

DAHLIA SOCIETY OF GEORGIA
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
JUNE 2017 NEWSLETTER



FERNCLIFF THUNDER M-FD-L

DAHLIA CULTURE—We are well on our way in the 2017 dahlia growing season and I am sure there are many stages of growth in our member gardens with some plants in bloom and others struggling to grow. My own garden is what I call a mess this year. I am still planting and will do so until at least July 15. I use this date as pretty much a cut-off planting date of any dahlia not already started. Any new planting of un-started tubers may or may not bloom in the current year.

A big issue that begins in full force in June is the attacking of insects on your dahlia plants. Snail/slugs are a real problem if you keep dahlias in wet non-sunny locations. Sluggo Plus is a product that will handle snails/slugs and will also take care of earwigs. A general insecticide is a good thing to include in spraying your dahlias along with a foliar fertilizer. You can use Bayer 3-in-1 which is an insecticide/fungicide/fertilizer combo and is a dry systemic product.

The insect that is the most hated insect by dahlia growers is the two spotted spider mite. It may take many years for them to show up but they usually do. They are not easy to identify if you don't have any experience dealing with them. They

usually attack the weakest dahlia plants in your garden. They start with lower leaves and work their way up the plant, living on the underside of the leaves. You can control them with Neem oil or anything with an oil base and if that doesn't work then ask other members if they have any AVID. This insecticide is very expensive to purchase but is very effective.



EARWIG— CAN BE A VERY PESKY INSECT EATING HOLES IN THE FOLIAGE.

JUNE MEETING—Monday, June 19, 7:30 PM in the Turner Theater in the entrance building. The program will be in two parts with a panel discussion on how to care for your dahlias during the long summer and the fertilization of your dahlias. After that, Allen Haas will have a slide show featuring dahlias in different gardens.

There will also be FREE DAHLIAS that are over runs by some of our members. So get there early to pick out some FREE DAHLIAS. There will be cuttings and tubers.

DISPLAY GARDEN—We had some trouble in getting the garden planted this year due to the rain but finally it was completed on the third Saturday in May. I would like to thank Dave Felton for helping Gene Hutchison and myself. The other members need to sign up to help at least one Saturday during the growing season. WE NEED YOUR HELP!

ANNUAL PICNIC—The annual picnic will be held on the last Saturday of July, 29 at the home of our President, Francine Dykes and her husband Richard. More information will be coming next month.

DAHLIA QUESTIONS—

Q: It is getting hot now so how often should I water my dahlias?

A: If you don't receive any rain for a number of days then you should probably water once or twice a week. Dahlias need about 1" of water a week. Last year when it was so dry I watered almost every day. You must watch out for stem rot.

Q: I have had some yellowing of leaves on some of my plants. Is this the dahlia virus I have heard about?

A: While every grower should be alert for dahlia virus, you want to make sure you don't over hype this real issue with dahlias. The truth is dahlia virus is pretty rare. If you suspect you may have a plant with virus you should do two things. Check to see if the yellowing pattern is on the top set of leaves of the plant. If there is no yellowing on the top leaves then is not virus but some sort of stress on the plant. The second thing to do is to take pictures of the leaves or bring to a meeting and let a more experienced grower look at the leaves.

Q: What should I do with a plant that has been determined to have a virus?

A: Pull the plant up and throw it away. Disinfect all of your cutters and any other tools that may have come in contact with the plant.

Q: What fertilizer should I use?

A: Each time you spray for bugs always add a foliar fertilizer at a rate less than recommended. You can use Osmocoate, or Miracle Grow Rose food. Calcium Nitrate is another but make sure you get the type that won't absorb humidity.



AMY KAY B-SC-LB PK/WH



JESSICA BB-IC-FL YL/RD