



ADIRONDACK CHAPTER

North American Rockgarden Society

Green Dragon Tales

October 2004

Adirondack Chapter

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Letter from the Chair

Indian Summer is much appreciated this year. The day of the September meeting was sunny and warm and the days following were some of the nicest of the summer.

On the agenda for the board in the next few months is to encourage members to help the board members with their responsibilities. Here are some examples: Susanne has asked for help in editing the newsletter before it is mailed, but she needs somebody with good attention to detail who will spot missing or incorrect dates and who can help with text editing. Anne needs help with Program Chair responsibilities. She can make all the speaker arrangements, but she has asked for help in arranging workshops and coordinating the garden tours. Art needs assistance with Membership, e.g. updating the membership brochure and doing outreach to attract new members. Anne, Art, and Susanne are Board Members as committee chairs, but volunteers who help them out will not hold board positions.

Then there are board positions that need to be filled. Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Plant Sale Chair. There are candidates for the positions of Chair, Treasurer, and Plant Sale Chair but we are still looking for somebody to be Secretary. The Secretary records the minutes of the meetings and keeps the archives of the Chapter. Board members generally meet before each of the scheduled monthly meetings. While attendance at all meeting is encouraged, we do realize that not every board member may make it to every board meeting. Board members need to have internet access, since we mostly communicate via email.

Our October Meeting will feature not only a great speaker, but also a survey for members to take. We want your input into programs, workshops and projects for next year. Attendees will be given the survey before the meeting and asked to fill it out and return it by the end of the meeting. A good turnout at the meeting will help us get as much input

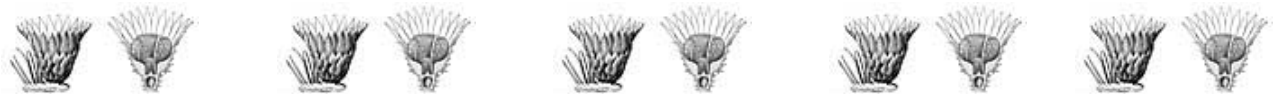
as possible. If you are unable to attend the October meeting, but would like to fill out a survey, please let me know and I will send a copy to you either via email or snail mail. This is your opportunity to insure the chapter is providing you with the types of programs and activities you want or would enjoy.

The Chapter Plant Sales are big attractions for new as well as existing members and our biggest fundraisers each year. This year donations and sales were down from previous years. To revitalize our plant sales, we are going to be doing more outreach and soliciting from members and local businesses for the sales. If you have plants that you would like to donate, but need some help digging and potting up, the chapter will offer to send members to assist. We will be doing more publicity for the sales and will be working on ways to display the plants more attractively at the May Sale to increase sales. As you work in your gardens through the fall, please begin to think of what you might be able to dig up, divide, and donate to our Chapter Sales. You could even do the dividing this fall so that next spring, before the sale, you just need to lift and pot up the plants and not have them just recovering from being divided when you want them to look their best. If you are donating an uncommon variety, please try to take a picture of it when it is in bloom and bring the picture to the sale with the plants.

So what is this message saying to you? We need you to participate! Volunteer to help – as a board member or a volunteer. We need your generous plant donations so we have the funds to keep chapter programs at their usual high quality. If you can't donate plants, come and buy plants and bring along friends to buy plants and/or to join the Chapter. Together, we all make this an interactive, growing group of gardeners that strives to increase the knowledge of our members.

See you in October.

Michelle



October Meeting

The speaker for the Adirondack Chapter's October meeting will be Al Pfeiffer, the proprietor of Oriental Garden Supply in Rochester NY. His talk "Woody Plants for the Rock Garden" will focus mainly on conifers but will include other things as well. His nursery, which some of us visited on the nursery/garden tour in 2003, sells a huge selection of bamboo, conifers, Japanese maples, and other unusual woody plant material. He will bring plants to show and sell.

The meeting is at the usual time and place, **October 16th**, Whetzel Room. Brown bag lunch at noon followed by the talk at 1 pm.

EASTERN WINTER STUDY WEEKEND

Hosted by:

Ontario Rock Garden Society

For info go to: <http://www.onrockgarden.com/>

Registration:

Norm & Lynne Limpert

R.R. #1,

Acton, ON, Canada L7J 2L7

limps@sympatico.ca

Co-ordinator:

Katy Anderson

katyand@sympatico.ca

(416) 767-3602

Registration is \$195 Us by 12/15/2004

Hotel: Toronto Airport Marriott

1-800-905-2811

901 Dixon Road

Rexdale, Ontario, Canada M9W 1J5

Contact hotel directly to reserve.

Mention the NARGS meeting for the special conference rate of \$129 CND

Grand Re-Opening of Benenson Ornamental Conifers Set for Weekend of October 30, 2004

Largest Landscape Renovation in a Decade to Open amid Fall Festivities

The New York Botanical Garden's Benenson Ornamental Conifers, known until recently as the Ornamental Conifer Collection, include many of the most interesting and exotic specimens of conifers in the country. They are located on 15 picturesque acres near the Peggy Rockefeller Rose Garden in the southernmost section of the Garden and will re-open to the public on Saturday, October 30, amid a gala weekend of festivities.

In its largest landscape restoration project in more than a decade, the Garden has undertaken extensive refurbishing to add new trees, improve the health of existing specimens, and enrich the visitor's experience. According to Dr. Kim Tripp, Senior Vice President for Horticulture and Living Collections, "The Benenson Ornamental Conifers are unique; they include rare mature trees and equally rare cultivars of conifers from Europe that are no longer available in the trade. Dwarf and specialty conifers are excellent garden plants that provide year-round beauty and color, and are resilient in today's small urban gardens and spaces. They have been used by people around the world to grace gardens with striking texture, winter interest, evergreen character, and exquisite form."

The public opening will coincide with the fall Members Open House. An official presentation will be made mid-afternoon Saturday and curators will lead hourly tours to introduce the public to this unique collection of rare trees. Home gardening demonstrations, a book signing, a bird walk, and other events will complement the program. At the Garden's Rondina and LoFaro Gallery, a new exhibition opens this weekend in celebration of the restoration and re-opening of the Benenson Ornamental Conifers. *Cultured Conifers: Selections of Rare Works from the LuEsther T. Mertz Library* will display botanical prints and books that illustrate the rich variety of conifers and their many uses.

After the public opening, the restored Benenson Ornamental Conifers will continue to offer a new highlight on the Garden's tram tour. It will also offer a brand-new scenic and educational walk for visitors, with rustic viewing pavilions overlooking the rolling landscape and a rich panorama of conifers in all shapes and sizes.

New Trees, Irrigation System, and Stone Pavilions

For the past three years, the Garden's Director of Living Collections and Senior Curator of

Trees and Shrubs, Todd Forrest, has scoured nurseries, research fields, and plant collections from Connecticut to Oregon, searching for rare and beautiful specimens for the collection. Forrest's goal is to display as wide a range of cultivated conifers as possible: everything from the monkey puzzle tree and weeping giant sequoia to classic cultivated forms such as Silver Curls fir and Blue Star juniper. Approximately 250 new conifers have been added, including as-yet-unnamed dwarf white pines from the research nursery of legendary plantsman Sidney Waxman, professor emeritus at the University of Connecticut.

Another major undertaking involved bolstering the health of existing trees through systematic mulching, fertilizing, and remedial pruning to improve growing conditions and reinvigorate older plants. In addition, dense plantings were added to screen and absorb outside noise and the dramatic rock outcroppings in the landscape were cleared. Additional massive boulders have been positioned to create new beds for the display of dwarf conifers. A stone and wood pavilion, perched atop an impressive rock outcrop, gives a dramatic new view over mature and newly planted conifers. Interpretative signs describing the history of the

collection and its exciting additions have been added, and new tram and pedestrian paths installed to improve access.

The natural beauty of the area is enhanced by new bluestone paving inside the gateway plaza and pavilions. Illumination of the collection's entrance and plaza enables this area to be used for special events at night. Finally, to facilitate the future care of the collection, a new irrigation system was introduced, drainage systems upgraded, and additional power sources installed.

Trees Both Ancient and Current

Conifers are an ancient group of plants that evolved over the last 300 million years into more than 600 different species. Many are treasured as ornamentals around the world. In 35 years of world travel, a famous collector, Colonel Robert H. Montgomery, amassed a spectacular collection of indigenous and exotic conifers for his estate in Cos Cob, Connecticut. He began donating specimens to The New York Botanical Garden in the '30's and '40's, including many rare varieties that are irreplaceable today. This is the only known comprehensive set of dwarf and specialty conifers from R. H. Montgomery.

About 50 years ago, renowned landscape architect Marian Cruger Coffin, who designed the Winterthur Museum grounds in Delaware, was retained to arrange the conifers artfully in the Garden. The collection was dedicated on

May 26, 1949, with the planting of a dwarf Colorado spruce donated to the Garden by Colonel Montgomery and named for him (*Picea pungens* 'R.H. Montgomery'). It still stands today.

The Benenson Ornamental Conifers consist of approximately 440 conifers, including 70 donated by Montgomery. They complement the pine, fir, and spruce collections in the Ross Conifer Arboretum near the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory. Benenson Ornamental Conifer specimens range in size from 5 to 85 feet tall. Highlights include an 'R. H. Montgomery' dwarf blue spruce that is nearly 100 years old and the parent of all such plants that are now in the nursery trade; a group of prehistoric dawn redwoods from China, a species thought to be extinct until they were re-discovered in a remote Chinese valley in the 1940's; and a rare reproducing pair of Japanese torreyas, which are highly endangered in the wild. Echoing the 1949 dedication, the opening ceremony launching the restoration of the collection in 2001 was also marked by the planting of a blue conifer, a blue Arizona cypress (*Cupressus glabra* 'Blue Ice').

The restoration of the Benenson Ornamental Conifers is itself unique among the great botanical garden collections in the United States. Patrick Chassé of Landscape Design Associates, Bar Harbor, Maine, researched the historic design and architectural elements. The landscape architects were Shavaun Towers and Joe

Payne of Towers/Golde, New Haven, Connecticut, and the civil engineer Frank Vultaggio of Wohl & O'Mara, Staten Island, New York. Yonkers Contracting Company, Inc., provided boulders used in the creation of the new dwarf conifer beds.

The New York Botanical Garden is a museum of plants located at Bronx River Parkway (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road in the Bronx. The Garden is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday and on Monday holidays, from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. April through October, and 10 a.m.–5 p.m. November through March. The best way to enjoy the Garden is with the *Garden Passport* that includes grounds admission, the Conservatory, Rock Garden, Native Plant Garden, Tram Tour, and Everett Children's Adventure Garden, and costs \$13 for adults, \$11 for students and seniors, \$5 for children 2–12. Grounds admission is free all day Wednesdays and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. For information call 718. 817. 8700 or visit our Web site at www.nybg.org.

Contact: Melinda Manning or Maria Izquierdo 718-817-8616



Hooray for a Successful August Plant Sale!

When only 20 members signed in for our meeting on August 21st, I was worried about the success of this sale (as perhaps only a treasurer focusing on finances would). Important it is, because this sale is the second largest of our year and one of three we hold annually. We count on these funds – and the generous contributions of our members – to cover our expenses, the largest being to bring outside speakers, often of national repute for their plant expertise, to our meetings. I might add that this is, in my judgment, our best sale of the year for several reasons. It is more focused on mature plants and proven performers, often not easily found in the trade, and at bargain prices. Members often share their rare treasures which makes this a much-anticipated and special event.

I'm happy to report my financial worries were unfounded. Contributions, while perhaps not as numerous as past years, were unparalleled in quality. The silent bidding table saw lots of activity, some big spenders, and some incredible bargains. Plant enthusiasts that we all seem to be, we bought away and raised \$722 in about an hour of swift and active (and democratic) selling. I think it's fair to say everyone went home happy about the day's proceedings.

A big thank you to all contributors, buyers, and helpers (setting up, cleaning up, etc.) for another successful sale. Happy growing!

Carol Eichler

Wild Orchids Will Grow in Your Garden!

Reprinted from The Wild Orchid catalog

When most outdoor gardeners hear “orchid,” they automatically think of the tropical species, which require a green-house or indoor growing. But, there is a whole class of orchids known as “hardy terrestrial orchids.” These perennials actually survive and thrive in soil and in temperate to more frigid climates. Some of them actually require temperatures at or below freezing for several months each year to maintain proper growth, much like tulips or daffodils. This is not to say that terrestrial orchids can be planted anywhere and expected to grow! To be successful, it is absolutely necessary to plan ahead and prepare a site to meet the special requirements for the species to flourish.

Generally speaking, the most important requirement is good soil drainage, which in most cases requires excavation and the addition of premixed soil in a raised bed

manner. Sand and/or Perlite are the key ingredients to achieving good drainage. Soil moisture requirements vary among species, and the addition of peat increases the moisture holding capacity, which is necessary for most species. All orchids grow better with low mineral and well-aerated water, i.e. rainwater.

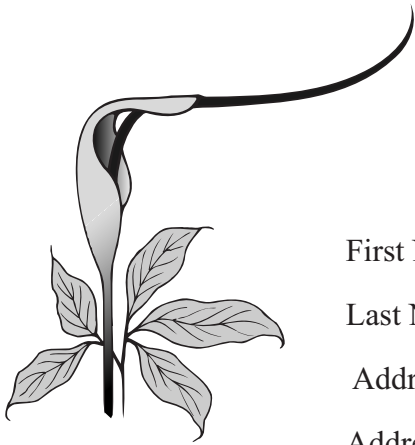
Orchids have very low nutrient requirements, and do not tolerate high nutrient fertilizers. The addition of a good leaf or bark compost to the soil mix is sufficient to supply necessary nutrients. The use of reduced strength fertilizers is sometimes necessary, but only at about 20-25% of the rate recommended for most flowering plants.

Editor's note:

The Wild Orchid Company www.WildOrchidCompany.com 215-297-5403 ships in late fall (November to mid-December) and spring (March to mid-April).

Bill Mathis





ADIRONDACK CHAPTER

North American Rockgarden Society

Membership Form 2005

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address 1 _____

Address 2 _____

City : _____ State: ___ Zip: ___

Date:

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

email: _____@_____

new
member

renewal

Individual
life time

family
membership

family
life time

nursery

Have you joined NARGS national?

Is your garden open for visitors?

Would you like to help? (Please circle below and/ or give details)

Hospitality: Host a picnic Host a speaker Provide transportation Make phone calls

Newsletter: Write or solicit articles draw pictures provide photos

Events: be a speaker (subject) _____ suggest a speaker (who?) _____

other suggestions _____

Would you like receive the Green Dragon (our newsletter) as

paper copy

as a PDF file
attached to an email

an email providing you with a link to an
online version of the Green Dragon

Please remember that you can always print out the electronic version of the newsletter if you prefer not to read it while sitting at your computer. Sending it electronically is easier and cheaper for the chapter and makes it possible to include color photos and links to great garden sites, which will not be available to those who receive the paper version.

Please fill out and include your check for \$10.00 for an individual, \$150 for individual life time, \$15 for a family, \$225 for a family life time, and \$25.00 for a one year nursery membership and

send to:

Art Trimble, 37 Songbird Lane Rochester, NY 14620