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Delphinium

for Every Garden

By JACK OFFERMAN

Member of the American Delphinium Society

IT is interesting to know, that more flower lovers in the Southwest are growing Delphinium species than ever before. Many gardeners are looking forward to the release of the new crop and their new hybrid strain. The change from the old fashioned Delphinium to the new hybrid is enormous. The flowers are much larger, double, semi-double and more brilliant; they make such wonderful growth the first year, that seeds planted in August and September will be ready for exhibition the following season. If flower stalks are cut down to the ground after the first flowering, there will be a second blooming in Fall. Seed sown in early spring will produce Maidenbloom same year. An established plant occasionally gives flower spikes 4 feet high, with individual flowers up to 3 inches across and more. Last year's new introduction of the Pacific Hybrid Delphinium was named "Percival," a pure white flower with Black Bee, a companion to the all-white Galahad Series, one of the greatest achievements in the Giant Whites.



Delphinium Grower Jack Offerman holding an array of his flowers.

There are quite a few more named varieties in the Pacific Hybrid Strain, the most handsome of all Delphinium known. They come in a fine color ranging from sky-blue to the darkest blue, royal purple, lavender, violet, etc., a color combination never seen before in the better Delphinium.

Of all the plants we grow in our gardens, Delphinium are the most indispensable; no perennial garden is complete without this magnificent flower. Wherever you live they are easily grown from seed. Where the summers are sudden, drouth and blistering hot, the handsomest of the Delphinium tribe must be treated as biennial, and often perennial, since heat resistance is being bred into our crop by American breeders. With a little care, Delphinium will topnotch other favorite plants in your garden.

If your garden needs any change in the border, replace it with a few Delphiniums; it will give the artistic gardener an opportunity to create everchanging pictures and color combinations.

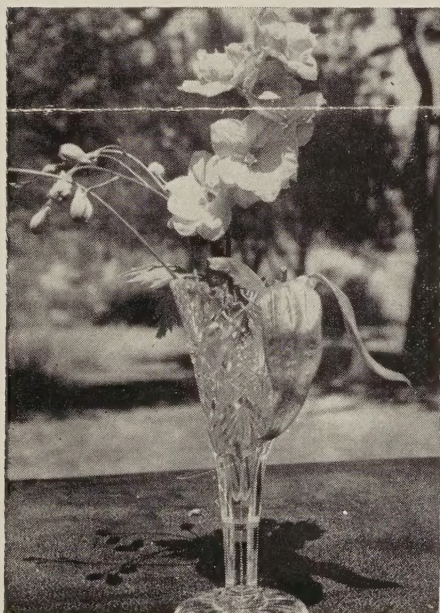
When preparing a seed bed dig space 8 inches deep; add equal part sand or peat moss to good garden loam and see to it that bed is 3 inches higher than the ground. Rake bed even and sow seed evenly on surface of the soil; firmly press them in gently by means of a board. A light covering of sifted soil or peat moss (not more than $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch) will afford the ideal conditions for germination. Water with fine spray and darken bed with wet paper or dampened burlap.

After 10 to 14 days when seedlings appear, remove the burlap and give more light and air. Never let seedbed dry out. No seed can grow in dry and hard soil.

When seedlings are 3 inches high, transplant them in sandy soil 4 inches apart; when plants are strong enough (usually 8 inches high) place them in permanent position. Add stable manure to each plant about one foot deep. You will have flowers in four months from seed.

For best result sow seeds in boxes indoors. You can protect your seeds against strong rainfalls, which otherwise, unprotected in the garden, may wash many of the seeds away.

Now go to work and don't take your Delphinium growing too seriously. Get some fun out of it as you go along. Give your plants loose soil; give plenty of water and sunshine and the joys of beautiful flowers will be yours.



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