



ADIRONDACK CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

Visit our blog: acnargs.blogspot.com

March 2015

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MARCH 21 SPEAKER MEETING: JOHN BARTRAM, AMERICA'S FIRST REAL STORY OF NATIVE PLANTS AND HOW THEY CHANGED ENGLISH GARDENS

Nari Mistry



Our March meeting will feature the team of Lisa and Tim Ballantyne, who will talk to us about the first American botanist, 18th century horticulturist and explorer John Bartram. Linnaeus said he was the "greatest natural botanist in the world."

Lisa Ballantyne has a degree in Horticulture from Morrisville College. She is a Master Gardener with over 25 years gardening experience, having worked in several retail garden centers before opening Ballantyne Gardens in 1997. With Lisa's organic approach to gardening Ballantyne Gardens is a leading source of organic gardening solutions. As a landscape designer Lisa designs gardens for bird and butterfly attraction, for children, water gardens, gardens for winter interest and more.

Tim Ballantyne is a graduate of Lemoyne College with a degree in Business Administration and Marketing. After 20 years of working in gardening for others, Tim joined wife Lisa in opening Ballantyne Gardens. For the past 13 years he and Lisa have been tour leaders to Longwood Gardens and The Philadelphia Flower Show. Tim & Lisa have both given many talks to local garden clubs, at local libraries, and on radio and television, as well as at local garden centers.

Our meeting will be held in Room 404 Whetzel Room, Plant Science Building, Cornell University (see map on last page). Brown bag lunch at noon. Drinks provided, refreshments to share are always welcome. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.

FROM THE CHAIR

John Gilrein

For those who were not at the February meeting, I was elected to the Chairperson position. In an ideal world, Carol would have stayed on until I retired from my day job, but ideal worlds just seem to be fantasies. Along with that, I gave up being the Program Co-coordinator with Nari, and gave up the Plant-of-the-Month Coordinator. We're hoping to recruit someone to help with the Program, and Colette Colby De Haan and Vashti De Haan will be coordinating Plant of the Month. I'll especially miss my Plant-of-the-Month job (it was a good fit for a pathological plant person); at the same time it will be good to have new blood and new energy for the POM. It will be fun to be surprised every month to find out what we'll be getting for our member benefit plant.

It was quite a few years ago when Carol recruited me to be on the Board of ACNARGS; I was initially somewhat reluctant. In spite of my sometimes demanding day job, and all the gardening I try to do, I have really enjoyed being a part of ACNARGS. Please consider volunteering for whatever you're able to contribute.

Lots of you may be feeling weary of snow and winter after an intense month of snow and cold and more snow. I'm enjoying the snow more, now that I'm not actively shoveling so much. I think it will be interesting to see how the plants fared this winter, being so well protected by a thick blanket of snow (we have about 2 to 3 feet currently on the ground in South Onondaga, NY). I'm testing my gardening limits, as last year I planted some woody plants that should not be hardy here, like *Sequoia gigantea* (giant sequoia), *Magnolia grandiflora* (southern magnolia), and *Lagerstromia indica* (crepe myrtle). They're all nicely buried in snow, so I don't think they saw the below zero temperatures that the plants above the snow line experienced. I hope the little critters, like voles, did not have too much of a smorgasbord nibbling on the plants under the snow. I have one *Euonymus japonica* that was not covered in snow that was consumed by the rabbits, but at least that wasn't too choice of a plant. Spring will be really welcome this year.

Some upcoming events to consider are the Central New York Home & Garden Show at the NY State Fairgrounds, in Syracuse on March 19 through 22; the annual alpine plant sale at Stonecrop Gardens on April 25 in Cold Spring, NY; and the NARGS annual meeting in Ann Arbor, MI, on May 7 through 10. Stonecrop has a dazzling array of interesting plant vendors, including Harvey Wrightman (previous speaker at our meetings). The annual meeting is a very worthwhile event to hear about great plants, see great gardens, and connect with other determined gardeners. We're planning to have a day of touring gardens in the Binghamton, NY area in June, and we will keep you posted on the details.

Congratulations to Mary Stauble and Bill Stark, recipients of a stipend from ACNARGS to attend the Annual Meeting. Bill and Mary have contributed in many ways to the Chapter, including hosting trough workshops and serving on the Board. We hope they will bring home some good ideas for their future gardens in Lansing.

Round 2 of the NARGS seed exchange will be underway when this newsletter goes out, so consider participating and ordering more seeds for 2015.

Hope to see you all in March!
John

MARCH PLANT-OF-THE-MONTH

Colette Colby De Haan

For the March meeting with Tim & Lisa Ballantyne speaking on John Bartram, I wanted to showcase some plants discovered by him, but this stormy and frozen season makes that too difficult to do. Another interesting plant group, guaranteed to bring some green luck, would be ... dwarf conifers!

After some delightful conversations with Tim Ballantyne, we decided to brave the weather and take advantage of a special opportunity. During Tim & Lisa Ballantyne's recent travels to some New England Flower Shows they made a very special contact with an Oregon grower who might be able to deliver some of these little charmers in time for our meeting.

We are expecting a yet to-be-determined selection of Zone 4-5 hardy dwarf conifers. They will be very small - actually large deep plugs - but a perfect challenge for us. Species and/or cultivar specific information will be provided at the meeting. (Note: If the plants don't make it in time, Colette is planning on holding them until the April meeting)

2015 MEMBERSHIP: RENEWAL REMINDER

Mary Stauble

Please welcome new member Judy Jordan from Aurora. Judy heads the Program Committee at the Southern Cayuga Garden Club. Also welcome back Debi Lampman from King Ferry after a 5-year hiatus. Many of us know her from touring beautiful Bedlam Gardens.

If you have not renewed for 2015, you should do it now so you'll be eligible to purchase the plant-of-the-month! 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.

CRAIG CRAMER RECEIVES CHAPTER SERVICE AWARD

Carol Eichler

In every organization there always seems to be one "go to" person who makes the rest of us wonder what we'd do without him or her. For the Adirondack Chapter that person is Craig Cramer and we have recognized him by presenting him with a Chapter Service Award at the February meeting.

When he was a new member of our Chapter more years ago than I can pinpoint, we recruited him to become editor of our newsletter, the *Green Dragon*. Not only did he serve in that position for several years, he revamped our website where each issue of the newsletter is posted. While he has relinquished the editorship, he continues to serve as our webmaster. For these tasks alone he would be worthy of the Chapter Service Award but his service to our Chapter doesn't end there.

Craig is the first person to arrive at our meetings - opening up the room (after first reserving the space), hauling in our multiple boxes of supplies including the portable lending library (which he stores in his office), and often proceeding to set up the room. At the conclusion of our meetings he completes the task he began by hauling everything back to his office for storage until the next meeting.

Craig is also our in-house expert for all things technical which means he coordinates with our program speakers to make sure the audio-visual portion of the presentations (that is, PowerPoint, slides, etc.) work. For anyone who has had this responsibility, you can appreciate that this is no simple task.

What's remarkable is that Craig does all this work for the Chapter - much of it behind-the-scenes of the casual observer - reliably, seamlessly, and cheerfully. We think it's about time to say thank you Craig! This Chapter Service Award is just our small way of recognizing how much we appreciate all that he does, and continues to do, for the Adirondack Chapter.

For Craig, helping others is in his blood; it's a lifestyle choice. This past year he was presented with one of two Unsung Hero Awards from Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, where he works as a communication specialist. In the presentation they expressed much the same sentiment as our Chapter: "he does whatever it takes...." We couldn't have said it any better. Craig is certainly our Unsung Hero. Again, we thank you, Craig.

NEWS FROM NARGS: BACK TO ALPINES

Excerpted from Great Lakes Chapter NARGS Newsletter

This year's Annual Meeting is hosted by the Great Lakes Chapter NARGS in Ann Arbor, Michigan on May 7-10. Only a day's drive away, this will be a superb chance to see and hear great speakers and see great gardens, to say nothing of buying super plants, tufa, troughs, and books.

Our last newsletter offered extensive information about the tours and speakers and can be referred to [here](#).

Registration cost is US\$290 (US\$325 after March 20) and includes all meals Friday through Sunday morning. The host hotel, Weber's Inn in Ann Arbor, costs extra with a special rate of \$99 per night using code MAR050715 through March 20, 2015. Call (800) 443-3050. <http://www.weberinn.com>.



On the day tour: the gardens of Jacques & Andrea Thompson

If you plan to go, you should register through the NARGS website www.nargs.org, reserve your hotel room on your own, then contact Terry Humphries (see Responsible People below) who is coordinating carpooling and hotel room-sharing details. Let's hope for a great showing from our Chapter to this stimulating and nearby meeting.

A CELEBRATION OF 50 YEARS IN THE GARDEN

Bill Plummer



Come join us on the patio for wine and cheese and music as we celebrate a half-century of gardening. Enjoy the flowering trees and the many rhododendrons that will be in bloom. Walk the paths through both the front and back woods marveling at the trilliums, Virginia bluebells and a host of spring wildflowers in bloom.

When: Saturday, May 23rd and Sunday, May 24th

Time: 10am-4pm

Where: Bill and Jane Plummer's, 10 Fox Lane East, Painted Post, NY

In 1965, the year after our house was built in a new wooded development, I followed a landscape plan prepared for us and took a summer off from sailing to plant shrubs and trees and to amend the soil in the front woods. That year and in the succeeding years I added more ferns and wildflowers to those on our lot as well as more native shrubs and trees and a few exotic specimens such as *Enkianthus* and *Acer griseum*. Some great laurel that my dad brought up from the Poconos honed my interest in rhododendrons, both hybrids and species. The already small lawn was further reduced by the construction of a stone wall separating the front woods from the lawn. The wall provided an area for rock garden plants.

The garden has received awards from the VIIth District Federated Garden Clubs of New York and the Finger Lakes Native Plant Society.

WHAT YOU MISSED IN FEBRUARY



Xanthoceras sorbifolium This was the spectacular white flowered small tree in Lee Nelson's slide, AKA Shiny Leaf Yellowhorn or Chinese Flowering Chestnut., that she shared with

us at the February Members' Share Meeting. Per Michael Dirr, it's a small tree up to 18 feet high by 24 feet wide, hardy to at least zone 4, native to Northern China, adaptable to sun, well drained soil, and not fussy about pH. Look for the long-lasting star-shaped blooms in late spring emerging just before the lustrous compound leaves, then followed by 2.5" green fruits, resembling buckeyes, except the seeds are edible. The tree is slow growing but begins blooming when it is still quite young. Because it is tap-rooted, transplanting may be a challenge. It may be difficult to find in nurseries, but it's certainly a plant to seek out. Lee, will you share some seeds?

WAYS YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO OUR CHAPTER

Carol Eichler

Would you consider getting more involved with ACNARGS? Contact John Gilrein, Chapter Chair. Here are some ways to contribute:

- host a speaker by providing overnight accommodations
- join outside speakers for dinner and conversation
- suggest topics and/or speakers for program meetings
- bring refreshments to our meetings
- offer to be a trip/tour coordinator
- write a newsletter article or send in garden photos
- prepare a slideshow or presentation for Members' Share
- donate plants for our plant sales
- submit regular posts to our Facebook page

UPCOMING 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 Whetzel Room, 404 Plant Science Building, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY (see map on the last page).

March 21: Tim & Lisa Ballantyne of Ballantyne Gardens: "John Bartram, America's First real Story of Native Plants and How They Changed English Gardens." Plant-of-the-Month sale to current members

April 18: Emily Detrick, Stonecrop, the history of the alpine collection, tried and true alpine/rock garden plants for the northeast, and lessons on cultural and site requirements. Annual Seedling Exchange and Plant-of-the-Month sale to current members

May 7-10: NARGS National Conference in Ann Arbor, Michigan (our Chapter's overnight trip for the year)

May 16: ACNARGS Plant Sale at annual CCETC Garden Fair and Plant Sale

June TBD: Chapter day trip to visit Binghamton area gardens

August 15: Annual Picnic and Members' Only Plant Sale, at the Picnic Shelter at Upper Buttermilk Falls State Park, Ithaca

September 19: Speaker TBD. Plant-of-the-Month sale to current members at Ken Post Lab Classroom.

October 17: Speaker TBD. Plant-of-the-Month sale to current members. Location to be determined.

November 14: Sharee Solow preceded by dish-to-pass luncheon and brief annual meeting. Note 2nd Saturday meeting date and location at Ken Post Lab Classroom, Cornell.

As we learn them, details of Chapter activities will be included in future newsletters, our blog, acnargs.blogspot.com, and our Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/acnargs>.

SELECT CALENDAR OF GARDEN EVENTS

To have a garden event in your area listed send all pertinent information to Carol Eichler at carolithaca@gmail.com

Feb. 28-March 8: Philadelphia Flower Show; theflowershows.com

March 7: Worm Composting. 10 a.m. to 12 noon at T.C. Cooperative Extension. \$10 per household. Call to register at 272-2292

March 8: Botanical Garden Tour from NC through the South to Ohio, presented by Pat Curran, from 2:30 – 4p.m. sponsored by Tompkins County Cooperative Extension, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Suggested donation of \$3

March 11-15: Boston Flower Show; bostonflowershow.com

March 17: Deer-Resistant Ornamental Plants for Your Garden 6:30-8:30 p.m. at T.C. Cooperative Extension. Pre-registration recommended; call 272-2292

March 18: Arieh Tal, From Coltsfoot to Aster – A Visual Guided Tour of Our Native & Naturalized Sunflower Family Species (Asteraceae) . 7-8:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Church annex. FLNPS . Visit FLNPS.org for info

March 19-22: Plantasia Garden & Landscape Show Theme: Every Garden Tells a Story, Hamburg, NY. plantasiany.com

March 21: Akiva Silver, Winter Tree Walk. Visit FLNPS.org for info

March 21: Fruit Tree pruning & Grafting 11a.m.-1p.m., Indian Creek farm, Rt. 96, Ithaca sponsored by Tompkins County Cooperative Extension. \$5-10 sliding scale fee plus \$5 for grafting materials. Call 272-2292 to register

March 26: Banking on the Rain - Rain Barrels and Rain Gardens 6:30-8:30 p.m. at T.C. Cooperative Extension. Pre-registration recommended; call 272-2292

March 28: Spring Into Gardening! Several gardening workshops offered throughout the day. Full schedule available at www.ccetompkins.org. \$8 per workshop of 4 for \$25

April 1: Rock Garden officially opens at New York Botanical Garden; depending on weather the opening may be earlier or later; check nybg.org)

April 1: Know Your Soil, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at T.C. Cooperative Extension. Hands-on workshop; bring your soil sample from home and learn to assess texture, color, drainage, pH, etc. \$5-10 sliding scale fee.

April 4 (tentatively): Open Days at Hitch Lyman's, sponsored by the Garden Conservancy; www.gardenconservancy.org. Check the website as other Open Days gardens are scheduled throughout the northeast.

April TBD: Garden in the Woods opens; annual plant sale; for specifics visit [New England Wildflower Society](#)

April 9 Landscape Design Part I. 6:30-8:30 p.m. AND

April 16: Landscape Design Part II, 6:30 -8:30 p.m. at T.C. Cooperative Extension. \$5-10 sliding scale fee per session. 272-2292. www.ccetompkins.org for details

April 15: Colleen Wolpert, Caterpillar Gardening: The Plants That Butterflies and Moths Need to Complete Their Life Cycles. 7-8:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Church annex. Visit [FLNPS.org](#) for info

April 25: Alpine Plant Sale, Stonecrop; [stonecrop.org](#)

May 1-3: National Show American Primrose Society, Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Boylston, MA (coinciding with Seven States Daffodil Society Show. Info at [americanprimrosesociety.org](#)

May 5: Easy Flowers to Grow 6:30-8:30 p.m. at T.C. Cooperative Extension. Pre-registration recommended; call 272-2292

May 8-17: Lilac Festival, Rochester. [Rochester-lilac-festival](#)

May 20: William Stein, Binghamton U., Gilboa Fossil Forest. 7-8:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Church annex. Visit [FLNPS.org](#) for info

May 23 & 24: Garden Open House. 50 Years in the Garden at Bill and Jane Plummer's, 10 Fox Lane East, Painted Post, NY. 2-4 pm

August 1: Open Garden Days, Tompkins County through Garden Conservancy

August 14-16: Northeast Regional American Conifer Society Meeting, Wayne, PA; [ACS Northeast Regional Meeting](#)

Sept. 10-12: National American Conifer Society Meeting, Sonoma County CA. [Conifer Society 2015 National Meeting](#)

Sept. 12: Gathering of Gardeners. [Gatheringofgardeners.com](#)

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 \$10 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, 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 \$30 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 hear and visit with outstanding plants people from around the world who present talks and workshops.

RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE/2014 BOARD MEMBERS

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

Chair: John Gilrein, basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu

Program: Nari Mistry, nbm2@cornell.edu

Program Committee Members: **Could this be you?**

Secretary: Mary Stauble, mes2@cornell.edu

Treasurer: BZ Marranca, mmm10@cornell.edu

Plant Sales Chair: David Mitchell, dwm23@cornell.edu

Plant Sales Committee Members: Michael Loos, BZ Marranca, Carol Eichler

Plant of the Month: Colette Colby De Haan, 4kotobuki@gmail.com and Vashti De Haan, vadkam@yahoo.com

Membership: Mary Stauble, mes2@cornell.edu

New Member Hospitality: Terry Humphries, terryehumphries@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Carol Eichler carolithaca@gmail.com

Newsletter Assistant: Pat Curran, pc21@cornell.edu

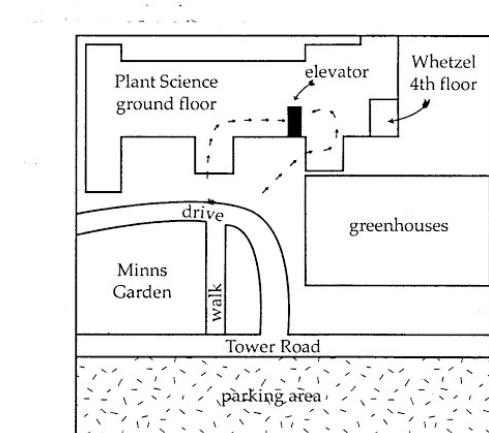
Webmaster, Program Tech: Craig Cramer, cdrramer@gmail.com

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 Carol Eichler,

carolithaca@gmail.com. Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be in March 2015.



Map: Whetzel Room on the Cornell University Campus