

THE
ROSE  **ELLE**

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Patsy Williams, Editor

April 2009

This Month's Meeting

Thursday
April 9, 2009

Twelve Roses to grow in Houston
Tommy Hebert

7:30 pm
Garden Center
Hermann Park

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My Sunshine
Roses Are Blooming

Twelve Roses to Grow in Houston

You asked for it. Responses to our Member Survey show that recommendations for varieties of roses that grow well in this climate are among the most requested program topics. Our Speaker for April has wonderful ideas on this subject harvested over his years of experience growing and judging roses along the Gulf Coast. **Tommy Hebert**, a resident of Beaumont, Texas, is a 25-year member of the Golden Triangle Rose Society and a 20-year member of The American Rose Society. Some of his many awards include the Master Rosarian Award of the ARS and the Outstanding Judge Award, the Outstanding Consulting Rosarian Award and the Silver Honor Medal of the South Central District of ARS.

A lifetime gardener, Tommy counts around 300 rose plants in his garden. Tommy and "rose-wife" Ange also enjoy rose exhibiting when Tommy is not judging. Come to our April meeting to learn about Tommy's favorite roses for Houston.

Consulting Rosarian for April is James Laperouse. The roses are blooming. Bring your rose questions to the meeting.

Grand Prix begins this month. We should be having beautiful blooms. Bring your best, and enter the monthly show. Remember, there is a special class for beginners, and there is a monthly prize for that class.

Feature of the Month: Old Garden Rose Bouquet, 5 or more stems of one bloom or multiple blooms, in a container furnished by the exhibitor.

SPECIAL: 7:00 pm, Beginner's Corner - John Jons, on how to choose a rose.

What Good Rosarians Are Doing in April

Spring has now sprung. Our favorite flower is growing and will be blooming soon. We had a cold snap the middle of March and it brought us a little of that much needed rain.

Finish spring chores

Our goal at the moment is to finish pruning, fertilizing, mulching and to begin a preventive spray program for fungus. With all these things done, we are able to enjoy the fruits of our labors.

Blackspot

If your roses had blackspot at the end of the season, you will begin this year with blackspot. It takes about five weeks, spraying at 5 to 7 day intervals to rid your plants of blackspot. By spraying with a preventive spray and a contact killer spray at the same time, you will be able to eradicate blackspot. Then, you continue with the preventive spray so that blackspot will not re-infest your garden.

Be Observant

Aphids. Aphids will appear as soon as there is lush new growth in the garden. They are easy to get off. They can be washed off with a strong water spray (the most environmentally friendly) or by any insecticide you might have. You will know that you have them when you begin to see the shinny honey-dew on leaves. Turn over the leaves that are above the shinny, sticky material and you will find what is causing it.

The bushes have lush new growth and the aphids are on the miniatures. You will see the evidence as stated above. Now is the time to use the strong spray of water before they get heavily infected.



Beneficial Insects. Many rosarians welcome beneficial insects. When you care more about the environment than you do about killing every insect in sight you will have more beneficial insects. Ladybugs have been around most of the winter and are here now. If you spray for aphids, you will probably kill the "good guys" too. More

ladybugs were spotted at pruning time than are being seen in our garden at this time.



Spider mites. These little devils always seem to be around. If you had them last year, there is no reason to believe that they went away. **Watch for them!** Lower leaves will look dry, lose color and begin to fall off. Spider mites work very fast. They can defoliate miniature roses in a few days. **CONTROL:** Washing the undersides of the leaves with a high-pressure spray of water is the safest practice. A Water-Wand (NOT a water breaker) with a long handle and high-pressure spray is the safest for you and the environment. A pistol-grip spray nozzle on the end of the water hose is also effective; the user just gets a little wetter. Wash the undersides of the leaves every other day for a week, and the life cycle of the mite will be disturbed so much that it cannot reproduce. Mites have to be on the plant to reproduce. **NOTE:** For larger yards, or a severe infestation, a miticide can be used. AVID is expensive, but it has proven to be the most effective. Gardens that have little to no insecticides sprayed will have less invasion of spider mites, thereby having more spider mite predators.



Thrips are just around the corner and will come into the blooms as soon as the sepals begin to show the smallest separation. Thrips are light sandy-colored insects (very small) that bruise and discolor the petals of roses causing the blooms to turn brown. Thrips can also cause petals to stick together, which can prevent bloom opening. Pull a petal back, and look for these little pests scurrying around in the bloom. To control: spray **buds and blooms ONLY** (thrips damage is only in the buds and blooms) with Orthene. Mix only the amount you anticipate using. **Do not** save any for later spraying. A pump-up sprayer can also be used effectively; spray with less pressure so that your spray can be directed more effectively. Don't lose those beautiful blooms to thrips; **those blooms are for you!**

Protect Yourself From Spray Materials. Wear long sleeves and long pants. Rubber gloves,

boots, goggles and a respirator are also recommended. Caution should always be practiced.

Blind Shoots. A fluctuation of temperatures during the development of new growth is probably the greatest cause of blind shoots. We had plenty of such fluctuation during March, thus many blind shoots. These are short growths terminating without a bloom at the end. Removal of these allows vigor of the bush to go to more-productive leaves. Blinds can be identified by the stem tapering to a point, with no sign of a bud in the center, and by much shorter stems with closely-spaced leaves. If the stem grew to 6 to 8 inches in length before it became blind, cut the stem back to a five-leaflet leaf, and it will begin to grow again. Remove the whole stem if it is only 2-4 inches long.

Continue to **finger prune** to remove the unwanted growth from your plants. Multiple bud-eyes may emerge from one leaf axil. Only one should be allowed to mature, especially if you are going to exhibit in a rose show. Remove, also, the eyes that are aimed in the wrong direction (toward the center of the plant, or on collision courses with other canes). This is very important if you are exhibiting roses or want long stems to take in the house.

Making blooms last. Bring your blooms into the house, and **recut them under water** to prevent an air bubble in the vascular system. Use warm water in the vase; this aids in the conditioning process of the bloom. Changing the water every day or so also helps to keep the roses fresh. A little of the original yellow Listerine will disinfect as well as feed the blooms. It helps to prevent algae in the vase.

Cutting spent blooms, or “deadheading.” After a flower has bloomed, the stem should be cut back above the second five-leaflet to encourage stronger stems. NOTE: A longer stem may be cut if you are bringing the bloom into the house or sharing with a friend, or you just want to keep the bush shorter. A good rule of thumb is: “Leave at least two sets of leaves on a stem, or else cut the stem back to the main cane.” A cane with less than two sets of leaves will not produce for you. The removal of

spent-blooms encourages new growth. New growth means new blooms.

Protect yourself from the sun’s rays.

The ozone layer is very thin, and folks are getting more and more skin cancers; please use a sun block with a SPF 15 or higher. Rosarians are in the sun a lot, and you should really protect your skin. Any uncovered portion of your body is a target. Protection should be applied before you set foot out of the door, whether you are going out to work in the garden or just going shopping.

Grow your roses to the fullest.

You are in control of how your roses grow and produce. See to it that they have every opportunity to perform their very best for you. Feed, water, spray, cut spent-blooms, and the bushes will do the rest. Enjoy your roses.

Share your knowledge with a friend.

The best way to share your knowledge with a friend is to introduce them to the Houston Rose Society. Bring them with you to a meeting. Show them what the newsletter is all about. Maybe you could even give them a gift membership.

What are your favorite new roses?

Each year the rose growers flood the market with new roses. Are you trying any of them? Let us know how they are growing for you and what you like best about the different varieties.

Visit gardens that are on tour on April 19th.

One of the highlights of being in the HRS is the Spring Garden Tour.

50 Years and still going strong. Join us in our July meeting as we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Houston Rose society. There are plans to have a big celebration in July.

Visit our sponsors who give discounts with membership card or current newsletter. Ask for the discount and show your current membership card before they ring up your purchase.



HRS Sponsors Which Offer Discounts

Arbor Gate

15635 FM 2920 - Tomball, Texas 77377
281-351-8851

www.arborgate.com

10% discount on rose related purchases

The Enchanted Gardens

6420 FM 359 - Richmond, Texas 77469
281-341-1206

www.myenchanted.com

10% discount on garden purchases

The Enchanted Forest

10611 FM 2759 - Richmond, Texas 77469
281-937-9449

www.visitourforest.com

10% discount on garden purchases

Nature's Way Resources

101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe, Texas 77385
936-321-6990 (Houston Metro)

www.natureswayresources.com

10% discount on soil, mulch, sand, etc.

RCW Nursery

15809 Highway 249 (at Beltway 8)
281-440-5161

10% discount on Roses

Plants for All Seasons

21328 SH 249, Houston 77070
281-376-1646

10% discount on roses with card

San Jacinto Stone

195 Yale Street, Houston, Texas 77007
713-868 3466

10% discount on purchases

Smith & Hawken

3935 San Felipe
713-621-9395

10% discount on everything except furniture and sale merchandise

Southwest Fertilizer

5828 Bissonnet, Houston, Texas
713-666 1744

10% discount on rose related products

Teas Nursery

4400 Bellaire Blvd.
713-664-4400

15% discount on roses

Wabash Antiques and Feed Store

5701 Washington Avenue
Houston, Texas 77007
713-863-8322

10% discount on garden products

Society Potpourri

LAST MONTH'S MEETING

Thanks to John Teas for presenting a program on the history of Teas Nursery and their involvement with roses.

Thanks to Gaye Hammond and Susan Kelly for the delicious refreshments.

HRS Spring Rose Show

April 18, 2009

Sharpstown Community Center
6600 Harbor Town Drive

We are going to have a rose show! It is a place where you can show off your best or favorite roses. It is a place where you can see what other rosarians are growing and maybe fall in love with what looks to you like the most beautiful rose that you have ever seen, and a day to spend time with others who share your favorite hobby. A time of sharing and learning.

Volunteers are needed to help with the show. We need help setting up the show on Friday, and numerous ways on Saturday. Contact Dan Lawlor at 281-343-9422 or dplawlor@pdq.net. He will be glad to hear from you. Dan will also gladly accept trophy donations for the show.

HRS Events Calendar

Mark your calendar - updates made monthly

- Apr 9 ▪HRS Meeting - Tommy Hebert
- Apr 11 ▪EarthKind Symposium at the American Rose Center in Shreveport, La.
- Apr 18 ▪HRS Spring Rose Show, Sharpstown Community Center
- Apr 19 ▪HRS Spring Garden Tour
- May 23-25 ▪ARS Rose Judging School
Beaumont, TX

Volunteers Are Appreciated

During the past month, the Houston Rose Society has been in several nurseries. We would like to thank those who helped in these endeavors. We have been to Buchanan's, Teas, RCW, Plants for All Seasons and to The Galveston Home and Garden Show. Thanks to Donald Burger, Maria Trevino, Baxter and Patsy Williams, Roy Brown, Mark Smith, James and Debbie Laperouse, Elisabeth Duhon, Carolyn Plant, Mary Fulgham, and Robin Hough for their unselfish support. Several rosarians went to more than one location.

Houston Rose Society 2009 Garden Tours

This will be an afternoon to remember. Get an early start so that you won't miss any of the sights, and make sure that your camera has plenty of film (or memory chips), and plenty of battery charge. The flowers are a-bloom in our fair City, and you'll see plenty of them. The owners of these gardens will show you what good blooms are all about.

A few suggestions: (1) Don't show up early - the Tour starts at Noon, not before. Don't stay

late, unless asked. Don't litter – pick up what you drop. Don't pluck anything. Don't ask to go inside. DO thank your hosts, and compliment their gardens. DO speak to others in the gardens. DO have a great time!

NOTE: Gardens to do have to be visited as they appear on this list.

Deanna Krause, Tour Chair

Sunday, April 19th, 12:00 pm until 6:00 pm

1. Herb and Margaret Loper 11038 Lark Brook Ln, Houston 281-807-4911

Herb and Margaret moved to their present home 2 years ago. The yard is about half the size of their previous yard. Margaret moved about 15 roses to this new yard, bringing only those that were disease resistant varieties. The bushes in the back yard were all started from cuttings. In all, the garden has 40 mostly hybrid tea roses.

Directions: Take U.S. Hwy 290 northbound to FM 1960. Right on FM 1960 to Wortham Blvd. Left to Walnut Lake Road. Left to Lark Brook Lane. Right to house on right.

2. Denise Cope 5913 Birdwood, Houston 713-771-4841

Denise is a long time rosarian that has downsized her rose garden for easy care and convenience. She is no longer growing hybrid teas, and has turned to Old Garden Roses and EarthKind roses, as they are more disease resistant. She hasn't had to spray chemicals in years! Be sure to see her favorite "Belinda's Dream" roses. There are also many perennials and herbs in her compact garden to add garden color.

Directions: Take South 610 Loop to Beechnut. Go west on Beechnut to Hillcroft; take a left (south) to Birdwood, right to house on left.

From Loper: Return to Hwy 290, and go south to Loop 610. Bear to right south past Hwy 59 and take the Beechnut Exit, right to Hillcroft, see above.

3. David and Renee Cummins #2 West 11th Place, Houston 713-524-2332

David and Renee's 1939 home is located in the West Eleventh Place Historic District and is listed in the National Register. Renee is very excited about gardening, and it shows in the beautifully designed walled garden covered with climbing roses. Antique roses are favorites, with a few shrub roses added for their beauty. Perennials and bulbs add to the riot of color. Wish we could all have her potting shed! As a special treat, the garden next door (#4) will also be available for viewing. It is the home of one of the founders of the Houston Bulb Mart. There will be flyers on hand describing all the above.

Directions: Directions: From US Hwy 59, go south on Main or Fannin to Binz/Bissonnet, right across Montrose to W 11th, left to first house on right.

From Cope: Return to Hillcroft, left (north) to Hwy 59, right to Main Street Exit, right on Main to Binz/Bissonnet, right to West 11th Place, left to first house on right.

4. Nick and Lucy Schmidt, Dorothy Winter 2217 Huckleberry Ln, Pasadena 713-477-3677

Lucy calls her yard “a bird and butterfly-friendly garden with roses.” A former exhibitor of miniature roses, Lucy still has many of those roses she used to exhibit, but has added many antique roses bought from a nursery going out of business, some of which she calls her nameless adopted roses. Her mother, Dorothy Winter, now residing with daughter Lucy, has incorporated some of her own roses into the garden. Fragrant olive trees add to the mixture of perennials, annuals, and roses.

Directions: Take 610 Loop east to Hwy 225. Travel Hwy 225 to the Pasadena Blvd/Red Bluff Exit, right (south) on Pasadena Blvd past Southmore Avenue and Strawberry Road to Huckleberry, right to house in second block on left.

From Cummings: Return east on Bissonnet (becomes Binz) past Fannin to San Jacinto, left to Hwy 59 entrance (just past Blodgett), right onto Hwy 59, then bear left to I-45 South, right to Loop 610, left to Hwy 225, right to Pasadena Blvd/Red Bluff Exit, see above.

5. Harris County Precinct 2, Master Gardeners 1202 Genoa-Red Bluff, Houston 77034

Master Gardeners in the Pasadena area have transformed a Hurricane Ike storm collection site into a wonderful working display garden. Not only will you see a number of named roses, but also a good collection of named fruit trees and other colorful plants. The greenhouses hold plants being started for periodic sales and planting in the garden site.

Directions: From I-45 South, take the Fuqua Exit, and cross over the freeway going eastbound. The site is just past Burke Road, and is on the right. Look for the gate marked “Harris County Precinct 2 Master Gardeners”.

From Schmidt/Winter: South to Cherrybrook Lane, left to Burke Rd, right 1.5 miles to end of street at Genoa-Red Bluff, left to site on right.

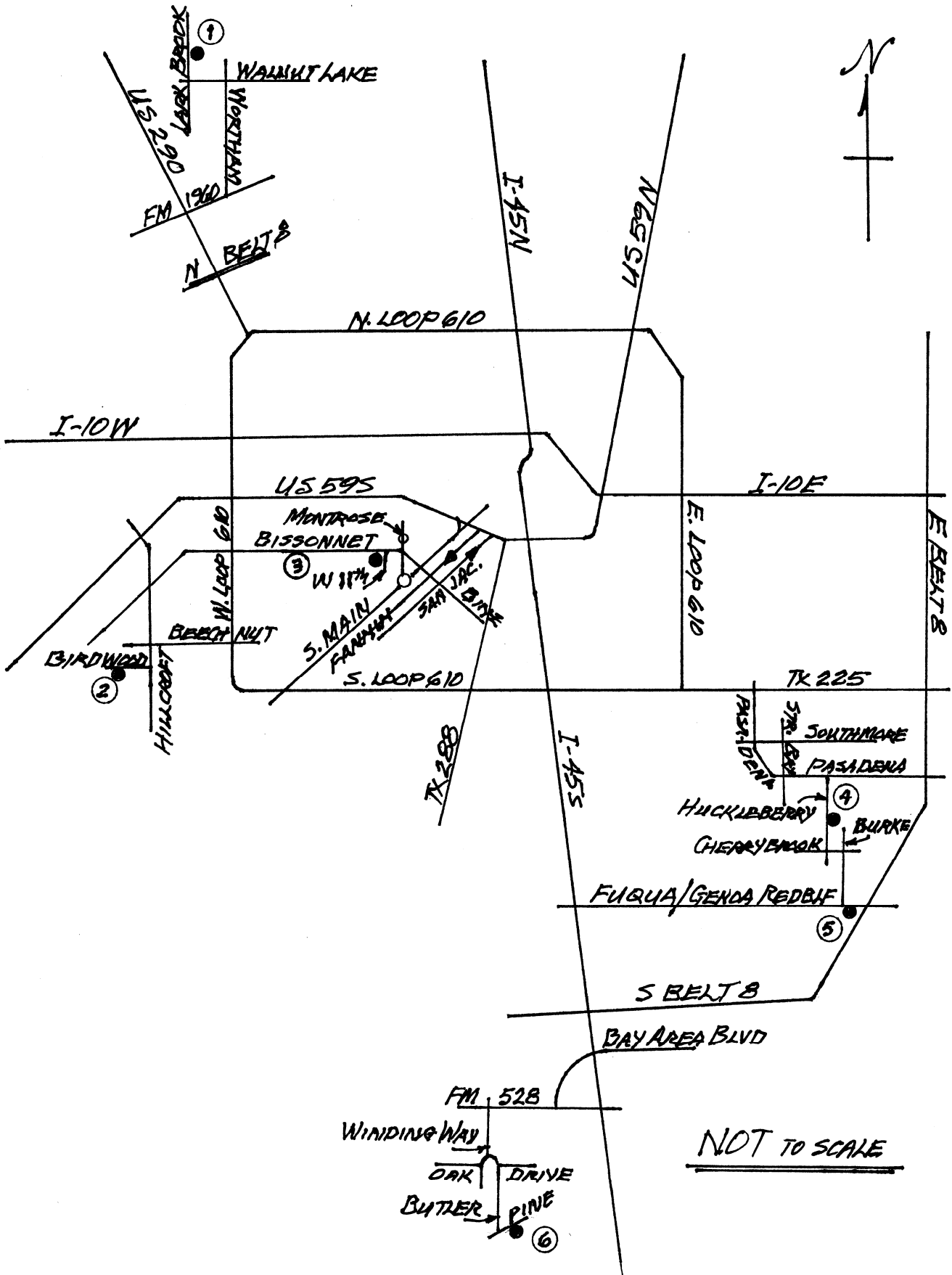
6. Soledad de la Cerda, Claudio Soto 2403 Pine Dr, Friendswood 832-247-3145

Soledad admits that roses are her favorite flowers; she admires their beauty, but hates their thorns. It has been three years since she started planting roses in her garden, and in the process she has had both successes and failures, but concludes that roses are now part of their lives and part of their garden landscape. Most of her roses are in an oval bed in front of her house. She mixes old garden roses, hybrid teas, and shrub roses together in this bed, for a spectacular welcome to her home. Go through the breezeway to a surprise backyard. There is a vegetable garden, a pool, a playground, and many tropical plants, grown from small plants. Look for the climbing roses on the fences to the right, and plants in containers.

Directions: Take I-45 South to Exit 26 at Bay Area Blvd, right on Bay Area Blvd to FM 528, right to Winding Way Drive, left (south) on Winding Way to Oak Drive, left on Oak, and bear right onto Butler to end of street, left on Pine Street to house on right.

From Harris County Master Gardeners: East on Genoa-Red Bluff to Beltway 8, right on access road past the Toll Plaza, then enter the freeway, exit onto I-45 South towards Galveston, take Exit 26 onto Bay Area Blvd, see above.

Garden Tour Map / Sunday April 19, 2009





HRS Library Book

By Maria Trevino

Sara Stein's *Noah's Garden* is much more than just another gardening book. It will change how you view your gardening world. Do you wonder why you do not see as many butterflies, birds, salamanders, walking sticks, and other species you had once known to be common garden residents?

Noah's Garden deals with this phenomenon. Ms. Stein reveals her philosophic approach through questions and ideas on gardening and ecology. She details the changes that occurred in her property when she cleared the land to have a "suburbia" type yard. One day it hit her. She noticed the decline of birds and butterflies, of toads and bees. She realized what happened and began the process of undoing her mistakes.

Throughout her book, Stein presents good ecological information explaining the micro system responsible for composting of the decaying tree trunks that are home to insects, birds, bees, and small mammals. She explains the interdependencies of wildlife and what is needed to encourage the ecosystem to flourish. Yes, we can have our manicured lawns in our "suburban" lots and our hybrid plants. But we can also plant native shrubs, fruit trees, and perennial native plants along the perimeter of our yard. And if we can convince our neighbor also planted shrubs, grasses, and trees along their perimeter then each of us can begin to improve our own land and create areas for the wildlife that we do not see much.

I recommend this book to anyone interested in gardening and ecology. It will stretch your perception of typical gardening and make you once again to want to look under rocks or logs and see what awaits you there.



In My Garden

By Robin Hough

This month I'm preparing both my roses and myself for our upcoming Rose Show on April 18. Let's start with the roses.

Some varieties I like to exhibit as one-bloom-per-stem specimens. These varieties come in almost all classifications, including hybrid teas, floribundas, minifloras, and miniatures. When walking my garden, I look for buds I think will be opening just before the show. Generally speaking, if a bush doesn't have buds on it three weeks before the show, it won't give you blooms for the show. Of course, this isn't written in stone – everything is subject to the weather. In order to put all growth energy into these single blooms, I gently twist off any side buds that appear. Doing this early on prevents scarring.

On the other hand, some varieties will be throwing sprays of buds. When walking past a bush I hope to get a spray from, I twist off the larger center bud (which formed first and would open first) so that the smaller buds will open at the same time. These blooms will fill in the gap left by the removed bud if you do this early on. Waiting until the center bud is open to remove it will leave a hole in the center of the inflorescence. Like single blooms, sprays can appear on any classification of rose, although I mainly encourage them on floribundas, climbers, shrubs, OGRs, and some miniatures. Occasionally I see a nice hybrid tea spray starting, so I'll try to have something to enter in that class in the show.

After looking over the show schedule, I'll start thinking about which arrangement classes I might want to enter. I'll look around the garden and write what roses I think will be available to use for arrangements the week of the show; I group these in my notes by color. Then I'll look through my collection of containers and earmark some for particular entries. I'll actually make the arrangements the day before the show and put them in my cooler. That way I can simply place them the morning of the show and then devote my time to preparing my entries for the horticulture classes.

I'm going to pick up some entry tags at the April meeting so I can stamp them with my name and put rubber bands on them – anything to save time the morning of the show. I'll also check my prep kit to make sure I have paper towels (for cleaning foliage), aluminum foil (for wedging stems in vases), cotton swabs (for gently

opening petals), sharpened pencils, small scissors (for trimming foliage), shears, and a source for checking spelling of rose names.

After entering my roses and making certain the judges are in place, it will be off to work (an opera rehearsal). By the time I get back, the judging will have been completed. I will either be delighted or disappointed by the results, but most likely it will be some of both mixed in with some surprises. One thing for sure, though – it will have been lots of fun! See you there!



Topskcalb

By Baxter Williams, Master Rosarian

Ooops! I spelled it backwards...it should have been written B-L-A-C-K-S-P-O-T. Whatever you call it... "*rosasea spottus noire*" (my own term), or *Marsonia rosae*, as listed in the [Compendium of Rose Diseases](#), it is sure to give you trouble in your rose garden. And it won't necessarily be of your own doing.

I'm convinced that the blackspot disease initially comes to you from either your having bought diseased bushes, or from spores blowing into your garden from a not-too-careful neighbor. The fact that a disease problem comes to you gives rise to some action, or inaction, on your part. I suggest that "action" is the way to address it.

Most of you know that my stance on using manufactured chemicals in the garden is a positive one. I believe that everyone who grows roses has a duty to the bushes to help keep them free from disease, and I do not know of any natural fungicides, so I apply fungicides to keep my bushes free of disease. But that is not all we do.

Good feeding of your bushes is necessary to keep them healthy, and a healthy bush is much more likely to remain disease free than a weak one. And a healthy bush is likely to be grown in a healthy soil. Such soils are almost all laden with composted materials, which give the soil organisms something edible, too. It is these creatures that enable the rose bushes to absorb the nutrients in that soil through osmosis.

Adequate watering is also required to let osmosis take place. If the soil is drier than the roots, then

the plant desiccates rather than taking in nutrients and hydrating. A dry plant is a weak plant, exposing itself to attack from harmful bacteria and fungi.

And good "housekeeping" is also really helpful. We manually remove those leaves that have developed blackspot or mildew, rather than letting their spores drop down onto leaves below and causing collateral damage. It should be noted that blackspots on leaves are a sign that damage has already taken place several days before, and that those leaves are doomed to turn yellow and drop off. Some rosarians also pick up any leaf that has dropped onto the mulch below, and believe that such removal of damaged leaves can also help to keep the level of spores at a minimum.

Both research and experience has shown that wet leaves can activate the fungus spores that are on leaf surfaces, if the surfaces are continuously wet for seven hours. If the leaves are wet for a shorter time, the fungus will not be activated. I often tell listeners that watering at night is perfectly acceptable *if their bushes have been protected with a preventive fungicide*, and I believe that is absolutely correct. It's not the water that allows the damage, it's not having sprayed.

Powdery mildew is another fungal problem, and the cool mornings with high humidity are just right for it to infect your roses. Again, a good fungicide is worth its weight in gold to keep the plants free of the disease. And prevention is so much easier than correction.

The fungicides available across the counter at your local nursery or garden shop must be regularly applied. Almost all of them give protection for 5-7 days, just as they should (they are designed to "fall apart" soon after they have been mixed, so that our environment is protected).

And for the best effect, begin your spray program as soon as your bushes have been pruned, using a "fungus killer" product (such as Mancozeb) mixed with a preventive (such as Ortho's Rose Pride) each week for at least five sprayings, after which you can continue with only the preventive fungicide. DO NOT keep unused portions of fungicides – mix only what you will use at each spraying.



Exhibiting for the Novice

By Baxter Williams

After growing roses for a while, you will notice that all of the horticulture has extrapolated itself into making roses *that are capable of winning a rose show*. So, those roses that have been providing your garden with beautiful color are probably ready to "see the inside of a rose show," aren't they? Be aware that looking at a rose on a show table is no different than looking at one on the dining table at home, provided you understand that an emphasis on perfection is found at the show.

Preparation for your first entry at a rose show starts in the garden. There are a few principles that should be considered at the outset:

- If the rose looks good to you on the bush, it will look good on the show table, too.
- It is the judges' problem to choose the best entries; it is the grower's obligation to provide the judges with a morning's work.
- Well-grown roses always do better in the judging than do others.
- An un-entered rose collects no trophy.
- The early bird gets the worm, which simply means that, if you arrive at the show just before entry time is over, you will have neither a convenient preparation area nor time to prepare and enter all of your blooms. The other adage, that it is always best to not be the first worm, is not true at rose shows.
- It does no good to look at other exhibitors' entries.
- Cut more stem than you will need.
- Don't depend on anyone else to bring needed items, except vases, to the show for you.
- A well-stocked prep box has all of these items:
 - Soft cloths
 - Small, soft paintbrush
 - Shears
 - Fingernail scissors
 - "Deco" (serrated) shears
 - Tweezers
 - Rubber bands
 - Exacto knife(s)
 - Propping material (aluminum foil, styrofoam, or clear plastic film)
 - Pencils
 - Extra Entry Tags, with your name(s) already on them
 - Q-Tips
 - A "Handbook for Selecting Roses"

- Register *first* by filling out the entry envelope.
- Get a Show Schedule ahead of the show date, *and read it ahead of time*.
- With your flashlight and shears in hand, check the bushes one more time before leaving the garden.
- If possible, polish the foliage the night before, and before refrigerating them.

Cut your entries either in the late evening or in the early morning. Re-cut their stems *under water*, and place them into containers having warm water. After they have achieved room temperature, polish the leaves before putting them into the refrigerator; they are much more difficult to polish when they are moist with condensate after having been removed from storage.

If you cut additional blooms for use in the rose sale, keep them separate from the show blooms. More of them can be stored in the same bucket, whereas jamming show blooms together too tightly can cause foliage damage, causing show blooms to get less consideration by the judges.

It makes a lot of sense to fill out entry tags the night before, because there will be more than enough to do on show day without having to spend precious time writing on entry tags.

Upon arrival at the show prep area, find a suitable prep table, and accumulate a sufficient quantity of vases thereto. Then, *immediately* fill out an entry form (envelope). Carefully lift the potential entries from your container, and put them into vases. It is a good idea to put all of those of the same variety in close proximity on the prep table, so that obviously-inferior blooms can be put into the "sale bucket" right away. Return unused vases to the common area, so that other exhibitors can use them. If you must talk to other exhibitors, make it short, just a "Good morning," or some other pleasantries; they will be more receptive to conversation *after* the entry period has ended.

Once an entry is ready, either take it to the entry table, or place it in a holding area on your prep table, to give more room for work other blooms. Be sure that there is a completed Entry Tag on

each one. Take them to the entry table in batches, rather than individually, to save time.

Examine each entry for the obvious disqualification problems: misnamed, misclassified, misplaced, unlabeled or mislabeled, stem-on-stem, foreign substance (cotton balls, etc.), and not-disbudded. Remove the problem; don't be disqualified. Keep track of what you have entered; it is a disqualification of the show rules to enter more than one entry of the same variety in the same class.

Then turn your attention to the problems that would cause your entry to receive a lower evaluation by the judges, such as -

- Un-polished leaflets
- Un-removed "guard petals"
- Un-groomed, or torn, leaflets
- Poorly done side growth removal
- "Balance and Proportion," issues with regard to the length of the stem above the vase
- Poorly propped entries that lean, instead of being erect.

Use the soft cloths in your prep kit to polish away any remaining fungicide on the leaflets. Leftover fungicide is a real distraction to any discerning judge, *and you don't want to do that!*

Guard petals are those smallish petals that sometimes are wrinkled or are color-faulted, and that are at the base of the flowers. They should be removed, and can be easily twisted sideways between your thumb and index finger to do so.

Torn, or blackspotted, or leaf cutter bee damaged leaflets should be either groomed to a more leaf-like shape, or removed altogether. The "Deco shears" in the prep kit have serrated blades, which make ragged edges look much better after being cut. Try to cut the edges into the same basic shape of a normal, yet smaller, leaflet, even if it means cutting away part of the leaflet that isn't damaged. If the leaflet is badly damaged, it might be necessary to remove it entirely. If so, then use your fingernail scissors to take it off all the way down to the next leaflet or petiole (little stem piece between leaflets); sometimes *no* leaflet is better than a badly-torn one.

It is highly recommended that any disbudding of an entry be reviewed just prior to taking it to the entry table. Scars, particularly those that were done soon enough to show darkening by time for

entries to cease, need attention. Carefully scraping the blackened area with your Exacto knife will usually expose the green cambium underneath. If a stem piece or bud is still attached, the Exacto knife will make short shrift of such. Don't leave anything sticking up, particularly down in the middle of a floribunda bloom head.

The amount of stem above the top of the vase should be approximately equal to three-and-one-half times the width of the bloom, assuming a single-bloom entry. Prop the entry high, if the stem is short; or put it all the way down into the vase, if the stem is long (I wish all of mine were *that* kind!), even cutting off some more of the stem, if required.

A leaning stem is very distracting to the judges. Being very careful to check the Show Schedule for what is allowed in the way of propping materials, add and adjust your entry to get it into the most erect position in its vase. Again, *don't depend on others to bring enough propping material to be able to loan some to you; bring your own stuff!* Aluminum foil has more structural strength than does plastic wrapping material, so it is a good idea to have some it in your prep kit at all times. *Note:* it is not necessary to use only one kind of propping material, *if* there is no restriction called out in the show rules; although it makes sense to use only one kind in an individual entry.

When all of your entries are put into the show, *clean up your own prep table.* And other tables, too, if you have time on your hands before other show activities claim your efforts. Your willingness to assist the show committee will encourage others to likewise, particularly if you ask them to help you in the project

Finally, enjoy the experience. Your participation in the show has many benefits: your garden will have received extra care, and the plants will therefore be healthier; the judges will be satisfied in having accomplished their task; the Show Committee will beam; and your newly-acquired ribbons and trophies will provide you with enormous gratification. *Just do it!* I'll see you on the show table.





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