

September 2016

Creating the Thousand Bloom Chrysanthemum





The Thousand Bloom Chrysanthemum

These chrysanthemums are not your ordinary mums!

Longwood has one of the largest and oldest chrysanthemum collections in North America with more than 200 different cultivars.

We maintain our own collection as stock plants in pots and through tissue culture because these chrysanthemum cultivars (varieties) are rare and difficult to acquire. Tissue culture enables us to maintain healthy virus free plants.



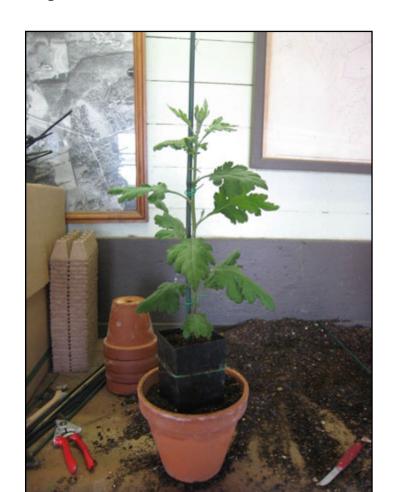


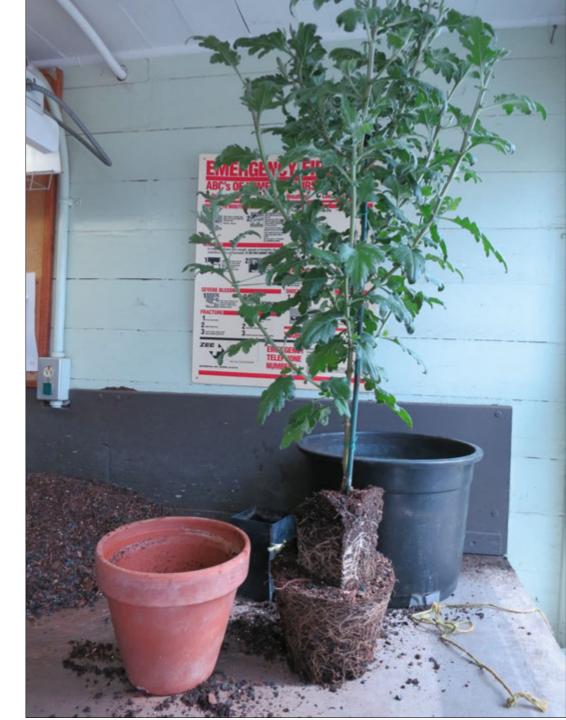
Our Thousand Bloom Chrysanthemum is started from cuttings in June, seventeen months before the plant goes on display.

Two of these cuttings will be selected — one to be the beautiful Thousand Bloom Chrysanthemum on display and one to be the understudy.

The stem surface is slit to stimulate additional root growth along the stem.

With potting medium surrounding the slit stem, more healthy new roots grow to support the growing plant.









Throughout the growing season, gardeners pinch the stems to remove the terminal bud at the end of each stem.

Each pinch creates two or more new stems for a fuller plant and more buds.



Chrysanthemums are short-day bloomers.

This means they naturally are stimulated to start blooming as the days grow shorter in late summer.

We turn lights on at night to "trick" the plants into thinking the day is longer. This prevents early flowering during the long growing period.





The plant is placed in its final growing pot in December.

Wood dividers are used to keep the soil area small as the plant grows to stimulate root development. Dividers are removed as the plant grows larger.







February

Supporting framework is put into place. It will grow as the plant grows.





One amazing stem!

This Thousand Bloom, a traditional Asian form, will grow to be twelve and a half feet wide and eight feet tall by in eighteen months.



Disbudding

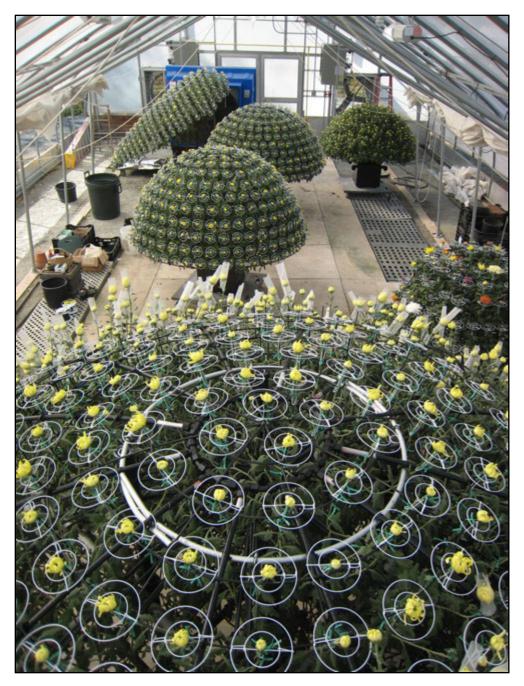
The gardeners disbud plants in mid September so there will be only one flower bud at the top of each branch.

All the plant's energy goes into these remaining buds, creating one larger flower on each stem.









Each flower is wired to a Rindai flower support to support and space each flower precisely.

Staff work from the top to bottom for days placing each bloom.



Placing flowers into rindai supports







Carpenters, painters, and metalworkers all work with gardeners toward one perfect display.











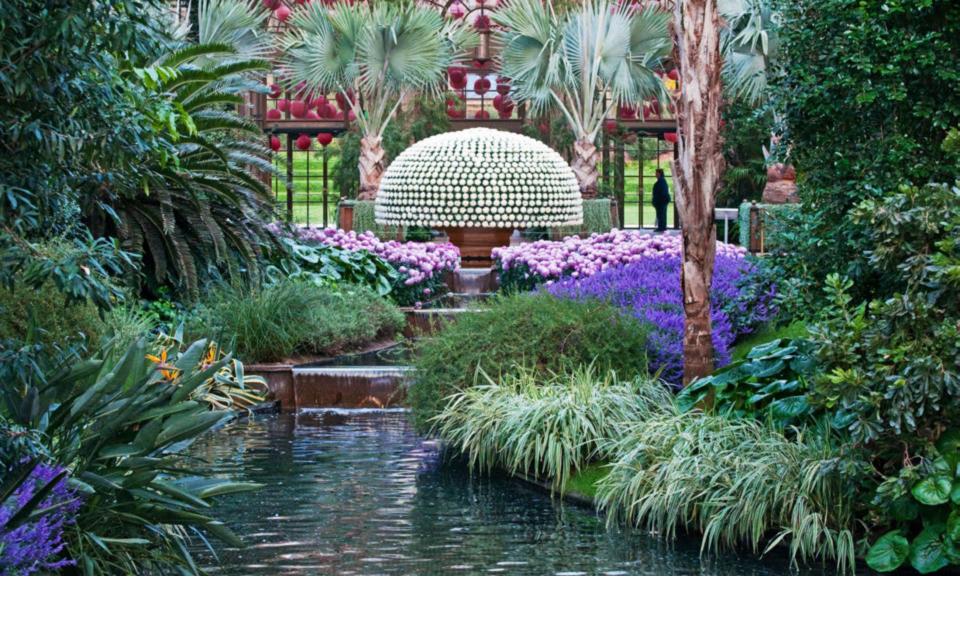
The single stem plant is carefully prepped for an early morning trip to the Conservatory from our Nursery and Production facilities.







The Thousand Bloom Chrysanthemum takes over 2,000 dedicated staff hours of to complete.



1100 perfect blooms grace this traditional Asian form in 2012







The largest Thousand Bloom Chrysanthemum grown outside of Asia.