



# The Pipeline

Vol.III, No. 10, October, 1977

**THE INTERNATIONAL LILAC SOCIETY**

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

*President:* Robert B. Clark

Cattle Landing Road, R.D. No. 1, Box 288, Meredith, NH 03253

*Secretary:* Walter W. Oakes

Box 315, Rumford, Maine, 04276

*Treasurer:* Mrs. Marie Chaykowski

4041 Winchell Road, Mantua, Ohio, 44255

*Editor:* Walter E. Eickhorst

129 West Franklin St., Naperville, Illinois. 60540

#### *MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION*

Single annual .....	\$ 5.00
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Life .....	100.00

Mail membership dues to I.L.S. Secretary, Walter W. Oakes, Box 315, Rumford, Maine. 04276.



BLUE AND PINK LILACS by R.L. Gardner,  
Edward J. Gardner, Nursery, Horicon.

This writing first appeared in WISCONSIN GARDENS (1955) - publication of the GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION OF WISCONSON, and appears here, edited and with the permission of the publisher.

If it's blue or pink lilacs you want, you are right in step with the popular trend. The demand for these varieties has increased so much during the past few years that it presents a real problem for the grower to maintain a stock to fill each year's requirements. This is especially true if the grower offers own-root plants to his trade. Because of the various problems involved in the propagation of own-root plants - which includes the all important long time factor - it may be many years before substantial own-root stocks of all varieties can be built up to meet consumer demands.

There are many varieties of lilacs for which the colors blue or pink are claimed. While acknowledging the beauty of many of these varieties, and the fact that the colors do approach blue or pink, I must, in this same breath, insist that most of them are not blue or pink and only a few of them can honestly be classified as such. We can have bright hopes, however, because lilac breeders are expanding the scope of their activities very rapidly. They are speeding up the tempo of their cross breeding which, until comparatively recently, was a wide open, almost untouched field. Results have been astounding and even better results in the near future are inevitable.

See Stock in Bloom

Subscribers to "Wisconsin Gardens" might feel that to be cautioned about purchasing lilacs advertised as blue or pink casts doubtful reflections on their intelligence and such advice is therefore out of order, or unnecessary, or superfluous. But, the fact remains that each year I receive more than a few orders for lilacs which the buyers "understand" are good blues or pinks. Of course, they have never



seen them ! Consequently, after they have seen them blooming a year or two later, I sometimes receive letters which are not too complimentary. So - caution No. 1, - see the bloom of the lilac you want, if at all possible, before you buy. Caution No. 2 - If, because of the newness or scarcity of a variety you cannot see it in bloom, do not hesitate to ask the grower point blank, "Is this really blue?". A grower of any repute at all will be only too pleased to answer your question quite frankly. Naturally, after you've seen the bloom you might not fully agree with the information given to you, but then, all of us have our own opinions. Maybe your idea of "blue" or "pink" is entirely different from that of the grower.

Perhaps the gripe brought up most frequently by my customers is about the descriptions offered for lilacs in various nursery catalogs. The general opinion seems to be that such information is, in the greater part, willfully deceptive. This may be quite true in isolated cases, but such intent on the part of the seller should be readily detectable if the buyer takes time to analyze the general manner in which the material is presented to him.

#### Remove Old Flower Buds

While not wishing to digress further from our subject of pink and blue lilacs, I do believe it might be well to mention another question brought up very frequently by lilac fans: Should flower buds be removed after fall or spring transplanting? My answer is yes. The flower takes a lot of food to grow and develop seed. The result is that the plant loses much of its vitality and often is unable to resist the onslaught of the hot weather which usually sets in during or immediately following the blooming season, and even the otherwise quite harmless diseases may produce adverse effects in the plant. This often retards complete recovery from shock of transplanting for several seasons and in some instances the plant may die. My suggestion is to remove buds on plants transplanted in fall at least the first season, and remove the buds on spring transplants the first and second seasons, unless unusually good growth has

been attained the year in which the spring transplanting took place. However, very often the shock from spring transplanting will cause the plant to set excessive quantities of blossom buds which, if not removed the second season (or at least half of them), will again sap strength from the plant which is not able as yet to produce.

#### Recommended Lilacs

In recommending blue and pink lilacs listed herein, I have used as a basis for my selections the reactions of visitors to the nursery to these varieties. I have also considered to a lesser degree my own observations. If you do not find your favourite in this list, please do not allow yourself to become disturbed. Rather, I would suggest that you see the listed varieties at your favorite nursery, arboretum, or public park during the blooming season.

After the variety name, the name of the breeder is inserted within parentheses. The description is more or less my own and I am open to correction. These are also listed in their order of best, next best, etc. Let us start with the blue lilacs.

#### Favorite Blues Listed

No. 1 *Mme. Charles Seuchet (Lemoine)*. This variety was imported by us in 1950. It is actually blue and might be described as "forget-me-not" blue. The flowers open up blue and stay blue for many days. After a week to ten days, the blooms were still a vivid blue with only slight indications of fading. A prolific bloomer producing very large panicles. It is a sturdy grower.



No. 2 *Ami Schott (Lemoine)*. A double lilac, with large panicles and florets. The lower petals are a deep, almost violet, while the upper and inner petals fade to an almost bluish white, with the result that the overall cast is blue. Another generous bloomer, with medium growing habits. Truly this is the best double blue to my knowledge.

No. 3 *Firmament (Lemoine)*. This blue lilac on our list was No. 1 (with apologies to President Lincoln) until we acquired Mme. Charles Seuchet. It opens light blue which is near sky blue and in suitable weather maintains that color for several days. Afterwards the color gradually turns to a pinkish blue, which is also most attractive. A prolific bloomer, sturdy, but with dwarf-like tendencies in growth. Panicles are medium to large.

No. 4 *Decaisne (Lemoine)*. This is a very good, long lasting, prolific bloomer. The growth habits are toward the dwarf side. The panicles are long and narrow. The flowers open to a deep blue and after some days, a hint of pink appears with the blue to produce a purplish effect which to most people enhances rather than detracts from the beauty of the flower. This is an old standby and the demand remains constant from year to year.

No. 5 *Mary Gardner (Gardner)*. A light blue early lilac, which is perhaps a hybrid of *Vulgaris* and *Geraldii*. A generous bloomer, blooming about one to two weeks before the regular French varieties. Growth habits of the bush tend toward the dwarf and the stocks are slender. Excellent for cutting.

No. 6 *Oliver De Serres (Lemoine)*. A good double, clear blue, somewhat sky blue. A good bloomer with large panicles. A rugged grower, medium tall.



No. 7 *President Lincoln* (Dunbar). An excellent sky blue lilac. Not quite as blue as Mme. Charles Seuchet, but more blue than Firmament. Would be an excellent No. 2 were it not for the fact that the blooms fade very rapidly once they are open. Also, panicles are not large and the bush is an upright grower which is not as desirable as the growth of the six preceding varieties mentioned.

#### Pink Varieties Listed

No. 1 *Edw. J. Gardner* (Gardner). Patent No. 1086. The mere fact that this double pink lilac was originated by the late Mr. Edw. J. Gardner does not put this lilac in the first place on this list of pink lilacs. For the past several years, the visitors to the nursery have been attracted to this lilac more than to any other variety, barring none.

The buds are of a mauve pink shade that lightens as the flowers open. The blooms become a beautiful light pink that glows in the sunlight, making a striking effect and attracting everyone's attention. The florets resemble a hyacinth floret in form, and measure as much as one inch in diameter. Two or three rows of petals appear to come from a single corolla. The inner petals are narrow and deeply channeled, while the outer petals are broad and recurved. The panicles are very large and loosely branching, often showing five to eight separate spikes to the cluster. Excellent for cutting and the blooms are quite fragrant. The plant is a strong grower. To my knowledge, there is no finer pink lilac.

No. 2 *Lucie Baltet* (Baltet). This very good, single pink lilac was considered for many years to be the best. It is still considered the best pink lilac by many of those who have not seen the Edw. J. Gardner. Although the florets are small and panicles medium, it is a prolific bloomer. Perhaps it is most beautiful just before the buds open. Shortly after opening, the flowers fade. In hot weather, the fading is very rapid and after a couple of days, in extreme conditions, they may turn to a questionable pinkish white. Under ideal conditions, however, the blooms are very beautiful for several days and they make an excellent cut flower. Growing habits of the plant tend towards the dwarf side.

Hue Range is Wide

No. 3 *Mme. Antoine Buchner* (Lemoine). A delicate pink, double flowered lilac. Panicles are medium but there are many of them. Truly a pure light pink.

No. 4 *Marechal Foch* (Lemoine). A striking deep pink or perhaps, more suitably, rose coloured single lilac. Enormous panicles, and a free bloomer. Growth habits of the plant are upright and medium tall. A desirable lilac for any garden.

No. 5 *General Pershing* (Lemoine). A good showy double pink, which has a slight lilac tint. Panicles are loose, which produces a graceful effect. Florets are large, resembling somewhat a double flowering almond. Even though this variety tends toward the lilac shade of pink, it is another very desirable variety. Panicles are large and blooms in late season. Growing habits, medium tall and spreading.

Of course, we could go on and on listing good varieties of pinks and blues. But, in doing so, we get away from the original thought of those which are the closest to true pink and true blue. And that's just the way it goes when my customers ask me for my opinion as to what lilac is the best blue, pink, purple etc. The best leads to the next, and that to another which may not be quite the color we started to talk about, and on, and on, until we are talking about an entirely different color than that with which we started, about a double instead of a single, a rugged grower instead of a graceful grower - guess we just like them all when you come right down to it. But those I have listed I believe are close to the true colors of blue and pink.

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The president, Robert B. Clark, will act as an ex officio member of all committees.

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WANTED for Exchange !!

Lilac seed, mature, dry, clean, tightly packaged and clearly (correctly) labelled. While we're cognizant of the fact that most of the cultivars do not reproduce (some do not even set seed) true to name (the species are much more dependable in this respect), we'd like to make such material available to those members who might wish to try their luck in looking for breaks and possibly a new introduction - who knows? In any event, please send me such as you may have - the Exchange (or giveaway) is popular.

Nancy Alexander,  
P.O. Box 309,  
1225 Wareham Street, Middleboro, Mass.02346.

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For the File :-

One of the purposes of I.L.S. is to provide lilac enthusiasts with a means of sharing and exchanging favorite cultivars. To facilitate this exchange, we would like to set up a file system in which each member may list cultivars from which he is willing to donate scions. If every member having lilacs of suitable size and condition to provide a few scions would participate, I think we can have a very successful operation. Please send a letter to me including your name and address, name of cultivar, source of plant, and its size. This will be recorded and a future issue of the PIPELINE will give instructions for requesting a source of a desired cultivar.

For those inexperienced in the handling of scions, we will prepare a brief guide and a list of sources for more detailed information. Grafting can be done successfully by anyone with a little practice and patience, and the final product, grown onto its own roots, will be a source of pride to its owner.

Nancy Alexander (address above)

DID YOU KNOW ?

Syringa vulgaris 'Gloire de Lorraine' and S.V. 'Jacques Callot' were the first two selections to be named by the long famed Victor Lemoine in the year 1876. For reasons of history and nostalgia these two cultivars probably should be so indicated in the major collections. Most interesting to note that in the 1953 survey the latter was still considered the best single lilac shade. Apparently 'Gloire de Lorraine' was never considered worthy of being among the more outstanding selections.

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Bits of wits :-

NOTHING is quite so annoying as to have someone go right on talking when you're interrupting.

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THE TROUBLE with people who talk too fast is that they often say something they haven't thought of yet.

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LEADERS have two important characteristics: first, they are going somewhere; second, they are able to persuade other people to go with them.

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Lilac Plant Distribution - 1977

The Propagation and Distribution Committee makes available for the first time to the I.L.S. membership the following 22 select cultivars and species :

<u>Cultivar</u>	<u>Descr.</u>	<u>Origin</u>
'Ann Tighe'	D VII	Yaeger, 1945
'Bountiful'	S V	Clarke, 1949
'Doctor Chadwick'	S V	Karpow, 1962
'General Sherman'	S V	Dunbar, 1917
'Lewis Maddock'	S V	Rankin
'Jane Day'	S VII	Havemeyer
'Lucie Baltet' (Copper Form)	S V	
'Marachel Foch'	S VI	Lemoine, 1924
'Maud Notcutt'	S I	Notcutt, 1956
'Mood Indigo'	S II	Clarke, 1946
<u>reflexa</u>	S V	Species
<u>rhodopea</u>	S IV	Species
'Sarah Sands'	S VII	Havemeyer, 1943
'Silver King'	S III	Lemke
'Souv. d'Alice Harding'	D I	Lemoine, 1938
'Sunset'	D VI	Clarke, 1949
'Sweetheart'	D VI	Clarke, 1953
'True Blue'	S III	Havemeyer
'Violet Glory'	S II	Castle, 1969
'Violetta'	D II	Lemoine, 1916
'White Long Fellow'	S I	Rankin
'White Summer'	S I	Lape, 1976

Key:

S - Single	I White
D - Double	II Violet
	III Bluish
	IV Lilac
	V Pinkish
	VI Magenta
	VII Purple

The two-year plants have been propagated by budding and are multiple-stemmed. In the propagation procedure it was anticipated that plants would be own root by time of shipment. However, in case the plants have not become established on own roots, it is advised that the plant be planted with the bud union set below ground level.

The plants are offered at \$7.50 each, which includes packing and shipping costs. However, if packing and shipping charges exceed the included 20%, it will be necessary to bill you for the excess. It will greatly assist if the local I.L.S. chapters pool orders and assume regional distribution. With limited numbers of plants available and to expedite plant dispersal, it is urgent that the attached order form be forwarded immediately. All orders will be processed in the sequence received. Make check payable to the International Lilac Society and mail with your plant order to:

Dr. Donald R. Egolf,  
14600 Cambridge Drive,  
Upper Marlboro,  
Maryland 20870.

This, the first I.L.S. plant distribution, offers an additional benefit to the membership. The response to the current distribution will further define the scope of the project in future years. Plants are now propagated for distribution in 1978 and 1979. Future offerings will include many additional elite cultivars and new introductions. The cultivars offered this year will not be available on the 1978 distribution.

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