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March 2010

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## March 27 program: 'Certain Plants, Uncertain Snow Cover'

On March 27, Anne Spiegel of the Berkshire Chapter of NARGS will speak on "Certain Plants, Uncertain Snow Cover." Spiegel will focus on plants that perform well in Northeast gardens despite changing weather patterns. "We'll look at hardiness, various ways to grow plants (raised beds, troughs, walls, rock garden) and which plants will adapt to cold, windy and snowless winters," says Spiegel, who notes that her Zone 4b garden has been behaving more like Zone 5 these days.

Spiegel has been a member of NARGS for more than 25 years and is a charter member and past President of Berkshire Chapter. A dedicated rock gardener, she has spent almost 30 years building a rock garden on a very challenging site. The **Plant of the Month** will be **Cyclamens** from Ellen Hornig, one of our members, who has a nursery, Seneca Hill Perennials. (See article below for details.) We'll meet in 404 Plant Science Building (Whetzel Room) on the Cornell University campus. Brown bag lunch at noon. Program begins at 1:00 p.m. **Note this is not our usual meeting date.**

Join a potluck with Anne at Susanne Lipari's following the meeting. Says Susanne: "Let's say drinks at 5 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m., but anybody can head out to my house right after the meeting and hang out." Directions: Take Rt. 79 West towards Watkins Glen. Turn left into Rt. 228 in Mecklenburg. Go 2.4 miles, the house is on the right. Please park along the road.

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## Flower bulb expert, author to speak at Cornell March 20

Horticulturist and best-selling author Anna Pavord will speak on "A Luxuriance of Bulbs" at 11 a.m., Saturday March 20 at the Statler Hall Auditorium on the Cornell University campus. The talk is free and open to the public.

Pavord has been the gardening correspondent for The Independent (UK) since 1986 and has written eight books, including the bestseller *The Tulip* and 2009's *Bulb*.

"Of all the different plants in the world, bulbs intrigue me the most," says Pavord. "As a gardener, I appreciate the way they mark the seasons. Bulbs are not just a spring thing. In this talk I introduce some of my favorites and suggest how they might be used in a garden."

After the talk, Pavord will sign copies of her new book, *Bulb*, which will be available for sale.

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## 2010 program plans

Our **tentative** program line up for 2010. Details in future newsletters or : [acnargs.blogspot.com](http://acnargs.blogspot.com)

- March 27: **Gardening without Snowcover** Anne Spiegel of the Berkshire Chapter of NARGS. (Note this is **not our usual meeting date**.) See details above.
- April 17: **Dwarf Conifer Gardens**, Jerry Kral will talk about conifers he grows in his Rochester gardens and special treasures from his trip to the Czech Republic.
- May 15: **Plant Sale**, Ithaca.
- June 5-7: Chapter **Summer Trip** to Stonecrop, Storm King, NY Botanical Garden, Wave Hill, Planting Fields and more. (See article below.)
- July 17: **Member garden tours**.
- August 21: **Members only plant sale**.
- September 18, October 16 and November 20 **programs to be announced**.

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## March Plant of the Month: Cyclamen

From John Gilrein, Plant of the Month Coordinator:

Our March 2010 Plant of the Month is Cyclamen. Our plants will be from Ellen Hornig, one of our members, who has a nursery, [Seneca Hill Perennials](#), in Oswego County, NY. We will have *Cyclamen hederifolium* and *Cyclamen purpurascens*, which are both hardy in our area.

*C. hederifolium* is a fall blooming Cyclamen, and is summer dormant. *C. purpurascens* is an evergreen, summer-blooming Cyclamen. Leaf shape and silver markings on leaves are variable. The leaves can be extremely attractive, even without flowers. A mature *C. hederifolium* can have a dinner plate sized tuber and hundreds of flowers. The flowers are smaller than florist's Cyclamen (non-hardy *C. persicum*), but make up for their smaller size with sheer abundance.



*Cyclamen hederifolium* as ground cover. Photo by Bill Rischhoff

These Cyclamen will perform best in part shade in a humus rich, well drained soil, with a near neutral or alkaline pH. They are tolerant of lower pH conditions, evidenced by growing under Rhododendrons shown in the Cyclamen article at the end of the newsletter. Cyclamen are tolerant of root competition but intolerant of poor drainage. *C. hederifolium* should be planted where it will not be disturbed during its summer dormancy. Cyclamen tubers should be planted near the soil surface and mulched. *C. purpurascens* prefers to stay moist during the summer. Our Plant of the Month will be from a cold greenhouse, so it will need to be acclimatized before planting outside.

Additional cultivation information can be obtained from the [Cyclamen Society's](#) website. Next month's Plant of the Month will be dwarf conifers.

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## **NARGS Seed exchange - Time to pick!**

*From Susanne Lipari and BZ Marranca:*

Our Chapter is in the middle of fulfilling the orders for the 2nd round of the NARGS seed exchange. You are all encouraged to help, you do not need to be a member in NARGS National. Why would you do that?

- Because those working on this project have the right to pick up to 100 seed packets ( \$5 per 20 packets).
- Because you get to hang out with a fun bunch of people and get fed and pampered to keep you in a good mood.
- Because it's something that needs to be done.

There will be sessions on the weekends and in the evenings until all orders have been picked. We will be working at KPL in the cellar hallway outside BZ's old office. (To get there, go down the stairs at the end of the central greenhouse isle. At the foot of the stairs, turn right and you will see us.) Parking on the Cornell campus is free after 5 PM and on weekends.

Please send BZ ([mmm10@cornell.edu](mailto:mmm10@cornell.edu)) an email to let her know that you can help and get the latest schedule of work sessions.

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## **Chapter Summer Trip June 5-7**

*From Susanne Lipari, membership coordinator ([sel3@cornell.edu](mailto:sel3@cornell.edu)):*

**On Saturday, June 5**, we will be heading down to [Stonecrop](#) to visit that lovely Cabot garden in its early summer glory. People wishing to also visit the sculpture garden at [Storm King](#) can do that afterwards and then join the rest of the group at the lodging (TBA).

**On Sunday, June 6**, we will be given a tour of the [rock garden at NY Botanic Garden](#) by garden's curator, Jody Payne. After the tour, we can explore the rest of the garden or visit [Wave Hill](#), not far away. We will meet at the [East Norwich Inn](#) in Oyster Bay on Long Island. There will be a cocktail hour in the courtyard of the lovely [Chelsea Mansion](#), one of the Gold Coast mansions, followed by dinner in a local restaurant (TBA).

**On Monday, June 7**, we will visit [Planting Fields Arboretum](#), with its synoptic garden, newly established Daphne collection, the rose garden, heather garden, late flowering rhododendrons.... Leaving Planting Fields, we can stop in at [Martin Viette Nursery](#) and – most importantly - stock up on goodies at [Trader Joe's](#). Return to Ithaca whenever you have had enough of Long Island.

Please let [me \(sel3@cornell.edu\)](mailto:sel3@cornell.edu) or [BZ \(mmm10@cornell.edu\)](mailto:mmm10@cornell.edu) know if you will join us for the trip, and if you will need us to make lodging arrangements for you and for which nights (the individual events – except Planting Fields - can be done as day trips for those who cannot spare more than one day).

## **Seed starting resources:**

Member Lynn Purdon Yenkey suggests: [Rob's plants](#) (Rob has tons of info he's tried on lots & lots of plants) and [Tom Clothier's Garden Walk and Talk](#) (This site is amazing for not just alpine, but all kinds of seeds. There is an entire database for *Penstemons*.)

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## Ruksin bulb order anyone?

From John Gilrein, Plant of the Month coordinator ([basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu](mailto:basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu)):

Two years ago a small group of Adirondack Chapter members placed a collective order to Janis Ruksans' Bulb Nursery in Latvia. Ruksans was a speaker at one of our chapter meetings and is also a well-known author of a book on bulbs. He has had access for years to areas formerly behind the iron curtain (the USSR) and other areas of Central and Eastern Asia (inaccessible to Americans in the past), and has collected seeds from many exotic areas.

His nursery has available many bulbs available either exclusively from him, or at least not widely available in the trade. Bulbs available vary from \$2 Alliums to \$80 Trilliums, and from easy to grow bulbs to some requiring very special conditions. The catalog includes a large selection of Alliums, Corydalis, Crocus, Iris, and Tulips.

Is anyone interested in working on a group order to Ruksans' Nursery? I'm volunteering to help, but not to be in charge of the order.

Contact info: Mr. Janis Ruksans Bulb Nursery, P. O. STALBE, LV-4151 Cesis distr., LATVIA  
Telephone: ++371-29-41-84-40, 641-00-326, Fax: ++371-641-64-003, E-mail: [janis.bulb@hawk.lv](mailto:janis.bulb@hawk.lv)  
Catalog: US\$5.00

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## News from National

### NARGS Board nominees

From Alice Nicolson, Chair, Nominating Committee ([taxonomy@verizon.net](mailto:taxonomy@verizon.net)):

On behalf of the NARGS Nominating Committee, I present the list of nominees for the three upcoming positions on the Board of Directors for 2010-2013. They will be voted on at the NARGS annual meeting in Colorado in July 2010.

- Jane Grushow--Pennsylvania
- Philip MacDougall--British Columbia
- Anne Spiegel--New York

Visit <http://acnargs.blogspot.com/> for short bios of the nominees.

### May 8 deadline for NARGS awards nominations

From Lee Curtis, Chair NARGS Awards Committee ([buzz.curtis@netscape.com](mailto:buzz.curtis@netscape.com)):

The North American Rock Garden Society is seeking nominations for six prestigious awards, the Award of Merit, the Marcel le Piniec Award, the Edgar T. Wherry Award, the Carleton R. Worth Award, the Marvin E. Black Award, and the Linc and Timmy Foster Millstream Garden Award. For information about the awards and nomination details, see the Rock Garden Quarterly, Winter 2010, page 52-53. Or check the NARGS website, <http://www.nargs.org/> Click on Board and Committees at the bottom of the page, and under Committees you will find Nomination procedure and lists of past recipients.

## Camille Doucet to speak on Botanical Illustration & Painting

From Rosemarie Parker [Gardener.Parker@gmail.com](mailto:Gardener.Parker@gmail.com):

The Finger Lakes Native Plant Society present a slide show & talk by Camille Doucet, Painter, Botanical Illustrator, Watercolor Teacher, & President of the local chapter of the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators on Botanical Illustration & Painting

In conjunction with the Living Light art show at the Tompkins County Public Library, Camille Doucet, one of the invited guest jurors, will present a different side of botany than we usually hear at FLNPS meetings. Camille will speak about the business of being an artist and art teacher, using slides of her work to discuss painting from photos and from live specimens. Her love of nature, of science, and of gardening is evident in her detailed images. Be ready for a visual treat!

Thursday, March 18, 2010, 7:00 to 8:30 PM, at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, 615 Willow Ave., Ithaca. All are welcome!

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## Other events

- March 18: Camille Doucet, Botanical Illustration & Painting. (See article above.)
- March 20: "A Luxuriance of Bulbs," presentation by **British bulb expert Anna Pavord**, author of *The Tulip and Bulb*, Statler Hall, Cornell University, 11 a.m.
- July 11-14: **NARGS Annual Meeting**, Salida, Colo. More info: [www.rmcnargs.org](http://www.rmcnargs.org)  
Carol Eichler and Donna Kraft have registered and are getting psyched to go on some serious/fun alpine hikes. Are others from the Chapter going too? If so, maybe we could share a car rental from Denver to Salida. Contact Carol at [ceichler@twcny.rr.com](mailto:ceichler@twcny.rr.com).

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## Cyclamen: A Perfect Companion Plant for Rhododendrons

Bill Bischoff, Surrey, BC

Let me introduce you to one of the small wonders of the Mediterranean area, the beautiful *Cyclamen*, all 22 species of them. As the cacti are native to the Americas, so are *Cyclamen* true children of the lands between northern Africa and southern Europe.

*Cyclamen* grow throughout the Mediterranean region. From the west on the Balearic Islands; north to southern France, northern Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria and the southern mountains of Poland; northeast to the south west coast of the Caspian Sea in northern Iran; east to Greece, Turkey, Lebanon, and Israel; and south, to many of the Mediterranean islands, several

locations in northern Africa, and one location in Somalia (Horn of Africa). When one looks at the area of distribution of *Cyclamen*, one sees that studying *Cyclamen* is also a lesson in geography and ancient history, as several species are named for their locations, sometimes using ancient place names. Also, in several locations more than one species grows.



*Cyclamen coum* groundcover. Photo by Bill Bischoff.

That *Cyclamen* have flourished in the Mediterranean for a very long time is quite evident from the remarkable growing habits of these plants. So well adapted are they to the climate of this area that they have become summer dormant for the most part. Summer dormancy may be a rather difficult concept for many North American gardeners to accept. However, most *Cyclamen* are indeed without leaves and flowers for several weeks every summer. To make up for this, they are evergreen throughout winter. The exception is one species, *C. purpurascens*, the northern most growing species, which is mostly evergreen year round.

In northwest North America, we enjoy a climate that as far as *Cyclamen* are concerned could be considered as medium Mediterranean. It is warmer in the winter than their coldest northern growing areas and cooler in the summer than the rather hot Mediterranean islands and northern Africa. In the hottest growing areas, *Cyclamen* grow mostly at higher elevations, where they at least enjoy cooler nights. Our rather dry summers also suit them well, as it duplicates the condition in their respective native habitats. To really make them feel welcome in culture, use only the best draining mix to grow them in: lava rock, perlite, # 3 turkey grit (which can be used also as top-dressing), and very coarse compost. Most important, avoid having them stand in water for any length of time.

In succession, the different *Cyclamen* species will flower from mid January to mid December, with the occasional flower of *C. purpurascens* as late as Christmas. A dormancy period is a definite adaptation to the very dry and hot summer climate of the Mediterranean. Of the 22 recognized *Cyclamen* species, 18 are hardy enough to be considered outdoor plants in coastal British Columbia, Washington and Oregon. To successfully cultivate these plants, first familiarize yourself with their origin. Plants from north of the Alps withstand longer cold and wet conditions than plants from the hot and dry Mediterranean islands.

Most *Cyclamen* are shade tolerant, and so can be planted under trees and bushes, including rhododendrons. They are also very pH tolerant, although in extreme cases, a small top-dressing of crushed oyster shells will correct an over acidic condition without harming nearby acid-loving plants. When grown in full sun, expect smaller leaves, but more distinct leaf patterns. Once established in a garden, these plants will surprise one by where they decide to locate themselves as they naturalise. It is therefore important to be careful when weeding, so as not to rip seedlings out.

Most of us are likely to be familiar with the "supermarket" *Cyclamen*, which has shooting-star flowers, with flower petals bent back and upward. The leaves of these plants are beautifully marked, and all plants seem to have different leaf patterns. This is *C. persicum*, which is not hardy as an outdoor plant in Canada or other areas with freezing conditions. Its name might imply it's from Persia, i.e., Iran, but it comes from north-western Syria and eastern Turkey, which years ago were under Persian influence. These supermarket plants are highly cultivated and inbred, which results in gorgeous plants that are rather susceptible to disease, making home-cultivation difficult. Until you get more familiar with this species of *Cyclamen*, its best to treat them as cut flowers and not try to keep them alive over the long-term. Wild plants of this species are vastly different and are very resistant to pests and disease, but even *C. persicum* in the wild are not reliably hardy at temperatures below freezing, and so only pot-culture is advised. This will allow them to be moved indoors when freezing temperatures occur outside. Potted plants of this species (not inbred cultivars) can be placed in direct sun outside except for the coldest weeks of winter. Their almost infinite leaf coloration and patterns is attractive, and their flower colour is wideranging.

Among the other species, *C. coum* is perhaps the most available and hardiest winter flowering species, while *C. hederifolium* is the most available and hardiest fall flowering species. Images of the different species show both the beautiful, dainty flowers and the wonderful leaf patterns that are available.

*Cyclamen* are relatively long-lived plants, and so it is advisable to seed or plant them in the garden where you will disturb them the least. Remember to mark the spot well, so as not to dig where they are dormant and resting during the summer. Seedlings and young plants transplant easily any time, as long as care is taken not to damage the corm and the roots. If injured, a wound can be treated with fungicide such as garden sulfur, and then be left to dry for several days before replanting.

As a group, *Cyclamen* offer an almost endless variety of leaf colorations and patterns. I suggest few gardens are large enough to hold them all. While the flowers may all seem to look alike except when examined closely, there are both color, scent and shape variations. These differences along with flowering time are used in identifying different species. Individual flowers can stay in bloom for more than eight weeks, especially with the early blooming kinds. When insects are not available for pollination, especially for species that bloom in the colder times of the year, *Cyclamen* can be self-pollinating. After a flower is fertilized, the flower stem starts to coil, placing the pod on the ground near the center of the plant. There, the seeds take all summer to ripen. If you want to collect the seed, keep an eye on these little coils, and when the seed capsule opens, be fast in collecting the seeds, or ants or wasps may carry the seeds throughout your garden. Ants carry the seeds away to eat the sugary coating off the seeds, without doing harm to the seeds, and so disperse them. New plants often sprout up along ant trails where the seeds are discarded! Seeds, even when taken from a selfed pod, will not yield uniform plants, and many leaf color variations can be expected.



*Mixed Cyclamen groundcover under Rhododendron. Photo by Bill Bischoff.*

Bought or harvested seed should be sown as soon as possible, and covered with some five cm (two inches) of grit because they prefer to germinate in the dark. Planted seeds may take up to three year to germinate, so mark garden planting locations well, or if planted in pots, remove the germinated seeds, now small corms, each year when dormant for replanting, but keep the pots available so seeds that germinate in future years are not discarded. This pattern of germination is thought to better ensure seedling survival in locations where severe droughts periodically occur, as not all seedlings from a plant are then killed in any given severe drought year.

*Cyclamen* are mildly poisonous plants, and all parts of the plant are somewhat toxic. The underground corms, in their native locations are only eaten by pigs and in the Pacific Northwest, very little pest damage is apparent throughout the year. Weevils will occasionally take a bite out of a leaf and their larvae may damage part of a corm, but usually *Cyclamen* take care of themselves. During the summer, slugs might attack some seedpods, but a bit of slug bait will quickly solve this. Leaves that have been damaged either by accident or frost might succumb to a fungus, but removing these damaged parts or dusting with garden sulfur will overcome this problem.

In summary, wouldn't it be a welcome surprise starting next winter to see some of these Mediterranean jewels beautifying your garden with scented flowers, and to know they will continue to do so for many years to come. Especially after a winter storm, nothing lifts a gardener's heart and spirit higher than to see these little garden amethysts glowing above a blanket of glistening fresh snow. No matter what your plans are, to buy plants or to just broadcast seeds at random in to your garden, you will be more than justly rewarded for your efforts with cyclamens.

### Some Selected Species Descriptions

***C. hederifolium:*** The specific name makes reference to the shape and markings of an ivy leaf (hedera = ivy); it is the most easily grown hardy *Cyclamen*. It grows in sun or semi-shade and its flowers are produced from late summer to autumn just before the leaves, which have some of the most wonderful leaf patterns of this genus. This species grows over a wide range throughout southern Europe and the extreme western part of Asia Minor, from southeastern France to shores of the Black Sea, just north of the Bosphorus, as well as from Sardinia to the northwestern part of Crete. Its a robust plant and needs at least a square foot of space to show its fullest splendor. It is also a very long-lived plant, and some tubers can reach a size of 0.5 kg (over a pound) and are thought to be in excess of 100 years old. Plants from seeds will start to bloom in their second year, and from then on the plants will steadily increase in size, with 50 or more blooms after just five to six years. The tubers need to be planted at least 8 cm (3

inches) below grade to assure support for the leaf and flower stems, which grow under-ground and sideways away from the tuber for several 5-8 cm before showing above ground. The plant is dormant during July and August, but evergreen during the rest of the year. Depending on the genetics of the plant, flowers will show from late August on, with different varieties blooming over a three-month period. Flowers are held well above the plant and are elegantly shaped, with little bumps at the bottom of the petals. Colors can be white to very dark magenta. After flowering, the plant as an attractive ground cover. Grow this plant as a woodland plant under conifers, deciduous trees and bushes or as an accent plant in the open. Because it has sideways spreading roots (no roots on the bottom of the tuber), it can be easily grown in containers. Fertilize these plants only lightly and keep them evenly moist during active growth. A slight sprinkle of ground oyster shell will benefit them.

**C. coum:** This is one of the hardier species and one of the easiest to grow. It flowers from early winter and well into spring. It occurs from the mountains of Bulgaria south to Turkey and east into the Caucasus Mountains, including the Crimean Peninsula, usually in shady places. Leaf colors can be shiny green, silvery or have silvery-green zones in the leaves. The leaves are round to kidney shaped in the western end of its growing region and tend to become more pointed toward the east. Grow this plant in soil with good drainage with the tubers at least eight cm (three inches) below the surface of the soil. Flowers are held well above the plants, giving an excellent show at a time when there is little else in bloom. When in bloom, the plants can tolerate snow or frost without being damaged, and the flowers are just as erect when the snow has melted as they were before being covered with snow. The petals are somewhat propeller shaped and tend to extend to the side of the flower. There are white, pink and dark magenta colors available, and most flowers have a dark zone at the base of the petals. Because of the many clones available, it is difficult to predict what color the flowers of seedlings will be. They need very little fertilizer, but *C. coum* does prefer a slightly alkaline soil, which can be achieved with a light top-dressing of lime chips or crushed oyster shells (a tea spoon full per plant). Because they are rather small and low to the ground, do not grow these plants close to more vigorously growing plants. From July to the end of August these plants are dormant, and new leaves begin to show in early September, which will persist to the next summer.

**C. alpinum**, syn. *C. trochopteranthum*, is a species in the *C. coum* group from southwestern Turkey where it grows in rocky areas, deciduous woodlands, and scrub. Flowers occur in spring and vary from pinkish carmine to white with a darker stain around the mouth. The petals are twisted, like a ship's propeller and the leaves are rounded or heartshaped with shallow toothing and silver green markings. This species will thrive in a sunny rock-garden and may need some protection from competitors, as it is smaller than *C. coum* and can easily be overwhelmed by more vigorous rock garden plants. Plant this species in an area where it has room to grow at least a foot deep. Fertilize only lightly and reduce watering during late summer. It is dormant during mid summer and evergreen for the rest of the year. There are several flower colors available.

**C. purpurascens:** This is the only evergreen cyclamen species It is native to mountain woods and rocky places in the most of the Alps, as far south as the southern foot-hills in northern Italy, and spans an area from south eastern France in the west to the southern most part of Poland and down into the northern Balkan States. Flowers appear from late summer to late autumn and are pale to deep carmine. Most are nicely scented, but is not as easy to grow and flower as some of the other species. It benefits from being kept cool and not allowed to dry out in summer, being planted deeply, and being well mulched. The species is well adapted to grow under trees and bushes and will naturalize under rhododendrons. This plant does not like root disturbance, and it is suggested to seed the plant where you want it to grow, as it is deep rooting. Plant seeds 10-15 cm (4-6 inches) deep and cover with some loose well-draining material. Allow about three years for all the seeds to germinate. The best place to grow *C. purpurascens* is in shaded areas, with definitely no midsummer afternoon sun. This species grows upward extensions from its growing areas on top of the tuber. These "floral-trunks" will elongate every year and should be covered with several inches of mulch if they show above grade. It appears that this is an adaptation to growing in a forested area where debris adds to the top of the soil every year. Because this is an evergreen species, it may add new leaves and shed older ones during all seasons. Keep evenly moist all year and fertilize only lightly.

**C. repandum:** This is a species from southern Europe, where it grows from south eastern France across the Southern Alps to the coastal area of the Balkan States. It is one of the last cyclamen species to break dormancy in spring, sometimes not until March. The leaves are heart shaped with a narrow and deep



sinus making them almost triangular, are angled and lobed and are often toothed. Many leaf forms and patterns are available. Flowers often appear with or soon after the leaves and are white to pale or deep pink, often with a pink or purplish red zone around the mouth; carmine magenta or reddish purple. Petals are sometimes twisted, and the flowers are held elegantly erect above the plant. Grow it as a woodland plant with good drainage and little fertilizer. Because these plants only show their presence for about four months per year, mark the spots where they grow to avoid later disturbing and damaging them.

**C. cilicium:** This species comes from south eastern Turkey, where it grows as a woodland plant. It is not as hardy as either *C. coum* or *C. hederifolium* but will survive west-coast winters well. Should it lose its leaves during an exceptional cold winter, it will come back the following fall, and seeds set in the fall will ripen, even without leaves, during the following summer. This is a smallish plant, with leaves held erect and flowers presented well above the foliage. Flower colors range from pure white to pink and dark pink, and the white variety is thought to be the hardiest. This is a fall flowering species that gives color to a garden when most summer flowering plants have finished blooming. While it thrives in dappled shade, it will do equally well in a more exposed situation. Because of its size, it is also good in a rock garden if there is at least 15 cm (6 inches) downward space for the roots. Plant tubers some 10 cm (4 inches) below ground level. If left undisturbed, it will self seed in the area where it grows.

More information about these charming little garden plants can be obtained from the Cyclamen Society, and if you become members, as a bonus they will send you every year free seeds, where the value of the seeds just about equals the cost of the yearly membership. The cyclamen society web site is <http://www.cyclamen.org/>

*Bill Bischoff and his wife Carla successfully grow and bloom 18 Cyclamen species as outdoor plants, and their garden, which also contains many hardy orchids, has received awards several times by the City of Surrey. They are members of the South Fraser ARS Chapter. This article originally appeared in the Journal of the American Rhododendron Society. To join the ARS, send \$40 to Laura Grant, Executive Director, PO Box 525, Niagara Falls, NY 14304-0525. Benefits include a quarterly journal, seed exchange, and chapter affiliation. Visit the ARS website at: [www.rhododendron.org](http://www.rhododendron.org)*

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## People

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## Green Dragon Tales

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