

ABOUT BULLETIN * 60

Your present Editor agreed to write the NERLG Bulletin for a few months. He assumed without checking that his first issue was #61, and it was so marked. *(SO THERE IS NO NERLG BULLETIN #60).* The series runs from #59 and skips #60, and picks up at #61.

GREEN GOLD GARDENS

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GREAT POND ROAD
EASTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS
02642

Our Eben has an interest in life.

"You're crazy", he said, "When you could just as well be in Florida or Hawaii where the sand and sun are always warm, - why do you stay here and fuss over lilies?"

It was no use to try to explain the fascination of trying to see what one can do, he was not the kind who could understand.

I like to play with the idea, "The impossible just takes a little longer." Dick Lighty told us in Boston a few years back that most lily hybridizers do not approve of Leslie Woodriff's hybridizing methods. But he added that any one of them would give their shirts if they could get the results that he does.

When I look over my garden the fact stands out that all of the biggest, most rugged and showy plants came from Woodriff. So, Woodriff can't be all crazy. Anyone who saw my records of 308 crosses made last summer would know that I am crazy.

I grew up with the Canadense and Philadelphicums but never saw a wild Superbum until late last summer. A fellow who is interested in plants, a school teacher who knows a good bit about botany - came in and told me that he had found a bunch of Superbum by a woodland pond and he told me where it was. Next morning I went up to see them. -- My Superbums had been bloomed so long that the seed pods were almost full grown. That puzzled me and still does. Most of the wild blooms were gone but I found one at just the right stage for pollen use and I took it home. I spread the pollen on every bloom that was ripe for it and had some left. So, as there was a husky plant of Black Beauty with several flowers, I used the last of the pollen on them. Woodriff says that Black Beauty is totally sterile as a seed plant and very little fertile with its pollen, so of course I doubted the cross would take, but it did use up all the pollen I had.

Later when I checked up on all the plants crossed I found not one was making any seeds until I got to the Black Beauty where I found, much to my astonishment, that two of the pods had started to turn up and were a healthy green while all the others had dried and fallen. These two never did turn up completely as a good seed take does but they remained in a horizontal position and grew slowly. In about a month one gave up the ghost and dropped off. The other kept growing a little altho badly deformed and when the nights got cold I cut it and put it in water in a west window. There it stood for another month then started to crack open at the top just as good pods do. I cleaned it out and found it full of chaff except for just one badly deformed, but otherwise good looking seed.

It is planted and set in a south window where it gets sun when there is any. After another month it will go into the refrigerator for three months and then out to a cold frame which move will probably be its last, BUT -- IF -- it should grow what a time I would have watching to see what it was when and IF it ever bloomed!

Maybe it is because most of my crosses are so wild, or maybe it was the drought, but for some unknown reason my seeds are not germinating nearly as well this year as they always have before. If, as has been said, "A green thumb is just a dirty one", maybe I have washed mine too clean. (Well, with a clean thumb you won't carry unwanted pollen to a stigma. We hope this wild cross will produce! Ed.)



Eben's woodland pond with L. canadense, L. superbum, ferns, iris and hosta growing. The little boy is admiring Eben's lilies.

The child takes them for granted. Some of the rest of us are amazed that the bulldozers haven't scraped them up for fill some where. There are still wild areas in Cape Cod, I judge.