

ADIRONDACK
CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

Visit our blog: acnargs.blogspot.com

February 2023

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FEBRUARY 18: MEMBERS' SHARE

Terry Humphries, Program Chair

Join us at 1:00 p.m. on February 18th in the Whetzel Room (404 Plant Science Building, 236 Tower Rd, Cornell University). Optional bring-your-own lunch starting at Noon. Drinks provided. Goodies always welcome for sharing.

I don't know about you, but for me these gray (or hopefully white!) days of winter are a great time to reflect back on beautiful plants and places I've seen and begin to plan for the next gardening year. Our annual Members' Share meeting is a time to do that collectively, and at our February 2023 meeting, we'll have our first chance since 2020 to do that together and in-person!! (There was a time that would have been redundant, but we now know that is no longer true.)

Please plan to participate in our February 'Members' Share gathering. You can do that by presenting photos or a mini-program on garden memories, methods, and plans. Share pictures you took in your own garden or a special garden or natural site you visited, a garden event you attended, propagation and cultivation techniques you have learned, or anything you think would interest the group.

All are encouraged to contribute. We usually allot 10-15 minutes per person, so plan your presentations accordingly. Handouts and tip sheets will be printed if you send them ahead of time to terryhumphries@gmail.com

As in the past, Craig Cramer is coordinating the AV details. Here is what Craig writes:

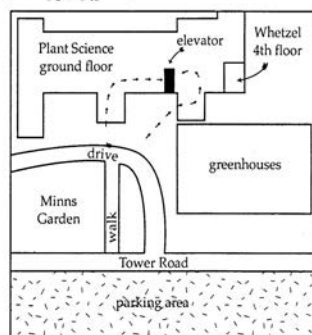
"If you're going to be presenting, please send your presentation file to Craig Cramer (cdcramer@gmail.com) the week before the meeting so we can minimize technical glitches. If your file is too large to send as an email attachment or if you have other technical questions, let Craig know. If you can't send the file ahead of time, please bring it to the meeting on a USB stick (aka 'thumb drive' or 'flash drive' etc.) and hand it off to Craig as soon as you arrive so that we can transfer the talk onto the podium computer. "

For planning purposes: let us know of your intention to make a short presentation. Send a brief email to Craig Cramer: cdcramer@gmail.com AND to Terry Humphries: terryhumphries@gmail.com. If you already know the AV format, you will use , let us know that too. DEADLINE for submissions is Saturday February 11.

Let's have a great show!

And let's not forget our tradition of bag lunch starting at noon for those who wish this extra time to socialize.

****NOTE: Our meetings are back at Whetzel Room,
Room 404 Plant Sciences Building
236 Tower Road, Cornell University! ****



The west wing of the Plant Sciences Building has been shut down for renovations. But those won't start until next year sometime. So other than having those hallways walled off, everything should look pretty much as it did last time you were here. Remember the elevator to the 4th floor and then exit right down the long hallway. You will be facing the Whetzel Room.

Just a reminder, we ask all attendees to be fully vaccinated. Additionally, we will be following CDC, NYS, and Cornell covid protocol, which at this time does not require masks though you may choose to do so. Please do not attend if you are not feeling well.

FROM THE CHAIR

John Gilrein, Chair

The Adirondack Chapter had a successful year in 2022: we pulled off the June 2022 Annual Meeting in Ithaca, returned to in-person chapter meetings, and had 2 plant sales. We can return to having a garden tour this year as well. We're in the process of getting a speaker through the NARGS speaker program, Gerard Van Buiten, from the Utrecht Botanic Garden in the Netherlands for September. We still have COVID, but life has mostly returned to normal.

Do Your Part

It's hard not to think about our warming planet with the lack of snow and cold this winter. Here are a few ideas to do a little bit to help out mother nature:

- Turn some of your lawn into garden space
- Get a battery powered lawn mower (I did this a few years ago, and it's quiet, there's no stinky mower exhaust, so it's much nicer to use than the old gas model). Most helpful to have a second/spare battery.
- Support native pollinators, which are in trouble in some areas. You can do this by planting native plants, reducing pesticide use, and/or put up mason bee nesting boxes. Here's a link for a YouTube video about mason bees: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Gp59zXFauk>. Mason bees are gentle, solitary bees and much more effective at pollination than honeybees.
- Reduce plastic use: reuse plastic bags and nursery pots, buy laundry detergent in sheets instead of liquid in plastic bottles (there are multiple brands available including Tru Earth, Earth Breeze, and Miracle, easy to use and no plastic waste)
- Wash your laundry in cold water (most of the energy used in laundry goes to heating the water), and/or air dry your laundry
- Buy local food
- Include some drought resistant plants in your garden, which could reduce water use and save time

On Another Note

It's a perfect time of year to buy seeds and plants for 2023; the weather isn't great (it's especially lousy as I'm writing this!), you'll be more likely to get your first choices, and why wait for a sunny spring day to do these. It's a good idea not to be too ambitious when ordering, and maybe if I keep telling myself that, I'll follow through on it! Thinking about spring planting helps raise one's spirit during the gray days of winter.

Hope to see you at our winter/spring meetings!

DELPHI FALLS

John Gilrein



Photo by John Gilrein

There is a beautiful new waterfall park in southwestern Madison County, Delphi Falls County Park. This is a relatively new park, which opened after a generous donor granted the park (formerly a private home) to Madison County. The park is on Cardner Road in the Town of Cazenovia, near the hamlet of Delphi, and very easy to find on Google Maps. It's close to a 20 minute drive from either Lafayette or Tully and it's open sunrise to sunset. The currently accessible waterfall is a 62 foot drop on the East branch of Limestone Creek. The park is currently at a primitive stage of development, with limited parking, porta-potties, and a few picnic tables. The park is undergoing further development for

additional parking, and ultimately viewing access to the currently inaccessible 52 foot upper falls. It's only a very short, flat walk to the lower falls from the parking lot and well worth a stop if you're nearby.

For the best and safest experience, consider the timing of your visit. There's not much infrastructure, and it may not be safe to visit after very heavy rains, or when the trail would be icy. On a beautiful weather day on a holiday weekend in summer, you might not find parking. There's likely to be at least some water flowing every day, but after weeks of no rain the falls would not be as impressive

For more information about the park, including a video you can watch showing the falls, go to this website: <https://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/2312/Delphi-Falls-Park>.

MEMBERSHIP

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

Do you need to renew for 2023? The email message you received with this email will indicate if you do. The ACNARGS membership year runs the calendar year. So, your 2023 membership is due now (Individual @\$15, Household @\$20). Print and complete the 2023 Membership form now: <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf> or you can save a stamp and renew in person at our February meeting. Questions? Contact Mary at mes2@cornell.edu

Please welcome new member Matt Szostak from Webster, NY. We visited his beautiful garden in June of 2016.

HOW TO BUILD A MOUNTAIN... IN A COUNTY WITHOUT MOUNTAINS

Kaj Andersen and Heriot Johansen
Reprinted by permission

On November 1st, 2008, Zdenek Zvolanek came from the Czech Republic to give a lecture to the Alpine Garden Society of Denmark on the pervasive phenomenon of the crevice garden. We arrived at the conference, the Gedved State Seminar, with a high degree of expectation, eager to learn more about this type of rock garden.



Left: *Primula japonica* in bloom
<https://bangsbobotaniskehave.dk>

After Zdenek's immersive lecture, accompanied by very beautiful and descriptive photos, and after a very exciting day in Gedved ended, there was no doubt in our minds that we had to construct a crevice garden at the Bangsbo Botanical Garden, which is located in North Jutland, near the town of Frederikshavn [in Denmark]. The area we imagined for it was already laid out as a rock garden, but the question had been in the air for a long time: how do we make it appear as natural as possible?



Daphnes in bloom at Bangsbo.
<https://bangsbobotaniskehave.dk>

With Zdenek's book on the crevice garden in our hands we went home to Frederikshavn. A seed was definitely sown. No matter how clearly inspiring and engaging the lecture had been, we needed to hear the expert's ideas for the design of such a garden, and we therefore decided to ask Zdenek to visit Frederikshavn to see the site and offer some good advice. A talk with the protagonist, however, did not give us hope that there was room in his calendar for such a visit. He is a very busy and sought-after man, and we expected him to be too busy for such a visit [until] years into the future. Fortunately, the phone rang on Sunday November 2nd and Zdenek promised he would come to Bangsbo in May 2009 and build a "monument to the Old World." Rarely has a good vintage Amarone been opened so quickly by the chairman of the Botanical Garden, Egon Svendsen. Obtaining this appointment was something of a coup.

Planning was then started, and the essential challenge was to find the right stone. Correspondence with Zdenek led to a connection with the Botanical Garden in Hof [Germany], approximately 100 kilometers from the Czech border. Some limestone from a local quarry was available and was highly recommended by Christoph Ruby a botanist from Hof. We decided delivery so the rock would be ready in Bangsbo when Zdenek and Joyce Carruthers [his business partner] arrived on May 11th. It proved not to be the easiest trade agreement we had ever negotiated. First there was a problem getting the stones stacked on pallets and then the price went up. Secondly there was a problem getting approval from the German authorities for the delivery and then the price went up again. Finally they could only deliver 25 tons per week. There was some nail biting as the date of Zdenek's arrival was quickly approaching, but finally the first stone delivery arrived the day Joyce and Zdenek arrived in Frederikshavn by train from the Czech Republic.

Then the work had to be done. All preparatory work had been previously described by Zdenek and completed prior to their arrival. An agreement had been made with the Bangsminde machine station in Frederikshavn to make a gardener and engineer available to work on the project for the two weeks Zdenek had set aside for his trip. This machine station has helped us several times on garden projects, entirely without payment. In addition to providing these competent workers, there were several volunteers to help, many of whom had taken time off from their work to participate in this epoch-making project. 25 tons of stone sounds a lot, but under Zdenek's knowledgeable leadership, the stone was put in place in only two days. It would be a week before the next stone delivery showed up, so we experimented with putting peat

blocks between the stones. Normally the core of the crevices is fine gravel, but according to Zdenek, a core of peat blocks had not been tried before and sphagnum-filled crevice areas would allow us to grow more acid-loving plants.

Zdenek's working methods puzzled us a little at first. We were inclined to start from one end and work our way methodically to the other end, but Zdenek selected stones and put them together in small islands here and there in groups of 5-10 stones. It seemed a bit chaotic at first and it was difficult to maintain the correct east-west orientation of all the stones when it was not possible to look up over the mountain of sand which formed the core of the crevice garden, but in a marvelous way Zdenek always managed to tie the islands together. Eventually everything formed a unit, and it actually helped us in the end, for it gradually became clear to us that Zdenek could not stay and complete the



work, since the stone deliveries were so slow to arrive. He simply built the strategic points in the crevice garden, which were 50 meters long and 10 meters wide, and it was up to us to complete the remainder of the work from those points.

Left: Bangsbo Crevice Garden
<https://bangsbobotaniskehave.dk>

It also became clear that the bed should be divided into "continents." We had already dedicated part of the bed to plants from the Himalayas, Alps, Japan, and the Caucasus, and the western part of the crevice bar was dedicated to North American plants. Small "roads" in the various beds were designated as borders between continents. As the stones were set in place, Joyce Carruthers jumped around in the beds, planting the little plants we had already acquired, and we have never seen anyone so careful with planting as Joyce. When we had run out of stones, before the next shipment came in, Zdenek also went in and strategically planted in the correct places, but often, like the amen in church, Joyce would come by the following day, dig up the plant and replant it "properly."

Everything has an end, and we understood that Joyce and Zdenek's last day working in Bangsbo Botanical Garden would be May 25th. The Chairman of the Technical Committee in Frederikshavn, Jens Hedegaard Kristensen, then warmly thanked Joyce and Zdenek for their innovative work creating the crevice garden.

Editor's note: Kaj Andersen was the Chapter speaker for our October program. He was a volunteer involved with many others in the construction of the rock garden at Bangsbo. You can read more about the crevice garden here: <https://bangsbobotaniskehave.dk/en/the-crevice-bed>. There are 2 short videos included. You may also want to check the rest of the Bangsbo gardens including a tufa garden that was built later.

NARGS & ACNARGS UPCOMING 2023 PROGRAMS

NOTE: As of now, we are planning in-person meetings this spring. Plus we are back to meeting at Cornell in the Whetzel Room...at last!

February 18: Members Share 1:00 pm at Whetzel Room, 404 Plant Science Building, Cornell University.

February 25: NARGS Rocks: What's New in Rock Gardening (Building a moveable mountain, propagation techniques, and more). Virtual Study Day. Registration fee charged and recorded. Visit [NARGS.org](https://nargs.org).

March 18: Speaker program to be announced

April 15: Speaker program to be announced

June 8-11 2023: Rocks, Plants, Habitats, NARGS Annual General Meeting hosted by Nova Scotia Chapter in Truro, Nova Scotia. This should be an awesome meeting in an awesome location. Start planning now to attend. Registration to open in early February, 2023. Info <https://nargs23.org/>. Scroll down to watch the video – what a beautiful place!

September 28 (tentatively): Gerard van Buiton, NARGS Traveling Speaker from the Netherlands

CALENDAR OF SELECT GARDEN EVENTS

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

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Online class information: cctompkins.org

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society monthly meetings – a hybrid of in-person and zoom: <https://flnps.org/> Recordings of past programs are available to view online.

Cornell Botanic Gardens: <https://cornellbotanicgardens.org/explore/events/>

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

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

2022 ACNARGS BOARD MEMBERS AND CONTACTS

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

Chair (aka head honcho): John Gilrein, basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu

Program Coordinator: Terry Humphries, terryehumphries@gmail.com

Program Committee Members: Would you like to help? Share your speaker suggestions!

Secretary: Currently rotating amongst "Responsible People"

Treasurer (aka CFO): Marlene Kobre

Plant Sales Chair: Carol Eichler carolithaca@gmail.com

Plant of the Month: Marlene Kobre, mkobre@ithaca.edu

Membership: Mary Stauble, mes2@cornell.edu

New Member Hospitality: Graham Egerton, Anne Redfern

Newsletter Editor: Open. Carol Eichler (temporary). We need someone to take on this responsibility!

Book Order Manager: New NARGS program to offer NARGS' members select books at deeply discounted prices. New Chapter position. Looking for a volunteer!

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, occasional 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), invitations to our garden day trips, 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 a wealth of information including current and archived of Quarterly's, recordings of past study days and more. NARGS National also 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

Published eight times a year (Jan./Feb., March, April, May/June, July/Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov./Dec. Submit articles no later than the fourth Friday of the month preceding the monthly publication to Carol Eichler, carolithaca@gmail.com. Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be March 2023.