



*Epacris pauciflora*, a dwarf native shrub related to the heaths, deserves a place in our gardens.

slightly with a small block of wood to prevent excessive condensation. The container should be placed in a shaded frame or greenhouse and watered when necessary by standing in a trough of water.

Germination is slow, usually about 6 weeks. When it takes place the covering should be removed. When the plants are  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 in. high they should be transplanted into other boxes or very small pots. Great care is needed as the roots are surprisingly long for such small plants.

After they are transplanted they should be watered in and set in a shaded place until they are growing away, when they can be grown on in a more open position, provided some shade is given in hot weather with scrim or laths placed over the area.

When well rooted and growing satisfactorily the plants should be set out in a nursery bed of open soil in a partially shaded position before being

planted out finally when about 1 year old.

## Garden Work for May

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The May holidays are a time when controlled fires outdoors are popular. If children are encouraged in early years to help with cleaning up and burning rubbish, the gardening instinct may be fostered and remain for life. This is

an excellent time for the burning of any diseased plant material and for cleaning up any corners which have not been given attention during the busier, summer months. Grassed areas which have been allowed to seed could be cut off with a scythe or sickle and the rubbish raked off and burnt.

### Lawns

In the milder, northern districts it is not too late to prepare and sow down new lawns. Where frosts are experienced it is better to wait until spring before sowing, as the young seedlings may be checked. Hard frosts can lift the soil, and the roots of young seedlings, unless well established, will be damaged. Bare patches in old lawns should be "scarified" by raking stiffly to break up the soil, toppedressed with new soil if necessary, and reseeded. A satisfactory seed mixture for use on new lawns or for reseeding consists of two parts of Chewings fescue and one part of certified browntop.

To obtain a good growth response a fertiliser should be applied and raked in with the seed. On most soils a mixture of three parts of sulphate of ammonia and one part of superphosphate, used at  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz per square yard, has given good results. Blood and bone is an unsatisfactory lawn fertiliser, as it encourages growth of weeds and of fungi which cause open patches in a lawn.

### Weeds

The joints of steps, paths, and drives often harbour difficult weeds and periodical treatment with chemicals will prevent the breaking of asphalt and other materials when eradication of weeds is attempted. Arsenical weedkillers will kill all plant growth, but care must be taken to keep them out of reach of children and to destroy the containers or bury them deeply. Other useful materials are based on sodium chlorate and borates. A complete weedkiller can also be safely made from two parts of dalapon and one part of amitrol applied at 1 oz to 20 sq. yds. in autumn and again in spring.

Mechanical methods are still the best for removing many perennial weeds from the flower garden. A heavy mulch of sawdust can encourage the weeds to grow into the surface area, where removal is easier. For a more detailed list of weed control methods in the flower garden, see the November 1957 issue of the "Journal".

### Dahlias

Except in the mildest areas dahlia plants should be lifted each year when the frosts have touched them. While there is sufficient growth to identify them the plants should be rogued and any discarded which may be infected with virus or which, because of their type, colour, or growth, do not warrant