

Indoor Culture of Dutch Bulbs

Rev. Jas. Fletcher, Whitby, Ont.

DUTCH bulbs possess many advantages for indoor culture. They are inexpensive and of less trouble than other house plants, as they can be stored away in the cellar when not in bloom. They stand cold which would destroy other plants. They can be depended upon to bloom when other plants are scarce, and in beauty and fragrance they are not excelled by flowers of any other class.

CULTURE

Their culture is simple, but there are certain principles which must be observed, or failure will be the result. They must have suitable soil if you wish to have bulbs for future use. Some of them as hyacinths and narcissi, when grown in water give good bloom, but the bulbs are of no use afterwards. The soil usually recommended for potting bulbs is a compost consisting of leaf mold, sand, and well rotted cow manure in equal parts. Good garden soil, well enriched, answers the purpose very well, but there must be no fresh manure in it or it will rot the bulbs.

After blossoming is over the bulbs may be put away in some retired place, secure from frost, and sparingly watered until the foliage has died down, after which they had better be planted in the flower garden, and fresh bulbs used in the house for next year's bloom.

For the window, tomato cans in which holes have been made, or boxes, are better than earthenware pots, as they give more root room, and are not so likely to dry out rapidly in our heated rooms.

DRAINAGE

To ensure good drainage, place an inch of broken crockery, pebbles or similar material at the bottom of a five inch pot, cover with moss or other material to keep the earth from clogging the holes, fill up with potting soil, and place the bulbs in the soil, so that the crowns are about level with the top. Eight or ten crocus, four or five tulips, two or three hyacinth or narcissus bulbs may be placed in such a pot. Then water well and let drain before putting away.

The most important part of the treatment is to place the pots in a cool, dark cellar, and keep them there until the roots have completely filled the pots. This will be from six to ten weeks for crocus, tulip and Dutch hyacinths. Roman hyacinths and narcissus do not take quite so long. Do not try to hurry them by bringing them to the light or heat, as they will resent it by giving you poor bloom, or none at all. When roots appear at the bottom of the pot they are ready to be taken up.

If the cellar is moist, they will not need

watering again until taken up; if dry, water sparingly. If the cellar is damp, it is not suitable, as they are likely to rot. The coolest place you can find is the best place for them. They will stand light frost without serious injury.

Wherever kept they must be gradually accustomed to the light, placing them for several days in partial shade, and not bringing them to the sunlight until the foliage is strong enough to endure it. Most living rooms in the winter are too warm for the successful growth of bulbs; our sleeping rooms suit them better. The cooler they are kept the finer will be the bloom and the longer it will last. Late planted bulbs do not require so long a time in the cellar, as roots are formed more rapidly. By careful management a continual succession of bloom may be secured from Christmas until Easter.

A Wild Flower Garden

R. S. Hood, Galt, Ont.

I enclose you a snapshot of my wild flower garden. It is situated on the north side of the kitchen. The house projects eight feet past the kitchen, which makes a very suitable place for it as it gives a north eastern exposure. The bed is eight feet wide by sixteen feet long. It is filled with plants brought from the woods and swamp, and planted by myself. It has taken some years to get the collection together. It is and has been a source of pleasure to others and to myself, and not by any means the least of the pleasure is the fact that it makes a nice corner at our home.



Mr. Hood's Wild Flower Garden

All the plants are strong and healthy, and have large foliage. They have taken very kindly to their new home. Occasionally during the summer I give them a treat in the shape of a little stimulant, to which they respond very generously.

There are over two hundred trilliums. Their blooms were exceptionally large last spring. Included also are five varieties of ferns (one fine specimen of the maiden-hair variety), three varieties of lady slippers, thirty-five of the large yellow slippers, twelve of the small yellow variety, and twenty one of the tall or showy slipper. The top of the rack or slip of several was a beautiful shade of pink, others white. One of the showy variety had three flowers on one stem, six had two, and the rest one each.

There are thirty-eight lilies, ranging in height from two feet to six feet. One has twelve dear little graceful blooms on it. Others have from one to ten. I have also several plants of Jack-in-the-pulpit, blood root, violets, hepatica, false Solomon seal and May apple. Every one to his or her own taste, but the little wild flower garden is my favorite.

When spraying, do it thoroughly.



Horticultural Possibilities of the Far North. A Yukon Garden Photographed in August