



DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA NEWSLETTER

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WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFGEORGIA.COM

**WILDWOOD MARIE WL-DP
2011 FLOWER OF THE YEAR**

HOW ARE YOUR DAHLIAS GROWING?

Another hot summer has arrived....but wait! We had a hot May and it was dry too. June was worse and July is just hot except for this past week-end. Real rain and temps in the 70's...you could almost see the dahlias jumping out of the ground and buds forming. I know some of you already have blooms and are very proud of them.

I even have had five or six that have bloomed but in July I like my impatiens better than my dahlias as July blooms just don't match up to fall blooms where the form and colors are unbeatable and that is why we grow dahlias. My plants are another matter though. In all of the years I have been growing dahlias my plants look and are

the best overall I have ever grown even in all of this heat and those of us that live in the Atlanta area know it has been above 90 degrees almost every day since early May. I usually plant 60-70 cuttings each year and have only lost two this year, one to stem rot and one to root rot. Some I plant when they are only about six

Inches high with no protection from the brutal sun. Some are blooming already after planting in middle to late May. My tuber plantings haven't been as good as some have rotted and it is usually from the quality of stock and not the growing conditions. Brian K has always said you need to plan on a 30% replacement rate. That's expensive but true. CONT ON P-2



TOTENKO AA-SC-RD LIKES THE HEAT

**PICNIC PICNIC
JULY 30TH
5 PM - 730 PM
THE HOME OF

HENRY EVERETT
AND
JESSE USLETON
2690 GLENEAGLES
DRIVE
TUCKER, GA
PHONE
770-938-3134
MORE INFO P-2**

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
WAYNE & LISA NIX
NASHVILLE, GEORGIA
WE ARE SO GLAD TO HAVE
YOU AS MEMBERS OF THE
DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA

PICNIC TIME

The annual picnic will be held on July 30th at the home of Henry Everett and Jesse Usleton from 5 - 7:30 PM. Their address is 2690 Gleneagles Drive, Tucker, GA #770-938-3134 This is the third time we have held our annual picnic at their home over the years and it is always a treat to see their dahlias and many other flowers they will have blooming. Don't forget to see their orchids up on the hill behind the house.

Please bring a veggie, salad, or dessert to share with everyone else. We always have lots of good food. The Society will provide the meat and drinks.

Plan on being there as it is always a great time to talk dahlias and to see many of our dahlia friends.



CONT FROM P-1

Well, I guess you would like to know what has caused these plants to do so well this year. No spider mites, hardly any bugs, no disease, I haven't even sprayed my plants yet and only a little mulching (we have been out of town). I did have a few wilt but I gave them one or two treatments of a quart or so each of Banrot and they have all come back. If you will remember back at one of the winter meetings Allan Haas passed out some free products from a company in California called Xtreme Gardening. Their major product is called Mykos which is pure **mycorrhizal inoculant**. This is the good bacteria that helps your plants grow and protects them from soil diseases. I have been using another version of mycorrhizal in a tablet form for years as soil fungus becomes prevalent when you grow the same crops in the same location year after year. I used one or two tablespoons (the more the better) on each cutting I planted and on most of the tubers. It must make contact with the roots. I ran out of the free product so I ordered some more and I also bought another product called Mykos 30. This product has 30% mycorrhizal inoculant and the rest is a slow release fertilizer that will last the season. I have used it exclusively for all plantings since receiving it. I can feel confident that when I put a six inch cutting in the ground in the sun on a 90 degree day that it will live. I usually don't push one product or company over another but with the outstanding experience I have had so far this season and the years we have all spent trying to find products that will help us be successful in growing our dahlias here in the South, this one is worth touting. Xtreme Gardening has a number of products that fit very well into dahlia growers needs so go to their website and take a look at all of their products. <http://xtremegardening.com/>

John K

DAHLIA QUESTIONS

Q: HOW CAN I KEEP THE DEER AND RABBITS FROM EATING MY DAHLIAS?

A: The product I have been most successful with in keeping them away from my yard has been Liquid Fence. You need to spray it about once a week. It is all natural and will not hurt your plants. It is available at most Ace Hardware stores or on line. A second product I have been using this year is called the Sweeny System. It is six containers of blood meal that sit on a 2' stiff wire but coverage is limited. It has worked well around my 8' x 12' bed of tomatoes and cucumbers. It is waterproof and works for one season. You can buy blood meal and replenish it for next year and not lose your \$25 investment after one year. Available at Lowe's.

Q: WHY IS SO MUCH EMPHASIS PUT ON MULCHING DAHLIAS?

A: Dahlias don't care much for the heat so it is important to mulch them. The feeder roots can go out up to two feet around the plant and they are only about 1" below the surface of the soil, so it is important to keep them cool so they will keep growing.

Q: HOW DO I GET AA & A DAHLIAS UP TO THEIR LISTED SIZE RANGE?

A: First you must grow them only one or two up. That means you must limit the laterals on the plant to only one or two stalks that will have blooms. You must strip the plant of excess laterals as it grows. In our heat it is difficult to get 10" - 12" or even A sized blooms unless you grow them 1 or 2 up. In Northern growing areas or the mountains of North Carolina they can grow them 4 up usually and get them up to size. Most small growers are unwilling to have only one or two blooms per plant to get the dinner plate bloom. The second thing you must do is to pinch the side buds. See the question on pinching.

Q: MUST I TIE MY PLANTS UP? IT TAKES A LOT OF TIME.

A: Unless you want your blooms wandering all over the ground this answer is YES.

Q: DO I REALLY NEED TO PINCH THE SIDE BUDS ON MY DAHLIAS AS I LOVE LOTS OF BLOOMS?

A: This is the age old question of do I want lots of blooms or do I want larger flowers. You are in control of your plants, so whatever you desire should be the determining factor. I like lots of blooms, too, so here is the compromise I make with this issue. I pinch side buds of AA, A, B and some BB sized blooms. miniatures I don't usually pinch unless I want to show them like Weston Spanish Dancer or Altari Caress. Others depend on whether I am trying to show them or not. Pinching makes the blooms and plant look much neater.

Q: I SEE SOME WHITE POWDER ON SOME OF MY DAHLIA LEAVES. IS THAT POWDERY MILDEW?

A: Yes it probably is powdery mildew even though it is a little early for it with all of our hot temps. I usually start getting it on my plants the last week of July but have noticed it already on a few of them. You can't cure it on the leaves already affected so you must spray the rest of the plant with a fungicide that will prevent it from spreading. There are many products that will protect from powdery mildew and many home remedies. The product that many of us in the society use is called Rubigan. When you spray it every two weeks you will never see powdery mildew again. Available from Griffin Nurseries in Ball Ground, GA or Southern AG in Hendersonville, NC. Expensive

Q: WHAT CAN I DO TO KEEP MY BLOOMS FROM DROOPING AND SOMETIMES BREAKING?

A: We all need to apply a stem stiffener to our plants when blooms start to appear. The one we have been using for the past number of years is called potassium nitrate. You apply it every two weeks during the blooming season. I have a bag of it in a slow release form and anyone that wants some can have some for free.

Q: HOW DO I GET LOTS OF BLOOMS ON MY PLANTS?

A: Use a product called Mor-Bloom 0-0-10. It is from Alaska Products and has a fish base. Another product is called Sea Grow Bloom 4-26-26 from Charlie's Greenhouse.

DAHLIA VIRUS

Brian Killingsworth gave an excellent lecture on dahlia virus at our June meeting so here it is again in Powerpoint form.

“DAHLIAS AND VIRUS”

“Virus diseases of dahlias probably cause more disappointment to dahlia growers around the world than any other cause.”

Dr. Keith Hammett, New Zealand

CHARACTERISTIC OF VIRUS IN DAHLIAS

YELLOW LEAF VEINS

VEINS CONTAIN YELLOW SPOTS

“OAK LEAF PATTERN OF LEAF”

CRINKLED LEAVES/ MISSHAPED NEW GROWTH

STUNTED GROWTH



CRINKLED & MISHAPED LEAVES. MANY TIMES, THESE FEATURES ARE COMBINED WITH STUNTED GROWTH. IN THOSE CASES, THE DISTANCE BETWEEN LEAVES IS MINIMAL



CHLOROSIS— IRON DEFICIENCIES-NOT VIRUS
IN THIS CASE, THE VEINS ARE GREEN AND THE REST OF THE LEAF'S SURFACE IS YELLOW.

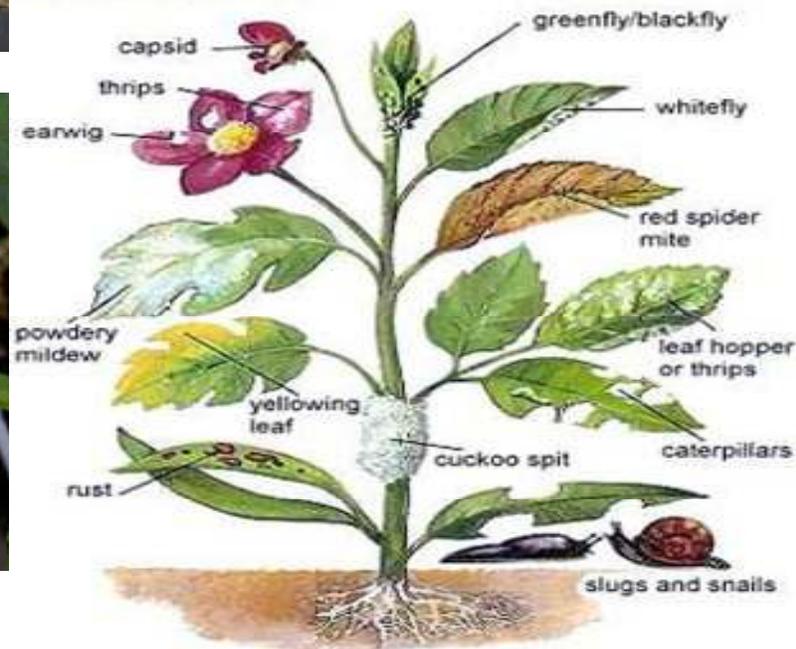


YELLOW VEINS WITH SPOTS



DAHLIA LEAF WITH “OAK LEAF” PATTERN. ALSO KNOWN AS MOSAIC VIRUS.

flower troubles



CARRIERS(VECTORS) OF VIRUS

Viruses are believed to be spread by the juices of the infected plants, Any chewing creature that dines on dahlias can pass a virus from an infected plant. For this reason alone, growers should try to keep their gardens free from chewing visitors. (See picture on P-4)

Likewise, tools such as knives and clippers, can also spread virus.

Smokers should not touch dahlia plants until they have thoroughly cleaned their hands. Neither cigarette butts nor other tobacco products should be left in the garden.

Check your plants weekly to monitor for any sign of virus. This precaution is known as “rouging” your garden.

Tubers of virused dahlias contain the virus, making it more important that you know your tubers are clean and that newly acquired dahlia tubers or plants come from trusted sources.

REMOVAL OF VIRUS INFECTED DAHLIAS

If you find or suspect that a dahlia plant has virus you should remove and bag all traces of that plant, including dropped leaves. I recommend that you don't look at the plant's name-tag. “Murphy's law” seems to apply in these cases. It is better to err on the side of safety!

AMERICAN DAHLIA SOCIETY GRANT FOR DAHLIA VIRUS RE- SEARCH

Dr. Hanu Pappu has led the research effort at Washington State University since 2007.

He has identified two new viruses that are commonly found in cultivated and wild growing dahlias.



VERRONE'S OBSIDIAN 2011 RELEASE 0-PR

A Black Dahlia?

For years the experts have said there is no black dahlia and there never will be one. Well the experts will soon be eating those words as the American Dahlia Society will soon be adding black as a colour to their classification list and there is a variety just waiting to be the first candidate. Not to be released until 2010 “Verrone's Obsidian” a black orchid dahlia is on trial in a Nova Scotia garden this summer and early indications is that it will be a big winner. It is not only black in colour, but has excellent orchid flower form and loads of blooms. It was developed by a dahlia grower in Washington State in the US. Keep an eye peeled for this one, it will be well worth growing.

Arthur Haskins



AC TWIST

AC TWIST A-ID-W 2011 RELEASE