



Epi News



August 1989 SAN DIEGO EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY, INC. VOL. 14, NO. 8



George French's seedling #15302



**NEWTON TO TALK BULBS
AT AUGUST MEETING**

Writer, educator Betty Newton will be the featured speaker at the August 8th General Meeting of the San Diego Epiphyllum Society.

Mrs. Newton will show slides and answer questions about bulbs that are ideally suited to the unique conditions found in Southern California.

In addition to her excellent features on gardening in the Sunday San Diego Union, Mrs. Newton also teaches classes on flower gardens, drought resistant plants and landscaping techniques at Grossmont Adult School.

At the pre-meeting workshop the topic will be "Tips for Building a Shade Structure" presented by Sean Minogue.

The pre-meeting workshop will begin at 6:30 p.m., in Room 104 of the Casa del Prado. General Meeting time is 7:30 in room 101. Come early, there are always lot's of things to see and do.

REFRESHMENT LIST FOR AUGUST

Bringing those ever popular treats to our August meeting will be...

Mary Ann Alexanderson
Linda Hammer
David & Daniel Graham
Marie Chadwick
Helen Rhea
Madeline French
Mary-Alice Buaas

...help us celebrate Rose Martinez's First Anniversary as our Refreshment Coordinator.

ABOUT OUR COVER PHOTOGRAPH

How about that? A first for Epi News, a real photographic print in each copy.

Photographer Joe Janes captured the beautiful new hybrid by George French, # 15302.

The photograph was taken on July 13, 1989 in George's yard using natural light about 9 a.m. on a fairly overcast day.

A garden cross with Malcho's Beauty this charming flower bloomed for the first time this year. Produced from other seeds in the same berry were Misha, Ariba and several other deep purple flowers. #15302 bloomed again one week after this picture was taken and that flower had much less white and more purple. We will have to wait to see what it settles into. George promises that if next year's flowers are as good he will register #15302.

Thanks to Joe Janes and to George and Madeline French who had coffee and cake waiting for the photographer and his assistant (yours truly). All 320 photos were mounted by hand.

This project was a great deal of fun and I think the results were worth the extra effort and expense. The plan had been to include one of the new generation color photocopies but the photo prints were cheaper and had better color.

We'd all love to do it again, perhaps on a regular basis. Please let us know what you think.

- Sean

**NOW IS THE TIME:
A YEAR AT A GLANCE**
by Sean Minogue

(based on the earlier works of
Frank Granatowski)

JANUARY

-Begin to feed with "Bloom"
(low or no nitrogen)
fertilizer.

-Watch for pests. Keep plants
free of debris where pests can
breed and hide. Wet weather is
snail and slug weather.

-Protect your epis from
freezing temperatures.

-Let your epis enjoy the rain.
A fast draining soil is
essential.

FEBRUARY

-Continue to watch the weather
reports for possible freezing
conditions and take steps to
protect epis if necessary. Most
hybrids can take short periods
of mild freeze (to about 28 F).
Most species can not. Do not
prune frost damaged foliage
until all threat of freeze has
passed.

-Watch out for snail and slugs.
They are most active during
cool and damp weather.

-Promote good bloom with a low-
nitrogen fertilizer (0-10-10),
reapply regularly if you use a
liquid.

-Don't allow your plants to be
exposed to unusually intense
sunlight. If the weather turns
unseasonably warm and dry extra
water and/or shade may be
needed.

MARCH

-Now that all threat of frost
is over, remove damaged foliage
and unsightly and unproductive
branches.

-Keep pots free of debris where
pests can breed and hide.

-For some epi growers this is
the last month to use a low-
nitrogen "Bloom" fertilizer.
Others will use this formula
until plants are in their full
glory.

-Inspect plants closely
(especially new buds) for pests
such as scale, mealy bugs and
aphids. Treat as directed with
malathion. ALWAYS FOLLOW LABEL
INSTRUCTIONS EXACTLY.

-Do not move plants after buds
appear. Relocation can cause
newly formed (and even some
older buds) to drop.

-Continue the snail patrol.
Plants that are lush and
succulent are irresistible to
these hungry critters.

APRIL

-Take an inventory of your
plants. Make a list of their
names, this knowledge will help
you avoid duplicates at the
various sales this spring.
Inspect each plant carefully,
a look at each plant will help
you identify and treat any
problems quickly. Be especially
aware of any signs of disease
such as darkening of stems near
the soil line.

-Water as needed and use either
bloom or regular fertilizer.

-Continue to watch for snails,
slugs and other pests.

NOW IS THE TIME:
A YEAR AT A GLANCE

MAY - The Epi Lovers Reward

-Adjust your watering schedule. Weather now is not only warmer but dryer.

-Keep up your pest control program. Buds and blooms are irresistible to most insect and other pests.

-Enjoy the blooms. Visit your friends gardens and the local epi nurseries to see what's new.

-Compare first and second year blooms with the ESA Directory. Only those matching the description exactly are correctly named. Do not share cuttings from plants that are incorrectly named with anyone.

-Mark all cuttings with hybrid name, blossom color and size immediately after they are made. Do not wait or errors will result.

-Don't miss the SDES Mother's Day Show at the Casa del Prado in Balboa Park. You'll see the very best and the very newest in Epiphyllums at this annual show.

JUNE

-Don't allow soil to dry out.

-Continue to feed plants well. Now use a "balanced" or "Grow" formula. (With about equal amounts of N-P-K).

-Remove spent blossoms (leave just a quarter of an inch of stem attached to the aerole to avoid damage). Don't allow

fruit to grow or mature unless you intend to use the resulting seeds.

-Monitor humidity in your garden. Misting of plants may be necessary. If so, do it in the morning or early evening, not during the hottest part of the day.

-A mild solution of liquid fertilizer makes an excellent foliar mist and can add extra vigor to plants with visible results.

-Plant this season's cuttings as soon as possible for optimum growth.

JULY

-Watch for pests and treat as necessary. Follow all label directions carefully.

-Repot plants as necessary. Some may need larger pots others simply need to be repotted in the same container with fresh potting soil. Hold water for one week after repotting.

-Remove spent blossoms and epi fruit (berries) to save plants from unnecessary stress.

-Continue to feed with balanced fertilizer.

-Monitor humidity in air and soil moisture. Mist or water as needed.

-Make and plant cuttings to share with friends. Be sure they are correctly labeled.

-Watch for winds. Damage can result when pots start to sway in the breeze. Dry, strong Santa Ana winds can be harmful.

NOW IS THE TIME:
A YEAR AT A GLANCE

AUGUST

-Groom your plants. Remove dried up or scared foliage and keep debris out of branches and containers.

-Protect plants from extreme light and watch for dry Santa Ana winds.

-Continue to monitor humidity and mist when necessary.

-Check moisture in soil and water and feed as necessary. Do not let soil dry out.

-Fruit should be developing well by now and should be protected from birds.

-Water and feed as necessary.

SEPTEMBER

-Continue to water and feed as necessary with a balanced fertilizer.

-Keep pots free of debris and prune unsightly or damaged foliage.

-Be on the look-out for pests and continue to protect fruit from birds and rodents.

OCTOBER

-Unless there is no danger of winter freeze in your area (such as along the coast) you should encourage your plants to go dormant by withholding fertilizer beginning in October. New growth is more sensitive to frost damage than older growth is. Many epis enjoy a rest at this time of year.

-Protect epis from extremes. Sun, heat, wind and hail can all be very damaging and with the added threat of freezing temperatures the potential for real loss is increased.

-After a summer of dormancy snails and slugs are emerging with strong appetites. Protect your plants and hand pick or bait to control them. Follow all label instructions carefully.

-Epi fruit should be ripe now or next month. If in doubt wait to pick.

NOVEMBER

-Water if necessary. Withhold food unless there is no danger of winter frost.

-Check fruit for ripeness. Pick now if ready.

-Snail wars are on in full. Bait, trap or hand pick to avoid damage.

-Pest control measures should include inspection for and elimination of Sow Bugs (a.k.a. Pill Bugs). Some products sold for snail and slug control also control Sow Bugs. Use only products specifically mentioning Sow/Pill Bugs on the label and follow instructions exactly. These pests eat roots and new growth and become active during moist weather.

DECEMBER

-Move plants now in areas where freeze is strong and sure.

-Watering plants should not be necessary. Be sure soil is not waterlogged. Protect from rain plants with poor drainage.

ADAPTED FROM AN EARLIER ARTICLE
BY SEAN MINOGUE

HOW MUCH SHADE IS IT?

The types of shade material used most often by Epi growers are lath and fabric.

The traditional lath house is made of wooden slats. These are good because the wood is attractive and somewhat long lasting. Fabrics are also very effective and have some solid advantages, particularly where a temporary structure is preferred.

The material most often used is polypropylene. This lightweight, low cost material is easily stapled to a wooden frame and can be taken down, stored and reused many times. Polypropylene is also very resistant to sun caused decomposition.

Shade cloth is rated by the percentage of sun that it blocks. For epis a 63% to 75% cloth is recommended. A 75% cloth blocks 3/4s of the sun's rays and admits 25% of the available light.

You may find it necessary to add more sun protection at particular times of the year. Let's say that 50% protection is necessary during winter but during summer you need 75%. Start with a 50% cloth, framed and placed the way you want it. When the sun's intensity increases you simply add another layer of 50% cloth and you get a total of 75% blockage of the total available sun. The first layer stops 50%, the second layer stops 50% of the sun not already blocked, or 25% of the total available.

(The second layer of cloth should be placed several inches

below the first).

It is easy to determine the amount of light blocked by wooden slats (lath).

Let's say the slats are each two inches wide and that you want 50% blockage in one area and 75% in another area. Fasten one slat in place (start at the edge). Lay another slat flush against it, then place a third slat flush against the second. Fasten the third slat in place move the second slat and place it flush along the other side of the third slat and continue. You have now left a gap between the first and the third slat that is exactly the width of the slats and if you continue all the way across you will admit 50% of the available light.

To get 75% simply repeat the process with a second layer of slats placed in a cross pattern. The first layer blocks 50%. The second layer blocks 50% of the light not already blocked or a total of 75% blockage of the available light.

When using lath remember to place the slats running north to south. This will provide shade for all the plants at various times of the day as the sun moves across the sky. Slats placed east-west will cast a constant shadow on some places and allow full strength light to hit others. This will cause plant tissue to become scorched, which can lead to other horrors.

The August 9th Pre-meeting workshop will cover this and other material related to the topic of shade structures.

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SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH
AT 7:30 P.M. IN ROOM 101 OF THE
CASA DEL PRADO IN BALBOA PARK.
PRE-MEETING WORKSHOPS ARE HELD
REGULARLY BEFORE THE GENERAL
MEETING AT 6:30 P.M. IN ROOM
104. ALL ARE WELCOME.

MEETINGS OF THE SDAS EXECUTIVE
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ROOM 105 AT 7:30 P.M. ALL ARE
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