

A mulch or ground cover which shades the soil prevents the surface layers from becoming excessively hot and in the case of the mulch, moisture is conserved. This is particularly important with lilies which form stem roots close to the surface of the ground. These stem rooting lilies may be particularly benefited by fertilizing the surface of the ground or by working in well rotted manure or peat. In any case the lily bed should be amply supplied with water for best results.

#### WINTER CARE

Although many species of lilies are very hardy and are not likely to suffer damage from low winter temperatures, most species will benefit from a protective mulch during the winter. Any coarse material will serve provided it does not pack too solidly over the beds. Evergreen boughs that will hold the snow are very good. Straw, shredded peat, or shredded corn stalks will all serve the purpose. Covering the ground to a depth of two to four inches is usually satisfactory. In the spring the mulch should be loosened up early and removed before any considerable amount of growth has taken place. Lilies that come up under a mulch are distorted in growth and yellow due to the lack of light. These rarely recover perfectly.

Mulch should be removed early from *L. Hansonii* and its hybrids because this lily comes up very early in the spring, and if the mulch is not removed the plants are distorted and otherwise damaged. Some kinds of lilies are tender to frost, particularly *L. regale* and its hybrids and the mulch should be left on relatively longer. Other tender lilies that suffer seriously from frost damage are *L. Henryi* and *Sargentiae*. *Elegans*, *canadense* and most of the American lilies, *L. martagon* and its hybrids will stand severe frost with temperatures down to 27° F. but will be injured by freezes when the temperature reaches 24-25°. In the early spring those tender lilies which have come above the surface of the ground should be protected from the occasional late frosts otherwise the season's bloom may be lost and the plants seriously stunted. Large flower pots or fruit baskets inverted over the plants will prevent rapid radiation and frost damage.

As indicated above many species of lilies thrive even though there are other plants near them which shade the soil. They do suffer, however, from competition from rank growing weeds which compete directly for moisture and nutrients. If the weeds are not kept down, therefore, with a mulch, it is necessary to stir the soil about the plants for weed removal. Cultivation should not be deep as stem roots forming early in the season may be damaged. There is often serious injury to lilies in the early spring just as they are coming through the soil by over-zealous cultivation and weeding. Some kinds, among them *L. amabile*, *superbum*, *concolor* and *Maxwill*, do not appear above ground until about the time the tulips bloom. There are few lily growers who have not experienced cutting off the shoots just as they appear at the surface of the ground and thus ruining the plants permanently. Unless you are certain where the lilies are, and this is almost an impossibility, the gardener should be content with pulling the weeds in the vicinity of the lilies until they are well above ground.