





## GREENHOUSE GARDENING



# Greenhouse Gardening

G. F. Gardiner

*Formerly Curator of the Botanic Gardens and Recognized Teacher  
of Gardening at the University of Bristol*

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## **Greenhouse Gardening**

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## FOREWORD

I am very glad to have this opportunity of writing a foreword to Mr. G. F. Gardiner's book on greenhouse plants and their cultivation. It is now nearly fifty years since Mr. Gardiner came to Bristol from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, to become the Curator of the University Botanic Gardens. Here he had a very wide experience in horticulture, both in the glasshouses and gardens.

His careful skill in the propagation and cultivation of the great range of plants has made an important contribution to botanical and horticultural work in the University.

In his retirement Mr. Gardiner has devoted much of his time to writing on horticultural topics, particularly on greenhouse decorative plants.

He has already published *Pictorial Plant Propagation* and *Modern Indoor Gardening*.

Many former students of the University will remember Mr. Gardiner as a helpful guide and an enthusiastic instructor in horticulture; it is very gratifying that his knowledge, firmly based on practical experience, is now reaching a wider audience.

*Department of Botany,  
University of Bristol*

E. W. YEMM,  
*Professor of Botany*

## INTRODUCTION

I have written this book for the benefit of those who wish to grow suitable plants to provide flowers in a greenhouse or conservatory or to use for room decoration, during all seasons of the year.

Plants which do not flower freely and are not of great decorative value have been omitted, and only those which I have found to be ideal for the purpose have been dealt with in this book. There is a vast number of greenhouse plants to be seen in botanical gardens and large private establishments, but only a limited number are offered for sale by nurserymen. From these plant catalogues, which they issue free of charge, I have selected the most decorative kinds and have given the fullest details of their cultivation.

Therefore, by choosing plants from the "lists of flowering plants for every season of the year" given on p. 203, it will be found possible to provide a continuous display of flowers in the heated or unheated greenhouse.

I am indebted to Messrs. T. Bath & Co., Ltd., Greenhouse Specialists, 14 Norwood Road, Herne Hill, London, S.E. 24, for supplying the photographs of types of greenhouses, ventilators and heating appliances.

I am also grateful to Dr. A. J. Willis, Reader in Botany in the University of Bristol, for advice and assistance in the preparation of this book.

G. F. GARDINER





## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Foreword	v
Introduction	v
List of Plates	viii
<i>Chapter</i>	
1 Greenhouse and Plant Frames	1
2 The Garden Room or Annex	10
3 Bottle Gardening	13
4 Ventilating, Watering, Feeding and Potting	15
5 Methods of Propagation	27
6 Warm Greenhouse (Stove) Plants	42
7 Cool Greenhouse Plants (Soft-wooded)	58
8 Hard-wooded Greenhouse Plants	112
9 Annuals for the Cool Greenhouse	124
10 Cacti and Other Free-flowering Succulents	130
11 Attractive Greenhouse Climbers	138
12 Greenhouse Plants which grow from Bulbs, Corms and Rhizomes	148
13 Free-flowering Orchids for the Beginner	164
14 Greenhouse Plants with Attractive Berries	171
15 Ornamental-leaved Plants (including Ferns)	174
16 Forcing Hardy Plants	189
17 Colourful Plants for the Unheated Greenhouse	198
18 Pests, Diseases and Insecticides	206
Index	211

## List of Plates

	<i>Page</i>
1 A Lean-to Greenhouse against a House Wall	2
2 The Lean-to Greenhouse	3
3 Plant Frame	4
4 A Greenhouse Electric Fan Heater	6
5 A Greenhouse Paraffin Heater	8
6 A Garden-room or Annex	10
7 An Automatic Ventilator	15
8 Crocking a Pot	20
9 Potting Rooted Cuttings	22
10 A Chrysanthemum Ready to Set in its Final Pot	23
11 Firming the Soil with a Wooden Soil Presser	28
12 Preparing a Cutting	30
13 Propping up the "Light" of the Propagator	32
14 Leaf Propagation	35
15 Leaf Cuttings of Saintpaulia	37
16 Ringing (Air Layering)	38
17 Propagating Ferns by Spores	40
18 <i>Acalypha hispida</i>	43
19 <i>Aphelandra squarrosa</i> var. <i>Louisae</i>	45
20 <i>Eupatorium atrorubens</i>	49
21 <i>Euphorbia fulgens</i> (syn. <i>E. jacquinaeflora</i> )	51
22 <i>Jacobinia carnea</i>	53
23 <i>Pycnostachys Dawei</i>	55
24 <i>Tibouchina semidecandra</i>	56
25 Tuberous Begonias; Taking Cuttings	64
26 Tuberous Begonias; Removal of the Female Flower Buds	65
27 <i>Begonia Haageana</i>	71
28 <i>Beloperone guttata</i> (Shrimp Plant)	73
29 Bouvardia President Cleveland	75
30 Perpetual Flowering Carnations	79
31 Decorative Mid-season Chrysanthemum	81
32 Pinching out the Point of the Shoot to cause Side Shoots to Form	83
33 Chrysanthemum, All-year-round Variety	86
34 <i>Impatiens Sultani</i> (Busy Lizzie)	98

	<i>Page</i>
35 A Variety of Show Pelargonium	101
36 <i>Saintpaulia ionantha</i> (African Violet)	108
37 <i>Acacia armata</i>	113
38 <i>Acacia Drummondii</i>	114
39 The Indian Azalea	115
40 <i>Boronia heterophylla</i>	117
41 <i>Camellia japonica</i>	119
42 <i>Erica hyemalis</i>	121
43 <i>Erica gracilis</i>	122
44 Antirrhinums as Pot Plants	125
45 Bedding Petunias in Pots for Greenhouse Decoration	128
46 <i>Epiphyllum Ackermannii</i> (Phyllocactus)	132
47 <i>Rochea</i> ( <i>Crassula</i> ) <i>coccinea</i>	135
48 <i>Passiflora caerulea</i> (Passion Flower)	142
49 <i>Plumbago capensis</i> (Cape Leadwort)	144
50 <i>Swainsonia galegifolia</i> (Darling River Pea)	146
51 <i>Cyclamen persicum</i>	148
52 <i>Freesia refracta</i>	151
53 <i>Sinningia speciosa</i> (syn. <i>Gloxinia</i> )	153
54 <i>Lachenalia</i> (Cape Cowslip)	157
55 <i>Ornithogalum thyrsoides</i> (Chincherinchee)	160
56 <i>Veltheimia viridifolia</i>	162
57 <i>Coelogyne cristata</i>	165
58 Propagating Orchids— <i>Coelogyne</i> Divided	169
59 <i>Ardisia crispa</i> ( <i>crenata</i> )	172
60 <i>Asparagus plumosus nanus</i>	175
61 <i>Begonia Rex</i> as an Ornamental Foliage Plant	177
62 <i>Coleus Blumei</i> Hybrid	179
63 <i>Eucalyptus globulus</i> (Blue Gum Plant)	182
64 <i>Grevillea robusta</i>	184
65 <i>Pteris tremula</i>	187
66 <i>Hydrangea paniculata</i>	191
67 <i>Astilbe japonica</i> (Spiraea)	193
68 <i>Lilium candidum</i>	197
69 <i>Agapanthus umbellatus</i> (African Lily)	199
70 <i>Eranthis hyemalis</i> (Winter Aconite)	201
71 Hyacinths Grown in a Cold Greenhouse	202
72 Early-flowering Trumpet Narcissi	204



# I

## GREENHOUSES AND PLANT FRAMES

### Greenhouse Siting and Orientation

Except in the case of Ferns, Selaginellas and other shade-loving plants, the greenhouse should be sited where it will receive the maximum amount of sunlight. It should run north to south, i.e. at right angles to morning and evening light, and it must not be set where it will be shaded by trees or tall buildings. Another point to bear in mind is that the greenhouse must be erected where it will not be flooded during heavy rain. If necessary, drains should be laid to carry away surplus water.

Permission to attach a greenhouse or conservatory to a dwelling house must also be obtained from the local housing authorities.

### Choosing a Greenhouse

The three chief types of greenhouses are: (1) the span-roof house; (2) the lean-to house; and (3) the three-quarter span house.

The span-roofed house is the most useful, the simplest to erect, and is suitable for most types of plants. Being set in the garden, well away from buildings where it receives the maximum amount of light on all sides, the plants are not in danger of becoming drawn and spindly. The best plan is to have a long house which can be divided into two sections, so that one part can be used for raising the plants and the other for displaying them when they are in bloom. This is the ideal arrangement because the portion in which the plants are being raised can be kept at a higher temperature, if desired. When in bloom less heat is needed, in fact the cooler the house is kept the longer the flowers will last in full bloom. As a rule, the span-roofed house is fitted with a staging covered with stone chippings or similar materials which, when damped, help to maintain a moist atmosphere.

### *The Glass to Ground Span-roof*

This type of greenhouse is fitted with glass right down to ground level and is popular with nurserymen and those who have to grow large batches of plants, such as Begonias, Chrysanthemums, Geraniums (Pelargoniums) and *Solanum capsicastrum* (Winter Cherry), but it is not suitable for the amateur who wishes to grow and display a great variety of plants.

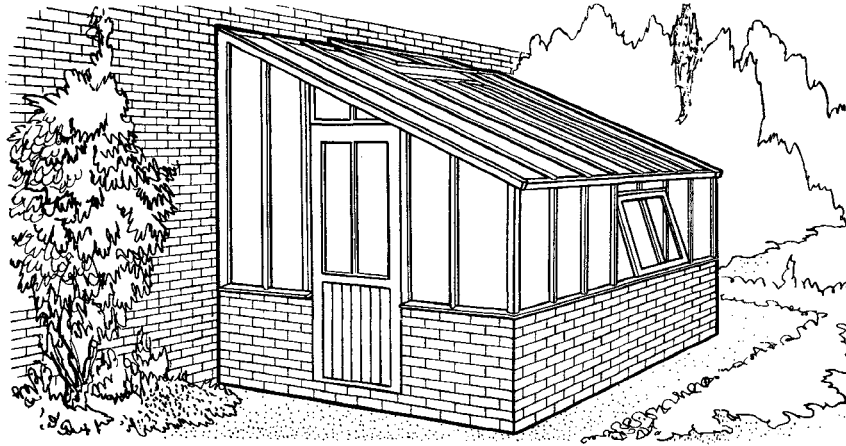


1 A lean-to greenhouse against a house wall.

*The Lean-to Greenhouse*

This is so called because it is erected against a wall or building. It is not the best type to have for growing pot plants because it receives most light

from the front and was originally designed for growing peaches and grapes. But where such a type of house exists, it may be fitted with a staging in the front upon which pot plants may be grown and receive a fair amount of light. The back of the house may be used for climbing plants such as *Plumbago capensis*, Fuchsias and *Passiflora caerulea* (Passion Flower), and Chrysanthemums when in bloom.



2 The lean-to greenhouse is suitable for erecting against a wall where it is sheltered from cold winds. It is often used for growing peaches and grapes.

#### *The Three-quarter Span Greenhouse*

This type is rarely built now. It is similar to a lean-to, but it does not reach to the back wall at the top. It is ridged at the top with a glazed section about 18", sloping backwards to allow more light and air to reach the plants at the top of the house. It is more expensive to build than a lean-to and more difficult to paint and repair.

#### **Plant Frames**

Cold frames set close to the greenhouse or other buildings are invaluable for sheltering many types of plants, from Spring to Autumn. In these frames they are protected from cold winds and make sturdy plants for setting in the greenhouse in October. Plants such as Cinerarias, *Primula obconica* and Cyclamen form sturdy specimens if they are set in the frame and given an abundance of fresh air on all favourable occasions. When bulbous plants such as Hyacinths, Tulips and Narcissi are removed from the plunging bed the shelter of a cold frame is beneficial before they are taken into the greenhouse for forcing. The unheated frame is also valuable for sheltering bedding plants from April until they are set out in the beds in June.

The frames are made of various materials such as brick, concrete and

## INDEX

- Abutilon 58, 59  
 Acacia 112  
*Acacia armata* 112, 113  
*A. Drummondii* 114  
 Acacias as climbers 113  
*Acalypha hispida* 42, 43  
 Adiantum 186  
 African Hemp 109  
 African Lily 199  
 African Violet 36, 107, 108  
*Agapanthus umbellatus* 198, 199  
 Air layering 38  
*Aloe variegata* 130  
 Alpine plants 198  
 Amaryllis 156  
 Amazon Lily 149  
 Annex 10  
 Annuals for cool greenhouse 124  
 Anthurium 42  
 Antirrhinum 124, 125  
*Aphelandra squarrosa* 44, 45  
 Aporocactus 130  
*Araucaria excelsa* 174  
*Ardisia crispa* 171, 172  
 Arum Lily 163  
 Asparagus "Ferns" 174  
*Asparagus plumosus* 175  
 Asplenium 186  
*Astilbe japonica* 193  
 Atmospheric enrichment with carbon dioxide 18  
 Australian Heath 120  
 Automatic ventilator 15  
 Automatic watering 17  
 Azalea 114, 115  
  
 Balsam 97, 126  
 Basket plants 66, 103, 136  
 Bastard Jasmine 138  
*Begonia coccinea* 68  
*B. Corbeille de Feu* 68  
*B. Dregei* 69  
*B. fuchsoides* 69  
*B. Gloire de Lorraine* 69  
*B. Haageana* 70, 71  
  
*B. metallica* 72  
*B. pendula* 66  
*B. Rex* 36, 60, 176, 177  
*B. semperflorens* 67  
*B. socotrana* 72  
 Begonias 59  
     Fibrous-rooted 67, 68  
     Multiflora 66  
     Ornamental-leaved 176  
     Propagation 63  
     Tuberous 60-3, 64, 65  
*Beloperone guttata* 72, 73  
 Berried plants 171  
 Blue Gum 181, 182  
 Boronia 116  
*Boronia heterophylla* 117  
 Bottle gardening 13  
     Suitable plants 13, 14  
 Bottles, Planting 13  
 Bottom heat 31  
 Bouvardia 74, 75  
 Brazilian Spider Flower 54  
*Browallia demissa* 77  
*B. speciosa* 76  
 Bulbous plants 11, 200  
 Bulbous plants, Large-flowered 203  
 Bulbs for early bloom 192  
 Busy Lizzie 97, 98  
 Butterfly Flower 128  
  
 Cacti 11, 130  
 Camellia 118  
*Camellia japonica* 119  
*Campanula isophylla* 77  
*C. Medium* 126  
 Canterbury Bell 126  
 Cape Cowslip 156, 157  
 Cape Heaths 120  
 Cape Jasmine 51  
 Cape Primrose 110  
 Capillary watering 17  
 Capsicum 171  
 Carnations 78, 79  
 Celosia 126



- Centipedes 207  
 Cestrum 138  
 Chinchinchee 159, 160  
 Chionodoxa 195  
*Chlorophytum elatum* 178  
 Christmas Cactus 136  
 Chrysanthemums 23, 80, 81  
   Cascade 84  
   Single 82  
   "Stopping" 84  
   Year-round production of flowers 86  
*Cineraria cruenta* 88, 126  
 Clarkia 127  
 Clematis 189  
*Cleome spinosa* 127  
*Clerodendrum Thomsonae* 139  
 Climbing plants 11, 138  
 Codiaeum 45  
 Coelogyne 165, 169  
 Cold greenhouse, plants for 198  
*Coleus Blumei* 178, 179  
 Composts for cuttings 31  
   for pot plants 19  
   for raising seedlings 21  
 Cool greenhouse plants (soft-wooded) 58  
 Cordyline 37, 47  
 Corms 148  
 Crassula (Rochea) 134, 135  
 Crocking a pot 20  
 Crocus 195  
 Croton 45  
 Cuttings 29, 37, 63, 64  
*Cyclamen persicum* 148  
 Cymbidium 164  
*Cyperus alternifolius* 180  
 Cypripedium 166  
*Cytisus fragrans* 89  
  
*Daedalacanthus nervosus* 46  
 Damping-down 16  
 Damping off 208  
 Daphne 189  
 Darling River Pea 146  
 Datura 90  
 Davallia 186  
 Deutzia 190  
 Dicksonia 187  
 Disbudding 85  
 Diseases 206  
 Division 34  
 Dracaena 37, 47, 48  
  
 Elk's Horn Fern 187  
 Epacris 120  
  
*Epiphyllum Ackermannii* 131, 132  
*Eranthemum pulchellum* 46  
*Eranthis hyemalis* 201  
*Erica gracilis* 122  
*E. hyemalis* 121  
 Ericas 120  
*Erythrina Crista-galli* 91  
*Eucalyptus globulus* 181, 182  
*Eucharis grandiflora* 149  
*Eucomis comosa* 150  
 Eupatorium 48, 49  
*Euphorbia fulgens* 50  
*E. pulcherrima* 50  
*Eurya japonica* 181  
  
 Feeding 11, 18, 62  
 Feeding, Foliar 19  
 Ferns 39, 40, 174, 186  
*Ficus elastica* 38, 182  
 Firming soil, 28  
 Flamingo Flower 42  
 Frames 3, 4  
   Heating 5  
   Ventilation 4  
 Free-flowering plants for Summer and Autumn 11  
 Freesia 150  
*Freesia refracta* 151  
 Forcing hardy plants 189  
   Shrubs 189  
 Forsythia, Forcing 198  
 Fuchsias 92  
 Fungal diseases 208  
 Fungicide, Systemic 209  
  
 Garden Room 10  
 Gardenia 51  
 Genista 89  
 Geranium 100, 139  
*Gerbera Jamesonii* 93  
*Gesneria cardinalis* 152  
 Gladioli 196  
 Gloriosa 140  
 Gloxinia 153  
 Greenhouse  
   Annuals 124  
   Choosing 1  
   Climbers 138  
   Concrete 6  
   Cool 58, 124  
   Glass to ground span-roof 1  
   Heating 6, 7, 8  
   Lean-to 2, 3  
   Plants (berried), 171  
   Plants (bulbs, corms, rhizomes) 148

- Greenhouse—*cont.*  
 Plants (hard-wooded) 112  
 Plants (soft-wooded) 58  
 Plants (warm or stove) 42  
 Routine management 7  
 Siting and orientation 1  
 Three-quarter span 2  
 Unheated 198  
 Ventilating 15  
*Grevillea robusta* 183, 184
- Haemanthus 155  
 Hard-wooded greenhouse plants 112  
 Hardy Alpine plants 198  
 Hardy herbaceous plants in pots 192  
 Hardy plants for cold house 198  
 Hare's Foot Fern 186  
 Heater, Greenhouse 6, 8  
 Heaths 120  
 Heating 5  
*Hedychium Gardnerianum* 155  
*Helxine Soleirolii* 186  
*Hibiscus Rosa-sinensis* 94  
 Hippeastrum 156  
 Hormone preparations 33  
*Hoya carnosa* 140  
 Hyacinths 192, 194, 202  
 Hydrangea, Blueing 96, 190  
*Hydrangea paniculata* 191  
 Hydrangeas 95, 190
- Impatiens 97, 126  
*Impatiens Sultani* 98  
 India Rubber Plant 182  
 Indian Azalea 114, 115  
 Insecticides, Systemic 209  
 Ipomoea 141  
 Iris 195
- Jacaranda ovalifolia* 185  
*Jacobinia carnea* 52, 53  
 Japanese Snake's Beard 186  
*Jasminum nudiflorum* 190  
 John Innes Composts 19-21
- Kalanchoe Blossfeldiana* 133
- Laburnum 190  
 Lachenalia 156, 157  
 Ladder Fern 187  
*Lantana Camara* 99  
 Layering 120  
 Leadwort 143, 144  
 Leaf cuttings 37
- Leaf hoppers 206  
 Leaf-miner 206  
 Leaf propagation 35, 111, 154  
 Lilac 192  
 Lilies 158, 196  
*Lilium candidum* 197  
 Lily, Arum 163  
 Livingstone Daisy 127
- Mealy bug 207  
*Medinilla magnifica* 54  
 Mesembryanthemum 127  
 Mignonette 127  
 Mildews 208  
 Millipedes 207  
*Mimosa pudica* 185  
 Mist propagation 33  
 Morning Glory 141
- Narcissi 192, 195, 204  
 Nephrolepis 187  
*Nerium Oleander* 99  
 Nicotiana 127  
 Norfolk Island Pine 174
- Oleander 99  
*Ophiopogon jaburan* 186  
 Orchids 164  
 Ornamental-leaved plants 11, 174  
 Ornamental Peppers 171  
*Ornithogalum thyrsoides* 159, 160
- Partial sterilization 25  
*Passiflora caerulea* 142  
 Passion Flower 142  
 Pelargonium 100  
   Ivy-leaved 103  
   Scented-leaved 105  
   Show 101, 104  
   Zonal 100, 139
- Pests 206  
 Petunia 127, 128  
 Pharbitis 141  
 Phyllocactus 131, 132  
 Pinching out shoot 83  
 Pineapple Flower 150  
 Plants for all Seasons 203  
   for pans 200  
*Platynerium alaicorne* 187  
*Plumbago capensis* 143, 144  
 Poinsettia 50  
 Pot plants, Compost for 19  
 Pots, Sizes of 9  
 Potting 21, 61  
   Compost, Loamless 24  
   Rooted cuttings 22

- Potting—*cont.*  
 Shed 9  
 Preparing Cutting 30  
 Primula 105  
 Propagation 27  
 by cuttings 29  
 by division 34  
 by hormone preparations 33  
 by leaves 35, 36  
 by ringing 37, 46  
 by root cuttings 76  
 by seeds 27  
 by spores 39, 40  
 by "toes" 39  
 "Mist" method 33  
 of hard-wooded plants 33  
 of orchids 168, 169  
 with bottom heat 31  
 with polythene film 34  
 Propagator management 31, 32  
*Pteris tremula* 187, 188  
*Pycnostachys Dawei* 54, 55
- Rat's Tail Cactus 130  
 Red Spider 207  
*Rehmannia angulata* 106  
 Repotting 22  
*Reseda odorata* 127  
 Rhizomes 148  
 Rhododendron 114, 115  
 Ringing 37, 38  
*Rochea coccinea* 134, 135  
*R. falcata* 134  
 Routine management of greenhouse 7  
 Rusts 209
- Saintpaulia ionantha* 36, 37, 107, 108  
*Salvia splendens* 109  
 Scale Insects 208  
 Scarborough Lily 159  
 Schizanthus 128  
*Schlumbergera truncata* 136  
 Seed compost 21  
 Seedlings, Potting 21  
 Pricking out 61  
 Selaginella 188  
*Senecio cruentus* 88, 126  
 Sensitive plant 185  
 Sequestrene 210  
 Shading annex 12
- Shrimp Plant 73  
 Shrubs, Forcing 189  
 Silk-bark Oak 183  
*Sinningia speciosa* 153  
 Soft-wooded plants (Cool Greenhouse) 58  
 Soil heaters 5  
*Solanum capsicastrum* 173  
 Sowing seeds 28  
*Sparmannia africana* 109  
 Spiraea, Forcing 192, 193  
 Spores of Ferns—propagation 39  
*Staphylea colchica* 191  
 Sterilization, Partial 25  
 Stove plants 42  
 Streptocarpus 110  
*Streptosolen Jamesonii* 145  
 Succulents 11, 36, 130  
*Swainsonia galegifolia* 145, 146  
 Syringa 192  
 Syringing 16  
 Systemic fungicides 209  
 insecticides 209
- Thorn Apple 90  
 Thrips 207  
*Tibouchina semidecandra* 54, 56  
 Tobacco 127  
 Transvaal Daisy 93  
 Treatment after potting 21  
 Tuberous Begonias 60, 64, 65  
 Tulips 192, 195
- Umbrella plant 180  
 Unheated greenhouse 198
- Vallota purpurea* 159  
*Veltheimia viridifolia* 161, 162  
 Ventilating greenhouse 15
- Wall plants 103  
 Warm greenhouse plants 42  
 Watering 11, 17  
 Wax-Flower 135  
 White Flies 208  
 Winter Aconite 201  
 Winter Cherry 173  
 Wistaria 192
- Zantedeschia 163  
*Zygocactus truncatus* 136



