

THE SIMPLE LIFE

THE HOME GARDEN

GARDEN CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER

Prepare Borders, if not yet done.
Plant: Hardy Border Plants, Alpines, Hardy Biennials, Hardy Climbers, Shrubs, Deciduous Trees, Fruit Trees, Bulbs. And especially—Paeonies, Evergreen Shrubs, Flowering Shrubs, Phloxes, Irises, Carnations, Pansies, Violets, Canterbury Bells, Foxgloves, Wallflowers, Roses, Alliums, Chives, Watercress, in streams, Pot Crocuses, Pot Tritonias, Pot Hyacinths, Pot Narcissus, Pot Tulips, Lilies, Anemones, Comifers, Bulbs, in Window Boxes; Cabbages, Coleworts, Savoy Cabbages.
Sow: Sweet Peas, Broad Beans, Mushrooms, Cucumber, Corn Salad, Mustard and Cress in heat, Cucumber in heat.

FEW garden pictures are more interesting than those of spring, where bulbs are largely grown. The flowers range through every shade of color, yield endless variety, and, being comparatively cheap and easily grown, they make the best of plants for amateurs. In most gardens there already exist positions where the judicious planting of bulbs would, in their flowering season, create a distinct break in the garden scheme. Daffodils and Crocuses are examples of bulbs that grow freely in grass when that can be left unbroken until the foliage of the bulbs ripen. Chionodoxas (Glory of the Snow), Scilla sibirica, Fritillaria Meleagris (Snake's Head) and Dog's tooth Violets all readily increase in grass and flower during the opening months of the year. While the meadow and woodland offer unlimited scope for the naturalizing of bulbs, most amateurs are obliged to confine their efforts within the garden proper, and although the effects obtained are not so fine, still, where planting is skillfully carried out with selected varieties of bulbs, the limited border becomes a marvel of beauty, only in a more humble way. Too little importance is often attached to the planting season of bulbs. They should not be exposed to the sun.

Where it is intended to plant this season there should be no delay in placing orders, and any necessary work in forming borders or preparation of the ground ought also to be put in hand at once. Bulbs are broadly classed under two cultural heads—first, those which are best planted in spring, including Crinums, Eucomis, late Gladioli, etc., and those which are delivered by bulb dealers in autumn and require planting before winter. A choice bulb border should have a sunny aspect, no position being more suitable than the foot of a wall. By marking out the border upon paper and indicating the position of bulbs, one gets a reasonable idea of what work is to be done. Use index figures, Nos. 1, 2, 3, to show the three grades of soil necessary for all bulbs: (1) A rich soil, composed of loam, charred garden prunings and well-decayed manure, all thoroughly mixed; (2) Ordinary garden soil, preferably light, to which well-decayed leaf soil may be added with advantage; (3) Very light, poor soil, best described as starvation ground.

Preparing the Border

On well-drained land no artificial drainage is necessary, but in the case of close retentive soils the ground should be opened 30 inches deep, the lowest 6 inches being replaced by broken tiles, brickbats or similar material, covering this with rough cinders or small brick chips. The necessary positions of the various bulbs should then be filled with suitable soil, as advised above; old mortar rubble and stone chippings in moderate quantity mixed with heavy soils materially assist in keeping it open and warm, while similar material has a cooling influence on hot soils. Planting should be done as soon as the bulbs come to hand, always choosing weather when the soil works freely. The depth at which to plant bulbs is regarded as a debatable point, and certainly varies with locality. Where the rainfall is heavy shallow planting is advisable, and better results follow planting small bulbs at 3 inches deep than the same variety planted 6 inches deep. On heavy soils it is best to cover with light mulching any bulbs of doubtful hardiness in winter. Upon light warm soils I invariably practice deep planting. Tritelias, Crocuses and Brodiaeas having small bulbs are planted 6 inches deep, while large bulbs, like the Belladonna Lily (Amaryllis Belladonna) and Eucomis, should have the crown placed 4 inches to 6 inches below the ground level. Varieties of Crinum Powellii will often require planting 18 inches to 24 inches deep in the soil.

The distance apart in planting may be governed by taste. When only first size bulbs are used, a minimum distance of four times the greatest diameter of the bulb will form a safe guide, while in all permanent planting the distance apart should be increased one half.

Many bulbous plants such as Crocuses, Sternbergias and Amaryllis produce their flowers in advance of the foliage. In the case of others, the leaves fade early in the year, leaving no trace save a bare patch of soil, for example, Tulips, Alliums, Tritelias, etc., while alone stand the Camassias, whose leaves depart with the opening flowers. As these lose half their beauty without foliage, so with many occupants of the bulb border, it is necessary to associate another bulb or plant whose leaves are more persistent throughout the year. Mossy Saxifrages, like muscoides, Rhei and Compositi give the brightest carpets of green, and are suitable for the dwarfest bulbs. Santolina incana, dwarf Lavender and Cerastium tomentosum have shades of grey foliage, and by frequent clipping during

summer they may be kept quite low. Geum montana and Heuchera glabra when kept to single crowns and grown in the sun produce vigorous rosettes of leaves, which color well in spring and autumn. All these plants are cheap and are readily increased by division during spring or autumn.

Selections of Bulbs—Poorest Soils

Eranthis cilicium—This is a better garden plant than the old winter Aconite; flowers yellow, in January and February.
Leucojum autumnale, a dainty Snowflake, which flowers in August, white.

Iris reticulata and its varieties flower in March; they cannot be planted too freely.

Stylosa, speciosa and alba often flower in midwinter, but yield their richest harvest in spring.

Ostrowskia magnifica, a noble Campanula, light blue flowers on 2-foot stems, in July.

Sternbergia lutea and macrantha, glossy yellow Crocus-like flowers in autumn; fischeriana flowers in spring.

Tulipa Greigii (scarlet), kaufmaniana (white, carmine and yellow) and the native sylvestris (yellow) should all have a place.

Triteleia uniflora (Spring Starflower) makes lovely masses of white star-shaped flowers in April; the flowers only open in sunshine.

Zephyranthes candida, flowers white in autumn, is often used as an edging to beds and borders.

Moderately Rich Soil

Anemone (Windflower) apennina and blanda, blue Wood Anemones.

A. Fulgens, a vivid scarlet, flowers during April.

Allium neapolitanum, tall, globular, white flower heads, flowers in May.

Brodiaea coccinea has pendent orange scarlet flowers.

B. Howells, lilacina has lilac flowers, early summer.

Camassia Leichtlini and its varieties are the best; flower-spikes like miniature Eremurus in June.

Chionodoxa (Glory of the Snow) Lucilia and gigantea, flowers porcelain blue in March.

Crinum longiflorum, flowers during August and September, the earliest Crinums to grow.

Galanthus Cassaba is a peerless Snowdrop.

Ixiolirion Palassi, a pretty June flowering bulb.

Narcissus Queen of Spain, a splendid sort.

Platycodon Mariessii and alba are valuable in that they flower during September.

Scilla sibirica, dark blue flowers, during April.

S. peruviana and alba flower in July (tender).

Bulbs for Rich Soil

Amaryllis Belladonna must have a warm corner to flower successfully; flowers silvery pink on 2-foot stems during September and October.

Eremurus robustus and elwesianus. Plant crowns 4 inches below surface of soil.

Gladioli Ardens (scarlet), The Bride (white), General Scott (white, yellow throat) and Peach Blossom. Plant in October and protect with light mulching. All flower in July. Plant late Gladioli during March.

Montbretias Gerbe d'Or (lemon), Rayon d'Or (orange) and Germania (crimson); these are cheap varieties with well-expanded petals. Plant in October.

Narcissus Mme. de Graaff.—If only one Narcissus is planted, this is pre-eminently the variety.

Eucomis punctata has small, close-set spikes like Eremurus, 18 inches high, flowers greenish yellow in September and October. Plant in March.

Crinum Powellii and varieties require a warm corner; they are very beautiful in autumn.

ZEPHYRANTHES

The Zephyranthes form a group of slender bulbous plants inhabiting the temperate regions of America. They number about forty kinds, some of which are weedy and of little worth; others which were grown in quantity in Dean Herbert's time are now apparently lost to cultivation, leaving about a dozen that one can recommend as interesting plants of real garden value. Only one kind can be considered absolutely hardy—Z. candida. This can be grown well in open fields, but the others require the warmest position the garden affords and the shelter of a warm south wall in all counties save the extreme southwest,

where they would be likely to thrive in more open exposures.

Generally, cultivation in wide pans and the slight protection and something of the general treatment given to tender alpines will prove the better way of growing these bulbs, and if an alpine-house is available in which to protect the plants in very severe weather and display them when in flower, no better treatment can be given. They thrive in a strong loam rendered porous by the addition of broken sandstone, coarse basic slag or other hard porous substance, mainly as a means of draining the bases of the bulbs. If grown in quantity, an open unheated frame well fitted to exclude frost when covered with mats, etc., will serve to grow all the hardier kinds, and these, fortunately, are both numerous and good.

Many Habranthus and some Prycellas are found in gardens incorrectly labelled Zephyranthes, and at one time when Habranthus brachyandrum was scarce Zephyranthes carinata was substituted for it; now, the Habranthus being common and the Zephyranthes scarcer, the reverse conditions prevail! All

mon in all the countries and islands of Central America, and is now widely distributed in all countries interested in horticulture, in many of which, and particularly in Ceylon, it occurs as a wildling, having escaped from gardens.

Z. gracilifolia is a dainty little plant. It has very narrow, rolled leaves, forming long slender tubes and lilac rose flowers on slender stems 6 inches high, narrowly funnel-shaped and not quite erectly poised. It prefers a damp yet warm site, and it is best raised from seeds every second year, for the bulbs are naturally short-lived under cultivation. It grows with Z. candida about Monte Video.

Z. lindleyana.—This was common at one time, but I have not seen it for years. It has slender, grassy leaves and equally slender stems bearing broadly funnel-shaped, rich red flowers with overlapping petals, 2 inches long. It inhabits the mountainous regions of Mexico.

Z. macrosiphon is another rare plant for a long time lost to cultivation, but reintroduced to cultivation by the late Mr. W. Thompson of Ipswich a few years ago. It has the leaves of carinata and the flowers like candida, but colored red, and they are not held quite erect.

The petals are spoon-shaped and overlapping. A pretty Zephyranthes of singularly clear coloring and refined shape. It hails from the mountains of Mexico.

Z. rosea.—The Cuban Zephyranthes is well known in gardens. It has narrow, Crocus-like leaves and stems six inches high having rich rose flowers, which expand fully, showing a greenish white throat. It grows well in pans under quite ordinary treatment, and seedlings are easily raised and soon reach a flowering size. It inhabits dry pastures in Central Cuba, and there is considerable variation in the vegetative powers of bulbs from varying districts.

Z. Treatiae is an early flowering kind from the marshes of Florida, requiring the protection of a temperate house for its proper development. It has narrow, grassy leaves and slender stems 1 foot high bearing white flowers 3 inches long, the tubes of which are prolonged and greenish, and the reverse of the broad white petals is lined with red. A scarce plant, pleasing in its color scheme and quite easy to grow.

Z. tubispatha is a common kind found in nearly every collection of bulbs. It has bright green, narrow and thin leaves one foot long, slender stems six inches high bearing white flowers 2 inches long, broadly funnel-shaped, keeled green externally and with a greenish tube; the spathe or flower-envelope is quite intact and somewhat prolonged, with a very small slit at the top. It is found in all the West Indian Islands and many countries on the mainland.

Z. verecunda is another rare plant that at one time was quite common in cultivation. It has the leaves of carinata and the flowers are broadly funnel-shaped, white, tinged red externally, 3 inches or more long and narrow-petalled. It is found in the mountain regions of Central Mexico.

It is a matter for regret that so few of the smaller Amaryllids are known to general cultivation. There are many hundreds of pretty bulbous plants in the genera Gethiis, Sternbergia, Zephyranthes, Habranthus, Phycella, Cyrtanthus, Gastronema, Crinum, Nerine, Ismene and Pancratium and many Alstroemeria that are just on the borderland of hardiness, requiring a cool house or frame for their culture, while a great number may be grown in sheltered places without protection. These properly treated would add immeasurably to the interest of the garden, particularly as many of them flower in winter. The Zephyranthes constitute a charming family, and it is a pity the various kinds are not more grown in our gardens. As I have mentioned, they are, generally speaking, not difficult to grow.—G. B. M.

LATE-FLOWERING TULIPS

A field of the late or May-flowering Tulips is a sight not easily to be forgotten, and one not readily pictured by the pen. When all the other Tulips have blossomed and their petals fallen, these late-flowering kinds keep the garden gay. From the earliest of the Van Thol kinds seen in the dull November days in West End florists' shops, with their 3-inch long stems and quaint little blossoms of scarlet, to the middle or end of May, when the giant Darwin kinds on 2 1/2 feet high stems are seen,

we may have Tulips with us. For the moment, however, these Darwin kinds claim attention, and by reason of their giant stature, fine form and rich and varied coloring they are of the greatest value in the garden. They have emanated from Tulipa gesneriana, and impress one by their stately character and handsome flower-cups, largely of self colors. Bold and effective in the distance and most brilliant when approached, these Tulips have no equal—and certainly no rival—in the garden in May. Those of your readers who know their value will need no reminder at this season, but they whose knowledge of the Tulip family is limited to a few beds of the so-called bedding kinds certainly miss one of the finest hardy flowers. They are as easily grown as a Potato or Cabbage. A point of value has yet to be mentioned—it is their utility earlier in the season when gradually forced into bloom. The term "gradually" is employed advisedly, so that the splendid stature of the plants be not weakened by undue forcing.

How to Plant

These Tulips prefer deeply-worked and moderately rich soils, and in applying organic manure to the soil it should be well decayed and buried some 6 inches below the bulbs. These Tulips are by no means fastidious as to soil, but the greatest vigor of stem, leaf and flower is always seen when the plants are grown in a rather strong loamy soil. What is most important is that the soil be not waterlogged.

Where and When to Plant

Scorching sun and keen northeasterly wind, play havoc with these lovely flowers, so that when selecting a position let it be one where shelter of some kind can be afforded. A thin evergreen fence, a belt of shrubs, a partition fence between gardens, will provide all that is required. The sunk garden, if this is protected around by raised banks and plantings of shrubs and evergreens, is an ideal spot, and, of course, the smallest of gardens boasts of its sheltered places. The bulb is perfectly hardy, and will ensure care when selecting a position that the growth is made under the most congenial conditions, each garden affords. Had I to name one month I should unhesitatingly say October. While this period may be accepted as the best, the bulbs can be planted over a much longer time. Experimentally and otherwise Tulips have been planted in the opening days of the new year, but such as these, while flowering well, lose in height and in size of bloom.

Depth to Plant

One of the most common errors in gardening is the fear of planting bulbous plants too deeply. To plant them practically on the surface of the soil is to court failure. The correct depth to plant these Tulips is 4 inches to 5 inches, measured from the top of the bulb to the surface. In other words, the base of the bulb should be, roughly, 6 inches below the surface, or 5 inches in the case of very cold or water-holding soils. The ground should be in readiness for the planting in October or November. Where beds are being planted wholly with the bulbs, the soil to the above-named depth should be first removed, the bulbs arranged at one level and the soil replaced. The dibber is not a good planting tool as a rule, and not only are the bulbs inserted at different depths, but frequently when a tapering dibber is used the bulbs do not reach the bottom of the hole. If the dibber is used for planting, only a large blunt-ended one should be tolerated, and marked as to depth. While the dibber under the above conditions may be tolerated on light soils, its use on heavy soils is not recommended. The garden trowel and small hand-fork are both good planting tools.

Treatment After Flowering

Where the beds are required for other things in summer, the Tulips may be carefully lifted in mid-June and laid in soil in the reserve garden to ripen. At the end of July lift the bulbs and give them a long rest in a dry, airy place. Thus treated they will last for years. The following are all

Good and Showy Varieties

Europe, Flambeau, Glow, Salmon King, Rev. H. H. D'Ormain and Pride of Haarlem, all of scarlet or similar shades. King Harold, Hecla and Negro are of maroon-crimson or scarlet or allied shades. Loveliness, Queen of Roses, May Queen and Clara Butt are among the best of the delicate rose shades. The Sultan and Zulu are of the darkest type, while Dream, Dorothy and the Rev. H. Ewbank are shades of heliotrope that appeal to many. Suzon and Margaret, soft blush rose, are very charming. In all cases where possible beds or groups of one color should be planted.—E. H. Jenkins.

SOME GOOD POINTS

Look over young trees and remove any wired labels that may have been left on last spring.

Mulch the asparagus and rhubarb beds with well rotted manure. In spring, when ground is dry, spade into the soil.

When you are eating an apple and run across a worm, it should remind you that neglecting to spray last spring is the cause.

Remove black knots from those plum and cherry trees and burn. When the knots are removed from a large limb, rub on a little kerosene.

Cultivation, spraying, pruning, fertilizing are the four corner stones of orchard management. In which one did you fail the past season?