

Delphinium, Lilies: Perfect Combination

By BETTY FRANKEL
Special Writer

an elegant combination that can bring great beauty to the garden in late June. The stately spikes of delphinium make an interesting contrast with the waxy lily chalice. These are both plants that test the gardener's skill. Neither are really easy to grow. Delphinium require a sunny situation and a rich well-drained soil that has a generous supply of organic material incorporated in it.

If the soil where you want to grow delphiniums is light, or even of medium fertility, work in plenty of well-decayed manure. If the soil is heavy work in sand, some sub soil, and a generous amount of compost or well-rotted manure.

The plants show to best advantage if three or more are grouped close together to make a sizable clump. However, allow about 18 inches or two feet between the plants. In a long border the clumps can be repeated at intervals to create a rhythm and pattern in the garden.

There are several kinds of delphiniums. Most spectacular of all are the kinds known as Pacific hybrids. These are sturdy plants with tall full spikes of bloom. These can reach five feet in height.

They come in a range of beautiful colors that blend well with each other. Some are a rich deep purple. Others are a beautiful sky blue. There are also white Pacific hybrid delphiniums.

The English hybrids are also very popular. These have broad cone-shaped flower spikes in all shades of blue, mauve, violet and white. They are considered among the most permanent of all delphiniums, lasting better than many other kinds of delphinium which unfortunately often disappear after a few seasons.

The old-fashioned belladonna delphinium have lovely blue spikes three to four feet tall. These plants are not as bushy, either, so can be planted a little closer together.

If the faded flowers are removed and seeds are not allowed to develop, you can expect a second bloom stalk in September. This is not as tall as the stalk that is produced in June, but is a decidedly lovely bonus.

Regal lilies make a classic combination with the tall blue spikes of delphinium. It is the most popular garden lily.

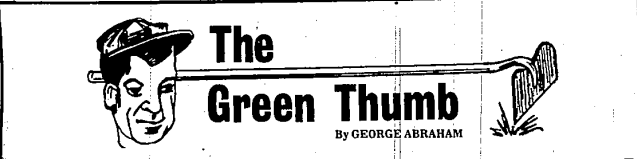
These lilies are not particular about the soil they grow in. However, depending on growing conditions the stems can be anywhere from three to five feet in height. They can bear from five to 20 blooms per stem. These are white funnel-shaped flowers streaked with pinky brown near the base of the flower on the outside of the petals and flushed with a bit of yellow on the inside of the petals.

These fragrant lilies bloom in late June and July at the same time as delphinium. The bulbs, which should be planted eight inches deep, may be planted in fall or early spring.

The Madonna lily is another beauty that blooms at the same time as delphinium and can be grown with them for a striking garden picture. These lilies should have shallow planting, but benefit from having the soil mulched over the bulbs to keep them cool and shaded. August and September are considered the best time for planting these bulbs.

There are also some orange lilies that bloom in late June. Some of these in the garden will add a great deal of sparkle to the blue and white of the other flowers.

Orange King and other lilies of the Hollandicum or umbellatum group have up-turned flaring cups.



When you're on vacation, who'll manage your house plants? If you're going on a real long vacation, maybe a friend or a neighbor can tend the plants, but for shorter trips you can fix the plants so they can take care of themselves.

Plastic bags in assorted sizes can give the needed help for maintaining your plants. First, water the plants thoroughly on the day before you plan to leave. Allow the pots to drain for at least one or two hours.

At the end of that time, slip each of the pots into a roomy plastic bag and close the bag over the top of each plant. If plants are small, several may be placed within one large bag.

If your plants are too large for plastic bags, use large sheets of clear plastic, or transparent clothing bags. Put the plants in the coolest room in the house. Houses closed in summer become hot and stuffy. Plants should be kept in rooms with the least heat buildup. If air conditioning is kept running during the vacation, plants need not be moved.

Basement areas are often cooler in most homes and should be preferred when adequate light is available. Never put the bags in direct sunlight as it will trap the heat inside.

Another trick is to place your plants in a bathtub. Draw off a couple inches of water, put some bricks in bottom of tub and set plants on them. Bricks are porous and will automatically water the plants.

NEVER set plants on newspapers in bottom of tub. Ink from the papers will etch the enamel.

Some people use wicks to water the plants. These may be made from sash cord or jute rope with one end placed in the base of the pots. The other end is kept in a reservoir of water beneath the pot. Set up the system well in advance of vacation to make sure it's working.

SUNFLOWERS: Few plants fascinate kids more than tall sunflowers. They like to see the big heads swaying in the wind, and like to watch the birds pick the seeds. We'll get your children interested in raising sunflowers. Send me a self-addressed stamped envelope for your free packet of giant sunflower seed. We still have giant pumpkin seeds left, and there's time to plant both.

GREEN THUMB CLINIC: A reader writes: "I suggest your readers grow lots of carrots for year round eating. Make several sowings throughout the season. In fall dig the carrots, wash them



SYCAMORE ANTHRACNOSE

Sycamore Anthracnose, a fungus leaf and twig disease, is severe this year due to low temperatures (55°F and below) at the time of bud initiation.

Leaves wilt, often causing the complete loss of the first set of leaves. Leaves appear to be killed by frost, but it is the disease. The bottom one-third to one-half of the tree is most severely affected. New leaves will reappear on affected trees within 10 days or less. Twigs and small branches will be killed back and small cankers will appear at the base of the twigs.

Powdery mildew is often associated with the anthracnose in early summer.

When leaves are fully developed another phase of the disease appears, causing triangular brown areas in the leaves which eventually cause browning and death of the entire leaf. Infected leaves fall through the summer.

CONTROL: Spray as leaf buds swell in the spring of the year with two tablespoons of Benlate 50 per cent WP per gallon of water. Sprays should have started just as the leaf buds begin to swell. Sprays at this time will not be beneficial in reduction of the disease.

Fertilization through root feeding will help the tree to make a more rapid recovery. Well fed trees also are the least affected by the disease the following year.

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