



ADIRONDACK CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

IN THIS ISSUE:

- March 16: Lee Ginenthal
- From the Chair
- Membership
- Plant-of-the-Month
- News from NARGS: Surplus Seeds
-
- Identifying Conifers
- Upcoming ACNARGS Programs
- Calendar of other garden programs
- About Us: ACNARGS
- About NARGS National
- Photos of the Month: Panama Plants

Visit our website <http://acnargs.org/>, blog: acnargs.blogspot.com, and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/acnargs>

March 2019

MARCH 16: APPLYING BONSAI DESIGN TECHNIQUES TO THE ROCK GARDEN OR TROUGH

Terry Humphries, Program Coordinator

Our program for March, presented by Lee Ginenthal, will show us how to combine techniques of landscape design and bonsai in the rock garden and on a small scale in troughs. He will cover aesthetic standards, scale, and shapes that are pleasing to the eye.

Lee is well-known in the area as an excellent speaker. His talk should motivate us to think how we can improve our rock gardens and troughs and very possibly motivate us to create some new ones in the months ahead.

Leon (Lee) Ginenthal and his wife Renate operate Der Rosenmeister, a family owned boutique nursery in Ithaca. They specialize in offering the best in cold hardy, disease resistant roses, as well as all the information needed to grow them.

He has been gardening since he was a young boy and growing roses for over thirty years. The nursery business began more than 25 years ago when the Ginenthals purchased a 3-



acre hayfield on a southeast slope in the Inlet Valley. The soil was good and the views spectacular. After building their home, they turned to the landscape, building arbors, brick and stone terraces, paths and bridges. Over the years they have grown over 400 species of roses.

Lee is a Consulting Rosarian for the American Rose Society and a member of the NY State Nursery and Landscape Association.

Two years ago, he retired from more than 40 years in special education and staff training with the Ithaca City School District. Now able to devote more time to other interests and passions, he has been pursuing many long-time interests, and rededicating his time to others like his bonsai collection.

Our meeting will be held in the Whetzel Room, Room 404, at 236 Tower Road, Cornell University. Map at the end of this newsletter. Refreshments are welcomed.

Heads Up Next month: April 13. Note it will be held the 2nd Saturday of the month. Our speaker will be Virginia Hildebrant, coming from the Toronto area, and speaking about plants of Iceland where she recently traveled.

FROM THE CHAIR

John Gilrein, ACNARGS Chair. Photos by Carol Eichler

Maybe by the time you read this issue of the Green Dragon, it will feel like spring outside. Winter has its challenges, but one of the reasons I like winter is the break from the warm season tasks of lawn mowing, weeding, etcetera. Of course summer tasks are replaced with others like shoveling snow, hauling firewood, and one does have to bundle up at least a little for simple tasks like fetching the newspaper. And effectively three months into winter like today (February 19), I really am looking forward to spring. Small confession: I actually did do some weeding during a thaw when the temperature outside was unseasonably warm. Somehow it didn't seem so bad, as I didn't feel like I had to do ALL the weeding.

Since it's hard to do any outdoor gardening now, it's a great time to order some plants for spring. We're working on ordering a Plant of the Month (POM) for both March and April. From my time as the POM Coordinator, I remember it was challenging to find vendors who would agree to ship plants in time for the March meeting, and then follow through in time. Milder climate places like Santa Fe or Seattle don't have much trouble with plant readiness, but the unpredictable weather makes some vendors uneasy about shipping. Please be patient with the process, and if we're not successful with getting the POM out in March, we'll double up in April.



*Gentiana acaulis
'Trotters Variety'*



For some great hands-on plant shopping and a chance to tour their gardens, there is the Stonecrop spring plant sale (photos taken in late April there), Saturday April 27 at Stonecrop Gardens in Cold Spring, NY (approximately 200 miles from Ithaca, 1 hour north of NYC). There are a dozen or so vendors, including some really outstanding ones like Wrightman Alpines, Garden Vision (epimediums), Jay's (dwarf conifers), and Broken Arrow (woody plants). And the woodland gardens, which I think are some of the best gardens at Stonecrop, are normally in their full glory during the sale.

We always hope our members are reading the "Green Dragon" to keep up with our activities and learn something new. It will be even more important this year, as we plan to change two meeting dates from our usual pattern: the April meeting is moving a week

earlier to Saturday April 13 (the 2nd Saturday in April instead of the third) to accommodate our speaker; the October meeting is moving to the first Sunday in October, Sunday October 6. For our October meeting we expect to have Cliff Booker, from the United Kingdom, as a NARGS sponsored speaking tour delivering two talks at our meeting. We've started working on plans for a 2019 garden day tour, though it's too early to announce the tour area. You can also look forward to a trough-making workshop as well. Stay tuned!

"Fine Gardening" magazine allows one to subscribe to the GPOD (garden photo of the day), which is an email with multiple photos of one person's garden from anywhere in the US, Canada, Australia, or almost anywhere. The link below includes excellent seed starting tips from this magazine, if you're interested in starting perennials or other hardy plants from seed.

<https://www.finegardening.com/article/10-seed-starting-tips>

Hope to see you in March, and if I have dirt under my nails, I'll be smiling!

John Gilrein, Chair

MEMBERSHIP: HAPPY NEW YEAR 2019

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

Please welcome new member Olivia Bono! She is a Cornell student and comes to us via longtime member Roz Bliss.

If you have not renewed for 2019, you should do it now so you'll be eligible to purchase the plant-of-the-month at our meetings. You can renew at the March meeting or by mail. The renewal form is at <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf>. Your membership

status is reported to you in the email with the newsletter link. Contact Mary Stauble at mes2@cornell.edu if you have any questions.

To our Chapter members: A membership directory is published electronically every year in September and accompanies the September newsletter as an attachment. For those who receive a paper copy of the Green Dragon, you will be mailed a printed directory. To respect our members' privacy we do not post the directory online.

PLANT-OF-THE-MONTH: EDELWEISS COMES TO THE RESCUE!

Marlene Kobre, POM Coordinator. Photos courtesy of Edelweiss Perennials

I am happy to report that we will, after all, have a POM sale at our March meeting, albeit not the selections from High Country Gardens (HCG) that I had announced at our February gathering. HCG did not want to ship the order in March because of the risk posed by persistent winter weather, but Edelweiss Nursery in Oregon came to our rescue.

As you may recall, our April POMs last year came from Edelweiss, and most of us were impressed by their size and quality, especially the epimediums, as well as the careful packaging to ensure they would arrive in top condition. Urs Baltensperger, the owner, is a pleasure to do business with, and the generous discount he offers our chapter gets passed directly on to our members. If you don't already know about Edelweiss, do check out their website (www.edelweissperennials.com).

I hope everyone will be able to find a favorite among the following three choices.

Epimedium grandiflorum 'Yubae' (the original Japanese cultivar name; aka 'Rose Queen')



Most of the *grandiflora* are native to Japan, and John Gilrein has explained that the Japanese cultivars prefer a somewhat acidic soil, whereas those of Chinese ancestry want alkaline conditions. This will have a bearing on the cultivation requirements described below.

Zone: 5

Flowers: 'Yubae' does justice to her genus name, producing large, dark rose-pink flowers with creamy white spurs reaching 12-18" high. The flowers reveal the complex four-part structure typical for epimediums that reminds some people of "fairy wings" or a "bishop's hat." Fortunately, the flowers appear before the leaves, making it easier to enjoy their delicacy.

Bloom Time: April and May

Leaves: Large, heart-shaped, with red edges and even a red flush in spring and turning orange-red in fall. Forms a clump 18"-24" high and up to 2' wide when mature. Some cultivars are said to be evergreen, but it is better to cut back the foliage in early spring so as not to detract from the emerging flowers.

Light: Half shade, but will tolerate both more sun and full shade. Leaves might burn in full afternoon sun.

Soil and Moisture: Their reputed tolerance of dry shade is indeed a virtue, but epimediums actually appreciate a loose, humus-rich, consistently moist soil with good drainage. Edelweiss emphasizes regular watering, especially until the plants become established. If your soil is alkaline, amend it with a product like Holly-tone to create the slightly acidic soil that 'Yubae' prefers.

Other Benefits: Deer and rabbit resistant.

Geranium magniflorum 'La Veta Lace'

'La Veta' is a selection from Panayoti Kelaidis, so it's no surprise that it's a real gem, perfect for the rock garden or even the corner of a trough.

Zone: 5



Flowers and Leaves: Purple, saucer-shaped flowers on stems reaching 6-10". Foliage is finely dissected, and might be evergreen in areas with milder winters, but probably not here. If you can give it a sheltered position you might be lucky enough to enjoy the winter foliage that is tinged purple. And if so, do invite us all over to share the gift.

Bloom Time: May, June, July

Light: Bright sun to half shade.

Soil and Moisture: Drought-tolerant once established, it wants lean, well-drained soil. Dislikes high humidity and wet soil.

Other Benefits: Deer and rabbit resistant.



Gypsophila repens 'Rosa Schoenheit'

The Latin name *Gypsophila repens* means "creeping chalk lover," referring to the chalky slopes on which it grows in Central and Southern Europe. 'Rosa Schoenheit,' another little gem, is a new Edelweiss selection chosen by Urs for its dark red stems.

Zone: 4, but will appreciate a sheltered position, if possible.

Flowers and Foliage: Edelweiss says this selection has the darkest pink flowers yet found on a repens cultivar, and it remains compact at a height of 4". Prune it after flowering to encourage repeat blooming. The foliage is blue-green, may be semi-evergreen, and it certainly creeps.

Bloom Time: Main flush in June and July, but intermittent blooms into Sept.

Light: Bright sun, with an eastern, western, or southern exposure. Will tolerate some shade.

Soil and Moisture: Likes a deep, neutral-alkaline, lean, and well-drained soil. Drought tolerant; dislikes high humidity and winter wet.

Other Benefits: Deer resistant (but apparently not to rabbits). Easily propagated by division in early spring.

Whichever plant you choose, do let me know how it performs for you. I also welcome suggestions about new sources or plants that you'd like me to consider.

Now, if only winter would release us from its clutches. . . .

NEWS FROM NARGS: ROUND 2 SEED ORDERS

Carol Eichler, editor

NARGS' 2nd Round Seed Exchange aka the Surplus Seed Round began on March 1st and concludes with orders in-hand March 20.

The "Surplus Seed List 2018-2019" page is up on the website but keep in mind surplus seeds sell out quickly. It is recommended to select MANY more seed numbers than the number of packets you wish to receive.

To order online, log in to the NARGS website to get to the "Order Seed" page. The procedure for Surplus Seed online ordering is similar to the Main round online ordering, except that you can request to receive up 100 packets (at \$10 per 20 packets). Please read the "Surplus Online Ordering Information - READ FIRST" page <https://www.nargs.org/surplus-ordering-information-read-first> for important information on placing your order before you begin.

Also note, our Chapter has put in a request for any leftover NARGS seed. So after phase II of the seed exchange is completed, we'll get a share of the remaining spoils. We can expect these seeds to arrive by our April meeting. Sometimes we get a lot, sometimes only a few packages.

AREN'T THEY ALL JUST PINES? ID CLARIFIED

Pat Curran

I know that the identification of needle-bearing trees is something that most folks have trouble with. I know I do. To refresh our skills, here's a link to a helpful article about our native conifers by Peter Smallidge

<https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/2019/02/11/arent-they-all-just-pines-how-to-id-conifer-trees/> As gardeners, we will encounter many non-native trees too and hope to be able to ID them. So I will make some additional comments.



Dawn Redwood
in fall color

First, in addition to our native, there are two common species of non-native larch that we can grow: Japanese and European, and frankly I haven't gotten around to telling them apart myself without looking in Michael Dirr's book on trees and shrubs.

There are also two more deciduous conifers that we will see quite frequently: dawn redwood, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, and bald cypress, *Taxodium distichum*. They can look quite similar since both are large trees with soft, deciduous needles. Here's a good mnemonic for remembering which is which. Dawn redwood needles are opposite, and comes from China, which is opposite on the globe. Bald cypress, on the other hand has alternate needles and is from the U.S. Another question is how do you tell these two trees apart from larch? The needles of American larch, *Larix laricina*, grow in clusters while both dawn redwood and bald cypress needles are attached singly to the twig.

In addition, there is a third genus of deciduous conifers which can be grown around here, but is so rare that I have never seen it: *Pseudolarix amabilis*, the golden larch.

Among evergreen conifers, gardeners will also run into the umbrella pine, *Sciadopitys verticillata*. There are two nice large specimens on Comstock Knoll at the Cornell Botanic Garden. Their shiny needles are very distinct.

And then there is the genus *Chamaecyparis*, false cypress, of which we can grow many species. There is one native nearby, *C. thyoides*, known as the Atlantic white cedar hardy to zone 4, and native to the eastern U.S. swamps.

It is easy to confuse the leaf characteristics of *Chamaecyparis* with *Thuja*, arborvitae, but the cones are different. Some *Chamaecyparis* have white markings resembling the letter v on the underside of the leaf sprays.

And let's not forget two more conifers: *Microbiota decussata*, the low-growing Siberian cypress, with foliage reminiscent of arborvitae but more shade tolerant and Douglas fir, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, a tree which has distinctive pointed terminal buds, nice soft needles, and very distinctive cones.



Umbrella Pine,
courtesy of Wikipedia



Image courtesy of <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com>

Finally, there are several species that are questionably hardy for us. You will possibly see them if you tour botanic gardens a little warmer than we are. For example, a couple of "true" cedars, *Cedrus libani* or Cedar of Lebanon, grow in the Cornell Botanic Garden – no doubt in a micro-climate, though Dirr says the tree is hardy in zones 5 to 7. *Cupressus sempervirums* or Tuscan Cedar, with its tall columnar silhouette so common throughout Italy, is supposedly zone 7 (perhaps for our "some day" list). *Cunninghamia lanceolata*, common Chinafir, has really stiff and often bluish needles. I have observed this tree in Rochester, zone 6, although Dirr says (6) 7.

Last but not least, there is *Cryptomeria japonica*, which used to be found in the ILR quadrangle at Cornell, again a very protected environment, before they remodeled the buildings. Dirr says it is zone (5) 6. In particularly harsh winters, it would die back to the height of the adjacent building.

Have fun identifying these plants. Strolling the Newman Arboretum in Ithaca could make for a great winter walk and gardener's challenge. (Plus their plant tags can confirm your identifications)

See "From the Chair" in the Jan-Feb, 2019 issue of the Green Dragon for suggestions on what to look for in conifers for your rock garden or trough.

UPCOMING 2018 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 renovated Whetzel Room, 404 Plant Science Building, 236 Tower Road, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

March 1-20: NARGS Surplus Seed Round in progress. Visit NARGS.org.

March 16: Lee Ginenthal, Applying Bonsai Design Techniques to the Rock Garden or Trough

April 13: Note 2nd Saturday. Virginia Hildebrandt, Flora of Iceland. Annual seedling exchange.

April 27: Annual plant sale at, Stonecrop, Cold Spring, NY. Guest vendors.

May 3-5, 2019: "Rooted in Diversity," NARGS Study Weekend, based at Sheraton Great Valley Hotel, Frazer, PA, a Philadelphia suburb. Hosted by Delaware Valley Chapter NARGS with details in the Fall Quarterly (not yet published) and in this newsletter.

May 18: Cooperative Extension Garden Fair and Plant Sale at Ithaca High School. ACNARGS plant sale – our biggest fundraiser of the year.

August 17: Annual Dish-to-Pass Picnic and Member Only Plant Sale. Upper Buttermilk Falls Picnic Shelter

September to be announced.

Oct. 6: Note 1st Sunday. Two presentations by Cliff Booker, from United Kingdom. Part of NARGS Speaker Tour.

October 28 – November 8: NARGS Tour to Greece. This tour is now full and a wait list has been created.

June 18-20, 2020: Foresight 2020: Exploration and Inspiration, NARGS Annual General Meeting, hosted by ACNARGS in Ithaca, NY

May 8-11, 2021: International Rock Gardening Conference, Perth Scotland. Start saving your pennies.

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>.

HAVE SOME: WANT SOME:

Here's our new monthly feature – a classified section – to facilitate your gardening wants and needs. Do you have too many large pots? Do you want some small pots? Do you have too

many divisions (that will otherwise go into the compost)? Are you seeking a certain plant? The idea is to use this newsletter to express your "haves" that you are willing to give away and "wants" for any items you are seeking. To post a listing contact Carol Eichler at carolithaca@gmail.com.

HAVE: Winter

WANT: Spring

Panax trifolius and *Asclepius quinquefolia*. Contact Bill Plummer, remmulp@stny.rr.com

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

March 14-17: "A Taste of Spring," Rochester Flower Show, at the Arena in Henrietta, NY
<https://rochesterflowershow.com/>

March 21-24: "Plantasia in Paradise," flower show, Hamburg NY.
<https://plantasiany.com/>

April 27: "Millennial Gardens: Savor, Sizzle and Shrub," Gathering of Gardeners symposium, RIT Inn & Conference Center, Rochester NY; sponsored by Monroe County Master Gardeners. [Gathering of the Gardeners Info.](#)

May 10-19: Lilac Festival, Highland Park, Rochester NY.
<https://www.rochesterevents.com/lilac-festival/>

May-June: usually the last 2 weekends of May and the first weekend of June, Linwood Gardens Tree Peony Festival, Pavilion NY.
<https://www.linwoodgardens.org/festival2019>

Cooperative Extension Horticulture Programs, located at 615 Willow Av., Ithaca. 607-272-2292. Unless otherwise stated, classes require pre-registration and have a self-determining sliding fee scale. More info at www.ccetompkins.org

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society Meetings from 7-8:30pm at the Ithaca Unitarian Church annex (corner of Buffalo & Aurora, enter side door on Buffalo St. & up the stairs). More info at www.FLNPS.org. Also look for FLNPS Walks meeting at different times and locations.

Cornell Botanic Gardens (formerly Cornell Plantations) calendar of events visit: [CBG Calendar](#). Fall Lecture Series (the last one on November 7) [CBG Fall Lecture Series](#).

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 5 program-speaker meetings, the Green Dragon newsletter, web and Facebook pages, garden visits, overnight garden trips, hands-on workshops, 2 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), 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. Download a membership form here: <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf>.

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 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 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.

2018 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: David Mitchell, dwm23@cornell.edu. Changes coming soon!

Plant Sales Committee Members: Michael Loos, BZ Marranca, Carol Eichler

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

Membership: Seeking someone to do this. Could this be you?

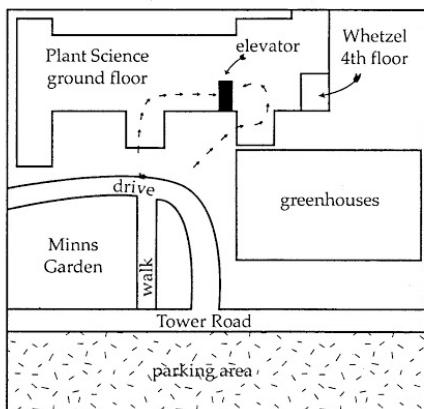
New Member Hospitality: Graham Egerton

Newsletter Editor: Carol Eichler carolithaca@gmail.com Changes coming soon!

Calendar: Pat Curran, pc21@cornell.edu

Webmaster, Program Tech: Craig Cramer, cdcramer@gmail.com

GREEN DRAGON TALES



Published eight times a year (Jan/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 our April issue. The newsletter is always posted and printable each month on our website:

www.acnargs.org

Map: Whetzel Room, Room 404 Plant Science Building, 236 Tower Rd., Cornell campus

PHOTOS OF THE MONTH: PLANTS OF PANAMA

Some tropical plants
encountered in Panama;
photos by Carol Eichler



Senna alata,
Candlestick Tree,
native, medicinal



Polyalthia longifolia 'Pendula',
India Mast Tree, not-native
landscape tree



Thunbergia grandiflora,
blue trumpet vine,
non-native ornamental



Allamanda schottii
Bush Alamanda,
native to Brazil,
naturalized



Guandu, pigeon pea, a
traditional legume of
Panama mixed with rice;
woody perennial



Gossypium hirsutum?,
Wild Cotton, a native plant