



## ADIRONDACK CHAPTER

*North American Rock Garden Society*

# Green Dragon Tales

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**May 2020 SPECIAL ISSUE**

## Letter from the Chair

*John Gilrein, ACNARGS Chair*

I hope you all are doing OK in spite of the difficult time we are going through, and I hope that the social restrictions ease up in the near future. What are some options for getting out in this unique time? A lot of nurseries and plant sellers are open, though you should check their website before driving to a nursery, and bring your face mask when you go. Watson Greenhouse (Lafayette), Dickman Farms (Auburn) and The Plantsmen (Groton) are open; some have reduced open hours and modified shopping and/or payment procedures. In some cases you can shop online, pay by phone, and pick up the plants with minimal risk. And of course, there are always mail order nurseries.



*Trillium grandiflorum* at Baltimore Woods

I received our share (the chapter's) of the leftover seed from the NARGS Seed Exchange.

Since we won't be getting together until August, we're giving members the opportunity to receive some of these seeds. It's not the most perfect timing, but the price is perfect – they're free. If you're interested in receiving some of the seeds, you'll need to read the attachments sent with the notice about this issue of the Green Dragon. There are around 250 different seeds available but in **extremely limited quantities**. If you request seeds by the deadline, I'll mail the seeds that are available. If you don't meet the deadline or would like to wait until August, I'll bring the remaining surplus seeds to the picnic August 22.

FOR ANYONE ONLY RECEIVING A PAPER COPY OF THE GREEN DRAGON: If you want to participate in the chapter seed exchange and don't have email, you can call me (315) 430-8855 and I will mail you the seed exchange information. If you are looking for something specific and let me know ahead what you're looking for, I'll check whether it's available before I mail out the documents you'll need to get seeds. Please note, this option is only available for those receiving the paper version.



*Tulipa batalinii* 'Bronze Charm'

For another opportunity to get plants or give away plants, check the plant exchange in this issue. This is a little like a classified newspaper ad – the buyer contacts the seller (actually the person giving the plant(s) for the exchange. Not as good as our plant sale, but we're doing what we can.

On the subject of seeds, I have been a fan of the NARGS Seed Exchange for quite a few years. I don't have success with every single pack of seeds, but I have had many successes over the years to make it more than worthwhile. Why don't all the seeds germinate? Well, potential reasons include problems with the soil medium, sowing incorrectly, or growing conditions; and with donated seed harvesting and handling might not have been ideal.

Raising plants from seed is very satisfying, much less expensive than buying plants, and you usually get multiple plants, which is good insurance you'll still have plants surviving after the ravages of weather, imperfect watering, and trouble with critters.

Some of the plants I have successfully germinated and raised to plant in the ground: *Alyssum serpyllum*, *Aethionema grandiflorum*, *Draba* species (several), *Dryas octopetala*, *Linum campanulatum*, *Penstemon* 'Dark Tower', *Saponaria caespitosa*. If you want to start with easy seeds, annuals are generally easy from seed, and many do not need cold stratification to germinate. This year I grew *Asperula orientalis* (blue woodruff), *Cerinthe major* (honeywort), and *Nasturtium* 'Baby Rose' from seed, all germinated very reliably indoors under lights (the *Cerinthe* and *Nasturtium* from a commercial source).

Hope to see you at the picnic August 22!

## Growing Ephemerals from Seed

Carol Eichler, Plant Sales Chair

If you grow any of the plants listed below, they produce very short-lived seed called hydrophilic seeds - many of which we call ephemerals. These seeds contain a high moisture content and do not store well. So it's best if planted right away. From the Ontario Rock Garden and Hardy Plant Society Chapter website they state, "Success in propagating hydrophilic seeds is straightforward. Collect them as soon as they are ripe, then immediately clean and sow them." If you want propagate them this way, you can try your luck at letting nature takes it course and let them self-sow.

Here's the list: *Adonis vernalis*, *Amaryllis Anemone nemorosa*, *Anemone quinquefolia*, *Anemonopsis*, *Anthurium*, *Asarum*, *Caltha palustris*, *Caulophyllum*, *Castanea sativa*, *Claytonia*, *Clintonia*, *Clivia*, *Coptis trifolia*, *Dicentra*, *Dysosma*, *Eomecon chionantha*, *Hepatica*, *Hylomecon vernalis*, *Jeffersonia*, *Lindera benzoin*, *Medeola*, *Maianthemum*, *Nerine*, *Paris quadrifolia*, *Plagiorhegma*, *Podophyllums* (except *hexandrum*), *Ranzania*, *Sanguinaria*, *Symplocarpus*, *Stylophorum*, *Trillium albidum* and *grandiflorum*, *Uvularia*

## Road Trip worthy Ithaca Area Nurseries

*Carol Eichler, Plant Sales Chair*

During this pandemic we are told to support our local businesses. Since I'm not much of a consumer, my support is going (aside from food that is) to local nurseries.

Here's a list of local nurseries that I visit and the reasons I go there. For those from the Ithaca area, this might not be new info; for those who aren't, here are some reasons to make the trip. My visits include a good amount of impulse purchases too (you know, go for something specific and come home with a carload). These businesses are open because selling plants for food production means they are considered an essential business. But it also means if they offer ornamentals, they are allowed to sell them – a fine line of distinction. I might add browsing is half the fun and anything green is looking pretty good to my eyes right now. Flowering is an added bonus.

Perhaps in the past you were less inclined to travel to buy plants. Today those nurseries seem to have a special appeal because it creates the combined opportunity to get out of the house. Many of them are outdoors and to date they have not been swarmed with shoppers. Mask up and take a road trip. Or take a virtual road trip by going online. Each business is currently offering contactless shopping options.

**[Early Bird Farms](#)**, 1100 Elmira Rd. (Route 13), Newfield. A seasonal nursery of long-standing, their sales room on Route 13 reflects a broad inventory of greenhouse-grown annual flowers, veggie starts, herbs, some tropicals, and perennials. I especially love their 4-packs of perennials because you never know what you'll find, usually some are suitable for the rock garden, and sold at bargain prices.

**[Ithaca Agway](#)**, 2 locations: 213 S. Fulton St. and 2309 Triphammer Rd. I go to the downtown one because it is more convenient; their 2<sup>nd</sup> store, located in the northeast, is larger and I can't vouch for their inventory of plants. Open year-round this is my "go to" store for garden tools and supplies and I always check out their nursery "just to see what they have." If you're planning a nursery run, this one is conveniently located "on the way" to your next stop. I'm a regular at their feed store to stock up on chicken grit too. And it's where I bought the stone for my rock gardens. Clearly a one-stop shop if your time is limited. [IthacaAgway.com](http://IthacaAgway.com)

**[Cayuga Landscape](#)**, 2712 N. Triphammer Rd., Ithaca. The sales room is currently closed but they invite you to browse their grounds and phone or email an order for curbside pick-up or delivery. Their current plant list does not include herbaceous perennials. Soon they will offer a large selection of choice perennials so it is worth checking back to their website for the latest updates. They also carry a good selection of dwarf conifers from Iseli. [CayugaLandscape.com](http://CayugaLandscape.com)

**[Baker's Acres](#)** of North Lansing, 1104 Auburn Rd. (Route 34), Groton. Their website offers good directions no matter where you are coming from. In my mind they are noted for their wide selection of herbs. One item I go there for is their balcony geraniums, a trailing type I lusted after when I saw it growing from balconies in Tyrolean Italy. They also carry a number of scented geraniums. [BakersAcres.net](http://BakersAcres.net)

**[The Plantsmen](#)**, 482 Peruville Rd., Groton. They grow everything they sell and they claim to offer "the greatest diversity of native plants found in central NY." You can expect to find a full line of plants from annuals to veggies, shrubs, vines and trees, and more. Hours as of this writing are limited and more material is being added to their inventory on a regular basis. [Plantsmen.com](http://Plantsmen.com)



*Lantana camara* 'Luscious Berry Blend' at the Magic Garden

**[Der Rosenmeister](#)**, 190 Seven Mile Dr., Ithaca. Specializing in hardy roses. Beautiful display gardens include many varieties of climbing roses. Open by appointment, 607-351-1336 or email [derrosenmeister@gmail.com](mailto:derrosenmeister@gmail.com).

I know there are a number of vendors that sell at **[Ithaca Farmers Market](#)**. I rarely go to IFM, but when I do. I almost always buy yet more plants. Currently Ithaca Farmers Market is open Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and is following Health Department protocol for safe social distancing. These member nurseries were listed in their vendor directory: Dragonfly Nursery, Graceful Gardens, Kingbird Farm, Pleasant Valley Gardens, Stony Creek Nursery, The Little Barn, and The Magic Garden. There may be more.

Author's note: See the article in next month's issue about **[Kingbird Farms](#)**, a new local source for rock garden plants.

## Un-Conference T-Shirts for Sale



Are you interested in purchasing a un-Conference t-shirt? We love our logo and decided we want to print it to t-shirts and offer them for sale. Check out this mock-up, which is a reasonable facsimile to the actual product:

Beefy Fruit-of-the Loom sage green background with full color logo depicting Taughannock Falls and a botanically-accurate fern *Asplenium tricomanes* in

the foreground, found in our local gorges. Pre-orders will be taken until July 31<sup>st</sup> with mail delivery date approximately August 31<sup>st</sup>. Simply complete this order form.

SIZE CHART	S	M	X	XL	2XL
Body Length (inches)	28	29	30	31	32
Body Width (inches)	36	40	44	48	52

Cost \$20 plus \$8 for shipping per t-shirt; or save on shipping by arranging to pick up your t-shirt.

Send check payment with size, quantity, and shipping address to:

ACNARGS T-shirt  
c/o Carol Eichler  
1562 Taughannock Blvd.  
Ithaca, NY 14850

Questions: [carolithaca@gmail.com](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com) or 607-269-7070

## Internet Finds

Compiled by Carol Eichler and Kathy Purdy

**[Dutch Farmers Are Writing Special Messages in Their Tulips](#)** (Video)

**[England's Stunning, Bluebell-covered Forests](#)**

**[7 Beautiful Southern Gardens — Pollen Not Included](#)**

**[Tulips from Holland](#)**

**[Tulip festival Amsterdam](#)**

**[Winterthur Spring Garden](#)**

**[Chanticleer](#)** early spring

**[Tour of Kathy Purdy's garden](#)** (Video)

**[Virtual Garden Tours](#)**

**[Hauser + Wirth key plants from Piet Oudolf garden](#)**

**[Leon Ginenthal's rose pruning videos](#)**, only on Facebook. This is the first one.

## Spring Has Arrived at the Wurster Garden

*Carol Eichler, Plant Sales Chair*

Photos of Wurster taken by Sheila Stone on April 28.

A big thank you goes out to Sheila Stone for her kicking off our clean-up at the Wurster Memorial Rock Garden. She took these photos and as you can see, spring has arrived in the garden. Furthermore, the show is just beginning. Please make a point to stop by and watch the progression. The peak bloom is anywhere from mid-May to the first week of June.

Last year we put in a lot of new rock garden plants, many of them coming from Wrightman Alpines, while others were grown from seed and contributed by our members. We had a great

survival rate and I for one am excited to see them come to bloom and flourish. If you stop by, please feel free to pull a few weeds while you're there.



The Wurster Garden is located behind Tompkins County Cooperative Extension offices located at 613 Willow Avenue, Ithaca. You can approach the garden either from their parking lot or from Lincoln Avenue where street parking is available (hint: the latter is a much nicer approach as you walkthrough the garden gate with the rock garden as your destination).

Sheila returned for a 2nd work day accompanied by Monika Roth to continue the general clean-up. Big thanks to both!



## Ordering Surplus Surplus Seeds

*John Gilrein, ACNARGS Chair*

*Note: Seed List is attached to your emailed newsletter.*

### **About Ordering Seeds**

These seeds are 2019 seeds from the NARGS 2019/2020 Seed Exchange, and they are the seeds leftover from 2 rounds of seed ordering. NARGS provides some of the chapters with a portion of leftover seeds. These include seeds for hardy perennials (including rock garden plants and bulbs), biennials and monocarpic plants (those which die after flowering and fruiting), annuals and short lived perennials, shrubs, trees, and ferns (which have spores rather than seeds).

The seeds are donated by NARGS members, and the identification accuracy of those seeds is limited by the identification skill of the members. Occasionally, seeds will be misidentified, mostly likely with the correct genus and wrong species. Caveat emptor = let the buyer beware. Those of us who purchase seeds through the SeedEx haven't had any really unpleasant surprises (like germinating poison ivy or quackgrass). With rarest exception, there is only one of each type of seed; some species may include a few varieties; quantities are extremely limited.

The seeds provided include plants for a variety of climates, including Mediterranean or subtropical, so some may be for plants not hardy in our hardiness zones, which are USDA 4, 5, or 6, depending on where you live. It's up to you to choose plants that will be hardy for you, or experiment with plants not considered to be hardy. You could experiment and then boast that you grew redwoods – for just 1 season!

Quantities of seed in each packet vary, and the number of seeds in each packet varies depending on how many seeds were originally received by NARGS, and the anticipated desirability of those seeds. Information on hardiness of the plants represented in the Seed Exchange can usually be found on the internet, though the hardiness information may fluctuate depending on the source.

If you would like a much better selection of seeds and the opportunity to purchase 25-35 packets of seed in 2021, you can join NARGS and participate in Phase I of their Seed Exchange (35 packets are allowed only for seed donors and seed sorting volunteers).

The 2 relevant documents you will need are first the Adirondack Chapter List of Seeds, and second the NARGS List of Seeds. The list of seeds includes the Identity Number, genus, species, and variety. Seeds that are wild collected are 3000 numbers and are at the end of the alphabet letter for that genus. The NARGS List is a reference; on this list you can use the ID# to look up the specific seed packet, which may (but will not always) include flower color, plant height, and provenance (rarely, most commonly for wild collected seed). If you're not concerned about the details found on the NARGS Seed List, you can skip that step. Most seeds will need cold, moist stratification before they germinate, but this is not universal. Please follow the Seed Ordering Instructions.

### **Seed Ordering Instructions**

You may request only 10 packets of seed. Since others may order, and some of your choices may no longer be available, you can (and should) include many alternate choices. Please specify your first choices and your alternate choices, using the ID# (required) of the specific plant; the plant name is optional. Seeds will be mailed to you. If you would like more than 10 packets of seed, the seeds left after Adirondack Chapter members have received their seeds will be available at the August picnic and the Fall 2020 meetings.

You can order seeds by sending your order in an email message, including your physical address, to: John Gilrein – [jgilrein@twcny.rr.com](mailto:jgilrein@twcny.rr.com). Deadline for ordering is July 1, 2020.

## Have Some/Want Some

*Carol Eichler, Plant Sales Chair*

In lieu of our usual May plant sale, we are re-launching the Have Some/Want Some “classifieds.” Please send any listings to [carolithaca@gmail.com](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com) for inclusion in the June and subsequent newsletters. You will need to include your contact information so that respondents can get in touch with you. Then the two of you will have to work our arrangements for making the exchange.

We realize this is a poor substitute for our normal plant sale, but we wanted to create an opportunity for you to acquire a plant on your wish list or to find a good home for your excess.

Other suggestions for those extra divisions? Find another place in your garden to plant them. Donate them to the Master Gardener Volunteers for their upcoming plant sale (date to be determined, but likely late May). Contact Pat Curran, [pc21@cornell.edu](mailto:pc21@cornell.edu). Give them to a neighbor or friend. Set them at the end of your driveway with a free sign.

For plants on your wish list, perhaps the plant is listed in the surplus seed we received from the NARGS seed exchange so what better time than now to try to grow it from seed. See the article in this newsletter about obtaining seed. Or order the plant(s) from a mail order nursery. They could really use your business.

**John Gilrein** has: *Artemisia abrotanum* (southernwood) shrub with lemon scented foliage, *Caryopteris x clandonensis* (blue mist shrub), *Lamprocapnos spectabilis* (bleeding heart), *Penstemon hirsutus*, *Hieracium* species unknown, silver leaves, rhizomatous, best for trough; and *Primula cortusioides*.

I would like *Symphotrichum* (Aster) *novae-angliae* ‘Purple Dome’. Contact: [jgilrein@twcny.rr.com](mailto:jgilrein@twcny.rr.com)

## Membership

*Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator*

Please welcome new member **Rosemary Glos** - she is from [Kingbird Farm](#) in Berkshire.

It is time for some of you to renew - dues are \$15 for individuals, \$20 for a household. Check my email announcement of the newsletter link for your membership status.

If you have not renewed for 2020, you should do it now so you'll be eligible to purchase the plant-of-the-month at our meetings. 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.

## Upcoming 2020 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, 236 Tower Road, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.*

**CANCELLED: June 18-20, 2020: Foresight 2020: Exploration and Inspiration**, NARGS Annual General Meeting, hosted by ACNARGS in Ithaca, NY.

**August 22, 2020:** Members Plant Sale and Picnic, Myers Park, Lansing.

**September 19: Teri Dunn Chace**, *Seeing Seeds*, Lecture and book signing.

**October 4, SUNDAY, presentations at 11:00 & 1:00: Ger van Buiton**, Netherlands. *The Rock Garden*

at [Utrecht Botanic Gardens](#) and *Peatbeds, a Perfect Place to Grow Woodlanders and Plants of Alpine Meadows*.

**November 14: Darren Heinbecker, [Whistling Gardens](#), Canada's newest botanic garden.**

## Calendar of Select Events & Programs

**May 17: Spring Plant Sale**, Sunday, 9–2, [Ithaca Farmers Market Pavilion](#) at Steamboat Landing, 545 Third Street, Ithaca, New York. Food-producing plants only. The new location allows a more “social-distancing friendly” event with new procedures that have been designed in consultation with the Tompkins County Health Department. More info at <http://ccetompkins.org/2020PlantSale>. *Note: ACNARGS is not participating.*

**May 23, 24, 30, 31, and June 6, 7: [Linwood Gardens](#) Tree Peony Festival**, 9-4.

**CANCELLED, June 19: [Der Rosenmeister](#) open house** 4-7. Open by appointment, 607-351-1336 or email [derrosenmeister@gmail.com](mailto:derrosenmeister@gmail.com).

**June 27: Dryden Open Gate Garden and Art Tour**, 9-2.

**July 11 or 12: Southern Cayuga Garden Club Summer Tour** in the Genoa area.

**July 11: [Garden Conservancy Open Days](#)**, Ithaca area, 10-4.

**July 12: Fall Creek Garden tour**, usually 11-4.

**Aug. 8: [Garden Conservancy Open Days](#)**, Ithaca area, 10-4.

*Check out additional gardening programs of these organizations below.*

*Practical Earthkeeper*, Home Gardening Program, [Cornell Cooperative Extension](#)

[Finger Lakes Native Plant Society](#) monthly meetings

[Cornell Botanic Gardens](#) events

[Liberty Hyde Bailey Garden Club](#)

To have a garden event in your area listed send all pertinent information to David Mitchell at [david\\_mitchell\\_14850@yahoo.com](mailto:david_mitchell_14850@yahoo.com)

## About ACNARGS

We are an all-volunteer organization and one of thirty-eight NARGS affiliated chapters active in North America. Our annual Chapter activities include 5 program-speaker meetings, the *Green Dragon* newsletter, web and Facebook pages, garden visits, 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), 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. Download a membership form at [www.acnargs.org/join.pdf](http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf).

## 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 \$40 a year. Benefits include a seed exchange, a quarterly publication focused on rock gardening, and an online website 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 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.

## 2020 ACNARGS Board Members and Contacts

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: **Terry Humphries**, [terryehumphries@gmail.com](mailto:terryehumphries@gmail.com)

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

Secretary: Currently rotating amongst "Responsible People"

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

Plant Sales Chair: **Carol Eichler** [carolithaca@gmail.com](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com)

Plant Sales Committee Members: **Michael Loos**, **BZ Marranca**, **David Mitchell**

Plant of the Month: **Marlene Kobre**, [mkobre@ithaca.edu](mailto:mkobre@ithaca.edu)

Membership: Seeking someone to do this. **Could this be you?**

New Member Hospitality: **Graham Egerton**

Newsletter Editor: **David Mitchell**, [dwm23@cornell.edu](mailto:dwm23@cornell.edu). **Looking for a new editor!**

Calendar: **Pat Curran**, [pc21@cornell.edu](mailto:pc21@cornell.edu)

Webmaster, Program Tech: **Craig Cramer**, [cdcramer@gmail.com](mailto:cdcramer@gmail.com)

## Green Dragon Tales

Published eight times a year: Jan./Feb., March, April, May/June, July/Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov./Dec.

Submit articles by the fourth Friday of the month preceding publication to David Mitchell,

[david\\_mitchell\\_14850@yahoo.com](mailto:david_mitchell_14850@yahoo.com). The newsletter is always posted and printable each month on our website [www.acnargs.org](http://www.acnargs.org)

Map: Whetzel Room, Room 404 Plant Science Building, 236 Tower Rd., Cornell campus



*Paris quadrifolia*, *Podophyllum peltatum*, and *Arisaema ringsens* among other spring greens in David Mitchell's garden.

