

ADIRONDACK  
CHAPTER

*North American Rock Garden Society*

# Green Dragon Tales

Visit our blog: [acnargs.blogspot.com](http://acnargs.blogspot.com)

April 2015

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- April 18 Amy Detrick
- From the Chair
- Membership
- Remembering Marsha
- NARGS Annual Meeting in Michigan
- Invitation to Dieter Zschummel talk
- Chapter Garden Tour
- Ways to Contribute
- Upcoming ACNARGS Programs
- Calendar of Garden Events
- People

## APRIL 18: EMILY DETRICK ON CULTIVATING ALPINE PLANTS IN THE NORTHEAST

Nari Mistry



We look forward to a particularly interesting and helpful talk for April, featuring everything we would like to learn about successfully cultivating alpine plants here in the northeast United States.

Emily Detrick is a graduate student in the Department of Horticulture at Cornell University. Before coming to Ithaca, she was the Alpine Horticulturist at Stonecrop Gardens in the Hudson Valley, where she was trained in the cultivation of a diverse collection of alpine plants from around the world, developed and maintained by the late Frank Cabot and long-time director Caroline Burgess.

She will be speaking about Stonecrop Gardens' methods for alpine cultivation in the northeast, including the history, site development, and tried-and-true plant selections cultivated by the garden over the last six decades.

As you can see, she is uniquely qualified to tell us what we need to know as we struggle to coax alpine plants to flourish and bloom in our unpredictable Ithaca environment!

So come listen to Emily and walk away with new ideas and helpful handouts including:

- A list of recommended alpines for the NE, introductory, intermediate, or difficult
- Preferred sources for information on alpine cultivation
- Stonecrop's alpine soil recipe
- Upcoming dates for Stonecrop's workshops, plant sale, and trough making

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

My theme for April is *Better Late Than Never*. It goes along with the transition this year from Winter into Spring. Even here in one of the higher parts of Onondaga County with our 10 feet of snow each year, we seldom have consistent snow cover on the ground throughout the month of March. This year, the ground outside my house was almost completely snow covered until this week (I'm writing this on April 3). It was probably good for moderating the soil temperature, but there was almost nothing blooming until yesterday, when I was pleased to see *Galanthus* (snowdrops), *Eranthis* (winter aconite), and *Cyclamen coum* freshly in blossom. Today I saw the first *Crocus*, and soon the *Helleborus niger* (Christmas rose) that was blooming in early winter will be uncovered. I did not really mind the winter so much (the skiing was really good), but it's still great to have Spring finally arriving, albeit a little late [BLTN] (Winter haters can throw barbs at me at the meeting).



Somehow I missed the first round of the NARGS seed exchange, time was just moving too fast. I did get in on round 2 of the seed exchange [BLTN], kind of expecting many choices might not be available, and ordering a few extra packets of seed to make up for it. NARGS came through with the seed order really quickly, and I ended up with almost everything I ordered. If everything I ordered germinates, I will be inundated with plants (perhaps not that bad a fate). Well, I only got 2 flats planted, and they're sitting outside stratifying. I will get that 3<sup>rd</sup> flat planted this weekend [BLTN]. Maybe I am lucky that it has not gotten too warm, as I still need some chilly temperatures to stratify flat #3. So, obviously I won't have seedlings in time for the April 18 meeting, though I hope to have lots for the summer picnic [BLTN]. If you're not a NARGS member, it is really worthwhile to join our national organization, and the seed exchange is the most tangible benefit of this worthy organization, so I hope I can persuade others to join.

The big exception to my theme is my Spring hellebore order, which thankfully Pine Knot delayed shipping by 2 weeks. The garden is presently quite unfit for planting here, Pine Knot recognized that it was an exceptional season and my original shipping date was quite a bit premature. In 2 weeks, perhaps the snow will be gone and the ground not so sodden with snowmelt.

It's a good thing everyone isn't late like me, so if you have seedlings, bring some to our April seedling exchange, and it's a good idea to bring a container or a bag to carry your seedlings back home. When you can start working the soil, maybe in a few weeks, it will be time to start potting up plants for our annual May plant sale at the Garden Fair. If you can pot up plants a few weeks prior to the plant sale on May 16, the plants will have time to recover, look more perky, and be more marketable. But we'll still take plants potted up "last minute." Just keep 'em well watered, and .....better late than never.

We have a great program for April. Why not come in time for lunch (noonish) to have more time to socialize? Coming up in June, thanks to Lee Nelson, we have an interesting garden tour day planned on June 20 in the Binghamton area with 4 gardens and optional side trips. After you get to Binghamton, the gardens are all in close proximity, so the driving between gardens will be easy. It's a good way to celebrate the Summer solstice.

John

## 2015 MEMBERSHIP: RENEWAL REMINDER

Mary Stauble

Please welcome back Graham Egerton from Cazenovia after a 5 year hiatus. Many of us know him from touring his beautiful garden last year. If you have not renewed for 2015 you should do it now so you can get the member discount on the plant-of-the-month and at the plant sale! 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](mailto:mes2@cornell.edu) if you have any questions.

## REMEMBERING MARCIA

John Gilrein

Long-time Chapter member Marcia Meigs indulged her lifelong interest in gardening, with special interests including Arisaema, Clivia, Galanthus, Helleborus, and Hosta. She was a generous donor of plants for our spring plant sale and she joyfully shared her glorious spring garden with fellow plant lovers. One of the highlights of the Garden Fair plant sale day was getting a personal tour of Marcia's garden.



Marcia died peacefully at home on Saturday, March 14, 2015. Donations in Marcia's memory may be made to the food pantry at St. John's Episcopal Church or to a charity of one's choice.

## NEWS FROM NARGS: LAST CALL FOR ANNUAL MEETING – BACK TO ALPINES

Tony Reznicek



Let me give you an update on our NARGS Annual General Meeting in Ann Arbor May 7-10, 2015. We have extended the early registration deadline to April 22. However, we have been told that there are not too many rooms left at Weber's Inn at our NARGS Group Discount Rate (which will also expire April 6 – so book quickly). If you don't get a room at Weber's, there are some hotels close by; contact Susan Reznicek ([reznicek@umich.edu](mailto:reznicek@umich.edu)) for details.

We are offering 3 programs by top notch speakers – two international; two days of guided garden tours of some of the best rock gardens in Michigan, done by bus so no worries about driving or parking; four workshops/demonstrations; guided visits to two natural areas near Ann Arbor to see cool plants in the wild; plus great meals at Ann Arbor's own Weber's Inn for two days.

And I wanted especially to highlight some things that may be new to you. We are going to have a superb plant sale.

Jacques and Andrea Thompson's  
Garden in Ypsilanti, MI

Not only will we have nurseries like Wrightman Alpines, Arrowhead Alpines, and Benedicts with great alpines and rock garden plants, but Andy and Carol Duvall will bring their wonderful select woody plants; Don LaFond will be selling his great looking troughs; Ray Price of Great Lakes Orchids will be selling unique hardy orchids propagated from seed; and we will have two booksellers: Betty Mackey Books, plus White Raven Books, dealing in used and rare books.

Most especially, I wanted to say that we will also have our own chapter table stocked not only with many of the rare native plants features in the recent Quarterly articles, but we have also done quite a bit of work in importing a shipment of choice Japanese plants from a Japanese wholesale nursery. We will have both alpines and woodlanders at excellent prices, including choice but growable rarities typically available, if at all, only at very high prices.

Some examples include rare forms of Adonis, rare forms of Heloniopsis, Ranzania japonica, Shortias, Pteridophyllum racemosum, Dicentra peregrina, Diananthe caerulea, and many others. These were selected for growability in our area with proper siting and preparation, so make sure you get in on this.

You just have to have some of these! Even more, the chapter will have lots of tufa, and a silent auction with terrific, one-of-a-kind items, including plants, books, and rocks.

All this for \$290 – it's a deal you can't beat anywhere in the world!

So please sign up – <https://www.nargs.org/ann-arbor-registration>.

## INVITATION TO DIETER ZSCHUMMEL TALK

*Don Dembowski*

April 25 is the date for Stonecrop's Alpine Plant Sale in Cold Spring, NY, 9AM-2PM. However, it is also the day Dieter Zschummel, NARGS sponsored speaker, will speak to the Hudson Valley Chapter NARGS and we are invited to attend. His 1 p.m. talk is "One year in our Garden in the Middle of Germany." You could go to the sale in the morning, tour Stonecrop, grab lunch, and then join the Hudson Valley chapter at the Lyndhurst Carriage House, 635 So. Broadway, a half hour south of Stonecrop in the afternoon.

Dieter has been interested in rock garden plants since the '60's and has explored mountain habitats since 1967. He lives in Wallendorf, a small town near Leipzig. Before 1989, he visited the mountains of Eastern Europe, and after the fall of the Iron Curtain, has botanized in the Western U.S. as well as China and Iran.

In his garden Dieter grows all kinds of alpines, bulbs and woodland plants. He favors cushion plants, especially Androsace and Dionysia. He has a special interest in propagation allowing him to keep these plants in cultivation in an unfavorable climate.

*Editor's Note: Why not consider making this an overnight trip and visiting New York Botanic Garden? The Rock Garden and Native Plant Garden should be spectacular at this time of year and there are inexpensive motels nearby.*

## PLAN NOW FOR JUNE 20<sup>TH</sup> GARDEN TOUR

*John Gilrein*

Save the Date! June 20, 2015 we will have garden tours of 4 private gardens in the Binghamton area. The gardens are all be close to the Binghamton/Chenango Bridge exit off Interstate 81, and

within a short drive of each other. Gardens include those of Lee Nelson and Camilla MacLeod (ACNARGS members), and Karen Anderson and Mary Matwey. This year's garden tour promises to be an interesting day with diverse gardens. Details will be in the next issue of the *Green Dragon*.

## 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).*

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 15: Set up for ACNARGS Plant Sale: help needed; contact David Mitchell

May 16: ACNARGS Plant Sale at annual CCETC Garden Fair and Plant Sale 9-2pm, Ithaca High School, 1401 North Cayuga Street, Ithaca, NY

June 20: Chapter day trip to visit Binghamton area gardens. Details to come.

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

September 19: Krissy Boys & Rosemarie Parker: (Tentative Title) All about Seeds: collecting, cleaning, storing, stratification, etc. Plant-of-the-Month sale to current members. Note location is Ken Post Lab Classroom.

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

November 14: Sharee Solow, horticulturist, landscape designer and garden writer from Philadelphia; speaker preceded by dish-to-pass luncheon and brief annual meeting. Note 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday meeting date.

As we learn them, details of Chapter activities will be included in future newsletters, our blog, [acnargs.blogspot.com](http://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](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com)*

April 11 (rescheduled): Open Days at Hitch Lyman's, sponsored by the Garden Conservancy; [www.gardenconservancy.org](http://www.gardenconservancy.org). Check the website as other Open Days gardens are scheduled throughout the northeast.

April 11: Garden in the Woods opens; for specifics visit [New England Wildflower Society](http://NewEnglandWildflowerSociety.org)

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](http://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](http://FLNPS.org) for info

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

April 25: "One Year in our Garden in the Middle of Germany," presented by Dieter Zchumel at Hudson Valley Chapter NARGS monthly meeting, at Lyndhurst Carriage House, 635 S. Broadway, Tarrytown, NY at 1 pm. as part of the NARGS's Speaker Tour.

April 26: Wildflower Celebration 2015, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Mt. Cuba Center, located at 3120 Barley Mill Road, Hockessin, Delaware. Info [here](#).

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](http://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](http://Rochester-lilac-festival.org)

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

June 20: Fall Creek Garden Collective's annual walking tour, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Maps available at Thompson Park, Ithaca.

June 22: Carol Eichler, Rock Garden Basics. Suburban Garden Club, Manlius Library in Manlius, NY; lunch followed by presentation, noon – 2:30 pm

August 1: Open Garden Days, Tompkins County through Garden Conservancy (5 open gardens so far)

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](#)

October 13: Carol Eichler, Making of the Wurster Memorial Garden. Liberty Hyde Bailey Garden Club, Ken Post Lab Classroom, Cornell University, Ithaca, 6:30 – 8:00 pm

## 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](http://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](mailto:basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu)

Program: Nari Mistry, [nbm2@cornell.edu](mailto:nbm2@cornell.edu)

Program Committee Members: Could this be you?

Secretary: Mary Stauble, [mes2@cornell.edu](mailto:mes2@cornell.edu)

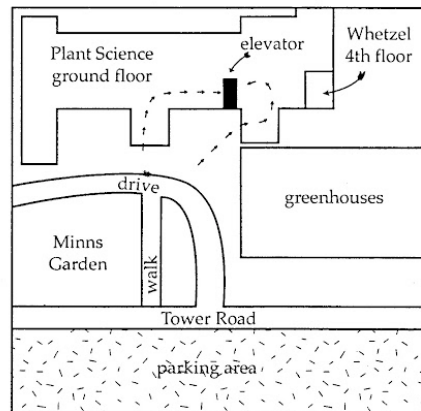
Treasurer: BZ Marranca, [mmm10@cornell.edu](mailto:mmm10@cornell.edu)

Plant Sales Chair: David Mitchell, [dwm23@cornell.edu](mailto:dwm23@cornell.edu)

Plant Sales Committee Members: Michael Loos, BZ Marranca, Carol Eichler  
Plant of the Month: Colette Colby De Haan, [4kotobuki@gmail.com](mailto:4kotobuki@gmail.com) and Vashti De Haan, [vadkam@yahoo.com](mailto:vadkam@yahoo.com)  
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## 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](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com). Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be in April 2015.



Map: Whetzel Room on the Cornell University Campus

Keep scrolling for a little eye-candy: the Dolomites as they appeared on March 27, 2015 from Carol Eichler's recent trip to Italy Obviously it was too early to catch alpine flowers. Skiing was still open until April 10<sup>th</sup>.





