

Fraser Valley Dahlia Society

Newsletter

46172 Clare Ave., Chilliwack, BC, V2P6N1

New Website location : www.fraservalleydahliasociety.com

Email fvds@shaw.ca

Since 1997 Vol8 June- July , 2009

Meetings: Held on the 4th Tuesday of the month February through October,

At 8 PM, Central Heights Church, 1661, McCallum Road. Abbotsford

Meeting: 8 PM , June23, 2009

Refreshments : Carol Rollie , Jeanette Stach, and Silvia Devitt

Program: Marty Van Den Bosch , Taking Pictures Of our Dahlias and our gardens and.....?

Question and Answer period.

Meeting : **Annual Potluck Picnic** 6PM, July28, 2009.

The club will provide the meat. Members bring main dishes and salads, not only deserts please.

President's Message

June should be a month of sunshine, but in the Pacific Northwest there is much confusion about what might be considered normal. Hopefully, June and July will be warm and sunny and bring our dahlias to the point where we are happy, and they are happy. At this time of the growing season there is much to do in all parts of the garden.. This keeps us all very busy, but the rewards are well worth the effort. I am not a beer drinker, but I guess I'll be purchasing some. Not for me but for the slugs, as it seems to be getting harder to find many products normally sold to control slugs. Beer works well they say. I never would have guessed beer was a green product.

While working in the garden, questions come to mind: Try to remember these and bring them up during our question and answer period at our meetings. We have many very experienced growers and hybridizers who are at most, if not all, of our meetings. We allow significant time for questions

and answers and it takes very little time to ask a question. You may be surprised how quickly your problem could be solved. Remember learning the do's and don'ts is why we are members of a Dahlia Society in the first place.

Our annual picnic is July 28th at the Youngson's . 10541 Ruskin Cres., Mission B.C.

Phone: 604-462-9382 Doug and Diana .

Doug Youngson., President

Door prices : Thank you to the members for bringing prizes for our draw every month.

The clubs annual Dahlia Show, this year will be held September 19 -20 ,2009. Plans are well under way. Any one who would like to donate to our award's list, please send donations to our treasure Larry Moore 46673 Macken Ave. Chilliwack, B.C. V2P 3B9

Some of you may have heard at our last meeting, Myrna Moore spent time in the hospital . She is home again and recuperating. Fibulator retuned and is feeling much better, nice to have you back with us Myrna.

Phyllis Jansen is also home again , but is starting more treatments. good luck Phyllis.

On a sadder note, I have to report, a long time supporter and member of the Dahlia world and our club

In Memorial

Frank Snell passed away April 28. Frank was a Senior Judge, held office in the Vancouver Club, member of FVDS, and was for some time, President of the Federation of Northwest Dahlia Growers. He was a instructor in the Federation Judges Training Program . He and Margaret were hybridizers as well, and released some nice Dahlias : Delta Alpha, Delta Coquette, Delta Red Delta Florence, Delta Jenny, Delta Shirley, Delta Claret and Delta Marika Anne. Frank loved the giant's, and always grow a row of Bonaventure's in the garden. I remember Frank's entry off a gorgeous Jewel Huston, winning best in show at a Pacific Rim Show.

You will be sadly missed Frank

Copied from: THE GROWING WORLD OF DAHLIAS Website BY H. L. BROUSSON

A DAHLIA plant has a good many enemies to contend with during its short life, but it is easy to keep them under control provided the cultivator is willing to devote a little time and trouble to the task. I now propose to show how all these enemies may be entirely destroyed, or at least held in check, so that the plants and blooms will suffer little, if any, damage, and the grower can carry out the directions which I give, in whole or in part, according to the purpose for which the plants are required. There will not be many who have sufficient enthusiasm to make the night visits to their plants which I feel bound to recommend as the most effective and time-saving remedy. It is unnecessary for most growers to so sacrifice themselves, as it. is of very little consequence to the majority if a few earwigs are left to attack the plants, but the enthusiastic exhibitor will have no hesitation in making use of the quickest and most certain means of destruction. It is not exactly" a congenial task to be examining" Dahlias in the garden at night time, but it is the most effective way of destroying earwigs, slugs, and caterpillars, their three most destructive enemies.

Prevention is better than cure, and something can be done before the young Dahlias are planted out. The pests mentioned feed on the young growth of almost any plant or weed, and it is advisable, therefore, to keep the proposed Dahlia bed and surrounding ground free from weeds. Earwigs in particular are very fond of unused corners of the garden, and collect in places where they are undisturbed. A hedge will harbor slugs, and if it exists near the Dahlias it certainly is a source of danger, particularly in damp seasons. Soot or lime should be spread on the ground between the Dahlia and the hedge, as both slugs and caterpillars will find it difficult to cross this barrier. A watch should be kept on neighboring fruit trees and plants, for should they be attacked by green or black fly the Dahlias will probably suffer in the same way. Wire-worms, if they exist in quantities, may do a great deal of damage to the roots. But this is only likely to be the case if the soil is pasture land which has recently been brought into cultivation. As a remedy some carrots should be sunk in the ground to a depth of four or five inches, and examined every two or three days, and especially when the soil is moist. If there are many wireworms, they will be discovered clinging to the carrots, or lodged in the little holes which they have bored.

The principal enemies of the Dahlia are earwigs, slugs, caterpillars, green and black fly, thrip, frog-hoppers, and ants.

Earwigs.—The presence of earwigs is recognized by the holes they make in the leaves of the plants and petals of the flowers, and by discoloration of the buds. The well-known way of trapping these destructive insects is by means of small flower-pots placed on the stakes of the plants, and filled with straw or some similar material, such as cotton-wool, which is infinitely preferable. The pots should be examined every morning, and many earwigs will be caught in this way. They begin to feed on the Dahlias at dusk, and as the night becomes colder, many of them enter the pots for the sake of the warmth afforded. After daylight breaks, and the air becomes warmer, the earwigs begin to leave their shelter, and it is therefore of the greatest importance to examine the pots early in the morning. This is rather a lengthy task when a large number of plants are grown, and one can make much shorter work of the enemy by trapping him at night time. I have already mentioned that the earwigs begin their attacks on the Dahlias as soon as daylight has gone, and by 10 p.m. most of them will be hard at work. Now is the time to secure them, and this is easily done with the aid of some form of light. It is best to use a lamp which concentrates the light on a small space, say, an electric or acetylene lamp, but the homely candle will do. The buds and tips of the growing shoots should be carefully looked over, and when the plants are in bloom, it will be the flowers that are being chiefly attacked. The earwig is particularly fond of lodging in the back petals of the older blooms, and, in common with slugs and caterpillars shows a decided preference for white and yellow varieties. One evening's work will almost clear the plants of these pests for the time being, but it will be as well to examine the Dahlias about once a week, choosing warm, dry evenings, when the whole of the earwig world will be at work. The exhibitor should examine his plants every night for a week before show day, leaving his old blooms on the plants as a decoy for the earwigs, and also as a protection for the blooms which lie will require on the great day. All buds and blooms which are likely to be of service should have cotton-wool wound round their stems. This is not an infallible protection, but earwigs, caterpillars, and slugs find great difficulty in crossing the barrier thus set up. In addition, or as an alternative to the pots, short lengths of hollow cane or wood, or old bean stalks, make very good traps, and should be attached to the stakes. If bamboo canes are used for stakes, the holes should be plugged with cotton-wool or clay, to prevent the earwigs from taking shelter therein.

Slugs.—A ring of soot or lime should be made round each plant, and, in fact, round the whole bed as soon as the Dahlias are planted out. As slugs work at night, they should be picked off the plants at the same time as one is capturing the earwigs. They will be found in the greatest numbers on warm, damp evenings. Handfuls of bran may be sprinkled between the plants as a protection to them; the slugs will collect on the bran in great numbers, and the task of searching for them will be greatly simplified. The bran can be examined in the morning, but, of course, most of the slugs will have departed by then. Earwigs and caterpillars will also be caught in this way.

Caterpillars.—Caterpillars do not attack Dahlias much, but even a few of them can do a great deal of damage if they are allowed to pursue their ravages unchecked. Those which attack the Dahlias are nearly all of a greenish color, and consequently are difficult to detect among the leaves. They eat the

leaves, buds, and blooms, and must be searched for very carefully by day as well as by night. In the daytime they "will be found on the blooms or among" the leaves, but at night they are more easily discovered, as they are nearly sure to be attacking the blooms and buds only. Sometimes it seems impossible to catch a particular caterpillar which is suspected to exist, and then endeavors should be made to tempt it from its hiding place with young lettuce or cabbage leaves laid amongst the foliage of the plants. The addition of a little damp bran to the bait will make it still more certain.

Green and Black Fly,—Dahlias in their early stages are frequently attacked by green and black fly, which is easily got rid of, provided energetic measures are taken at once. The presence of the fly will be recognized by the crinkling of the young leaves of the growing shoots, and, on careful examination, either green or black fly, or both will be discovered on the under part of the leaf. It is during the earlier stage, when the plant is chiefly making root growth, that the fly is particularly destructive.

Later on there is not so much danger, the growth of the foliage being very rapid after the middle of - July. The plants should be syringed with some good insecticide, of which there are numerous preparations in the market. It is best to use a very fine syringe, and to apply the liquid with considerable force. The plants are very hardy, and will probably not be damaged by this application, but as a matter of precaution it is safer to commence with half the strength recommended by the manufacturers, and to increase gradually to three or four times that strength if necessary. It is well to syringe the plants with clear water a couple of hours or so after making a strong application, to ensure the foliage against damage.

Thrip.—Fortunately, thrips very rarely attack Dahlias. The thrip is a very small black insect with rather a long body. It has the effect of blanching the leaves and buds. The remedy is sponging the leaves and stems with a strong solution of insecticide. If after a fair trial it is found that the thrips cannot be kept under, it is better to root up the particular plant infected, lest the adjacent ones be attacked by the pest.

Frog-hopper,— Fortunately these insects are not very common, except in certain districts and seasons, and many growers will not meet with them at all. Unless the frog-hoppers are on the plants in numbers, the damage caused by them is scarcely noticeable. They make little pin holes in the flower stalks and portions, of the branches just below the bloom or bud, causing a series of small swellings.

If any particular branch is badly injured, a good deal of its strength will have been taken away, and it should be cut off. The insect is about the size of a house fly, and is of a grayish or blackish color, but in appearance it is like a small moth. In the spring and early summer it appears as "cuckoo-spit," and can then be easily destroyed. Later on, when it becomes the perfect insect, it is not so easy to secure, as it jumps away directly it is touched, but it can be caught if completely surrounded with the hands.

Ants.—Ants very often make their nests round Dahlia plants. Some growers maintain that these insects do damage to the stems of the plants, and check the growth, but personally I do not think this is the case, unless the ants are present in large numbers. They are very easily destroyed by pouring boiling water over the nests, but, should they be close to the plants, one cannot make use of this remedy on account of the danger of injury to the roots, and the nests must then be syringed with a very strong solution of insecticide.

Editor, going fishing

