

# Suburban Gardener

## Lilacs From Far Away Grace Michigan In May

By BETTY FRANKEL  
Special Writer

It is lilac time and once again these old favorites are bringing beauty and fragrance to the garden.

Lilacs grow wild in Asia and in southeastern Europe. Botanists have found over two dozen species.

The common lilac is thought to have been brought into cultivation in Persia in the 16th century. Soon it was being grown throughout Europe.

It was brought to America in early Colonial times and nearly every home had a lilac or two growing near it.

Now, driving through the country one can spot the location of long abandoned farms by the lilacs blooming near the remains of cellars or old foundations. This is surely a tribute to the sturdiness and longevity of lilac shrubs. Even though neglected they continue to grow and to bloom.

THE FIRST work of hybridizing lilacs was done in France by the Lemoures, a father and son team. Their first introduction, made in 1879, was a double-flowered lilac-colored form. For the next 74 years the Lemoures introduced a steady stream of new lilacs.

Most of the beautiful hybrid forms grown in our gardens today are Lemoures hybrids. These are also known as "French lilacs."

Other crosses and hybrids have been made in recent years so there are now four

distinct groups of lilacs blooming in early May: mid-May; late May and early June; and June and July.

The earliest to bloom, coming into flower in late April, is a type known as pinnatifolia. These have lacey leaves and small flower clusters and are not especially attractive.

Hybrids of the Chinese lilac, Syringa oblata, also bloom early, a week or two ahead of the common lilacs. The variety Lamartine with pinkish flowers is considered the best of these.

NEXT TO BLOOM are the Persian lilacs, the Chinese lilacs and the common French lilacs.

The Persian lilac usually grows four or five feet high and forms a shapely shrub covered at this season with lilac colored flowers.

The Chinese lilac is really a hybrid between the Persian lilac and the common lilac. It is intermediate between the two parents in size, forming a nicely shaped shrub eight to 12 feet high. There are both purple and white forms, and a double form that is known as Rouen lilac.

There are several interesting lilacs introduced from the Orient, including some dwarf forms that can be used to good advantage in the landscaping close to a house.

Pashiana lilac comes from Korea and is rarely over three feet high and has a spread of three feet.

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Daphne lilac (S. microphylla superba) which reaches only five feet. The two-tone effect produced by deep red buds that open to small pink flowers is very attractive.

Last to bloom is the Japanese tree lilac. This plant grows to 30 feet in height and has large clusters of creamy white flowers in June and July.

Although lilacs have been grown and loved since early times it was only a year ago that a lilac society was formed. The International Lilac Society held its first annual meeting last week in Rochester, N.Y.

This was an appropriate place because Highland Park in Rochester has one of the most complete collections of lilacs in the world. The plantings were begun 80 years ago and there are now 22 acres of lilacs on display.

A special feature of the meeting was the introduction of a new group of lilacs called the "Rochester Strain." These are said to be superior to any now on the market. They have large flowers with a dozen or more petals lobes rather than the usual four lobes. Colors are intense and do not fade in strong sunshine. Some kinds have bi-colored petals with a darker hue on the outer part of the petal. The clusters are upright and 6 to 9 inches in length.

THESE NEW lilacs were developed from Lemoures' double white lilac "Edith

Cavell" which was introduced about 50 years ago.

The Highland Park staff passes on these tips for growing lilacs. Plant in moderately good soil that is well-drained. They need sunlight and room to develop. Keep unwanted suckers or sprouts cut off.

These suckers can be planted and will soon grow into new plants. If possible remove faded flowers so seeds will not develop.

Sometimes lilacs are infested by oyster shell scale. Spray in early spring with miscible oil, or in June with nicotine sulfate. Borers can cause injury. Check base of trunks. Carbon disulfide will kill borers.

### Michigan Day To Be June 10

Michigan Day at Cedar Point, Sandusky, Ohio, has been scheduled for June 10 by the Southwest Metropolitan Recreation Association, which includes the recreation departments of Livonia, Garden City and Westland.

The departments will have a special rate on tickets. These may be used on dates other than June 10 if necessary. Interested persons should contact the departments concerned for tickets. William Zirblis is looking after arrangements for Livonia; Ray Wiacek, for Garden City; and Terry Harbison, for Westland.

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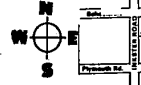
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