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November 2020

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**NOVEMBER 14: PROFESSOR KEVIN NIXON VIA ZOOM**

*Terry Humphries, Program Chair*



**Cushion Steppe and Alpine Zone Flora of Patagonia**

Saturday November 14, 2020

Note this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of November

1:00 PM

Via Zoom: Invite will arrive in your email

For this program, Dr. Nixon will present on Patagonia Flora, emphasizing the cushion, steppe, and alpine zone plants that he feels would be of particular of particular interest to our group.

Professor Nixon teaches Cornell graduate and under graduate students and conducts research on a wide variety of topics related to plant biology. He has particular interest in plant systematics, reconstructing the evolutionary history of plant life. He has developed an online identification herbarium, and is a world-renowned taxonomist.



Dr. Kevin Nixon

Although his research on theories of phylogenetic analysis and molecular diagnostics sound very intense, he feels strongly that teaching is an important aspect of maintaining an active and vigorous research program. His focus in teaching has been on graduate courses in advanced Plant Systematics. For the last ten years he has taught an undergraduate course entitled "*Global Vegetation and Plant Biodiversity*" intended for students with a minimal botanical background. This course emphasizes the factors controlling the distribution of vegetation and addresses issues of plant biodiversity from the context of climate and human disturbance. Associated with this course is an optional field course, which spends three weeks in Patagonia studying vegetation. He and his students visit a diverse set of ecosystems in southern Chile and Argentina while learning to identify dominant species, collect and press herbarium specimens, and perform analysis on flora density.

Based on responses from students, many consider this trip to be the most significant aspect of their Cornell education.

After his talk, we will hold a short meeting to let you know our plans for the rest of the year and the months to come in our covid-19 world. We are thinking of creative ways to keep in touch.

Join us for this meeting from the convenience of your own home. You will be receiving an invitation to register for this meeting. Once you register be sure to mark you calendar now and don't forget! We may even try recording this presentation, with permission from Dr. Nixon.

## **FROM THE CHAIR: SEED EXCHANGE PLEASE HELP!**

*John Gilrein, Chair*

The Adirondack Chapter is one of the many chapters that sorts and packages seed for the annual NARGS Seed Exchange, This involves portioning seed into individual envelopes, sealing the envelopes, and labeling them with the labels provided. Normally we do this in a congregate setting on a Saturday in December; the Ken Post Lab classroom at Cornell has been our go to site. Of course with the pandemic still going on, our usual venue is not available, and we won't be gathering as a group to do the sorting. The Seed Exchange will still be happening, and we'll be doing the work in our own homes.

We're planning to do a seed packaging meeting on Saturday December 12, 2020 via Zoom from 10 AM to 1 PM. If you're willing to help package seeds, you can join the Zoom meeting on this day OR you can sort the seeds any other time you have at home. The process is not complicated; seeds will be sent to your home and they just need to be mailed back to me once the process is completed. Required supplies, like the envelopes, labels, and adhesive are provided along with the seeds. And we will cover return postage cost. We're due to get 100 taxa from NARGS (one taxa would be seeds of 1 species or 1 variety) and would plan to give each volunteer 10 taxa or fewer. Alternately, you can pick up seeds from one of our central distribution point coordinators which will be David W. Mitchell [dwm23@cornell.edu] in downtown Ithaca; Carol Eichler [carolithaca@gmail.com] in Town of Ulysses and me [jgilrein@twcny.rr.com] in South Onondaga/Syracuse.

I can send you the instructions for the process and you can then consult with one of the coordinators about the process for clarification. The sorting needs to be done in the first few weeks of December and the seeds returned to me via mail or delivered to one of the coordinators (above) at their home.

This is critical process that allow many people to receive seed from the NARGS Seed Ex. Even if you don't participate in the Seed Exchange, our chapter benefits, and plants raised from NARGS seed end up in our plant sales. And if you participate in seed sorting, you get a benefit of being allowed to order an additional 10 packets of seed from NARGS!

#### Seed Sorting Timeline December 12 – via Zoom:

10 AM - review of the NARGS seed packaging process.

10:30 AM – 1 PM - informal stay-safely-at home online conversations while we individually sort seeds.

If you can volunteer to help with this, please email me at: jgilrein@twcny.rr.com. We hope you can help, and you can do this without even leaving home!

## **WHITE PINE CAMP : A HISTORIC ROCK GARDEN**

*John Gilrein*

Several years ago (2007 or 2008), the Adirondack Chapter took on a project of restoring plantings at the historic Frederick Heutte Memorial Rock Garden at White Pine Camp. White Pine Camp is a private resort and former Great Camp on Osgood Pond, located in Paul Smiths, NY.

The Heutte Rock Garden, designed by in-house gardener Frederick Heutte was his crown achievement among the gardens at the Camp. It was installed in the early 1920's. Over the years and a succession of owners, the garden was no longer maintained. Nature took its course over 40+ years of neglect. Restoration involved a lot of work by the owners first locating the garden, reclaiming it from the forest that had overtaken it (trees, forest duff, and an aggressive moss), and resetting the stone.





Tea House and Half-moon Bridge, another Heutte installation, on Osgood Pond at White Pine Camp. Check out their website for more photos ([whitepinecamp.com](http://whitepinecamp.com))

Once ready for planting, Dick and Mary George, two of the consortium of owners living in Ithaca, turned to the Chapter for more extensive gardening experience for help. Originally this was a Chapter-affiliated project but has since become an endeavor undertaken by enthusiastic and die-hard rock gardeners (who I will call the volunteers). The driving force behind a lot of the work at the garden has been Carol Eichler.

There were no records kept of the plants that were grown there, which gave us an open palette for experimenting with what would survive under the harsh conditions of an Adirondack winter.

The garden is set in a space, like a room, roughly 100' x 100', within a mixed northern forest of mostly young conifers. I enjoy the space as it has a really nice sense of enclosure. The rounded rocks in the garden are all igneous rocks, likely granite and gneiss, local to the area. (I really prefer the look of more square-ish sedimentary rocks, like limestone or sandstone, which are more traditional for rock gardens.) Osgood Pond is located in hardiness zone 4a, with potential lows from -20 to -30 degrees Fahrenheit. It is also in a snow belt, i.e. it gets more snow than some of the other nearby areas (though I'm not sure why). The soil in the garden is naturally-occurring sand providing the sharp drainage that rock garden plants like but with a low pH which is less preferred over a limey soil. Being set in the woods, the garden is quite shaded with the best sun at midday in the central area of the garden and the edges shaded either all morning or all afternoon. Hence there are some special challenges.



Overview of the rock garden comprised of 15 mounds

Why is this garden different? When I think of the rock gardens of Adirondack Chapter members, including my own, they're all in an area that is at least a zone warmer than Paul Smiths (with one exception that's just a half zone warmer). These rock gardens are all using sedimentary rocks like limestone or bluestone, they have alkaline soil, and they're in mostly full sun. The biggest difference, though, is that we are able to tend our gardens frequently. I'm amazed at the success of the garden at White Pine Camp, considering the 2 days a year of maintenance! Also the garden budget is extremely limited, that is there is no annual budget for replacement plants. The garden thrives on renewal plants that the volunteers generously donate.

This garden has been a major experiment. Other than a nice border of *Leucothoe* (*Leucothoe fontanesiana*) in one area around the perimeter. planting the garden was a case of starting from the beginning. The volunteers over the year have either purchased

plants to install, dug up plants from their gardens, or brought up plants raised from seed. Twice the volunteers have planted hundreds of bulbs. Other than some of the initial restoration work, all the planting and maintenance has been done by the volunteers, usually over one full day in June. Only in the last couple years have we scheduled a second full workday in the fall. There's always plenty to do. Our gamble with this garden has been a tremendous success! It's a pretty garden that the guests at White Pine Camp can enjoy, and I know the volunteers have enjoyed the garden as well.

What's growing in the Heutte garden? We've taken some liberties and have not strictly stuck to traditional rock garden plants. This was the only practical approach, considering the limitations. Some of the plants that have done really well are heath (*Erica carnea*), February daphne (*Daphne mezereum*), dwarf conifers (various), Canada anemone (*Anemone canadensis*), *Campanula punctata*, wood fern (*Dryopteris carthusiana*), peach leaf bellflower (*Campanula persicifolia*), and *Chrysanthemum weyrichii*. There are gentians and *Androsace sarmentosa* that persist in the garden, though not necessarily showing a lot of growth. One of the stars of the garden is a small Japanese maple (*Acer japonicum*) that is growing outside of its hardiness range. It performs as a dieback shrub, only dying back to the snowline! The Japanese maple needs a little pruning every year to remove the dead top growth, and other than that it's thriving. Its fall color is spectacular.



Spring primroses are one of the successes



Acer japonicum in fall color

Several of the ferns and the chrysanthemum are decorating partially decomposed tree stumps in the garden; these conifer stumps were too difficult to remove and now are a unique planting opportunity. Some traditional rock garden plants aren't as happy in the Heutte garden as they are at my home, likely due to the low pH, limited sun, or low fertility conditions, or a combination of the three.

One of the lessons I take away from the Heutte Garden is it's possible to have a nice rock garden without a huge amount of work...after construction that is. And of course one needs to be mindful of the plants, so you don't install plants that are aggressive spreaders, self-seed vigorously, or need routine upkeep like deadheading. The Canada anemone and *Campanula punctata* are a little too vigorous at this garden, and I could see us working on their removal in the next several years.

Since White Pine Camp is a private resort ([www.whitepinecamp.com](http://www.whitepinecamp.com)), to visit the garden, one should be a paying guest. The accommodations are very nice but not inexpensive) or contact the innkeeper for permission to visit the garden (contact information is on their website) and mention you are a member of the Adirondack Chapter. White Pine Camp is in the northern Adirondacks and within a short driving distance of a multitude of outdoor recreation opportunities including hiking, canoeing,

and skiing. It's close to Saranac Lake Village. I was just at White Pine Camp for a workday in early October 2020.

## SOME ONLINE GARDEN RESOURCES

*Carol Eichler*

Here's just a quick follow-up from the October meeting on some great resources that were mentioned.

David Sellars, amazing gardener, referenced Quarterly articles he has written. "The Art of Splitting Boulders" appeared in the Winter 2005 issue. "Photographing Alpine Plants: A Landscape Point of View" was published in the Summer 2012 issue. These issues are accessible online at NARGS.org. His website ([www.mountainflora.ca](http://www.mountainflora.ca)) and You Tube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/MountainFlora>) are both great resources (and a great way to take a virtual trip). He and his wife Wendy received the 2012 Millstream Garden Award for Rock and Alpine Garden from NARGS in 2012 and are featured in the Quarterly's Fall 2013 issue.

The presentation from the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens mentioned an evening lecture series. The 2020 programs were virtual and free. Some of these talks can be viewed and a line-up of monthly 2021 programs starting in January are listed. Presumably these will be virtual and free as well. Scroll down from this webpage:

<https://bettyfordalpinegardens.org/Programs/>

Lastly, since I'm a member of the NARGS Ontario Rock Garden and Hardy Plant Society and since their meetings are now on zoom, I am actually able to "attend" their programs. Just as an aside, their excellent seed exchange is the reason I belong and yes, you have to get a USDA Small Lots of Seed Permit. This Chapter always has enviable programs drawing from local nurseries and area gardeners but are also able bring in speakers from far and wide (for example, November is Crevice Gardens of the Czech Republic, and December is David Sellars "A Hillside Garden in Coastal Columbia." You do have to be a member to access these presentations.

All that is to say, I attended their October meeting and want to share some resources I learned about. Their main speaker was Anna Leggatt on Clematis and I'm happy to share her plant list with anyone who requests one. Also Arie Vanpronsen's short member talk took us on a whirlwind tour of rock gardens he has toured in Holland and Belgium – some very impressive gardens indeed. Arie later shared with me that photos from these gardens are often posted on the ORG&HP Facebook page – believe me, worth visiting on a bleak winter's day.

I was very impressed with the how the Dutch use recycled materials for troughs, which is well-illustrated in this little booklet by Jan Tholhuijsen, "Practical projects for the Rockgarden."

([https://issuu.com/jantholhuijsen/docs/practical\\_projects\\_for\\_the\\_rockgarden](https://issuu.com/jantholhuijsen/docs/practical_projects_for_the_rockgarden))



## NARGS PRESENTS: NOV. 14 STUDY DAY ON TROUGHS

*Elisabeth Zander, NARGS President*

It so happens this study day coincides with our Chapter meeting. You won't want to miss either one! However, the NARGS program is being recorded and with 5 presenters and lasting at least 4 hours in duration which means...You can zoom our Chapter meeting and, if you still have any "zoom" left in you, you can then join the NARGS' program in progress for the rest of the afternoon. OR since it's being recorded, view it at your leisure and on your own time. Gotta love Zoom for that! If you're not currently a NARGS member, check out their super deal to attend!



The North American Rock Garden Society ([NARGS](#)) will present [Troughs Coast to Coast: Celebrating Gardens with Rock Plants in Containers](#), a virtual International Study Day, on Saturday, November 14th at 2 PM EST. The cost is \$25 for NARGS members; and \$50 (which includes the pleasure of a 1-year membership to [NARGS](#)) for nonmembers.

[Troughs Coast to Coast](#) is being held as a live online Zoom event but your ticket will allow you to view the event later or revisit any part of it any number of times. Presentations on how to build, plant, and display troughs will be made by horticultural authorities from such disparate gardens as the roof of the NYC Rockefeller Center, the (Tilden Park) Regional Parks Botanic Garden (Berkeley, CA), the Millstream Garden Award 2020 recipient and Philadelphia Flower Show medalist, and Panyoti Keladais from the Denver Botanic Gardens. Plus design, plant choice and care at Wrightman's Nursery.

Beyond their uses for alpines and rock plants, troughs provide a space to grow and display miniature or diminutive plants (without losing them), and to provide finicky plants with specialized conditions. Troughs provide a space to garden and/or can make a difficult site more hospitable. Perhaps you have the urge to create miniature landscapes and gardens with plants, rocks, bonsai and found objects. There are no trough police.

The [Trough Photo Contest](#) is Now Open too.

Enter the [Trough Photo Contest](#) online. Prizes include a free NARGS membership for a year and a ticket to the November 14th Troughs Study Day. Submissions will be

accepted until November 7th at [woobox.com/kdfknp](https://woobox.com/kdfknp). Anyone anywhere in the world may submit one entry to each of the three categories (3 photos total): Best Trough Photo, Best Trough Design, Best Use of Troughs in a Garden. Plus a People's Choice prize will be voted on by visitors to the show.

Check out the NARGS website if you have further questions.

<https://www.nargs.org/nargs-rocks-troughs-coast-coast-virtual-study-day>

## FAVORITE GARDEN PERIODICALS

*Various from ACNARGS Member Forum*

*Editor's Note: No endorsements are intended.*

Besides the NARGS Quarterly, which periodicals are your "go to" to get the latest news on must-have perennials, maintenance tips, design ideas, etc.?

**From Rosemarie Parker:** The only gardening periodicals I read anymore are Fine Gardening and Horticulture. I prefer Fine Gardening because it has more useful articles and tips for experienced gardeners, and doesn't overwhelm me with vegetable gardening. Horticulture is similar, and both have regular articles on soil and various garden insects (beyond pollinators!). I think that Fine Gardening has slightly more interest in native plants.

**From Steve Whitesell:** I love the RHS journal The Garden (with membership to RHS; visit <https://www.rhs.org.uk/>). It has informative well-written articles on a wide variety of horticultural topics, great photography and cultural tips. It's primarily written for a UK audience and a milder climate than I garden in, but I always learn a lot from it and so will you! I can't think of anything equivalent published in the US.

**From Pat Curran:** Fine Gardening magazine is excellent. It's the only one that I keep intact copies of. The others I tear articles out of. American Hort Society's magazine is also excellent: The American Gardener

Horticulture magazine is pretty good, although not as good as it used to be. I started reading that in the 1970's with a recommendation from my first mother-in-law, who was an avid gardener. How do I know that the articles are not as good? A couple of winters ago, I read several dozen issues from the 1980's and 1990's. which I had missed when I was busy with moonlighting and childbearing. The articles were definitely meatier and directed toward a more experienced audience.

I also read Garden Gate, which is OK...and Birds and Blooms, mainly for the birdwatching tips and the pictures. What do I miss? I really liked Organic Gardening, and I was very sorry when they ceased publication. I also enjoyed Kitchen Gardening magazine when it was published.

Join the ACNARGS Member Forum

Not a member yet? The Forum is limited to ACNARGS Members who must be invited to join. Join this Google Group by sending a request to Carol Eichler, [carolithaca@gmail.com](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com).



## MEMBERSHIP OFFER FOR 2020 AND 2021

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

If you have not renewed for 2020, you should do it now and take advantage of our special deal! Join now for 2020 (individual \$15, household \$20) and we'll include a 2021 membership. The renewal form is at <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf>.

Not sure you're a member this year? Check my email announcement of the newsletter link for your membership status. Contact Mary Stauble at [mes2@cornell.edu](mailto:mes2@cornell.edu) if you have any questions.

## ACNARGS 2020 PROGRAMS

NOTE: Due to covid our fall meetings will take on a different format. We will hold live meetings via Zoom and are currently in the process of booking speakers, hopefully on our "usual" meeting dates. For those of you unfamiliar with Zoom, contact Terry Humphries for assistance.

November 1: Dr. Kevin Nixon, Cushion Steppe and Alpine Zone Flora of Patagonia. Program starts at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom. A link will be sent to you.

December 12: 9am to 1pm via zoom; review of the NARGS seed packaging process begins at 9am (see article)

Stay tuned for bonus meetings in via Zoom and our 2021 programs. Details as we learn them will be included in future newsletters, our blog, [acnargs.blogspot.com](http://acnargs.blogspot.com), and our Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/acnargs>.

## CALENDAR OF SELECT GARDEN EVENTS

For the latest information, visit these websites of these gardening organizations.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Online class information:  
<http://ccetompkins.org/gardening>

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society monthly meetings have resumed via Zoom..  
<https://flnps.org/>

Cornell Botanic Gardens: no on-site events at this time; visit Cornell Gardens at home:  
<https://cornellbotanicgardens.org/explore/events/>

Liberty Hyde Bailey Garden Club: <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/LHBGC/>

Garden Conservancy Fall Literary Series (virtual):  
<https://www.gardenconservancy.org/education/virtualevents>

To have a garden event in your area listed send all pertinent information to David Mitchell at [david\\_mitchell\\_14850@yahoo.com](mailto:david_mitchell_14850@yahoo.com)

## 2020 ACNARGS 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: Currently rotating amongst "Responsible People"  
 Treasurer: BZ Marranca, [mmm10@cornell.edu](mailto:mmm10@cornell.edu)  
 Plant Sales Chair: Carol Eichler [carolithaca@gmail.com](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com)  
 Plant Sales Committee Members: Michael Loos, BZ Marranca, David Mitchell  
 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: Graham Egerton  
 Newsletter Editor: David Mitchell, [dwm23@cornell.edu](mailto:dwm23@cornell.edu) and sometimes Carol Eichler.  
 Looking for a new editor!  
 Calendar: Pat Curran, [pc21@cornell.edu](mailto:pc21@cornell.edu)  
 Webmaster, Program Tech: Craig Cramer, [cdcramer@gmail.com](mailto:cdcramer@gmail.com)

### ABOUT US – ADIRONDACK CHAPTER NARGS

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, two plant sales a year, and frequent plant giveaways. 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 [our Zoom subscription limits participants to 100]. 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 at [acnargs.org/join](http://acnargs.org/join).

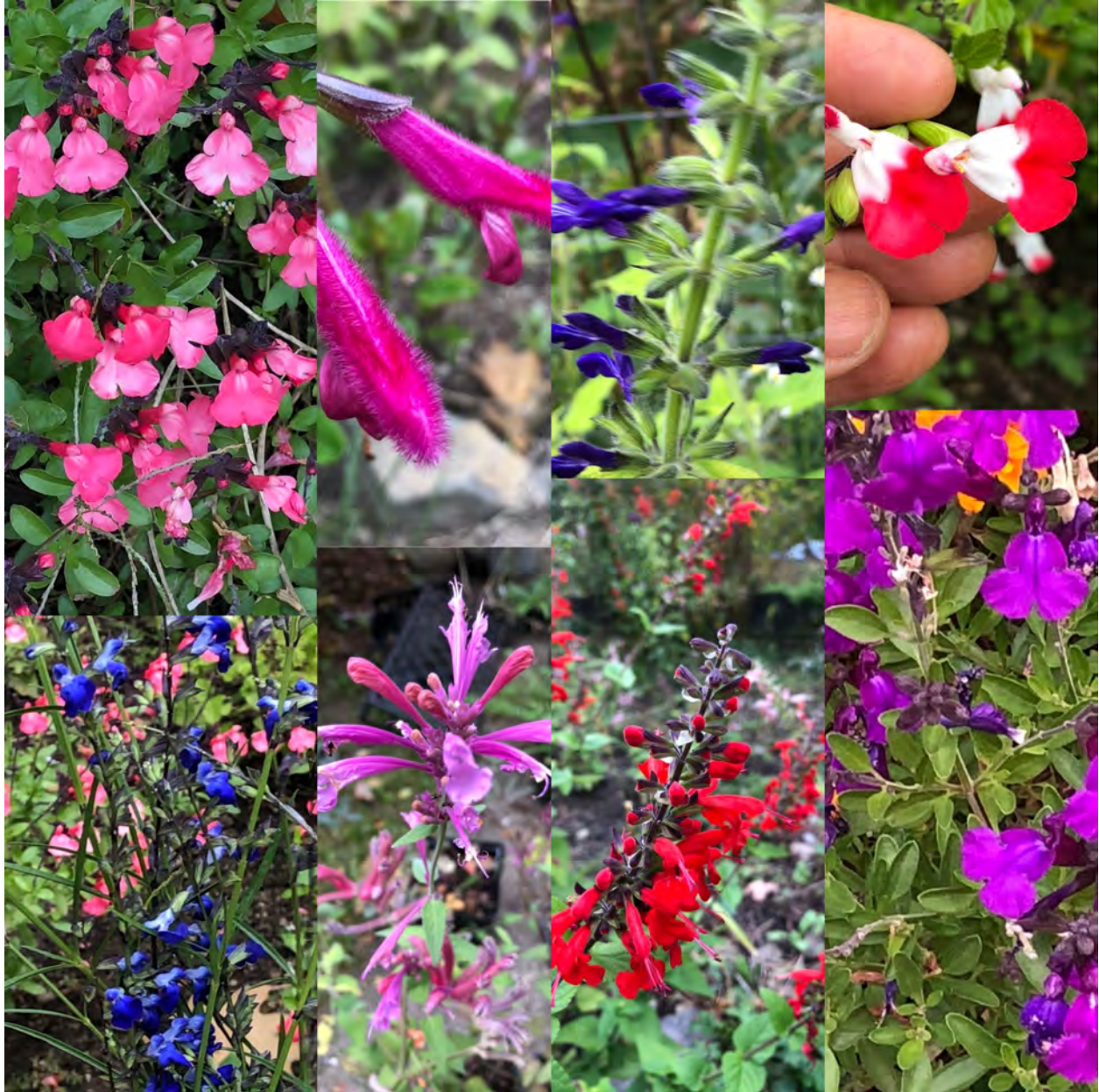
### ABOUT NARGS NATIONAL

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 focused on rock gardening, and an online website 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.

**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 David Mitchell, [david\\_mitchell\\_14850@yahoo.com](mailto:david_mitchell_14850@yahoo.com) Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be a supplementary issue in December 2020.

And now for some garden photos! Late summer and fall delights.  
Lee Adler's magnificent salvias.





Marlene Kobry and Ron Denson's Japanese maples in glorious fall color.

