

# Pompon Chrysanthemums Are Good Fall Bloomers

Many Pompon Chrysanthemums, growing outdoors are in bud (a few flowers have opened on some of them) at several locations. These are the ones that normally bloom in September and October.

Gardeners are asking, "How come?" The answer is, "It is due to a combination of environmental factors," which is another way of saying, "Don't know for sure."

CHRYSANTEMUMS are short-day plants. Short-day plants bloom normally in Autumn, Winter or early Spring when days are less than 12 hours long.

Some short-day plants, in addition to chrysanthemums, are Poinsettia, Kalanchoe, Christmas Cactus, Scilla and Euphorbia.

By controlling the day length, many chrysanthemums can be brought into bloom at any time of the year (but many varieties will not open flower buds when temperatures are in the 80s or 90s) Black Satin cloth is often used for this purpose. All light is excluded from the plants, usually from 6 p.m. to 6:30 or 7:30 a.m.

The shading should be continued until the flower buds are well developed and showing color. Pompons usually require 35 to 40 days or more of shade, depending on the variety. However, with some varieties, when temperatures rise above a certain level during bud development, growth stops and bloom is delayed until cooler weather returns.

It has been found that short-day early bloom can occur on plants which have reached blooming stage before days become long enough to inhibit flower-bud formation. A lot of cloudy weather can be a contributing factor.

PLANT DIVISION is the method most generally used to increase a particular bloom. The entire plant should be dug and the soil shaken or washed from the roots.

The plant is then separated through the use of a strong, sharp knife. This operation can be performed at any season of the year, but it is best done in the early fall after the flowering season is over.

The new plants will then have an opportunity to establish a root system in time for the following season's bloom.

Some varieties form offshoots or proliferations of the flower stalks. These may be removed with a section of the flowering stem and planted in moist soil, where they will take root and begin growing within a period of a few days.

Plants can be started from seed. The seed is sown outside between Oct. 1 and Feb. 1, and will germinate the following spring.

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