

# **Mind Your Garden Manners**

by Hallie M. Barrow (*Reprinted from "Flower and Garden magazine for May 1972 and later the August 1974 CRFG Newsletter. Contributed by Frank Raco*)

These are the days of garden pilgrimages and some garden hosts are near nervous wrecks after a group has departed. Here are some suggestions.

1. Never wear high heels when you visit a garden.
2. Unless the garden has been opened to the public, phone or write for an appointment. If it is for a group, state how many and their particular interests. If you are taking box lunches, ask if there is a place to eat and be sure to leave it spotless.
3. Avoid pulling blossoms or touching plants. I will remember the dismay of one garden host when some know-it-all broke off iris seed pods, saying, "I never let an iris go to seed." Those pods meant years of patient work for the gardener who was carrying on a hybridizing program.
4. Permission to visit the garden does not include a ramble through the house.
5. Do not ask for seeds, slips, or plants, especially if there is a group. The host almost has to ask if others want them, and nearly always, they all do.
6. Do not leave a trail of peanut hulls, gum or candy wrappers, discarded cigarettes or other litter.
7. If there are paths, stay on them to avoid trampling plants, basins, and grass plots. Close gates you found shut and do not break overhanging branches.
8. Take your own notebook and pencil, so you need not bother your host for them. The same goes for drinking cups, matches, and Kleenex.
9. Ask permission before taking pictures and don't delay the pilgrimage with your photography. Consider your host's time.
10. Never take a dog. Be prepared with an umbrella if it looks like rain. You will need rubbers possibly, if only the ground is damp, for your own protection and for your host's garden.
11. Use tact, and be kind. Do not declare loudly "I wouldn't give that stuff space in MY garden." Do not correct your host on the names on the plants. You are there as a guest.