



DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA NEWSLETTER

JESSICA , BB-C-FL, 2007
SOUTHERN STATES
FLOWER OF THE YEAR

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DAHLIASOCIETYOFGEORGIA.ORG

ANNUAL PICNIC AT CREEKSIDE

The annual DS of Georgia picnic will be held at Creekside Dahlia Farm, the home of Brian & Linda Killingsworth in Ellijay, GA. They grow over 1,000 dahlia plants so it is really something to see when they are all in bloom. It will be a little early in the season for that on August 4th but their home and the property is lovely and so enjoyable to stroll and view the garden and down by the

creek. The picnic is from 2-5 PM so plan on coming. Bring a covered dish of a salad, veggie, or dessert to share with the other attendees. Meat and drinks will be provide by the Society. Everyone is invited whether you are a member or not; and if you are not, this is a great time to come and check out the DS of Georgia.



Picnic in 2005 at the home of Henry Everett and Jesse Usleton. A great time was had by all.

Below — Dahlias blooming at Creekside.



2007

ANNUAL CALENDAR

- JULY MEETING, JULY 16, ABG
- PICNIC, CREEKSIDE DAHLIA FARM, ELLIJAY, GA, AUGUST 4
- AUGUST MEETING, AUG 20 ABG
- JUDGING SEMINAR, AUG 25, HOME OF DAN & PAULA PINHOLSTER, 73 BLACKFOOT TRAIL, CARTERSVILLE, GA
- NATIONAL DAHLIA SHOW, SEPT. 6–10, ST CHARLES, IL
- CAROLINAS DAHLIA SHOW SEPT. 15-16 , UNC ARBORETUM, ASHEVILLE, NC
- TENNESSEE DAHLIA SHOW 22-23 SEPT. East Brainard Church of Christ Gym, Chattanooga, TN
- GEORGIA DAHLIA SHOW SEPT 29/30 ABG, ATLANTA, GA
- ALABAMA DAHLIA SHOW OCT. 6, MCSWAIN SCIENCE CTR, BIRMINGHAM. AL
- GA NAT'L FAIR DAHLIA SHOW OCT 10-12, PERRY. GA
- MINI-SHOW OCTOBER 15, ABG
- NOVEMBER MEETING NOVEMBER NOV 19, ABG
- DECEMBER CHRISTMAS PARTY TBA

MEETING

MONDAY, JULY 16

7:30 PM

GEORGIA PACIFIC CLASSROOM

ORCHID CENTER

(FAR END OF THE PARKING LOT)

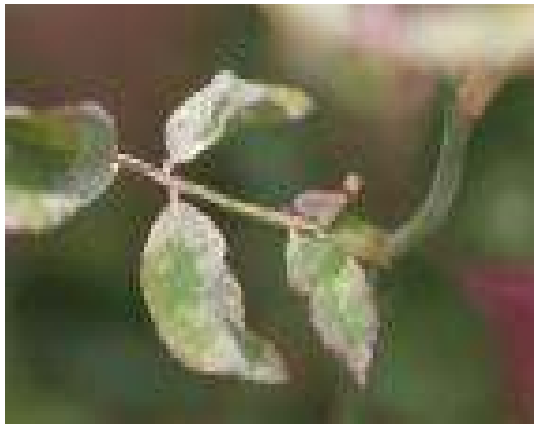
ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN

JULY CHORES IN THE DAHLIA GARDEN

Weather and Dahlias- Wet versus Dry (In this year's drought be sure to water!!)

Dahlias appreciate about 1" of water a week but they must have time to dry out as well. As mentioned before, dahlias do not like wet feet. Dahlias benefit from being grown in raised beds or hilled planting areas where the dahlias are not at the lowest point. If you are experiencing a large number of lost dahlias then they may be planted in a low spot that is not drying out enough. Since it's early July you can either replace lost dahlias, if you have spares, or with any dahlias that are showing stress and are often found in standing water, carefully dig up and replant in a better draining location.

POWDERY MILDEW- The bad news is damp weather encourages mildew problems and powdery mildew is the first and probably the worst you'll see. [The photo (left) shows powdery mildew.]



These dusty, milk colored powdery marks appear on lower leaves where poor air circulation doesn't allow the ground and leaves to dry out. If unchecked, powdery mildew will quickly work itself up the plant and severely stress the

plant. In addition, on infected plant will serve as a host for the disease which, in turn, will quickly jump to the other plants in your garden. The chemical treatment for this problem is a spraying of RUBIGAN at the first sighting of the powdery splotches. Usually one spraying, early in the season, will prevent a reoccurrence for the rest of the growing season. An organic approach is to remove all affected leaves and any mulch too close to the stem of the affected plants. The removal of lower leaves will permit better air circulation which will often prevent powdery mildew from ever visiting you garden. Be sure to remove all of these leaves and possible offending mulch from your garden and do not place it on your compost pile! Bag it and carry off. I recommend both spraying with Rubigan at least once each season and continual removal of lower leaves throughout the season.

Dry conditions stress the fast growing plants and also create the perfect environment for spider mites to attack your garden. Spider mites love hot, dry weather. As a rule of thumb, at the first site of coppery colored, lower leaves, blast the plants with your hose and repeat that several times a day. It will keep mites at bay and save you a lot of grief. If you're unable to rid the garden of mites you will need to use a miticide, like **Avid** to regain control. Using a miticide 3 times, 3 days apart should work but early detection and a hard spray of cold water is a lot cheaper and quicker. Beware- mites quickly become immune to miticides.

July is usually when you've caught your breath from all the planting, the dahlias have gained some size, and all of the dahlia predators have discovered this fresh, juicy source of food. Get out your sprayer and a container of soapy water or insecticide mix, and begin trying to find out which visiting vermin are in your dahlia

patch. If you think they will overwhelm your plants then begin an applicable spraying program, based on the vermin. If unsure, sticky yellow glue cards are available to lure the unwanted visitors and help you identify what you're up against. If you think that they are only a few and they are doing little damage, then try plucking them off and dropping them into a jar of soapy water or a mild mix of an insecticide. After all, they are only visiting and usually pass from existence within a couple of weeks. But, they are also followed by yet another plant menace or two.

A rogues' gallery of some "bad bugs" currently in Georgia follows:

APHIDS-These pests appear on the tips of brand new growth. They suck the "juices" flowing to the plant tips and divert plant



growth into aphid growth. They are also thought to pass on virus in their spittle. Aphids are prime targets for ever present beneficial Ladybugs.

CUCUMBER BEETLE-These spotted kinds and their stripped cousins are a menace all season long. They also are

thought to help pass on several forms of virus. Despite their common yellow background backs, they can be easily confused with beneficial ladybugs which commonly have red background colored backs. They are candidates for insecticide sprays. **COLORADO POTATO**



BEETLE- Here is another common pest that will spend the

summer in your dahlia patch and garden. They have hump-backed larva which have spotted backs on a background field of orange that can again cause confusion with good ladybugs. Isn't Mother Nature interesting? These flying beetles are quick to flee so if you attempt to catch them by hand, be quick and determined. Right now many are mating so you'll get a bargain



of two in one sweep if you're fast. Once caught drop them in soapy water or a deadly insecticide mix. I usually wear gloves so I just flatten them by hand. If you have an over abundance then spray with an insecticide.

JAPANESE BEETLE- You are probably beginning to see these imported pests in your garden about now. Many of the white grubs that you turned up in spring while working your soil were immature Japanese beetles. Their visit to your plants may be short in duration but can be very destructive. Some gardeners have them for only a couple of weeks. Unfortunately, they have been known to "visit" us until mid August- far too long! I try to squash them with my fingers. A more genteel approach would be to handpick



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DISPLAY GARDEN UPDATE

Below is a photo taken by Larry Blumer this past Saturday morning of the display garden showing the progress of the growth of the plants. A couple even have two or three buds showing so they are progressing quite well. Some replacements have been required so some plants are behind the others but they will catch up. We



really appreciate those that have worked weekly to keep the plants in good shape.

ANNUAL JUDGING SEMINAR

The DS of Georgia annual judging seminar will be held once again in the home of Dan & Paula Pinholster in Cartersville, GA on August 25, at 10:00 AM till 3:00 PM. Lunch will be served. Members from Alabama, Carolinas and Tennessee Societies are welcomed to attend. Please RSVP to Paula at the August meeting or call in your reservation to 770-382-8110, or email dfp@juno.com

The seminar will be taught by our own Gene Boeke, the ADS Southern Regional Vice-President. Gene will familiarize us with the various techniques of judging dahlias on the show bench and how to scorecard new dahlias. His judging seminars are always informative and interesting and so valuable in reminding current judges and explaining to new apprentice judges the finer points of judging. New members are welcomed as you can work as apprentice judges during our annual show in September which is a lot of fun and the best way to use the techniques learned at the seminar. If you are not sure if you have an interest in learning how to judge come and learn and also to see the lovely garden of Dan & Paula. They grow a lot more than dahlias that you will enjoy seeing plus they always have a number of dahlias blooming.

With the new trial garden in Cashiers, NC the importance of scorecarding new dahlias for release has become very important again. The Carolinas Society has invited all judges to come to Cashiers to scorecard the trial garden in September.

DAHLIA QUESTIONS

Q: My plant was about 3' high and it wilted & died. What caused this to happen? A: UPDATED—One treatment we discussed at the June meeting was to compact the ground with your foot around the base of the plant and then give it at least 2-5 gallons of water. Sometimes this will succeed in getting the plant to take up water again.

Q: How do I tell if I have spider mites? A: Take a piece of paper and hold it under the suspected leaf and shake the leaf (s) and if little red bugs show up on the paper you have them.

Q: The top sets of leaves on some of my plants are small & deformed. What is causing this to happen?

A: You have a fungus and need to spray the plant with a fungicide and cut off that growth and dispose of it. New growth should be normal after spraying.

Q: I have some yellowing on my leaves. Is it a virus?

A: It could be but if on the lower leaves it is from the heat. We usually strip those leaves for better air circulation and they usually die if left on the plant. Leaves higher on the plant that have yellowing could be from heat stress also so look at the set/sets above the yellowed leaves and if the yellowing is gone it was stress. If in doubt let a more experienced grower take a look at a couple of the leaves.

(CONT FROM P-2) them and drop into a container of insecticide. You be the judge.

DO NOT BUY JAPANESE BEETLE TRAPS!!!!!! If you have any of these traps, throw them away or give them to your neighbors in hopes they help to attract any Japanese beetle out of your garden. You can catch them by hand and you can often get two at a time. If this method makes you too squeamish then use something like Sevin applied directly on the pests. There are inexpensive dusters that can evenly disperse Sevin but be sure to check the wind before using.

SLUGS- They look like snails without shells and they do most of their damage during the night. With several days of rain you will probably find many near the bottoms of your plants and under their leaves. A saucer with a little beer will attract the slugs that crawl in and drown. Leave several short boards around the garden and slugs will crawl under them to spend the day. Turn over the boards and you'll have slugs ready for squashing.



Slugs love lettuce and other tender greens.

MEXICAN BEAN BEETLE- Yet another ladybug imitator, the Mexican bean beetle will be with you until frost. They seem to be every where and



usually they are. Serious uses of insecticides are needed for this pest. **LEAF BORERS**-This photo shows the damage done by leaf borers. They tunnel through the leaf and reduce the strength of the plant. I've usually stopped them for a season with one spraying of **CYGON**.



FLEA BEETLE-These dark copper colored, BB sized pests are about gone. They appear early in the season and are responsible for eating round holes in the leaves of young dahlia plants. Being hard shelled and fast, flea beetles need to be subjected to frequent dustings of Sevin. They can do a lot of damage in a short time. **REMINDER- Sevin kills good bugs, too, so if you can be patient, flea beetles are usually gone by mid to late July.**



WHITE FLY-If you brush by a dahlia plant and a cloud of minute flying insects arise from the leaves, you probably have an infestation of white flies. Weekly sprayings are needed to get control of these pests. Neem oil is preferred by some gardeners.



RED SPIDER MITES- As covered earlier, spider mites should not be a problem if we have frequent rains. In dryer times, spider mites are a major problem. (Photo to left shows spider mite damage.) These almost microscopic vermin (not really spiders) often attack the under-



side of the lower leaves of dahlias and the infected leaves take on a coppery color and appear to have small webs. (Photo at right shows spider mite webs.) The leaves quickly curl inward and die. If you suspect spider mites, hold a piece



of clean paper under an infected leaf, and gently tap the leaf. This action will dislodge some of the spider mites and you'll be able to see your foe. They will appear to be minute grains of pepper. **GRASSHOPPER**- These "eating machines" are every where now. They come in all sizes and colors- and they can do a tremendous amount of damage. Unless you have a flock of chickens or other fowl such as guinea hens running loose in your dahlias, you will have to resort to some type of spray or dusts. **KATYDID**- Later



in the season you will start finding these green, flying pests in your garden. Not as numerous as grasshoppers, they can still do a lot of damage and seem to have a definite fondness for blooms. I usually remove those I see by hand. Since they appear later I have, by that time, established a weekly spraying program that keeps their numbers down. They are master of camouflage.

CABBAGE LOOPER and CABBAGE WORM- It is still a little early to find



these in your dahlia patch but they will make their appearance near the end of July- for sure in August. They love the

heat! They are hard to see due to their color but you will know something is

doing a lot of leaf damage. **Bt ssp. Kurstaki** will cause them to stop eating and perish and is relatively safe. So.... The busy



time is here! Don't tromp on the planted surface, pull weeds, tie the ever growing plants to their stakes, pull weeds, look for bugs and disease, pull off and discard old, bottom leaves, pull weeds, pinch out the tops of plants to encourage laterals (branches) to grow, feed periodically and maybe use some MESSENGER, water when necessary, and study your plants as they begin to form the initial bloom buds of the season.

If you're growing mainly for competition, remove these buds so they will reappear nearer show time. If you're growing just for pleasure, let the buds mature and bloom. If you can stand to disbud several of the side buds you'll have stronger and longer stems to hold up the first blooms that you cut and bring in for your own amazement. What ever your purpose, take the time to sit and enjoy. Even stare off in space if you like because you've earned it.

This is ADS letter #7

If I were you, I would mention the National Show this year. It will be held at the Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois (just west and a little south of Chicago). It is a wonderful place, and the Central States Dahlia Society has been working very hard to have a wonderful show. They have done a lot of extra things which will allow our attendees to have a mini-vacation as well as a Dahlia Show. Contact Dan Kaplan if you would like to attend 6-10 September: 847-231-5075

The second item is for those members of your club that have a fondness toward the American Dahlia Society. Presently, in its quest to keep membership prices as low as possible, we have calculated that our printed materials (bulletins, manuals, etc) that go out to each member for a year costs the ADS about \$19.50. This leaves a margin of only 50 cents out of the \$20.00 membership fee.

The ADS Board would like to be able to do some other things to assist the local clubs and its dahlia growers. One of the main things is the revamping of the ADS WebPage. Two donors have opted to challenge the entire membership of the ADS to fully fund the new ADS WebPage (which is now being created). Their plan is that they will put up \$10,000; the ADS will put up \$5,000 (from its rainy day fund). This would occur if the ADS membership would match the \$10,000 gift. So, for the next year, the two donors will match all of our monetary gifts to the ADS dollar for dollar up to the \$10,000.00 limit. Please talk to your ADS members who might have some discretionary funds to give to the ADS (a 501c IRS charity). Just let Mac Boyer (574-848-4888) or Harry Risetto (202-739-3000) know of your intentions. I know that \$3,000 has already been pledged toward our goal of the \$10,000!



ANOTHER PHOTO OF THE DISPLAY GARDEN WITH THE NEW SIGN



L. A. T. E. M-FD-LB OR/Y



CREEKSIDE MARGE WL- OR



AMHURST KIM B-FD-P un-disseminated