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Conservation is not all that new!

The protection of fauna and flora in Switzerland is, quite rightly, taken very seriously.

These beautiful butter rolls bloom in our alpine regions from May to July and do much to enhance the areas in which they grow.

As far back as 1953 I purchased a ticket on Graubünden's Rhaetische Bahn and with it was handed a card which said simply:

"Ceux qui aiment les montagnes leur laissant leurs fleurs".

So be it!

W.G.S.

Progress in water protection

In 1974, there were 583 communal sewage works in Switzerland, ie 43 more than the previous year. The total cost of these works amounted to 1,417 million francs.

In addition, 112 communal sewage plants were in the course of construction in 1974, for a budgeted cost of 703

million francs, while plans for 93 other sewage works estimated at 347 million francs were ready to be put into effect.

These sums do not include the cost of pipes (supply and drainage) which, in Switzerland, averages out at four or five times the cost of the sewage works themselves.

For the Gardener

AMARYLLIS (*Amaryllideae*) –
Belladonna Lily

The name is given to a wide variety of genera including *Brunivigias*, *Creniums*, *Hippaestrums*, *Nerines* and many others. However the true *Amaryllis* is a summer flowering indoor plant.

Propagation is by seeds and offsets. Seeds should be sown as soon as ripe in shallow trays of loam and leaf mould. These should be kept in a temperature of 60 to 70 degrees F.

When seedlings appear they must have plenty of light and moisture. When two or three leaves have been produced the seedlings should be pricked out into single pots in soil similar to that in which they started life. It will be two or three years before these will have matured to actual flowering plants.

Increasing by offsets, these can be taken off when repotting the parent corm. It is possible to plant these out of doors in a warm, sheltered position, say at the foot of a south facing wall. The soil should be deeply dug and rich, protection will also be necessary during the winter months.

Planting should be made in September and October and once this is done they should be left for several years undisturbed.

If grown in pots, they should be repotted early in the year after cutting last year's leaves off just above the neck of the corm. Water very sparingly until growth appears, then watering must be done regularly to ensure that the soil never becomes dry.

The pot should then be placed in as much natural light as possible when the leaves, which are very attractive in themselves, will grow steadily from the corm.

In April-May a long stalk will grow from the bulb surmounted with flower buds. If kept near a window in full light these buds will open and as many as three flowers will be produced on one stalk.

Each flower can be as much as 10 inches across and are of lily-like formation, beautifully marked and really handsome. Sometimes a second stalk will be thrown up and further flowers produced in the same season, but these, whilst lovely to look at are not quite so good as the first flush.

When flowers die the stalk should be cut off low down, but the leaves should be left. The corms should be left in their pot over winter and the soil kept comparatively dry until time to repot.

The true *Amaryllis* tends to flower in autumn whereas *Hippeastrums* can be induced to flower at almost any time during the year.

The writer has a fine specimen of this flower and in April and May three large 10 inch flowers were produced on a single stalk which overall was something like two feet six inches in height.

He keeps the plant in its pot in the cold frame over the winter, giving occasional water, not too much. Repotting was done early in March and this pot was stood on the floor by the french window leading into the garden on the south side of the house.

Once growth appeared it was kept watered regularly. The blooms lasted almost a month between them (they did not all open at precisely the same time). It is assumed that the conditions must have been ideal.

The soil used to repot was garden soil with a mixture of sand and peat added and half-a-handful of National Growmore, seemed to suit.

HJT



AMARYLLIS

For your diary

Swiss Club Manchester

President: Dr A. V. Lang, "Trees", Chapel Road, Alderley Edge, Cheshire. Tel: Alderley Edge 3370 (home) 0061-223 1341 (business).

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs M. Themans, "Engadin", 38 Bower Road, Hale, Cheshire. Tel: 061-980 4085.

Hon. Secretary: Mr H. P. Riesen, 96 Bleak Hay Road, Peel Hall, Manchester 22. Tel: 061-437 5093.

Friday 1 August 1975: National Day. Cottons Hotel, near Knutsford.

Friday, Saturday, Sunday 29, 30, 31 August 1975: Assembly of the Swiss Abroad 1975. Inquire at Consulate-General, Manchester. Tel: 061-236 2933.

Saturday 6 September 1975: Barbecue. To be announced later.

Thursday 16 October 1975: Photo Competition/Film. CIBA-GEIGY (UK) Ltd., Heald Green.

Saturday 8 November 1975: Annual Dinner Dance. Excelsior Hotel, Ringway.

Saturday 13 December 1975: Children's Christmas Party. CIBA-GEIGY (UK) Ltd., Heald Green.

Thursday 29 January 1976: Raclette Party. Cottons Hotel, near Knutsford.

Thursday 4 March 1976: Annual General Meeting. CIBA-GEIGY (UK) Ltd., Heald Green.

Enter these dates in your diary.

LITERATURE AT THE EMBASSY

A literary evening took place at the Swiss Embassy on 6 May in honour of two well-known writers from the Valais, *Mr Maurice Chappaz* and his wife, *Corinna Bille*. Both read extracts from their works.

Chappaz read his prose with a strong, earthy Valais accent.

He told of mountains, ravines, high peaks and his "rocky" style reflected the natural splendours of his native soil.

His wife had recently received the Goncourt Prize for Short Stories for her collection *La Demoiselle Sauvage*.

She was more concerned with people, with feelings and her finely chiselled prose at times conveyed an impression of mystery.

Her style was quite different from her husband's, but man and wife were united by their "unintellectual" approach to the literary art.