



ADIRONDACK
CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

www.acnargs.org

November 2005

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November meeting: Newfoundland presentation & dish-to-pass

Our November 19 annual meeting and lunch will feature a presentation by chapter member **Art Trimble** reporting on his travels last July to the **North American Rock Garden Society meeting in St. Johns, Newfoundland.**

Art's travelogue will include field trips where he saw alpines growing in their natural habitats. "St. Johns is a very interesting place and has much to recommend it as a tourist destination," says Art. "It is one of the best whale-watching areas of the North Atlantic, and the nesting grounds of tens of thousands of sea birds." We will also have a brief business meeting, recognize the contributions of volunteers and are planning a special gift for members in attendance.

With no Cornell home football game, **we will return to the Whetzel Room, 404 Plant Science Building, on the Cornell University campus. Bring a dish to pass and a table setting.** Set up will begin around 11 a.m., we'll eat around noon and the meeting and program will follow immediately after.

Time to renew your membership

Beat the rush. Please fill out and return the 2006 membership form included with this newsletter. (It's a separate attachment with the emailed version.)

Letter from the chair

When leaders of the new Genesee Valley Chapter NARGS were holding formative discussions, they approached our Board to seek our opinion on whether a chapter serving greater Rochester would encroach on our membership. Quite to the contrary we saw a new chapter nearby as offering mutual benefits.

In fact, this has already proved to be the case. Last month I received a call from Anne the Wednesday evening before our Saturday meeting. Our speaker had to cancel at the last minute. After brainstorming with Anne, I began the next morning to search for a new program. What resulted is history. Roz Bliss, who had given a program to the Genesee Valley Chapter the month before, was available and delighted to repeat the program for our Chapter on Saturday.

Thank you Roz! And thank you Genesee Valley! I hope we can return the favor someday for you all.

Our November 19 meeting wraps up our program year. Traditionally we hold a dish-to-pass that starts as noon, but you are welcome to come as early as 11 a.m. to help with set up. Note we'll be back at the Whetzel Room on the Cornell campus. After what promises to be a fine repast, there will be a short annual meeting (summary reports, recognition awards, member appreciation) conducted by Billie Jean Isbell (in my absence as I will be traveling) to summarize our year.

Since all our board members are continuing in their current positions, we won't need to hold elections. However, we do have one open position on the board, that of secretary. I hope I can entice someone to fill this position. It offers a great venue for becoming more involved with the chapter, taking minutes at our board meetings (generally six per year preceding, our program meetings) and offering your thoughts – and a fresh voice – about our programs. Please contact me if you are interested.

I am also seeking nominations for Member Recognition Awards. This offers us a way to show our appreciation to members who are the "make it happen" people in an all-volunteer organization such as ours. Award recipients will be announced at the November meeting. I will accept nominations through November 12. We also plan a special gift for all 2005 Chapter members who attend. If you aren't sure if that includes you, contact Carolyn Yaeger. (See People at end of newsletter for board member contact information.)

Last and by no means, least Art Trimble will be presenting a program and photos from his trip to the National NARGS meeting in Newfoundland last July. His talk promises an intimate look at a truly special place.

So, our November meeting promises a full program and a great way to close out our year. Do plan to attend.

Carol Eichler, Chair

Mark your calendar: 2006 Programs at a glance

When you unwrap your new 2006 calendar, don't forget to go ahead and pencil in tentative dates for 2006 AC-NARGS program activities:

- Feb. 18 - Member's Share Meeting.
- March 19 - (Note this meeting is on Sunday.) Janis Ruksans, Central Asian bulb expert.
- April 15 - Program TBA.
- Summer activities – Plant sale, workshops, tours TBA.
- Sept. 16 - Maria Galetti of Alpines Mont Echo, expert grower of extraordinary alpine and rock garden plants from Quebec.
- Oct. 21 - Program TBA.
- Nov. 18 - Annual Meeting and dish-to-pass.

We'll be fleshing out some details and considering new program ideas at our January Board meeting. If you have suggestions, please pass them along to one of the board members. (See People at end of newsletter for board member contact information.)

Look for more details on these events in future issues of *The Green Dragon* and on our website: **www.acnargs.org**

Anne Klingensmith, Speaker Coordinator

NARGS Seed exchange

Do you get that "feels like Christmas" feeling whenever seeds or plants you've ordered arrive in the mail? If so, the annual seed exchange is a good reason to join our "parent" organization, the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS), if you aren't already a member.

In a nutshell, here's how the seed exchange works: Every year, NARGS members from around the world harvest seeds from their favorite plants and mail them in bulk to seed-exchange organizers. Then the seeds are divided up into small cellophane envelopes.

For an additional \$12.50 fee, NARGS members request 25 different varieties (plus some alternates in case of shortages) from a list of cultivars that last year reached nearly 5,000 varieties. Seeds usually arrive in time to start in mid- to late-winter.

If you enjoy seed-starting, this is a great (and inexpensive) way to try new plants that may be difficult (if not impossible) to find elsewhere. And if you have a bumper crop from your seed-starting, you can donate extra plants for sale at Adirondack Chapter plant sales.

The seeds offered by the exchange aren't just rock garden plants. I have a fondness for verbascums, heucheras and foxgloves, and there are always plenty of those to choose from. These are easy to grow from seed. But if you're looking for a seed-starting challenge, there are more difficult varieties as well.

To participate in the exchange, you need to first join NARGS. Dues are \$30 annually, and also include a subscription to a great publication, *Rock Garden Quarterly*. You can join online at www.nargs.org, or send \$30 (check payable to North American Rock Garden Society) to: NARGS, PO Box 67, Millwood, NY 10546.

Craig Cramer, Editor and webmaster

Workshop report: Trough building

The October '05 edition of the trough building workshop brought some cold, rainy weather, a new formula, new participants and a wonderful new space to use. The 4-H folks let us use their indoor facility at 4-H Acres. It had everything we needed to have a successful workshop, enclosed space, tables, running water, electricity and even a covered area to mix the hypertufa.

Armed with a new formula and an electric concrete mixer, we set about to making a wide range of planting troughs. Big, small, rectangular, round, you name it – all good looking and functional. Judging by what I have seen so far, the new formula was a success. After working out the ideal consistency, we ended up with a mix that was wet enough to mold fairly easily but not so wet as to slump. Susanne came up with a good fix for a too-wet mix: Just pat some peat moss onto the side of the slumping mix and it stiffens up nicely.

These workshops are always a fun time, partly because there are a bunch of interesting people expressing themselves different ways with a common medium. We probably could have had a good time just hanging out, talking about gardening (we did some of that). But it was great to leave with something functional and good looking for our efforts.

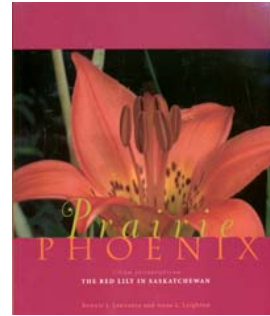
I am looking forward to running another workshop next year. If you have not taken part in one yet, I highly recommend it. Ask anyone who has. If anyone wants to bring a trough they made to the annual meeting to show-and-tell, that would be wonderful.

The Fall 2005 NARGS *Rock Garden Quarterly* has an excellent and timely article by Jane McGary titled "Tiny Bulbs for Troughs." Something to think about for what would look good in our new troughs.

Tom Myers

Book review:

Prairie Phoenix, *Lilium philadelphicum*:
The Red Lily in Saskatchewan
by Bonnie J. Lawrence and Anna L. Leighton.
Published by Nature Saskatchewan, 2005.



On the occasion of Saskatchewan's Centennial year, this Canadian province has published a comprehensive book on the Western Red Lily. Once an abundant and showy species of unbroken prairie, it has survived agricultural development, gained recognition as the province's floral emblem (in 1941), and today remains widespread but a protected species. On the back cover, the book states the authors "have gathered together a wealth of information from their ten years of fieldwork and research ... with well over 100 colour photographs, maps and charts. Learn about the lore, the life cycle and the adaptations of the Red Lily in natural habitats ... with quotes from Saskatchewan people who speak of their close attachments to this resilient and fascinating plant."

AC-NARGS member William Longaker, whose daughter is one of the authors (Anna), has donated a copy of this book to the Chapter with the wish that it be made available for loan to our members. The book is a wonderful read (or browse) and will surely enhance your appreciation of this wonderful species. Its range extends well into the northeast, although the focus of this book is on the western variety *andinum*.

Enjoy! And thank you, Bill, for donating the book.

Ordering info: www.bcbooks.com/prairiephoenix.html. Or see me at meetings if you'd like to borrow the chapter copy.

Carol Eichler, Chair

Can you send a card?

Shirley Halwig, the older woman who had the lovely gardens around her farmhouse on the Greene garden tour last summer, has been very ill. She's home now and if anyone would like to send her a card, her address is: Shirley Halwig, 129 King Road, Greene, NY 13778. She was so appreciative that so many made the effort to tour her gardens.

Peg Ross, Garden Trip/Tour co-coordinator

Other events

- **Cornell Plantations Lecture Series:** This fall's final program is Native Plants for Difficult Garden Sites with Don Leopold, Wednesday, Nov. 16 7:30 p.m., Alice Statler Hall Auditorium, Cornell University.
- **Forcing Spring Bulbs Workshop:** Wednesday Nov. 30, 6:30-8:30. Pat Curran, Extension Horticulture Educator, will demonstrate how to pot up hardy bulbs such as crocus, hyacinths, and daffodils, and discuss the care they need to flower well. Participants in this hands-on workshop will pot up and take home two pots planted with bulbs to force at home. Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Avenue, Ithaca. The \$15 fee covers bulbs, pots, and potting mix. The class is limited to 15 participants. Pre-registration and prepayment are both required. Please wear casual clothes! Please call 272-2292 for more information or registration.
- **Master Class in Rock Gardening:** Jan. 27-29, Marriot East Side Hotel, sponsored by Manhattan Chapter, North American Rock Gardening Society. More info: www.nargs.org.

People

Questions? Want to find out how you can help the Chapter? Don't hesitate to contact one of the volunteers who help make everything happen:

- **Chair:** Carol Eichler, cme24@cornell.edu, 607-387-5823
- **Treasurer:** Carolyn Yaeger, cao2@cornell.edu, 607-844-9462
- **Speaker Coordinator:** Anne Klingensmith, aekling@lightlink.com, 607-256-9308
- **Garden Trip/Tours:** Peg Ross and Alice Davis, pogr@aol.com, 607-656-4237 (Peg), 607-656-9931 (Alice)
- **Picnic:** Debi Lampman, bedlam@bluefrognet.net, 315-364-8725
- **Member participation:** George Erdman, gerdman@binghamton.edu, 607-748-3984
- **Plant of the Month:** Billie Jean Isbell, bj1@cornell.edu, 607-539-6484
- **Plant sales:** David Mitchell, dwm23@cornell.edu, 607-342-3660
- **Membership:** John Gilrein, basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu, 315-492-0844
- **Newsletter editor/Webmaster:** Craig Cramer, cdcramer@twcny.rr.com, 607-539-7233
- **Rep. to National, and Ex-officio:** Robin Bell, rgb2@cornell.edu, 607-272-2074

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