



ADIRONDACK CHAPTER

North American Rockgarden Society

Green Dragon Tales

November 2003

Adirondack Chapter

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Letter from the Editor

This month you are getting a letter from the editor instead of one from the chair, since Michelle is busy starting in her new job, looking for a new house, and moving. Best wishes, Michelle, in your new job and your new environment, and good luck with moving your amazing garden to a new home! The Chapter hopes that you, who is always willing help others, will feel free to ask for help with this tremendous job!

This will be the sixth electronic newsletter and we would like to get some feedback on how you feel about it. We have heard that some of you are having trouble downloading the PDF file, or that you can't print it out. Most likely that is due to the fact that you may have an old version of Acrobat Reader on your computer. We are including a link to the most current version of Acrobat Reader for you to download free of charge. Let me know how it works out for you at sel3@cornell.edu.

Thank you to those of you who have submitted articles or letters to be published in the Green Dragon. Please keep them coming, especially in the winter months. After conversations with several Chapter members I think we will follow the following pattern: Short newsletters with announcements of meetings and events, plant portraits of the plants of the month, and just the occasional article during the summer months, since in the summer we are more focussed on gardening than reading. In the fall and winter months, when we have more time to write, publish and read, we'll have more and longer articles, including ones reprinted from other sources. So please, write about that garden visit, that great new or new to you technique, review a book you love. Or send me an article you think might be of interest to other Chapter members. And send me images to go along with the articles. Even if they can't be in the printed version, we can link to them from the electronic version.

Susanne

New to NARGS

November 15: Adirondack Chapter Annual Meeting...

..... and Dish-to-Pass Luncheon in the Whetzel Room (4th floor Plant Science Building, Cornell University)

10:30 am to Noon - Set-up tables, decorations and food. Mingle, socialize, and position yourself by the most tempting dishes.

Noon to 1 pm - Dish-to-Pass luncheon. Bring a dish-to-pass and tableware for yourself. Drinks will be provided.

1pm-2pm - Annual Meeting, reports on 2003 activities from committee chairs, Member appreciation gift, door prizes.

2pm-2:30pm - clean up

It's time to be thinking about the "w" word - do I dare mention it? - winter. In case you haven't guessed, it's not my favorite season. However getting involved with rock gardening has, believe it or not, made winter a little easier to tolerate.

First, the "bones" of a rock garden offers lots of winter interest with a landscape of contours and protruding stone. The snow collecting in nooks and crannies further adds to the beauty. It was an unexpected revelation - one of those "aha" moments for me - when the Chapter Board held a meeting (in January I believe) at Tom Myers and Krys Cail's house. Their rock garden abuts the house, starting at eye level, then twists and turns, combining brick and stone, steps and walks, rising in elevation away from the house. Several small trees also add structure to their garden. From warmly inside the living room - which is where I prefer to spend much of my wintertime, one has a magnificent view of the garden through sliding glass doors.

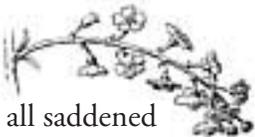
A second reason rock gardens have helped me survive winter is participating in the NARGS seed exchange. Since our Chapter is involved in helping at the front-end of the exchange, it means that in December Chapter members get together to repackage seed. Still later the seed list arrives. Last year,

I approached the seed list rather seriously and it occupied several hours of research and musings. Before I know it, it's time to start seeds, some as early as January - signaling the beginning of a new garden season.

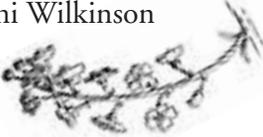
Thirdly, many rock garden plants are early bloomers - thus pushing the envelope on the spring season. If this isn't true for you, take note to be sure to select and grow some plants for their early bloom time.

Finally, although this is not directly related, I want to add that seeing the Myers/Cail garden in winter was also an important lesson in siting a rock garden. Or as the real estate trade reminds us location, location, location. While there are undeniably several factors to consider, I have decided that when I build my rock garden it will be located just outside my living room windows. Bring on the winter!

Carol Eichler



We are all saddened by the death of our dear friend and Adirondack Chapter founding member Toni Wilkinson



Adirondack Chapter Program 2004

- ◆ February 21: Winter Gathering, members share slides, etc
Along with sharing by members, Robin Bell will present a short slide show of his visit to Frank Cabot's Quebec garden, Les Quatre Vents.
- ◆ March 20: Alan McMurtrie of Ontario Chapter will present a program on Reticulata Iris
- ◆ April 17: Carlo Balistrieri of the New York Botanical Garden
- ◆ May: Spring Plant Sale at Ithaca High School
- ◆ May : Day trip to New York Botanical Garden. Please talk to program chair if you are interested in participating.
- ◆ June 19: Garden Tour to Ithaca gardens
- ◆ July 10: Chapter picnic hosted by Jerry and Carolyn Yaeger. Please note change of date to 2nd Saturday of the month.
- ◆ August 21: Members only plant sale, Ken Post Lab.
- ◆ September 18: TBA
- ◆ October 16: TBA
- ◆ November 20: Annual Meeting and Dish-to-Pass luncheon

Meetings are held monthly on the third Saturday in the Whetzel Room (4th floor of the Plant Science Building, Cornell University) unless otherwise noted. Featured programs start at 1 pm. Come at noon for brown bag lunch and socializing. Suggestions for meeting topics and speakers are always welcome, talk to the program chair. If you have questions or would like specifics call or email Anne 607-256-9308,

Cruising the Web

As I plow through my bookmarked sites on the computer, I come across new sites as well as old favorites rediscovered. There are none, so far that I can delete, as the website creators keep adding new material. I don't know where they find the time to maintain these marvelous creations. It must be a labor of love, indeed, and we lesser mortals are very fortunate to have access to them.

Over time I keep returning to Alpine-L. You don't have to be a member to subscribe to the incredibly useful material in the archives. Just use the address below and pop a word in the search box.

I tried "bog" as I was wondering what I should use as fill in the little pocket bog I have just created, thanks to my #1 son digging the hole. More than 50 emails displayed and still going strong. The only problem is that on Alpine-L there are many solutions and one must choose!

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Looking for a few good volunteers! I'd like some help at meetings taking money -- for plant-of-the-month sales, book sales, membership dues, etc. It seems that I'm so busy in my role as treasurer that I have no time left over for socializing. So, starting with the November meeting, I'd like to establish a group of us who can alternate this job. Maybe you have some thoughts, as do I, on how to make these money transactions work better. Contact Carol Eichler, 607-397-5823 or cme24@cornell.edu.

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Cruising the Web

Check this address:

<http://listserv.surfnet.nl/archives/alpine-1.html>

As always, I am crazy about those nursery/garden sites which not only have the rarest sorts of plants, hopefully woodlanders as well as rock plants, but have extremely interesting and knowledgeable write-ups about these plants and stunning photography.

Pat and Paige Woodard's Pacific Rim Nursery fulfilled my dreams this past Winter. Devoted to promoting the best in native alpines from different areas of the world, they can provide seeds as well as plants.

The array of bulbs available is heartstopping...I never thought to see a colchicum I had not heard of nor seen photos of, but it is here...the lovely *Colchicum szovitsii* Fisch. & Mey. 'Vardaovit'. An exquisite shining white globe of a flower, it bloomed in my garden this past Spring.

You may remember Paige sent the enormous shipment of seed that ensured everyone at our Winter Weekend had gift packets. If any of you are moved, as I am sure you will be, to order from Pacific Rim, please remember to mention this to Paige.

Pacific Rim Nursery:

<http://www.hillkeep.ca/>

Finally, for those of you who are not devoted only to plants small enough to qualify as rock garden plants, I offer this website I found when researching peonies.

The photos may turn off a few who respect only species but I am not so particular, being a lover of all sorts of plants. Enjoy!

The Peony Garden:

<http://www.peonygarden.com/>

If any member of our chapter has a website they feel should be mentioned, please do feel free to email it to me. Perhaps it would be useful to have new nursery discoveries mentioned in the months ahead, as the catalogues are already arriving.

Enjoy!

Marcia Meigs

Arisaemaq@aol.com



Upcoming National Meetings

Eastern Winter Study Weekend

"Special Gardens for Special Plants"

January 30-February 1, 2004
Delaware Valley Chapter

Radisson Hotel
Valley Forge, Pennsylvania

Registrar: Jim McClements
50 S. Prestwick Court
Dover, Delaware 19904
302-734-2836



Western Winter Study Weekend

"Braving the Elements"

March 5-7, 2004

Emerald Chapter
Valley River Inn
Eugene, Oregon

Registrar: Melody Clarkson
86083 Cherokee Drive
Eugene Oregon 97402
541-334-6883



Annual Meeting

"Rebellious Rock Gardening: Piedmont Surprises"

May 5-8, 2004

Piedmont Chapter
Sheraton Imperial Hotel &
Convention Center
Research Triangle Park
(Raleigh-Durham),
North Carolina

Contact: Karen and Dave Duch
1422 Lake Pine Drive
Cary, North Carolina 27511
919-467-0653

NARGS Expeditions Tour: Mountains of Western
North Carolina
May 9-14, 2004

Within the southern Appalachian Mountains is found one of the richest and most diverse assemblages of plants in the temperate world. NARGS Expeditions has chosen as its next destination the mountains of western North Carolina for a six-day tour to explore and experience this fascinating flora, as well as to sample some of the cultural and unique horticultural attractions the area has to offer.

The tour will depart from Raleigh, North Carolina on Sunday, May 9th immediately following the NARGS Annual Meeting, also in Raleigh. On the first day the group will travel to Asheville where we will stay for the duration of the trip. This small city will serve as an excellent base for our daily excursions. During the course of the trip we will visit several natural areas in order to see as wide a range of native plants as possible, as well as the communities in which they grow. Areas we will visit include Craggy Gardens Recreational Area, the highest point in North Carolina - 6,684 foot Mount Mitchell, Chimney Rock State Park, a high elevation grass/sedge community atop Black Spruce Knob along the Blue Ridge Parkway, and various other sites along the Parkway and in Pisgah National Forest.

To round out the tour the group will also visit some of the horticultural and cultural attractions near Asheville. Among these will be the garden of Ev and Bruce Whittemore in Penrose, the private garden of Tom and Bruce Shinn known for its wildflowers and particularly the Trillium, and the Biltmore Estate gardens and arboretum where will have a guided tour to see many rare and mature woody plants, and possibly an evening meal at the estate. The group will return to Raleigh on Friday May 14.

Consistent with NARGS policy and previous NARGS tours, plant collecting will not be permitted. Registration for this tour will be limited to approximately 18-22 people and to NARGS members

only, although new members are more than welcome to join in order to take part in what promises to be an interesting, exciting and fun trip.

For a complete prospectus and registration information please contact:

Tom Clark
253 Batchelor Street,
Granby, MA 01033,
Phone (413) 467-2714,
tclark@mtholyoke.edu



Left-over plants from last month will be sold at the Annual meeting. Below are descriptions and how many of each plant are left.

Campanula sp.aff. caesopitosa

4"x6". Full sun part shade. Zone 3. Blue. Summer. Origin Italy. It forms low pads of small leaves and bears open elongated clusters of small dangling bells of deep blue, well worth having and should do well in a trough setyting or perhaps best of all in a tight crevice in tufa rock. 3

Gentiana orbicularis

2"x4". Zone 3. Sun part shade. Beautiful small Gentian forming glossy dark green cushions of foliage set with short-stemmed deepest blue blocks in early spring. Free blooming and one of the easiest. 1

Petrocallis pyranacia

2"x8". Full sun. Zone 3. Pink spring origin Italian Dolomites. Bright green dissected leaves are borne on short spreading stems in spring. This verdant carpet of green is hidden beneath a mass of small pink blocks. Easy to grow and long-lived. 2

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November Plants of the Month

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Last month's plants

POROPHYLLUM (KABSCHIA AND ENGLERIA TYPES):

Classic alpines with cushion foliage and colourful short stemmed flowers in February and April. Great for troughs and tufa plantings. European in origin.

These Saxafrages are a bit more demanding. They can be grown successfully in trough, raised beds, tufa and crevassing. Northern exposure is best with no direct sun in the afternoon.

Overwintering in a greenhouse, cold-frame or plunging the pots in sand in a protected area and keep covered with snow. Good Luck!

SAXIFRAGA 'BOSTON SPA' H-4 cm. Sprawling mats made of spiny green rosettes. Gleaming yellow racemes. A choice old cultivar

SAXIFRAGA FERDINANDI-COBURGI SSP. RADOSLAVOFFII

H-3-8 cm. Grey-green rosettes form robust irregular domes with stems that carry terminal clusters of golden-yellow. Bukgaria, Greece.

SAXIFRAGA 'HOCKER EDGE'

H-7 cm. Slow growing non-spiny rosettes of roundish, thick leaves. Pretty, sculpted pale pinkish fading to pale lilac blooms. Very different

SAXIFRAGA 'GODIVA'

H-5 cm. Dense, tight, flattened domes of rich-green rosettes. Minutely waved soft lilac flowers.

SAXIFRAGA 'KATH DRYDEN'

H-8 cm. Silver encrusted compact green rosettes and pale bluish-pink flowers with dark center on short stems.

SAXIFRAGA 'MARIANNA'

H-8 cm. A choice hybrid that bears many handsome, large, long-lasting blooms of soft yellow. Medium size rosettes of lime encrusted bright green leaves.

SAXIFRAGA 'SALOMONII'

H-5 cm. A more evenly formed cushion than *S. pseudo-salomonii*. Dense, flattened hummocks with pure white, cup-shaped flowers.

SAXIFRAGA PSUDOSALOMONII

Flat-topped clusters of pure white on small, slightly loose cushions. A robust form.

SAXIFRAGA 'HANNELORE'

H-6cm A lovely and slow growing form of dense, hard, domed cushions. Branched cymes carry open, starry, pure white flowers. A good grower.

SAXIFRAGA OPPOSITIFOLIA X BIFLORA

A hybrid with *S. kochii* Carinthia. A purple flowered Saxifrage.

Potentilla nitide "Alannah"

2"x4". Full sun part shade. Zone 3. Pink summer. Flattened cushions of lovely silver foliage and deep rose-pink blooms through early summer. Likes sunny, dryish conditions. 2

Physoplexis cosmosa

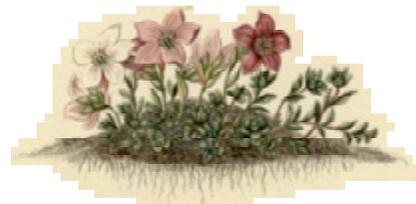
2"x4". Full sun, part shade. Zone 3. Purple pink spring summer. Origin Dolomites. A legendary alpine from limestone fissures. Fat carrot-like roots like being wedged into vertical crevices. Sprouts tufts of dark green toothed leaves; short flower stems arise in late spring bearing rounded heads of bizarre flask-shaped pale pink blooms with distinctive deep purple necks. 1

Valeriana supina

4"x6". Zone 3. Dolomites low spreading mats of pungent pale green leaves topped with short-stemmed umbrels of rose-pink blooms in late spring. Colonizes in limestone screes.

Wikstroemia scytrophylla

36"x36". Full sun. Zone 5? Yellow spring. Tibet. Closely related to Daphnes, well-branched upright shrub bears leathery bright blue green foliage and dense heads of yellow blooms that ripen into shiny black berries. 2



This month's plants will come from *Alpines Mount Echo*