**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- August 18: Picnic and Plant Sale
- Upcoming Programs
- From the Chair
- Membership
- Recap of our June garden Tour
- Name That Fern
- Old House Journal Feature
- Wurster Garden Update
- Open House at Trial Gardens
- CBG Volunteer Opportunity
- Upcoming ACNARGS Programs
- Calendar of other garden programs
- About Us: ACNARGS
- About NARGS National
- Photos of the Month: Syracuse area gardens

Visit our blog: [acnargs.blogspot.com](http://acnargs.blogspot.com)

July/August 2018

## **AUGUST 18: PICNIC! PLANT SALE! FUN!**

*David Mitchell, Plant Sales Coordinator*

Please think about potting up plants now for our annual member sale August 18th. This is your opportunity to share some of your select plants (even if you can only spare one division) where you can be sure they'll be nurtured and appreciated. Please label them in advance, as this will facilitate set-up.

We'll have a place set aside for anyone wishing to donate plants for the Wurster Garden refurbishment (see Wurster article in this issue). With the scale of that garden, plants up to 20 inches in height can be accommodated as well as shorter buns and mats. Some plant suggestions include dianthus, campanulas, saxifragas, onosma, alliums, penstemons, and mossy phlox (*Phlox subulata*).

Plans are set for this year's members-only plant sale to be held at the picnic shelter at Cass Park. There is no admission fee and there is a large parking lot nearby. Directions are to be found at the end of this article. Here's the schedule

- 10:00 a.m. Arrive, get your plant sale number and help with sale set-up; bring a dish-to-pass. Note there is no electricity available.
- 11:00 a.m. (approximately) Plant sale begins
- 12:00 noon Lunch and optional cook-out. Please bring your own service. Beverages will be supplied. We'll fire up the grill for those who want to bring grillables.
- Afterwards, clean-up with options to visit the Children's Garden next door, hike the Waterfront Trail (across the street following the Inlet, leading to Ithaca Farmers Market and ends at Steward Park) or hike a portion of the Black

Diamond Trail which begins at the far end of Cass Park and goes all the way to Taughannock State Park (optional)

As in past years, we'll very democratically allow those who arrive first to get "first dibs" at purchases. So it pays to arrive early and sign in. All members are welcome, whether you bring plants to sell or not. This sale has become an important revenue stream for the Chapter and enables us to bring knowledgeable out-of-town speakers.

For the treasured and rare plants, we will have a silent auction table. Note this is our only members-only sale and we should have some real gems (last year there was a number of rock garden plants and they were a big hit). You may become a 2018 member at the meeting for \$15 (\$20 for a household). It's still a great value since we have half of our program year ahead of us.

We have a great set-up for the sale with options to contend with whatever weather mother nature throws at us – tables under a roof that can be moved outdoors (as long as we move them back at day's end).

All in all, look forward to a good time with plenty of plants and food for everyone!

Our meeting will be held at the picnic pavilion at Cass Park next to the Ithaca Children's Garden. There is no address for the pavilion since there is no mailbox but the Children's Garden address is 121 Turtle Lane. The garden has good signage and the pavilion is just past the garden on the same side, along the Inlet on Rt. 89 on the left side of the road, still in the city of Ithaca. There is ample parking nearby as well. Hopefully you will have a chance to meander over to the Children's Garden; it's got some pretty neat stuff. Note: there is no on-site electricity at the pavilion.

## **AND UPCOMING PROGRAMS...**

With half our program year ahead of us, here are the programs for the remainder of 2018. Quite a lot to look forward to!

September 15: Bonnie Gale: Willow Fences & Other Natural Structures. Extended meeting (plan for 2-3 hours). We will meet at Cooperative Extension (615 Willow Av, Ithaca) for a presentation plus hands on demonstration.

October 20: Julia Goren, Education Director for the Adirondack Mountain Club. New York State has approximately 40 acres of alpine environment, most of them located in the high peaks of the Adirondacks. Here's our opportunity to learn about the plants that grow there and what is being done to preserve them in this fragile environment.

November 10: Evelyn Lee, Butternut Gardens, LLC (formerly with Oliver's Nursery in Fairfield, CT.) Behind the Scenes at a Flower Farm. This will be our last meeting of the 2018. Both October and November meetings are back at the Whetzel Room on the Cornell campus.

## FROM THE CHAIR

After weeks with very little rain and a parched lawn, we have had about 3 inches of sorely needed rain here in the last 2 days (I'm writing this on July 25). I hope you have also been on the receiving end of this week's precipitation. It provided much needed moisture and a very welcome break from the daily watering chores (for too many plants in pots and seedlings). It will also give me several days off from watering the thirsty vegetable garden.

Thinking of August and our annual picnic, I hope you're thinking about plants to donate for our plant sale. All kinds of plants can be donated from perennials to rock garden plants, trees and shrubs, to houseplants and tender outdoor plants. Plants will look perkier and sell better when they've had a few weeks to adjust to their new home in a pot, so try to get your potting done ASAP if you haven't already done so. It's also helpful to bring boxes, flats, or other containers to transport your purchases.

Garden rehab is a challenging endeavor that we're facing with the Wurster Garden. Some of us have done weeding there this spring/summer, and we are planning on installing some new plants in the garden. It's a bit of a tough environment, as it does not get routine watering, so the plants have to be tough. September is an ideal time to plant, when the air temperature is cooler, the sun is lower in the sky, and it is not as dry as summer. So if you have any rock garden plants that are available to share, get in touch with David, Carol, or me or plan to set some aside to donate when we meet at our August picnic. I for one have a few good-sized seedlings from my successful NARGS seed germination to donate for Wurster.

I'm facing a fair amount of garden rehab myself with my home gardens. Over time, some plants like bleeding hearts (*Lamprocapnos spectabilis*) spread fairly aggressively. Those bleeding hearts look lovely in May, when they're at the height of their blooming, even when there are a few too many of them. By July, they have grown tall, the leaves and stems are yellowing or brown, and they're looking pretty ratty. One really gets a sense of how extensive a plant like that is when there are a few dozen to cut down to tidy up the garden!

Then there are situations in which conditions have changed and the original plants are no longer very happy. I have a mophead hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) on the south side of the house that used to be shaded at the height of the day by a tall maple tree. The maple is no longer there, the hydrangea is in full sun and it was sulking through June and July, as it likes to be well watered. On top of that, it was an old variety that only bloomed on old wood, so it was time to compost it.

It's not easy for me to dispatch plants to their hereafter, but it really is good to resolve problem plants. I have a new hydrangea that will bloom on new wood and will get planted in a less sunny exposure. Some of my garden rehab will get done this year. Now if only my garden tasks would get done as fast as the planning!

John Gilrein, Chair

## A GOOD TIME TO RENEW!

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

Please welcome new member Barbara Vartanian from Greene, NY.

You must be renewed for 2018 to participate in the members' only plant sale at our August picnic. Dues are \$15 for individuals, \$20 for a household and you may join or renew at the August meeting. Check my email announcement of the newsletter link for your membership status.

The renewal form is at <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf> and can be printed out and completed or there will be forms at the picnic. Contact Mary Stauble at [mes2@cornell.edu](mailto:mes2@cornell.edu) if you have any questions.

*To our Chapter members: A membership directory is published electronically every year in September and accompanies the September newsletter as an attachment. For those who receive a paper copy of the Green Dragon, you will be mailed a printed directory. To respect our members' privacy we do not post the directory online.*

## AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL

Our day trip to tour Syracuse area gardens on June 23<sup>rd</sup> was a smashing success all around. We escaped the rain that threatened to dampen our day but not our spirits and saw some amazing gardens! It was a full day indeed with a total of 5 gardens visited and a shopping opportunity too. Many thanks to Michael Brennan, Dianne Bordoni and Donna Kraft (both of whom had just returned from the American Conifer Society National Conference), John Gilrein who likewise had just returned from a trip to Croatia, and to Diana Smith of Topiary Gardens for opening their gardens and for all the behind-the-scenes preparation involved with hosting us..

We also held a mini-plant sale at John's which brought in \$58 for the Chapter. Will this become a new tradition? Thanks to those who donated and purchased plants. A collage of photos from the day is included at the end of this newsletter.

## NAME THAT FERN

Rosemarie Parker

I consulted Robert Wesley and he has confirmed that the creeping fern at Donna Kraft's garden, which a number of us brought home, is the native oak fern, *Gymnocarpium dryopteris*. May it prosper so we can continue the giving to others. (Aren't I overly optimistic?)

## OLD HOUSE JOURNAL FEATURES STEVE'S NEW GARDEN!

About the time this newsletter is distributed the August issue of *Old House Journal* should be hitting the newstands. You just might want to grab a copy because...there's a wonderful illustrated article of Steve Whitesell's garden. I say it is a new garden because you remember his house and garden were flooded in 2011, thanks to Hurricane Irene. It necessitated emergency renovation of the house and for the garden...a complete do-over. And what a garden! The photos in the article will have to suffice until I get a chance to visit.

## WURSTER GARDEN UPDATE

We are all so busy with our gardens...and with life in general that it's hard to schedule work time at our Wurster Rock Garden. Rock gardens tend to be low maintenance but we've been pushing the limit a bit. Thanks to some individual efforts the garden has been holding its own but was desperately in need of a concentrated effort. A work day was scheduled on July 19. Many thanks to Wendy Sherman who came all the way from Syracuse that day! And to David Mitchell, John Gilrein and, Carol Eichler for their individual efforts. If others have helped, let me know (Carol) and my apologies for any omissions.

Here's a little history about the garden. The Wurster Garden was constructed by members of our Chapter in 2000-2001 and planted in the spring of 2001 with funds from the Al Wurster Memorial Fund, a Norman Singer grant from NARGS, and Chapter funds. A Committee of our membership met multiple times to plan the garden and even more volunteers were involved with implementing the plan. The design is intended to be educational since it incorporates several types of rock garden construction: wall, traditional terraced "English style", crevice, Czech crevice (using large stones), sand, and wall as well as a bog garden at the very top. Robin Bell is largely credited with the completed design. It is located on the property of Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County at 615 Willow Avenue on the Dey Street side. Our Chapter has maintained the garden ever since with supplemental plants added yearly from mail order nurseries, member donations and often from unsold plant-of-the-month plants.



Wurster in bloom in May 2017.

We get many compliments.

Since planting the garden, we have learned a lot – the good, the bad, and the ugly. First the good: the garden has good bones. There have been no structural issues. However we had designed the bog with rivulets flowing to the lily pond below. We no longer have electrical access so this is no longer an option. Secondly the garden is absolutely spectacular in late May with so many flowers in bloom. We wish more people were aware of its existence and that it were visited by more people. Many people who come to Extension are unaware of the vacant lot where not just this garden but others exist. We should perhaps be publicizing the garden more.

And the challenges? We need to think about adding plants that will flower later for greater seasonal interest. The site is very sunny which is not to the liking of many rock garden plants. Add to that the issue of watering which, due to the fact we are all volunteers, does not happen on a regular basis. That tends to translate to planting before May when we can generally expect cooler temperatures and regular rains to settle the plants in. We have lost many plants due to the challenges of the site. Tiny buns get lost to larger plants and need a designated area if they are to be used at all. The crevice garden has become a meadow which was not our original intent. People like to climb on the rocks! – a big no-no – and we see unintentional damage to the garden due to its public nature.

Now the thugs are taking over. And we realize it is time for a major overhaul starting this fall. We are calling upon you, our membership, to consider coming to a work session or two. We also need plant donations and what better time to start than at our August sale. A special table will be set aside at the August member sale for you to make one or more plant donations.

You should contact David Mitchell if you are willing to be part of the Wurster rejuvenation project. He maintains a list of people who have indicated interest and sets up work sessions. Stay tuned.

Editor's Note: Here's a big shout out to David Mitchell who, for many years, has shouldered the lion's share of oversight of our Wurster Memorial Rock Garden. Thank you!

## **BLUEGRASS LANE OPEN HOUSE**

Bluegrass Lane Turf and Landscape Research Center, Cornell Floriculture and Cornell Botanic Gardens invite you to an open house at 232 Bluegrass Lane, Ithaca, NY 14853 (off Warren Rd., near Robert Trent Jones Golf Course, follow signs for parking)

This event is open to the public. Bring your friends and family on Saturday, August 11 from 9 am to 2 pm. Please note that these are research plots; no picking flowers or taking cuttings, please! Restroom facilities are limited.

Come and see:

- Annual and perennial plant trials
- Pollinator garden
- Grafted tomatoes
- Planting media trials
- Containers planted by the Botanic Gardens' amazing gardeners!

Staff will be available to answer questions on what we do.

If you have questions or need special accommodations please contact Tara Reed [tl2@cornell.edu](mailto:tl2@cornell.edu) or 607-592-5620

## AND ANOTHER ROCK GARDEN LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

Emily Detrick, Horticulturist, Cornell Botanic Gardens

Cornell Botanic Gardens is beginning a revitalization project for the Heasley Rock Garden. The garden, dedicated in 1981 in honor of Walter C. Heasley, Jr., was originally designed as a textbook garden to illustrate various habitats in the alpine environment. Plants were selected to represent communities typical of rock-crevice, scree, moraine, and alpine meadow habitats. The specimens are either true alpine plants or demonstrate growth habits of adaptations found in alpine plants.



From L to R: Mary, Linda, & Marlene at work at the Heasley Rock Garden

Thanks to the enthusiasm and work of dedicated NARGS member volunteers Marlene Kobre, Mary Squyres, and Linda Uhl, along with staff horticulturist Emily Detrick, the garden is being maintained and rejuvenated. We are especially excited for this revitalization project in advance of the 2020 national NARGS conference in Ithaca.

The Botanic Gardens is currently seeking rock garden plant and seed donations of known provenance, as well as volunteers to help with garden maintenance.

If you are interested in volunteering your time to work in the garden, please contact Kevin Moss at [km274@cornell.edu](mailto:km274@cornell.edu).

If you are interested in donating divisions, plants, or seeds from your own collections to the Heasley Rock Garden, please email Emily ([efd46@cornell.edu](mailto:efd46@cornell.edu)) and Irene Lekstutis ([iml1@cornell.edu](mailto:iml1@cornell.edu)) and include:

- Botanical name(s)
- Quantity
- Provenance data (original source of plants or seeds)

## 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.*

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

September 15: Bonnie Gale: Willow Fences & Other Natural Structures. Extended Cooperative Extension (615 Willow Av, Ithaca) for a presentation plus hands on demonstration.

October 20: Julia Goren, Education Director for the Adirondack Mountain Club.

November 10: Evelyn Lee, Butternut Gardens, LLC (formerly with Oliver's Nursery in Fairfield, CT.) Behind the Scenes at a Flower Farm.

May 3-5, 2019: "Rooted in Diversity," NARGS Study Weekend at the Sheraton Great Valley Hotel in Frazer a suburb of Philadelphia, sponsored by Delaware Valley Chapter NARGS. More information in the fall issue of the NARGS *Rock Garden Quarterly*.

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](http://acnargs.blogspot.com), and our Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/acnargs>.

## HAVE SOME/WANT SOME

I seem to be the only one using this space to list my haves and wants. It's working for me as I can say that my listings have resulted in my "Wants" being fulfilled. So please think about using this classified space for your own 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, newsletter editor at [carolithaca@gmail.com](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com).

### HAVE:

Clay pots of various small-ish sizes, in storage at Tompkins Cooperative Extension greenhouse, 615 Willow Avenue. Help yourself. (I don't know if they are still there)

### WANT:

Plastic "woven" berry baskets. Carol Eichler, [carolithaca@gmail.com](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com)

## 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](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto:basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu)

Program: Terry Humphries, [terryehumphries@gmail.com](mailto:terryehumphries@gmail.com)

Program Committee Members: Could this be you?

Secretary: Mary Stauble, [mes2@cornell.edu](mailto:mes2@cornell.edu)

Treasurer: BZ Marranca, [mmm10@cornell.edu](mailto:mmm10@cornell.edu)

Plant Sales Chair: David Mitchell, [dwm23@cornell.edu](mailto:dwm23@cornell.edu). Seeking a Co-Chair for 2018 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](mailto:mkobre@ithaca.edu)

Membership: Mary Stauble, [mes2@cornell.edu](mailto:mes2@cornell.edu)

New Member Hospitality: Nari Mistry, [nbm2@cornell.edu](mailto:nbm2@cornell.edu)

Newsletter Editor: Carol Eichler [carolithaca@gmail.com](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com)

Calendar: Pat Curran, [pc21@cornell.edu](mailto:pc21@cornell.edu)

Webmaster, Program Tech: Craig Cramer, [cdcramer@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com). Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be our

September 2018 issue. The newsletter is always posted and printable each month on our website: [www.acnargs.org](http://www.acnargs.org)

## PHOTOS OF THE MONTH: MEMORIES OF JUNE GARDENS

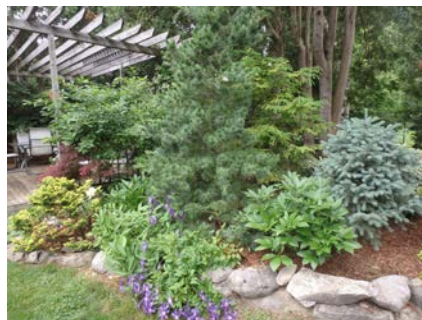
### Memories of June Gardens



Michael Brennan's Garden and "the group"



Dianne Bordoni's Garden





John Gilrein's  
Garden



Diana Smith's Garden and Topiary  
Gardens Nursery





Donna Kraft's Garden

