

THE MUM CHRONICLE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE OLD DOMINION CHRYSANTHEMUM SOCIETY
A Chapter of the National Chrysanthemum Society, Inc., USA
odcsmums.club

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a pleasant summer social we had on July 12, which was very generously hosted by Tim and Ruthie Moore. The weather was cooperative, there was plenty of food and drink (including Camilla Ng's homemade plum wine), and good group of members and guests showed up to enjoy the event. We were happy to have with us Kalpana Shyam and her husband Sanjay. Kalpana is a member of the (San Francisco) Bay Area Chrysanthemum Society and is an experienced bonsai mum grower. She will be joining ODCS as an associate member later this year.



Some of our summer social attendees. Back row: Lisa Sherman, Jack Rubenstein, Tim Moore, Andy Sherman, Bart Smith; front row: Cathy Roberts, Janice Chen, Rosemary Smith, Jody Goulden, Camilla Ng, Kalpana Shyam, and Sanjay Shyam. Photo by Ruthi Moore.

As always, if you have a friend or family member who is interested in mums, consider providing them a copy of the ODCS Membership Form, which is attached to the email of this newsletter. Have them mail the completed form and dues to the address provided: Galen Goss, 3128 Village Way, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.

NO ZOOM MEETING IN AUGUST

Traditionally, ODCS does not have meetings in August because of summer vacations. The Zoom meetings will resume in September.

BONSAI CLASSES

ODCS member Jack Rubenstein is offering bonsai mum coaching. Those who take advantage of these classes have the opportunity to learn this art form for FREE. At the National Arboretum students were charged \$250. The dates for the remaining sessions are August 9 and September 7. All sessions are being held from 1 pm to 3:30pm. If you're interested in joining these sessions, please email CamillaNg (tsuyya@yahoo.com) to reserve your spot. The first two sessions were held in Tim Moore's backyard. The next bonsai mum training on August 9 will be held at Doris Shen's home. Thank you, Doris, for offering to host!



ODCS bonsai class leader Jack Rubenstein

A resident of Alexandria, VA, Jack has been a bonsai hobbyist for 15 years with a garden of deciduous, coniferous, and tropical trees. He served as program chairman for the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society for six years and is currently serving his third two-year term as vice president of the Potomac Bonsai Association. Jack was greatly moved when he saw chrysanthemum bonsai for the first time while attending the Beijing Expo 2019. In 2023 and 2024, Jack served as a volunteer assistant at the National Arboretum Bonsai and Penjing Museum's program, introducing students to the art of chrysanthemum bonsai. He joined ODCS in 2024.

ANNUAL SHOW PREPARATIONS

As we reported last month, the ODCS Annual Show at the James Lee Community Center in Falls Church is scheduled for the weekend of October 25-26, with setup taking place on Friday, Oct. 24. Though this event is a few months off, preparations are already underway. Judges for the show have been invited, and we are issuing a call now for volunteers to help with the transport and setup of materials for the show, various show functions, and the breakdown of the show and transport of materials afterwards. Our Show Chairperson is Camilla – please contact her to volunteer your help.

AUGUST GROWING AND FEEDING GUIDELINES

The first half of August is a period of rapid growth for mums. Keep up the regular fertilizer applications, which on August 1 include the final feeding of 22-5-16, and on August 15 a feeding of 20-20-20.

As the plants grow, keep tying them to stakes to keep the stems straight. Water only when the plants begin to wilt and then water deeply.

Nights start to get longer in August, signaling the beginning of the blooming season for mums. To encourage large bloom types to flower earlier, shading should begin (see Camilla's article on Shading that follows).

At this time of the season, bugs are vigorous and plentiful. Follow a regular insect control schedule (see Camilla's article on Insect Control that follows).

For more information on fertilization and growing in August, refer to the growing and fertilization guidelines distributed to all members via email on July 13.

SHADING

By Camilla Ng

The chrysanthemum is a short-day plant. A short day is one having 12 hours or less of daylight. This length of day will initiate a flower bud.

Chrysanthemum cultivars are classified by the response group into which they fall. The Week Response of your chrysanthemums is listed on the ODCS 2025 Members Plant Order Form. The King's Mums catalog also provides the bloom periods of the cultivars. In order to encourage blooms by the ODCS Show date of October 25, 2025, shading the chrysanthemums is recommended according to the plant's Week Response. Generally, the Pot mums do not require shading nor the cultivars that are listed as Early. We shade the cultivars that are listed as Medium or Late season bloomers.

We find the starting date to shade by counting back from the show date. Three or four days should be added for insurance. For example, a 10-week cultivar will require a count back of 70 days from October 25, which would be August 17. Add 3 or 4 days would be August 13.

- 12-week response groups – start shading by August 3 (optimal by July 31)
- 11-week response group – start shading by August 10 (optimal by August 6)
- 10-week response group – start shading by August 17 (optimal by August 13)

Shading can be accomplished by using a blackout cloth with high thread count or black polyethylene. Shading is required for the evening and early morning to provide the necessary hours of uninterrupted darkness. The covering may be put in place as early as 5 or 6 p.m. and removed at 7 a.m. the next morning. When the temperature is near 90 degrees Fahrenheit, the covering may be delayed until 8 p.m., then remove the covering at 8 a.m. High night temperature and failure to apply shading each evening will result

in a delayed bloom date. The nightly shading should continue until the buds are the size of a pea.

For more information on shading, see Chapter 11, “Why Shade and How”, in the *Beginner’s Handbook for New Growers of Chrysanthemums*, and Chapter 7, “Shading and Lighting”, in the *Advanced Grower’s Handbook*. All members are provided with a copy of the *Beginner’s Handbook*. You may purchase a copy of the *Advanced Grower’s Handbook* from the NCS website <https://mums.org/shop/>.

INSECT CONTROL

by Camilla Ng

As we go into the active insect season, we need to be proactive and vigilant to protect our investment in time and labor of our mums.

On our Supply Order is one chemical for insect control, Marathon. New growers may ask, what is Marathon? Marathon is a granular systemic insecticide. The active ingredient is Imidaclopid. We find this product to be long lasting and effective to protect the chrysanthemums from certain chewing insects and insects with piercing mouth parts that suck the juices from the foliage. In lieu of Marathon, if you grow roses and already have the BioAdvanced 2-in-1 Rose and Flower Care granules, you can use that on the chrysanthemums. BioAdvanced Rose and Flower Care is available at Home Depot and Lowe’s. Apply according to instructions on the label for potted plants.

Marathon application: $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of Marathon to a 10-inch pot (or $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon for 6-inch pot). To assure optimum effectiveness, the Marathon granules must be incorporated into the top of the soil. This allows the roots of the plant to absorb the pesticide when the plant is watered. Use a plastic fork and work the Marathon granules in just below the soil surface. Do not apply Marathon if the potting soil is water-logged. If the potting soil is already water-logged, the pesticide will not be able to penetrate the root zone of the plant. Do not over-irrigate or allow runoff to occur following an application. Wait until the plant wilts before adding a small amount of water for two or three weeks after applying Marathon.

Reading suggestions: All members are provided with the *Beginner's Handbook*. Chapter 8, "Insects and other Animal Pests", gives information on insect habits and control. In the *Advanced Grower's Handbook*, Chapter 14, "Insects Which Affect Chrysanthemums", also is a good reference. The *Advanced Grower's Handbook* and other NCS publications are available for purchase from the NCS website.

OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT HILLWOOD ESTATE THIS FALL

As reported last month, we have the opportunity to schedule a visit to the renowned gardens at Hillwood Estate in Washington, DC, later this year, courtesy of ODCS member Kaki Power, who is a docent at Hillwood (see hillwoodmuseum.org for more information about the estate). We are looking at a weekday visit to avoid the crowds on the weekend. Details on the date and time of the visit will be provided soon.

UPCOMING DATES/ACTIVITIES, 2025

- Please remember to save these dates for upcoming ODCS activities:
- Bonsai sessions (see above for dates, times, location)
 - August - Summer Break, no meeting
 - Saturday and Sunday, October 25-26, ODCS's Annual Show,
James Lee Community Center, Falls Church, VA (with setup
Fri Oct 24)
 - Visit to Hillwood Estate, TBD
 - November Annual Meeting and Luncheon, TBD
 - November, NCS National Convention and Show, TBD

Attachments:ODCS Membership Form