**IN THIS ISSUE :**

- June 23 Garden Tour itinerary
- Mini-plant Sale
- From the Chair
- Membership
- Seed Growing
- Garlic Mustard
- Southern Cayuga Garden Tour
- More Garden Tours
- Classifieds
- Upcoming ACNARGS Programs
- Calendar of other garden programs
- About Us: ACNARGS
- About NARGS National
- Photos of the Month: Anne Spiegel's Garden

Visit our blog: acnargs.blogspot.com

May/June 2018

JUNE 23 SYRACUSE GARDEN TOUR

Here's the itinerary for our day trip to the Syracuse area on June 23. We will visit 4 gardens and an optional 5th garden and nursery, as announced in our special edition May newsletter. Below are garden descriptions and the time schedule. If you are taking the tour please, RSVP to Sue Mann (sue.mann@sansurising.com). **Visit [google doc link here to access addresses](#)**. Each address is linked to a Google map.

9:00am Arrive promptly at Michael Brennan's garden in Pompey (note a LaFayette mailing address), south and east of Syracuse.
Parking on the road

While I'm sure much has changed, here's the description of his garden from our visit in 2011. The garden is named Pagoda Hill for the *Cornus alternifolia* (pagoda dogwoods) that proliferate on the eighteen-acre hilltop. Mown paths allow access through the varied terrain of meadow, woodland, hillside, and pond. Close to the house is a sixty-foot locust pergola for growing roses and clematis, bordered by peonies and iris. The brick-lined gravel path continues into a formal perennial garden backed by a thirty-foot hot-colored border. The path ends with a locust arbor surrounded by twenty-seven raised beds for vegetables and cut flowers. Connected to the house is a shadbush shrub border featuring chartreuse foliage and blue and white flowers.

10:00 Depart for Dianne Bordoni's Garden in Fayetteville
10:30 Arrive at Dianne Bordoni's

Parking: Do not park in Dianne's driveway or on the street. You may park in the neighbor's driveway across the street and when full, in the circular driveway at 63 Lyndon, parking on side closest to Dianne's house only so that the neighbors can still get in and out

Excerpts from Upstate Gardeners' Journal, November/December 2017 issue: "The gardens she has created and the plant collections she has assembled, with a focus on dwarf conifers, are world-class....Everywhere you look there is a harmonious vista....Because they are more work, Dianne is gradually scaling back on perennials. The ones she's keeping are more unusual....[or] plants with deep familial meaning" such as memorial trees planted, the pond, and peonies.

11:30 Depart for John Gilrein's Garden in Syracuse area

12:00 Arrive at John's in rural Syracuse; enjoy bring-your-own bag lunch; drinks provided and tour his gardens
Parking: in the driveway and the west side of the road (same side as the house)
Restroom available

John's garden statement: I've been gardening here 30 years. There's a rock garden, crevice garden, shade gardens with woodland plants and ferns, perennial gardens, a dwarf conifer garden in development, a vegetable garden, a boggy garden, a rain garden, a pond with water lilies, and an acre of partially restored forest. There is a great variety of tree species throughout including *Taxodium distichum* (bald cypress), *Thuja plicata* (western red cedar), *Quercus imbricata* (shingle oak), *Magnolia tripetala* (umbrella magnolia), *Acer circinnatum* (vine maple), *Asimina triloba* (pawpaw) and *Diospyros virginiana* (persimmon).

1:30pm Depart for Donna Kraft's garden in Tully area

2:00pm Arrive at Donna's to tour
Parking in driveway until full then on the road (but be sure to pull well off the road)
Restroom available

Donna's garden statement: Much has changed in this garden since our last NARGS visit some years ago. Here's Donna's garden statement with an updated description: Originally these gardens reflected Donna's love of collecting perennials but the landscape has evolved to reflect a passion for unique dwarf conifers and flowering shrubs. Features include a small stream with waterfalls, a woodland area, rock garden plants in tufa tumbles and troughs, pendulous conifers, striking perennial plant combinations and a collection of various types of peonies. The Kraft gardens welcome you with a serene feeling enhanced by the backdrop of beautiful Crooked Lake, one of the areas kettle lakes.

3:00pm Depart Donna's and return home OR

Proceed to Diana Smith/Topiary Gardens in Marcellus area

- 3:30pm Arrive at Topiary Gardens
 Parking preferably in the U-shaped drive with overflow on the road
 Enjoy Diana Smith's view garden with mature Japanese maples and her nursery specializing in Japanese maples, new and hard-to-find conifers, perennials, shrubs and trees. The nursery offers over 500 varieties of maples grown from grafts that are produced on site. <http://www.topiary-gardens.com>
 No restrooms available on-site
- 4:30pm Depart to return to your respective homes after a long, fun, inspiring, fulfilling day of viewing gardens!

JUNE 23 MINI-PLANT SALE

Carol Eichler, Newsletter Editor

If you're like me, you're still digging and dividing perennials after our plant sale. Those poor plants have no place to go usually except the compost pile...and that seems a shame. I thought, why not offer a mini-plant sale at our June 23 garden tour?

If you have plants to share, pot them up or bag up the clump and bring 'em along. We'll offer the sale at John's where we have some extra time built into the tour. Everything must go and will be priced to sell. There may even be some seedlings ready to grow on.

Whether we have a little or a lot to offer, the sale is on! This may even become a new tradition!

FROM THE CHAIR

John Gilrein, Chair

Finally it seems like spring is here to stay. When I initially wrote this article April 29, we were having snow flurries; it seems like winter did not want to end this year. I'm really glad now that we're having some spring-like weather that is neither too cold nor too hot.

It was a nice warm sunny day April 28 at Stonecrop Gardens in Cold Spring, NY, and well attended by our Chapter for a plant sale and garden viewing. Even if one doesn't intend on buying plants, it's a very worthwhile garden to visit, especially for viewing the spring woodland wildflowers and the alpine houses (greenhouses partly buried in the ground) full of interesting plants. Stonecrop also sells seed, so if they have a plant onsite you didn't see for sale, maybe you can grow it yourself. With luck some of the plants I bought will spread and be available for a future plant sale.

Please consider contributing some plants or time at our plant sale during the Garden Fair, the big annual plant sale at the Ithaca High School, which is on Sunday May 20. If you have never been to the sale, it's a great event, as there are many plant vendors present at a single location with everything from annuals and vegetables, to woodland

and native plants, and perennials and even a few rock garden plants. Exotic and unusual plants (excluding plants that are invasive) sell well, as well as plants that are in flower. Helping to sort, label, stock, and sell the plants is always a fun event and appreciated.

We have a great garden tour coming up in June that is always a fun event. Each garden highlighted on the tour is a personal expression of its owner and each is very different. It's a great way to talk to gardeners, learn something new, and see some different plants. I've been on about 8 or 9 of our garden tours through the years and it's always a pleasant experience – plus you will see that you are not the only one with a weed or 2 in the garden!

I did hear recently that people might be interested in additional garden tours. Many of us in the chapter (though not everyone) are open to having more impromptu garden tours (Harold was almost famous for that, possibly due to handing out plants during his tours). If you know you'll be in the area, why not call ahead and find out if you can get a visit a Chapter member's garden. There are also a number of other garden tours scheduled in the area; refer to the calendar of gardening events for dates and places. *[Note: the member directory indicates which members are willing to open their garden to visitors]*

Many of you gardeners out there might relate to my simple joy a few weeks ago. I've been growing Cyclamen outdoors for years (*coum*, *hederifolium*, *purpurascens*, and very recently a few others). I found 2 tiny seedlings, not sown by me, likely sown by ants. Cyclamen seeds have elaiosomes (fatty bits attached to the seed) that attract ants, who then move the seed. I just hope I can keep them growing until they're big enough to move. I probably won't know what species they are until they're big enough to develop an adult leaf shape (*coum* has round leaves, *hederifolium* has ivy shaped leaves). Cyclamen, especially *coum* and *hederifolium* are especially easy care plants, all they need are good drainage, partial shade, and not to be overrun with competition from taller perennials (competition from tree roots is fine, as the cyclamen are dormant when the tree roots are taking in summer moisture).

John Gilrein, Chair

YOUR 2018 MEMBERSHIP: HAVE YOU RENEWED?

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

Please welcome 2 new members: Sheila Stone from Ithaca and Cathy Horvath from Groton via Rochester. Both joined at our April meeting.

SEED GROWING CHALLENGES

Carol Eichler, Newsletter Editor

Are you ready, gardeners, to challenge yourself...to take your gardening to the next level? Whether a rock gardener or not, you really should try growing plants from seed...if for no other reason than to be able to say (and experience the admiration from others), "See that beautiful plant in flower over there? I grew it myself from seed!" For

the thrifty gardener, growing from seed is a huge money saver. While it can seem like a labor of love/patience, it need not be. A number of seedlings will bloom in the 2nd year, while some even bloom in their 1st year.

While there weren't many seedlings this year for our April exchange – the delayed spring weather being one of the causes (and the noticeable absence of Harold Peachey's contributions), we expanded the event this year to include a seed exchange. It was your chance to try your hand at growing plants from seed, and especially rock garden plants because they are not readily available for purchase locally. Not only were seeds supplied (from various exchanges - NARGS, Ontario Rock Garden and Native Plants and from individual's collected seed), but also pots, a gritty potting mix, glassine envelopes, and labels. In other words, everything you would need to get started.

Here are some planting and growing suggestions. Consider sowing these seeds atop moistened growing medium. Unless the seed is large-ish, many people suggest there's no need to bury them. Besides this provides for those seeds that require light to germinate. Gently water the seeds in, and place outdoors for mother nature to supply light. In theory the seed will germinate when the outdoors meets the proper requirements - that is, when the soil is warm enough. But do water as needed to keep the surface moist and presumably, keep the seeds happy.

The Ontario Chapter suggests that if you do not get germination with 3 months, you might try a cold treatment for 1-2 months. At this time of year, since you are starting these seeds at what might be considered late-in-the-season, chilling the seed, also called stratification, is a way to supply the necessary cold period for those seeds that require it.

Since you asked about my potting mix formula I present it here – realizing there are many possibilities. I choose only three ingredients that together holds moisture, won't compact, and yet provides good drainage, is accessible locally and has worked for me: Earlybird's potting mix, fine vermiculite and starter chicken grit – all in equal proportions.

Earlybird, is a local grower-nursery that sells the mix they use made by Sungro Horticulture. I especially like this mix because it is specialized for seedlings and does not include Perlite, which I find rises to the surface and is "too large" as compared to the size of the often tiny seedlings that emerge. For fine A1 vermiculite Agway was willing to special order it for me (in a ginormous bag) and it was cheap. Lastly, for grit I use Gran-U-Grit, a crushed granite, available from the feed store side of Agway. It comes in 50-pound bags but can be custom packaged in any amount you want. You'll use more than you think because its volume is dense. Grit is useful, as well, as a top dressing for troughs holding tiny gems. While I haven't tested the pH of this mix, I would expect it to test toward the alkaline side, much preferred by many rock garden plants.

As for germination success, I play the odds by seeding enough genera to see some success. As a rule 1/3 to 1/2 of the pots seeded will germinate. Of these I may get 20 seedlings from one pot, while another pot may yield a precious handful of babies. Some pots just sit there while I anxiously check them day-by-day for nothing. But why dwell on the duds when I've got 20 seedlings to transplant. And what am I going to do with all of them?!

Germination is just the beginning. The next challenges? To successfully transplant and to grow on to flower. There are many ways to kill the plants at every step – but then why dwell on the negative? Remember to play the odds and focus on the positive. I still have those 20 seedlings raring to go.

For more information on seed starting visit the newsletter archives (acnargs.org) March 2017, February 2015 issues of Green Dragon.

GARLIC MUSTARD : AN INVASIVE PLANT CONUNDRUM

To pull or not to pull...that is the question. According to Dr. Bernd Blossey, Associate Professor in Cornell's Department of Natural Resources, whose research focuses on invasive plants, you may be better off leaving the garlic mustard in place and let nature take its course. He states, "All plants produce root exudates (species specific chemical profiles) that affect the microbial communities in the root zone, and sometimes other plants (through allelopathy).

"Our experience is that where garlic mustard has been, native plant species return just fine and that includes all spring ephemerals like trilliums, cohosh, trout lilies, mayapples, true and false solomon's seal, geraniums, hepaticas and many more. Sometimes it appears they are even bigger but that could also be because garlic mustard often occurs in the most fertile places with good moisture. There is only one caveat, deer populations need to be low so that these native plants have a chance to grow, flower and reproduce."

Blossey continues, "Worry less about garlic mustard, except when the very first plants show up in isolated areas. Your trampling to pull the plants will be more damaging. And in the dense patches, your removal [I assume pulling] will set back the response of the soil microbial community. The suppressive effect (called negative soil feedback) only occurs, when garlic mustard is not removed. If you remove it, you prevent the ability of the soil microbial community that negative affects garlic mustard to build up (you remove its food source). This suppressive effect may be realized 5-10 years after initial invasion by garlic mustard, so you need some patience. But it appears permanent. The big job is to protect the native plants from the deer!"

And a comment from Deb Grantham, Assistant Director for Environment and Natural Resources for Cornell Cooperative Extension, "I think the only point in pulling [garlic mustard] is if you are going to put something else in its place. Otherwise, focus on others. And mostly, I think that removal of invasive plants should be accompanied by putting something else there."

SOUTHERN CAYUGA GARDEN CLUB TOUR JUNE 10

George Fearon

Note the June 10 fundraiser for Southern Cayuga Garden Club, its 29th Garden Tour .1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Visit seven outstanding gardens in the Union Springs area

between the hours of 1 and 5pm. Tickets are \$10 and will be sold at the Gazebo on State Route 90 in downtown Union Springs.

My yard is one of the seven and has had many changes and additions made since being on the tour several years ago.

MORE GARDENS WORTH VISITING

Quinte Botanical Gardens, from Deanna Groves:

“Just a note to let you know about a new botanical garden located in Southern Ontario, Canada. The Quinte Botanical Gardens opened last year and several U.S. garden enthusiasts (and travelling tourists) have enjoyed visiting. Nine years in the planning, we’ve worked hard to create this amazing project.”

From their website: “Enjoy 6 acres of unique garden displays with extraordinary plant combinations....Some of the gardens include a Bee, Bird & Butterfly Garden, an Oriental Garden, and a romantic Rose Garden. Our Colour Wheel Garden is the largest in the world, and an extraordinary experience. Each of the 8 “pie” sections is meticulously designed to create monochromatic displays.” Visit <http://www.qbgardens.ca/>

Whistling Gardens, mentioned by Anna Legatt, our April speaker: From their website: “We are now home to North America's largest public Peony Collection! Our fall planting additions introduce a total assortment of over 1,000+ varieties just in time to mark Canada's 150th Anniversary!

“The Conifer Collection now surpasses 2,300 different species, hybrids and cultivars. This collection is the largest in North America on public display. Many specimens in the collection are the only ones in the country, and also features one of the rarest plants in the world – Baishan Fir (*Abies beshanzuensis*). Only 3 wild specimens remain!!”
<http://www.whistlinggardens.ca/index.php>

HAVE SOME/WANT SOME CLASSIFIEDS

A new monthly feature to facilitate your gardening wants and needs. Do you have too many large pots? Do you want some small pots? Do you have too many divisions (that will otherwise go into the compost)? Are you seeking a certain plant? The idea is to use this newsletter to express your “haves” to give away and “wants” for any items you are seeking. To post a request contact Carol Eichler at carolithaca@gmail.com.

HAVE:

Clay pots of various small-ish sizes, in storage at Tompkins Cooperative Extension greenhouse, 615 Willow Avenue. Help yourself.

Sturdy Styrofoam boxes ideal to use as molds for building hypertufa troughs. Rosemarie Parker, gardener.parker@gmail.com

WANT:

Plastic pots – small, deep pots and quart sizes especially. Square rather than round are preferred. Carol Eichler, carolithaca@gmail.com

UPCOMING 2018 ACNARGS PROGRAMS

Mark your calendars! Unless otherwise specified, all local events start with a brown bag lunch at noon with the program following at 1 pm, and take place at the renovated Whetzel Room, 404 Plant Science Building, 236 Tower Road, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

July 6-8: “Where Alpines Meet the Sea,” NARGS Annual Meeting in St. John’s Newfoundland, Optional post-conference trip: July 9 – 15. Info here: [Newfoundland Meeting & Post-Conference Tour](#).

August 18: Members’ Only Plant Sale and Annual Picnic, Cass Park Picnic Pavilion, Route 89, adjacent to the Ithaca Children’s Garden, across from the Cayuga Inlet and Waterfront Trail and site of the trailhead to the Black Diamond Trail. No admission fee.

May 3-5, 2019: “Rooted in Diversity,” NARGS Study Weekend in the Philadelphia area, sponsored by Delaware Valley Chapter NARGS. More details to follow.

May 8-11, 2021: International Rock Gardening Conference, Perth Scotland. Start saving your pennies.

As we learn more details of these meetings they will be included in future newsletters, our blog, acnargs.blogspot.com, and our Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/acnargs>.

CALENDAR OF SELECT GARDEN EVENTS

To have a garden event in your area listed send all pertinent information to Carol Eichler at carolithaca@gmail.com

May 26, 27: Linwood Gardens Tree Peony Festival. Also June 2, 3.
<http://www.linwoodgardens.org/>

June 10: Southern Cayuga Garden Club Tour, Union Springs area. (see article)

June 29 & 30: Plastic Garden Container/Pot Swap from 9 am - 6 pm
Bring plastic pots, trays and cell packs to Cooperative Extension (615 Willow Av, Ithaca) and take what you need with you! No broken pots or hanging baskets, please.

July 7: Open Days in Tompkins County. Four gardens open 10-4. Admission charged. Fundraiser for Tompkins County Community Beautification Program. More info when available at <https://www.gardenconservancy.org/open-days/open-days-schedule>

July 8: Fall Creek Garden Tour.

July 14: Dryden Garden and Art Tour. Info when available

<http://drydenbeautification.weebly.com/>

Cooperative Extension Horticulture Programs, located at 615 Willow Av., Ithaca. 607-272-2292. Unless otherwise stated, classes require pre-registration and have a self-determining sliding fee scale. More info at www.ccetompkins.org

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society Meetings from 7-8:30pm at the Ithaca Unitarian Church annex (corner of Buffalo & Aurora, enter side door on Buffalo St. & up the stairs). More info at www.FLNPS.org. Plus FLNPS Walks meeting at different times and locations.

Cornell Botanic Gardens (formerly Cornell Plantations) calendar of events visit: [CBG Calendar](#).

ABOUT US – ACNARGS

We are an all-volunteer organization and one of thirty-eight NARGS affiliated chapters active in North America. Our annual Chapter activities include 6 program-speaker meetings, the *Green Dragon* newsletter, web and Facebook pages, garden visits, overnight garden trips, hands-on workshops, and 3 plant sales a year. Our meetings are informal, friendly gatherings that provide a wealth of information and offer a source for unusual plants, plus the opportunity to be inspired by other gardeners. The public is always welcome.

Chapter membership starts at \$15 a year based on the calendar year. Membership includes these benefits: newsletter sent to you electronically (or option by mail for an extra fee), opportunity to travel on our planned overnight garden trips, annual membership directory, and plant sale discounts and member only sales, including Plant-of-the-Month sales. Download a membership form here: <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf>.

ABOUT NARGS NATIONAL

NARGS National is our parent organization: We encourage you to join (online at www.nargs.org) for only \$40 a year. Benefits include a seed exchange, a quarterly publication, and an on-line web site featuring an archive of past publications, a chat forum and a horticultural encyclopedia. NARGS National also conducts winter study weekends and holds its Annual Meeting in interesting places where attendees have the opportunity to visit gardens, and take field trips, often to alpine areas, as well as hear talks by outstanding plants people from around the world. More recently, NARGS is offering botanical tours each year, both within the US and abroad.

2018 BOARD MEMBERS AND CONTACTS

If you want to volunteer, we'd love to hear from you!

Chair: John Gilrein, basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu

Program: Terry Humphries, terryehumphries@gmail.com

Program Committee Members: **Could this be you?**

Secretary: Mary Stauble, mes2@cornell.edu

Treasurer: BZ Marranca, mmm10@cornell.edu

Plant Sales Chair: David Mitchell, dwm23@cornell.edu. **Seeking a Co-Chair to work alongside David...Why not you?**

Plant Sales Committee Members: Michael Loos, BZ Marranca, Carol Eichler

Plant of the Month: Marlene Kobre, mkobre@ithaca.edu

Membership: Mary Stauble, mes2@cornell.edu

New Member Hospitality: Nari Mistry, nbm2@cornell.edu

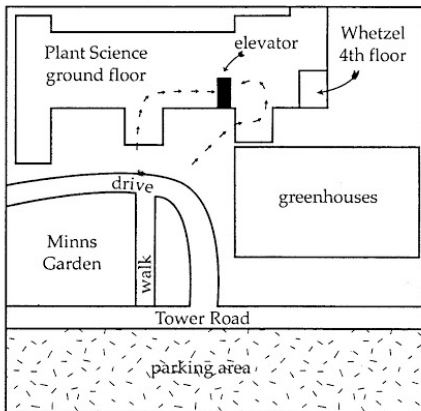
Newsletter Editor: Carol Eichler carolithaca@gmail.com

Calendar: Pat Curran, pc21@cornell.edu

Webmaster, Program Tech: Craig Cramer, cdcramer@gmail.com

GREEN DRAGON TALES

Published eight times a year (Jan/Feb., March, April, May/June, July/Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov./Dec.). Submit articles by the fourth Friday of the month preceding publication to Carol Eichler, carolithaca@gmail.com. Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be our July/August 2018 issue coming out in early August. The newsletter is always posted and printable each month on our website: www.acnargs.org



Map: Whetzel Room, Room 404 Plant Science Building, 236 Tower Rd., Cornell campus

PHOTOS OF THE MONTH: ANNE SPIEGEL'S GARDEN

(See next page)



Anne Spiegel & Her Rock Garden

