



ADIRONDACK
CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

September 2024

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MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 21 – WHETZEL ROOM

Terry Humphries, Program Chair

Lori Chips: Alpine Plant Propagation



I know everyone is looking forward to Lori Chip's presentation on Alpine Plant Propagation and I can assure you, it will be everything you hoped for, and more! Lori is one of the most knowledgeable, enthusiastic and articulate rock garden professionals anywhere. She will be bringing plants, troughs and all of her creativity for a truly wonderful lecture and sale.

Lori Chips has been committed to the exploration of alpine plants since her student days at the New York Botanical Garden. After graduating from the School of Professional Horticulture at NYBG, she became propagator for the Rock and Native Plant Gardens. She has been the animating spirit behind Alpines and Troughs at Oliver Nurseries for over 25 years, expanding the rock garden collection and pressing the boundaries in the art and science of creating and planting troughs, a long-standing interest that holds a special place in her heart. Lori also currently creates the content for Oliver's social media.



Lori propagates alpine plants and creates stunning displays that reflect her artistic talent. Her book *"Hypertufa Containers: Creating and Planting an Alpine Trough Garden"* was released by Timber Press in 2018



The west wing of the Plant Sciences Building is still undergoing renovation. The easiest entrance to the building is where the Liberty Hyde Bailey Conservatory connects to the building. Use the walk along the west side of the conservatory. Turn left when you enter the vestibule and continue to the end of the hallway. Turn left and take elevator to the 4th floor. Turn right when you exit on the 4th floor and proceed to Room 404 (Whetzel Seminar Room) straight ahead.

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

FROM THE CHAIR

John Gilrein, Chair

First, thanks to all of you who made the August plant sale a success, as usual! The profit from this plant sale should fund all, or most, of our Fall speaker expenses, helping us stay in good financial shape. We had plenty of plants, possibly not as many as some previous sales. But there were good plants donated and enthusiastic buyers to take the plants home. And a good meal and social hour after the sale to catch up with people.

Our meetings with speakers, and our plant sales, are customarily held on the 3rd Saturday of the month – the routine makes for easier planning. Please note that we will be breaking from our routine this fall. We only break from our scheduling routine for good reasons – usually to accommodate a speaker coming from abroad or due to a home football game at Cornell. Meeting at Cornell on the day of a home game complicates parking on campus, so it's easier to change the venue. For meeting dates & locations, check the most current Green Dragon, which is always available online at acnargs.org. Of course, we will announce the meeting date and venue for the next upcoming meeting when we meet as well.

I'm freshly back from a one-week canoe trip to northern Minnesota – thus the photos I'm hoping will be included in this issue. The distance from home to northern Minnesota is roughly 1,000 miles – though less “as the crow flies”. Minnesota has a continental climate, with more extremes of heat and cold than we experience. Where we were in northern MN, the vegetation is southern boreal forest, similar to Adirondacks of New York with fewer hardwoods and more aspen. Red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) and jack pine (*Pinus banksiana*) are much more common in MN than in NY. The Boundary Waters of MN is in hardiness zones 3b and 4a, with possibly winter low temperatures around minus 25 to minus 35 degrees F., and with around 10 inches less of annual precipitation. Some of highlights of botanizing while driving/riding were seeing large patches of *Monarda fistulosa* (purple bee balm) blooming, *Solidago rigida* (stiff goldenrod) about to bloom, and perennial sunflowers blooming, *Helianthus* species, possibly *H. decapetalus*. One of the botanical mysteries I encountered in MN was finding orange jewelweeds, *Impatiens capensis*, flowering in the usual shade or orange as well as some plants in a paler shade of orange. The paler orange flowered plants were not unusual, and sometimes found next to the darker flowered ones. I've never seen the paler orange flowered plants here in NY, in spite of seeing hundreds, if not thousands, of orange jewelweeds in flower (there's even a thick patch of them in the ditch directly across the road from my house).



MEMBERSHIP

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

Please welcome our new members who came to the August Plant Sale - Joanne Yunger from Groton was a guest of Cindy Pataki and Lisa Powers was a guest of Joanne Button. Susan Guardi from

Sauquoit, NY joined via email.

If you haven't yet renewed for 2024 it's not too late - you already know the many benefits and we have 3 meetings left! The mail-in form is at www.acnargs.org/join.pdf or you can join at our September meeting. Membership is for the calendar year; dues are \$15 for individual and \$20 for household. If you have any questions email me at mes2@cornell.edu.

PLANT OF THE MONTH :

Marlene Kobre, POM Coordinator

Lori Chips will bring plants for sale.

PLANT SALE RECAP

Carol Eichler, Plant Sale Coordinator

I saw a lot of smiling faces on Saturday at the conclusion of our annual Members' Only August plant sale. There seemed to be a great selection of plants to satisfy everyone's garden tastes. For the first time we featured a native plant table as well as our usual specialty tables for rock garden, non-hardies and annuals, and free tables. You just can't beat our prices! Officially we raised \$1,017, which is about par for our August sale less minimal expenses. Those \$3, \$4 and \$5 prices do add up.

These funds help cover most of our speaker fees at \$300 per talk. These payments allow us to attract such great speakers as Lori Chips on September 21, Chris Gardener (our NARGS traveling speaker and owner of Vira Natura tours coming from Turkey) on October 26 (note not our usual date), and Elisabeth Lawson talking about her new book on mosses and lichens, on November 9th, note the 2nd Saturday of the month. Note too this meeting will be at Cooperative Extension at 615 Willow Av, Ithaca.

We had 33 people sign in – good attendance including two new members. For the most part the weather cooperated but it did come in handy to lower the two side tarps against the wind and rain. The food at the dish-to-pass was predictably excellent too as was the company. I love that our sales are so relaxed and gives us more time to socialize than our regular meetings do.

I know there will be a lot of busy gardeners over the next few days and with the rains and cooler temperatures we are getting as I write this article, the weather is perfect for planting. At the end of the day there was no excuse for anyone not to leave happy. I think it's fair to say "A good time was had by all."

DRAINING THE SWAMP

Carol Eichler, Wurster Garden Coordinator

After several years of neglect and debate, both Tompkins County Master Gardeners and ACNARGS agreed that it was time to retire the pond at the base of the Wurster Rock Garden. Or as we've been saying time to "to drain the swamp," This area will be transformed into a shade garden to include some of our spring ephemerals. The area between the pond and chain link fence defining the property boundary already includes a number of plants including hepatica, dodecatheon (shooting stars), trilliums, hellebores, primroses and ferns to name a few.

The Master Gardener volunteer who initially installed the pond over 24 years ago (yes, it preceded the rock garden) was no longer active and no one else had stepped up to maintain it. Additionally, nearby trees had transformed that space from full sun to shade so that the pond could no longer support water plants. It did support a healthy stand of invasive yellow iris, *Iris pseudacorus*, and a carpeting layer of duckweed.

John Gilrein was willing to do the literal dirty work of donning barn boots and wading into the muck if necessary. He came to Ithaca on August 15th prepared to work. First, John and I scooped and emptied numerous buckets of water until some of the liner was exposed. John then proceeded to cut away part of the liner to allow any remaining water to naturally seep into the subsoil. He didn't even get that dirty! Within a few hours the draining was complete – end of phase 1. This part turned out to be much easier than expected.

Next, we will want to remove the liner and start filling the rather cavernous hole. This fall our plan is to ask the City Parks and Forestry crew to deliver a load of free woodchips from the nearby pile on Pier Road (they do this often for Extension). The chips will require a work party to move them into the dug space. The hole is huge so it may even take 2 dump truck loads. Perhaps for the final step we will want to bring in some topsoil or a combination soil/compost mix.

Our goal, hopefully by next spring if the ground has settled sufficiently, this area will be ready to plant with woodland and shade-loving plants. Stay tuned. Eliminating the pond has created a new planting opportunity.

FURTHER READING: NATIVE PLANTS

Some food for thought in this article.

<https://www.plantdelights.com/blogs/articles/native-plant-myths>

ACNARGS UPCOMING 2024 PROGRAMS

Chris Gardner, NARGS traveling speaker with **ViraNatura** based in **Turkiye**, speaking on **Flora of the Mediterranean** and starting at 1:00 PM **Flora of South Africa**

Saturday October 26, 2024 10:30 AM Whetzel Room 404, Cornell Plant Science Building

Elizabeth Lawson on her new book ***Moss and Lichen***, a fascinating guide to the natural and cultural significance of mosses and lichens.

Saturday November 9, 2024 1:00 PM at Cornell Cooperative Extension (Cornell has a home football game) 615 Willow Avenue

CALENDAR OF SELECT AREA GARDEN EVENTS

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

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

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society monthly meetings – a hybrid of in-person and zoom:

<https://flnps.org/> Recordings of past programs are available to view online.

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

Habitat Gardening in CNY, local Wild Ones Chapter: <https://www.hgcny.org/>

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

To have your garden event listed send all pertinent information to Susanne Lipari sel3@cornell.edu

2024 ACNARGS BOARD MEMBERS AND CONTACTS

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

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

Program Coordinator: Terry Humphries, **terryehumphries@gmail.com**

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

Secretary: Currently rotating amongst "Responsible People"

Treasurer (aka CFO): Marlene Kobre

Plant Sales Chair: Carol Eichler **carolithaca@gmail.com**

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

Membership: Mary Stauble, **mes2@cornell.edu**

New Member Hospitality: vacant

Newsletter Editor: Susanne Lipari **sel3@cornell.edu**

Wurster Garden Coordinator: Carol Eichler

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

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

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

ABOUT US – ADIRONDACK CHAPTER NARGS

We are an all-volunteer organization and one of thirty-eight NARGS affiliated chapters active in North America. Our annual Chapter activities include 6 program-speaker meetings, the Green Dragon newsletter, web and Facebook pages, garden visits, occasional overnight garden trips, hands-on workshops, two plant sales a year, and frequent plant giveaways. Our meetings are informal, friendly gatherings that provide a wealth of information and offer a source for unusual plants, plus the opportunity to be inspired by other gardeners.

The public is always welcome. Chapter membership starts at \$15 a year based on the calendar year. Membership includes these benefits: newsletter sent to you electronically (or option by mail for an extra fee), invitations to our garden day trips, opportunity to travel on our planned overnight garden trips, annual membership directory, and plant sale discounts and member only sales, including Plant-of-the-Month sales.

ABOUT NARGS NATIONAL

NARGS National is our parent organization: We encourage you to join (online at www.nargs.org) for only \$40 a year. Benefits include a seed exchange, a quarterly publication focused on rock gardening, and an online website featuring a wealth of information including current and archived of Quarterly's, recordings of past study days and more. NARGS National also holds its Annual Meeting in interesting places where attendees have the opportunity to visit gardens and take field trips, often to alpine areas, as well as hear talks by outstanding plants people from around the world. More recently, NARGS is offering botanical tours each year, both within the US and abroad.

GREEN DRAGON TALES

Published eight times a year (Jan./Feb., March, April, May/June, July/Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov./Dec. Submit articles no later than the fourth Friday of the month preceding the monthly publication to Susanne Lipari, **sel3@cornell.edu**. Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be in October 2024.