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CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

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September 2015

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SEPTEMBER 19: KRISSEY BOYS & ROSEMARIE PARKER "ALL ABOUT RAISING PLANTS FROM SEEDS"

Nari Mistry, Program Chair

Note: Location for this meeting is the Ken Post Lab Classroom at Cornell



Good Plants to Propagate from Seeds



How many of these plants can you identify?

Our September meeting will feature a talk and practical demo of everything you need to know about raising plants from seed including collecting, cleaning, treatment, storing, sowing, and more. Our presenters, Krissy Boys and Rosemarie Parker, have guided members of the Finger Lakes Native Plant Society for many years in seed collecting forays, followed by seed preparation, storage, sowing and nurturing the seedlings.

The presentation will start with a talk/slide-show illustrating all the steps in starting plants from seed. This will be followed by a series of demos showing the practical aspects of all the tricky steps. There will be time to ask any questions you may have.

Krissy has over 25 years of gardening experience with native plants which she enthusiastically shares with everyone, encouraging love of and propagation of native species in their own gardens. She holds a B.S in Plant Science from the University of Delaware, and was a Land Steward at the Brandywine Conservancy in Pennsylvania before coming in 1992 to Cornell. She

is on the staff at the Cornell Plantations and has been on the Steering Committee of the Finger Lakes Native Plant Society since 1998.

Rosemarie Parker, a member of our own ACNARGS, says: "I am an all-purpose gardener with a strong interest in native plants, who dabbles in rock garden plants. I've been gardening since college with mixed results. In the 18 years I have lived in Ithaca, I have had more success with propagation from seeds than ever before. I attribute this to volunteering at the Plantations Mundy Wildflower Garden, where propagating locally collected native seeds is a priority." She too is on the Steering Committee of the Finger Lakes Native Plant Society.

Come and find out all about raising plants from seeds, so you too can grow uncommon plants from the NARGS Seed Exchange and, maybe, from your own collected seeds!

Our meeting will be held in the Ken Post Greenhouses/Lab classroom (free parking in the large parking lot at the corner of Tower and Judd Falls Roads), Post Circle off Tower Road, Cornell University. Brown bag lunch at noon. Drinks provided, refreshments to share are always welcome. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.

We have met in this classroom many times before. However, if you are trying to find this location for the first time, it can be tricky. To get driving directions, you may want to go to [Cornell map](https://www.cornell.edu/about/maps/) (<https://www.cornell.edu/about/maps/>). The good news is that Tower Road construction has been completed.

FROM THE CHAIR

John Gilrein, ACNARGS Chair

First, thank you to all the people who made the annual picnic and plant sale a success: Carol, who reserved the pavilion, David and Michael who organized the plant sale, Michael, the voice of the plant sale, BZ our cashier, everyone who brought plants, and all the food contributors. It seemed like there were a lot of plants, with 3 tables full of either rock garden, sun, or shade plants, plus a few extra plants and bulbs on top of that.

We're still awaiting the final numbers from the sale. Our plant sales support our organization, helping to keep dues low and funds available for good speakers. The plant sale was enjoyable for socializing, which we don't get enough time for at meetings, and checking out and buying interesting plants. You can always count on ACNARGS for a good array of interesting plants.

Second, now that summer is waning I hope everyone is looking forward to our fall season of interesting programs and our Plant-of-the-Month. The El Nino prediction is for a warmer and drier fall, at least for October, which would be a nice reward after an extended 2014/15 winter. If you're more organized than me, perhaps you got a reprieve this summer after the spring planting season and will be energized to do some fall editing and planting.

Lastly, I hope to see you soon. Our September meeting is just around the corner!

John

FALL IS FOR PLANTING – HELLO PLANT-OF-THE-MONTH!

Carol Eichler, Green Dragon Editor

With native plants as our speaker topic this month, what better place to shop for native plants than local nursery, The Plantsman! Here's the selection being offered:

Actaea rubra, red baneberry: moist shade preferred, 1-3' tall, clusters of red berries are attractive but poisonous

Allium cernuum, nodding onion: tolerant of dry soil, to 1½', suitable for rock garden or garden trough with pink blooms June-Aug

Asclepias incarnata, swamp milkweed: easily grown in medium to wet soils, full sun pollinator and food source for Monarch caterpillars, tall to 5', showy flowers white to mauve

Echinacea tenesseeensis, Tennessee coneflower: very similar to *E. purpurea* (in fact they can cross) but smaller to 2' and less vigorous; only known to exist naturally on certain glades near Nashville, Tennessee, and is on the Federal Endangered Species List; known hardness to Zone 5

Iris domestica, blackberry lily (not-native but a wonderful plant): new classification for this plant which looks like an iris and blooms like a lily with deep orange petals dotted with red; rhizomatous perennial which typically grows 2-3' tall; flowers give way to pear-shaped seed pods which split open when ripe (late summer), with each pod revealing a blackberry-like seed cluster

Ruellia humilis, hairy wild petunia: tubular, bell-shaped, petunia-like lavender flowers bloom all summer long on plants that grow only 2' tall, not terribly picky about soil, sun, or moisture; you'll probably welcome that this wonderful plant seeds around a bit

Talinum calycinum, fameflower or rock pink: native succulent preferring sandy, well-drained soil, perfect for the rock garden or trough, long bloom time with pink to red flowers in cymes atop leafless stems growing to 8"

Zizia aurea, golden alexander: flat-topped clusters (compound umbels) of tiny yellow flowers in spring atop stems growing to 3' tall; native habitat is moist woods and meadows, thickets, glades and prairies; food plant for the larvae of the swallowtail butterfly, *Papilio joanae*

AND STILL MORE PLANTS! THANK YOU MEMBER SALE!

Carol Eichler, Green Dragon Editor

Our August member sale at Buttermilk Falls State Park this year brought Chapter members and friends together after our summer break. Attendance was good, the rain held off, (it even started to get hot), and we had a generous selection of plants – something for everyone's tastes it seemed.



Each year we are getting more and more rock garden plant selections – many of them grown from seed ordered through the NARGS seed exchange and tended through the spring and summer by our members. Some of the plants were returnees from our April seedling exchange, now grown out and big enough to sell. The auction table dedicated to choice plants was abuzz with friendly bidding competition too.

After a dish-to-pass lunch that noticeably favored desserts (no complaints were heard) several members chose to enjoy the coolness of the Buttermilk Creek gorge to do a little botanizing and work off some of those dessert calories! Among the plants we spotted were: *Aralia racemosa*, American spikenard; *Adiantum pedatum*, maidenhair fern; *Asplenium trichomanes*, Ebony spleenwort; *Desmodium rotundifolium* (perhaps?) round-leaved trailing tick-trefoil; *Epigaea repens*, trailing arbutus; *Cystopteris bulbifera*, bulblet bladder fern; *Epipactus helleborine*, a non-native orchid, *Streptopis roseus*, twisted stalk; *Gaultheria procumbens*, wintergreen, and *Vaccinium angustifolium*, lowbush blueberry. Obviously the soil varied from alkaline to acid. We also saw tufa forming in various stages from early, crumbly formations along seeps on the cliff sides to more hardened (meteogene) travertine.



Asplenium trichomanes
growing in a special niche

See more photos on our Facebook page: [ACNARGS Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/acnargs). (<https://www.facebook.com/acnargs>)

AND BECAUSE WE WERE TALKING ABOUT THIS...

Excerpted from Barry Glick, *Sunshine Farm & Gardens*

At the plant sale a few of us were talking about *Trautvetteria caroliniensis*, AKA "Tasslerue" so you might be interested to learn a bit more about this plant as portrayed by Barry Glick.

"This easy to grow member of the Ranunculaceae (Buttercup) family makes quite the dramatic statement in the shade garden. In the wild, it prefers moist to sometimes wet soils, but it does well in average garden soil, as long as your soil doesn't completely turn to dust. This garden treasure does well in deep shade, but even better in bright shade to dappled sunlight. *Trautvetteria* is considered hardy in zones 5 – 8. It's native to over half of the states in the US.

"Groundcovers aren't required to be low growing, short plants. The attractive foliage of a *Trautvetteria* colony makes this plant a great groundcover plant with about 12" - 18" of height and an equal spread. In flower, the sturdy stems can reach skyward up to 48". The long lasting, pure white, early to mid-summer blooming flowers have an interesting, somewhat indescribable, pleasant fragrance."

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.

September 19: Krissy Boys & Rosemarie Parker: "All about Seeds: collecting, cleaning, treatment/stratification, storing, & more." Plant-of-the-Month sale to current members. Note location is Ken Post Lab Classroom.

October 17: John Gilrein : "Alpine & Subalpine Plants of Wyoming." Plant-of-the-Month sale to current members. Note location is to be determined.

November 14: Sharee Solow, horticulturist, landscape designer and garden writer from Philadelphia: "From Front Yard to Rock Garden: Step by Step." Dish-to-pass luncheon at noon followed by a brief annual meeting and speaker presentation. Note 2nd Saturday meeting date. Note location is Ken Post Lab Classroom.

Looking ahead for 2016:

February 20: Members Share. PLEASE CONSIDER SHARING YOUR FAVORITE PHOTOS & EXPERIENCES. Plan now as you take photos of your gardens, specimen flowers, or travel highlights of gardens or alpine/subalpine environments (including mountains, stones, and plants) that you visit.

March 19: Elizabeth Lawson: "Primroses"

April 16: Elisabeth Zander, NARGS Recording Secretary and Officer, Berkshire Chapter. Topic to be announced

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

CALENDAR OF SELECT GARDEN EVENTS

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

Sept. 2: Robin Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants, 5:30 pm, Call Auditorium, Cornell

Sept. 9: Elizabeth Farnsworth speaking on the New England Wild Flower Society's recently released comprehensive, peer-reviewed report called "The State of the Plants," 7pm, Unitarian Church annex (corner of Buffalo and Aurora, enter side door on Buffalo St & up the stairs)

Sept. 13: Tomato Festival (sampling & seedsaving), 11am-2pm, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Fee

Sept. 16: Dave DeWitt, Blame It on Columbus: Chile Peppers Around the World, 7:30 pm, Statler Auditorium, Cornell

Sept. 19: Judy's Day Family Program on Peppers, 1-5pm, Cornell Plantations

Sept. 20: Fall Creek Plant Exchange. 12-3, Thompson Park on North Cayuga St at Cascadilla Creek. Free plants! Share your extra plants with other gardeners and take some new ones home. Sponsored by the Fall Creek Garden Club. For more info, contact Carol at 275-9090 or cjb4@cornell.edu

Sept. 29: Spring Bulbs: Three Months of Bloom, 6:30-8:30 pm, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Fee

Sept. 22: Intro to Home Winemaking, 6:30 -8:30 pm, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Fee

Sept. 30: Gary Braasch, From Glaciers to Generations – Climate Change Affects Landscapes and Lives, 7:30 pm, Statler Auditorium, Cornell

Oct. 3: Cornell Plantations Fall Plant Sale, 9am to noon. Cornell Plant Production Facility, 397 Forest Home Drive, Ithaca

Oct. 6: Dan Segal, Rain Gardens, 6:30-8:30 pm, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Fee

Oct. 7: Mark Whitmore of Cornell's Natural Resources Dept., Emerald Ash Borer and Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Update, 6:30-8:30 pm, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Fee

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

Oct. 13: Sean Dembrosky, Fall Propagation of Fruit and Nut Trees, 6:30-8:30 pm, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Fee

Oct. 14: Marc Hachadourian, Modern Plant Exploration in the Tropics: The Age of Rediscovery, 7:30 pm, Statler Auditorium, Cornell

Oct. 16: Invasive, Native, or Neither: Which Plants to Remove, Which to Plant, 6:30-8:30 pm, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Fee

Oct. 22: Getting Your Landscape Ready for Winter. 6:30-8:30 pm, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Fee

Oct. 28: Courtney Roby, Plant-Based Medicines: Ancient Greece and Rome and Beyond, 7:30 pm, Statler Auditorium, Cornell

Oct. 29: Brian Caldwell & Akiva Silver, Getting Started with Nut Trees, 6:30-8:30 pm, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. Fee

Nov. 9 - Nov. 21: 4th Annual Leaf Swap & Compost Giveaway, Cooperative Extension Education Center, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca

Nov. 11: Professor Sir Peter Crane, Ginkgo: The Tree that Time Forgot, 7:30 pm, Statler Auditorium, Cornell

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 \$40 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

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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. Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be in October, 2015. The newsletter is always posted and printable each month on our website: www.acnargs.org

Now for the Photo of the Month (or in this case a page of photos) compliments of Nari Mistry (see next page).

A Succession of Blue Blooms: Nari Mistry's Garden

(photo credits: Nari Mistry, 2015)



Scilla siberica, April 17



Veronica peduncularis,
May 7



Hellebore orientalis,
April 25



Aquilegia jonesii,
May 31



Pulsatilla halleri,
July 7



Gentiana acaulis,
May 10



Campanula Birch hybrid,
June 4