



# The Bulblet

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## President's Lily Pad

*Like us on Facebook; Follow us on Twitter*

*If you haven't checked out the updated website: [www.arls-lilies.org](http://www.arls-lilies.org).*

Hello Lily Friends!

Our AGM voted in a new President. Welcome back Lorne Kaban. Hope your new position at NALS does not take too much time away for your presidential duties with ARLS. The board will support you for both positions. The casino is June 6&7 so our society can continue to do all sorts of events, programming, and education for gardeners. The volunteer hours bring us about \$2000 per volunteer shift so it is a great payback for your volunteer time.

Lorne Kaban  
President, ARLS

## ARLS AFFILIATES- we maintain memberships with these societies

**Alberta Horticultural Association** [icangarden.com/clubs/aha](http://icangarden.com/clubs/aha)

**Calgary Horticultural Society** [calhort.org](http://calhort.org) @YYCGardening <https://www.facebook.com/calhort/>

**Edmonton Horticultural Society** [edmontonhort.com](http://edmontonhort.com) @YEGgardening

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/14571255402/>

**North American Lily Society** [lilies.org](http://lilies.org) <https://www.facebook.com/NorthAmericanLilySociety/>

**Royal Horticultural Society Lily Group** [www.rhslilygroup.org/](http://www.rhslilygroup.org/)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2617608858556096>

ARLS and its members also have botanical relationships with Calgary Zoo Dorothy Harvie horticultural garden, Olds College, St Albert Botanic Gardens, U of A Botanic Gardens.

## EVENTS 2023

### ARLS MARTAGON LILY SHOW JULY 1&2 University of Alberta Botanic Garden

June 30 Friday 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm staging

July 1 Saturday staging 8 am-10 am.

**Judging takes place from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm**

**Public viewing 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm**

July 2 Sunday **Public viewing 10:00 am - 5:00 pm**

### NALS 73RD LILY SHOW CHICAGO JULY 5-9 2023

### ARLS ANNUAL LILY SHOW JULY 22 & 23 GREENLAND GARDEN CENTRE, Sherwood Park



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July 21 Friday 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm staging  
July 22 Saturday 7:00 am - 9:00 am staging  
**Judging takes place from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm**  
**Public viewing 1:00 to 5:00 pm**  
July 23 Sunday **Public viewing 10:00 am - 3:30 pm**

**BULB SALES FALL Sept/Oct**

ARLS is going to need a few hardy souls to dig and bag the second half of the lily beds donated for the sale last year. Plan on volunteering with shovel and muscles for a full day of lily companionship. We will also need lots of plastic bags to keep the bulbs in their own groups for ease of washing and labelling. If you can't volunteer for the digging days can you volunteer for the washing or packing groups.

**2024 EVENTS**

**MINGLE**

**AGM SATURDAY APRIL 27**

**Spring Bulb sales**

**MARTAGON SHOW**

**ANNUAL SHOW**

**Fall Bulb sales**

**MEMBERS RECEIVE DISCOUNTS AT THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES:**

- \* **ALL SEASONS GARDEN CENTRE.** 10027-81 Ave. Edmonton 10% discount. Membership card must be presented and discount may not apply to all products. <https://allseasonsgardencentre.com/>
- \* **APACHE SEEDS LTD.** 10136 149 ST., EDMONTON 10% discount. Membership card must be presented and discount may not apply to all products. <http://apacheseeds.ca/>
- \* **LOCAL NURSERY** owned by the BIG GREENHOUSE. 26515A Township Road 514 [WOODBEND RD], SPRUCE GROVE (west of Devonian Gardens) 10% discount. Membership card must be presented and discount may not apply to all products. <https://www.localnursery.ca/>



**LILY SOURCES**

**Bertha Lardner: Martagon Lilies** NE Edmonton 780-478-7929 [lardnerbm@gmail.com](mailto:lardnerbm@gmail.com)

**Dr. Ieuan Evans Lilies** Martagon & Asiatic lilies. Spruce Grove. Feel free to peruse my new website where they are featured in "Shop" at <https://drieuanevans.com>

**Rundlewood Gardens Specialty Nursery & martagons** 1643 Altadore Ave SW. Calgary (corner of 16th Street and 46th Ave SW) <http://www.rundlewoodgardens.ab.ca/> [info@rundlewoodgardens.ab.ca](mailto:info@rundlewoodgardens.ab.ca) location shopping only- no mail order shipping. Stop by when in Calgary- check website for hours.

**Lily Nook Nigel & Joyce Strohman; all things lily**  
Box 846 Neepawa Man. R0J 1H0 <http://www.lilynook.mb.ca> 1 204 476 3225 [info@lilynook.mb.ca](mailto:info@lilynook.mb.ca)

**Skinner Nursery Hugh Skinner; martagons, species, asiatics**  
Box 220 Roblin Man. R0L 1P0 1-204- 564-2236. [ski\\_hugh@mts.net](mailto:ski_hugh@mts.net)



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**Jeffries Nurseries Ltd.** P.O. Box 402, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, R1N 3B7  
29053 Trans Canada Highway #1 35 miles west of Winnipeg near Portage la Prairie Man. [www.jeffriesnurseries.com/](http://www.jeffriesnurseries.com/)  
204-857-5288 [jeffnurs@mts.net](mailto:jeffnurs@mts.net)

**SW-Gardens Sandra-Pat Willis; lilies from various divisions**  
22507 Kenesserie RD Thamesville ONT. NOP 2K0 <http://www.s-wgardens.com/> 1-519-692-5580  
[swgardens@yahoo.ca](mailto:swgardens@yahoo.ca)

**LilyCrest Gardens Brian Bergman; Bergman seedlings, [OTs, asiatics, orientals & trumpets from active hybridizing]**  
51 Woodcrest Dr. Toronto ONT. M9A 4J3 [Facebook.com/LilyCrestGardens](https://www.facebook.com/LilyCrestGardens) 1-416-614-6394 [bfberg@rogers.com](mailto:bfberg@rogers.com)

**Parkland Peonies Adam Yakabuskie** supplying peonies and martagons and Yakabuskie hybrids Calgary  
<https://parklandpeonies.com/> 1-403-819-3881; [parklandpeonies@shaw.ca](mailto:parklandpeonies@shaw.ca)

**Prairie Smoke Growers Lilies Leanne Dowd** Mail order supplier of martagon, Canadian heritage and species liliium to  
Canada and other countries Box 221 Neepawa, Manitoba R0J 1H0 [prairiesmoke01@gmail.com](mailto:prairiesmoke01@gmail.com)  
[prairie-smoke-growers.myshopify.com](http://prairie-smoke-growers.myshopify.com)

**UNIVERSITY of ALBERTA BOTANIC GARDEN NEWS**

Check out the website <http://botanicgarden.ualberta.ca/>

**Twitter** <https://twitter.com/UABotanicGarden>;

**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/UABotanicGarden>

**MUTTART is open again go check out the gardens; in and out.**

**REQUESTING NOMINATIONS**

ARLS is now awarding the **CATHY & ARNOLD SEMENIUK VOLUNTEER AWARD** for an outstanding volunteer who goes above and beyond in supporting our Society in its endeavours and events.  
Please forward your nominations with a supporting letter to [arls@arls-lilies.org](mailto:arls@arls-lilies.org)



**THE ALBERTA REGIONAL LILY SOCIETY BOARD AND COMMITTEES**

**Executive 2023-25**

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(Board Appointed-to 2024)

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[blackmartagon@gmail.com](mailto:blackmartagon@gmail.com)

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**ARLS COMMITTEES**

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Shauna Willoughby

Venue Coordinator:

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[blackmartagon@gmail.com](mailto:blackmartagon@gmail.com)

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Laurie, Britta & Shauna members

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OLDS College Committee Chair:

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Shauna Willoughby

26th Martagon Show Chair 2023

Lorne

36th Lily Show Committee 2023

Lorne, Suzanne, Dianne, Britta

Lily beetle

[lilybeetle@arls-lilies.org](mailto:lilybeetle@arls-lilies.org) (Laurie)



**NOMINATIONS FOR THE NALS REGIONAL MEDAL** are being solicited please submit to Shauna Willoughby.

**VOLUNTEERING WITH ARLS** we now have a procedure to follow and track volunteer hours. When a volunteer reaches the required hours, they are eligible for a lily bulb. Please make sure you confirm your hours volunteered with your volunteer coordinator.

**LILY BEETLE**

(photos L. Hepper)



**ARLS Lily beetle report** [lilybeetle@arls-lilies.org](mailto:lilybeetle@arls-lilies.org)

- also, if you have questions, I will try to answer them.

**Report your beetles.** With a picture, To Carlton University [lilybeetletracker@weebly.com](mailto:lilybeetletracker@weebly.com)

- **There is also a resource page on the website**

**Report your beetles** – with a picture to Olds College [Kfry@oldscollege.ca](mailto:Kfry@oldscollege.ca)- **all information submitted is also shared with Carlton University**

If you are in need of beetle brochures to give to a friend or neighbour. Contact [lilybeetle@arls-lilies.org](mailto:lilybeetle@arls-lilies.org)



I'm on a mission to collect as many Canadian - hybridized lilies as possible with the intention of providing a safe haven and ultimately preventing the loss of these important lilies. I would like to put a call out to members of the ARLS to see if anyone has any of the more obscure varieties that aren't typically available commercially. I would pay for them of course.

**Leanne Dowd** [leannekiss.lk@gmail.com](mailto:leannekiss.lk@gmail.com)

*Leanne has published the new edition of her book "Canadian Lily Hybridizers and Their Lilies; A working garden reference". ARLS is fortunate enough to acquire 50 signed copies contact [Britta.finance@arls-lilies.org](mailto:Britta.finance@arls-lilies.org) to purchase a copy.*

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**Leanne would like some help in tracking down where to get these lilies LIST FOLLOWS. If you have any idea or actually have a bulb you can spare to sell to her, also share with people you think might have these in their garden; drop her a line.**

Alex 5, Amelia, Donna, Apricot Jewel, Bennett's Big Bang, Black Gold, Briana, Brianne, Brown, Buttercup, Butterfly Kisses, Contrails, Darcie, Debra, Jeanne, Dusky Bells, Easter Charm, Enigma (a Tarlton trumpet), Eros, Firefox, Fred's Red, Glynis, Golden Jubilee, Happy Camper, Hay River NWT, Hummer, Iced Melon, June Bride, Keeper, King Orange, Lady Godiva, Lea's Beauty, Lemon Queen, Lillian Eileen, Lily Simonet, Linda May, Red Raven, Robert Simonet, Serena, Trinita.

## MARTAGONS AND ASIATIC LILIES ARE EASY TO GROW

March 2023 **leuan Evans**

Martagon lilies, are primarily a mix of hybrids between *Lilium martagon* and several closely related species. Martagon lilies are found from central Europe to Siberia, including Mongolia, China, Japan and Korea. Modern martagons are crosses between the European and other martagon type species. The most common crosses with *Lilium martagon* (white, maroon and spotted forms) are the yellow Japanese *hansonii* and the orange Chinese *tsingtauense* lilies. *L. martagon* can cross with the North American *L. kelloggii* and hybrids are also been (via tissue culture) made with Asiatic lilies. The Asiatic crosses are called martasians.



In nature all the related martagon species grow in cold to extremely cold climates, such as those that reach 40 below, the same temperature in Celsius and Fahrenheit. Typically, martagons seem to tolerate acidic to alkaline soils and grow well in full sun to very heavy shade in well drained soils. Although *Lilium hansonii* and Claude Shride do well in wet soils. They do best in an East facing location where shade begins at 2 p.m. each day. Martagons do exceptionally well in lightly wooded areas along with the lily related hostas. Martagons will compete very well with ligularia, fiddle head ferns, fireweed, hemp nettle and wild raspberries receiving very little in the way of weeding. In the open garden, with little or no shade, martagons seem to really thrive on heavy applications of peat moss given as a mulch in early spring. This 1-to-2-inch layer of peat moss also helps controls annual weeds and insulate the bulbs from severe cold.

Martagon seedling crosses can range from three to almost nine feet tall (1 - 3 metres) especially when grown under light shade. Martagons of course come in every colour and shade except blue.

Once martagons are established in any given area of the garden they can virtually be left forever. Asiatic and other lilies on the other hand have to be moved every few years or their vigour and size will deteriorate. One martagon bulb in a favourable location will double every couple of years so that at the end of 6 to 7 years you will have a spectacular vigorous clump of vibrant martagons. Martagons do have a bad habit of not emerging above ground in some seasons. They will



stay perfectly healthy underground and show up vigorously the next year or even remain dormant underground for as long as two years.

### How do I multiply my martagons?

#### Patience in Growing Martagons

Buy 5 to 10 martagon bulbs in late August or early September and plant them immediately 4 - 5 inches deep (base of bulb to the top) in well-drained soil. Plant in different locations in your garden from full sun to half shade. Spring planting is only really successful if you purchase pot grown plants or bulbs that have been refrigerated over winter and planted immediately. Martagon bulbs planted in the spring generally will not flower in the first year and may not even emerge above ground. They can stay dormant until the next season. If all goes well these individual bulbs will develop into major clumps of vigorous martagons over the next 5 - 10 years. In some gardens and in some locations (including my own garden) some martagon varieties unfortunately will multiply and grow very slowly or hardly at all.

#### Rapid Martagon Multiplication

If you are already growing martagons or intend purchasing bulbs in August or September, consider scaling. Scaling is the procedure whereby you remove the outer scales of a martagon bulb and effectively reduce the size of the original bulb by up to 50% or more. Do not be squeamish, you want more martagons, yes!

As soon as you have scaled the martagon bulbs from late July to October you can do the following:

- a) Plant the original scaled bulb 4 - 5 inches deep right away and at the two-inch level in the planting hole after filling the first three inches place the martagon bulb scales. If you do this in late July or August in Western Canada or September further south in the U.S. these martagon scales will form bulblets, overwinter and emerge as seedlings around the original bulb. If you scale in mid-September, October or later the scales will form bulblets but they may not emerge until the next spring. That is 19 - 20 months after planting.
- b) You may also plant the scales in rows, 2 - 3 inches deep, one inch apart and carefully mark the rows, naming each scaled martagon bulb, since the emergence of the seedlings from the scales may skip a year. Weed the row carefully. I once did this with hundreds of Mrs. R. O. Backhouse scales that emerged after 19 months and ended up with a thousand plants for sale in 4 years. If your soil is heavy clay, you may consider filling the top two inches of the row with the scales with a brand potting soil, e.g., #4 Sunshine mix, a coarse mixture of peat, perlite and vermiculite.
- c) **The Evans Method.** I scale my bulbs that I have selected and need to multiply in September. I place the scales in peat moss in clear plastic containers with tight lids. The sort of container that you buy olives in at the grocery store. Each plastic see through container will hold a pint (500 cc) of peat moss. I will put 3 layers of scales into the peat moss container numbering from 10 to 30 scales depending on the size of the scales. The peat moss that you use must be barely moist. When you strongly squeeze the peat moss your hands are barely moist. Moisten the peat moss if it needs moistening the day before you use it. After stuffing the peat moss and the scales into the container mark the lid and label with a non-removable magic marker. The scales will not suffocate since plastic allows the slow entry of oxygen but not the loss of water vapour. The sealed plastic containers should then be placed in a transparent garbage bag to ensure against any moisture loss and to facilitate observation from time to time. I even put this plastic bag with up to 30 containers inside another plastic bag i.e., a double bag seal. I put a couple of damp (wet) paper towels inside the inner garbage bag to gauge and maintain humidity. I check the towels every few weeks. If they are dry, I wet them again. The acidic peat moss will protect the scales against fungi and bacteria. The plastic bags along with plastic containers inside are then left at room temperature (70 to 80° F) until New Year's Day, January 1st. In that time the scales will have formed very nice bulblets (at least most varieties). These bulblets will not grow until they have been vernalized, i.e., given a prolonged cold period at around 32° F (0° C) for 3 - 4 months. You can do this with 2 or 200 containers depending on spare refrigerator



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space, i.e., the coldest part, the bottom shelf. Do not worry if the containers freeze sometimes in the refrigerator and the temperature hits 27 - 28° F. This will not kill the bulblets.

**What do I do next?**

NO - I do not pull the scales apart. I merely dump out the peat moss and rooted scales with bulblets into one hand and then place the mass of scales, bulblets and roots directly into 5-inch (10 cm.) pots containing an inch of soil mix (#4). I cover them with an inch of the same potting soil mix. Half shade is best, facing east when the sun is shaded by 1 p.m. I do this in April and by early May after the martagon seedlings emerge. I may have to bring them indoors in May for a heavy frost greater than 7° C.

If you pull the scales and bulbs apart, they check and grow very poorly – its - DO NOT DISTURB. You will see the emerging bulblets, perhaps 10 - 30 green shoots in a clump. These are your new martagons in a few years. An occasional bulblet will flower in pot in the first year of planting. Ensure that they are well watered into late June. I place the 5-inch pots, 8 pots to a standard tray and water the sealed trays regularly with about 1" of water (2 cm.). In May, June and July one of the waterings each month will have fertilizer (20-20-20) at about a level teaspoon to a gallon. Any diseased or dying martagons, pot and all are removed and discarded. The potted martagon seedlings are then placed out in rows in the garden in September so that the original pot level is 2" (5 cm.) below the soil surface. Do not split up the potted seedlings.

**Growing Martagons from Seeds.**

If you are already growing martagons then be sure to collect the seeds in August or early September before the pods shatter from your better varieties. Most martagons will set seed, some more than others and a few like Moonyeen are female sterile.

- a) You can sow the seeds immediately into the ground (semi shaded is best, East aspect) about 1 inch deep. Water in and if you have a mild fall (even in Alberta sometimes) the tiny martagon seedlings will emerge in April - May. With care and weeding you will have martagons in flower in 3 - 7 years. If you seed them late in October the seedlings may not emerge until the next year. So, cover the rows with 6" (15 cm.) wide planking to prevent weeds.
- b) Most of the "seed" that you collect will be sterile and seed like. Good seeds will be much heavier and only about 15% of the seed bulk. With small amounts you can place the "seeds" in a deep bowl and physically blow away the sterile seeds and you will be left with only the heavier fertile seeds.
- c) Collect the seed as in a) above and scatter the seed in your shaded or shrubby areas of the garden and in a few years, if you look carefully, you will notice martagons popping up everywhere. I have got martagons all through my wood lot, under trees and shrubs and even some that are now flowering on the edge of a shaded but poorly kept and mown lawn. They will effectively naturalize on their own in favourable locations in our Northern climate.

**Growing and Multiplying Asiatics and Their Hybrids**

Asiatic lilies readily set seed in our prairie climate but sometimes they need a little help with a tiny paintbrush when you go from plant to plant. Many of the Asiatic hybrids are sterile because of the hybrid cross or because they are triploids or aneuploids (unusual numbers of chromosomes).

You can select the lilies that you want to cross but sometimes our season is too short and you may have to cut the lily stem with the seedheads and bring them indoors to fully ripen by placing them in clean water that is changed daily.

Asiatic seeds and their hybrids can be sown in pots in mid-to-late April and they will emerge usually in mid to late May. Sow the seeds in 5-to-10-inch (12 to 24 cm.) pots in a good soil mix (sunshine #4) and cover with a half inch (1 cm.) of soil mix. Fully water each pot (gently). Grow and fertilize the seedlings as for MARTAGONS. Plant out with the full pot clump



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(do not SEPARATE) 2 – 3 inches (5 – 8 cms.) deep in well drained garden soil in September. Cover the seedlings in late October with 2” of peat moss for winter insulation. These Asiatics will flower (50% or more) the next year.

**Scaling and Multiplying Asiatics**

1. Do exactly as for Martagons with the scales.
2. Plant your potted seedlings out into the garden in September, 2 – 3 inches deep in drained soil, ASAP.
3. Some Asiatic hybrids will form bulbils, such as Embarrassment and Hotel California. You can plant these bulbils 1” deep in September and cover with 2” of peat moss in late October. Alternatively, you can plant the bulbil in 5” pots and bury them in the garden 2” below pot level and dig up and care for them in late April or early May.

For YouTube videos check out on the net:

1. Martagons Galore
2. Martagon Lily Propagation with Dr. Evans
3. Winning at the Lily Show

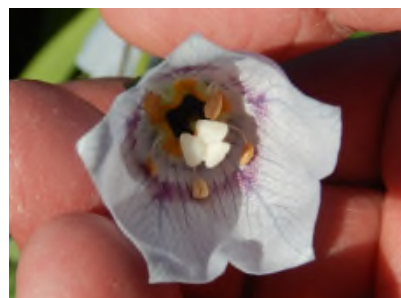
And you thought that you could not grow martagons, eh!

**A VISIT WITH DARM CROOK**  
**Britta Johnson**

In mid-August of 2022 we embarked on our long-delayed trip to Wood Buffalo National Park. On the way we just happened to drive by Darm Crook’s property and arranged for a visit. Most of you know that Darm Crook lives close to Hay River in northern Alberta and grows a wide variety of species lilies but that is just the tip of his hybridizing and growing endeavors

Darm Crook and his wife moved to their acreage in 1978 where they promptly got to work clearing close to 5 acres of bush and building a house. The property now houses many raised flower beds, a large vegetable garden, a carpenter shop and a 20’ x 15’ greenhouse, the dimensions of which were determined by local building codes. The large variety of trees were all grown from seeds that were started in plastic baggies in the fall and then planted out in the spring. Darm credits the survival of bur oak, maples, elm, mountain ash and wild plum among others, to the fact they were grown from seed and adapted to the harsh northern conditions. The prunus americanus took 9 years to grow from seed to a fruiting tree. The last frost is usually around June 15 and the first killing frost about September 18 which makes for a very short growing season though there are 19+ hours of daylight in June. All the perennials are planted in raised beds that are about 8-10” high and filled with soil brought in to cover the thin layer of topsoil and sand and then mulched with sawdust. This allows for good drainage, soil amendment and targeted watering. There is seldom enough rain and only 14-30” of snow cover so Darm supplements with water pumped from his dammed-up creek.

This 77-year-old carpenter retired in 2000 but he definitely is not idle. There are 5 haskap bushes that usually produce about 5 bushels of berries, strawberries and rhubarb. The large vegetable garden is surrounded by a chain link fence buried 8” deep to deter the ground hogs and grows turnips, cauliflower, kohlrabi, parsnips, cabbage, carrots and potatoes among other vegetables. Everything is started in the greenhouse except the carrots and potatoes. The space between the rows is mulched with shredded paper to help conserve water and deter weeds. Root vegetables are stored throughout the winter in a root cellar that is sunk deep in the ground and has a couple of insulated trapdoors to protect them from freezing.



Over the years, Darm has hybridized delphiniums, columbines, peonies, poppies which are a cross between oriental x arctic and roses among other species. He also pushes the growing boundaries by growing a zone 5 Showy Milkweed, codonopsis from India and numerous others, all of which were grown from seed. Most of the lilies were done blooming when we arrived but the sheer number of stems in the many raised beds, beg for a return visit in July for a peak blooming show. Darm is always hybridizing lilies and there were tagged seed pods waiting to ripen and bring





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forth more surprises. There was a *lilium maculatum* var *flavum*, a light yellowing flowering species with no bulbils, *tigrinum* x *lancifolium*, *dauidii* x *leichtlinii* and *szovitsianum* x *monadelphum* with huge seed pods to name a few of the crosses. Darm is an amazing person, grower and hybridizer with a wealth of knowledge and experience that he is happy to share.

Thank you for the visit Darm!



*Editors Note: Hay River was evacuated this spring due to wild fires; hoping Darm and his lilies avoided harm. All photos are by Britta Johnson for this article. Enjoy.*





*Darm's hybrids*

## GARDEN FACTS, FALLACIES AND PLAIN TRUTHS

### Coniferous trees like pine and spruce turn the soil acid.

- Not at all. They lose moisture all fall, winter and early spring and dry out the soil around them. To get plants to grow under such trees you must water well in May of each year.

### Bone meal is an excellent source of phosphate.

- In alkali prairie soils bone meal is a very poor source of phosphate. It is essentially insoluble. When you bury animal bones in alkali soil they last for centuries, i.e., soils above pH 6. In acid soils below pH 5 and lower the bone gradually break down. Bones dissolve in peat bogs but last forever in limestone soils.

### Coir should be used instead of peat.

- No way, coir comes all of the way from southern Asia after a long wetting process of the coconut husks. Its transport and distribution give it a big carbon footprint. Peat on the other hand is local and Canada only has 270 million acres. Peat accumulation in Canada is 60 times greater than its horticultural use.

### Mercury, Lead, Arsenic and other minerals.



**THE ALBERTA REGIONAL LILY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**  
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- All garden soils contain mercury, arsenic and lead, as does sea salt and many other kinds of exotic table salts. Plain salt is refined but has iodine added to it since this essential thyroid mineral is in short supply in prairie Canada.

**Copper, Zinc and Nickel are not heavy metals.**

- Copper zinc and nickel are bio-essential minerals for all living things. They are listed as supplements on all multivitamin containers. The blood of snails, slugs, octopus, oysters and other molluscs is copper based not iron based as in most animals. Gold, silver and platinum are heavy metals as are lead and mercury. Have mercury tooth fillings or the expensive lead crystal drinking glass ever harmed anyone? The toxicity of heavy metals is related to bioactive forms of these metals.

**Peat versus manures and composts.**

- Peat is actually nature's compost. Over time peat becomes coal. Organic matter in the oceans eventually (millions of years) becomes oil or bitumen. Our prairie highways are essentially giant spills of heavy oil such as bitumen. Peat has the same plant nutrient value as cow manure but both are excellent soil amendments. It's much more preferable to see stacks of peat bales than to see countless tons of peat on fire on the prairies along with the choking smoke. If you want organic manure high in plant nutrients such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and micronutrients then use poultry manure.

**The magnesium in Epsom Salts is good for tomatoes.**

- Really? In actual fact prairie soils are seldom short of magnesium but often very short of sulphur. The growing boost to tomatoes and other crops you can bet comes from the sulphur content. Epsom salts is Magnesium sulphate.

**Baking powder and powdery mildew.**

- Baking powder component (potassium bicarbonate) gives good control of powdery mildew on roses and other ornamentals. It is sold in the UK as a pesticide for mildew control and as a consequence you must put on a disposable pesticide suit and wear a face mask. That is the rule on pesticides. No one tells grandma anything about the tablespoon of potassium bicarbonate that she uses for home baking. Go figure!

**You see frost on the grass and all over the car windows.**

- Check the temperature in early fall frost can form at temperatures as high as 3 – 4° C, i.e., well above freezing. Frost on the pumpkin or the beans doesn't mean that anything froze in the garden.

**GMO's and other genetic products in Canada.**

- I refuse to eat GMO crops they can be harmful. Nonsense, really. If you are a diabetic for example all of your insulin is produced by GMO bacteria as are many other products in today's world. Why are we living longer and healthier?

**Worms do wonders of the garden soil.**

- Before the arrival of European settlers in Canada there were no earthworms on the prairies. All 9 or so species present in this country were mostly brought over from Europe. So, the original prairie soils developed without earthworms.

**Bees pollinate 90% of Canada's crops.**

- Honey bees were all brought to Canada from Europe. They probably pollinate 3 – 4 of our crops such as cherries, blueberries and help with canola but none of the other crops from potatoes to corn. Honey bees are also infested with as many as 18 viral, bacterial, fungal and insect pest disorders. Some of these disease problems are likely responsible for damage to our native bees. About 50 people die in North America from bee stings and thousands end up annually with hypoallergic reactions.



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**Cheetahs run at 70 mph and chimps are 8 times stronger than humans.**

- The actual measured fastest cheetah speed was 57 mph and chimpanzees are probably a little fitter and stronger than the average human.

**Antibiotics, sulphur drugs, salt and so on, all act as pesticides.**

- Anything that kills a pest is a pesticide so all fungicides, insecticides and herbicides selective or otherwise are pesticides.

**No such this as Irish potatoes and French beans or Hungarian peppers.**

- Most of the food we eat originated in the Americas from Mexico to Argentina. Crops such as corn, dry beans, snap beans, runner beans, all peppers, all squash, potatoes, peanuts, sunflowers, quinoa, avocados, artichokes, all tomatoes, many kinds of nuts, chewing gum, sweet potatoes, tomatillos, tapioca (cassava), vanilla, chocolate, papaya, chia, pineapple and many other minor crops. Did I miss any? All are continental American.

**Advertisements that promise miracles.**

- There are all kinds of elixirs, dusts and assorted “organic” amendments that promise miracles. The miracles are really the profits that the seller makes from these wonder products. Always read the labels very carefully. I always think about the cure for baldness, the advertising looks convincing but why are there so many bald men around even royals like Prince William and Harry. Wouldn't they both like a cure for baldness?

**Some people never learn.**

- Every year when poinsettias are sold for Christmas some old wag will say how poisonous these plants are to house pets. Countless tests have shown that poinsettias are fed to test animals the plant leaves and stems are NOT poisonous but it's reported that they taste awful.

**Dr. Ieuan R. Evans, Forensic Plant Pathologist 780-987-4398 [dr.irevans@gmail.com](mailto:dr.irevans@gmail.com)**

**Lily beetle musings by Laurie Hepper**

The saga continues with my lilies, having unpotted all my lilies last fall to put them into coolers to make room for my car to fit into the garage. The lilies are waiting for new garden beds to be made. When I unpotted Claude Shride I unearthed about eight orange bean shaped cocoons. Hmmm. Into a zip-lock bag they went as I was not sure if any of these things had occupants and what they might be. I figured they might be beetle cocoons but had never found one before, let alone eight. I looked at the bag today as I was repotting a few lilies and had found the bag in my garden supplies. Well I had a very interesting surprise there had been no emerging red beetles. Good news. There was a little wasp in there though, and it was not in there last fall. So I had the wasp in my garden in Edmonton???? How else would it get into a pupae that was in one of my pots of lilies. My question is how did I get pupae in mid summer last year that did not emit beetles last year but emitted a wasp sometime between last fall and spring this year. Were they all parasitized cocoons? Then what happened to the other wasps? Did the beetles emerge earlier last year from this pot and started munching last spring and got sprayed or picked. Timing is weird. However, it was also good that I had ziplocked the pupae as they could very well have hatched out beetles this spring. I was not going to send them to the dump and have a problem here in Sicamous that Edmonton ended up with in the Cloverbar dump, thus the bag, also to keep it and see what emerged. As I got a wasp I am going to assume it was beetle pupae, but will see if I can identify the wasp before I will be positive.

**DON'T FORGET TO GO ONLINE FOR THE 2023 LILY SHOW SCHEDULES.** The Martagon Show is the same as 2022 if you have that one. July 1&2

The Annual Show is located in the Rose House at Greenland Gardens Centre, Sherwood Park. July 22 & 23.

Staging Hours and Public viewing hours are covered on page 2 in this newsletter.