



ADIRONDACK
CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

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November 2019

November 16: Lori Chips

Terry Humphries, Program

NOTE: This meeting is a dish-to-pass starting at noon with set up beginning at 11:00 AM and program starting about 1 PM. Please bring your own table service, including utensils. Drinks will be provided.

Lori Chips, *The Art & Science of Successful Rock Gardening in Troughs* and book signing. Saturday, November 16, 1:00 PM, Whetzel Room 404 Cornell Plant Science Building.

“No other gardener knows more about cultivating precious alpiners than Lori Chips—or constructs such unique troughs for them, or writes with more engaging insights.” — Abbie Zabar, author of *The Potted Herb* and *A Growing Gardener*

“Prepare to be mesmerized by your newest obsession. But fear not—you are in the ultra-capable hands of a master.” — Tovah Martin, author of *The Garden in Every Sense and Season*

“In addition to being an accomplished gardener and expert trough builder, Lori is also a talented designer ... Every gardener needs a copy of her book.” — Joseph Tychonievich, author of *Rock Gardening*





Lori Chips hails from Norwalk, Connecticut where she is the long time alpine manager at [Oliver Nurseries](#) and a member of NARGS. In addition to sharing many design tips for building and planting troughs, she will recommend soil mixes and plant combinations especially suited to hypertufa containers. She will help us understand how to incorporate rocks, especially tufa, for both aesthetics and functionality in trough construction and planting.

The presentation that Lori has pulled together for us will draw the best elements from her recent book for an audience of NARGS members who know and love the joy of planting alpine jewel plants in appealing vessels that resemble real stone. Be prepared to expand your knowledge and get enchanted about creating miniature landscapes that draw the eye.

Lori Chips has been committed to the exploration of alpine plants since her student days at The New York Botanical Garden. After graduating, she accepted the job as propagator for the Rock and Native Plant Gardens there. She has been Alpine Manager at Oliver Nurseries for over 20 years, expanding the rock garden collection and pushing the boundaries in the art and science of creating and planting troughs, a long-standing interest that holds a special place in her heart. Her book on the subject, [Hypertufa Containers: Creating and Planting an Alpine Trough Garden](#), was released by Timber Press in 2018. (NARGS members receive a 30% discount using promotion code NARGS at checkout.)

She has taught classes at New York Botanical Garden, lectured to the North American Rock Garden Society and written many articles for NARGS as well as Oliver's over the years. As a botanical illustrator, Lori's artwork has appeared on the covers of the NARGS Quarterly (1999). She is the recipient of the Carleton R. Worth Award for horticultural writing. She has judged at the Philadelphia Flower Show as well as at smaller venues.

Lori lives and gardens with her husband Joe, without whom there would be less rock in the rock garden, and who is her unflagging partner, travelling to climb mountains, explore other gardens, and meet other like-minded gardeners.



Illustration of Gentiana sino-ornata by Lori Chips on cover of NARGS Rock Garden Quarterly, Fall 1999.

From the Chair

John Gilrein, ACNARGS Chair

A theme of late is meeting date surprises, so please remember that the next meeting is the third Saturday of the month (on our "normal" schedule), November 16, 2019. We often move the November meeting up to the second Saturday, when the third Saturday seems close to Thanksgiving. So this year there's a long gap between the significantly early October meeting and the November meeting.

Most of you know that the Adirondack Chapter's preferential identification system is to use the botanical names. I have been talking to members recently about using botanical names and common names. In the past another gardening group complained about our use of those botanical names. This preference for using

botanical names also seems true for NARGS, other alpine garden societies, and the garden magazines I receive. Common names are frequently included with the botanical name. Our usage of botanical names precedes my involvement in the chapter. Prior to the use of the standard botanical binomial name (genus + species) some of the names of plants (which were likely in Latin as well) varied from one European country to the next and might be 6 or 8 words long! Thankfully Linnaeus developed a simpler naming system. Using the botanical name is the best way to communicate with people from different backgrounds, from different countries, and sometimes the only way to communicate about some rock garden/alpine plants when we don't know a common name. A classic example of why the botanical name is critical is the beloved bluebell, which is *Mertensia virginica* in the eastern US, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* in England, and *Campanula rotundifolia* in Scotland.

The Adirondack Chapter doesn't have any labeling police, so if you're labeling a plant and don't know the botanical name, it's better to label the plant with what you know. Or even better, ask a friend. And when you're at a plant sale or garden, and you're seeing an unfamiliar plant name, ask what the common name is. Sometimes when I'm in the woods and drop a botanical name with a close family member (possibly to be annoying), she shoots back "what's it really called?" or something to that effect. Common names aren't always clear or and sometimes they're quite misleading, e.g. Lily of the Nile, *Agapanthus*, is from South Africa. Was someone long ago in Europe bad at geography? Sometimes common names are charming or interesting, and might be informative about the plant: there's Kiss Me Over the Garden Gate (*Polygonum orientale*), Lamb's Ears (*Stachys byzantina*), and Blue Bead Lily (*Clintonia borealis*, which has a blue berry as it's fruit).

It would be rare to grow up knowing botanical names, so we've learned by reading, sharing our knowledge, looking up names, and being on trips where plants are identified. It seems to take hearing or seeing a botanical name more than once for it to be stored in my memory, and that memory recall is not always instantaneous. Sometimes I want the name before the recall kicks in and I Google it. What helps me is reading garden related books and periodicals, checking the guidebooks or other reference books when needed, and reciting the botanical name (usually quietly inside my head, not blurting it out) as I walk through the woods or a garden. With all the people walking through town alone using their Bluetooth and talking (seemingly to no one!), maybe it's now more acceptable just to talk to yourself or an imaginary friend.

It is frustrating these days with the botanical names that change after being fixed for our entire lifetimes, e.g. *Aster novae-angliae* was changed to *Symphotrichum novae-angliae* (New England aster), which is significantly longer and more difficult to remember. The upside of botanical names is that there are many that provide clues about the plant, like specific names that refer to a color, (alba for white *Quercus alba*, white oak, or flava for yellow, *Arisaema flava*, a yellow flowered Arisaema), habitat (*Thelypteris palustris*, marsh fern), the plant's habit (*Thymus serpyllum*, creeping thyme), size (*Sequoiadendron gigantea*, giant sequoia) or recall famous person (*Franklinia alatamaha*, franklin tree, named for Ben Franklin by John Bartram. Lifelong learning is a plus, and the Adirondack Chapter hopes to expand our horizons. Even if you learn just a few botanical names this year, that's progress!

Hope you can join us for the dish to pass lunch at noon for the November meeting. Our next event is sorting seeds for NARGS that will happen in early December in Ken Post Lab (KPL) Classroom. We usually pick two Saturdays early in December with snow dates the following Sundays.

Membership

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

There are no new members to report on from the last month. But this is a reminder that our membership year runs the calendar year. So starting January 1, everyone's membership will have expired and we all need to renew. At \$15 a year for an individual/\$20 for a household it is easy to get a great ROI (Return on Investment). Our plant sales and exchanges and members-only Plant-of-the-Month subsidized sales are just two examples of our membership benefits. I will send out an email reminder in January and there will be an announcement in the February newsletter. If you have questions please contact me at mes2@cornell.edu.

Trough Ideas

John Gilrein, Chair

Being the owner of a dozen or so troughs, I have thought a lot about my troughs and what should be planted in them. Since I like to travel, and I'm not sure how many more years I will have a reliable neighbor (or neighbor's kid) to provide watering when I'm away, I'm working on less water intensive trough plantings. So that's the main theme of my article.

Hardiness: Since troughs are just another type of above ground container, the plants in your trough need to be a zone or two hardier than plants growing directly in the ground. A good suggestion is that the plants need to be one zone hardier for a trough on the ground in a protected area, and two zones hardier for a trough raised off the ground and/or in an area subject to the force of the weather.

There are plenty of plants that are very hardy. If you are willing to go to extra trouble to protect your troughs in the winter, the extra hardiness rule does not apply. Some of the extra measures to get your planted trough through the winter include moving the trough to an unheated shed, a cold frame, or unheated garage. Japanese maples in pots winter over nicely in my unheated garage basement, which is partially below grade, so it's a fair bit warmer than outside. Planted troughs can be very heavy, so moving them for the winter is not always practical. I try to shovel snow over most of my troughs, which works better here in the snow belt than in Ithaca, which is practically a snow desert compared to Barneveld or South Onondaga. But snow protection is not completely reliable to ensure hardiness, unless you can make your own snow. Wrapping an outdoor trough in foam over the winter could help, but it's a lot of work and not very attractive.



Sempervivum trough. Photo by John Gilrein.



Troughs at Stonecrop Gardens. Photo by Carol Eichler.

Sun plants: Full sun exposure is the trickiest exposure for a trough than can go for a week or two without water at the height of summer (assuming no water coming from the sky). For me, summer is the most challenging season for my trough plants. Sempervivums are very hardy, and look beautiful when they fill up a trough, either by themselves or with a few attractive rocks. To me the webby semps, *S. arachnoideum*, are especially attractive. They tolerate drought, and if we're lacking rain, I would just water the trough just before leaving on a one or two week trip. You could plant just one variety in a trough, or coordinate several varieties. The only care they need is a tiny bit of weeding and picking out the crowns of plants that have flowered and died. *Eunomia oppositifolia* (formerly *Aethionema*) is very drought tolerant (I had one growing in a trough of

only grit that I inherited, and I neglected it) and has attractive blue green foliage. It's very small, so that contributes to its low water needs. Cacti (there are some hardy to Zone 4) could be grown in a trough, and their lack of thirst is well known. See this link from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden for more information:

https://www.bbg.org/gardening/article/hardy_cacti. I would be sure to have excellent drainage in the trough, which I suspect is more important than the actual temperature. And keeping the trough drier over the winter could help (e.g. under an overhanging eave). Non-hardy succulents work great in a sunny trough with little supplemental watering and they're not expensive to replace every spring if you buy small plants (or hold over in your basement, and there are many choices. I would consider Graptoveria in that category, but I found by leaving out in the frost that it's hardy to 25 degrees F., or possibly even lower. Non-hardy succulents are now my summer planting for the trough in front of the garage, which is the farthest from any water source.

Partial sun plants: I'm recommending some trees for partial sun situations, as they would tolerate neglectful watering better in less than full sun. I would consider morning sun/afternoon shade an ideal exposure for minimizing water needs, i.e. sun in the cooler morning, shade in the hot afternoon. The very smallest miniature conifers would be a better bet for a trough that won't see water for a week or two. I would consider the dwarfest *Thuja occidentalis* (arborvitae) and *Pinus mugo* (mugo pine) some of the most drought tolerant conifers. Arborvitae grows on limestone cliffs and in cracks in rocks. The planting medium needs to be well drained so it won't crack in the winter, and the trough would need to be big enough to still have some moisture if it will be left for a week or two. One of our dwarf conifers in the trough at Wurster died in a summer drought (no one is there to water every few days). Sorry I can't be more specific on trough size, I don't have enough experience to do so. Almost all the conifers would do well in full sun if provided with regular watering through the summer of course. You would want the standard stone mulch to help maintain soil moisture. Probably the best plants are saxifrages "saxes" including the silvers like *S. cotyledon* and Kabschias; they need a gritty, preferably limy, planting medium, spread slowly, and they're happy to live on the water provided by rain and snow. Like the sempervivums, saxes look good all the time with minimal grooming.

Shade plants: This is where there are the most options for a variety of plants that will tolerate neglectful summer watering. Shady placement means the trough (and plants) will be cooler in the summer and will have reduced water needs. An eye to careful placement will avoid placement adjacent to hot surfaces like a dark colored building, windy sites, and the blackest shade under a tall Norway spruce (*Picea abies*). Just a thick carpet of moss is lovely in a trough, and a planting medium of peat moss and quartz sand kept moist would likely encourage it to grow (no fertilizer) on its own. Tiny hostas, e.g. 'Pandora's Box' and 'Blue Mouse Ears' need little water in a shady site. Many ferns are very hardy and do well in troughs. Some very hardy ferns include maidenhair (*Adiantum pedatum*), cinnamon (*Osmunda cinnamomea*, moved to *Osmundastrum*), marginal (*Dryopteris marginalis*), lady (*Athyrium filix-femina*), which has a dwarf variety, and maidenhair spleenwort (*Asplenium trichomanes*). Ferns need a moisture retentive planting medium (except maidenhair spleenwort, which would be better in a gritty/rocky one), and cinnamon fern likes being left with the trough in a tub of water, until late fall, when the trough should get moved out of the water until late spring. [Fancy Fronds](#) nursery website is a good source for information and fern plants, but their hardiness ratings are on the conservative side, e.g. maidenhair spleenwort grows in cracks in boulders well above the ground in the Bruce Peninsula of Ontario, which is a cold Zone 5 (and that's what it's rated at by FF). I have cinnamon fern and evergreen wood fern growing in containers successfully. Some other ideas that I expect would work well but have not tested are *Primula x juliae* like 'Wanda' and *Heucherella*. The key is to use plants that are not too large and lush (and thus thirsty).

If you experiment with your trough plantings, keep us posted!

Foresight 2020 Conference Line-up

By the Conference Planning Committee – John Gilrein, Terry Humphries, Marlene Kobre, or Carol Eichler

It's not too early to be thinking about June. And why? As gardeners there are many reasons to look forward to this month and the NARGS Annual General Meeting and Conference, which we are hosting, I hope is one of them.

So mark your calendars now for the conference dates of June 18-20 and plan to attend. In another article in this issue there is information about how you can apply for a stipend from the Chapter to defray some of the registration cost. We will have lots of volunteers during that time as well (even if you don't register for the

Conference). Our volunteers will receive a free Conference t-shirt featuring the Conference logo and may participate in the plant sales.

We will have the opportunity to highlight for our guests the best of what this area has to offer. Our field trips will visit three private gardens and a gorge walk, the pre-conference tour highlights three more gardens, as well as a day at the Cornell Botanic Gardens. Since we are familiar with all of these places, we will be in a unique position to help others enjoy them.

As a registrant you will also be able to attend the talks. Two international speakers will join us. Harry Jans, plant explorer extraordinaire and a legend among rock gardeners, is one of them and the other is Kaj Andersen from Denmark, whom we are so pleased to introduce to the NARGS community. We will also have an evening of talks by horticulturists and designers from Cornell Botanic Gardens.

After the formal scheduled talks each evening we are offering after-hours mini-talks. Attendees are invited to submit and present short of 5-15 minute slide shows on anything rock gardening related.

Many of our activities will be based in the Robert Purcell Community Center including meals, plant sales, and evening talks. Since the Conference is local, you may choose to commute each day to the Conference activities. Nearby dorm lodging is also an option, offered literally steps away from this building.

Registration

Ready to sign up? The opening of registration will open around January 1st and will be online only via the NARGS.org website. The registration fee of \$425 payable by credit card is due at that time. You must be a NARGS member to attend this Conference; however, you may include the \$40 membership fee with your registration.

Questions?

Check out our FAQ's first (which will be posted soon on the NARGS website). If you have further questions, contact anyone on the Conference Planning Committee – John Gilrein, Terry Humphries, Marlene Kobre, or Carol Eichler.

Here's the Conference Schedule as it stands today:

Conference Schedule

Thursday, June 18

8:00am – 3:00pm	Optional Pre-conference – Day trip to 3 Syracuse area gardens; pre-registration required and additional fee of \$45
2:00 – 6:00pm	Official Conference check-in (early & late registration by prior arrangement)
3:00 – 6:00pm	AdCom and NARGS Board meetings
3:30 – 5:30pm	Plant sales and book sales/signings
4:30 – 5:30pm	Informal BYOB gatherings
6:00 – 7:00 pm	Dinner at (Robert Purcell Marketplace Eatery)
7:15 – 9:30pm	Evening Talks, CBG horticulturists & designers (yet to be announced)
9:30 – 10:30pm	After-hours mini-talks (attendance optional)

Friday, June 19

7:00 - 8:00am	Breakfast Robert Purcell Marketplace Eatery
8:00am – 4:00pm	All Day Field Trips; gorge walk and 3 private gardens; box lunch included
4:30 – 6:00pm	Plant sales & book sales/signings
5:30 – 6:15pm	Cash bar
6:15 - 7:30pm	Catered banquet
7:45- 8:00pm	Evening program: Harry Jans
9:15 -10:15pm	After-hours mini-talks (subject to submissions)

Saturday June 20

7:00 – 8:30am	Breakfast at Robert Purcell Marketplace Eatery
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9:00 – 10:00 am	Talk by Kaj Andersen
10:00 – 10:30am	Walk to Cornell Botanic Gardens
10:30am – 12:00pm	Tour Cornell Botanic Gardens with their docents
12:00 – 7:00pm	Box lunch & free afternoon; dinner on your own
12:00pm	Chapter Chairs meeting begins
7:00 – 8:00pm	Annual Meeting & Awards
8:00 – 9:15pm	Talk by Harry Jans and concluding remarks

Sunday June 21

7:00 - 8:30am	Breakfast at Robert Purcell Marketplace Eatery
10:30 – 3:00pm	“On-your-own” tour to members’ private gardens

Announcing Stipends for ACNARGS Members

Foresight 2020: Exploration and Inspiration, June 18-20, 2020. Is it on your calendar yet? It’s not too early to consider attending.

Itinerary details for the Conference have been arranged already in preparation for the opening of registration around January 1st. The Winter issue of the NARGS Quarterly will contain several Conference-related articles. Note we are also offering a pre-conference day-trip to tour Syracuse area gardens on June 18 and will invite our attendees to visit member’s gardens on Sunday June 21, following the close of the Conference.

Since this is our last newsletter until the Jan/Feb issue, we are sending out this first announcement about stipends for the Conference, open to our Chapter members.

Purpose of the Stipend

Our aim is to encourage as many of our members as possible to attend the 2020 AGM hosted by us. We believe the Chapter will benefit in the long term by increasing both interest and involvement with Chapter activities.

The ACNARGS Board voted on Oct. 20, 2018 to set aside up to \$3,000 from our reserves to subsidize Chapter members wishing to attend the 2020 Chapter-hosted NARGS Annual Meeting. As per the Chapter’s past stipend program as well as NARGS’ past stipend guidelines, we plan to offer a reimbursement subsidy of \$300 per individual. A stipend recipient must register for the AGM and then will be reimbursed for \$300 of the \$425 registration fee. To attend a NARGS AGM you must be a NARGS member. NARGS membership costs \$40 a year.

Should we receive more than 10 worthy applicants, the Board will consider increasing the amount in the stipend fund.

Who’s eligible?

We will follow past guidelines of NARGS’ AGM stipends. That is:

- anyone who has never previously received a stipend to attend a national AGM (either annual meeting or study week-end)

And

- has been/is a member of ACNARGS in both 2019 and 2020

And

- is a member of NARGS at the time of applying for a stipend; the individual can join at the same time as their stipend application is submitted

What are the expectations?

Stipend recipients are expected to volunteer to help with the AGM and to volunteer for the Chapter. See below for examples of volunteer needs for both the AGM and the Chapter; the applicant may make further suggestions, if there is a special interest. Altogether a minimum of 10 hours of volunteer time is required.

How does one apply?

Applicants must submit a letter to Chapter Chair John Gilrein stating their interest in receiving a stipend and why they are interested in attending the 2020 AGM. Once an award has been granted this will necessitate follow-up conversations with the ACNARGS Chair (John Gilrein) and the AGM Volunteer Coordinator (Carol Eichler) to secure specific commitments.

Deadline for applying: Applications will be accepted until Feb. 15, 2020 and should be submitted to John Gilrein (basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu), ACNARGS Chair, who will submit all applications to the Review Committee. Feb. 15 is the date of the first 2020 meeting of ACNARGS.

Review of applications

A Committee of the Board will review the applications and make a recommendation to the full Board for a vote at a March Board meeting. No applicant for a stipend should be part of the Review Committee.

Decision and Notification of Awards

Stipend recipients will be notified as soon as possible after the March 15, 2020 Chapter meeting and no later than March 31, 2020.

Some examples of Conference volunteer tasks:

Meet & Greet at registration desk, bus monitors, audio/visual liaison, plant sale assistants, bus monitors, chase car drivers, conference bag stuffers, and more.

Some examples for ACNARGS volunteer tasks:

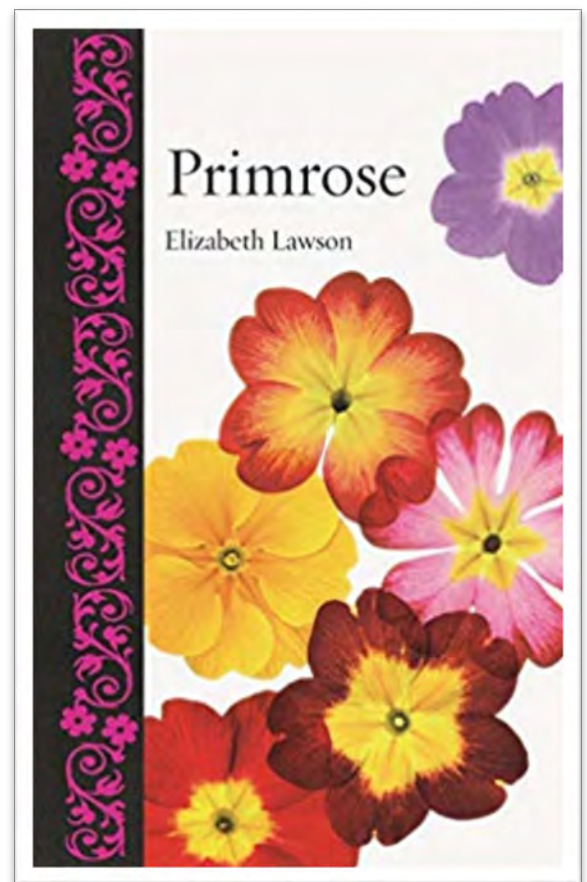
Meeting room set-up and clean-up, write for the newsletter, help with the plant sales, be a greeter at meetings, organize a garden tour, work at the Wurster rock garden, and more.

Book Review: *Primrose*

By Mary Gilliland

The family home from which I left for college was on Primrose Drive, and the first plant I brought home from a NARGS meeting was Wanda. In the years since, my excitement about primroses has multiplied as vigorously as the flowers themselves do in my woodlands and its borders throughout the spring, with an occasional second late summer flowering. But imagine that it is a snowy day in winter, and with cup of tea at kitchen table, I sit with two books opened: my oldest edition of Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* at my right hand, and botanical illustrator Barbara Shaw's 1991 *Book of Primoses* at my left. That sum of pleasures is what I feel as I immerse in Elizabeth Lawson's new hardcover, *Primrose*.

While her book was in development in 2017, Elizabeth gave a slide lecture for the NARGS Adirondack chapter. Her overview ranged from displays of the rare—*primula* with the hugest stalk that grows on far northern limestone barrens, cave-dwelling *primula* of the Southwest that grow in algal mats—to reminders of the practical: doubles must be divided, for they bloom and bloom and never set seed because all the reproductive parts have become flower. At her talk, intermixed with such lively botanical knowledge were historical summaries of primrose appreciation and uses, as well as cameos of primrose breeders, bloggers, and illustrators. Did you know that the most famous auricula illustration is Georg Dionysius Ehret's 'Fille Amoureuse,' the beautiful pale blue primrose with pale green leaf?



Lawson's book is graced with this picture, and over 100 other splendidly reproduced illustrations: botanical paintings of individual plants, photographs, herbarium sheets, electron micrographs, handwritten letters with line drawings, portraits of primrose breeders and historians, and posters from popular culture incorporating the flower. Around and among these visual delights are striking condensations of history and biography. Did you know that herbals were succeeded by florilegia; do you remember that sketching was followed by painting by engraving by computer imaging? 17th century weavers often grew gold-laced polyanthus and other flowers for sale. 18th century Elizabeth Blackwell spent two years at the Chelsea Physic Garden drawing 500 plants recently arrived from the Americas then engraved, hand-colored, and marketed *A Curious Herbal* in order to ransom a feckless husband from debtor's prison. The project turned out well, though the fate of the feckless man did not. In Lawson's book we also get notes on the primrose from Dorothy Wordsworth's journal (occasionally sourced, I might add, for poetic lines by her brother William). For nature writing, I place poet John Clare near the pinnacle, and my eyes misted over upon finding his "crimped and curdled leaf" of the cowslip embedded in a discussion of their vernal being revolutive—and then noticing the words of this literarily botanical paragraph run below a reproduction of Cicely Mary Barker's eponymous flower fairy!

That moving combination is actually one tiny bit from a chapter devoted to molecular genetics, a chapter that covers 30 years of Charles Darwin's research on pin-and-thrum (a terminology originating with the aforementioned 17th century florist weavers) on Britain's common primrose, cowslip, and oxlip. But here as elsewhere, Lawson displays no dichotomy between science and letters, nor chronological or spatial separation between people of different centuries and countries who pursue a common interest. All chapters are topically holistic—chapters on explorers and adventurers, on hybridizers from the Wynne sisters through and beyond Barnhaven, on 400 years of auricula (ah! the stunning "farina" photographs), on the Japanese *sieboldii* and Chinese counterpart *sinensis*, on the primrose in prose and poetry, in fairy tales and politics, in health and cooking.

Authorial joy permeates our richly illustrated verbal travels from Scotland to Turkey to Tibet to the one South American primrose. This labor of love includes a comprehensive index, a list of associations and websites, an excellent bibliography, 20 pages of references, and a superb timeline which notes that 25 million years ago "Primula solidifies its genetics in the eastern Sino-Himalayas" and then begins with Pliny the Elder (he who became fertile soil beneath Vesuvius's ashes trying to save the life of a dear friend) and continues through the 2016 isolation of the supergene in the thrum flowers of *P. vulgaris*.

Primrose is the newest addition to the Botanical series from Reaktion Books Ltd. As for the phrase from *Hamlet* reused by so many—perhaps most movingly by Oscar Wilde in *De Profundis*—"the primrose path" is explored both metaphorically and literally in Elizabeth Lawson's finely written book. I leave you, dear reader, your own pleasurable adventures with her through its host of colors and meanings.

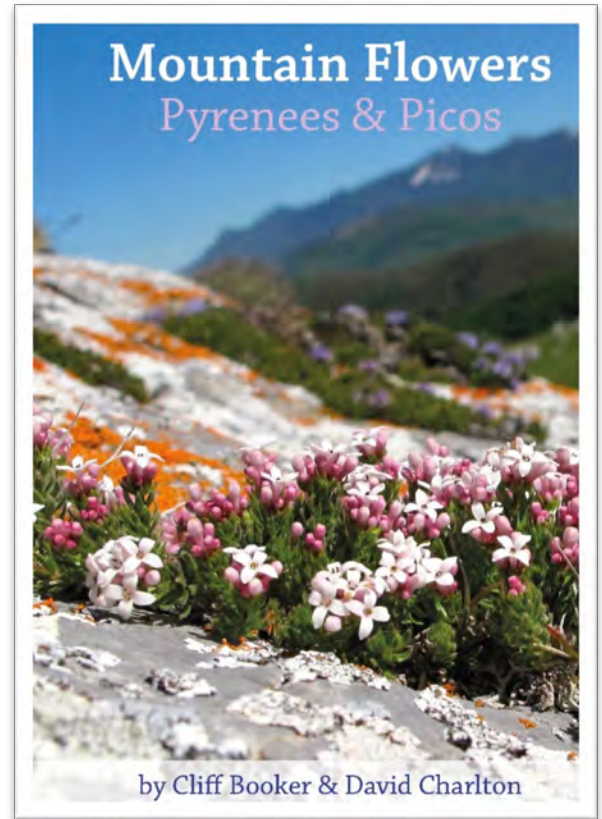
About the author of this review:

Mary Gilliland is an award-winning internationally published poet. She has done multimedia collaborations with musicians, painters, photographers, and sculptors. On the writing faculty of Cornell University's Arts & Sciences college, she also taught writing at Cornell's branch campus in Doha and was a featured poet at the International Al Jazeera Film Festival. "She is not afraid of delight, neither does she shirk the hard tasks of anger, pain, and deep caring," said Mary Oliver about Gilliland's letterpress collection *Gathering Fire*. In November 2019 Mary is one of 4 writers selected for the inaugural Sandy Bend writers' residency on Sanibel Island.

Book Review: *Mountain Flowers*

By John Gilrein

This is a spiral bound field guide, written by Cliff Booker and David Charlton (who was our October 2019 speaker) in 2017. The Pyrenees is the mountain range dividing France from Spain with the Atlantic Ocean to the west and the Mediterranean Sea to the east. The Picos de Europa is a range of mountains along the north coast of Spain. Both ranges include both limestone areas, and areas of acid rocks with different flora. The habitats or zones covered in the book include woodland, valley meadows (grazed by livestock), high mountain meadows, and lastly rocks, peaks and scree. Each zone in the book has an associated symbol which identifies the zone where each plant is commonly found. The book has color photographs of each flower is divided into sections by flower colors: blue (including blue violet), pink (including purple pink), red, yellow, and white. Each flower page is labeled with bloom time with the month(s) highlighted. Botanical name, plant family, and common name (in English, Spanish, and French) are all given. There is helpful text which sometimes includes more specific information about the plant's habitat, whether the plant is a semi-parasite or parasite. Plant and flower size are not specified, however the user would likely be able to identify the plants in the book, provided they are in flower when seen.



Some critical comments:

The book is clearly organized, and the photos are good. It is not meant to be a comprehensive plant guide to the two mountain ranges, rather it includes many of the most showy or interesting flowering plants. The zone information would be most useful for finding and identifying the plants. Organization by color sections is also helpful to find a plant in the book. Some of the flower colors may be on the cusp of two (sometimes different) colors: is that flower violet/purple or is it pink/lavender pink? Sometimes two individuals perceive colors differently; I have had debates about the color of a flower before. Still, I wonder why the *Ramonda* with the violet flowers is included in the pink flower section (*Ramonda* can have pink flowers, but the photo is a violet flowered one). One point I don't understand is why the book is still using some now archaic plant family names: *Cruciferae*, *Labiatae*, *Umbelliferae*; current plant family names for the above families are (in order as above) *Brassicaceae* (cabbage family), *Lamiaceae* (mint family), and *Apiaceae* (carrot family). More perplexing is that the book uses both archaic and current plant family names for the first two families mentioned in this topic. And the plant family name for the bean family, *Fabaceae*, is consistently misspelled *Fabiaceae*. Plant family names were standardized decades ago to all end in ---aceae. Two identification errors are that *Euphorbia amygdaloides* is labeled as in the *Liliaceae* (correct family is *Euphorbiaceae*) and *Sedum dasyphyllum* is identified as *Sedum album*. In spite of the anomalies in the book, I enjoyed perusing the book, and would bring the book on a trip to the Pyrenees to use as a helpful guide.

Upcoming 2019 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.

November 16: Lori Chips Hypertufa Troughs book signing and presentation.

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

As we learn more details of these meetings they will be included in future newsletters, our blog, acnargs.blogspot.com, and our Facebook page, [facebook.com/acnargs](https://www.facebook.com/acnargs).

Calendar of Select Events & Programs

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

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.

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). Also look for FLNPS Walks meeting at different times and locations.

Cornell Botanic Gardens (formerly Cornell Plantations) calendar of events visit: [CBG Calendar](#).

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

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, 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), 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 at 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 horticultureal 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.

2019 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**, terryhumphries@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**, **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: **David Mitchell**, dwm23@cornell.edu. ***Looking for a new editor!***

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 David Mitchell,

david_mitchell_14850@yahoo.com. Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be our September issue.

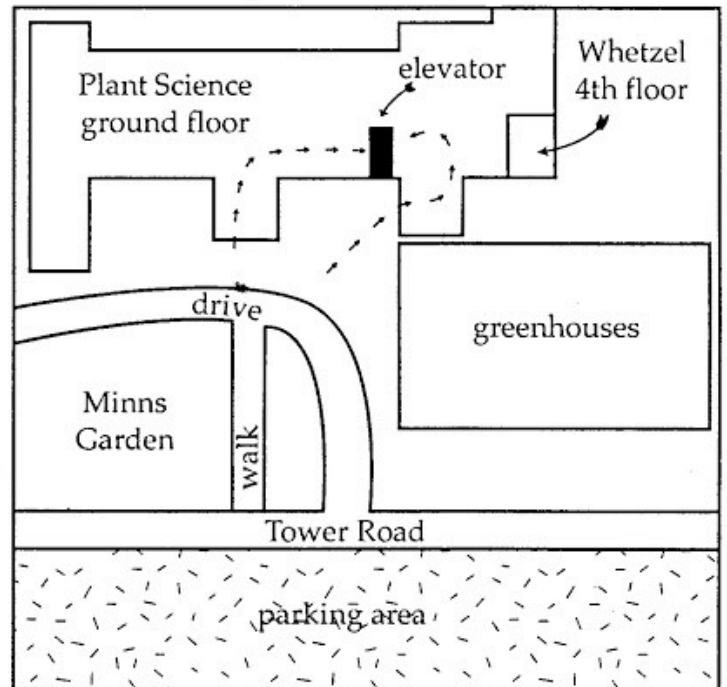
The newsletter is always posted and printable each month on our website: www.acnargs.org

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



October surprise! *Primula vulgaris*. Photo by Terry Humphries.

(More pictures on next page!)





Pat Curran and Nigel Dyson-Hudson garden. On a slope, the garden escapes the earliest frosts, which we had already had further down the slope. The red is Acer japonicum aconitifolium. The straw yellow is 'Mary Stoker' Chrysanthemum. Arisaema consanguineum is in front. Photo by Pat Curran.



Pat Curran and Nigel Dyson-Hudson garden. Hardy begonia photographed on Oct. 18, with English yew 'repandens' in the background, both Zone 6 plants in my mildest microclimate up on the hill (where the cold air drains away). Photo by Pat Curran.



Aconitum carmichaelii 'Arendsif' blooming in my garden on Oct.28. Photo by Nari Mistry.