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September 2010

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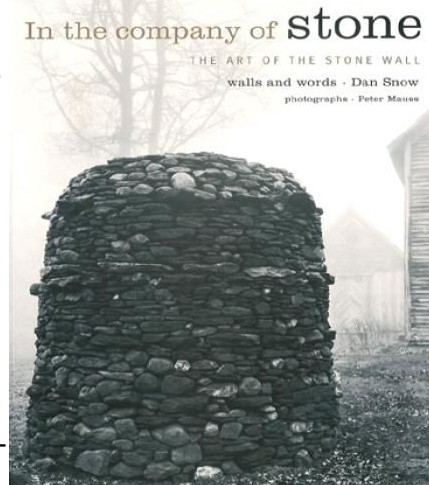
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## September 18 program: Dry stone construction: a 'fitting' medium for the rock garden

Dan Snow, the author of *In the Company of Stone: the Art of the Stone Wall*, will give a talk at our September 18 program on "Dry stone construction: a 'fitting' medium for the rock garden." The Plant of the Month will feature a selection grown by our very own Harold Peachey.

Snow is a designer of outdoor spaces in stone and an art maker specializing in dry stone construction. He has been building with stone since 1972 when he worked on the restoration of a 13<sup>th</sup> century Italian castle. His career as a professional dry stone waller began soon after in his native Windham County, Vermont, with retaining wall and field fence reconstructions. His dry stone constructions have included stock-proof fences, pillars, stiles, staircases and arch bridges. Utilitarian works have expanded to include garden follies, grottos and grandstands, as well as environmental art and non-functional, abstract and figurative works of sculpture.



Snow's work inspired the 2005 film *Stone Rising* by Camilla Rockwell, which captures the spirit of Snow's constructions and chronicles the process of their creation. Snow's second book *Listening to Stone - Hardy Structures, Perilous Follies, and Other Tangles with Nature*, was published by Artisan in October 2008, and his work has been featured in *This Old House* and *Vermont Life* magazines, and the *New York Times*. For more about Snow and his work, visit his website at: [www.inthecompanyofstone.com](http://www.inthecompanyofstone.com)



Dan Snow

We'll meet in 404 Plant Science Building (Whetzel Room) on the Cornell University campus. Brown bag lunch at noon. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.

## Plant of the Month

From John Gilrein, Plant of the Month coordinator

Since our September speaker will be talking about rocks, rather than plants, our September Plant of the Month wasn't dictated by the topic. One of our members, Harold Peachey, grows a lot of plants from seed, and I was able to obtain a nice, diverse assortment of plants. There may be a few surprise additions, but the current mix includes:

- *Gentiana depressa* (1), 6-10" x 18-24", nice green mound after blooming, purple flowers, good looking foliage.
- *Primula japonica* (2), flowers in various pink shades, red, or white.
- *Aquilegia*, early blue (3), low growing, blue flowers.
- *Aquilegia fragrans* (3), the only fragrant columbine, purple to light yellow flowers.
- *Allium x 'Mt. Everest'*, 18", late blooming (now) white flowers (3)
- *Veronica alpina* (3), mat forming, blue flowers.
- *Ruellia ciliata f. depressa* (3), very small plant with purple leaves with white flowers.
- *Cheilanthes lanosa* (3) (hairy lip fern, these are still small), lip fern is a versatile fern for sunny areas or woodland edge-even a cave man could grow it!



*Allium x 'Mt. Everest'*



*Cheilanthes lanosa*

Key to cultural recommendations (numbers after plant names above):

- 1 – Sun to part shade, good well-drained soil.
- 2 – Part shade to sun, damp to moist soil.
- 3 – Sun to part shade, well-drained to very-well-drained soil.

As usual, the plants will be a good deal for our members. Thanks Harold for the interesting selection from your private nursery!

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## 2010 program plans

Program line up for the rest of 2010. Details in future newsletters or: [acnargs.blogspot.com](http://acnargs.blogspot.com)

- September 18: **Dan Snow**, [www.inthecompanyofstone.com](http://www.inthecompanyofstone.com), "Dry stone construction: a 'fitting' medium for the rock garden."
- October 16: **Elisabeth Zander**, Berkshire Chapter-NARGS, "Vertical Gardening."
- November 20: **Program to be announced.**

## Donna and Carol in Colorado

*From Carol Eichler, who along with Donna Kraft attended 2010 NARGS annual meeting, Romancing the Rockies: The Marriage of Plant and Stone, July 11-14, 2010 in Colorado*

How does one begin to describe a trip of a lifetime? From tours of private gardens to exploring the alpine tundra and all the side adventures in-between, Donna Kraft and I were on a week-long high – and it wasn't entirely the altitude. Being with people as crazy over plants as we were was great. Can you tell we left our husbands home? The scenery was awesome, the guides were superb, but it was the plethora of plants everywhere that was most impressive.

From the cultivated gardens in and around Denver, to the Denver Botanic Gardens, to the day trips to the high mountain passes, my camera got a work-out. So did we. A short uphill walk left us breathless and the all-too-often get-on-my-belly to get the close-up of a 1-inch-tall plant resulted in a few sore muscles. Just to entice you here, I've attached a sampling of pics. More will follow in subsequent newsletters.



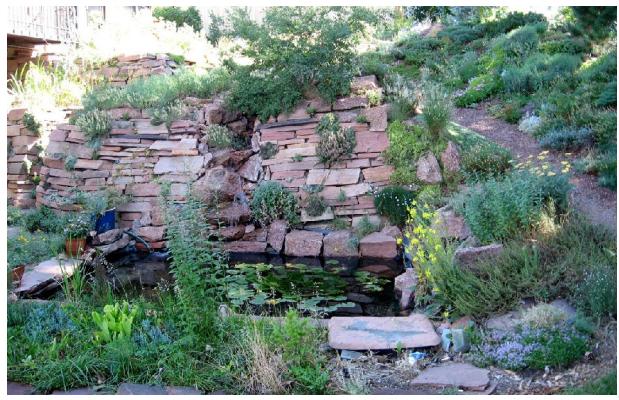
*Taking a break from looking down at tiny alpiners to appreciate the bigger picture.*



*We began drawing inspiration from the rock garden at the Denver Botanic Garden.*



*I couldn't have done any better than nature's rock garden at Cottonwood Pass, elevation ~12,000 feet*



*Water feature at the home garden of Panayoti Kelaidais, chair of the Rocky Mountain Chapter*

Donna and I are already planning to attend the next national conference in New Hampshire. We are converts and highly recommend you consider attending as well. Mark your calendar for June 17-19, and plan ahead now for the Winter Study Weekend at Sidney-by-the-Sea, Vancouver Island, February 25-27, hosted by the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society (VIRAGS).

## From the chair

*From Billie Jean Isbell, ACNARGS chair.*

I hope all your gardens are surviving this dry spell and the almost unbearable heat.

September is hibiscus month in my garden and my favorite is the gigantic hardy red hibiscus, brilliance, in my hot garden against the barn. It loves this heat when so many other plants are suffering. Moreover, the tribe of woodchucks that live under the barn don't bother it and I don't have to water it. What more could I ask for? Seedlings, but it doesn't seem to want to produce them.

We have two exciting speakers scheduled for September and October. I am sad that I will miss Dan Snow's talk but I will be in Peru. If anyone feels motivated to tape it, I would be very appreciative.

There are two ideas that have come from our members that I would like to have members think about for the November annual meeting. One suggestion, concerns our members-only plant sale, comes from Bill Stark. Many of our members seem to already have the plants that are offered. For example, the dwarf hostas did not sell, nor the irises, nor the daylilies. We seem not to want those plants.

Bill suggests that we have a mechanism to match offerings with desired plants. We could have a column in the newsletter that would list desired plants and members with those plants could respond. We'd have to work out how to price them. I for one don't want to dig plants that will not sell. Let me know what you think. We will discuss the proposition at the annual meeting in November.

Another idea came from Bob Schneider after the delightful trip to White Pine Camp that I joined as well. He suggests that members sponsor plants for the renewal of the rock garden at the camp. I think it is a splendid idea and I would like to discuss it at the annual meeting as well. Email me any thoughts you have: [bjj1@cornell.edu](mailto:bjj1@cornell.edu).

## From NARGS national

In September and October, the Book Service is to run a sale of most of the books in its inventory and prices will be reduced to half of previous prices. (The sale will **not** include titles self-published or co-published by NARGS, nor the *Caucasus and Its Flowers* book.) The Administrative Committee is currently waiting for the Book Service Manager to submit an updated inventory to put this sale in motion.

After October 31, 2010, the NARGS self-published and co-published books will be transferred to a volunteer who will sell these publications through the NARGS Web site (and perhaps on other on-line venues) as part of continuing NARGS Publications Service. In addition, NARGS Executive Secretary, Bobby Ward, will handle sales of back issues of *Rock Garden Quarterly*. Any other leftover books will be sold by a volunteer to a discount book seller.



## Got *Primula kisoana*?

From Pat Curran:

Greetings fellow ACNARGS members! Several years ago, I brought in all the fruits from my *Arisaema sikokianum* and gave them away at a meeting. I didn't realize then, of course, that I would never get any more fruit, and that the plants (which had been raised from seed by Anne Klingensmith -- thanks!) would gradually die off over the next few years. So I'm wondering if anyone has fruits or seedlings to spare. I have figured out a better spot where they may be more persistent, (less likelihood of hard frosts in spring), although advice on how best to keep them going would also be welcome!

Also, can anyone spare *Primula kisoana*, the white form?

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## People

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## Green Dragon Tales

Published eight times a year (Feb., March, April, May/June, July/Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov./Dec.). Submit articles by the fourth Friday of the month preceding publication to Craig Cramer: [cdcramer@gmail.com](mailto:cdcramer@gmail.com). Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be in October 2010.

