

Friends of Old Bulbs Gazette

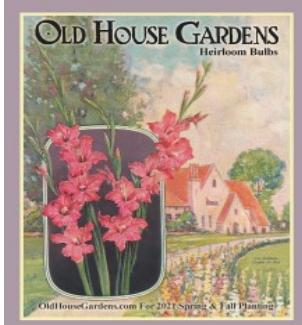
[Old House Gardens](#), Ann Arbor, Michigan, 734-995-1486
by Scott Kunst, OHG Founder, Expert Emeritus, and Ambassador for Heirlooms

“One of the most delightful things about a garden is the anticipation it provides.”

— W.E. Johns, 1893-1968, English author and journalist, in *The Passing Show: A Garden Diary by an Amateur Gardener*, 1937

Happy New Year!

Here's to a year ahead that's happier, healthier, much less stressful, and filled with all of the soul-sustaining delights our gardens bring us!



Our Spring/Fall 2021 Catalog is in the Mail!

Spring is coming and so is our spring/fall-2021 catalog. Woohoo!

We mailed them last Friday, and if you've ordered from either of our past two catalogs, you'll be getting this one.

Bulk mail can be slow, though, so if you don't have yours by Monday, Feb. 1, please let us know at 734-995-1487 or help@oldhousegardens.com and we'll rush you another one by first-class mail.

But why wait? Everything for spring-planting is now online at oldhousegardens.com/Spring, you can see what's new or back from a hiatus at oldhousegardens.com/New, and you can search by zone, color, and 15 other criteria at oldhousegardens.com/Search.

As always, shipping starts April 1. Happy ordering!



8 More Dahlia Treasures are Now Online!

We're happy to announce that eight of our favorite dahlias – including some we haven't been able to offer for years – are once again available at our website.

[‘Willo Violet’](#), for example, is back for the first time since 2006!

‘[Blue Danube](#)’ (bottom right) and ‘[White Fawn](#)’ have been missing since 2013, and ‘White Fawn’ is still in such short supply that we're limiting it to one per customer.

We've also put a "limit 1" on '[Union Jack](#)' (bottom left), '[Bloodstone](#)' and '[Klankstad Kerkrade](#)' (top right), all of which we've been building up stock of since 2016, along with the incomparable '[Kaiser Wilhelm](#)' (top left) which returns for the first time since 2018.

Finally, '[Mrs. H. Brown](#)', which we offered last year, is now back online after our growers confirmed that they can supply it again this spring.

We probably don't need to say it, but if you want any of these rare beauties, NOW is the time to order them!



"My Favorite Lily" – A Tough, Rose-Tinted Beauty to Plant this Spring

Chuck Robinson's favorite lily, *Lilium speciosum* var. *rubrum*, has "survived wonderfully ... for more than ten years" in his zone-6 garden in Kansas City, Missouri. That's one reason he loves it, he writes in the June 2020 *Quarterly Bulletin* of the North American Lily Society. Another reason is that "it blooms late, in mid- to late July and even into August, extending the lily bloom season for us and providing a much-appreciated spot of color during the heat of summer...."

"*L. speciosum* is known for its virus resistance," too, Chuck adds, "as noted by lily breeder Judith Freeman in discussing her Hall of Fame lily 'Anastasia' which has some *L. speciosum* ancestry.... *L. speciosum* is also thought to be in the DNA of Leslie Woodriff's 'Stargazer'. It certainly is an ancestor of Woodriff's famous '[Black Beauty](#)'" (which we ship in the fall.)

"The most famous *L. speciosum* cultivar is '[Uchida](#)' [which we ship in April]. It is named for Hirotaka Uchida of Japan, who grew and exported bulbs before World War II.... Uchida particularly liked *L. speciosum rubrum* and selected and cultivated the best forms.

"With Japan's attack on China and the start of World War II, flower fields in Japan were discouraged in favor of food production. Uchida and his son safeguarded a small cache of *L. speciosum* clones, however. After the war, when lily bulb exports resumed, the Uchidas exported 60 bulbs to the West."

The tough, rose-tinted beauty the Uchidas had nurtured for so long "won a gold medal in 1963 at the *Internationale Gartenbau Ausstellung* garden exposition in Hamburg, Germany" and before long had become one of the world's most popular lilies – one that you could enjoy in your garden this summer by [ordering now!](#)



Canna Ehemannii Stars in Garden Museum's Lush New Garden

As part of a major renovation, the courtyard at London's Garden Museum has been redesigned into a lush, inspiring space – and it features our favorite canna!

"A surreal sense of wonder and of the exotic prevails" in the new garden, as though visitors are "ambling into a Rousseau painting," says the February 2020 *Gardens Illustrated*. Since the pioneering horticulturists John Tradescant the Elder and Younger are buried in the garden (the

Museum is housed in a former church), designer Dan Pearson wanted the garden to “rekindle the same sense of wonder that 17th-century visitors to the Tradescants’ nursery may have felt.”

Although every plant in the garden “is a treasure in itself, all of them take their place in a cogent, multi-layered composition.” Among the “cast of strong individual characters” is *Canna ‘Ehemannii*’, which the article describes as one of “the most magnificent of the canna lilies, with considerable heft and stature.” With its “hot pink, gracefully pendulous” flowers nodding over “huge, paddle-shaped leaves,” this striking heirloom is a key player in creating the garden’s “otherworldly atmosphere.”

To add a bit of otherworldly atmosphere to your own garden, why not give [‘Ehemanni’](#) a try this spring? All it needs is full sun and plenty of water – and having grown ‘Ehemannii’ in my own garden for years, I can’t imagine summer without it.



ADS Invites All to its Virtual (and Cheap) Daffodil Convention

If you’ve never been to an American Daffodil Society national convention, this year’s get-together via Zoom offers an easy, inexpensive way to see what they’re all about.

For just \$35, non-members can enjoy “an extensive line-up of speakers from around the world, fabulous events that include an online eBay auction as well as two virtual live bulb auctions, and a phenomenal online daffodil photography show.”

“Let’s Talk Historics” is one session you won’t want to miss. Hosted by Sara Van Beck, author of *Daffodils in American Gardens 1733-1940*, this hour-long Zoom chat is scheduled for March 24 at 6:00. Other events – including talks about daffodils and perfume, hybridizing in Germany and New Zealand, and butterflies around the world – are spread out over multiple weekends from February 25 through May 1.

Learn more at the ADS’s [Virtual National Convention](#) page – and then sign up to join the fun!



Looking Back: A Few Favorite OHG Articles/Posts from 2020

Tis the season for looking ahead – which goes hand in hand with looking back, right?

So just in case you missed them, here’s a carefully curated list of . . . well, really it’s just a bunch of our articles/posts from 2020 that we especially liked, and we hope you will, too.

“Is This the Year You Try [‘Freaking Adorable’ Glads?](#)”

“Just in Time for Valentine’s Day: [Dutchman’s Breeches](#)”

“[Breaking News: Grandmother’s Gardens](#) and Heirloom Flowers”

[“What’s That Weed? And That One? And That One?!?”](#)

“David Austin: Finding the [Future in Antique Roses](#)”

“*Garden Gate*’s Top Picks: [3 ‘Thrilling’ Heirloom Lilies](#)”

“Will Daffodil Shows Welcome [Nameless Historics?](#)”

“The Forgotten [History of Jute Twine](#)”

[“219 Dahlias from 1929: ‘Are They All Lost?’”](#)

Did You Miss Our Last Newsletter? Read It at Our Website or Blog

Our [December newsletter](#) included:

antique nursery catalog [jigsaw puzzles](#),

[1929 dahlias](#) – “Are they all lost?”

great books for [winter reading](#), and more.

You can read all of our back-issues at [oldhousegardens.com/NewsletterArchives](#) – and most of them at [our blog!](#)

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