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Dahlia Talk *from tubers to blooms*

June - The Buds are Beginning to Bloom



Googleybear's' Garden, 3rd Place, Class 6 Winner, ADS 2022 Photo Contest

Dahlias grow and bloom according to their own calendars. Some types (cultivars) will bloom during June and others not until September. There are a variety of theories, including genetics, date of potting or planting, the amount of light, and the mixture of fertilizers. There is even a theory that

excess nitrogen will delay blooms. I have been to two gardens recently where the tubers were left in the ground through the winter and have begun to bloom in mid-June. For the average gardener timing is an academic question. Watering is the opposite.

June in Northern Virginia has been dry - less than a half-inch during the first three weeks. (Falls Church averages about 40" per year; the national average is about 30.) June 2023 has been a dry month in most of the U.S. This means our gardens need us to provide about an inch of water each week to feed the roots that have by now taken over from the tubers. When I planted tubers from pots during June, there is usually a large network of tiny roots that need to be handled very gently. The absence of roots is a danger signal.

There are many ways to water ranging from cans, to hoses, sprinklers, and drip lines. While the general view has been to water deeply rather than frequently, a recent innovation is called "pulse watering." If you are growing dahlias in containers, do not let the pot dry out or become soggy. See the watering links below for more information.



Photo by Kathleen Brinkman

A boost of fertilizer come July will help the plants develop and bloom. Some growers use granular fertilizer and others water soluble.

If you haven't done so already, top (pinch) the plants by removing the growing tip to get more blooms. In addition, the plants will benefit by removing spent

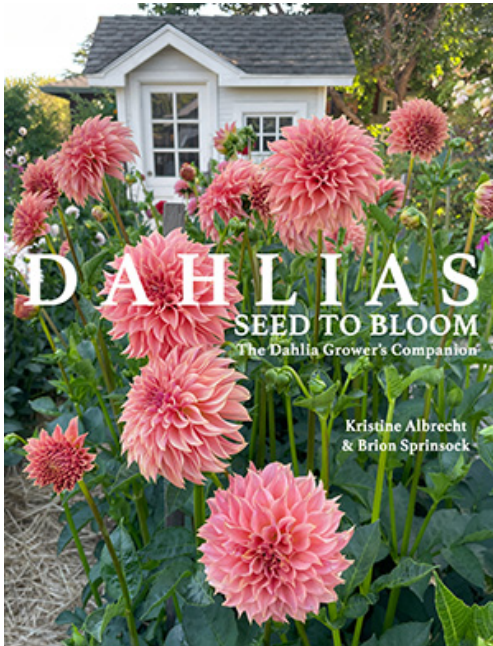
blooms.

Add ties to the stake or wire to support the plant and develop straight stems.

If you wish, remove the side shoots and side buds so the blooms will make a better show.

Good growing,

Harry Risetto



This spring we have been treated to a new book by Kristine Albrecht and Brion Sprinsock titled, *DAHlias Seed to Bloom, The Growers Companion* (2023).

Available on Amazon, it is a weighty paperback (277 pages). Its 14 chapters begins with “Soil” and continues through “Digging and Dividing the Tubers”.

I (Harry) particularly enjoyed Kristine’s debunking several long-held “dahlia myths. The book is comprehensive, beautifully photographed, and a necessary addition to a gardening bookshelf.

More Information

Watering Links

[Hand Watering](#)

[Drip Tape Irrigation - DIY](#)

[Pulse Watering](#)

[11 Tips for Growing Beautiful Dahlias in Pots or Containers \(includes watering\)](#)

[Fertilizing](#)

[Pinching](#)

[Disbudding](#)



ADS National Show Open to the Public August 26-27

Thousands of show-stopping blooms will be on display in the 18,000 square foot Grand Ballroom of the Holiday Inn, Columbia Riverfront Hotel and Convention Center in Portland Oregon. Hosted by the Portland Dahlia Society. **You are invited** (free of charge).

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American Dahlia Society

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