

## Horticultural Points of Interest – January 2015

- **Flowering Indoor Plants**

- Short Day Flowering Plants
  - Poinsettia, Christmas Cactuses, Kalanchoe, Gardenia and some Begonias
  - Generally need a Night Length of 10 to 12 Hours to set Buds
    - Room Lights at Night will interrupt this Period and prevent Bud Set
    - Typically requires 4 to 6 Weeks of long Nights
- Long Day Flowering Plants
  - Most Plants fall in this Category
  - Lack of Sun in the Winter may curtail Flowering
  - Augment Daylight with Fluorescent or Similar Lighting
- Dormant Period Flowering Plants
  - True Cacti and some Succulents must undergo a Period of Dormancy in order to flower in the Spring
    - Withdraw Water slowly eventually watering only enough to prevent shriveling of Bodies or Leaves
- Cold Period Flowering
  - Phalaenopsis Orchids do best with temperatures of 60° F or more but a period with nighttime temperatures approaching 50° F will help trigger flowering

- **Growing Perennials from Seed**

- Planting on Coffee Filters prevents attack of DampOff Fungi before Germination (See November 2008 on the Horticultural Society Website for more details)
  - <http://sites.google.com/site/northshorehorticulture/links>
- Dust seed with Captan to prevent seed from bringing in Fungus
  - Avoid contact or breathing of Captan dust
- Very fine seed usually needs light to germinate
  - Hold in Frame near Window (see Reference above)
- Germination usually can be seen by Holding Bag with Filter up to Light
- Most Perennial seeds require an extended Period of varying Temperature and Moisture to break Dormancy but many Perennials will germinate without Stratification allowing them to be treated like Annuals

Perennial	No Stratification	Perennial	No Stratification
Achillea	Filipendula & Tomentosa	Agastache	Cana & Rupestris
Arabis	Most	Bergenia	Most
Companula	Most	Echinacea	Most
Echinops	Most	Gaillardia	Most
Inula	Most	Leontopodium	Most
Lilium	Most	Oenothera	Many
Platycondon	Most	Physostegia	Most
Polemonium	Most	Rhododendron	Many
Rhodgersia	Many	Sedum	Many
Stokesia	Most	Thymus	Most
Tiarella	Many	Verbena	Most

- Germination can usually be seen by holding the bag with the coffee filter up to the light

- Transplanting
  - Carefully remove Seedlings from Filter.
    - If the Root tip is broken, the Seedling Probably won't Survive
    - Sterilized Razor knife good for this Purpose. (Dip in Alcohol & Dry).
      - Takes Practice & Patience



- Soil Mixtures
  - Soilless Mixes are Best to Avoid Damp Off Fungi
    - Commercial
      - Peat mixtures of one kind or another
    - Homemade gives best results for me
      - 3 Parts Perlite, 2 Parts Milled Sphagnum, 2 Parts Vermiculite
        - Seeds that need extra moisture use equal Parts Perlite, Sphagnum and Vermiculite
        - Seeds especially prone to damp off use 2 parts Perlite to 1 Part each Sphagnum and Vermiculite
- Always water from the Bottom.
  - Don't soak but water enough so that after removing from Water the Surface in time will show Dampness.
- Fertilizer
  - Because Mix is Soilless Nutrients must be Provided
  - Water Soluble Fertilizer used at 1/4 to 1/2 Normal Mix Strength
    - Low Nitrogen Fertilizer is Essential
      - Nitrogen is the first number in Fertilizer Rating
      - High Nitrogen Greatly Encourages DampOff !!
    - Dyna-Grow Liquid Bloom Fertilizer used at the rate of 1/4 or 3/8 teaspoon/Gallon is outstanding
      - 3-12-6 with Micronutrients
      - Excellent Protection from DampOff especially if combined with Dyna-Grow Pro-TeKt at the same Rate