

Sacramento Garden Notes

#2 2016

Written & Published

by Robert B. Hamm

(916) 617-7516

1689 Vallarta Circle

Sacramento CA. 95834

NEW EMAIL

planthappysac@gmail.com

Since I'm writing this as I think of things, not by date, I'm just numbering them.

Growing species cyclamen from seed:
patience required.

I've been growing some of the hardy cyclamen species from seed and thought I'd share the experience.

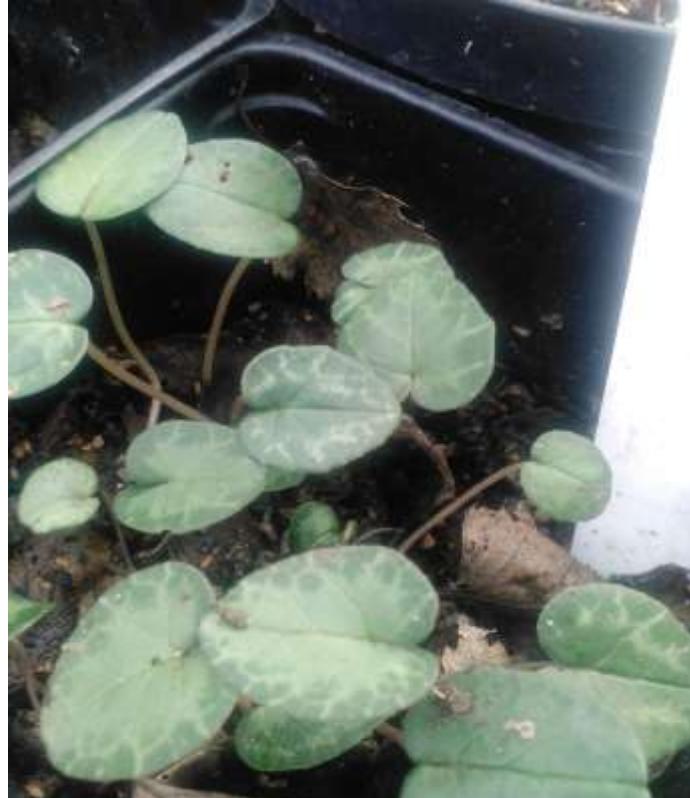
Step one is getting seed in late summer (most came from a grower in Australia who specializes in cyclamen). When you have the seed, you soak it 24 hours in a cup with a drop or two of dish soap. Then rinse and soak another 24 hours in clear water. Then you press the seed into the surface of the soil mix, place in a cool, shaded spot (I put mine under the camellia by the front door which gets watered by the mini sprinkler on the drip) and keep moist. AND WAIT, some of the seed MAY germinate in fall, or it may wait for spring, but that isn't all the seed, just the ones that want to germinate right away. Cyclamen seed can sit dormant 3-4 years before germinating.

You leave the seedlings be in the container to grow for a year before

transplanting, with possibly more



Germinating seed planted in July 2015,
germinating in December 2015



One year old seedlings with newly germinated seedling

germinating later (up to 4 years later), so don't throw away the pot!

When you keep the germinated seedlings damp and in shade, they don't go dormant the first year but grow a tuber, all that time with just one leaf!

They grow a second leaf (maybe) the next fall and then you can transplant them into bigger pots.

They probably go dormant their second summer and do the typical summer dormant, fall thru spring growing typical of them. Although, I've had reports of them in damp shade not going dormant at all!

This is typical of growing many bulbs from seed, so you can see the time and effort involved. Which explains the cost!

So why grow from seed? Many of the rarer bulbs, be it cyclamen or others, can't be found for sale in the U.S., so collectors and those that like the unusual have to grow from seed.

Luckily most perennials that aren't bulbs usually only take 1 to 3 years to bloom so don't require quite as much patience but you still have the problem of many items not being in commerce, since few sellers will grow items they can't sell a lot of.

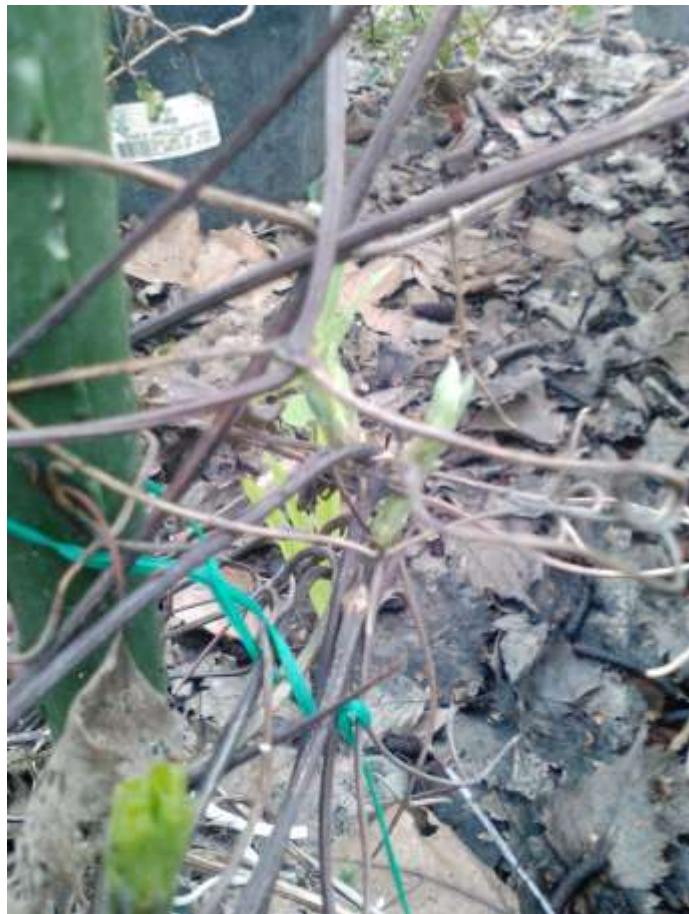
Odds & Ends: If you still want to send in a donation, even \$10 will help, it doesn't have to be a lot. I'd hope out of over 800 of you, more than the 20 who send donations think the newsletter is worth it.

I've been dividing and putting down cuttings for the spring yard sale, though still haven't set a date. I want to see what the weather and plants do first.



Above- a Hellebore in bloom and below an Iris in bloom, both on December 30,2016. The Iris was blooming when it froze, and just

sent up a new spike. Below is *Helleborus argutifolia* but a variegated leaf form where the new foliage comes up highly variegated with white. Unfortunately, the variegation slowly fades through the season.



Garden notes –

After 4 years of dry warm winters, this year's more normal temperatures have many of us feeling everything is slow and behind schedule, when it's actually just back to near normal.

It is nice not to have to water the yard in January as I did the past few years, but even I forget on occasion that the plants protected from rain on porches, under eves (and my case under tables) will dry out and need water.

NOW is the time you need to trim back your Clematis and Roses if you haven't already, as the pictures (Dec 30th) show Clematis buds swelling and starting to grow!.

Lots of bare root has come into the nurseries, but be careful with stuff that has already sprouted in the packages since the shoots have been in the dark and may burn or frost when planted out. If possible either plant the shoots below ground (good on daylilies, lilies, canna) or protect them with some shade them some until they turn green/harden up (clematis, shrubs, tuberous begonias).

I recently bought some lily bulbs and they already had 5" shoots from being stored too warm (it was Walmart and they were indoors).

Another thought, for those having evergreen type Epimediums, you may want to trim off the old foliage so you can enjoy the blooms and new foliage which won't be long in coming.

I am having a squirrel problem this year, with one of my neighbors feeding them walnuts in the shell which wind up dug into the pots and when they dig up a 4 inch to plant a walnut, there isn't much left of it.

I've had to start inverting trays over trays of cutting and newly planted items to keep them out. It is a real pain.



New Computer, New technology, New Opportunities – I'm getting used to the new computer, which is a laptop and the new tech that comes with it.

Now I am not stuck with the crappy connectivity upstairs in my room but can bring the computer downstairs with full connectivity. No more dropped connections trying to email or send out a newsletter!

One new thing is Dropbox with online storage of files you upload (it also leaves a copy on your computer). One advantage is access from other computers for your files, so if your computer dies, you can log into your Dropbox account from another and still have all your files.

It also has an iPhone app so you can upload pictures from your phone, this will mean I can just take pics as I run across plants where ever I am and then upload them anywhere without having to plug into the home computer.

This will make my collecting plant pics so much easier!

Of course on the other hand, I need so much storage it will cost me \$10 a month (at minimum, maybe \$20) after my free year that came with the laptop since the free account doesn't have enough space for me. Also, I'll have to upgrade my phone to unlimited data, from my basic talk only plan, so that is additional \$35 a month.

Amazing how the technology so many depend on also raises the basic monthly bills so much.

Speaking of pictures, I was going through old music disks and found an old backup disk of pictures from 2012, so will copy that to the computer and regain many of my older pics.

I also have Word now (Microsoft office actually), so now I can read those documents sent to me as .doc or .docx files and put the info in the newsletter as appropriate. This was all made possible by your generous donations. THANK YOU!!!

As a Thank you I will be sending a list of available plants to those who donated before the spring yard sale so you can advance order items.