

Summer Care of Roses in the Flower Garden

FEW flowers repay the gardener more for regular attention throughout the year than do roses. This article by J. P. Salinger, Horticultural Advisory Officer (Ornamentals), Department of Agriculture, Wellington, describes their routine care during the growing season.

A PART from climbing roses of the rambler and wichuriana types such as Dorothy Perkins or Paul's Scarlet Climber which normally flower once, all other roses will flower from late spring until late autumn or winter.

Many gardeners obtain an abundance of blooms from their roses in the early part of the season, but after this first flush, growth and flowering are frequently disappointing. As each cluster of flowers is produced only on fresh new growth, the plants must continue to make new shoots and leaves during the whole of the summer to produce more flowers.

To encourage this growth regular culture is necessary, the exact treatment to be given depending on the age and type of rose. These operations are described under two headings, the treatment for specific types of roses and the routine treatment for all roses.

Treatment of Specific Types of Roses

Newly Planted Roses

Roses planted the previous autumn and winter will be making new shoot growth; they will therefore require attention for the first year to see that a good root system is formed.

Newly planted bush roses produce flowers in early summer at the same time as established plants, but it is unwise to let the plants flower at this time, as they will expend their energy in flowering instead of producing shoots and leaves. The best policy is to pinch off the first flower buds as soon as they are seen; the plants will then make better growth and may be allowed to flower a little later, about December. They should be watered well, if the weather is dry in spring or early summer.

If there has been heavy rain, the soil may have been washed away from the base of the plants. The soil should then be replaced or soil added if the bed has sunk, exposing the stem below the bud union. The young shoots of climbing roses should be regularly tied in gently to the supports.

Established Plants

Established plants should be growing strongly and will require regular examination. In windy areas it is advisable to stake these plants not only to prevent the whole plant rocking in the wind but also to prevent young shoots being blown off or damaged by

rubbing against the thorns. One short strong bamboo cane or green-painted metal stake inserted near the centre of the bush will be sufficient. The base of the plant can be tied to this near ground level and the young shoots lightly looped to the stake at varying heights. The stake will not be seen, but will provide sufficient support and ties of soft brown string are inconspicuous. Ties on standard roses should also be examined.

Climbing and Rambler Roses

Climbing and rambler roses flower initially on short young shoots produced on older wood. At the same time strong young canes grow from the base of the plant or from the main branches. These young canes should be gently placed and tied in an upright position to one side of the plant. If left too long without tying, they may break off or grow unsuitably.

As rambler and wichuriana roses have only one crop of flowers each year, they can be pruned immediately after flowering. Where there are sufficient replacement shoots on rambler roses all the older wood may be removed. Wichuriana roses do not usually produce enough young shoots, so a proportion of the healthier older shoots should be retained.

Weeping standard roses are usually rambler varieties and so should be pruned like ramblers after flowering.



The rose, the queen of summer flowers, supplies blooms which are among the best of cut flowers.

