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DATE :

Terry Humphries, Program Chair

Janet Allen will present: **Habitat Gardening Central New York**

The Little Things that Run the World



Janet Allen is with Habitat Gardening Central New York (HGCNY), an affiliate of Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes. The national organization began in the Milwaukee area in 1977 and remains the only national not-for-profit educational organization with a mission to promote environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones currently has 88 Chapters and 31 “Seedlings” (young chapters) in 34 states.

While HGCNY regularly meets in Syracuse, the chapter serves Onondaga, Cayuga, Cortland, Oswego and Tompkins counties.

One of the co-founders of the local Wild Ones Chapter, HGCNY, Janet has also served on the Wild Ones Board of Directors. She has earned multiple degrees, including a PhD in Education. Now retired she is focused on climate change and ways for us all to positively impact and preserve the environment.

She writes articles and gives presentations to educate the public. Using her extensive background in education, she created a six-session discussion course title “Caring for Our Piece of the Earth” and earned a Toastmaster Advance Communicator Gold Certificate.

Her own yard is certified as a Monarch Waystation for Monarch Watch and her garden full of natives is Wildlife Habitat certified by the National Wildlife Federation.

For her talk, “The Little things that Run the World”, Janet will focus on opening our eyes to the fascinating interrelationship between insects and plants.

We’ll gain a better understanding of the complex web of nature and the varied connections between native plant species and wildlife.

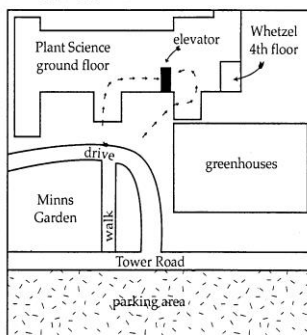


People know pollinators are important, especially since we depend on them for much of our food, but bees and other pollinators have a larger role in the world beyond our farms and gardens. And we’re now finding alarming declines in the kinds and sheer numbers of all insects, the foundation of the food web. Janet will help us learn how we can support these “little things that run the world” in our own yards — and why it matters. Going beyond the loss of habitat and native species, she will give us tips about using pesticides and share encouraging information from community science projects. Janet will help us provide

better habitats for the birds, butterflies and other creatures that bring life to our own little ecosystems.

Join us at 1:00 p.m. on April 20 in the Whetzel Room. Optional bring-your-own lunch starting at Noon. Drinks provided. Goodies always welcome for sharing.

******NOTE: Our meetings are back at Whetzel Room,
Room 404 Plant Sciences Building
236 Tower Road, Cornell University! ******



The west wing of the Plant Sciences Building has been shut down for renovations. But those won't start until next year sometime. So other than having those hallways walled off, everything should look pretty much as it did last time you were here. Remember the elevator to the 4th floor and then exit right down the long hallway. You will be facing the Whetzel Room.

Just a reminder, we ask all attendees to be fully vaccinated. Additionally, we will be following CDC, NYS, and Cornell covid protocol, which at this time does not require masks though you may choose to do so. Please do not attend if you are not feeling well.

FROM THE CHAIR

John Gilrein, Chair

Spring has really busted out into bloom and I hope you are enjoying this as much as I am. Most of the early spring flowers are open in my garden and I saw the first bloodroots (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) blooming along the side of a road yesterday, though mine have not popped out of the ground yet. The hard reality of winter returning last week with a lot of snow made me curtail gardening activity, but now I can get out and garden, since the snow has gone. I have several garden projects that I'm thinking about and hoping to get at least some of them done this spring, so I'm itching to get working on those.

Following our April meeting, some of us are doing a weekend of garden tours April 26-28, starting Friday April 26 at Elizabeth Zander's garden in Litchfield County, Connecticut and ending Sunday April 28 at the New York Botanic Garden in the Bronx. You can see more information in the March 2024 Green Dragon on our website (acnargs.org) or email me for more complete information (my email address is at the bottom of every newsletter).

Our May activity is the Adirondack Chapter plant sale and dish-to-pass lunch at Myer's Park, Lansing on Saturday May 18. It's always a worthwhile event, socializing with fellow gardeners (which we don't get enough of at our meetings), and buying some great plants at bargain prices. A wise person said (I don't know to whom this quote should be attributed) the best way to keep a plant is to give it away (I would include donating it to a plant sale). I translate this as in the event the weather, the wildlife, or others acts of fate kill my plant, I can get a piece of it from the friend I shared it with. Let's start scouting our gardens in April for plants to share at the plant sale.

I organized a full day garden tour day on Saturday June 8 in Onondaga County – Save the Date! We'll send out an announcement with the details and more about the gardens (addresses, times gardens are open, parking, etc.). These are all gardens very worth a visit and vetted by our members. Chapter members are welcome to take part in visiting some or all of the gardens, but no dogs and no children under 12 years old except with explicit permission. Each venue will only be open during the stated hours. Here's the plan with the gardeners/garden to visit:

- Dianne Bordoni in Dewitt
- Janet Allen in Westvale
- John Gilrein in South Onondaga (BYO lunch here)
- Diana Smith/Topiary Gardens Nursery in Shepherd Settlement/north Skaneateles

Dianne has a well-established and carefully curated garden which includes a massive yew tree. Janet is the Chair (not sure of her exact title) of the local chapter of Wild Ones, a club of native plant enthusiasts, and has a garden filled with mostly native plants. I have a large rock garden, shade gardens, perennials, and a diverse variety of trees. Diana is a professional gardener with an interesting garden (the only garden where I've seen *Lithodora diffusa*, a gorgeous blue flowered perennial) and a 20-year-old nursery specializing in Japanese maples (both *Acer japonicum* and *Acer palmatum*) and also some dwarf conifers. Topiary Gardens is known for its huge variety of reasonably priced maples, which start in 1-gallon pots at \$38-40 (some are available in larger sizes.) Diana is extremely knowledgeable about her plants and can suggest plants for specific situations. I'm really looking forward to these visits.

Last year we had our first natural area visits, which included Labrador Pond and Clark Reservation. This year I'm hoping to venture further afield and visit Chaumont Barrens (a limestone pavement barren) near Watertown, NY. Details TBA. Hope to see you soon!

HELLEBORE SEED STRAINS AND CULTIVARS

John Gilrein, Chair



species.

Lenten roses are late winter/early spring bloomers (blooming in my garden as of March 20) and are very easy plants when grown in loamy or clay soil with good drainage in partial shade, and they also like lime (but sources say they don't require it). Lenten roses are long lived and they're difficult plants to divide, but many have a lot of offspring, possibly too many seedlings close to the parent plant. Due to division not being a good means of producing plants, breeders have bred plants in cultivation by developing seeds strains, controlling crosses and rogueing out undesirable plants (i.e. discarding plants with undesirable characteristics like off-colored flowers). Seed strains produce plants within a color range which are not genetically identical, so different plants in a specific strain would exhibit some differences in flower color (but possibly all attractive). Hellebore plants don't bulk up quickly, and can bit pricier than some perennials, but I believe buying named hybrids or plants of a good seed strain is a good value, to get a pleasing flower color in a long-lived plant.



Northwest Garden Nursery is a small nursery in Eugene, OR, operated by Marietta and Ernie O'Byrne They obtained hellebore stock from some of the best hellebore nurseries in Europe (e.g. Ashwood, Blackthorn, and de Hessenhof) and now breed hellebores which they sell to retail nurseries. Their Winter Jewels series includes seed strains with yellow flowers 'Golden Sunrise', red flowers 'Ruby Wine' and deep slaty purple/black flowers 'Black Diamond', among other colors.

The nursery photo gallery has good photos of several plants in each of the varied series they produce; this is the link for the singles: <https://northwestgardennursery.com/singles/>. There are also doubles, but I prefer the simplicity of the singles. I have one plant each of 'Golden Sunrise' and 'Ruby Wine' and I am quite happy with each (see photos). 'Golden Sunrise' has chartreuse foliage, which goes quite nicely with the yellow flowers (and makes it easy to identify is a good source of hellebore plants in the eastern US and carries the Winter Jewel series. They mail order small plants at a modest cost, a good way to improve your collection without digging deeply into your pockets. the singles. I have one plant each of 'Golden Sunrise' and 'Ruby Wine' and I am quite happy with each (see photos). 'Golden Sunrise' has chartreuse foliage, which goes quite nicely with the yellow flowers (and makes it easy to identify one of its seedlings). Both reseed themselves lightly (at least so far). Pine Knot Farms in VA, website:



<https://www.pineknotfarms.com/> is a good source of hellebore plants in the eastern US and carries the Winter Jewel series. They mail order small plants at a modest cost, a good way to improve your collection without digging deeply into your pockets. website: <https://www.pineknotfarms.com/> is a good source of hellebore plants in the eastern US and carries the Winter Jewel series. They mail order small plants at a modest cost, a good way to improve your collection without digging deeply into your pockets. the singles. I have one plant each of ‘Golden Sunrise’ and ‘Ruby Wine’ and I am quite happy with each (see photos). ‘Golden Sunrise’ has chartreuse foliage, which goes quite nicely with the yellow flowers (and makes it easy to identify one of its seedlings). Both reseed themselves lightly (at least so far). Pine Knot Farms in VA, website: <https://www.pineknotfarms.com/> is a good source of hellebore plants in the eastern US and carries the Winter Jewel series. They mail order small plants at a modest cost, a good way to improve your collection without digging deeply into your pockets.



Helleborus x ericsmithii is a collection of different hellebore varieties with unusual and multitone flower colors (like ivory and pink). Eric Smith was the first person to make this cross. The *ericsmithii* hybrids are intersectional hybrids with complex genetics, crosses between *Helleborus x sternii* and *H. niger*; *sternii* hybrids are crosses between *H. argutifolius* and *H. lividus*. Both *sternii* parents are only hardy to around Zone 7; *H. niger* is hardy to Zone 3. My limited research suggests these are hardy to Zone 5/-20 degrees F., though one should check the hardiness listing for the *ericsmithii* plants before purchasing. None of the 3 plants I own has exhibited any hardiness issue after several years in the garden. I sourced my information from *Hellebores: A Comprehensive Guide*, by Burrell and Tyler, Timber Press 2006. Apparently neither hellebores nor their breeders follow “the rules” about breeding between different sections, nevermind just between species, not being possible, to our benefit. The foliage is obviously different from the Lenten roses, more of a blue green color, and the flower color is more complex (not just a single tone of pink or white). There are multiple *ericsmithii* hybrids with varying flower colors like ‘Monte Cristo’ and ‘Pink Frost’ (see photos). These are also easy plants, though I find mine do not bulk up as quickly as other hellebores and have not reseeded (they’re possibly sterile, which would not be surprising for intersectional hybrids). I quite like the interesting foliage and flower colors offered by these hybrids. The *ericsmithii* hybrids are sometimes produced by tissue culture. Some (if not all) of these hybrids are part of the *Helleborus Gold Collection*. Expect to pay more for these hybrids than other Lenten rose hybrids. Mail order sources include Pine Knot Farms, Bluestone, and Plant Delights Nursery.

For more information on hellebores, *Hellebores: A Comprehensive Guide*, by Burrell and Tyler, is an excellent book, with detailed information on provenance, taxonomy, species, hybrids, and cultivation.

MEMBERSHIP

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

If you have not renewed for 2024, you should do it now so you’ll be eligible for our many membership benefits. You can renew at the April meeting or by mail. Your new or renewed

membership will allow you to purchase the April Plant-of-the-Month, which we sell at a discounted price. The renewal form is at <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf>. Your membership status is reported to you in the email with the newsletter link. Contact Mary Stauble at mes2@cornell.edu if you have any questions.

PLANT OF THE MONTH :

Marlene Kobre, POM Coordinator

Marlene has not been able to lock in a POM so far but hopes to find a nursery able to deliver by the time of the meeting. Check your email for updates.

MAY PLANT SALE

Carol Eichler, Plant Sale Coordinator

When I presented the pros and cons of holding a May members' only sale vs. participating in the public plant sale sponsored by Cooperative Extension, it became a no-brainer in my mind. Why sell our best plants only so the public can snatch them up at bargain prices? No! Let's keep those plants "in the family!" I'm glad the rest of those present agreed in the resulting vote.

That means now is the beginning of potting up time for the plant sale on May 18th, our traditional 3rd Saturday of the month meeting date. We're at Myers Park in Lansing again, same pavilion, same set-up time starting at 9a.m., same sale start time of 11a.m., same simplified pricing system (by pot size with exceptions), same procedure for running the sale (by order of arrival, and finally, ending with our traditional dish-to-pass lunch! Note the Park charges admission for non-residents of the Town of Lansing. The May newsletter will include information in greater detail.

As we have come to expect, we should see a broad range of enticing plants. As you dig and divide, remember to remove as much soil as you can and repot into soilless mix. However, we do not need to be as scrupulous in past years in regard to bare-rooting to avoid the spread of jumping worms. Most of us already have the worms in our gardens; we are passing the responsibility to those few among us who do not. Buyer beware.

Volunteers are needed to help with set-up, cashiering, and clean-up, after which we all sit down to dish-to-pass lunch. To help, contact Plant Sale Coordinator Carol Eichler (carolithaca@gmail.com).

SINGER AWARD

Carol Eichler

And the winner is ...!

The Heasley Rock Garden at Cornell Botanic Gardens, one of three proposals that will receive a Singer Award this spring. Congratulations are in order.

The award of \$4,000 will allow for comprehensive inventorying of existing plants, identifying and photographing them, mapping, labeling, and updating the online Collections Database. Cornell Botanic Gardens is contributing staff time for a horticulturist, plants records specialist, and botanist. ACNARGS volunteers (and perhaps others) will also play a significant role.



Since 2017, dedicated members of our Chapter have been involved in a monumental volunteer effort to salvage the underfunded Heasley Rock Garden alongside Cornell Botanic Gardens staff. In the last couple of years ACNARGS members have also been contributing plants. After several years of hard work, the Heasley Rock Garden has become a show piece within the greater cultivated areas of Cornell Botanic Garden. Visitors

often compliment how great this garden looks.

By definition, the proper management, preservation, and educational components of the garden will bring it up to botanical garden standards. Additionally, it will also enhance the overall visual and educational experience of visitors to the garden and may even attract a donor to endow its upkeep.

This project is a win-win. It will elevate the garden to the next level of restoration while also supporting the outreach and education goals of NARGS and ACNARGS to promote rock gardening.



NARGS AND ACNARGS UPCOMING EVENTS

NOTE: As of now, we are meeting in-person at Cornell in the Whetzel Room and not recording the sessions.

Spring Garden Tour in West Danby

Pat Curran and Nigel Dyson-Hudson invite you to tour their garden on Sunday May 5, 1-5 pm.

Pat and Nigel moved here in May 1986 and started planting trees and shrubs on what was a largely blank canvas of mowed lawn. They have learned that all the cold air up in Danby rolls down the hill and settles around the house, which is why Pat thinks the property should be called 'Frost Pocket Farm.'

In early May, there should be a variety of plants in bloom, always subject to weather vagaries. In bloom will be many flowering trees and shrubs as well as perennials and bulbs in bloom. Thanks to the deer fence, there is a thriving Hosta collection, and we can hope that they will have started to leaf out. What used to be a hillside lawn is now covered with native trout lilies, and many of them are blooming sized. On the hillside across the stream is the beginning of an arboretum.

The address is 10 Slaters Lane in the town of Danby. Landline phone is 607-564-7927, cell phone is 607-227-3298. We hope to see you there, rain or shine.

CALENDAR OF SELECT AREA GARDEN EVENTS

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

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Online class information:
ccetompkins.org

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society monthly meetings – a hybrid of in-person and zoom:
<https://flnps.org/> Recordings of past programs are available to view online.

Cornell Botanic Gardens: <https://cornellbotanicgardens.org/explore/events/>

Habitat Gardening in CNY, local Wild Ones Chapter: <https://www.hgcny.org/>

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

To have your garden event listed send all pertinent information to Susanne Lipari
sel3@cornell.edu

2024 ACNARGS BOARD MEMBERS AND CONTACTS

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

Chair (aka head honcho): John Gilrein, basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu

Program Coordinator: Terry Humphries, terryhumphries@gmail.com

Program Committee Members: Would you like to help? Share your speaker suggestions!

Secretary: Currently rotating amongst “Responsible People”

Treasurer (aka CFO): Marlene Kobre

Plant Sales Chair: Carol Eichler carolithaca@gmail.com

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

Membership: Mary Stauble, mes2@cornell.edu

New Member Hospitality: Graham Egerton, Anne Redfern

Newsletter Editor: Susanne Lipari sel3@cornell.edu

Wurster Garden Coordinator: Carol Eichler

Wurster Volunteers: Elaine Caso, Ellen Lane, Sheila Stone; Others always welcome! Contact Carol Eichler if you wish to be added to the email list.

Book Order Manager: New NARGS program to offer NARGS’ members select books at deeply discounted prices. New Chapter position. Looking for a volunteer!

Webmaster, Program Tech: Craig Cramer, 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, occasional 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. 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), invitations to our garden day trips, 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.

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 focused on rock gardening, and an online website featuring a wealth of information including current and archived of Quarterly’s, recordings of past study days and more. NARGS National also 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 (Jan./Feb., March, April, May/June, July/Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov./Dec. Submit articles no later than the fourth Friday of the month preceding the monthly publication to Susanne Lipari, sel3@cornell.edu. Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be May 2024