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September 2021

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SEPTEMBER 18, 1P.M. VIA ZOOM: GARDENING WITH WHAT YOU HAVE WITH CHRISTINE FROEHLICH

Terry Humphries, Program Chair

If you'd like to improve your garden or landscape, it takes three things – your eyesight, a little imagination, and a plan of action. Many homeowners who want to create new gardens or improve existing one's struggle because they lack design experience and don't know where to start. In this slide lecture, Christine will show you how to evaluate your existing landscape and how to correct common problems – from plant choices and siting to design – by leading you, with before and after images, through some of the projects she's worked on. You'll leave with plenty of tips for creating the gardens that you want by working with what you have.[p

About September 15, you will receive an email with an invitation and Zoom link to join our meeting. There will also be an attachment for a hand-out that you can print to follow along with the presentation.

Christine writes about herself: I'm a passionate gardener. I love working outside and can't imagine life without a garden. It's been my vocation, passion, source of entertainment and comfort since I first put my shovel into the soil 40 years ago.

My horticultural career has morphed through several stages, each one taking me to another level.



After studying art in college, I got interested in plants when I began collecting houseplants. I quickly got hooked into the world of gardening, inside and out.

Most of my training has been hands on. I got my first gardening job in Maymont Park, a public garden in Richmond, Virginia and a few years later, landed a position as the head gardener on a private estate in Wilton, Connecticut. After years of honing my skills on the job and getting further training at the New York Botanic Garden, I established my own garden design and maintenance company, which I operated for 30 years in Fairfield County and Kent, CT. I maintained and redesigned a variety of small suburban lots, modest rural properties, and spacious country estates.

I saw the same hodgepodge of garden problems on a routine basis- struggling plants, inadequate or no apparent design, overcrowding, poor siting, improper pruning and general lack of maintenance. In short, lots of underused plants, missed opportunities and unhappy homeowners. The waste of resources drove me nuts, but as I worked with some of these homeowners I got excited about showing them how to use what they already had more advantageously. I got really passionate about the problem-solving aspect of gardening.

It wasn't until I moved to upstate New York with my husband in 2003, that I saw an opportunity to share more of my experiences through writing, teaching and consulting. I began freelancing for a variety of gardening magazines; Fine Gardening, American Gardener, Country Gardens, American Nurseryman, The Upstate Gardeners Journal and Rochester Magazine. Writing spurred me on to develop lectures and classes I offered locally at the Rochester Civic Garden Center, a nonprofit horticultural education center in Rochester, NY.

In 2007, I was hired as their executive director and worked for 10 years to develop the education programs further. Throughout my time as director and instructor, I found that most people are hungry for horticultural knowledge they can use in their own garden.

When I retired from that job in 2017, I stepped up my game as a garden communicator, designer and consultant. I began a monthly blog – Gardening With What You Have (www.gwwyh.com), as a way of sharing information with other gardeners, homeowners and anyone else who wants to know how to create a more exciting landscape.

Editor's Note: We're still Zooming. Don't be shy; give it a try. We're here to help. And we actually spend some time chatting following our program. It's the next best thing to being together.

FROM THE CHAIR

John Gilrein, Chair

I'm very fond of summer, but as of today, August 31, it is really a relief that we're having a cool night and most of the hot nights of summer are behind us. It has been mostly dry the past week after months of extra rain and humidity. I have noticed that many plants grew larger than normal this summer, due to lots of rain and heat. Some of the classical

rock garden plants reputedly dislike heat and humidity, though I believe after seeing my own rock garden and Carol's rock garden, that most of the plants in our rock gardens made it well through summer. Did it help that we planted in sand? I know we still have 3 more weeks of summer, but we are past the really long days, the most intense sun, and most of the hottest weather. The plant sale is always very intense for those of us running the sale, but it was enjoyable and well attended. Thank you, team, for providing a plant sale location at the last minute (Carol), for fetching and returning tables, contributing so many good plants, setting up and taking down the sale, cashing us out, and of course for buying the plants. There were some really nice plants, allowing us to include some in our silent auction. And the venue for the plant sale was most enjoyable, allowing us to chat with other enthusiastic gardeners after the sale and get a bonus garden tour at one of our premier gardens.



Main falls at Fillmore
Glen State Park

Do you consider periodically whether your plants are “earning their keep” in your garden? I'm reluctant to rip out plants that are healthy, possibly to a fault. I had some Nanking cherry (*Prunus tomentosa*) shrubs, volunteers that were seedlings from one I planted years ago, that in theory I was growing for fruit. This is a fairly large shrub, not very ornamental, which blooms very early (i.e. risks frostbite nipping the flowers). Last year they were zapped by a late spring frost, but not so this year. In spite of the better weather this year, they bore no fruit. I decided to remove them. Ultimately the garden is better without them, as I haven't been religious about pruning them to keep them in bounds.

Some of my challenges are the result of conflicting goals, e.g. growing plants that are ornamental and growing others for food (this wouldn't be a conflict if the food plants had their own space). Another plant on its way out is a large bird's nest spruce (*Picea abies nidiformis*); this is a dwarf cultivar of Norway spruce. It was about 18 inches high and 2 ½ feet wide. It has very congested foliage, which looks nice, but the interior likely didn't get enough air circulation and there was some dying foliage (possibly a fungal affliction). It may have recovered after it thinned itself out, but it seemed too big for its space and I have a smaller replacement (which won't grow as quickly). There are some other volunteers in my garden that might also get the proverbial axe.....on another day. Hope to see you on Saturday, September 18 on Zoom!

John Gilrein, Chair

Editor: I've included some photos taken by John.

OUR 2021 AUGUST PLANT SALE RECAP

Carol Eichler

One lesson we've learned from covid is resiliency and thank goodness! We needed it on our member-only plant sale day, August 21.

If it hadn't been for an early Friday morning email from Maureen Cowan, it would never have occurred to me that our venue – Myers Park – was flooded. A quick call to the Lansing Parks Department confirmed that yes, Pavillion B, which we had rented was underwater and oh, didn't we get the phone call?

As it turned out, John Gilrein had signed the park reservation form. I'm sure they called him but he was vacationing in the Adirondacks and out of cell phone range. With time running out to notify our members, I was in a bit of a panic. A decision had to be made and made quickly. Canceling was not an option as far as I was concerned.

So...after a brief consultation with my husband Steve, I made the decision to hold the sale at my house. Another phone secured rented tables; I put out the call for still more tables (thank you Pat, Kathy, Rosemarie – hopefully I remembered everyone; I think we used them all). Then a quick email to notify members – and another to include the full message, and a third to provide directions to my house (, sorry about all those emails!). And yes, just in case, I made follow-up phone calls too.

Most of Friday night and into Saturday morning we got still more rain. I was sweating it, because I was afraid no one would come. Thankfully, the rain stopped by 9 when folks started showing up to help with set-up. There was a steady stream of arrivals and lots and lots of great plants too. Some great socializing too.

We pulled it off! Since this is likely to be our last in-person meeting for a long while, the day was perfect for getting together outdoors, a great day for plant-lovers. There was such a great selection of plants and I think everyone left feeling quite happy. The fact that we made \$1,207 in sales was icing on the cake and it will certainly help us fund another program year of great speakers.

Thank you all for your contributions! It truly takes a village.

POM OF A DIFFERENT KIND

Carol Eichler

Sadly, since it's not likely we will be meeting in person this fall, there will be no Plant-of-the-Month plants either during this time. Instead, rather ironically, I offer you a different POM....Pest of the Month.



Our August issue contained information about a new invasive insect to look out for, coming soon to a garden near you – the Spotted Lantern Fly.

Box Tree Caterpillar (larvae)

This month we introduce to another new invasive almost certain to come our way. And it is not good news for boxwoods. Introducing (literally) the box tree moth. The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) confirmed last month that the the detection of box tree moth has been detected in Niagara County in western New York. Native to East Asia, it is believed to have been



Adult Box Tree Moth

introduced from nursery stock from Canada. Here it is an invasive pest that poses a major threat to the boxwood plant, The largely green and yellow caterpillars with spots of various colors (see photo) skeletonize the leaves and feed on the bark, causing defoliation and dryness, eventually leading to the plant's death.



Brown form of Box Tree Moth

If you have boxwood, you can help track the progress of its infestation by checking your boxwood plants for signs of box tree moth life stages. If you find any signs of infestation, take a picture, and report it to <https://arcg.is/1Df8Se>.

While the New York State Dept. of Ag and Markets press release did not include information about the life cycle, adult moths were seen in July and larvae detected in August.

LATE SUMMER BLOOMERS IN THE ROCK GARDEN

One tricky thing about rock gardens is to make sure you have a flower display throughout the growing season. Alpines love cool weather and are accustomed to a short growing season and cool temperatures so most of them produce their flowers in spring – peaking for me, and as is the case in Wurster, from mid-to-late May.

I present here some plants that are blooming now – or about to bloom - in my garden. I've had to wait all season but they are most welcome now.



Erigeron karvinskianus

Terry Humphries introduced me to this little daisy, *Erigeron karvinskianus*, (some were offered at our August sale) growing only 1-2 inches high, which probably started blooming about a month ago for me and is still going strong. The flowers wave above the foliage and are white aging to pale pink. It is growing in two different places in my rock garden, performing best in a shady spot with richer soil to the second's hotter, drier full sun location.

Here's another long bloomer, the common but showy . The flowers proportionate to the foliage is huge and this photo illustrates how prolific it is.

Aster alpinus



Another daisy blooming now is *Heteropappus meyerendorffii* 'Blue Knoll' (right). It is a half-hardy perennial, which unfortunately means it's not hardy here. Guess I better enjoy this plant now.



Silene sp.

I don't know the species of this silene (left), perhaps *alpestris*, which my notes indicate I got from Harold Peachey. It is quite a prolific bloomer. Unlike *Silene phyllaceae* (schafta) which bloomed a few weeks earlier with bright pink flowers, these blooms are pale pink and filling a late summer gap in the garden.



Heteropappus meyerendorffii 'Blue Knoll'

I really want to think of this clematis, *C. tenuifolia*, as a rock garden clematis but it's really too vigorous for my garden. However it is growing on the wall at the Wurster Garden where I think it is well-suited. The common name of Golden Bells describe the flowers perfectly.



Clematis tenuifolia



Sanguisorba sp.

This small-ish burnet of unknown species (left) frames a trough in my garden so I can tolerate its height bordering on 2+ feet. It offers a burst of color with its maroon bottlebrush flowers held high on sturdy stems from mid-summer onward. While waiting for bloom time, the deep-green serrated leaflets are attractive too.

Sometimes with seed exchanges you take a chance on something unknown and get lucky. Case in point: this dwarf *Sucissa praetensis* 'alba' dwarf form (right) which I grew from the Ontario Chapter Seed Exchange. I cannot find much information about it but what a surprise gem (and a rather awful photo).



Sucissa praetensis 'alba'



A. senescens glaucum

Last but not least, I grow a succession of small alliums in my rock garden. Right now, it's the *Allium senescens glaucum* which is about to bloom. I enjoy its curly gray-green ground hugging foliage, yielding pink flowers in late summer. Perhaps my favorite though and which is yet to bloom, is *Allium thunbergii* 'Ozawa.' Once it unfurls its purple flowers it will bloom through frosts and into late October.

MEMBERSHIP

Please give a belated welcome to 3 new members:

- Frank Bittmann is from Pittston Twp, PA and joined at the May plant sale. He has an interesting blog at katob427.com
- Maureen Cowen is from Lansing, NY - I invited her and her friend in to see our garden one May day when they walked down the railroad tracks!
- Liz Toffey is from Ithaca and is a former member of the Berkshire chapter.

For current members: The 2021 ACNARGS Membership Directory is attached to the newsletter announcement email or to your paper copy of the newsletter. If you have corrections please contact Mary Stauble, mes2@cornell.edu. The Directory is updated and published yearly in September.

We still have half our 2021 program year left. If you have not yet renewed for 2021 (membership runs the calendar years), dues are \$15 for individuals, \$20 for a household - perhaps you will be able to take advantage of our member benefits in 2021! You can always check my email announcement of the newsletter link for your membership status.

The renewal form is at <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf>. Contact Mary Stauble at mes2@cornell.edu if you have any questions.

WANT A LITTLE TUFA?

From Reenie at Baker's Acres: A couple of weeks ago we uncovered a pile of tufa rocks that Mrs. Baker had ordered from British Columbia almost 30 years ago. Her intention was to make a tufa rock garden to house all the hard to grow rock garden plants that do not grow well in soil. But over the years the pile became hidden and forgotten.

We have dug them all out and have them for sale. It is a fairly small quantity, which we are selling for \$.99/ lb. and they range from small to large in size. They are certainly well weathered. We are offering a 15% discount to all Rock Garden Society or Master Gardener members. At the time of purchase, you will need to let the cashier know you are a member.

We are open 8-5 weekdays and 9-5 weekends. Call 607-533-4653 with questions.

NEWS FROM NARGS: AGM DURANGO IS NOW HISTORY

Carol Eichler

By all reports the AGM in Durango was a whopping success. Colorado is always a popular location because of its dramatic, and in many cases unspoiled scenery, and the wonderful plants of the alpine, sub-alpine and montane that can be viewed on the day trips. With the social isolation we've experienced over the past 18 months, perhaps it has

made us more appreciative of in-person gatherings, even more so when we can share a common interest such as plants.

In spite of covid, over 200 people attended – cautionary measures were taken to keep people safe. It was anecdotally noted that it seemed more NARGS members from the East and Midwest attended than from the West. Steve Whitesell was the only member of our Chapter to attend. We owe Steve a big thank you, since he was able to present attendees with a preview of the 2022 AGM to be hosted by our Chapter next June.

(The 2022 AGM planning committee comprised of John Gilrein, Marlene Kobre, Terry Humphries, and myself has been resurrected from the cancelled 2020AGM. Look for an extensive article in our October newsletter for details. For now SAVE THE DATES: June 13-17 2022).

Back to Durango, local hikes were planned for the daytime (*see select photos on the last page of this newsletter*), including a guided trip to Mesa Verde for the lucky few who signed up in advance. The evening talks focused not just on the plants of the Four Corners high desert region – which is a hot spot for endemics - but included ancient imagery and rock art of the indigenous peoples, geology, and ethnobotany (traditional uses of the endemic plants). Mike Kintgen, who grew up in western Colorado, delivered a fabulous talk/retrospective on the changes in the Rockies over the past 30 years. This area has experienced many changes over the decades, centuries and eons, whether heat, drought, or fire, but now climate change has accelerated many of these phenomena. His observations included a hopeful reminder that the native plants are highly adaptable, having survived many dramatic cycles of change before. (See last page for photos)

As is the tradition, NARGS announced annual awards to recognize those who have contributed to NARGS and/or the rock garden community – whether as nurseryman, amateur gardener, or writer. Look for this information to be published in the October newsletter.

The talks have been video recorded and are posted online at NARGS.org, accessible to NARGS members only. Thank you Elisabeth Zander who made this possible. What a wonderful benefit to a NARGS membership and perhaps an incentive for non-members to join.

ACNARGS UPCOMING 2021 PROGRAMS

NOTE: Due to covid our meetings will take on a different format for the foreseeable future. We will hold live meetings via Zoom for now. For those of you unfamiliar with Zoom, contact Terry Humphries terryehumphres@gmail.com for assistance.

September 18: Christine Froelich, How to Garden With What You Have; 1pm via Zoom

October 17: Note change of date to Sunday. Clare Cockcroft, "Trekking and Learning about Asiatic Primulas: clues to growing primulas after seeing them in the wild". She will show us primulas in Sichuan, Yunnan, Turkey, Himachal Pradesh, and Sikkim and discuss their habitats and growing requirements; 1pm via Zoom

November 1: Seed contributions to NARGS Seed Exchange are due

November 13: ACNARGS speaker program TBD. Note we are meeting, as has been our practice, on the 2nd Saturday this month

December TBD: Our Chapter packages seed for the NARGS Seed Exchange. We will likely Zoom together.

December TBD: NARGS Seed Exchange ordering begins

CALENDAR OF SELECT GARDEN EVENTS

For the latest information, visit these websites of these gardening organizations.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Online class information:
<http://ccetompkins.org/gardening>

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society monthly meetings via zoom. <https://flnps.org/>

Cornell Botanic Gardens: Verdant Views virtual programs; no on-site events at this time; visit Cornell Gardens at home: <https://cornellbotanicgardens.org/explore/events/>

Liberty Hyde Bailey Garden Club: <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/LHBGC/>

To have a garden event in your area listed send all pertinent information to David Mitchell at david_mitchell_14850@yahoo.com

2021 ACNARGS BOARD MEMBERS AND CONTACTS

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

Chair: John Gilrein, basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu
Program: Terry Humphries, terryehumphries@gmail.com
Program Committee Members: Could this be you?
Secretary: Currently rotating amongst "Responsible People"
Treasurer: BZ Marranca, mmm10@cornell.edu
Plant Sales Chair: Carol Eichler carolithaca@gmail.com
Plant Sales Committee Members: Michael Loos, BZ Marranca, David Mitchell
Plant of the Month: Marlene Kobre, mkobre@ithaca.edu
Membership: Mary Stauble, mes2@cornell.edu
New Member Hospitality: Graham Egerton
Newsletter Editor: David Mitchell, dwm23@cornell.edu and sometimes Carol Eichler.
Looking for a new editor!
Calendar: Pat Curran, pc21@cornell.edu
Webmaster, Program Tech: Craig Cramer, cdcramer@gmail.com

ABOUT US – ADIRONDACK CHAPTER NARGS

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, 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 [our Zoom subscription limits participants to 100]. 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.

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 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.

GREEN DRAGON TALES

Normally published eight times a year (Feb., March, April, May/June, July/Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov./Dec., during covid we've been publishing monthly. Submit articles by the fourth Friday of the month preceding publication to David Mitchell, david_mitchell_14850@yahoo.com
Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be October 2021.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST: (ON THE NEXT PAGE) PHOTOS!

Scenes from Durango with Photos by Jeff Wagner

