



# DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA NEWSLETTER

CREEKSIDE GENEVEVE, B, FD,  
BI , FLOWER OF THE YEAR

July 2006

[WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFGEORGIA.ORG](http://WWW.DAHLIASOCIETYOFGEORGIA.ORG)

## ANNUAL PICNIC ON THE 29TH

The Dahlia Society of Georgia annual picnic will be held on Saturday, July 29th at Dunaway Gardens just North of Newnan, GA (see attached map). Dunaway Gardens is the rescue work of a garden that existed around 30 years ago. The owners have been working to make it a real show place and everyone seems to agree that it is a lovely garden to visit and the best part is they grow in the neighborhood of 500 dahlias each season and we

hope some of them will be in bloom on the 29th. There is a \$10 per person entrance fee but we hope that won't be too much of a burden on those attending. If it is please let us know. We plan to eat as CLOSE TO THE NOON HOUR AS POSSIBLE as it will be plenty hot so don't be late. The garden opens at 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM. Bring a SALAD, VEGETABLE, OR

## 2006 ANNUAL CALENDAR

- JULY , ANNUAL PICNIC, JULY 29 AT DUNAWAY GARDENS IN NEWNAN, GA. [WWW.DUNAWAYGARDENS.COM](http://WWW.DUNAWAYGARDENS.COM)
- AUGUST MEETING, AUG 21, ABG
- CAROLINAS DAHLIA SHOW UNC ABORETUM, ASHEVILLE-SEPT 9 & 10
- NATIONAL DAHLIA SOCIETY DAHLIA SHOW, LONG ISLAND, NY SEPTEMBER 14-17
- TENNESSEE DAHLIA SHOW, CHATTANOOGA TRADE & CONVENTION CENTER, CHATTANOOGA, SEP 23 & 24
- GEORGIA DAHLIA SHOW, ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN, ATLANTA, GA SEPT 30 & OCT 1
- ALABAMA DAHLIA SHOW, MCWANE SCIENCE CENTER, BIRMINGHAM, AL SATURDAY, OCT 7
- GA NAT'L FAIR DAHLIA SHOW, PERRY, GA OCTOBER 11-13
- OCTOBER MEETING, MINI DAHLIA SHOW, OCT 16, ABG
- NOV MEETING, NOV 20, ABG
- CHRISTMAS PARTY— DEC, TBA

**JULY PICNIC**  
**SATURDAY JULY 29TH**  
**12:00 PM**  
**DUNAWAY GARDENS**  
**NEWNAN, GA**



SPRING FLAG IN JOHN & GALE GEURIN'S GARDEN IN CARTERSVILLE, GA

DESSERT FOR ALL TO ENJOY. THE SOCIETY WILL PROVIDE THE MEAT AND DRINKS. Bring lawn chairs too and a box fan if anyone has any. The directions to the garden are very important to follow so just don't get on I-85 and drive to Newnan and then hope to locate the garden as it doesn't quite work like that. If you are having a hard time locating the garden call 678-423-4050 and request assistance.

## JULY CHORES IN THE DAHLIA GARDEN

Weather and Dahlias- Wet versus Dry Dahlias appreciate about 1" of water a week but they must have time to dry out as well. As mentioned before, dahlias do not like wet feet. Dahlias benefit from being grown in raised beds or hilled planting areas where the dahlias are not at the lowest point. If you are experiencing a large number of lost dahlias then they may be planted in a low spot that (CONT ON P 3)

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

LINDA KARR  
STONE MOUNTAIN, GEORGIA

BRIAN & HOLLY GLASS  
TUNNEL HILL, GEORGIA

WE ARE SO GLAD TO HAVE  
YOU AS NEW MEMBERS OF  
THE DAHLIA SOCIETY OF  
GEORGIA.

is not drying out enough. Since it's early July you can either replace lost dahlias, if you have spares, or with any dahlias that are showing stress and are often found in standing water, carefully dig up and replant in a better draining location.

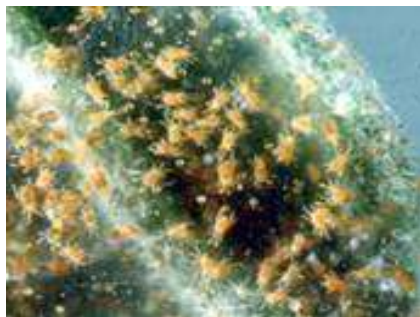
**POWDERY MILDEW-** The bad news is damp weather encourages mildew problems and powdery mildew is the first and probably the worst you'll see.



These dusty, milk colored powdery marks appear on lower leaves where poor air circulation doesn't allow the ground and leaves to dry out. If unchecked, powdery mildew will quickly work itself up the plant and severely stress the plant. In addition, one infected plant will serve as a host for the disease which, in turn, will quickly jump to the other plants in your garden. The chemical treatment for this problem is a spraying of RUBIGAN at the first sighting of the powdery splotches. Usually one spraying, early in the season, will prevent a reoccurrence for the rest of the growing season. An organic

approach is to remove all affected leaves and any mulch too close to the stem of the affected plants. The removal of lower leaves will permit better air circulation which will often prevent powdery mildew from ever visiting your garden. Be sure to remove all of these leaves and possible offending mulch from your garden and do not place it on your compost pile! Bag it and carry off. I recommend both spraying with Rubigan at least once each season and continual removal of lower leaves throughout the season.

**Spider Mites-** Dry conditions stress the fast growing plants and also create the perfect environment for spider mites to attack your garden. Spider mites love hot, dry weather. As a rule of thumb, at the first site of coppery colored, lower leaves, blast the plants with your hose and repeat that several times a day.



SPIDER MITES

It will keep mites at bay and save you a lot of grief. If you're unable to rid the garden of mites you will need to use a miticide, like **Avid**, to regain control. Using a miticide 3 times, 3 days apart should work but early detection and a hard spray of cold water is a lot cheaper and quicker. Beware- mites quickly become immune to miticides.

**July** is usually when you've caught your breath from all the planting, the dahlias have gained some size, and all of the dahlia predators have discovered this fresh, juicy source of food. Get out your sprayer and a container of soapy water or insecticide mix, and begin trying to find out which visiting vermin are in your dahlia patch. If you think they will overwhelm your plants then begin a spraying program as described in the June program by Dr. Dan Pinholster. If you think that they are only a few and they are doing little damage, then try plucking them off and dropping them into a jar of soapy water or a mild mix of an insecticide. After all, they are only visiting and usually pass from existence within a couple of weeks. But, they are also followed by yet another plant menace or two.

**A rogues' gallery of some "bad bugs"** currently in Georgia follows:

**APHIDS-** These pests appear on the tips of brand new growth. They suck the "juices" flowing to the plant tips and divert plant growth into aphid growth. They are also thought to pass on virus in their spittle. Aphids are prime targets for ever present beneficial Ladybugs.



APHIDS

**CUCUMBER BEETLE-** These spotted kinds and their striped cousins are a menace all season long. They also are thought to help pass on several forms of virus. Despite their common yellow background backs, they can be easily confused with beneficial ladybugs which commonly have red background colored backs. They are candidates for insecticide sprays.



CUCUMBER BEETLE

**COLORADO POTATO BEETLE-** Here is another common pest that will spend the summer in your dahlia patch and garden. They have humpbacked larva which have spotted backs on a background field of orange that can again cause confusion with good ladybugs. Isn't Mother Nature interesting? These flying beetles are quick to flee so if you attempt to catch them by hand, be quick and determined. Right now many are mating so you'll get a bargain of two in one sweep if you're fast. Once caught drop them in soapy water or a deadly insecticide mix. I usually wear gloves so I just flatten them by hand. If you have an over abundance then spray with an insecticide.

# ANNUAL JUDGING SEMINAR

Saturday, August 19th our annual judging seminar will again be held at the home of Dan & Paula Pinholster in Cartersville. Gene Boeke, our American Dahlia Society Regional Vice President, will conduct the seminar drawing on his many years of experience and knowledge of dahlias and dahlia judging for our edification on how to judge dahlias correctly. The seminar will start at 10:00 AM and conclude by 4:00 PM. Lunch will be provided by the Society. All judges and wanna-be judges are invited to attend the seminar.

Even if you have never judged before this is a good opportunity to learn some of the basics in dahlia judging and then if you would like to be an apprentice judge at our annual show you may do so with some knowledge. Judging is fun so come and learn some of the aspects of judging. Paula & Dan have invited those members that would just like to come and see their garden to come and join in also. You won't be disappointed and there will be lots of dahlias blooming.

Additional information and a map will be included in the August newsletter.



**COLORADO POTATO BEETLE**

**JAPANESE BEETLE-** You are probably beginning to see these imported pests in your garden about now. Many of the white grubs that you turned up in spring while working your soil were immature Japanese beetles. Their visit to your plants may be short in duration but can be very destructive. Some gardeners have them for only a couple of weeks. Unfortunately, they have been known to "visit" us until mid August- far too long! I try to squash them with my fingers. A more genteel approach would be to handpick them and drop into a container of insecticide. You be the judge.

**DO NOT BUY JAPANESE BEETLE TRAPS!!!!!!** If you have any of these traps, throw them away or give them to your neighbors in hopes they help to attract any Japanese beetle out of your garden. You can catch them by hand and you can often get two at a time. If



this method makes you too squeamish then use something like Sevin applied directly on the pests. There are inexpensive dusters

that can evenly disperse Sevin, but be sure to check the wind before using.



**MEXICAN BEAN BEETLE-** Yet another ladybug imitator, the Mexican bean beetle will be with you until frost. They seem to be every where and usually they are. Serious uses of insecticides are needed for this pest.

**LEAF BORERS-**This photo shows the damage done by leaf borers. They tunnel through the leaf and reduce the strength of the plant. I've usually stopped them for a season with one spraying of **CY-GON**.



**LEAF BORER**

**FLEA BEETLE-**These dark copper colored, BB sized pests are about gone. They appear early in the season and are responsible for eating round holes in the leaves of young dahlia plants. Being hard shelled and fast, flea beetles need to be subjected to frequent dustings of Sevin. They can do a lot of damage in a short time. **REMINDER- Sevin kills good bugs, too, so if you can be patient, flea beetles are usually gone by mid to late July.**



**FLEA BEETLE**

**WHITE FLY-**If you brush by a dahlia plant and a cloud of minute flying insects arise from the leaves, you probably have an infestation of white flies. Weekly sprayings are needed to get control of these pests. Neem oil is preferred by some gardeners.

**WHITE FLY**





**SPIDER MITES**

**RED SPIDER MITES-** As covered earlier, spider mites should not be a problem if we have frequent rains. In dryer times, spider mites are a major problem. (Photo above shows spider mite damage.) These almost microscopic vermin (not really spiders) often attack the underside of the lower leaves of dahlias and the infected leaves take on a coppery color and appear to have small webs. (Photo to the left shows spider mite webs.) The leaves quickly curl inward and die. If you suspect spider mites, hold a piece of clean paper under an infected leaf, and gently tap the leaf. This action will dislodge some of the spider mites and you'll be able to see your foe. They will appear to be minute grains of pepper.



**GRASSHOPPER-** These "eating machines" are every where now. They come in all sizes and colors- and they can do a tremendous amount of damage. Unless you have a flock of chickens or other fowl such as guinea hens running loose in your dahlias, you will have to resort to some type of spray or dusts.



**KATYDID-** Later in the season you will start finding these green, flying pests in your garden. Not as numerous as grasshoppers, they can still do a lot of damage and seem to have a definite fondness for blooms. I usually remove those I see by hand. Since they appear later I have, by that time, established a weekly spraying program that keeps their numbers down. They are master of camouflage.

So.... The busy time is here! Don't tromp on the planted surface, pull weeds, tie the ever-growing plants to their stakes, pull weeds, look for bugs and disease, pull off and discard old, bottom leaves, pull weeds, pinch out the tops of plants to encourage laterals (branches) to grow, feed periodically and maybe use some MESSENGER, water when necessary, and study your plants as they begin to form the initial bloom buds of the season. If you're growing mainly for competition, remove these buds so they will reappear nearer show time. If you're growing just for pleasure, let the buds mature and bloom. If you can stand to disbud several of the side buds you'll have stronger and longer stems to hold up the first blooms that you cut and bring in for your own amazement. Whatever your purpose, take the time to sit and enjoy. Even stare off in space if you like because you've earned it. And if you listen carefully, you might even hear these pampered plants grow as they prepare to present you with a kaleidoscope of flowers in the months to come. You'll be proud. Brian Killingsworth

## GROWING TIP OF THE MONTH

As you have noticed during this month of heat, our dahlia plants have a difficult time combating these mid 90's temperatures every day. So what can you do to help them out? Give them a shot of Liquid Kelp/Seaweed every week to two weeks. How do you do that? A soil drench is one way or as a foliar spray as either way will work. If you use it as a soil drench give each plant about 1/2 -3/4 of a cup.

What does the Kelp do? First it helps expand the root zone so the plant will take up more nutrients thus making your plant healthier and it just looks better. No—it won't keep it from wilting under the brutal sun but it helps. Secondly, Kelp provides micro nutrients to the plant that it might not be getting from any other source. By using liquid kelp or seaweed extract, you are introducing substances into the plant that will make it stronger, healthier and increase it's resistance to sap sucking pests and diseases.

Although it isn't known yet why kelp products give some kind of biological control over many plant diseases, plants fed with liquid kelp develop a resistance to many diseases and pests. They become much stronger plants as noted above. Its use is highly recommend.

Where can you buy it? Maxicrop is one of the most popular brands and you can go to their website

[www.maxicrop.com/pages/products\\_main.html](http://www.maxicrop.com/pages/products_main.html)

I have seen it at Hastings Nursery but I would call to see it is available before going to any nursery in town. You can also find it on most garden supply stores on the internet. One that I use is [www.Worm'sWay.Com](http://www.Worm'sWay.Com) Don't recall seeing it in a big box store.

Help your plants out and give them liquid kelp/seaweed. You and they will be very pleased that you did.

**COME TO THE PICNIC AND SEE A GREAT GARDEN AND LOTS OF DAHLIA PLANTS**