

# THE SPECIES LILY

summer, 2003

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SPECIES  
PRESERVATION LILY GROUP  
AFFILIATED WITH THE  
NORTH AMERICAN LILY SOCIETY



## *SPLG GOALS*

- ❁ Growing as many species lilies as possible, especially those rare and in danger of extinction.
- ❁ Making excess species bulbs available to members collecting, preserving, planting, growing, and distributing species seed.
- ❁ Collecting all possible information on each species: its habitat, distribution, cultural needs, etc.
- ❁ Disseminating cultural information on each species.
- ❁ Assembling a slide and photo record of all species lilies.
- ❁ Identifying areas where species grow and seeking protection for those areas.

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**---WITH A SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS TO  
PROOFREADER MAUREEN BARBER**

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Fellow Members:

Outside commitments forced Jim Doherty to resign his position as President, and I have taken on the job, having been Vice President. The transition happened on short notice, but I am confident we can provide a stimulating program at the NALS summer meeting and show.

The nominating committee has asked me to run for president, which I have accepted, with the condition that I be allowed to outline my concerns about the current relationship between SLPG and the North American Lily Society to the membership beforehand.

Currently, the SLPG takes advantage of all the benefits of being part of NALS, but at the same time acts as a separate organization.

The conflicts inherent in this relationship came to a head last Summer when the proposed new SLPG constitution was tabled. I believe it is time to consider re-association with NALS, but under a status that works for both groups:

- ❁ Our goals seem mutually complimentary.
- ❁ We meet at the same Summer lily show.
- ❁ Our memberships overlap to a large degree.
- ❁ And, most importantly, I think each group working together can be more effective than working separately.

At the NALS Winter board meeting, the possibility was discussed extensively from their point of view. This resulted in a nearly unanimous vote to encourage efforts by NALS to work out ways to meet the needs of SLPG, with the goal of re-associating the two groups.

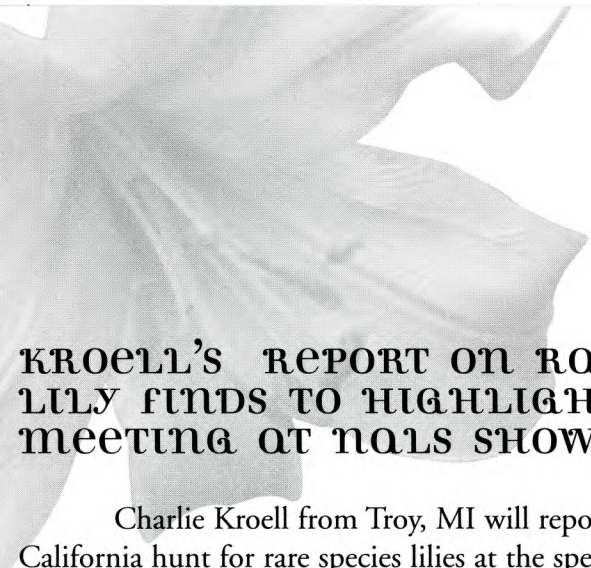
My proposal would see SLPG as a dedicated subgroup of NALS, and with the SLPG leader elected by our group having a position on the NALS board. I truly believe SLPG will be better able to achieve its stated goals under the auspices of NALS, while it consolidates some areas such as membership, and, possibly, publications.

This reconnection has the support of our most important member, Ed McRae. I would envision his same independent relationship, that of a bulb supplier, to continue and be strengthened. Access to species bulbs is certainly a major incentive for joining SLPG. It is a membership benefit that has a bright future if promoted effectively.

The SLPG board of directors is actively engaged in considering all aspects of our NALS relationship. My goal is to have something in writing for the membership to consider at the 2003 meeting in Minneapolis. The crucial issue is how to insure that our stated goals can be pursued most effectively over the long run. Both groups consist of individuals devoted to growing, preserving, promoting, and sharing our passion for lilies. Surely we can find a common ground which everyone can support.

If you agree with my ideas, I hope you will support my effort to become your next elected president of SLPG.

***Bruce Richardson***



## **KROELL'S REPORT ON RARE WESTERN LILY FINDS TO HIGHLIGHT SPECIES MEETING AT NALS SHOW**

Charlie Kroell from Troy, MI will report on his recent Northern California hunt for rare species lilies at the species group's meeting on Friday, July 4th, from 3.30 to 4.30 PM at this year's NALS show in Minneapolis.

### **SHORT BUSINESS MEETING FIRST**

The talk will be preceded by a short business meeting, when the issues facing the species group, including those mentioned in the President's letter, will be discussed. Officers and board members will also be elected, following the nominating committee report.

The issues will be reviewed in detail during the Species Lily Preservation Group board meeting on Thursday evening, July 3rd. Members are urged to attend, to present their views.

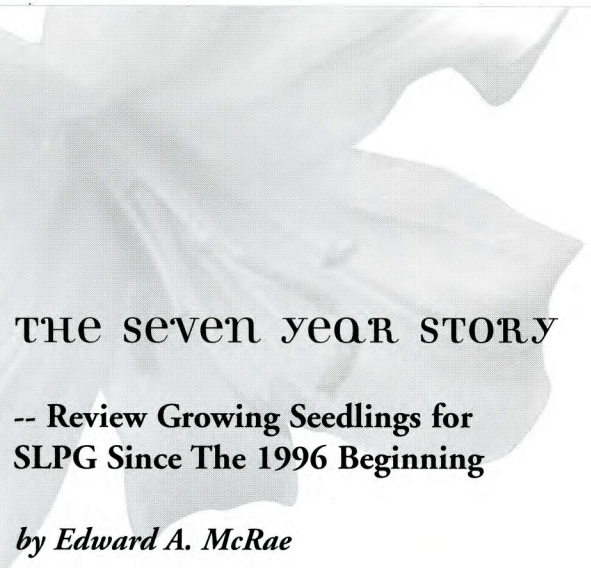
### **KROELL TALK TO HIGHLIGHT MEETING**

Kroell will present a slide show/report on a 1998 trip that took him, Dick Kammer, David Sims, and Barbara Small to the Golden State to hunt elusive Western species lilies that hide in the wetlands along Northern California's Pacific Coast, in the lush green foothills near Mt. Shasta, and in the delightfully dryer uplands of Gold Rush Country, east of San Francisco.



Their mission: locate, find, and photograph the Western species lilies hiding in the mountain valleys and coastal marshes of their area, and report their finds.

Among their finds - and photos we will see -- are: *L. occidentale*, a bright red, rare lily that hides in misty wetlands near the Pacific; *L. kelloggii*, the hyacinth-scented lily that lives further inland on higher ground; *L. rubescens*, the white, upfacing lily that secrets itself in the 4000' Onion Mountain area thriving along babbling springs in that locale. Slides of more common species lilies will also be shown.



## THE SEVEN YEAR STORY

### -- Review Growing Seedlings for SLPG Since The 1996 Beginning

by *Edward A. McRae*

The first planting of seed for the Species Group was sown at Lava Nursery early in May 1996. Lava Nursery, situated on the northwest slopes of Mt. Hood, is near the small community of Parkdale. The volcanic soil at Lava Nursery is highly fertile, deep with excellent drainage, at an elevation just over 2,000 feet. Lava Nursery produces over eight million conifer seedlings annually, including Douglas fir, ponderosa pine and noble fir.

The area destined for the lily seedlings was treated identically to land prepared for conifer seedlings, with the soil being fumigated with methyl bromide to control weeds and pathogens prior to planting. The four foot wide beds were raked level prior to sowing at a density of approximately one seed per square inch. The seed was carefully covered with approximately half an inch of soil from the bed margins.

Meaningful quantities of the following epigeal germinating species were planted:

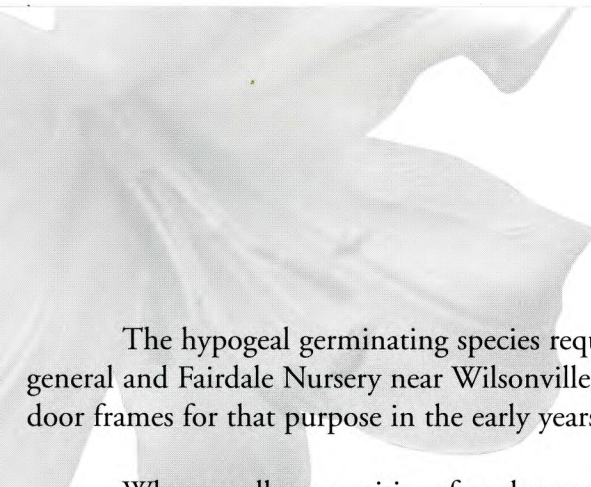


- ✿ *L. amabile*
- ✿ *L. amabile* var. *luteum*
- ✿ *L. cernuum*
- ✿ *L. concolor*
- ✿ *L. concolor* var. *coridion*
- ✿ *L. davidii*
- ✿ *L. lancifolium*
- ✿ *L. lankongense*
- ✿ *L. pumilum*
- ✿ *L. pumilum* 'Golden Glean'
- ✿ *L. pumilum* 'Yellow Bunting'
- ✿ *L. wilsonii* var. *flavum*

*L. candidum*, the Madonna lily, was planted in a separate bed due to its overwintering rosettes formed in the fall. Despite being listed as delayed epigeal, its germination was excellent. Cool temperatures are a big factor in its germination.

All Chinese trumpet species and *L. henryi* have epigeal germination. The following were planted: *L. henryi*, *L. Regale*, *L. leucanthum* var. *centifolium*, and *L. sargentiae*. The germination and subsequent growth was excellent; the beds were then allowed to remain down for a second growing season before harvest.

Three hypogeal germinating species -- *L. martagon*, *L. hansonii* and *L. tsingtauense* -- were also planted. All germinated in the Fall and formed true leaves the following Spring. An adequate irrigation system is essential for success with outdoor bed systems.



The hypogeal germinating species require cool conditions in general and Fairdale Nursery near Wilsonville, Oregon, offered us outdoor frames for that purpose in the early years.

When smaller quantities of seed were involved, we used mostly flats and a few pots. The well-tried "liner mix" acquired locally was used. Liner mix is equal parts sphagnum peat moss, pumice and well-decayed bark dust with the required nutrients. The seed was sown in August and placed in frames at normal temperatures. The following species from Europe and Asia were sown: *L. chalconicum*, *L. cilatum*, *L. hansonii*, *L. martagon*, *L. martagon* var. *album*, *L. pomponium*, *L. pyrenaicum*, *L. monadelphum*, and *L. tsingtauense*. Also sown were *L. canadense* var. *coccineum*, *L. parryi*, *L. pardalinum*, and *L. pitkinense*, from North America.

The following Spring, the majority of the species had germinated. *L. chalconicum*, *L. cilatum*, *L. pomponium*, and *L. pyrenaicum*. They surprised us by showing epigeal germination, all having grass-like cotyledons instead of true leaves. Comber had listed these species as delayed epigeal, perhaps suggesting it wise to plant with hypogeal germinating species?

The flats and pots of growing seedlings were loaded into a large van and moved to Lava Nursery in early June of the same year. They were all planted in prepared beds by hand, a tedious task which took almost two days, but which paid off handsomely after two years. Then, many saleable bulbs were harvested.

The second shade house built at Lava Nursery was for the sole purpose of growing seedlings of both epigeal and hypogeal germinating species. Beds are 12 inches in depth and three feet across; all were filled with the liner mix already described. The epigeal species planted included *L. amabile*, *L. amabile* var. *luteum*, *L. davidii*, *L. pumilum*, *L. pumilum* 'Golden Gleam' and *L. pumilum* 'Yellow Bunting', all planted in April.

A large number of hypogeal germinating North American species were planted in the following August, including *L. columbianum*, *L. humboldtii*, *L. kelleyanum*, *L. occidentale*, *L. pardalinum*, *L. parryi*, *L. parvum*, *L. pitkinense*, *L. washingtonianum* and *L. wigginsii* from Western North America, and *L. canadense* var. *coccineum*, *L. michauxii*, *L. michiganense* and *L. superbum* from Eastern North America



European and Asian hypogeal and delayed epigeals were also planted, including *L. ciliatum*, *L. chalconicum*, *L. hansonii*, *L. martagon*, *L. martagon* var. *album*, *L. martagon* var. *cattaniae*, *L. monadelphum* and *L. tsingtauense*.

The majority germinated, with some being exceptional. We were proud of how well they looked in mid-June of the next year. Then, we were hit by a frost in late June, killing virtually all of the foliage. The only answers: plant the seed later to avoid such unpredictable weather, or to move the shade house to higher ground for better air drainage and frost protection.

All seedlings were allowed to remain in the beds for another year, during which time many recovered to a remarkable degree. All bulbs were then lifted in early October and planted directly in rows at Lava Nursery.


## MOST SUCCESSFUL PRODUCTION

The most successful seedling production in the past seven years has been raised in the large greenhouse at Fairdale Nursery, where an almost identical soil mix was used. The warmer temperatures seemed to suit hypogeal germinations, such as *L. alexandrae*, *L. auratum platyphyllum*, *L. japonicum*, *L. nobilissimum*, *L. rubellum*, and *L. speciosum* var. *rubrum*.

Seed of these species was sown in late August, using equal quantities of sphagnum peat moss and coarse vermiculite, moist but not saturated. Seed was placed in well-ventilated, plastic sacks before being placed in incubation at 70 F. for approximately three months. Bulblets must be plump and well-formed before removal. Following incubation, the bulbs were placed in cold storage (34' F.) in early May, when they were planted with epigeal germinating seed.

The following epigeal germinating species were planted early May in the large greenhouse at Fairdale Nursery:

- ❁ *L. amabile*
- ❁ *L. amabile* var. *lutem*
- ❁ *L. bakerianum*
- ❁ *L. bukozanense*
- ❁ *L. callosum*
- ❁ *L. cernuum*
- ❁ *L. concolor*
- ❁ *L. concolor*. var. *coridion*

- 
- ❁ *L. davidii*
  - ❁ *L. duchartrei*
  - ❁ *L. formosanum*
  - ❁ *L. lancifolium*
  - ❁ *L. lankongense*
  - ❁ *L. leichtlinii*
  - ❁ *L. longiflorum*
  - ❁ *L. pumilum*
  - ❁ *L. taliense*
  - ❁ *L. wardii*
  - ❁ *L. wilsonii*

*L. brownii* var. *australe* and *L. dauricum* both have immediate hypogeal germination; the tiny bulblet immediately forming a true leaf. They can be sown with epigeal germinating species.

Purple bulb species all have epigeal germination and are sown at the same time, giving more space due to superior vigor. *L. henryi*, *L. leucanthum* var. *centifolium*, *L. regale*, *L. rosthornii*, *L. sargentiae* and *L. sulphureum* all also prefer warmer conditions.

The crop was harvested late December when all tops had senesced. The bulbs were packed in sphagnum peat moss in trays lined with well-ventilated, plastic liner. They were put in cold storage (34 F.) til late February, then at 29 F. until planted at Lava Nursery in late April or early May.

The planting was left down for two growing seasons, although many Asiatic species such as *L. cernuum* and *L. pumilum* attain adequate size after one season. Two rules apply, especially when growing lily species from seed:

- ❁ Seed must be stored in a freezer to maintain viability.
- ❁ Seedlings must be grown in isolation from known virus carriers.

Finally, a special note of appreciation to Teresa Pankiewicz Leap of the late Cebeco Lilies who was responsible for skillfully growing several special species, including *L. canadense* var. *coccineum*, *L. parryi*, and *L. pitkinense*, among others.

Fairdale Nursery has given up their lily program, which is a severe loss to the Species Group. The program will continue at Lava Nursery, where we will continue to grow seedlings under added protection. We are also planning to acquire greenhouse space in the Sandy, OR, area, where smaller quantities of the rare species can be grown.



## HOW THEY DO IT: SPECIES LILIES AND THEIR GROWERS

*By Woody Imberman*

Reports from English and North American correspondents suggest the best way to grow species lilies is to take the natural approach in your gardens. Don't coddle your species lilies as you do your hybrids. Rather, find a habitat that your favorite species lilies like, plant them, and patiently let them grow in peace, as Mother Nature fulfills her promise in their beauty and bounty.

### ENGLAND

From England Harris Howland reports, "...there is no magic formula that will guarantee success every time, particularly with species."

"They have widely diverse habitats and climates demanding a whole variety of cultivating conditions," he continued. "This means a considerable degree of trial and error, in my case a lot of the latter."

Best bet, according to Howland, is to follow the advice of experts. This means reading the works of Derek Fox, Ed McRae, and Patrick Syngé, all of which are worthwhile. They have valuable tips about most species lilies, and they are helpful to find ways to overcome the difficulties of some of the prima donnas of the species world.





Howland grows a variety of lilies in his greenhouses, because this enables him to control the irrigation. However, the downside of greenhouses, he points out, is that the high temperatures that can be generated encourages fusarium and rats, to the death of far too many lily bulbs.

"Even in England, I have to employ shading over the greenhouse from relatively early in the year, and use hoses for drip irrigation."

Readers can duplicate Howland's efforts to some extent even if they do not have a greenhouse, by using drip or soaker hoses in their gardens, rather than sprinklers. The result should reduce incidents of fusarium and other dread things.



## NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND

Following the sun as it hurtles the Atlantic brings us to Dick Richards, who lets his *L. superbum* grow wild on his 15 acres of woodlands and fields acreage near Gilmanton Iron Works, in New Hampshire, named for the early cast iron produced there in colonial times from the region's naturally occurring bog iron. Local legend has it that the cannons of the *USS Constitution* were cast there, cannons whose swift thunder ruled the world's seas. It was Richards' *L. superbum* that won the Best of the Show award at the NALS show in Hamilton, Ontario in 2001.

While many complain about the depredations of deer and smaller critters, Dick has to deal with 1,000 lb. moose who forage across his sun lit fields.

"I let my dogs Sammy and Petey roam freely," he said, "and the moose seem to find other fields and forested areas more attractive."

Richards' cigars are perhaps equally effective as a moose repellent. The long brown tobacco tapers give off clouds of faintly green smoke rather like the poisonous vapors arising from the Venusian marshes of Flash Gordon fame of which we read in our youth, when life held no worries and all was possible. The vapors are so powerful that Richards' wife, Zanna, will only allow him to smoke them outside their home -- a shingled structure surrounded by rock gardens, shady groves of deciduous trees, and sunny fields full of native grasses interspersed with thistles, wild asters, goldenrod, and wild roses.

In the bright fields, Richards has planted many stands of *L. superbum*. He then leaves them to fend for themselves. As the snow pack melts every Spring, the native grasses sprout and grow, shielding the lilies from late frosts. But soon, Richards with by his bounding dogs can see the *L. superbum* thrust through, reaching for the sunlight, and eventually reaching their full height of eight feet or more.

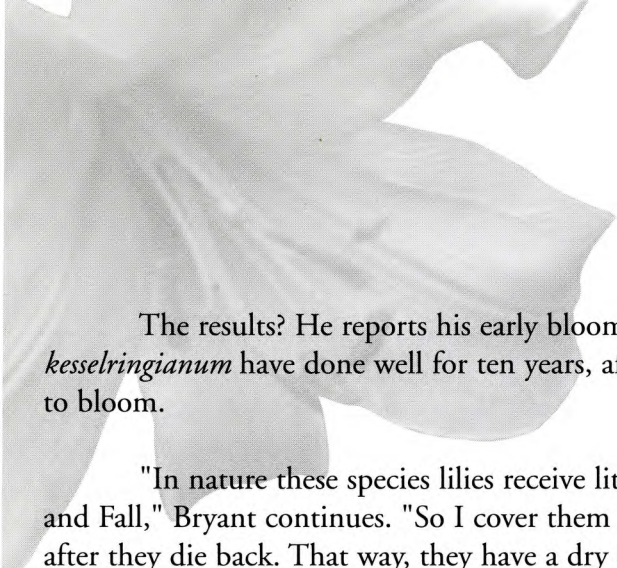
Richards unhappily notes that he is seeing an influx of lily beetles, bane of European lilies for many years. Again, he lets Mother Nature in her inscrutable glory take care of the problem. "The area is full of spiny stink-bugs. Although aptly named," he continued, "they seem to love chewing on lily beetles, and keep them in check."

## **BAY AREA**

Further South, in the Boston area, Curtis Bryant also tries to duplicate the native habitat of species lilies in his own garden.

"I select a garden spot for a given species, taking into account shade, Ph level, and soil type," he says. "I add sterilized soil from that site to the potting mixture for starting seeds, so if they flourish I know they will tolerate the soil at that site when I transplant them."

Bryant adds that he does not try to grow species lilies in beds with hybrids, because the species lilies do not tolerate commercial fertilizer well. "Lots of leaf mold and very diluted liquid fertilizer has worked best," according to Bryant.



The results? He reports his early blooming *L. szovitsianum* and *L. kesselringianum* have done well for ten years, after having taken six years to bloom.

"In nature these species lilies receive little water in the Summer and Fall," Bryant continues. "So I cover them 20 with a piece of plywood after they die back. That way, they have a dry dormancy following Mother Nature's way."

He has also been successful with *L. meleodoides*, *L. oxypetalum*, but so far, he says he has not had any luck with *L. calcedonicum*, *L. lankongense*, or *L. philadelphicum*.

## MIDWEST USA

The author has tried a relatively narrow variety of species lilies in his Winnetka, Illinois gardens. He lives only six blocks from moody Lake Michigan, whose moods have a strong effect on local weather conditions.

The lake turns icy gray when the Nor'easters scream, instantly cooling the shores and dampened them with morning fogs. Soon, the winds shift to the West, the lake turns a smiling, calm blue, and the hot Summer sun dries the swaying lily stems. Species lilies in his gardens are interspersed with hybrids, all of which are heavily fertilized and sprayed with fungicides and insecticides about every ten days. Results are mixed, probably due to overly shady conditions, heavy, water retentive clay soil, and perhaps too much coddling. Here are his mixed results:

☼ *L. canadense* and *L. michiganense*. Little increase, but they survive for several years, especially in the more sunny locations.

☼ *L. henryi*. Does well, with some growing up to five feet tall with many blooms. They require staking, especially the taller ones.

☼ *L. henryi citrinum*, and *L. szovitzianum*. Struggle to reach four feet, lasted for only three years.

☼ *L. leucanthum* var. *centifolium*, and *L. Regale*. When planted in well drained, sunny locations, survive and prosper. Not surprisingly, they do poorly when misplanted in wet patches.

☼ *L. martagon*. Does quite well, especially in sunny locations, some reaching over four feet tall. Good increase, especially in the better drained, brighter areas of the gardens.

## CENTRAL CANADA

Just Southwest of Toronto in Oakville, Ontario live Maureen and Ian Barber, who spend their time working in their shade speckled gardens or laughing with their sunny grandchildren.

Winters are frequently quite cold on the shores of Lake Ontario, with little snow cover to protect gardens from bitter winds. However, Ian and Maureen successfully grow many types of long lasting lilies, including *L. amabile*, *L. davidii*, *L. henryi*, *L. lancifolium*, *L. tsingtauense*,

*L. martagon*, and *L. michiganense*. The latter was rescued from a local construction site, giving Ian a short-term dose of poison ivy, and their garden a long lasting, gracefully nodding beauty.

Most have weathered the Winters for years and multiply slowly. However, *L. speciosum* var. *rubrum* and *L. auratum* var. *platyphyllum* are slowly fading. "Their sad decline is due to the fact that our Summer days and entire season are too short to keep them happy," Maureen said.

"Success is when they survive," said Maureen. "I lose some, but replacements soon refill the spots they have abandoned. I find I have the best luck when I mulch the flower beds, to keep the lilies' feet cool"

She and Ian dig over their gardens with compost during the Spring. They water their lilies when planted, then scatter some granular fertilizer on the flower beds, and mulch for the Summer heat.

"Other than that, they are on their own," she says.

## THE WESTERN CANADIAN PRAIRIES

Further West, and much farther North lie the more successful gardens of Reg Gallop, along the wind-swept plains and hills of the Eastern Shore of Manitoba's Lake Winnipeg . There, Reg, who needs no introduction to most lily growers, successfully propagates lilies in USDA Zone 2-3 weather conditions, in soil which is sandy, slightly acid, well drained, and full of rich humus.

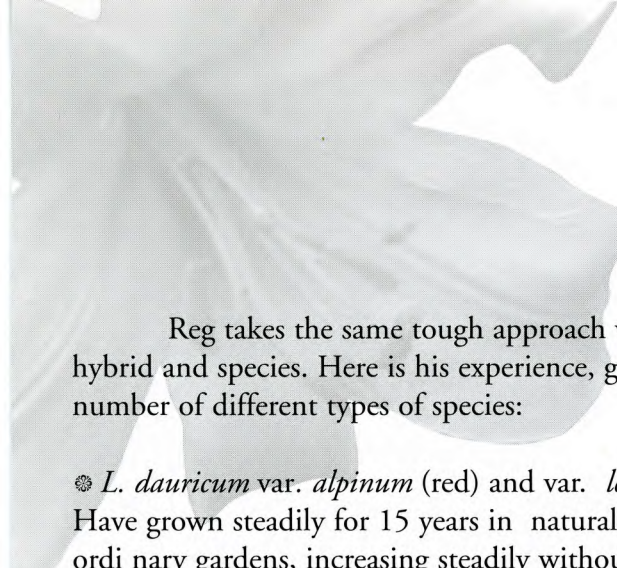
Like Bob Richards, Reg takes a somewhat Darwinian approach to his lilies.



"Often, we pamper them too much, by giving them excess nitrogen fertilizers and fine accommodations they would not ordinarily find in nature," he says. "This approach would soon end our supplies of lilies, from botrytis, viruses, etc., if widely practiced."

Dr. Gallop also admires the results of plant breeders Fred Fellner and Alex Burnett, near Vermilion, in Northern Alberta, who take a similarly *laissez-faire* approach to their lilies.

"I have been very impressed by the few, mostly tall beauties there, which survive and flower vigorously amidst the parched and cracked, dryland-farmed fields. Not even the wind-borne ground coating of seeds from nearby fields could germinate because the soil was so dry," Reg continued. "But their lilies survive and thrive, having initially gone down deep into the clay soil to find enough water and nutrients without help from humans"

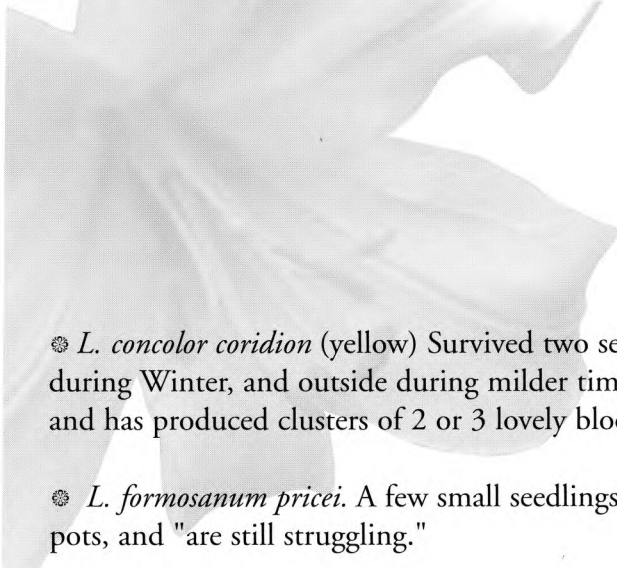


Reg takes the same tough approach with some of his lilies, both hybrid and species. Here is his experience, good and bad, growing a number of different types of species:

- ❁ *L. dauricum* var. *alpinum* (red) and var. *leuteum* (yellow). Have grown steadily for 15 years in naturalized bush-land and ordinary gardens, increasing steadily without care. They grow about three feet high, and are among the earliest flowering lilies.
- ❁ *L. davidii* var. *willmottiae*. Have done well, producing elegant tall stems, with many slightly recurved pale-orange blooms on arching stems that needed staking.
- ❁ *L. lankongense*. Produces a 30 cm stem each Summer, with several slightly fragrant, creamy-pink blooms.
- ❁ *L. martagon* var. *cattaniae* (aka *dalmaticum*). Vigorous, growing up to 1.5 m, with about 25 deep burgundy clear blooms. Very good survivor, but reproduces less than the lighter colored ones like those in the Paisley hybrid families.
- ❁ *L. philadelphicum*. Native to the Manitoba bushland, these lilies have survived for a long time, with little increase. Usually, only one will send up a single bud, on a 50-70 cm stem.



- ❁ *L. hansonii* (Martagon). A golden yellow beauty survived many ears until the very destructive deep freeze of the 1997-1998 Winter, killed them and a wide variety of other normally Winter hardy flowers.
- ❁ *L. henryi*. Increases only slowly, perhaps due to too much shade in his gardens. Produces 5 to six flowers on tall, drooping stems, increasing only slowly; one of the better cold-hardy lilies.
- ❁ *L. amabile* var. *luteum*. Survives moderately well.
- ❁ *L. michauxii*. Many losses of seedlings. Reg suggests putting these in pots for their first few years, before exposing them to the full force of nature. "They need to be adolescents, to possibly withstand those stresses."
- ❁ *L. superbum*. "They are reluctant to bloom." Many North American and other species like to have a long vegetative "establishment time" before they pass through their primitive form of "puberty" to produce buds and viable seeds.
- ❁ *L. cernuum*. Three small bulbs have each produced one small stem and bloom. No obvious increase in number and vigor.
- ❁ *L. columbianum*. Three small bulblets purchased in Fall 2001, grew a little, then declined. May still be underground.

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- ❁ *L. concolor coridion* (yellow) Survived two seasons in a pot - inside during Winter, and outside during milder times. Grows about 3 feet tall, and has produced clusters of 2 or 3 lovely blooms on each stem.
  - ❁ *L. formosanum pricei*. A few small seedlings have survived, planted in pots, and "are still struggling."
  - ❁ *L. martagon*. Purchased from European, North American and Turkish wild sources, they have survived well for 20 years, but with little increase. Normally they grow about 1 M. tall.
  - ❁ *L. pumilum* (orange-red). Produce only thin, short, (45 cm) stems, with several orange-red blooms. Little increase, and disappear after a few years. Reproduces well from seeds.
  - ❁ *L. Regale*. Cold hardy, but have increased only slowly, producing only 1 m spindly stems, with a few nice blooms at the top.
  - ❁ *L. tsingtauense*. Do well outside, producing fine stems about 75 cm high, with several lovely bright orange, outfacing blooms. Some increase.

As do other lily fanciers, Reg continues to try, and his results are better than most, perhaps because of his tough love approach.

## WEST COAST - CANADA

From Nanaimo, located on the East coast of Southern Vancouver Island, Bruce Richardson reports that "Lilies like this climate and all but the most tender tropical species thrive."

The climate there is mild and moist, much like Southern England or Western Oregon. Winter temperatures drop below freezing, but rarely as low as 20F or -8C, with the first frosts coming in October and the last in late March. Summer temperatures are similarly mild, usually in the 70's F or 27C.

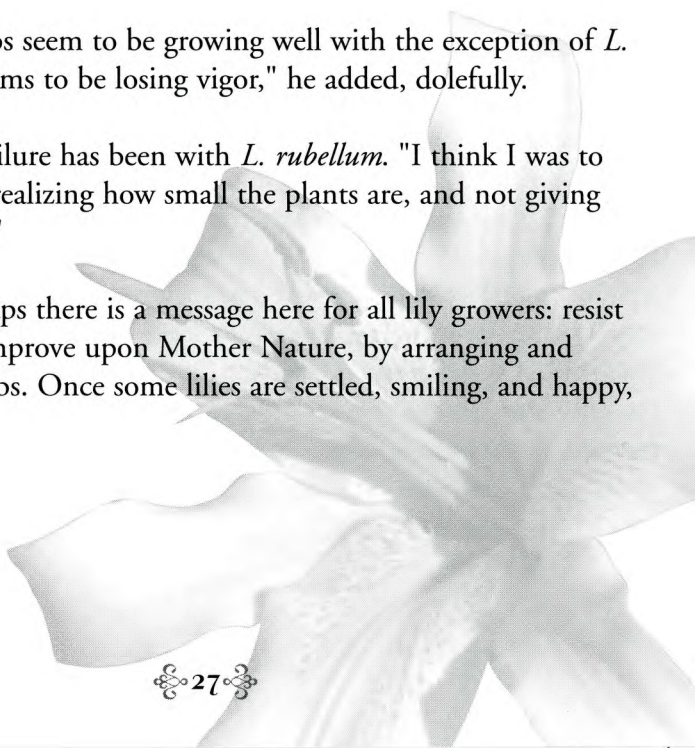
"*L. pardalinum* grows like a weed, forming vigorous clumps. It blooms early, sets seed well, and seems impervious to disease. *L. hansonii* is equally at home, and also blooms early."

Later in the season, Richardson reports success with a wide range of species, including *L. davidi*, *lankongense*, *amabile*, *tsingtauense*, *wardii*, *taliense*, *candidum*, *centifolium*, *regale*, *wilsoni*, *auratum*, and very late in the year, *L. speciosum*.

"All my bulbs seem to be growing well with the exception of *L. canadense*, which seems to be losing vigor," he added, dolefully.

His single failure has been with *L. rubellum*. "I think I was to blame for that, not realizing how small the plants are, and not giving them a special spot."

Again, perhaps there is a message here for all lily growers: resist the temptation to improve upon Mother Nature, by arranging and re-arranging the bulbs. Once some lilies are settled, smiling, and happy, leave them alone.





## WEST COAST USA

California's dry gleaming hills and sun speckled mountains are the happy homes of some species lilies, while others enjoy the damp fogs and more humid conditions along the California Coast. Yet other kinds of species lilies thrive in the wetter green mountains and rocky glens of Oregon and Washington.

Lilies growing in this great area generally can be roughly categorized into two general types - dry land and west land species.

Barbara Small has knowledgeable arranged these in the following categories:

### Dry Land

These lilies often grow in the higher slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, from whose peaks one can see the Pacific shimmering in the distance in one direction, and the Central Valley simmering in the other.

In their lofty perches, species lilies living here often receive a fair amount of moisture early in the Spring, as run-off from the mountain snows course by their homes and green-up Spring rains water their habitats. That moisture seems enough to allow them to weather the dry, often hot weather that follows during the Summers and Falls. Barbara includes the following lilies in the dry land category: *L. humboldtii*, *L. washingtonianum*, *L. bolanderi*, *L. rubescens*, *L. kelloggii*, *L. columbianum*, *L. marimum*, and *L. occidentale*.

According to Ed McRae, the most persnickiest of the dry land lilies are *L. washingtonianum*, ("I just can't seem to grow the damn things," he says. "They just don't do well."), and *L. bolanderi*. Others having difficult reputations are *L. rubescens*, *L. kelloggii*, and *L. columbianum*.

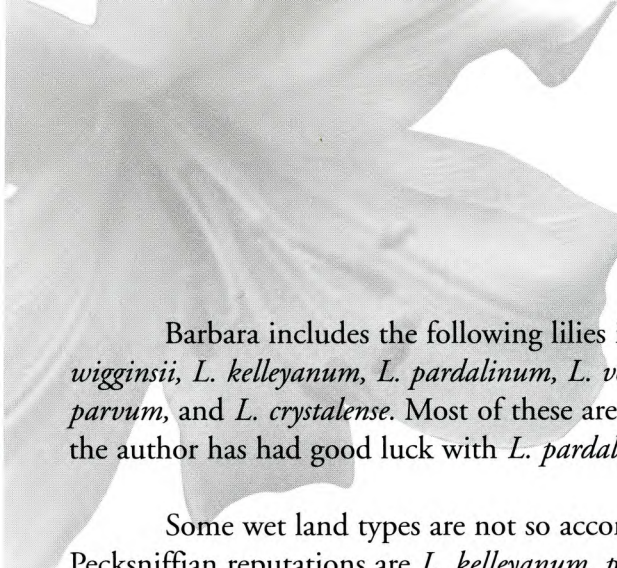
"The others are pretty accommodating to reasonable conditions, and not particularly difficult for gardeners to grow," he said.

Barbara reports she has been unable to grow that many of the dry land types successfully: "The *L. humboldtii* I started from seed seven years are now only two inches tall!"

Gardeners trying to grow these dry land lilies in their own flower beds are often met with frustration. The lilies might grow for a year or two, and then simply disappear, signaling their displeasure over their transplanted homes.

## **Wet Land**

Lilies in this category are found along the entire West Coast. They live happily in hidden marshy areas along the Northern California and Oregon coasts as well as in deep mountain glens secreted under towering Redwoods, and along water courses and rivers that give them moisture all Summer long.



Barbara includes the following lilies in this category: *L. parryi*, *L. wigginsii*, *L. kelleyanum*, *L. pardalinum*, *L. vollmeri*, *L. pitkinense*, *L. parvum*, and *L. crystalense*. Most of these are relatively easy to grow. (Even the author has had good luck with *L. pardalinum*!)

Some wet land types are not so accomodating. Those with Pecksniffian reputations are *L. kelleyanum*, *pitkinense*, *parvum*, and *vollmeri*.

Happily enough Barbara mentioned she had good luck with the wet land types, especially those growing at the lower elevations, again, by following Mother Nature. Here's how she does it:

"I keep them in partial shade and water them every day. In nature, many of them actually grow in the stream beds where they receive running water until July or August," she reported with a smile.

## **WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE HERE?**

What conclusions can we draw from these reports from England and across North America?

- ❁ First, successful growers read their books about species lilies, and become familiar with their habits.
- ❁ Second, successful growers try to welcome wild newcomers into their gardens by providing an environment as similar as possible to that of the species' actual homes.

❁ Third, successful growers are tough customers, Darwinian in outlook and Spencerian in method, unwilling to give their species lilies the coddling care they don't want...or need.

❁ And fourth, successful growers are patient, willing to wait for shy species lilies to finally peek their heads above ground, slowly and tentatively, as they look about to see if this is where Mother Nature really wants them to make their homes.

## PHOTO CREDITS

Front Cover: *L. henryi* Woody Imberman

Page 7. *L. philadelphicum* Ed McRae

Page 12 *L. canadense* Woody Imberman

Page 17 *L. superbum* Bob Richards

Page 23 *L. pardalinum* Woody Imberman

Back Cover

Top *L. tenifolium* Woody Imberman

Bottom. *L. auratum* var. *platyphyllum* Judith Freeman

