

THE DAHLIA DIRT



The Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Dahlia Society

June 2012

Next Meeting:

Friday, June 8 at Simpkins Swim Center, Santa Cruz

7:00 Pot Luck Dinner

7:30 Meeting

Program:

Our guest speaker will be sharing strategies and ideas for keeping gophers (those pesky varmints!) out of your garden.



From the Prez....

A big thank you for all the members who led all the wonderful "teach-ins" last meeting. Everyone I talked to liked the small groups as they were able to ask questions and learned so much. We will do that again in future meetings.



At this Friday's meeting our speaker will be Thomas Wittman. He is a local gopher expert and will be educating us on many aspects of catching gophers. I am definitely dealing with gophers in my garden now and am looking forward to learning all I can.

Hope to see you there.....
Happy Gardening...
Kristine

Obie, the cat, hard at work in the garden.



Workshops

During our May meeting, members were allowed to choose between four different workshops offered by our own expert dahlia growers. It proved to be a lively, informative hour and a good time was had by all.



General Dahlia Care
Karen and Mary give their award winning advice as members eagerly take notes.





Container Planting

Janet, Millie and Ozzie share their secrets of growing dahlias successfully in containers.



Pest Management

Kevin has a rapt audience as he explains different methods of controlling the pests in your garden.



Dahlia Labels, Tubs, Transportation and Shows

Dean, Iris and Katy demonstrate how to get your blooms successfully labeled and safely to their destination as Lena looks on.





DAHLIA CULTURE FOR JUNE 2012

Most of the information in this article was written in 2001 to tell about some of my gardening practices. Some of the information might be helpful to our newer members.

REPLACING

Lack of an eye, rot, gophers and other acts of God cause blank spots. Not one prepared plant space should be left vacant!

One needs replacements on hand to fill in the blank spaces. Spare tubers might be available. Extra shoots on garden plants can be taken and prepared as cuttings. Ozzie says “just break it off at the tuber.” Otherwise, stick a knife down to cut it off. Put the cutting in water right away. Fill a pot with dampened, good planting mix. Adding perlite to the mix will be an aid to moisture retention. Prepare the cutting for potting by cutting just below a node (the bump where leaves grow) and dipping it in a rooting hormone. Make a hole in the mix and insert the cutting. Cuttings need a greenhouse effect. Make a mini-greenhouse, using a 7gallon plastic tray as a base. Make a four-legged frame to set in the tray. Legs should be 12 to 15 inches long. Cover the frame and tray with clear plastic sheet secured to the tray with a string-rubber band loop. Add water to the tray, but put a plate or something in the tray to keep pots out of water. Set the tray in a well-lighted, warm place. Spray the cuttings at least once a day. Wait a couple of weeks with hope that roots will form.

TRIMMING AND TOPPING

With a small digging tool in hand, crawl from plant to plant. If no sprout, carefully finger down and search. If the tuber shows no eye or it has rotted, flag the space or plant a replacement. Loosen soil around plants and complete filling of holes. Remove leaves at ground level or below. Eventually, I remove leaves to at least 4 to 6 inches above ground level. The open space allows good air circulation and one can see the plant base and water more sensibly. If it is about time to top a plant, do it now because you might not revisit the plant for awhile.

DISBUDDING

Disbudding is such fun, and it continues for the rest of the season. My mind stays active as I do it and keeps repeating “Dis buds for you!” Disbudding is easier done than described. Check the internet for a good description with pictures. Watch a demonstration. Meanwhile, a brief description might help before trial and error takes over.

A lateral is the growth that emerges in the angle between a leaf stem and the main stem or an existing lateral stem. Laterals develop with all the features of a main stem. The tip of a lateral may show three or sometimes four buds. Disbudding is the act of removing the two or three small buds from the top of a lateral. In practice, disbudding also includes removing laterals at the second leaf node below the main bud to provide stem length for cutting. For even longer stems, also remove laterals at the third node. Be very careful during removal of buds so that the main bud survives. Lateral removal is best done carefully with a sharp knife to prevent damage to the leaf stem and to leave a clean scar.

PLANT SUPPORT

The tall ones may be waving in the wind and bending down from foliage weight. Wide green plastic plant ties with one wrap around a stake and then around the plant with a bow knot works just fine. Tape is easy to remove and save for reuse. Another method has posts at row ends with affixed wires down each side of the row. Stakes along the wires might be needed.

Judging Seminar

Judging Seminar, July 14, 2012 9 am -5 pm, Santa Cruz Montessori School (Winston Campus), Soquel, CA

The Monterey Bay Dahlia Society will be hosting a judging seminar at Santa Cruz Montessori School on July 14th at the Winston Campus off of Park Ave in Soquel. The address is 2446 Cabrillo College Drive, Soquel, CA 95073 This is a wonderful opportunity to learn how judges view blooms and select winners at the dahlia shows. I expect members from several California Dahlia Societies to attend. Membership in a dahlia society is required to attend this event.

Head judge Lou Paradise from the California Dahlia Society (San Francisco) will be leading the seminar with help from John Morton of the San Leandro Dahlia Society and many other head judges.

If you are currently a judge, you need this seminar to stay current and keep your judging status. If you are thinking of becoming a judge, this seminar is a requirement.

I attended this seminar before I was thinking of judging and learned so much about how best to show my blooms. This seminar will teach you what the judges are looking for! I recommend this for everyone, even if you are a real beginner. Please e-mail me kristinexoo@gmail.com if you are interested in attending or signup at our next MBDS meeting. - Kristine



Name Tags



Here's Katy looking good wearing her MBDS name tag!

WOW! Our MBDS membership has grown this year. In fact, we have 35 new members that have joined since January!

There's a need for both "seasoned" members and newer members to remember names, so wearing name tags to meetings isn't a bad idea. It's also important to wear name tags at dahlia events such as the tuber sale and shows.

If you want a name tag the cost is \$7.50.

Here is a pretty example of a name tag. You can sign up and pay for your name tags at the June or July meetings. Jean (in charge of membership) will place an order for name tags after the July meeting.



Minutes from the MBDS Meeting

Minutes from MBDS meeting on May 11th, 2012

Kristine Albrecht called the meeting to order at 7:38PM. A couple more new members came. Welcome Lori Bertolucci and Terri Simms!

Teach - in: Kristine announced that we would go through our business quickly in order to have time for two half-hour “teach-in” type workshops/discussions. Members were allowed to choose between 4 different offerings: General Dahlia Care, Pest Management, Container Planting or Dahlia labels, Tubs, Transportation and Shows.

Minutes: Motion was made to approve the April minutes as written in the newsletter. Which were then approved.

Treasury: Katy Bannister reported that we are in good shape after our tuber sales. She purchased ink cartridges and printed up new grow sheets.

Membership: Jean Biberdorf reported we currently have 54 members. At next month’s meeting she will had a name tag drive. Members are encouraged to purchase name tags so they can be identified at shows and sales as a member of the club. Name tags are around \$7 each depending on how many members request them.

Upcoming Events: Next month: Tom Whitman AKA “the gopher guy” will come and speak about gophers and traps.

Judging Seminar in July at SC Montesorri, MBDS Show at Soquel High end of August, National Show in Portland Labor Day week-end. (See Newsletter or website for more details).

June 16th is the Monterey Bay Greenhouse Growers Open House. Six Greenhouses in our area will open their doors from 10-4 for free. MBDS members Carol and Stewart Kitayama’s family greenhouse is participating in this Open House as well. Go out and learn from and see these growers in action. See <http://www.montereybayfarmtours.org/> for more information and maps. A flyer was also passed out to members interested in gardening themed workshops, events and sales in our area for the month of May.

Kristine is working on setting up a time to visit the Mills garden up the coast. This will be the third year that our club has been invited to this private garden. This is truly a special privilege and honor to be able to visit this world class garden. She will send out an email when this is set up.

Please speak with Doris Wilson if interested in using soaker hoses or if you have a need for permanent marker pens.

Meeting was adjourned at 8 PM and split into various “teach-in” groups that lasted until around 9:15pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Iris Wallace



Future Dates

July Meeting:	Friday, July 13
Judging Seminar:	July 14 Santa Cruz Montessori
San Leandro Show:	August 3-5
San Francisco Show:	August 17-19
MBDS Show:	August 24-26 Soquel High School
National Dahlia Show:	August 31 - September 2 Portland, Oregon
San Jose Show:	September 7-9
Santa Cruz County Fair:	Staging on September 9-10

The Crew

President: Kristine Albrecht
Vice President: Kevin Larkin
Treasurer: Katy Bannister
Secretary: Iris Wallace
Membership: Jean Biberdorf
Newsletter: Jan Palia
Website: Brion Sprinsock



Please send all your fascinating photos and interesting tidbits for the newsletter to bgawlik@cruzio.com

**Want to see past issues of the newsletter?
Check out our website mbdahlias.org**