



# DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA NEWSLETTER

CREEKSIDE GENEVEVE, B, FD,  
BI, FLOWER OF THE YEAR

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[WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFGEORGIA.ORG](http://WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFGEORGIA.ORG)

HAPPY NEW YEAR

## WHAT DAHLIA GROWERS CAN DO IN JANUARY

Here you are in the midst of winter and wondering if you have any dahlia chores. I will suggest two that you can do now or you can save them for February. If you dug and stored your tubers then you can work to improve the soil in your beds. If not, and they are still in the ground, safe under a 4"-6" layer of mulch, you can still consider which new varieties to grow this coming summer.

### #1- WORK TO IMPROVE YOUR SOIL

You can take advantage of any warm day to work in your garden with the aim of improving its overall condition. I recommend it be done now so there is a longer time for changes to occur before planting. As long as the soil in your beds is neither wet nor damp, now would be a fine time to incorporate any available source of organic matter.

If during the past summer you noticed any area that possibly had a drainage problem now is the time to correct it by adding loft and height to the soil. I use loft here to describe an airiness or lightness in the soil as opposed to sticky,

compacted soil. Adding overall height to the bed will allow you to plant your dahlia tubers or plants higher in the bed and further away from low spots where water might collect.

Organic material like rotting leaves, decomposing or completely composted manures, finely chipped bark, or even small bits of granite ("turkey grit" or "8s and 9s"), available from any local rock quarry, will add valuable loft to soil and increase the tilth (workability or crumbliness) of the soil. If granite rock is not available you can add vermiculite or perlite to your soil to achieve the same results. **You are creating space between the smallest particles that make up the soil so that plant roots can grow and spread freely.** You are also increasing the drainage capability of your soil. The organic matter also has valuable nutrients that benefit your plants and attract earthworms whose work, in turn, further increases the loftiness of the soil and the nutrients available to the plants. Some people advocate the use of green manure. (continued on page 4)

## DAHLIA SOC OF GEORGIA JANUARY MEETING

**MONDAY, JANUARY 16**

**7:30 P. M.**

**ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN**

**GARDEN CLASSROOM**

After a terrific Christmas Party at Bob Hoge's north Atlanta home and with the holidays behind us it is time to begin focusing on the new 2006 dahlia-growing season. And what a kick-off to the new season we have planned for our January meeting! As has been customary for many years the meeting has

been dedicated to showing slides of the new introductions. Well, that will continue to be the case but this will not be your mother's traditional new introductions slide show. The new ADS slide librarian Claudia Briggs has wedded eighty-six pictures of the new 2006 introductions to the bells and whistles of DVD technology to create an outstanding presentation. You most definitely will want to see the best new introductions show ever and get the new growing season off to a rousing start. See you on the 16th. Frank McComb

## 2006 ANNUAL CALENDAR

- JANUARY MEETING, JAN 16, ABG
- FEB MEETING, FEB 20, ABG
- ATL GARDEN & PATIO SHOW  
FEB 2-5 GALLERIA CONV CTR
- SE FLOWER SHOW, FEB 8-12,  
GA WORLD CONG CTR, HALL C
- MARCH MEETING, MAR 20, ABG
- APRIL TUBER SALE, APR 17, ABG
- MAY TUBER SALE, MAY 15, ABG
- JUNE MEETING, JUNE 19, ABG
- JULY, ANNUAL PICNIC, TBA
- AUGUST MEETING, AUG 21, ABG
- CAROLINAS DAHLIA SHOW UNC  
ABORETUM, ASHEVILLE-SEPT 9  
& 10
- NATIONAL DAHLIA SOCIETY  
DAHLIA SHOW, LONG ISLAND,  
NY SEPTEMBER 14-17
- TENNESSEE DAHLIA SHOW,  
CLARION HOTEL, CHATTA-  
NOOGA, SEP 23 & 24
- GEORGIA DAHLIA SHOW, ABG,  
SEPT 30 & OCT 1
- ALABAMA DAHLIA SHOW, BIR-  
MINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDEN,  
OCT 7 & 8
- GA NAT'L FAIR DAHLIA SHOW,  
PERRY, GA OCTOBER 11-13
- OCTOBER MEETING, MINI  
DAHLIA SHOW, OCT 16, ABG
- NOV MEETING, NOV 18, ABG
- CHRISTMAS PARTY— DEC, TBA

## 2006 DAHIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA OFFICERS

Our new President for 2006 is **Brian Killingsworth**. This will be his second two year term having served as president in 1995-96. Brian has been serving as our Annual Show Chairman for the past few years. The new CO-Chairpersons for our show will be **Dan & Paula Pinholster**.

**Frank McComb** will serve another year as the Vice-President and Program Chairman. This will be his fourth year in serving in

that capacity. **Frank** is also our ADS Representative and has served in that position for a number of years. He writes the articles for the ADS Bulletin in the society news section. Frank's beautiful writing style is always so interesting to read in the bulletin.

**Henry Everett** is our Treasurer again this year after doing a wonderful job in that capacity last year. He is our membership director also.

We still need a Secretary for this year so if anyone would like to accept that position please talk to Brian. We only do minutes six times a year so the requirement is minimal.

**John Kreiner** will serve as our Marketing/PR person with emphasis on our trade show participation and other marketing venues for promoting our society to the general public.

**"Our new President for 2006 is Brian Killingsworth.**

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### 2006 DUES

The new year is here so it is time to write one more check for your annual dues. If you joined in August 2005 or later your dues payment included all of 2006. The dues will be the same as in previous years, \$27 for an individual and \$ 30 for a family unit. Make your check out to The Dahlia Society of Georgia and mail to Henry Everett our Treasurer or you can pay him at our January meeting. Henry's address is: 2690 Gleneagles Drive, Tucker, GA 30084

### ATLANTA GARDEN & PATIO SHOW/SOUTHEASTERN FLOWER SHOW

We will be starting the new year off with a bang come February 2-5 as the Atlanta **Garden & Patio Show** will be held at the **Cobb Galleria**. We will have a booth like we did last year with our computer running continuously showing pictures of beautiful dahlias for the public to view as they pass by. The show hours will be 10 AM-6PM Thurs-

day & Sunday and 10 AM-8 PM Friday & Saturday. **The Southeastern Flower Show** will be right on the heels of the Patio Show. It starts on Wednesday, Feb 8 at the **Georgia World Congress Center Hall C**, through the 12th of February. The daily hours will be 10 AM to 8 PM each day except on Sunday it will close at 6 PM

**We are committed to manning our booth and table respectively at both shows so we need many of our members to volunteer to sit for a few hours handing out literature, our new color brochure, and signing up people to receive our newsletter for a few issues. Please contact John if you would like to volunteer. You get in free to each show.**

## 2005 CHRISTMAS PARTY

Many thanks to Bob Hoge for hosting our Christmas party last month in his lovely home. We had a great time with some excellent food as always and much conversation. Touring Bob's home was very interesting with all of his paintings and art objects. We had the gift exchange and all got a new gardening (for the most part) item

for use during the growing season. After the singing of Christmas Carols accompanied by Regina Kreiner on the piano, we honored John Kreiner with a plaque denoting his service for the past three years as President. The officers for 2006 were installed at the end of the party. Even though we had threatening weather with thunder-

storms we had 26 members and spouses in attendance. Thanks to everyone for coming and bringing such great food.



**Remember last summer?** This is Santa Claus, BB, ID, RI R/W, growing in the garden of Ed Bonci and Pam Jenson in Eastchester, NY. Ed & Pam are affiliate members of the DS of Georgia. **Left is Campos Gigi, M, FD, LB BR/Y**. Both flowers grow well in the South.



## THE HISTORY OF THE DAHLIA

You may have read about the history of the dahlia in different publications and received different bits and pieces of information but from my own experience it has been like a shotgun effect so in this article we will try and put a logical and factual history together that we hope will be both interesting and informative.

The [Genus Dahlia](#) is native of Mesoamerica, principally in the high plains of Mexico also some species can be found in Gua-

temala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador & Costa Rica (Probably introduced by the Toltecs or their ancestors) as well as parts of South America where it was introduced and at present there are 35 recognized species in existence. Botanically the Genus [Dahlia](#) belongs to the family [Compositae](#) (Asteraceae), tribe Heliantheae, and was given the Genus name "GEORGINA" in error in 1803, a name by which it is still known in many eastern parts of Europe.

The Dahlia has been in Europe for over two hundred years. It came from Mexico to the Botanical Gardens in Madrid towards the end of the eighteenth century and was named by Abbe Cavanille in honour of Andreas Dahl, Swedish scientist come environmentalist. The initial named species imported into Europe were *Dahlia pinnata*, *Dahlia rosea* and *Dahlia coccinea*. The first dahlias grown outside of

Madrid were single (open-centered) & Multi-ray open centre flowered.

It was not long before the horticultural growers of the day **discovered the Dahlia was a natural hybrid and when grown from seed, it readily changed its form and colour, so that today we have a range of Dahlia types that offer something to please everyone.** The first double flowered cultivars were called

Show and Fancy types. The Show were self-coloured, ball like flowers, while the Fancy ones were multi-coloured.

During the mid 1800's, these show and fancy flowers attained cult status with gardeners, and several thousand different cultivars were recorded. Other forms followed, in 1829 the first Anemone flowered dahlia appeared and then in

1850 the first Pompon were raised in Germany, and was named after the bobble on a French Sailor's hat. The origin of the Cactus & Decorative type belongs to the arrival of "Juarrezii" according to the written records it was imported as a piece of tuber from Mexico in 1872 to Holland. M. Van de Berg of Utrecht who had received this so-called species (Actually a cultivar) from Mexico and



Bill & Sharon Farmer, Bob Hoge, Henry Everett, "Pumpkin" & Jesse Usleton in Bob's backyard at the Christmas party.



Discussing their dahlia growing techniques in Bob's den are, Left to Right: Don Bloodworth, Mike Tsurutis, Dick Amundsen, Robin & Pat DeAndrade. Not facing the camera are Paula Pinholster and Janice Tsurutis.

released stock of the cultivar in 1874. Subsequently "Juarrezii", named after a President of Mexico, was introduced into the UK by W. Cullingford a Vice President of the NDS and distributed by H. Cannell after 1880. Collettertes are the last form of dahlia to have been raised, that have their origin in France and are due to sporting of dahlias at Jardin Botanique de Lyon at the end of the 19th century. Today, there are cultivars in the form of the waterlily, the peony, the

**(history continued)** the orchid, the chrysanthemum and the anemone, to say nothing of the main formations like the decorative (flat, broad petals), the cactus and semi-cactus types (rolled, pointed petals) and the ball forms (globular flowers) that have as their smallest relative the popular Pompon Dahlias that beguile so many gardeners.

There is every colour and colour combination to choose from, except the elusive blue (which we are still seeking) which is covered by the wide range of violet and mauve cultivars. Sizes range from the smallest types, called Topmix or Lilliput Dahlias to the giants that have blooms over a foot in diameter carried on powerful stems. Today's hybridizers are still seeking the true blue dahlia, as well as one with a scent, and one that is frost hardy. (Taken from the NDSUK website)

**(dahlias in January cont)** This term describes growing a winter hardy crop, such as rye grass, winter wheat or vetch, in your beds then plowing it in at least 6 weeks prior to planting your dahlias. I've used rye grass and have been pleased with the results. One note of caution- you will probably need to cut the rye grass before plowing it in and be sure to give it a full 6 weeks to start decomposition before trying to plant. One of the best growers in the southeast, Richard and Joy Strong from Birmingham, believe in letting Mother Nature and the winter weather work the soil. After digging and storing their tubers they simply plow their beds deeply and let winter rains and recurring frosts "reshape" the particles of soil. Keep in mind they have been growing in the same, built up beds for about 20 years so their soil is very rich and lofty.

**#2- CONSIDER WHICH NEW VARIETIES TO TRY THIS SUMMER**

Perhaps you saw a bloom or two at our September show or the mini show in October which you want to grow this year. Or, perhaps you have received several catalogs from the commercial dahlia growers that have varieties that are enticing you to try in your garden. Or, you have visited any of several internet sites that have gorgeous pictures of perfect dahlia blooms that make you want to have similar beauties in your 2006 garden. That is all part of the draw in growing this highly varied, multi-formed and multi-colored flower called the dahlia. **BUYER BEWARE!!** Keep in mind that probably 95% or more of the commercial dahlia growers are in the northwest and that the weather in Washington, Oregon and British Columbia, Canada differs "somewhat" from

our southern weather. Many of the dahlias that grow perfectly out there will croak the first +100 degree day we have. When we have several of those days in a row, many a dahlia as well as many other plant species will not make it. But have faith! There are still many other dahlias that can be classified as "heat tolerant" and can make it through a southern summer and still reward you with beautiful blooms in mid September and on into October and November. How can you tell which ones belong to which category? Study the ADS Classification and Handbook of Dahlias that you recently received with the December ADS Bulletin. This little book has a wealth of information and the section in the middle of the bulletin entitled "Cultivars listed by classification number with 200\_ awards listed by geographic region" will serve as a guide for which dahlia varieties will grow well here in the south. In the example page below the first column contains the size and color



**DAHLIA COCCINA 1795**



**DAHLIA PINATTA 1791**

classification #. The second column is the name of the dahlia. The 3<sup>rd</sup> column is the total of awards (blue and higher) won in the most recent year. **Now it really gets interesting.** Columns 4 and 5 show the # of blue ribbons (col. 4) and # of higher ribbons (col. 5) won in western USA - the home of cool, cloudy weather. Columns 6 and 7 show the same information for the Central USA-hot, dry summers, high temperature days. Columns 8 and 9 show similar winner information for the southeast **but**, also includes New England and most of eastern Canada. **The section with weather**

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**The section with weather most like our southern climate is the Central USA, columns 6 and 7.** Using the sample page below, apply some of what you just learned.

(1) In the case of # 370 **Taratahi Lilac**, the total wins of 269 were won in all 3 areas so it is a dahlia for any part of the USA. The same can be said for # 375, **Jessica** which won throughout the country, not in just one region of the country.

(2) In the case of # 372 **Frigoulet**, all of its 17 wins were on the west coast. None of that variety won in the Central or Eastern sections. Therefore, don't bother trying to grow **Frigoulet** in Georgia. The same conclusion can be drawn by studying the results of # 371, **Salmon Rays**. On the other hand, using # 383 **Barbara Z**, it is obvious that it "loves" the heat and does quite well in areas with hot

If you will apply these rules and study the classification booklet, you will save yourself a lot of disappointment (and money). There are plenty of dahlias that do well here in the south. Just think back to last fall's show or even your garden, and remember the variety of colors and shapes that can grow here. You just need to realize that some dahlias do a whole lot better than others, depending on the weather.

Where do I recommend you shop for these heat tolerant dahlias? I suggest that you buy most of your 2006 dahlias at our Society's April and May auctions. The members bring their own tubers that grew in their gardens last year. If they didn't prove viable last year we would have tossed them. The tubers and plants at the auctions are acclimated to southern growing conditions by at least one season, and many, numerous seasons. Enjoy this period of downtime. Soon you'll have plenty of physical work.

Brian Killingsworth

370 LAVENDER LINK	11	5	4	1	1	0	0
370 MAJESTIC KERRADE	4	3	1	0	0	0	0
370 MARTIN'S HEAT	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
370 ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH	9	3	0	3	3	0	0
370 TARATAKI LILAC	269	84	51	52	27	31	24
371 SALMON RAYS	34	22	9	2	1	0	0
372 MY FRITZ	4	3	1	0	0	0	0
373 APRICOT RAYS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
373 CAHANG DHP	7	4	0	1	0	2	0
373 FRIGOLET	17	16	1	0	0	0	0
373 KARI FRUIT SALAD	31	14	10	4	1	2	0
373 KIDWATIN PIONEER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
373 LITTLE JACK	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
373 SCARBROUGH BRILLIANT	24	14	4	3	0	2	1
374 ALFA SOCCORO	4	3	0	0	0	1	0
374 CENU	9	7	2	0	0	0	0
375 JESSICA	100	29	11	29	10	11	10
375 JESSICA TEARS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
375 PURPLE MIST	22	16	5	1	0	0	0
375 TANJON	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
381 COCONUT PUFF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
381 HELEN'S DAVID	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
381 WEDDING VOWS	9	5	3	1	0	0	0
381 WHITE LACE	6	3	2	1	0	0	0
381 WOODLAND'S SARAFINA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
382 ALLISON	7	1	2	4	0	0	0
382 COLWOOD ANN	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
382 COLWOOD FAITH	4	2	2	0	0	0	0
382 HISSY FITE	29	6	2	9	0	10	2
382 LINDA BLAST	3	0	0	0	0	3	0
382 MARY MORRIS	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
382 PINELANDS PEACE	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
382 SUN FLARE	3	0	0	2	1	0	0
382 VISTA LINDSEY	12	6	6	0	0	0	0
383 BARBARA E	24	0	0	14	8	2	0
383 HENOUS WILLIAM M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
383 ORANGE SPICE	2	1	0	0	0	1	0
384 CORAL FRILLS	8	3	2	0	0	2	1
384 HAN	3	3	0	0	0	0	0
386 COLWOOD EVE	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
386 ELLA B	7	3	4	0	0	0	0
386 HELEN'S LITTLE ED	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
386 HICKEY BRINLEAU	4	2	2	0	0	0	0
386 NICKY K	2	1	0	0	0	1	0
386 PINELANDS PAULA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
386 SKIPLEY SPYDER	4	3	1	0	0	0	0
387 CAPROS PAL'BRY TWINKLE	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
387 KORA PURPLE WONDER	1	1	0	0	0	0	0