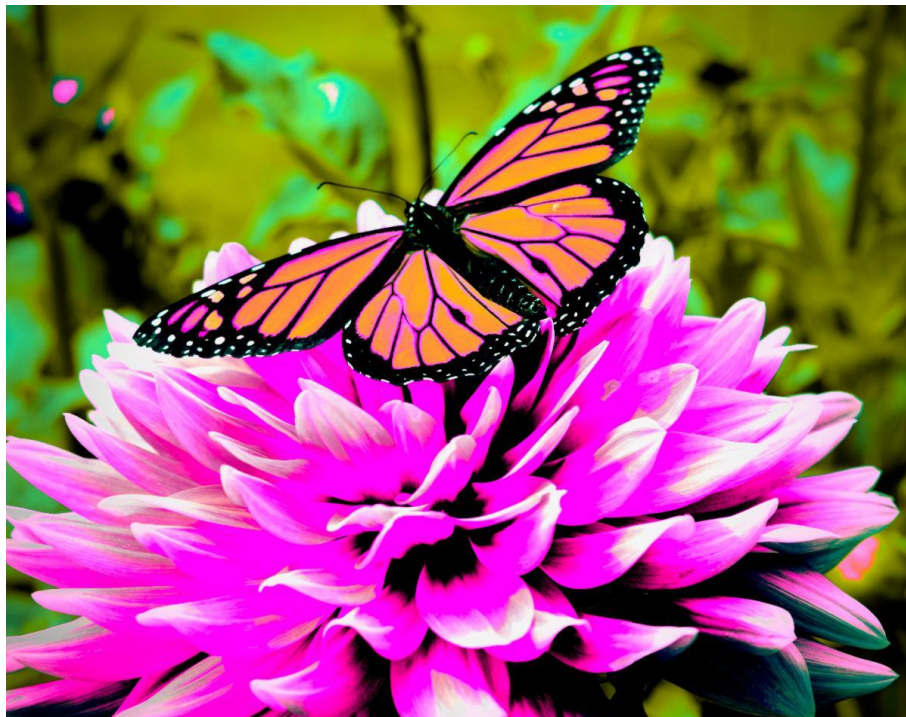




News from ADS!

DAHLIAS DURING THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS April 2020



Grand Prize Winner 2019 ADS Photo Contest
Photo taken by Nancy Riopelle (digitally enhanced)
See other [photo contest winners](#)

We are living in a challenging time. When I was growing up, I heard stories from my father about the influenza epidemic of 1918. I never dreamed we would be experiencing

something similar about a century later. One of the by-products of hunkering down is spending too much time in an easy chair. As my wife reminds me, that is not healthy. One way to avoid this is to go out into the garden, patio, or balcony. The seed companies are experiencing a run on vegetable seeds. For me the dahlias are calling.

If you stored tubers over the winter, take them out of the bag and sit them on potting soil in a container. If they have a shoot or eye, it will develop with a little moisture and warmth. If there is no apparent eye, mist the tuber lightly and be patient. Eyes appear when the tuber is ready, though sometimes a tuber is "blind" and does not develop an eye. It can be discarded after a month.

Our local dahlia societies are challenged. They cannot hold in-person meetings. Dahlia tuber and plant sales, particularly those for the public, are difficult to organize consistent with local regulations. Look on the [ADS website](#) and the websites of local societies (these are listed on the ADS website by state) to get the latest information about local sales. Alternatively, check on-line for commercial dahlia growers - some are listed on the ADS website. Commercial garden sites also sell dahlia tubers. Finally, tubers are available from big box stores, or stores that include gardening supplies.

During April tubers are ready to grow. Much of the country will be beyond the last frost date by the middle of the month. You can plant tubers in your garden. There are many sites that describe how to do this in varying degrees of detail. Dahlia plants taken from cuttings should be gradually exposed to outdoor weather and not planted out until the end of the month. Tubers will develop new shoots after a frost. Plants will not.

If your area is not past the frost date until some time in May, you can start tubers in pots, in a warm place with artificial light. Take them outside on warm days. Or, just planting them in your garden after the frost date works too!

Turn off the TV, get out of your chair, and engage the dahlia. You will love the results later in the summer.



Dahlia Boys in the demonstration garden at Miller Nature Preserve,
Avon, Ohio, sponsored by Dahlia Society of Ohio.
Photo by Marilyn Weber

Stay safe and healthy,
Harry Risetto

Useful videos:

[Getting a head start on dahlias](#)

Note: the current best practice is to add fertilizer with nitrogen into July. Tubers can be put into the garden soil that drains, during late April and after. If you are in Zones 2-5 wait until mid to late May. Be sure the soil has warmed up and is not soaking wet,

[How to take dahlia cuttings](#)

Note. Make sure you put a label in the pots.

[Planting dahlias](#)

Note: They have great soil. In typical garden soil plant the tuber so that the crown or eye is 3-4" . Swan Island is in Oregon. In many parts of the country you cannot leave your tubers in the ground over the winter.

[Info from Sidney, Australia](#)

