he says, "I have a short want list." He tends to favor what he calls "Rochester's Children": the Dwight D. Eisenhower, a first-generation offspring of Rochester, which is a pale blue with immense clusters of radially double florets, and the John Dunbar.

A most active promoter of lilacs and a founder of the International Lilac Society, he has had one cultivar named after him, the Professor Robert B. Clark, a pale pink that fades to a pinkish white. The Wyoming No. 4, another pale pink, he calls the Birchwood. Both are on view in his garden. Bloom time is about the third week in May.

Most people, says Bob, look for strong color and, perhaps, heavy fragrance in lilacs, but he prefers to raise more unassuming plants and use them in landscaping. He has planted Palibin, a single lavender which blooms profusely on slow-growing dwarf plants, to form a three-foot hedge along the terrace. Other favorites noted more for grace and fine-textured foilage than bloom include Superba, a pink that blooms early, and George Eastman, a dark purple. Still, his favorite of all is Leon Gambetta, a double lilac with large long-stemmed clusters of florets which in bud are very pink, slowly turning to lilac.

Like so many other lilac fanciers, Bob also raises wildflowers. He is an expert on firs and proudly shows 17 varieties. There is a picnic table beside the lake, with a view of Mt. Belknap.

To reach Birchwood, take exit 23 off I-93, proceed east on N.H. 104 to U.S. 3, left downhill to Meredith's only traffic light, right on N.H. 25 for one block, right (opposite Gulf station) and follow yellow median strip to Cattle Landing Road, thence to last driveway on left, marked PRIVATE/CLARK; 6.5 total miles from village of Meredith (603-279-7756).

In Durham, the University of New Hampshire is rebuilding its collection (The lilac is New Hampshire's state flower). Among three late bloomers (this year all late bloomers will peak during the first two weeks of June) introduced by the university, are James MacFarlane, Miss Kim, and Agnes Smith, a white. About half the collection consists of the common lilac, which blooms between May 20 and 30. The new planting is just behind Thompson Hall, highest point on campus (603-862-3205).

GRAPE HILL GARDENS, INC.

The Department of State recently issued a certificate of incorporation to Grape Hill Gardens of Clyde, N.Y.

Grape Hill Gardens is a not-for-profit organization which will serve Wayne County as well as Central and Western New York State; and in the future, according to projected plans of its Board of Directors, will become a national resource for public instruction and enjoyment and for horticultural research of cultivated plants.

The Gardens presently consist of 90 acres situated on Devereaux Road, Clyde, New York. They contain extensive collections of lilacs, magnolias, flowering crabapples, hemerocallis and other choice ornamental plants.

Also projected for the future are research programs for college students, allotments for school children, and year-round activities for home gardners and nature lovers including senior citizens.

Officers elected are President: William Utley of Clyde, N.Y., Vice-President: Daniel K. Ryniec of Brooklyn, N.Y. , Secretary: Patricia Shenk of King Ferry, N.Y., Treasurer: Lois Utley of Clyde, N.Y. Other members of the Board are Mayor Richard DeVito of Clyde, N.Y., Frank Lee of Clyde, N.Y., Mrs. Bernard Markness of Geneva, N.Y., Out-of-state members of the Board are Orville M. Steward of Plymouth, Vermont, Robert S. Clark of Meredith, New Hampshire, and Father John L. Fiala of Ocala, Florida. Attorneys Robert DiNieri of Clyde, N.Y. and James L. Gage of Esperence, N.Y. serve as counsel.

Editor's Note: The Utley's Garden will be formally dedicated during the 1988 Convention in Rochester.

Oystershell scale:
characteristics and control on ornamental trees and shrubs

[1]Whitney S. Cranshaw, CSU Cooperative Extension entomologist and assistant professor (revised 12/86)

More than 50 plant species are attacked by the oystershell scale. Of these, ash, cotoneaster, dogwood, lilac, poplar and willow are most commonly infested. Oystershell scales attach themselves to the bark of twigs and branches. They feed on the plant by sucking out plant sap and can weaken and even kill the plant when the infestations are abundant.

The most familiar stage of the oystershell scale is the covering of the full-grown female scale which overwinters attached to the bark. The old mother scale is about 1/8-inch long, brown or gray in color, slightly banded, and the general shape of an oyster shell. The overall appearance of the scale often is very similar to that of the underlying bark and these insects are easily overlooked. Old scales can stay attached to the tree for several years before falling off.

Oystershell scale can be particularly difficult to control because they are protected with a waxy covering for most of their life. One popular control approach is the use of dormant oils.

Several brands of dormant oil are available. These are typically used at rates of 2 gallons oil per 100 gallons of water. Treatment is recommended late in spring on warm days before bud break. Effective use of dormant oils requires thorough coverage of infested trunks and branches. Where heavy crusts of scales exist control will be reduced.

After leaves have emerged, oystershell scale is vulnerable to control only during the crawler stage. After the waxy covering has been produced by the insect it is not susceptible to control with insecticides.

Determination of when the crawler stage is occurring requires a careful examination of the plant for the presence of the crawlers. Weekly examinations should begin around mid-May, depending on location. Dislodging the crawlers onto a sheet of paper by shaking infested plants may aid in observing the crawlers. Use of a magnifying glass also can help with crawler detection.

The oystershell scale only overwinters in the egg stage. Eggs are underneath the old scale covering of the mother. At lower elevations, eggs typically hatch in late May or early June. At higher elevations egg hatch may be delayed into mid-June. Eggs from all the scale insects do not hatch at the same time and egg hatch may extend over a couple of weeks. Eggs of oystershell scale with two generations per year are reported to hatch earlier than one generation scales.

The newly hatched scale insects are called "crawlers." The crawlers are pale in color, smaller than a pinhead in size. The crawler stage is the

only mobile stage in the life history of the oyster shell scale. After a few hours, the crawlers find a suitable location, usually on a shaded area of the tree. They insert their mouthparts into the plant, begin to feed and soon molt. They remain in this location for the rest of their lives. Within a week they are covered with a waxy scale covering that provides protection from most insecticides.

In most areas there is only one generation of the insect per year. In some areas, however, races of the oystershell scale exist which have a second generation with egg hatch in July and August.

As soon as eggs have hatched use one of the following insecticides, applied to the bark of the tree:

acephate (Orthene)	diazinon
carbaryl (Sevin)	malathion
chlorpyrifos (Dursban)	methoxychlor

Orthene should not be used on certain plants, such as aspen, cotton wood and flowering crabapple or plant injury may result.

Highly refined summer or superior oils also may be used safely on most trees for crawler control and have given control comparable to standard insecticides. Summer oil sprays should be used at lower concentrations (1-1½ gallons of oil per 100 gallons of water) than dormant oils. Make sure that the oil is of sufficient purity that its label intructions permit use on plants with leaves. Always read and follow label instructions for directions on mixing, usage and application safety.

Where very heavy infestations exist, pruning should be considered. Removal of pruned wood a few dozen feet away from susceptible trees should be sufficient to prevent reinfestation.

Overwintering scales can also be scrubbed off of small trees and shrubs with a plastic scrub pad. Avoid overly vigorous scrubbing, which can damage wood.

Pruning Decisions

Pruning can change the look of a plant for years, and it isn't always easy to gauge the effect of a cut before you make it. To help you decide if a branch should be removed, mark it with a strip of cloth and leave it for a year. Whenever you're in the garden, your eyes will be drawn to the cloth and you will automatically re-evaluate the proposed cut. That way, your decision will be based on how the plant looks throughout the year, not just during pruning season.

Mrs. Louis B. Pankratz
Albany, Oregon

JULY 1987

History Of The Lilac As The State Flower Of New Hampshire

The first time lilacs are mentioned in New Hampshire history is in 1750 when Governor Wentworth enlarged his house and the plantings around it. Since the only plant that has ever been planted near the house was the lilac, we believe it was there in 1750. Lilacs were already known in the colonies but few records exist apparently because the lilac came in as a personal, family possession not part of the agricultural inventory.* However, and whenever it came into the state, the lilac took root and, like the hardy settlers who brought it, became a permanent feature in this new world. *and so its appearance by the kitchen door was appreciated but never recorded.

The popularity of the lilac grew during the late 1800's with the introduction of the French hybrids so it is not surprising that someone should suggest that it be designated the state flower. However, it was not a shoo-in and other flowers were proposed as can be seen in the following exerpt from Leon Anderson's History; Colorful Sessions On Flowers from the Manual for the General Court Page 2, 1981.

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The purple lilac became New Hampshire's official state flower, in a most colorful manner, in the 1919 legislative session. It was opposed by nine other flowers, including the apple blossom and the purple aster.

This legislative battle of the flowers was launched on January 9, when Rep. Charles B. Drake, Lebanon physician, filed a purple lilac bill on behalf of two sisters -- Mrs. Marietta C. Wright of Etna and Mrs. Josephine A. Joslin of Surry, two of New Hampshire's tinier towns. It continued through a dozen weeks, and was finally resolved with the help of botanical experts from Dartmouth College and New Hampshire College (now the University of New Hampshire).

Other legislators quickly became flower proposers. They were Dentists Henry F. Libby of Wolfeboro for the wood lily; Dr. Erwin W. Hodsdon of Ossippe for the water lily; John Knowlton, Concord street car conductor for the goldenrod, and farmer Walter W. Sanborn of Brookfield for the pasture rose. The House Agriculture Committee aired the flower bills through a month of colorful hearings, and filed a surprising recommendation that all five proposals be killed, and substituted by the apple blossom.

The committee's recommendation was approved by the House, even as it required two votes to kill the purple lilac, in that February 20 action, and the apple blossom was sent up to the Senate for concurrence. In this action, Henry J. VanVliet, blind Manchester lawmaker, vainly proposed the mayflower.

The Senate developed considerable purple lilac sentiment. During ensuing discussions, the buttercup was proposed and then forgotten. Entirely opposed to the apple blossom, but unable to muster majority support for any other flower, the 24 members of the Senate turned to a novel solution. They placed the names of three flowers in a hat, blindfolded Senate Clerk Earle C. Gordon of Canaan, and ordered him to pull one out. The purple lilac, the mayflower and the purple aster went into the lottery, and the latter won the draw.

The Senate reported its unique decision to the House, which clung to the apple blossom, and the impasse was referred to a committee of conference.

The 10-man conference committee soon became stalemated on the flower fuss, and turned to another unique solution. It asked two botanists, Professor Arthur Houston Chivers of Dartmouth and Professor Ormond Butler of the state college to arbitrate the dilemma, and agreed to accept their decision.

Within a few days the two botanists informed the conference committee that they had also become stalemated. The Dartmouth expert favored the purple lilac, while his state college counter-part favored the evening primrose, with the purple aster as his second choice. Faced with this deadlock added to its own deadlock, the conference committee voted eight-to-two for the purple lilac. Two members stuck to the apple blossom to the bitter end.

The House and Senate concurred with the committee compromise, without further argument, and Governor John H. Bartlett of Portsmouth signed the purple lilac into law on March 28, 1919.

Leafmining insects—characteristics and control

Whitney S. Cranshaw, David A. Leatherman and James R. Fouchi[1]

Quick Facts

Leafminers develop and live within leaves of plants and injure the leaves by feeding on the soft interior tissues.

Broadly categorized by the shape of "mines" produced by their feeding, leafminers include many different insects.

Leafminers rarely are abundant enough to be injurious to the plants they infest.

The more common leafminers in the north are: spinach leafminer, cottonwood blackmine blotch leafminer, lilac leafminer, and birch leafminer.

On ornamentals, leafminer control is rarely justified. Although unattractive; little or no damage to the plants occurs from the mining. Also, there is little relationship between injury from one season to the next since many natural controls effectively regulate leafminer populations.

When necessary, leafminers on ornamentals are controlled best with applications of insecticides that are carried systemically throughout the plant. This activity allows the insecticide to be carried to the insect larvae, which otherwise are protected effectively within leaves. These applications should be made during the egg hatch period or shortly afterwards, before the larvae and mines get very big. Insecticides with systemic activity include acephate (Orthene), dimethoate (Cygon) or oxydemetonmethyl (Metasystox R). Carefully read labelled instructions since certain insecticides can cause injury to plants. None of the systemic insecticides available to home-owners can be used on food crops.

Control also can be achieved with an insecticide that is applied when eggs are being laid. Adults and newly emerged larvae can be controlled with these treatments but they are ineffective after tunneling begins. On trees and shrubs, diazinon and carbaryl (Sevin, Sevimol) is used most often for these treatments.

On leafy vegetables damaged by the spinach leafminer, regular sprays of diazinon applied at two-week intervals can limit injury. Systemic insecticides can not be used on these edible crops. Closely follow labelled instructions for application rates and observe required preharvest intervals (10 days, spinach; 12 days, swiss chard; 14 days, beet greens). Malathion also may be used for these treatments if applied at more frequent intervals. Preharvest intervals on these crops are seven days.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the 1st paragraph of Ann Leighton's book "American Gardens of the Nineteenth Century" Univ. of Mass. Press, Amherst 1987. It contains some good philosophy.

GARDENS are living witnesses of those who made them, tended them, discovered new plants to go into them, and knew why each plant had to be there "for meate and medicine, for use and for delight." Gardens cannot be separated from their origins or their originators. To see a garden and not be able to recognize its background or catch its figures of speech as it tells us its history is like being at a party of strangers with no one introducing guests to each other. If one is truly interested in gardens, a world is open; but one cannot come in as a stranger and enjoy either oneself or the gardens. Riots of bloom, intricate designs, plans so charming as to be apparent under inches of snow or in driving rains - all these take understanding. Copying without knowing why will miss the whole point; polite pretense cannot avail.

THE CICADAS ARE COMING

Your summer may be a lot noisier than usual. Scientists at Penn State University and the University of Maryland say periodical cicadas, whose familiar loud buzz echoes through the treetops this time of year, will emerge in huge numbers this year from their 17-year sleep in the ground. Commonly called 17-year locusts, these large bugs (Magicicada septendecim) emerge in distinct broods. Twenty broods have been recorded in this country. Brood X (for number 10), the largest one, is due to emerge in the Middle Atlantic and North Central states in late May or early June.

Equipped with oversize, fanged forelimbs, the emerging pupae look fierce. The adults are an inch long, stout, brown to greenish, with large, transsparent wings. In both stages cicadas are harmless to people and are not classified as pests. In the immature stages cicadas feed on sap from plant roots, but have never been implicated as root pests. Contrary to popular lore, the adults do not defoliate shrubs, trees or garden plants. They have sucking mouthparts, and feed solely on tree or shrub sap. However, where present in large numbers, the adults damage tree limbs as they lay their eggs. The females insert two rows of eggs under the bark, which weakens thin branches until they snap off. The bugs reportedly lay eggs on about 75 species of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants, but they like oaks the best, with hickory and apple trees close seconds.

What to do? Spraying will do more harm than good. University of Maryland entomologist Gene Wood recommends covering valuable young trees with 1/4-inch plastic mesh.

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From The Registrar's Desk

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Syringa vulgaris 'Carolyn Mae'

alias Carolyne Mae, Carol Mae Nelson, Carolin Mae Nelson, and Carolyn Mae Nelson

In a letter dated March 6, 1987, Mrs. Lourene Wishard of Bennett, Nebraska, writes us that on the request of the late Henry E. Sass she named several lilacs. One of them was 'Carolyn Mae' which she named in honour of Mrs. Carolyn Mae Nelson; Mrs. Wishart emphasizes that it was never named "Carolyn May Nelson".

The name 'Carolyn May' was validly published in J.C. Wister's LILACS FOR AMERICA, 1942, p.44, where it was described as having double and magenta flowers. Several variants of the name, namely Carolyne Mae, Carol Mae Nelson, Carolin Mae Nelson, and Carolyn Mae Nelson have appeared recently; they are invalid names and should not be used.

June 3/87
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