

November 2023

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**DATE: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2023, 1 PM**

*Terry Humphries, Program Chair*

For almost 25 years, F. Robert Wesley has served as Botanist at Cornell Botanic Gardens, specializing in knowledge about native plants, rare and scarce species and monitoring invasive species in the garden as well as regional natural areas. He is recognized as an authority on the distribution, abundance and distinct features of wild plant species in the region and beyond. Robert frequently serves as a guide for field trips to explore the landscape and vegetation of unique environments.



Members of NARGS that attended the AGM hosted by ACNARGS in the summer of 2022 were wowed by Robert's enthusiasm and knowledge of plants when he acted as a botanical guide to natural areas. He was asked to present a video regarding the exceptional Chaumont limestone barrens of upstate New York and will expand on that topic for the November 2023 ACNARGS meeting. He will talk about limestone pavement barrens: what they are, where they are located and how they are formed, with particular emphasis on North American examples, particularly



the Chaumont Barrens Preserve.



The Chaumont Barrens Preserve lies northwest of Watertown, NY and is one of the last and finest examples of limestone pavement barrens, or alvar grasslands in the world. The preserve features a trail that traverses fissures, rubble barren, deciduous limestone woodland, coniferous limestone woodland, and Alvar grassland. Naturally, Robert will primarily focus on the unusual flora and plant communities that survive the fragile soils and harsh weather conditions in this unique ecosystem.

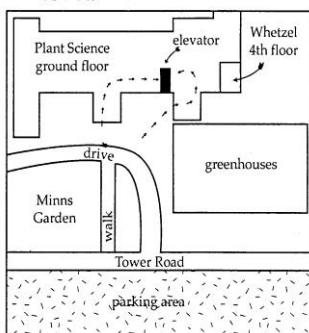


His fabulous photographs will feature a mosaic of windswept rare plants growing in shallow soils atop ancient fossilized bedrock. Thanks to the Nature Conservancy, this ecosystem has been protected, and thanks to Robert Wesley, we will get an

expert's tour of rare plants that grow in extreme conditions in a striking environment not far north from us.



**\*\*\*\*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 4<sup>th</sup> floor and then exit right down the long hallway. You will be facing the Whetzel Room.

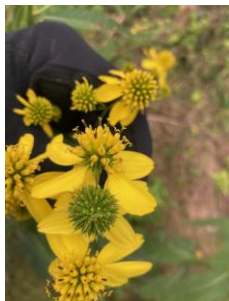
**Just a reminder**, we ask all attendees to be fully vaccinated. Additionally, we will be following CDC, NYS, and Cornell covid protocol, which at this time does not require masks though you may choose to do so. Please do not attend if you are not feeling well.

## FROM THE CHAIR

*John Gilrein, Chair*

In the presentation by the October speaker there were many photos of the glorious scenery of New Zealand and the interesting and unusual plants found there. The *Celmisias* (white flowered daisies found in Australia and New Zealand) portrayed in the presentation include alpine plants, some of which have attractive silvery foliage. They are not commonly grown in the northeastern USA, though at least one species is hardy to Zone 6. Possibly worth trying in the rock garden, and seeds of at least one species are available through Jelitto (note not necessarily inexpensive). The presenter commented on some invasive brooms (shrubby legumes/Fabaceae) including gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) and Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), both European natives to dry habitats. These shrubs are both invasive in parts of the American west. Scotch broom can be grown in most of our area and I was surprised to find that it is invasive in downstate NY, where it is being eradicated in some state parks (and can be found by a trained dog!).

It won't come as a shock to anyone to hear that I am really into plants. I recently biked along the C&O trail (Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, along the old towpath), which runs from Washington DC to Cumberland, MD along the Potomac River. Just like any other time I'm traveling, I'm almost constantly checking out the plants along the way. In the overstory were many large sycamores (*Platanus occidentalis*). Two dominant plants in the understory were pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) and spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), both extremely common. I saw few pawpaw fruits, but pawpaw is clonal and not self-fertile. It was bloom time for wingstem (*Verbesina alternifolia*), a tall native yellow daisy which prefers some shade. One of the surprises of the trip was to find multiple patches of shiso (*Perilla frutescens*) along the trail. Shiso is an annual herb in the mint family with fragrant foliage, used in Japanese cuisine. It is also considered invasive in some areas. Other blooming plants included wreath goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*) and cliff stonecrop (*Sedum glaucophyllum*), which looks like a great rock garden plant.



Don't forget our next meeting and last meeting of the year on Saturday November 11 in the Plant Science Building, part of which is presently under construction, so follow the signs to enter the building.

## MEMBERSHIP

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

Please welcome our new member Barbara Harrison! She is a Master Gardener from Ithaca.

This is just a reminder that our membership year runs the calendar year. So, starting January 1, 2024 everyone's membership will have expired and we all will need to renew. Rates are \$15 a year for an individual and \$20 for a household. There will be an announcement in the January/February newsletter. The renewal form is at <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf>. Contact Mary Stauble at [mes2@cornell.edu](mailto:mes2@cornell.edu) if you have any questions.

## CHAPTER SERVICE AWARD

Carol Eichler

I wish to nominate Maribea "BZ" Marranca for a Chapter Service Award.

Maribea (known to everyone as BZ) has recently retired as Treasurer of the Adirondack Chapter. This is a position that she looked back at our history, I was long. We all know managing the and trusted position and few people responsibility. We wish to her many years of service with the



held for over 10 years. When I shocked that she had served that Chapter's funds is an important are willing to take on this demonstrate our appreciation for Chapter Service Award.

BZ's greater service however is community and this award also For over 20 years she worked as an Horticulture Institute at Cornell breaking research has done much to improve the success rate of urban landscapes, most notably the survival and health of street trees. Informally, BZ created a huge gardeners' list-serve, long before Facebook or Google Groups were "a thing." She organized group orders for seeds. Many

to the much larger gardening recognizes these contributions. associate with the Urban University whose ground-

people still recall her “dumpster dive” alerts when researchers were discarding plants that had been used for research but were a treasure for local gardeners. Dumpster diving became one of us gardeners’ favorite pastimes and you met the best people there!

She was a founding member of the hugely successful Plants for Life initiative which over the course of 6 years raised over \$50,000 for the Cancer Resource Center (then known as Ithaca Breast Cancer Alliance). This became a year-long endeavor to organize this all-volunteer effort to collect donations from individual gardeners, nurseries and Cornell’s Horticulture department and sell at this much anticipated fall event.

For all that she has contributed to our Chapter and to our local garden community, BZ has more than earned the Chapter Service Award. Thank you, BZ

## ACNARGS UPCOMING 2023/2024 PROGRAMS

Nov. 11: Return of the Natives: Penstemon, Eriogonum, Phlox, Trillium, Lewisia. A virtual NARGS study day with 4 horticulturists who are experts in the field. Fee: \$25 for NARGS members; \$50 non-members includes a NARGS membership. This session is recorded for viewing online at your leisure.

UPCOMING NARGS WINTER STUDY WEEKEND

### EUREKA!

Exploring Troughs and Crevice Treasures Around the Bay

Hosted by Western Chapter of NARGS, Tilden Regional Parks Botanic Garden, and NARGS

**Save the date!**

March 8-11, 2024  
Oakland, California

Visits to Tilden Regional Parks Botanic Garden, University of California-Berkeley Botanical Garden, Ruth Bancroft Garden, the Gardens at Lake Merritt, and outstanding private gardens on both sides of San Francisco Bay.

Special plant sales, outstanding speaker lineup, opportunities to sample unlimited Bay Area cuisine, and MORE!

Details and registration will be included in the winter issue of the NARGS *Rock Garden Quarterly*.

December 15: NARGS Seed Exchange opens for ordering

January 13, 2024 The Undervalued Ranunculaceae: Hepatica, Anemone, Ranunculus, Clematis Speakers: John Massey, Todd Boland, Cliff Booker, & Deborah Hardwick. A NARGS virtual study day. Fee-based and recorded.

February 10, 2024 What’s New in Rock Gardening. Speakers: Adam Black, Paul Spriggs, Elisabeth & Rod Zander & one more TBD. Fee-based and recorded.

## NARGS TOURS 2024

NARGS Tours offers a unique way to visit places abroad, all with a botanical emphasis, led by people knowledgeable not just in the flora and fauna and but in the host country as well. Terry Humphries has taken any number of them and can attest to how wonderful—and sometimes adventurous—these tours are. She describes them as once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

For the summer of 2024, NARGS is delighted to announce a tour to the Limestone Barrens of Newfoundland, Canada from June 28 to July 6. As of this writing there are still spaces.

The unique limestone barrens of Newfoundland, a habitat found nowhere else on earth, are located at a botanical crossroads. Here you can find the southernmost distribution of many Arctic plant species. Some of the alpine plants are more commonly seen in the Alps or northern Scandinavia. There are even Rocky Mountain outliers! And not surprisingly there are even several endemic species. Most appealing, all grow at sea-level; so there will be no long uphill hikes! On

this tour we will look for icebergs, whales, moose, and caribou. We will also visit L'Anse-aux-Meadows, the only authenticated Norse settlement in North America, as well as spend several days in Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site noted for its spectacular geology, not to mention serpentine barrens with unique flora. Join Todd Boland and Julia Corden on this exciting tour where the alpins meet the sea in Newfoundland's Limestone Barrens. Visit our website for costs and more details. Go to [www.nargs.org](http://www.nargs.org) and click on "Tours."

Tantalizing tours to come: Western Cape of South Africa in the fall of 2024; Spring wildflowers of Crete in March 2025; a possible repeat of the Alpines of Switzerland in June 2025; and Alpines of the Pyrenees with an extension trip to the Picos de Europa National Park in the summer of 2026. Stay tuned!

## 2023 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](mailto:basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu)

Program Coordinator: Terry Humphries, [terryehumphries@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com)

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

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

New Member Hospitality: Graham Egerton, Anne Redfern

Newsletter Editor: Susanne Lipari [sel3@cornell.edu](mailto:sel3@cornell.edu)

Wurster Garden Coordinator: Carol Eichler

Wurster Volunteers: Elaine Caso, Ellen Lane, Sheila Stone; Others always welcome! Contact Carol Eichler if you wish to be added to the email list.

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](mailto: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.

## 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](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com). Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be December '23/January '24

## 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 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.