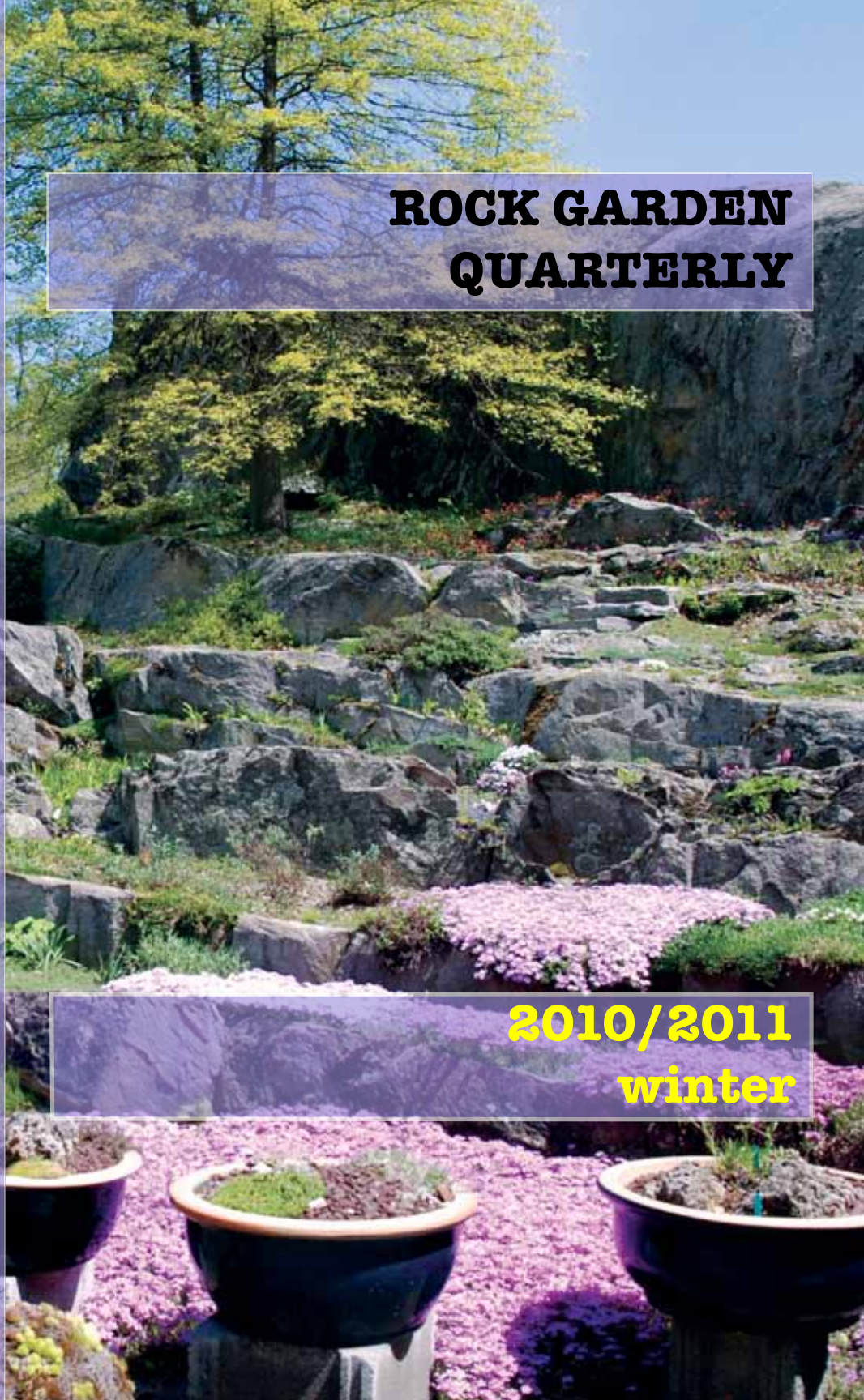


**ROCK GARDEN
QUARTERLY**

**2010/2011
winter**



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Cliff Booker is a photographer, lecturer, writer and alpine exhibitor who lives in Lancashire, England. Cliff and wife Sue lead wildflower walks in the Dolomites for Collett's Mountain Holidays, a well-known travel company. Founder and current Chair of the East Lancashire Group of the Alpine Garden Society, Cliff specializes in growing high-mountain *Ranunculus*.

Thelma Hewitt has held many significant positions on various bodies, currently on the Board of The Fells, The Fells Chapter of NARGS, and Honorary Trustee of the New England Wild Flower Society, but she is most excited at the moment by an award for her garden, for its "significant use of wildflowers and other temperate North American native plants".

Hugh MacMillan lives and gardens in Colorado at the base of the Front Range. He is a founding member of the Eriogonum Society. He is currently the Webmaster for NARGS. His passions include hiking and climbing, gardening, and travel.

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Abbie Zabar has been a member of the Manhattan Chapter of NARGS since 1996. With occasional success, she attempts to garden in NYC. Author of 5 books, 2½ on gardening, her illustrated stories have appeared in American and British publications. Her drawings are part of the permanent collection of the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, one of the world's foremost resources of botanical art.

Kees Jan van Zwielen lives in Ablasserdam in the Netherlands. He has travelled widely in search of unusual plants, particularly in Iran, Turkey, Greece and the European Alps. He is particularly interested in alpines, bulbs and hardy cacti. Kees Jan had an article on the autumn flowers of Crete in the Spring 2006 issue of the *Quarterly*, and from 2003 to 2007, Kees Jan was editor for the Saxifrage Society.

All illustrations are by the authors of articles unless otherwise stated.

A version of the first chapter of Cliff Booker's account first appeared in the Berkshire Chapter Newsletter. Thanks are due and it should also be noted that the article by Robin Magowan in the last issue had also appeared previously in the Berkshire Chapter Newsletter. Apologies for not having been aware of this at the time.

The map on page 36 was initially derived from the copyright-free map on the CIA website.

Front cover: Anne Spiegel's garden, Wappingers Falls, NY (page 24), photo: Cliff Booker.

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ROCK GARDEN

Quarterly

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From the Editor

DURING 2010, NARGS members responded to an appeal for donations by contributing some \$3200 towards enhancing the *Rock Garden Quarterly*, with most of this designated for more pages and more color. This issue starts to see the results of those donations. The Fall issue of the *Quarterly*, using color throughout, was produced at no more than the average cost of the previous four issues but to expand the number of pages to 96 is more expensive. The production cost increases are surprisingly modest, less than \$500 (less than 20¢ a copy) but there will also be some increased distribution costs on top of that with the increase in weight. Anyway, the net result of all this, is that it is possible to finance the enlarged *Quarterly* for the whole of 2011. Thank you to all the donors. And 16 more pages, is 16 more pages of articles and photographs – so do keep sending me articles, photographs, or even just ideas.

Obviously whenever you make conspicuous changes there will be those who dislike the change and there is nothing more conspicuous than the change in the cover made this time. I know that there are some members who have been particularly fond of the paintings on the cover of the *Quarterly*, and will lament their demise, but they have been enormously outweighed by those who have told me that they would so prefer a photographic cover. Equally there will be some who will regret the passing away of the traditional “academic” separation of text and photographs, but it seems to me that we should embrace the possibilities offered by modern printing and photography, bringing text and image together to reinforce one another. Vastly improved color registration in printing, ubiquitous digital photography, improved electronic communications, all contribute to making the full integration of text and pictures possible.

While most editors probably have a perfect issue in mind, some Jeffersonian ideal of what their production should contain and look like, it’s not easy to actually achieve what they have clearly in mind when they start out. The *Quarterly* is like a garden - every now and again it’s time to give it a facelift, build a new rockery, dig out some old shrubs that have seen better days, stock up with some of the new introductions, try to see whether those new-fangled sandbeds might not be the answer, or a waterwise garden, or a new bulb house.

Plants, gardens, how-to tips, travel, books, gardeners, news, articles for beginners, for gardeners, for botanical specialists, for long-distance or armchair travellers – places you can visit, plants you can grow; plants you can’t grow, places you can’t visit – gardens you’ll never get to see or could never manage to create and maintain, gardens you can get to and can emulate. I want to see pictures of plants I could grow, and get tips on

how to do it. But I also want to read about and see pictures of plants from the corners of the world that I may never get to, plants I can never grow, so this will be as close as I get. So that's the program – and not every issue will have all of them – but that very wide range of levels and subjects is what I'm aiming at – and all of these in good writing and great pictures, for experts and beginners alike.

Having been working on the *Quarterly* for most of October and November it's now ready to dispatch to the printer in Kansas. I did have ten days off though, visiting my wife Monica who is teaching in Lisbon, Portugal, for a term. Not the best time for flowers but there is always something...



Daphne gnidium in flower on November 4th, at Cabo da Roca, Portugal, most westerly point on the European mainland, facing out across the Atlantic.

IN MEMORIAM - LEE RADEN

We are sad to learn of the death of Lee Morris Raden, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, on October 22, 2010, age 85. He was NARGS President from 1986 to 1990.

Lee served in World War II in the U.S. Army Air Corps as a bomber pilot, based in Abbot, England. After the War, he finished a B.S. Degree in chemistry from the University of Wisconsin. Lee joined the ARGS (American Rock Garden Society as it was then) in the early 1960s. He was instrumental in organizing local members as a section of the North Atlantic Region of ARGS. This became the Delaware Valley Region as yet more members joined, many inspired by Lee's entertaining and enthusiastic newsletters and the fine programs and camaraderie. In 1967 the Delaware Valley Chapter, led by Lee, organized the Annual Meeting and in 1969, he was a co-organizer of the first Study Weekend held in Atlantic City, New Jersey. According to the ARGS history, written by Marnie Flook, "while he was [ARGs] President, Lee Raden was the national Sales Manager for Fabricated Metals, Inc., manufacturers of semi-bulk containers, located in San Leandro, California. His job involved traveling around the United States and, whenever possible, Lee included visits to ARGS chapters." Lee said he visited 23 of 29 chapters.

For more than forty years, Lee was an active member of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS). He was an annual award-winning competitor at the Philadelphia Flower Show, but also a Passer, Judge, and Horticultural Chair. In 1998, he was given the PHS Distinguished Achievement award. The citation described Lee as "a horticultural pied piper" with "enthusiasm, dedication, and good humor" in all horticultural endeavors.

Peggy Bowditch remembers that "visiting Lee's garden was always fun, but as he gave you one of everything you admired it was necessary to stop admiring so that you wouldn't feel guilty about going home with too many plants." At his 85th birthday celebration this past March, Peggy recalls that guests were given corms of *Cyclamen hederifolium* from Lee's garden, "The uninitiated thought they were odd chocolate cookies." Joyce Fingerut recalls that Lee's "seemingly endless energy allowed him to perform at a high level at his 'day job' with extra left over for the world of horticulture. His knowledge of plants was deep and based upon first-hand experience." Everyone always felt welcomed in his garden, Alpineflora, especially when he would fly the flag of the home country of his visitors, she remembers.

Panayoti Kclaidis says that of his mentors in rock gardening "none was more dynamic, entertaining or talented than Lee Raden. He was a dazzler, a razzle-dazzler who could charm an auditorium and yet beguile you one on one...But most of all, I treasure the times I spent with Lee in his incomparable garden: his berms were works of extravagant, Roberto Burle Marx fantasy and innovation (full of rock garden gems); his alpine house was a trove of rare bulbs and alpine plants that Lee nurtured. No man has served Mother Flora more faithfully, with greater zest than this handsome, dashing, gallant gardener whom I shall remember tenderly for the rest of my life."

Survivors include Lee's wife Mary Ann, a daughter, and three sons. Contributions in Lee Raden's memory may be made to the American Cancer Society or the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 100 N. 20th St., 5th Floor, Philadelphia, PA19103.



Douglasia nivalis near the summit ridge of Chumstick Mountain

David Douglas and the *Douglasia nivalis* Mystery

DAVID SELLARS

IF YOU ARE lucky enough to be on Chumstick Mountain near Leavenworth, Washington, in June you will be delighted by the masses of *Douglasia nivalis* growing on steep slopes near the summit at 5800 feet. *Douglasia nivalis* is an outstanding alpine species with its low-growing habit and deep rose-pink flowers often covering the plant. The narrow, fleshy, elegant leaves are unusual in the genus and are covered with fine hairs that give them a distinctly grey appearance.

The genus *Douglasia* was named after the great plant explorer David Douglas, who was hired by the Royal Horticultural Society to collect plants in the Pacific Northwest. *Douglasia nivalis* is the type species that was reported to have been collected by Douglas in the Canadian Rockies in 1827 and was the only named species in the genus for a decade until Hooker added *Douglasia arctica* in 1838. The genus was

named in 1827 by the English botanist John Lindley writing in the *Quarterly Journal of Science, Literature and the Arts*.

Mr. Lindley on a new Genus of Plants. 383

Notice of a New Genus of Plants discovered in the Rocky Mountains of North America by Mr. David Douglas. By John Lindley, Esq., F. L. S., &c. &c.

Upon his journey across the rocky mountains in April 1827, in latitude 52° N., longitude 118° W., at an estimated elevation of 12,000 feet above the level of the sea, the attention of Mr. Douglas was attracted by a brilliant purple patch amidst the surrounding snow. On approaching it, he was surprised to find that the colour which had arrested his eye was caused by the blossoms of a little plant, from which the superincumbent snow had not yet melted away. The well-known *Saxifraga oppositifolia* immediately occurred to his recollection, and he at first imagined he had either discovered that species, or one nearly allied to it; but upon a closer inspection, he perceived that it was no *Saxifraga*, but a genus apparently new;

Lindley concluded:

I have, therefore, named it after its indefatigable discoverer, whose active and successful researches in its native country, richly entitle him to the distinction.

DOUGLASIA.

NAT. ORD. *Primulaceae*; inter *Primulam* et *Androsaceum*.

Calycis obovatus, angulatus, 5-dentatus. *Corolla* infundibularis, tubo ventricoso; limbo plano 5-partito, fauce callo lineari sub utraque sim. *Ovarium* uniloculare placenta centrali libera pedicellata fungilliformi, margine 5-dentato; crura 5 dentibus placenta opposita. *Capsula* vesicita, unilocularis, 5-valvis. *Semina* duo concava reticulata.—*Carpus suffruticosus* (American borealis), foliis indivisis, pube rigidatissima, floribus axillaribus subsessilibus.

Sp. 1. *Douglasia nivalis*.

The wonderfully named *Magazine of Horticulture, Botany and all Useful Discoveries and Improvements in Rural Affairs* noted in 1837 that *Douglasia nivalis* was the only species in the genus and was appropriately named:

This genus is commemorative of the indefatigable zeal of the late Mr. Douglas, in collecting seeds and plants. Perhaps it may be thought by some that a more showy plant might have been selected, among the very many which he has described, for adding thereto his name—one that would be more likely to be generally diffused in gardens than in all probability the present subject

ever will. But botanists seem not to regard this. The genus is composed of only one species and one variety, plants not growing more than three or four inches high, and rarely known, only in botanical works, beyond their native localities. *Douglasia nivalis* will, however, carry down his name to posterity, and wherever it is grown, it will not fail to remind the amateur of the untimely fate of this excellent botanist, and of the value to our gardens of the numerous plants and shrubs he discovered and introduced into Britain.

The Genus Androsace by Smith and Lowe includes *Douglasia* as a section within the genus *Androsace*. The distribution map they include for *Androsace nivalis* shows the plant occurring over a large area of British Columbia with a smaller disjunct population in Washington State. Graham Nicholl's book, *Alpine Plants of North America*, also mentions that *Douglasia nivalis* occurs in the Rockies of British Columbia and Alberta.

Not having seen *Douglasia nivalis* in British Columbia, I resolved to try and track it down and where better to start than with the wonderful online resource eFloras.org which includes the online version of *Flora of North America* in which *Douglasia* is found in volume 8. Surprisingly, the distribution map of *Douglasia nivalis* only shows it in Washington State where it is found in the Wenatchee Mountains and part of the eastern Cascade Range just to the north. It is noted that:

Presence of *Douglasia nivalis* in Canada is uncertain. The original collection was described by Lindley as collected on the Alberta-British Columbia border near Mount Robson; no other collections of the species from either province are known.

Douglasia nivalis growing on blocky scree





Douglasia nivalis on Chumstick Mountain with the Cascade Range in the distance

Furthermore, the electronic atlas of the plants of British Columbia, E-Flora BC, does not list *Douglasia nivalis* as occurring in BC.

So it appears the only collection that was ever made of *Douglasia nivalis* in Canada was the original collection by David Douglas in 1827 when he was crossing the Rockies over Athabasca Pass. He was returning to England via the York Factory Express trade route between Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River and York Factory on Hudson's Bay. A close examination of the journal of David Douglas reveals that it was extremely unlikely that he made the collection on that trip. He crossed the Rockies at the end of April/beginning of May. At that time of year in the Rockies, the alpine areas would be entirely covered with

snow except for a few windswept rocks. *Douglasia nivalis* flowers in June following snowmelt in the Wenatchee Mountains on the dry side of the Cascades and, if it occurred in the Rockies where there are greater snow depths, it would be expected to flower in late June or more likely July. The journal confirms the snow conditions on Athabasca Pass at the time:

After breakfast at one o'clock, being as I conceive on the highest part of the route, I became desirous of ascending one of the peaks, and accordingly I set out alone on snowshoes to that on the left hand or west side, being to all appearance the highest. The labour of ascending the lower part, which is covered with pines, is great beyond description, sinking on many occasions to the middle. Half-way up vegetation ceases entirely, not so much as a vestige of moss or lichen on the stones. Here I found it less laborious as I walked on the hard crust. One-third from the summit it becomes a mountain of pure ice, sealed far over by Nature's hand as a momentous work of Nature's God.

Rather than finding the plant in the Canadian Rockies, it is more likely that Douglas collected *Douglasia nivalis* a year earlier, in June 1826, when he was based in Walla Walla for four weeks "in order to secure the herbage of these regions." He could have made a trip to the Wenatchee Mountains during that period.

So how did this error occur that has persisted for so long? I suspect that the account of the discovery of a new plant in the Primulaceae family was provided verbally to Lindley by Douglas. There does not appear to be a written record of the specific finding except for Lindley's written account and his version is second-hand. It is possible that Douglas told Lindley that he had found the plant in the Rocky Mountains, using the term in a general way for the mountains of western North America. At the time, rivers not mountain ranges, defined the geography of western North America because rivers were the primary routes for overland travel. Specific



Douglasia nivalis on Iron Peak,
Wenatchee Mountains

mountain ranges were generally not mentioned in Douglas's journal and in fact, the geographic name for the Wenatchee Mountains was assigned much later in 1903. Even today the name Rocky Mountains is often incorrectly used for the Western Cordillera, the chain of parallel mountain ranges throughout western North America. For example Smith and Lowe (1997), when discussing the *Douglasia* Section of *Androsace*, use the startling geographical oxymoron "Rocky Mountain Coastal Ranges".

After Douglas told Lindley his story of finding the plant in the Rocky Mountains, it is possible that Lindley read Douglas's journal and jumped to the conclusion that Douglas must have found it when he was crossing the Athabasca Pass; hence the apparent precision of the latitude and longitude in Lindley's account. Lindley may have been a geographer as well as a botanist and understood that the Rocky Mountains were at the eastern extremity of the Western Cordillera. Unfortunately his precision as a geographer has led to the error in the designated range of *Douglasia nivalis* that has persisted for over 150 years.

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The Magazine of Horticulture, Botany, and all Useful Discoveries and Improvements in Rural Affairs, Volume III, 1837.



The pictures of *Douglasia nivalis* on page 6 & 9 were both short-listed in the 2010 Photo Contest in class 2. For further details of the Photo Contest results see pages 12–15.

Photo Contest



Class 1 winner (Portrait of a plant in the wild) and Joint Photo of the Year: Cliff Booker's picture of Potentilla nitida in the Dolomites.

The 2010 Photo Contest produced some exceptional entries although the overall number of entries was somewhat down from the last couple of years. The judges met at the end of October and the names of photographers were not made available to them until all decisions had been made. The process involved establishing a shortlist of pictures in each category (in some categories shorter than others). These shortlisted pictures were all of a high quality and were contenders for the final top three places in their class. From among these, decisions were made as to the winning entries in each class. Having done this, and had a break so that the most recent decisions were not foremost in their minds, the judges looked at the six first-prize entries in each category to determine an overall winner. After extensive discussion the decision on "Photo of the Year" was to award joint top awards. Both of the two photographs are of plants in the Dolomites. But the very different technical approaches of these two photographs showed such different qualities, with the almost hyperreal, staged quality of the Potentilla nitida image, almost having the quality of a fifties Hitchcock film set, contrasting with the extreme depth of focus of the larger landscape

2010 Winners



Class 2 winner (Natural scene with plants) and Joint Photo of the Year: Cliff Booker's picture of Silene acaulis on scree under Tor Del Boe Pizkofel, Dolomites.

showing *Silene acaulis* in its natural habitat. This latter image was felt to exhibit great technical skill allied to a great sensibility to the nature of the place, while the former was felt to be a magnificently precise image of an individual plant, staged against a background and cut out from its surroundings by great control over the depth of field. It was with great surprise that the judges, on looking at the photographers of these and the other category winners, discovered that these two photographs were both by Cliff Booker, as indeed were two of the other category winners.

"Judging this year's photo contest was a great pleasure in spite of some hard decisions during our final selection. The photographs were generally of a high standard with classes 1 and 2 very well represented, however some of the other classes, notably 4 and 6, had far fewer entries - which was somewhat of a surprise, especially as class 6 (Plant in a Container) gives a photographer almost unlimited control. It also came to our attention that some of the photographs in class 5 suffered from depth of field problems, but apart from this all classes showed a great deal of ability in capturing a wonderful array of plants in diverse situations."



Class 4 Winner above: David Sellars' photograph of his rock garden

CLASS WINNERS

Class 1 - Portrait of a plant in the wild

- 1 Cliff Booker, *Potentilla nitida*
- 2 David Sellars, *Castilleja rupicola*
- 3 David Sellars, *Phlox diffusa*

Class 2- Natural scene with plants

- 1 Cliff Booker, *Silene acaulis* in the Dolomites
- 2 Yoko Arakawa, *Rydbergia grandiflora*, Crested Butte, Colorado
- 3 Michel Hoppel, *Eritrichium nanum*, Pala Group, 2700m, Dolomites

Class 3 - Portrait of a plant in cultivation

- 1 Cliff Booker, *Sarracenia*, Ev Whittemore's garden
- 2 David Sellars, *Meconopsis* 'Lingholm'
- 3 Arlene Perkins, white *Cypripedium reginae*

Class 4 - Rock garden scene

- 1 David Sellars, Sellars' garden with lawn
- 2 David Sellars, Saxifrage garden
- 3 Arlene Perkins, Primula garden 2010

Other shortlisted entries:

Class 1: Michel Hoppel, *Androsace helvetica*, and *Eritrichium nanum*; Yoko Arakawa, *Eriophorum scheuchzerii*; David Sellars, *Phacelia sericea*, and *Lewisia rediviva*

Class 2: David Sellars, *Douglasia nivalis* (portrait) and *D. nivalis* (landscape); Yoko Arakawa, *Eriophorum polystachion*; Merril Jensen, *Pedicularis lanata*

Class 3: Michel Hoppel *Phlox missoulensis* and *Edraianthus pumilio*

Class 5: Lola Horwitz, *Polygala baetica*; Arlene Perkins, *Habenaria*, Yoko Arakawa, *Claytonia megarhiza*, *Geum reptans*, and *Mertensia ciliata*; Michel Hoppel, *Androsace hausmannii*

No other entries in classes 4 or 6 were shortlisted.



Class 3 Winner above: Sarracenia (Cliff Booker)

Class 5 Winner right: Nigritella rhellicana, Porto Vescova, Arabba, Dolomites (Cliff Booker)

Class 6 Winner below: Townsendia hookeri (Michel Hoppel)

Class 5 -Macro photograph

- 1 Cliff Booker, *Nigritella rhellicana*
- 2 Marlene Werr, *Verbascum* sp.
- 3 Yoko Arakawa, *Ranunculus adoneus*

Class 6 - Plant in container

- 1 Michel Hoppel, *Townsendia hookeri*
- 2 Michel Hoppel, *Dionysia hausknechtii*
- 3 Cliff Booker, Planter with carnivorous plants in Ev Whittemore's garden



More of the winning entries, some of the other entries shortlisted, and comments from the judges will be featured in the next issue of the Quarterly.





Drosera rotundifolia is found in both bogs [John Lynch]

Bogs of northern New England

Eshqua in Hartland, Vermont

& Philbrick-Cricenti in New London, New Hampshire

THELMA K HEWITT

PERHAPS I READ too many British mysteries in my early teens. Thoughts of bogs bring images of murder victims disappearing into quagmire in some bleak landscape. That is far from what one finds at Eshqua Bog in mid- to late-June. Then, hundreds and hundreds of *Cypripedium reginae* (showy lady's slipper) are dancing among the ferns and *Veratrum viride* (false hellebore). Shy *Plantanthera dilatata* (white bog orchid) and *P. aquilonis* (northern green orchid) peek from behind a *Geum rivale* (water avens) or *Sanicula odorata* (clustered snakeroot). If spring has not been too warm, you may still find a few *Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *pubescens* (yellow lady's slipper) in flower. Both of the lady's slippers are considered rare in the region, and are one of the main reasons the New England Wild Flower Society was eager to help protect this habitat.

The eight-acre boggy part of the forty-acre Eshqua property is more properly called a rich fen. Unlike a true bog, there is inflow and outflow

of water. The water drains down from Garvin Hill and bubbles up from a hidden spring bringing a wealth of nutrients from the mainly calcareous subsoil. *Menyanthes trifoliata* (bog buckbean) grows in one of the wetter places not far from the base of the hill, and *Caltha palustris* (marsh marigold), which wants moving water at bloom time, can be seen in dense patches nearer the eastern side in early spring. If one looks closely, a little murder and body disposal can be found by observing *Drosera rotundifolia* (sundew) or the few *Sarracenia purpurea* (pitcher plants). When these plants are producing seed, they make use of the nutrients their enzymes release from the insects they've trapped.



Platanthera dilatata is found in Eshqua [Arieh Tal]

The entire area, with a documented inventory of almost four hundred species, is charming. If one searches carefully, *Galearis spectabilis* (showy orchid) can be seen above the right, hillside fork of the trail, and blossoms of *Sanguinaria canadensis* (bloodroot) brighten the early spring woodlands further along that loop. Another early bloomer, *Trillium undulatum* (painted trillium) grows near a bend of the left fork of the trail. You may find some remaining bright red fruit, an oval berry with pointed tip, on a mid-June visit. If you are fortunate enough to have this plant growing on your

Cypripedium reginae in Eshqua Bog [Thelma Hewitt]



property, enjoy it. If not, don't even try because its requirements are essentially impossible to replicate. As Clarence Birdseye wrote, it thrives in deep, very acid (pH4) humus rich soil of moist cool woodlands, where the roots from the rhizome penetrate sand through which some water flows. Bill Cullina in his *Growing and Propagating Wildflowers* says you can be 99% sure that no nursery is successfully propagating it.

Lobelia cardinalis (cardinal flower), *Chelone glabra* (white turtlehead), *Scutellaria laterifolia* (mad-dog skullcap) and numerous Asteraceae bloom later. *Rhododendron* (*Ledum*) *groenlandicum* (Labrador tea), *Hamamelis virginiana* (witch hazel), *Cornus* (*Swida*) *alternifolia* (alternate leaf dogwood), *Cornus* (*Swida*) *sericea* (red-osier dogwood), and *Corylus cornuta* (beaked hazelnut) are among the many shrubs.

In mid-April, the hazelnut produces pin-head size bright red blossoms which grow into the interesting shaped nuts loved by the wildlife.

Philbrick-Cricenti Bog with larch and cotton-grass [Thelma Hewitt]





Philbrick-Cricenti Bog is full of pitcher plants (*Sarracenia purpurea*) [Arieh Tal]

Board walk at Eshqua Bog - home to many orchids [Thelma Hewitt]





Rhododendron groenlandicum is present at both locations [Thelma Hewitt]

Calopogon tuberosus is found in Philbrick-Cricenti Bog [Dorothy Long]



Philbrick-Cricenti Bog is quite a different place. Though it, too, is a fen, there are many fewer species. The orchid found here is *Calopogon tuberosus* (grass pink). While Eshqua has only a few pitcher plants this place is full of them. The openness and extra sunlight may be one reason and a lower pH another. In Cricenti, the cotton grass (*Eriophorum*) is more obvious than at Eshqua. Berries of all sorts grow in profusion. There are blueberries, both highbush (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), and velvet-leaved (*V. myrtilloides*), cranberries large and small (*V. macrocarpon* and *V. oxycoccos*), maleberry (*Lyonia ligustina*), creeping snowberry (*Gaultheria hispidula*), winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), and mountain holly (*Ilex mucronata*). *Rhododendron canadense* (rhodora) blooms early, and *Kalmia angustifolia* (sheep laurel) usually is best in mid-June.

Chamaedaphne calyculata (leatherleaf) produces its blueberry-like blossoms in spring while *Andromeda glaucophylla* (bog rosemary) waits a little longer, later spring or early summer.

One of the trail loops leads you over a “quaking” section where the mat is floating on the bog’s surface. You are invited to pull what

appears to be a small pole from the muck, but you pull and pull, and find that this pole measures the depth to be twenty or more feet. Reports of deer and even horses being lost here are will convince you to stay on the board walk.

Tamarack or larch (*Larix laricina*), white birch (*Betula papyrifera*), yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), and not surprisingly, many ferns are found on both properties. Every visit seems to reveal or highlight another special feature. Come to the June 2011 NARGS Annual Meeting and check out these fascinating areas and plants for yourself.

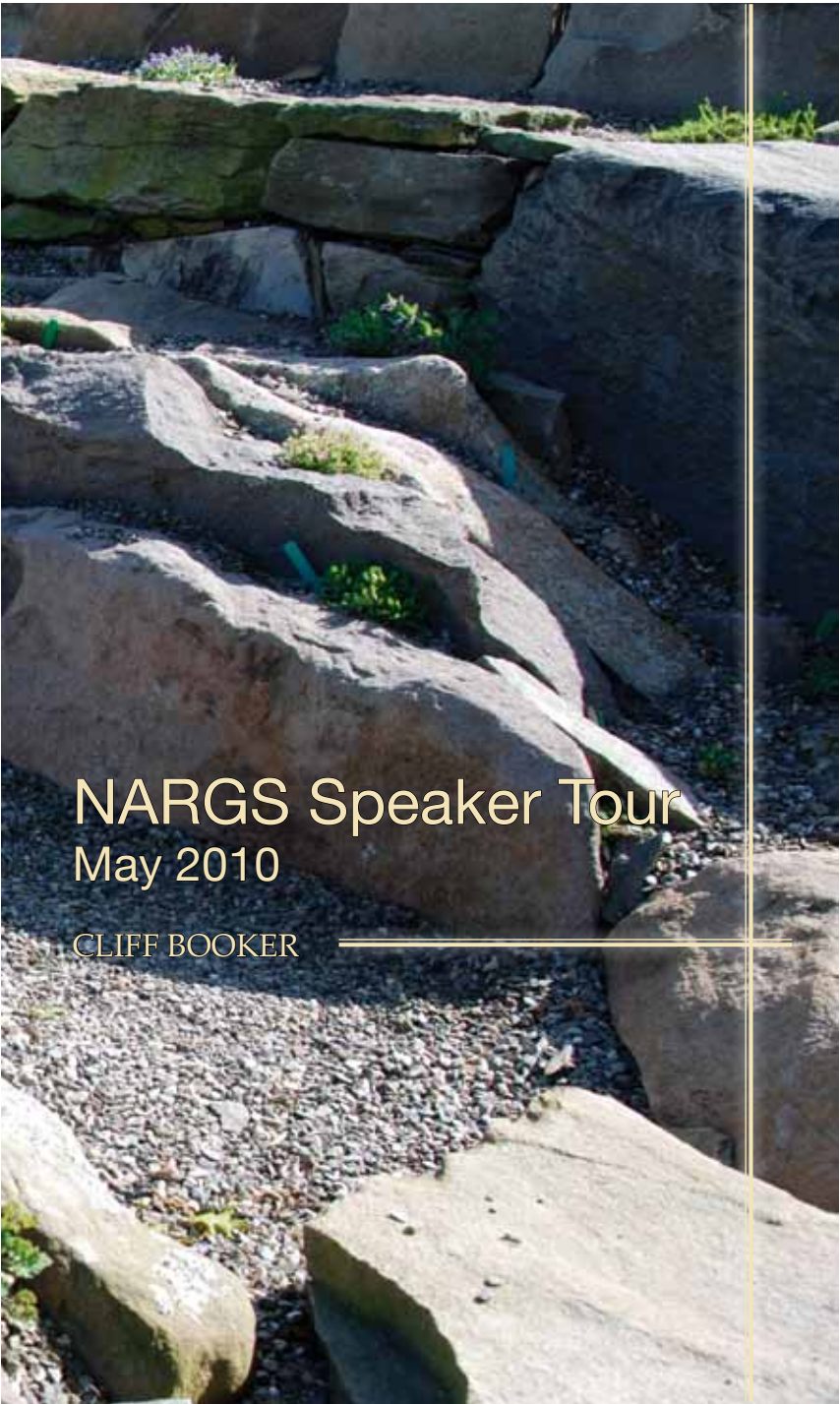


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MORE DETAILS ON PAGE 85



NARGS Speaker Tour May 2010

CLIFF BOOKER

A detail of Anne Spiegel's rock garden

CHAPTER 1

Worrying about the tour – Anne & Joe Spiegel and Anne’s garden – Berkshire Chapter – Robin Magowan – Connecticut Chapter & Broken Arrow Nursery – childhood thoughts about Newfoundland

THE LECTURES DIDN’T frighten me, the possible reception to them did. I am well versed in giving presentations here in the UK and know my audience, I hope I know how to appeal to that mix of expert grower, budding enthusiast and the man who confesses; “I’m only here to drive these three ladies home” - but here in the UK we are privileged to have local groups within easy driving distance of our homes; few people drive more than thirty miles to a meeting and one doesn’t need to be a totally dedicated enthusiast to attend. In the United States and Canada we were amazed by the distances that some of you drive just to attend a Chapter get-together, hundreds of miles to digest just one lecture, it is dedication of a higher level, it is the commitment of the converted. To lecture to a NARGS Chapter is like preaching to the devout.

These thoughts criss-crossed my mind as we traversed the Atlantic, the nerves jangled just a little and then jangled a lot more when I remembered who I was standing in for. To visit such diverse and widespread Chapters would be daunting enough, but to try to fill in for such a renowned speaker as John Watson was another thing altogether.

As we descended into Philadelphia we couldn’t help noticing the plethora of baseball diamonds that were visible to the naked eye ... every park, college, green space, high school, and as far as we could discern, every backyard appeared to contain a pristine place of worship to this most American of sports ... and, shortly after arrival at the beautiful home (and garden) of Anne and Joe Spiegel (who had met us at the airport) in the Hudson Valley, we were introduced to the ritual of evening homage to the Yankees and their most sacred of diamonds ... the Stadium. But later it struck me that one word shone out throughout our three week stay in North America and that word was “diamond” ... every single person we encountered during our stay proved to be “an absolute diamond.”

We flew out of Manchester, England (the nearest airport to our home high up on the Lancashire moors, near Rochdale) on April 29th, 2010, bound for Newburgh, New York State, via the huge international airport at Philadelphia. We were originally intending to honor a long-standing agreement with Anne Spiegel to visit the Berkshire Chapter and do a presentation or three before enjoying a well-earned holiday starting in the Hudson Valley, but an unforeseen illness for John Watson and a long telephone call from our great friend Alan Grainger, raised the possibility of standing in at quite short notice for John on his pre-

scheduled and much-anticipated Spring speaker's tour of Eastern Chapters. Any remaining thoughts of a relaxing break also seemed shattered when the final itinerary revealed twelve flights and eight lectures to six Chapters in just over three weeks, but this apparently hectic schedule was so well-organized by (and included such luxurious accommodation) Alan Grainger and NARGS Vice-President and tour organizer, Maria Galletti. Our thanks must go to them for arranging such a tremendous tour.

As Joe Spiegel, Anne's delightful husband drove us through gorgeous New England scenery to their Poughkeepsie home we were unprepared for their incredible garden. As we drove up their long drive and turned a corner we were greeted by arguably the most amazing private garden it has been my privilege to encounter.

They say "timing is everything", but this magnificent garden would have looked just as appealing if the carmine, pink, white and candy-colored western phloxes hadn't been gushing like tumultuous mountain streams through the detritus at the base of those enormously imposing cliffs and boulders. The spectacle would surely be just as complete, even if not so colorful, if the vast scree, numerous troughs, and expansive dry stone beds, weren't bedecked with countless alpine gems of every color and persuasion. Lichen-covered steps draw the admiring visitor forward, enticing the avid, demoralizing the vertiginous, and challenging the aged or asthmatic. But stone seats surrounded by sempervivums wait at the ridges; and sandbeds, saxifrages in shale, and sumptuous scenes seduce and stimulate.

Deep but painfully thin fissures, across the faces and tops of the cliffs, have been painstakingly cleared of weed, duff, roots and bramble and each of these cracks has been coerced into accepting the long delving roots of a tiny high mountain plant. A task in itself of course, but made even more onerous by the heat and dryness of a New York summer. So many plants, but so little water, and so little time to irrigate a garden of this magnitude and intensity. Dryland plants do best, they have to ... moisture loving plants cannot and do not tolerate these arid, tortuous conditions.

Anne doesn't have the time, the unlimited water or the inclination to molly-coddle her high-minded tenants, but that doesn't mean she doesn't get to know them well or try to cater to their individual needs to the best of her abilities. They all get suitable beds and locations for their (hopefully) lengthy stays and they are watered in a number of times after planting but that is as far as this hostess (and her water supply) can afford to go, they must then survive or perish in this harsh environment - and survive they surely do - Anne's crevice gardens are dotted with alpine gems from around the world, *Astragalus* and *Oxytropis* from the Rocky Mountains; *Physoplexis* and gentians from



Anne & Joe Spiegel
with views of their spectacular
rock garden





the Dolomites; *Dianthus* and saxifrages from the Alps. This, of course, would be sufficient for most alpine obsessed gardeners but not dear Anne ... her horticultural skills have created a beautiful streamside garden, shade and woodland beds overflowing with ferns, irises and jeffersonias, magnificent homemade troughs of every imaginable size and shape, and landscape management of the highest order.

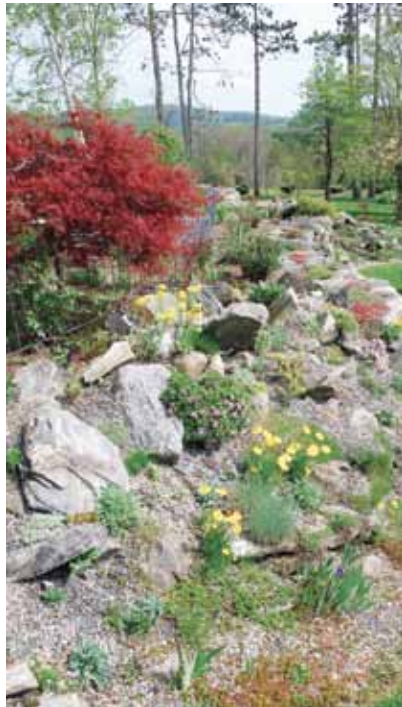
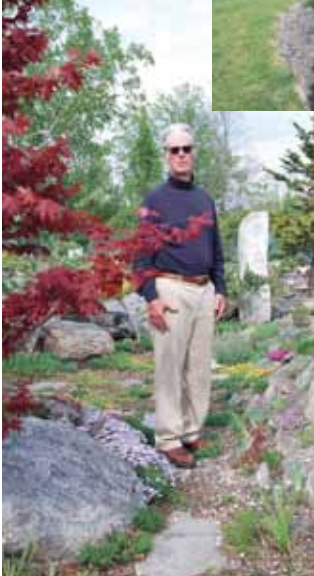
Some may say that the Spiegels were very fortunate to find such quantities of stone on their premises. Others will understand the foresight, dedication, sheer exertion and time required to create even one tiny area of this truly epic garden. Entire cliffs had to be excavated, enormous boulders and rocks had to be cajoled down (and sometimes up) precipitous slopes - tons and tons (and tons) of soil, timber, weeds, sand, grit and stone had to be removed or introduced into the garden and years of back-breaking toil went into creating this incredible (and I don't use the word lightly) monument to one rock-gardener's dream. And, like all really good gardens, this one will never be finished or will never even reach a stage where the head gardener will put down their trowel (or pick-axe or breaking-bar or winch and rope) and sit in the sun admiring her amazing alpine accomplishments. Anne is out of bed at first light and has either planted, carried, weeded, scraped, dug, shifted, barrowed or created her way through to dusk with barely a break - she is, like the amazing Ev Whittemore of Penrose, North Carolina who we will meet later, a truly inspirational alpine enthusiast, rock gardener and horticulturalist. We will also meet Anne and Joe again, as we were

fortunate enough to spend nearly a week with them at the conclusion of our tour, but there are two weeks of adventures to describe before we reached that point.

My first two presentations were quite fittingly to Anne's Berkshire Chapter ... only an hour-and-a-half's drive from her home into the neighboring and beautiful State of Massachusetts. The Berkshire Chapter is thriving due to an inspirational band of officers and committee members and an exceptional Newsletter which is published ten times a year under the impressive editorship of Peter George. The venue, the Exhibit Hall at the Berkshire Botanical Gardens in Stockbridge, was filled with over thirty welcoming and devout faces, but those jangling nerves that surfaced briefly during my morning presentation (*Cream of Alpines*), all but disappeared after a thoroughly amiable lunch. A second lecture (*Alpine Fever*) was more confidently imparted and apparently enjoyed. *Cream of Alpines* delves into the plants that have shaped my hobby and forged my love affair with mountain plants. It features thirty intimate portraits that examine these very special plants, their beautiful habitats, and some associated species in the wild and on the show bench. By way of a contrast, *Alpine Fever* examines (with a touch of whimsy), the cultivation of alpine plants under the varying climatic and growing conditions of several prominent British gardeners.

The day continued to get better. Anne had kindly arranged a visit to the home and garden of renowned poet (and Chapter Vice-Chair) Robin Magowan and artist and photographer Juliet Mattila in Salisbury, Connecticut. Robin and Juliet's utopia [which was featured in the last issue of the *Quarterly*] has been created on the remains of a windswept nineteenth-century farm near Barack Mountain and the extensive rock garden, that constitutes only a fraction of their magnificent estate, has been adapted and reconfigured by Czech plant explorer and garden designer, Josef Halda. Local limestone has been used to create outcrops, ledges, gorges, screes, pinnacles and boulders and these have been sympathetically and enthusiastically planted with alpines and geophytes from around the globe. Our visit lasted less than two hours, we could easily have occupied two days in this wonderland of fissures and floral excellence. Robin and Juliet have used their creative skills to fashion an alpine world where the visitor becomes part of the landscape - one doesn't just view these peaks from afar, one walks through and into it. This overall effect has been repeated, more recently, at the front of the house and one's first view of Magowanland is of limestone pavement - uplifted in places - ebbing and flowing in perfectly planted drifts along the extensive front elevation of a magnificent country residence.

The following day saw a lecture visit to the Connecticut Chapter, and to another beautiful venue at Broken Arrow Nursery, near Hamden. This trip was considerably farther from Anne's house but any



Robin Magowan with two views
of his garden

The Weeping larch
at Broken Arrow Nursery and the
Connecticut Chapter venue



nervous reservations of the preceding day were dispelled and I could enjoy the verdant scenery and the rock gardening reminiscences and wisdom emanating from our most delightful driver. Anne Spiegel has encountered many in the "Who's Who" of rock gardening - she has lived alpinists for decades and can relate stories about some of North America's finest growers - it is my pleasure to include Anne in that illustrious company.

Broken Arrow Nursery was established in 1984 by Dick and Sally Jaynes who specialized in growing *Kalmia latifolia* (Mountain Laurel), the state flower of Connecticut. They now stock well over 1500 lines and offer some very appealing species and cultivars. A brief tour of this elegant nursery preceded my presentation and we were particularly impressed by an extraordinary *Larix kaempferi* 'Pendula' (Japanese weeping larch) that had been planted in 1960 and now snaked across a central bed for nigh on thirty feet or more. It was pleasing to be introduced to some "web" friends at this delightful venue and to finally meet Barbara van Achterberg and Chapter Chair, Virginia Gingras.

The Connecticut Chapter is a small, but enthusiastic and friendly one, with members who are always ready to discover more about a lecture topic by asking questions - a very appealing trait for any speaker. Feedback for my presentation (*Cream of Alpines*) was particularly gratifying and the journey back to Poughskeepie was spent aglow with warm satisfaction and alive with alpine conversation.

During my adolescent years I toured the world via travel books and marvelous natural history programmes on the television ... I trekked in the high Himalayas; crossed the barren ice-fields of Alaska and Greenland; climbed in the Alps, the Andes, the Atlas and the Appalachians all on the same day; I swam with turtles, flew with eagles and ate with anteaters in the termite mounds of my imagination; I was consumed by an enormous desire to see the world, not, at that stage, as a photographer, as an alpine fanatic or even as a licensed driver ... I just needed to travel.

One of those countries and environments that drew me most was Canada, and Eastern Canada in particular ... names such as Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland were plotted on my cerebral sat-nav, and I envisaged long cold winters, brief sun-drenched summers, indented rocky coastlines and isolated settlements on tundra. When Maria Galletti confirmed that St. John's, Newfoundland, was on our itinerary, my pulse raced and my memories flooded back ... what a tremendous opportunity to journey to a part of Canada practically untouched by the tainted fingers of modernity.

continues on page 64 

Rock Gardening from Scratch

MALCOLM MCGREGOR

ROCK GARDENING FROM SCRATCH is designed to talk about rock gardening in a straightforward way. This time we're going to look at sowing seed of plants for the rock garden.

AT THIS TIME of year, outdoor gardening can be very restricted if not non-existent. Cold and wet, or frozen or snow-covered, the garden does not allow us much actual gardening although the sense that spring is not long away is always exciting. But, if gardening in the open is not a possibility, this is the time when seed is arriving from the seed exchanges.

The Seed Exchange is the plantaholics long-distance seasonal swap meet. If you've never taken part as donor or recipient then you are missing one of the great pleasures in life.

The Seed List is that magic thing – among all the junkmail and spam something you actually want – and it comes around Christmas. But that is just the first of the pleasures – you open it up, physically or on-line, and there are thousands of things to choose from – in the 2009-2010 list there were over 4600 items listed – the ultimate Christmas catalog. And you can choose whatever you want – what about trying to grow a *Magnolia* from seed (have I got enough years left?) – or what about just asking for *Penstemon* (there were

87 penstemons from gardens and 20 collected in the wild), or just wild-collected things (although garden-collected seed is usually a safer bet when you start out – it often germinates much better) – or just things from Oregon, or Alaska – or do I go through picking out only things I've never heard of

... I'm happy if I get 50% of the things I sow to germinate

..... so now I'm sitting here with all these packets of seed and it's time to get on with it – I sow almost all my seed as soon as I get it.

There are plenty of people who are more sophisticated about what they do but this article is going to describe a very straightforward approach to rock-garden or alpine plant seed that should give you a reasonably satisfactory germination – I'm not looking for a 100% – I'm happy if I get more than 50% of the things I sow to germinate, and I only want a few of most things anyway. I'm not running a nursery. Just how many do you want for your rock garden? Just what do you do when you get a hundred seedlings of something?

Seed compost

Producing a regular compost for sowing the seed of rock garden plants is very straightforward. The sort of mix that is needed will typically be a mix of loam or peat, sand, and grit. Exactly what you use (and the exact proportions) will depend on what is available to you but will usually follow this three-part recipe with about equal parts of each. The result is a mix that is scrunchy rather than squashy, so that it doesn't compact too much.

The grit gives it the scrunchy anti-compacting quality, the grit and the sand help it from getting waterlogged, and the soil or peat allows some water to be held in the mix. The choice of peat or loam (or shredded leafmold or proprietary seed compost or sterilized garden soil) is pretty open-ended and will depend on what you have available to you and, to some extent, the way you germinate your seed and grow on your seedlings.

If the mix is the right consistency then it will only compact a small amount in the pot. Since the seedlings may stay in the pot for quite a long time this is particularly important. It might not seem like there are many nutrients in this mix but we are not trying to crop a harvest from our sowing – there's no problem if it takes a couple of years for our plants to get to flowering size.

I find it's worth mixing up my compost in decent size batches, say a bucket full at a time; it takes little more effort than to make a larger batch than a smaller.

**And it's not too late.
You can still get seed
from the Seed Exchange.
Page 74 for more details.**

Filling the seed pots

1. Fill the pot to the brim without knocking the mix down.
2. Scrape off any compost that is above the brim of the pot.
3. Tamp the mix down firmly –

I use the base of another pot of the same size. If the mix is about right the mix will press down more or less to the line around the pot about a half inch from the rim.

4. Top up about halfway to the top with a layer of mix with extra sand added to it.

... there's no problem if it takes a couple of years to get a plant to flowering size

5. Press down gently again. There will still be room for a layer of grit to cover the surface of the seed mix. The next stage - actually sowing the seed - depends mainly on the size of the seed. A simple rule-of-thumb is to sow seed around 2 to 3 times deeper than the diameter of the seed. So tiny seed (such as saxifragas, foxgloves) is sown on the surface, and at the other extreme big seed (such as peony seed) which is $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ inch diameter is sown $\frac{3}{4}$ to 2 inches deep.

Sowing the Seed

For most seed I use 4-inch plastic pots. Don't sow the seed too thickly. If there seems a lot of seed, split the packet in two, and sow two pots.

If I am going to sow very fine seed I usually sprinkle a very thin layer of very fine silica sand (silver sand in the UK) on the surface and then I sow the seed on this. The fine sand seems to help conduct moisture across the surface more efficiently. I then add some gravel across the top of this, although others put a layer of gravel on before sowing, then sprinkle with "silver sand" then sow the seed on the surface of that.

If the seed is bigger than this, I just roughen the surface of the tamped seed mix, sow the seed on the surface of this compost, cover with an appropriate thickness of compost (so that the seed is buried one to three times deeper than its size) and then with a layer of grit.

If the seed is very large, like peony seed, make a hole for each seed with the blunt end of a pencil (if you don't have a little finger which is what I use) and drop one seed in each hole, brush the compost over to fill the holes, and cover with a layer of grit.

Once all the pots are sown and labelled, stand them in a deep tray of water until the gravel just shows that the moisture has soaked up to the surface. When the grit has just dampened remove the pot from the tray of water - don't leave them to keep soaking up water..

Label each pot as you sow the seed.

It might seem like a good idea to write all your labels first, sitting at the kitchen table in the warm. The snag is that then you have to match up label and seed packet as you get to sow each different thing you have. Easier by far to write each label as you go along.

Just how much you write on the label is obviously up to you, but I generally have three things: the name of the plant, the date of sowing, and the source of seed which might be the number on the NARGS seedlist for example.

*seeds are nature's lottery tickets
- not everyone is a winner*

Pre-treatment

Some seed can benefit from pre-sowing treatment usually to help the seed absorb water and help it germinate. The most obvious examples are *Cyclamen* seed that germinates better if it is soaked in lukewarm water for 24 hours before sowing, and some seeds with a thick outer coating (such as Pea family seeds like *Astragalus* or *Oxytropis*) that benefit from that outer coating being breached in some way. One way is to knick the outer skin with a knife or, slightly less dramatically, to sandpaper part of the surface. Germination, which can be poor otherwise, is greatly improved.

Some seed is very difficult to germinate without some sort of chemical treatment but most seed is not anything like so difficult. Seed can be thought of as nature's lottery ticket - not everyone is a winner but, with any luck, some will be winners. Seed is just waiting to germinate – that's its whole purpose in life.

Post-sowing

Once the seed is sown you have a choice of whether to put the pot of seed straight outside or keep it at room temperature. Since most of the plants I grow are alpine or rock garden plants I put almost all my pots outside in a frame where they will stay at the very least until I start to see germination in the pot. Then some get moved into the open, some are given more time in the frame.

Opinions on what you do next vary dramatically. It is possible to prick out some seedlings when they are tiny, but only if it is done with great care. If pricking out very tiny seedlings sounds a bit too fiddly (it is) then they can be left in the pot to grow into small plants (rather than mere seedlings) so that they are strong enough to handle. In some cases this is a matter of a couple of months; in the case of slower-growing plants this can be the following spring.

Some seedlings are particularly difficult to prick out. Seedlings of plants with a tap root, such as *Astragalus* seedlings, can very easily be damaged if they are allowed to grow very large. If the tap root is damaged they will die. I prick these out once they have germinated but

before the roots have reached too deep into the pot. Do not try and dig these seedlings out: gently tip the pot out, tipping it into your hand, then you can separate out any germinated seedlings for potting on and the remainder can be put back in the pot.

In 2010, I used this approach and germinated seed of *Gaillardia*, *Penstemon*, *Ratibida*, *Astragalus*, *Townsendia*, *Echinacea*, *Saxifraga*, *Dianthus*, *Androsace*, *Iris*, *Primula*, *Tulipa*, *Allium*, *Heuchera* and *Fritillaria* among others. And it's not too late, you can still apply to the Seed Exchange.

KEY POINTS IN SOWING SEEDS

prepare the compost properly

*fill the pot
and firm the compost*

*sow the seed according to the
size of the seed*

*cover with grit & soak with
water from the bottom*

*keep in a frame at least until
you start to see germination*

*don't be too impatient and
don't expect 100% success*

*and don't forget to label as
you go*



Viola coronifera - one of the most beautiful of the rosetate violas

Northern Patagonia : a land of Rosulate Violas

GER VAN DEN BEUKEN & KEES JAN VAN ZWIENEN

DURING OUR TRIP to northern Patagonia, from January 2 to 19, 2010, we explored the Argentinian provinces of Rio Negro and Neuquén, starting in San Carlos de Bariloche and gradually making our way north, finishing our botanising in Chos Malal in the northwestern corner of Neuquén province. The objective of the tour, organised by Ger van den Beuken, who has been to South America six times, was to explore the alpine and steppe flora, so we targeted the Andes, and steppe areas immediately east. Marcela Ferreyra, a biologist from Bariloche University was our botanical guide and Alfredo Gastambidez our driver. Our group was very international with Rick Lambert and Mark Childerhouse from England; Ger and Mariet van den Beuken, and Kees Jan van Zwielen from the Netherlands; Elana Dobrzanski from Russia; Ingolf and Dorte Bogo, and Knud Thomsen from Denmark. In this article we will concentrate on the botanical highlights of this trip, concentrating on those plants that are very typical for this area and those that we feel will be of most interest for the members of the North American Rock Garden Society.

[Since there are measurements given throughout this article, many approximate, it seems appropriate not to interrupt the flow of the text with an overburdening of dual unit measurements. Since the measurement of plants is not precise but indicative, it can be taken that 10cm = 4 inches, that 30cm = 1 foot; that 2m = 6 feet. Measurements of altitude (which are exact) are given at that point in the text, as are temperatures. *Editor*]

Exploring the steppe between Bariloche and Pilcaniyeu

The steppes east of Bariloche have a huge diversity of species, and our timing was perfect, according to our guide, Marcela. We were not disappointed. It was particularly nice to find an example of an important Patagonian genus immediately, with the pink *Oxalis adenophylla*, a well-known plant in cultivation, very common in the steppe near the airport. The steppe here is relatively moist and mainly consists of grass but we found *Chloraea magellanica*, an exotic-looking orchid here, a species that we would see regularly during our time in Patagonia. Not much farther on, still in relatively moist steppe, we came across more orchids. One of the most beautiful was *Gavilea glandulifera*, about a meter tall, with flowers in a combination of white, green and yellow. The most robust orchid that we would see during this trip was *Chloraea cylindrostachya* with green and white flowers.

Not far from Bariloche, we found two shrubby plants both fairly common in this part of Patagonia. *Oreopolis glacialis* is an exquisite, mat-forming species in the Rubiaceae, a family hardly known for exquisite species. The small yellow flowers, have a long tube, and are produced in clusters from the center of the rosette. Also with clusters of extremely long-tubed flowers, this time a spectacular fire-red, *Embothrium coccineum* is a 2m tall shrub from the Proteaceae, a true southern hemisphere family.

Another very diverse family in Patagonia is the Fabaceae with *Senna arnothiana* one of the more distinct and showy examples, about 30cm tall

CLIMATE & PHYTOGEOGRAPHY

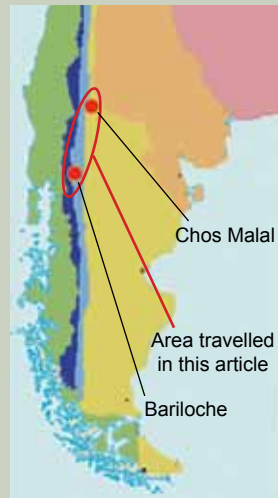
Precipitation in northern Patagonia is mostly in winter and decreases from west to east as a result of the rain-shadow effect from the Andes. It is divided into 4 phyto-geographical provinces: Monte province, Patagonia, Subantarctica and Altoandina that have nothing to do with the geo-political provinces, but are distinguished by climate, characteristic plant species, and vegetation types.

Monte province (orange on map) is dry: precipitation usually less than 200mm (8 inches), average temperature over 13°C (55°F). Typical vegetation is thorny scrub. Grasses are infrequent, distinguishing it from the steppe vegetation found in the Patagonia province. We did not spend much time in Monte province, since our main objective was the steppe and alpine flora.

Patagonia province (yellow on map) is cold and dry with a steppe vegetation of grasses and dwarf shrubs (*Mulinum spinosum* is very typical).

Annual precipitation varies from 116 to 600mm (4.5 to 23.5 inches); average temperatures less than 13°C (55°F). Two types of steppe can be distinguished. The Subandean district, recognizable by the presence of grasses, is moister as it is close to the Andes; the Eastern district, is drier with a greater presence of dwarf shrubs like *Junellia*, and relatively few grasses.

Subantarctica province (blue on map), mainly situated between Patagonia province and the high Andean, Altoandina. In the transition from the Patagonia steppe, the forest is characterized by drought-tolerant trees like *Austrocedrus chilensis* and *Araucaria araucana*. In the transition to the high Andean zone, where it is relatively moist, the forest is characterized by deciduous "southern beech" species *Nothofagus antarctica* and *N. pumilio*. Evergreen *Nothofagus* forests can also be found, but are restricted in this province to the relatively mild climate found around some of the lakes.



Altoandina province (dark blue on map) is above the tree-line. The altitude where this begins depends on the latitude. In the north of the Patagonian Andes this is at about 2000m (3280ft); in the far south in Tierra del Fuego the treeline is at about 500m (1640ft). The climate is cold, and in the rain-shadow dry. In the eastern part of Altoandina the vegetation is similar to the steppe of Patagonia province separated only by Subantarctica province.

with large yellow flowers. *Fabiana imbricata*, a shrub about a metre tall and having white or lilac flowers, belongs to the Solanaceae. *Mulinum echinus* is a small dwarf shrub in the Apiaceae that grows to about 20cm tall and might be of interest for alpine gardens; *M. microphyllum* is only about 5cm tall and would fit quite well in a trough. *Sisyrinchium macrocarpum* has bright yellow flowers with dark marks at the base of the petals. It is very small and showy and seems well worth cultivating. The conifer *Austrocedrus chilensis* was scattered amongst these steppe plants.

Bulbs are an important part of the flora in Patagonia and here we came across *Rhodophiala mendocina*, with large yellow flowers in a small cluster on 30cm stems, our first example of this South American Amaryllid.

In a moister habitat at the base of a valley we found *Calceolaria biflora* with *Ramonda*-like rosettes, *Mimulus glabratus*, and *Pratia repens*,

the only Campanulaceae we found during our trip, always in short grass in moist conditions. Further on, *Grindelia (Haplopappus) prunelloides* made a good show. This creeping species has relatively large composite flowers that would make an attractive garden plant.

Tropaeolum incisum was also found here, a tuberous plant with attractive grey foliage and large orange-yellow flowers.



Mulinum echinus above; *Tropaeolum incisum* below



Since we were travelling east, the steppe was gradually becoming drier, and this was illustrated by the presence of two cacti that made quite a show: some big mats of *Maihuenia patagonica* were in full flower, with yellow and pink flowers and *Austrocactus patagonicus* with flowers in various shades of yellow. The *Maihuenia* preferred the flat terrain and was found amongst the *Junellia*, while the *Austrocactus* was found in steeper, rocky terrain. It was clear that the vegetation was changing: less grass, and more dwarf shrubs: this was *Junellia* country.

During our trip we found many species of this very diverse genus and although all are attractive, we will be very selective and only mention the most spectacular. *Junellia mulinoides* is certainly in this category. It forms very tight cushions, up to 2m in diameter and about 50cm tall. *Junellia minutifolia* is a creeping species, with lavender flowers, but there was also a taller “form” that looked very different, growing alongside, that had both yellow and reddish flowers, and Marcela, an expert on *Junellia*,



Junellia mulinoides (top)
Junellia minutifolia (above)
Junellia patagonica var. *morenonis*



explained that the genus is in need of revision. A little further on, near the small village of Picalniyeu, we found another small species, *Junellia patagonica* var. *morenonis* with small mats of grey foliage and exquisite pale-lavender flowers. Near the railway track just above Picalniyeu, situated in the middle of nowhere, we found a few other exciting plants including *Nastanthus patagonicus*, a rather weird member of the Calyceraceae which was in flower here, a rosette-forming species that seems to be monocarpic.

The title of our article indicates that *Viola* species featured prominently during this tour. Most were rosulate violas, a group that have a mythical status in the alpine scene. They are small, many are very beautiful, but all are extremely difficult to grow – hardly any of them have more than a toehold in cultivation. *Viola escondidaensis*, which we found in this area, is not one of the exquisitely beautiful species though, growing

Viola escondidaensis



rather loose and having small, rather insignificant white flowers but nevertheless it was an exciting find.



Cerro Cathedral [K]vZ}

Cerro Cathedral

Cerro Cathedral is named for the Cathedral-like rock formations and an easy place to reach the high Andean zone for the first time on the trip - always an exciting moment - and there are some exquisite alpiners here. One of the most beautiful is *Ranunculus semiverticillatus*, plentiful in some of the screes and in perfect condition. It is quite a variable species: the flowers are huge and are set off beautifully by the finely divided grey foliage. *Oxalis erythrorhiza* was also at its best on a windswept ridge. This is a very tight mat or cushion-forming species with hairy foliage and large, stemless, yellow flowers. Unfortunately this perfect species is disappointing in our Dutch climate because it very quickly loses its compactness. The bloom is also often disappointing.

Viola sacculus clearly enjoyed similar conditions. This is a very beautiful species in the rosulate group, having pure white flowers that are in nice

Viola sacculus





Ranunculus semiverticillatus [K]vZ}

Tristagma patagonica [K]vZ}

Viola volcanica

contrast with the very dark leaves. We also found *Viola columnaris* here in a form that was quite different from those we would find later on during our trip. Although in the case of these specimens the plants were not very tall, the white flowers, which form a ring, were quite large.

Rather than catch the chairlift all the way down, we walked a section, since we had spotted some beautiful clumps of *Tristagma patagonica* with its starry white flowers on 10cm stems. We also found other great plants here including *Mulinum leptacanthum*, a small cousin of *M. spinosum*, the omnipresent species in the steppe. In the shady areas, another entirely southern hemisphere genus was represented: *Ourisia fragrans*, a lovely example with relatively large white or lavender flowers, only growing to about 5cm. *Ourisia alpina* was also found on the Cathedral, but it has smaller pink flowers on somewhat taller stems.

Passo Cordoba

The next day was a transfer day, northwards about 120km from San Carlos de Bariloche to San Martin Los Andos. Our main objective was to find



the rosulate *Viola volcanica* on Passo Cordoba. Together with some of its close relatives, in what we will loosely call the “volcanica” group, this is difficult to spot in the field. These species strongly mimic the volcanic sand and rock fragments in which they grow.

The colour of the leaves and of the sand is very similar, and it seems that this could be an adaptation to herbivores. We were delighted to find it on Passo Cordoba after quite a bit of searching (later we would find it on the roadside down from the pass) and decided it was also a good place to celebrate Ger's sixty-third birthday with very nice cakes and coffee. *Viola volcanica* is a short-lived perennial that forms a flat rosette. It has glands on the underside of the leaves to attract ants.



Viola volcanica

Plants at this location were both in flower and fruit. The white flowers are rather small, so this really is primarily a foliage plant as far as a gardener's eye is concerned. Another plant that was found in the volcanic sand was *Nastanthus aglomeratus*

When we descended Passo Cordoba and made our way toward San Carlos de Bariloche we came across the delightful *Calceolaria tenella*, that grew by a small stream in evergreen *Nothofagus* forest. This is quite a fragile-looking species only common in very wet spots and again a representative of a genus common in Patagonia.

Cerro Chapelco

The high Andean zone is just as easily reached on Cerro Chapelco as on Cerro Cathedral and they have many species in common. But there were some interesting species for us. The first was *Viola dasyphylla* not the most spectacular rosulate *Viola*, but it has charm. Unlike the species in the "volcanica" group, this species forms many side-rosettes and has green leaves. The flowers are white, but we found a very interesting and beautiful form with pale yellow flowers.



Viola dasyphylla
Calandrinia caespitosa
subsp. *skottsbergii*

Among the other plants here was the spectacular *Calandrinia caespitosa* ssp. *skottsbergii*, with large, orange-yellow flowers and green rosettes. This is very beautiful: more established in cultivation and easier than many other South American alpine. The flower colour is more of the "bedding" variety and might be considered out of place in an





Rhodophiala andicola [KjvZ]



Rhodophiala elwesii

alpine environment, but it is very similar to the color of both *Viola coronifera* and *Chloraea alpina*. Another less spectacular plant we found here was *Nassauvia lagascae* ssp. *lagascae*, in the Aster family. In this case the stems are quite short, a small high-alpine plant that we would see on many other mountains. The flowers, as usual in this genus, are white.

Cerro Colohuincul

The next day was going to be tough with a long steep walk up to the summit of the Cerro Colohuincul to look for *Viola coronifera*. We started in steppe country, amidst orchids like *Gavilea glandulifera* and *Chloraea magellanica*, and one of the first new species of the day was *Rhodophiala elwesii*, distinguished from *R. mendocina*, that we found on our first day, by the dark base of the yellow petals. We also found *Rhodophiala andicola* in large numbers. This is shorter and has pink flowers, only one per stem.

Valeriana moyanoi



Perezia pilifera, a charming small member of the Asteraceae with white flowers, was seen in small numbers, and so was *Ephedra frustillata*, a tiny shrub with interesting brown fruits, which is a typical species of the high Andean zone. One of the highlights of the entire trip, for some, was the unusual *Valeriana moyanoi*. This tiny monocarpic species has a relatively large inflorescence. Rosettes are only about 4cm in diameter and the inflorescence is about 5cm tall.



Oxalis erythrorhiza on Cerro Cathedral

Oxalis nahuelhuapiensis

Oxalis erythrorhiza



We had seen other *Oxalis* but here it was *O. nahuelhuapiensis*, a small yellow species, related to *O. compacta* but with more or less glabrous rather than hairy leaves. After a hard climb we reached a ridge where we finally found *Viola coronifera*. But it took quite some time and a bit more climbing to find some specimens in flower. The flowers are waxy orange-yellow, and it is one of the most attractive of all the rosulate violas. Our day was well worth the effort.

Around Moquehue

The next day we had a transfer on to Moquehue, a tiny place very near the Chilean border that was going to be our base for the next few days. This was a long day but intriguing with spectacular *Araucaria* forests on our way: one of the joys of travel in this part of the world. But the first high alpinines were to be found in a flat valley more or less in front of our hosteria. For the first time on the tour, we found *Viola cotyledon* although in very small numbers, and other interesting alpinines were found without any climbing involved. This would change the following day though, at



Oreopolus glacialis and *Viola cotyledon* (also below) at Volcano Batea Mahuida

the Volcano Batea Mahuida, not far from Moquehue. Half of the caldera rim of this volcano has disappeared, but the crater was still there, filled

Viola cotyledon



with water. This was going to be one of the best days of our trip. One of the highlights was *Viola cotyledon*, which was present in large numbers. It was quite variable and plants often formed rather big clumps often intermixed with *Oreopolus glacialis*.

Calceolaria borsinii was perhaps the most striking *Calceolaria* we found during the trip and it was quite plentiful up on the caldera rim. It is related to the variable and widespread *Calceolaria polyrhiza*, but is somewhat shorter and has larger flowers.



Calceolaria borsinii at Volcano Batea Mahuida [KJvZ]

Chaetanthera villosa was found on a very steep scree in small numbers. Unfortunately there was no sign of the large composite flowers but even out of flower this is a spectacular plant, its silver rosettes covered in long silver hairs. Another beautiful plant was the small *Adesmia longipes*, with yellow flowers, growing in volcanic pumice-like material and *Nassauvia revoluta* was quite common on the plateau and on the caldera rim.

On our second full day here, we had an excursion to Primeros Pinos, or "first pines." *Azorella monantha* was the most common of its genus during our trip. It forms big, very hard cushions, often more than a meter

Azorella monantha near Primeros Pinos



across, and despite the specific epithet “*monantha*”, it often had more flowers. The cactus *Maihuenia poeppigii* can be found up to 2500m (8200 ft) in Patagonia: here there were huge cushions with pale yellow flowers.

Near a small river we found several interesting plants. First there was the white-flowering *Calandrinia affinis*, as well as *C. colchaguensis* with purple flowers and rather wide leaves, and *C. dianthoides* with narrow leaves and bedding-plant-like, large pink flowers, that seem almost out of place in this alpine environment.

There were two rosulate violas. The first was *Viola* aff. *coronifera*, this population being possibly somewhat different from the plants we found on Cerro Colohuincul. But when we finally reached Primeros Pinos we found the objective of the day: *Viola trochlearis*. This belongs to the “volcanica” group; in this case the leaves are beautifully textured, the leaf margins are entire and the flowers have pink veins.



Viola trochlearis

Copahue

Our next destination was Lago Caviahue, a good 200 km north, and in transit we photographed a spectacular specimen of *Azorella trifurcata*, in full flower, on a riverbed. The weather was deteriorating by the time we reached the Pino Hachado pass (1778m/5833ft), about one-third of the way, but a short excursion revealed some brilliant plants such as *Mimulus cupreus* only 10cm tall but with large orange-red flowers. Also along the streams was *Pinguicula chilense*, a tiny carnivorous plants with

sticky leaves and lavender flowers which avoided competition from other plants by growing vertically on the eroded, wet stream sides. Perhaps the highlight was the small and clearly distinct *Calceolaria poikilanthos* with small, flat rosettes and flowers with a very wide labellum with red dots on the underside. *Hypochoeris acaule* was also present, a member of the Asteraceae, with rosettes of leaves and yellow, stemless flowers. We had hoped to find *Primula magellanica* in flower but only found a single rosette showing no signs of flowers or buds. In this part of Patagonia there had been much snow in winter, and the season was very late. In general timing was perfect for plants, but it was clearly too early for some species. By now it was snowing rather than raining so we were all pleased to reach our hotel at Caviahue, with a beautiful view across the lake of the same name. We managed to take some photographs of the surrounding mountains covered in fresh snow and hoped this would not stop us from botanizing over the next days.

The hotel was quite warm, the entire village was on a volcanic water-heating system as village and lake are situated on the lower slopes of the volcano Copahue. This large stratovolcano is 2997m (9833ft) high and is situated on the border between Argentina and Chile. It has several volcanic craters and has been quite active, with ejections of pyroclastic rocks and sulfur fragments in the twentieth century. The largest eruption in the last 100 years started on 1st July 2000. It involved eruption of lapilli, ash, and bombs up to 13cm in diameter were apparently ejected more than 8 km (5 miles) from the summit. Ash fell 100 km (62 miles) away. Marcela told us there used to be an evacuation plan at the information desk, but this was no longer there. Perhaps the hotel owner feared it would scare tourists. The lake bordering the hotel is apparently extremely acidic.

The next morning the weather was fine, but still rather cold. There was still quite a bit of fresh snow in the mountains so we decided to explore the steppe vegetation near Puente del Agrio. We found quite a few *Chuquiraga* species during our trip: here, even though it was still in bud, *Chuquiraga straminea* was spectacular, as was *Grindelia anethifolia*, a 50cm tall Asteraceae. And there was *Rhodophiala araucana*, named after this region, and quite similar to *R. mendocina* and *R. elwesii*, but distinguished from these by the orange apex of the tepals, more flowers per stem, each perhaps slightly smaller, and with more leaf development. A little bit further, at Salto del Agrio, a magnificent waterfall, *Ourisia microphylla* was spotted with binoculars, on a cliff. This was a popular alpine among connoisseurs in the UK perhaps a decade ago, but is now very rarely seen. This was apparently the only known location of this species in Argentina although we found it again right at the end of our trip. It was well protected by its choice of location here. Not only was it on a cliff, it was under an overhang – the sort of place where you would expect *Dionysia* if you were in Iran rather than Patagonia.



Cascadas del Agrio with mature *Araucaria araucana* [K]vZ

The village of Copahue is at about 2000m (6560 ft), surrounded on three sides by hills and the volcano that the village gets its name from. The village is a health resort which is only open during the southern hemisphere summer, since it is covered by meters of snow in winter. It has lots of warm baths and mud baths, and is apparently world famous. The contrast between the warm baths and the snow and ice was amazing, because at this altitude the snow had far from melted. We managed to photograph some nice specimens of *Viola cotyledon*, amidst the snow, but were quite frustrated that nearly all plants were under the snow. There was no point in spending much time here so we drove back to Lago Caviahue and then up to Cascadas del Agrio, beautifully set amidst mature *Araucaria* trees. Species of note here were the tiny *Gunnera magellanica*, along a small stream, and a Pampas grass, *Cortaderia pilosa*, that was about 50cm tall. Back at Lago Caviahue and despite the acidity we spotted some interesting birds including a small group of Chilean flamingoes.

The next day the higher grounds above the village of Copahue were our target and we were not bothered by snow. Alfredo would transfer



Olsynium junceum [K]vZ}

us to a trailhead behind the village, from where we would walk to near the Chilean border and then on to Laguna las Mellizas or “Twin Lakes” where he would collect us. One of the first plants we found was the widespread *Calceolaria polyrhiza* but we were more excited by *Viola columnaris*, which was quite different from the plants on Cerro Chapelco. It was much more columnar here, sometimes to about 10cm tall in plants which were clearly old and the leaves were generally darker brownish green. A bit further on we found spectacular specimens of *Nassauvia revoluta*, tiny *Azorella lycopodioides*, and *Gaultheria caespitosa* an exquisite Ericaceae that was found near snow patches forming mats of only a centimetre or so high with small, pale pink flowers.

We found a relatively small population of the pale-yellow *Olsynium frigidum* here. This is a beautiful species with short-stemmed flowers and spreading, long, narrow leaves that are often eaten by a large, smelly insect. *Olsynium junceum* was found often, but here we found a spectacular clump of the white form (blue forms are also quite frequent in this part of Patagonia). We were lucky to have excellent weather for this last day on Volcano Copahue.



Viola cotyledon (above)

Viola columnaris (top, top right [K]vZ)
and right [K]vZ))

The highlight of the day was some extensive colonies of *Viola cotyledon*, a beautiful species in its best forms, with hairy fringes to the petals. It is not columnar in typical forms and the flowers tend to be larger with quite full rounded petals. It also tends to form many more side-rosettes than *V. columnaris*, often forming large clumps of about 15-20cm across. The flowers of *Viola cotyledon* vary from white to quite dark blue and they tend to be paler in *V. columnaris*. Although it is very easy to differentiate these species in their typical forms, some forms and populations seem to be intermediate and are much more difficult to identify with any certainty. However, the two species tended to grow in isolation rather than together.

Transfer from Caviahue to Chos Malal

During the trip we saw quite a lot of interesting birds including various Patagonian geese, Andean condors, Southern crested caracara, and today we came across rather good numbers of the Burrowing parrot

(*Cyanoliseus patagonus*) although rather surprisingly, perhaps, they were sitting on telegraph wires.

While descending a pass before El Cholar we found the shrub *Chuquiraga straminea* again up to a meter high, but this time in perfect condition with its orange flowers, while nearby some of us - like Kees Jan - were distracted by two cacti: *Maihuenia patagonica* and *Austrocactus patagonicus*. Nearby, still in the steppe zone, we came across a tiny population of *Viola tectiflora*. This is an annual species in the "volcanica" group. The plants were smaller than *V. volcanica* and the related *V. trochlearis*. The leaves of *Viola tectiflora* are much narrower than in its relatives and it has glands on its leaves to attract ants for pollination. *Junellia spatulata*, about 30cm tall and with blue flowers was much more common.

Between El Cholar and Chos Malal we descended to much lower elevations: Chos Malal, situated at only 974m (3196ft), has a continental climate, with cold winters and hot summers and is in the Monte province, which harbours a diverse vegetation although desert rather than alpine and is at its best earlier in the year. This was our most northerly base in the far northern corner of Neuquén, from which we made excursions northeast to Volcano Tromen, and northwest on two separate days past Andacolla: these were both to prove rather too long.

Excursions from Chos Malal

Our first day was to Volcano Tromen, yet another stratovolcano, with an elevation of 3,978m (13051ft) but, unlike Volcano Copahue, it is apparently extinct and is said to be last active 2000 years ago. Just south of the volcano we found some very interesting cacti: *Pterocactus hickenii*, *Maihueniopsis darwinii* var. *hickenii* and *Maihuenia patagonica*. Charles Darwin collected *Maihueniopsis darwinii* during his Beagle trip; it was described by John Henslow in 1837 as *Opuntia darwinii*.

We gradually climbed from a plateau, but while in the steppe zone we found *Junellia micrantha* in volcanic sand, very short and beautiful with lavender flowers. Growing nearby we found the yellow *Oxalis compacta* in flower. All round this was an excellent location: here was *Viola tectiflora* again, this time in much larger numbers. It was again hard to spot, very



Viola tectiflora



Adesmia quadripinnata [K]vZ}

successfully mimicking the volcanic sand, as was that South American *Astragalus*-relative *Adesmia quadripinnata*.

We had lunch at Laguna del Tromen, situated between two volcanic cones. *Montiopsis* aff. *dianthoides*, with large, strong pink flowers was quite common and there was also the pale yellow *Junellia spissa*. At the foot of the volcano's cone, we again found *Mailhuenia poeppigii*, the only Patagonian cactus that grows in the high Andean zone. The alpine purists amongst our group were delighted to find the very low *Nassauvia ulicina* in flower, the yellow composite *Hypochaeris hookeri*, and *Arjona tuberosa*. A very exciting discovery was a specimen of the

yellow *Rhodophiala montana*, even though not in brilliant condition. This was previously only known from Chile and is quite similar to *R. elwesii*, *mendocina* and *araucana*, but distinguished by its narrow tepals. This was going to be the last "new" *Rhodophiala* during our trip, but it made a total of 5 different species of this beautiful genus from the Amaryllidaceae. A few specimens of *Pantacantha ameghinoi* were also found, another exciting discovery since this species is endemic on Volcano Tromen. It is a small Solanaceae with spiny leaves and yellowish-white flowers.

During the next two days, the last alpine excursions of our trip were due. The first was a long trip to the area Natural Protegida Epu Lauquen. On the way we found exciting plants like *Viola trochlearis* and *Rhodophiala elwesii* and, just before the entrance of the park, purple-blue forms of *Solenomelus segethii*. The main botanising of the day was done

Viola congesta



near Laguna Superior. First the search for *Viola congesta*, a rosulate species with white flowers and quite soft leaves. Its population, the only one known, is tiny. This species has been known for about a decade now and the population used to be much larger: it seems to be under threat by succession of the vegetation, with *Nothofagus* and bamboo growing close to what might have been a much more open habitat in the past. Marcela was quite distressed by the demise of the population and gave the GPS coordinates

to a local ranger. Hopefully, action will be taken to rescue this unique species from extinction. It seems to be yet another short-lived species in

the “volcanica” group, although the flowers are more substantial than in other species of this group.

It would be a long trip to Andacolla, Las Oviejas, and a geyser at Los Tachos. The first exciting plant of the day was an unknown rosulate *Viola* that has possible affinities with *V. cotyledon* although unfortunately out of flower. It formed small groups of greenish and brown rosettes. Growing at the same location was *Viola trochlearis*, clearly a quite widespread species in northern Neuquén province. We had lunch near Los Tachos, where *Junellia minutifolia* was of note and on the short walk to the geysers we found *Calceolaria volckmanii*. On the way back to Chos Malal, between Las Oviejas and Los Tachos, we found again one of the most exciting plants of the entire trip: the exquisite *Ourisia microphylla* with its large pale pink flowers [pictured on the back cover]. *Calceolaria dentata*, with dentate leaves was found at the base of the cliffs, as was a spectacular herbaceous perennial, the sunflower-like *Viguiera revoluta*.

These final long days, north of Chos Malal, revealed exciting species we had not seen further south. As Marcela explained, this was due to the fact that here were plants usually found in different phytogeographical regions.

A few end words from Kees Jan van Zwiene

The trip was very successful. For most of the group this was their first visit to South America: the landscape and wildlife were fascinating. From the botanical point of view the rosulate violas were amazing, we found great *Oxalis*, *Verbena* and *Rhodophiala*, and overall we saw such a diverse range of plants in excellent condition. The season was relatively late in 2010 and we feel sure November or December would have been much too early to have seen the alpine and steppe plants of northern Patagonia at their best. Many thanks were due to all involved: Ger van den Beuken, organiser of this expedition; our botanical guide Marcela Ferreyra; and to Alfredo Gastambidez, our driver. They all were excellent.

Useful information

If you would like to see more pictures, there are more than 4000 on Kees Jan van Zwiene's website: <http://keesjan.smugmug.com> and have a look at the “Patagonia, January 2010” gallery. All 4000+ pictures from the trip are indexed so you can search for pics of particular species or all pics of a given plant family.

The most valuable book is Marcela Ferreyra, Cecilia Ezcurra & Sonia Clayton (2005), *High Mountain Flowers of the Patagonian Andes*, Editorial Lola, Buenos Aires.

Photographs are by Ger van den Beuken except for those marked [KJvZ] that are by Kees Jan van Zwiene.

Ger's next trip to South America will be in January 2012, he writes: There are still some places available on our next expedition to the high Andes in Mendoza province in Argentina in January 2012. People interested in information about this fantastic trip, led by Bariloche botanist Marcela Ferreyra, can email Ger at gervandenbeuken@versatel.nl



Eriogonum lobbii, Mt Rose, Washoe Co, Nevada [Steve Caicco]

The Eriogonum Society Up and Running

HUGH MACMILLAN

WHERE DOES ONE start? With approximately 250 species distributed throughout the Western US, Mexico, and Canada, the genus *Eriogonum* ranks only behind *Penstemon* in being the largest genus confined to the North American continent. The lack of a society devoted to eriogonums had been the focus of conversations around campsites near the San Rafael Swell in Utah, on hikes near the Beaver Divide in central Wyoming, and walks in the White Mountains of California as well as at NARGS meetings in Colorado and at several American Penstemon Society meetings (June 2007 in Stanley, Idaho and June 2008 in Bishop, California). In a casual meeting in Stanley, Marcia Tatroe had commented, "Why don't we have an eriogonum society? We grow them better than penstemons!" Additionally there were growers of plants and purveyors of seeds like Agua Fria Nursery, Rocky Mountain Rare Plants, Sunscapes Rare Plant Nursery, and other fine growers who were whetting our appetite for these gems. For many of us the focus would be identification, for others the question was how to use eriogonums in the garden, and for still others the interest was on conservation. The common factor was appreciation of the genus. Somewhere in the mix of events, resources, and conversations over the last decade or so was the seed that would one day sprout to become the Eriogonum Society.

Somewhere the conversation turned to "Can we, or should we, create the society?" My compatriot Bob McFarlane (NARGS member and American Penstemon Society President) and I, had worked together on several projects over the years. In late June 2008 we decided to build upon the momentum carried over from the Ely APS meeting. It was now that the real impetus to create a society started to take form. We discussed strategy, communications, and the creation of a website as well as whether there was enough real interest by others to join the society. Our structure was to mimic, loosely, that of the APS. We enlisted NARGS members Phoebe McFarlane and Elaine Menter to create the society's by-laws. The website template was created in July.

Dr. James Reveal is the recognized leader on the subject of eriogonums, having spent most of his adult life researching the genus. He is the author of the *Eriogonum* chapter (including the IDs) in *Flora of North America*. Anyone who has been fortunate enough to attend one of his lectures or accompany him in the field is quickly aware of his infectious passion. Bob and I anointed him (affectionately of course) as the "Godfather" of the soon-to-be Society. We had approached Jim at the Ely APS meeting with the notion of a society and asked how best to leverage his expertise. Jim wholeheartedly embraced our plan and provided his library of images, an extensive glossary, and access to much of his life's work.

In December 2008, we outlined the responsibilities and timelines, seeded a bank account, and identified recipients for notification that the new Society had been created. One of the larger projects we formulated was to host an inaugural national meeting. For that meeting we confirmed with Jim Reveal that he would conduct a session on the identification of *Eriogonum* at a yet-to-be-determined meeting. The elements were in place.



Jim Reveal photographing *Grayia spinosa* during the 2010 meeting near Reno, Nevada



Eriogonum brevicaule
var. *laxiflorum*,
Wastach Mts,
Utah [Eriogonum Society]

NARGS and APS member Barbara Lewis provided us with a list of contact information for a large number of plant organizations. In early January of 2009 the Eriogonum Society was officially announced. We were finally a Society.

With only a few members initially, the first year was very busy. Bob McFarlane acted as editor for our

Eriogonum robustum, north of Reno, at the Desert Research Center [Hugh MacMillan]



newsletters. Jim Reveal created an excellent 5-part treatise on *Eriogonum* evolution and identification for the newsletter. Ginny Maffitt from Oregon coordinated our first seed exchange. Hugh and Bob processed the membership accounts. Hugh was registrar for the first annual meeting.

After entertaining a few venues for our inaugural Society meeting, we decided upon Reno, Nevada, as the venue. Reno residents Steve Caicco and John Weiser coordinated with the University of Nevada in Reno to confirm classroom availability. The meeting was confirmed for June, 2010. We would have a three-day session with one day dedicated to the classroom and two days in the field.

The classroom session consisted of a half day of a rather animated lecture by Jim Reveal on the identification of *Eriogonum*, followed by a half day of hands-on identification by the students. It was truly a memorable occasion to see the students peering through lens, referring to the identification key and discussing with each other the nuances

of identification. The atmosphere was electric. Of particular interest was the cross-section of attendees: we had a large number of professionals from government agencies (federal and state), as well as gardeners, conservationists, nurserymen and photographers. We felt our objectives as a society were well represented.

We took our newfound skills to the field the following two days. Day one consisted of a journey to the garden of Steve Caicco and excursions to the desert south of Reno and to Mount Rose. Day two locations included the *Eriogonum*-rich Desert Research Center and then a quick trip to Dog Valley across the border in California.

Up to this time Bob and I were the only principals for the Society. At the Reno meeting we added a newsletter editor, a seed exchange coordinator, and a chair for the next meeting (August 2011, near Bishop, CA, in the White Mountains). As of this writing we have over 100 members with growth continuing each month.

ERIOGONUM SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 2, NO. 2 APRIL 2010



Eriogonum diatomaceum, "Churchill Narrows Buckwheat". Photo copy, 2010 Gary A. Monroe

Eriogonum Society Newsletter with picture of
Eriogonum diatomaceum [Gary Munroe]

Membership of the the Eriogonum Society is \$10 annually and this gives you the Eriogonum Society Newsletter, participation in the Seed Exchange, special membership access to the website, and there is the Annual Meeting - this year near Bishop, California.

More information on the Eriogonum Society website at <http://erigonum.org>

The Eriogonum Society has the following objectives;

- enjoying and promoting the use of these plants in the garden.
- enjoying and evaluating eriogonums in the wild.
- collecting, developing and sharing information on the propagation, cultivation, identification and distribution of the *Eriogonum* species.
- providing a seed exchange to distribute *Eriogonum* species seed for use in gardens.
- protecting rare and endangered species of eriogonums.
- advancing the overall understanding of *Eriogonum* from a scientific perspective.

In recent times there has been a great loss of biodiversity nationally. We hope in some way that the Society will have a positive effect on the preservation of essential habitat, and biodiversity.

What is it about eriogonums that we find so alluring? Is it that these species are well adapted to the dry rock garden? Is it the adaptability to a range of harsh environments? (I have friends, who think it is probably an acquired taste, better not acquired, and who suspect my sense of aesthetic.) I suspect on one level or another that our passion is yet another conduit towards satisfying the human need to acknowledge beauty and wonder.

Thanks to the many NARGS members whose participation and feedback, explicitly or implicitly, helped us realize the Eriogonum Society.



the
Container Garden,
Considered

————— ABBIE ZABAR —————

NOW AND THEN, I plant shop with friends, gardeners who can load up a vehicle, and before you turn around they're hauling home enough greenery to start a nursery of their own. Everything from flats

of groundcovers to trees with stubborn root-balls – one of these, five of those, you name it. If a garden has more legroom than boundaries there's always room for another perennial, a few more stately conifers. It's like shopping for dinner when you're hungry. Sometimes I watch with envy. More often I rather enjoy a diet that comes with gardening in containers.

Malcolm McGregor, new Editor of the *Rock Garden Quarterly*, visited my little rooftop on a too hot and sunny afternoon; it was 2009 and at the end of his late spring Book Tour. Since then we've corresponded about typefaces, justified margins, and gardens. As far as the *Quarterly* was concerned he wrote me:

I need [a few] people who think outside the box. Something on the discipline of gardening in a tiny space might be good. Most gardeners can be much looser with their choices. For you everything must earn a place. That's true for almost all of us but you come up against that so much quicker.

Yes, Malcolm, and all the time. As you saw, I'm not one of those blessed with endless in-ground options who go shopping, get their booty home, then plant the stuff – best side out. For better or worse, my gardens have usually been container bound and 'best side out' is the least of my problems. [Right now, Abbie has one of the smallest of planting sites, wrapping around three sides of an equally compact penthouse apartment so that you have to edge sideways from one part to another while you look out across Manhattan. *Ed.*] The good news is containers can always be turned, whether it's a Holy Trinity of Washington Hawthorns (*Crataegus phaenopyrum*) in aged English 'Caisse de Versailles' style teak planters, or local cobblestones lush with tenacious little ground-hugging alpines [*Rock Garden Quarterly*, Fall, 2005]. Even a screen of ten-foot-high hornbeams (*Carpinus betulus* 'Fastigiata') or thirty running-feet of yew hedges (*Taxus x media* 'Brownii') in pressurized treated wood is moveable. We simply jacked those "troughs" up on dollies and spun that garden round like Saturday night square dance partners.

Yet container gardening isn't just filling up pots, no more than in-ground is like plugging the gaps in a BP oil leak. Several years ago I heard Martin Lane Fox, landscape designer and gardener, telling an audience that pots in a garden are the hardest part – for him – to get right; he, recipient of the Royal Horticultural Society's most honorary award, the Victoria Medal of Honor?

No matter how grand the setting, a garden is always more seductive with potted plants. So once you've created the bones, planted the big picture, it's time to get intimate.

Consider Powis Castle, in Wales, where the hand of man is not only

seen in the *Taxus* and *Buxus* hedges – dense with ancient growth that gardeners walk on top of to do their pruning – but also in the planting out of dozens and dozens of late-Victorian-designed terra cotta ‘baskets’ from a local pottery. There are regal agaves punctuating balustrades of the 17th Century staircase, and exuberant floral arrangements nestled in sandstone niches along the Italianate terraces, with even more pots highlighting the elaborate borders. Centuries of changing fashion and taste in gardens have not diminished the added value of containers that are taken as seriously there as those world-renowned hedges.

Or consider the wide marble steps leading to Villa Fiorentina in Cap Ferrat where grey-green vegetation cascaded down to the Mediterranean Sea, while a parade of pale clay pots – from nearby provincial potteries – edge those stairs like “Borough Winner for Best Stoop Plantings in Brooklyn.”

Or what about a royal collection of terra cotta olive urns from around the world, that Prince Charles doesn’t even see any reason to plant up, at his Highgrove estate, for them to look beautiful? Or the Central Park Precinct in New York City, where unstudied groupings of potted red geraniums make the police station look cozy, and inviting enough to spend the night?

Or my own classic four-square Elizabethan herb garden that I sited in a seaside meadow on Nantucket Island, with high-rise Long Tom pots of santolina (*Santolina chamaecyparissus*) spires as punctuation marks along the perimeter fencing, plus a pair of topiary rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) in jardinières at the entrance gate, announcing “Welcome To My Garden” better than if I had planted those standards in the ground.

In an abandoned greenhouse with broken panes of glass, and weeds growing through foundation walls, I found a stash of vintage Sankey terra cotta alpine pans. At a Hudson Valley Chapter auction I’m the one who placed the high bid on a small palm-size rock deeply etched with natural crevices. That was years ago and, though my good fortune certainly was not in the league of a “Chinese Scholar’s Rock,” I’m still on the lookout for its perfect plant mate. Then there was a



gnarly tree root that I outfitted with dwarf ferns (*Woodsia intermedia*, *W. polystichoides*) bought at one of our Manhattan Chapter plant sales because I needed a rustic finial above a woodland gatepost. Every single space, every single plant, every single container in my garden is accounted for, and accountable.



Loading up at the local nursery may never be this gardener's M.O. But when the world is seen through the eyes of a container gardener, possibilities become limitless. Not just lead, stone, iron, terra cotta, tufa, hypertufa, or fiberglass containers. But what of New York City cobblestones; what of recycled rubber tires, so routine in rural Southern gardens? Or how about nothing more than an endearing little lichen-covered log that tripped me up twenty years ago and nowadays is overflowing with cobweb houseleeks (*Sempervivum arachnoideum*) and what everybody comments on. Gardening in containers is taking pleasure in discovering a whole world of options, especially when someone else might kick those tires but give them a pass.



NARGS WESTERN WINTER STUDY WEEKEND - 2011

ALONG THE SILK ROAD

February 25 – 27, 2011

**Mary Winspear Centre
2243 Beacon Avenue
Sidney, British Columbia**
(20 minutes north of Victoria)

Hosted by the Vancouver Island Rock &
Alpine Garden Society

Speakers to include:

Stephanie Ferguson, expert rock & crevice gardener
from Calgary, Alberta

Vojtech Holubec of the Czech Republic & coauthor
of "The Caucasus & Its Flowers"

John Massey, owner of Ashwood Nurseries, U.K.

Bill Terry, Meconopsis expert and author of "Blue Heaven – Encounters with the Blue Poppy"

Dr. Bobby J. Ward, botanist & author of "The Plant Hunter's Garden"

plus

Workshops, Plant Sales, Seed Sales, Displays, Open Gardens

Registration fees:

\$135 before January 28, 2011



FOR MORE INFORMATION

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

www.virags.ca/winterstudyweekend.htm

OR EMAIL OUR REGISTRAR:

kathylalli@hotmail.com

OR MAIL:

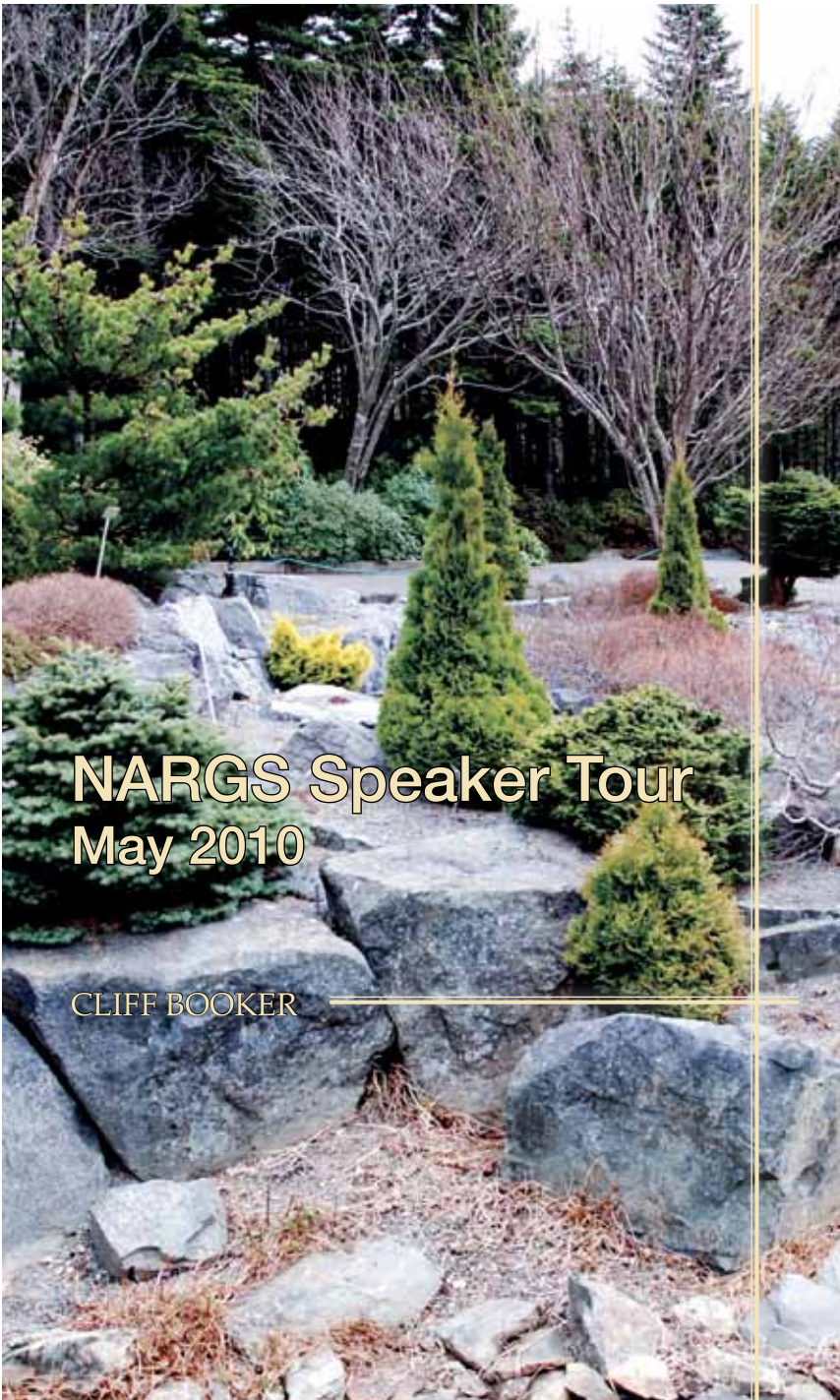
Western Winter Study Weekend 2011

Kathy Lalli, Registrar

2531 Wenwich Road

Victoria, BC V9B 3N5

CANADA



NARGS Speaker Tour May 2010

CLIFF BOOKER

The rock garden at the Botanical Garden, Memorial University, St John's, Newfoundland

CHAPTER 2

*Arriving at St John's – Newfoundland
Chapter – Todd Boland and the
University Botanical Garden – local
cuisine – an outing with Basia Price
– a short digression about the author's
Lancashire garden – Barb Wetzel's
garden – neat stop Wisconsin-Illinois*

WE ARRIVED AT St. John's perfectly formed airport at 11pm (after flights from Newburgh via Newark) and were directed to a lengthy taxi rank and into the first cab in the line - big mistake - our "genial" driver proved to be as high as a kite in a hurricane on something distinctly Afghan and quite keen to emphasize (and stress again and again) the native custom of tipping more than usual at this lamentable time of the evening. A brilliant driver though, he managed to get us to our B&B in record time and without seeming to actually touch the steering wheel with more than one finger at a time ... utterly brilliant. Another diamond ... and certainly well cut!

Please do not get the impression though that all of St. John's taxi drivers are of this ilk ... our return trip was gentle, sedate and perfectly pleasant in every way ... and proved considerably cheaper.

After this, St. John's was everything I expected it to be: beautiful, comparatively small, cold, distinctly wet, chic-rugged, full of rainbow-clad wooden houses and incredibly welcoming - and also everything I hadn't expected it to be: bustling, arty, cosmopolitan and a hotbed of culinary sensations from around the world.





St. John's, Newfoundland

Crevice garden at University Botanical Garden

Chapter members L to R:
Howard & Leila Clase, Cliff
Booker, Basia & Dan Price, and
Todd Boland

Todd Boland outside Alpine
House at University Botanical
Garden



The local NARGS Chapter is probably one of the smallest on the continent numerically, but they more than make up for this with their knowledge and enthusiasm, working, as they do, with the local Wildflower Society to promote alpine gardening on this beautiful island. Much of the credit for this must go to Chapter Chair, Todd Boland who, along with members Howard & Leila Clase and Basia Price, made our brief stay in St. John's such an enjoyable experience.

Todd gave us a guided tour of the city's splendid Memorial University Botanical Garden where he has been research horticulturalist for more than six years, and this impressive garden certainly stimulated our camera lenses into overdrive. Seldom have our digital records of garden visits included images of moose footprints or moose droppings or, for that matter, huge clumps of carnivorous plants growing naturally in wild bogs. Incidentally, images captured in a local supermarket included moose puddings, bottled moose, home-style moose and home-style seal flipper pies - delicious.

The Botanical Garden also hosted my presentation (*The Dolomites*) and it was wonderful to talk to such a friendly and knowledgeable bunch of botanists and gardeners. The Garden, originally named Oxen Pond Botanic Park, was initiated in 1971 and opened to the public in 1977. There is much to interest an alpine enthusiast in this unpretentious haven of horticultural excellence; a modest alpine house and bulb frames; a superb rock garden with enormous stands of pulsatillas; woodland beds awash with trilliums and slipper orchids, and a newly established exquisitely planted crevice garden.

It was too early in the season, at the beginning of May, to see much of note in the wild, but Todd did point out the noses of cypripediums protruding through the carpet of moss and we were treated to two car tours that confirmed without doubt my long-held impression that the coast of Newfoundland is very much indented and rocky; Basia took us on a hike out onto a deserted promontory where the chill wind was so strong that I conjured with the image of moose throwing themselves into the waves to escape it.

A super meal out signaled the climax of our impossibly short visit to St. John's and the next stage of our adventure beckoned. We were to fly to O'Hare Airport in Chicago, via Newark, and be met by Barb & Bob Wetzel ... little did we know what that meant in a horticultural sense!

Airports can define a nation. Powerful, economically rich countries boast enormous cogs that drive the transport wheel, mega-stations for the air trains of the skies, global gateways that both attract and repel - and few of these behemoths can compare to O'Hare.

This was to be our first visit to Chicago and we were delighted that we were to be met at baggage reclaim by 'Barb in the red jacket' - a promise of assignation and allure.

O'Hare isn't a huge airport, it's a minor city, a citadel of elevators, alleys, plazas, one-way streets and infinite parking, with shopping, restaurants, IT bars, entertainment and religious establishments on every level and concrete consuming every aspect. ... it makes our pleasant Lancashire township feel like a hackneyed one-horse town.

So I digress (as is my norm) to depict the poor little garden that we "abandoned" high on the moors in Lancashire, England whilst we toured such beautiful climes.

Our total useable garden area is exactly one ninth that of a baseball diamond (which is ninety foot square) and is as flat and as regular as that type of sporting domain should be.

I grow almost everything in pots (for showing and to accommodate as many species as possible) and, apart from one tiny greenhouse and a couple of frames, everything remains open to the elements for the entire year.

I specialise in trying to grow the high mountain buttercups of the world (and related members of the family Ranunculaceae), but also attempt to cram in waifs and strays of every genus, species and form that I encounter - I am a sucker for a plant, for a seed, for every persuasive nurseryman.

We enjoy a temperate but rather damp climate that precludes the growing of dionysias and western phloxes, but encourages the cultivation of mosses, liverworts and accompanying wildlife ... we aren't proud to have some of the finest slugs, snails and woodlice in north-west England.

Our son-in-law kindly sprayed everything to within an inch of its life whilst we were away and my only losses during the three week period were *Thlaspi* and *Talinum* seedlings that might have struggled anyway. A case of successful gardening by proxy (or progeny).

Barb and Bob Wetzel appeared like guardian Angels (though Bob had mysteriously mislaid his customary red jacket) to escort us to beautiful Barrington Hills, just forty minutes and fifteen million miles from the bustle and hustle of O' Hare.

Barrington Hills is like Goodwood (Sussex) on steroids; like Newmarket (Suffolk) on beefsteaks, it is gloriously bucolic yet incredibly urbane, magnificent countryside interspersed with inestimable estates, a meringue of meadows and mansions topped off by the double-cream of society ... Barrington Hills is unlike anywhere we have been before, even in occasional fantasies.

Barb and Bob welcomed us like returning children and we certainly felt like kids in a candy store when we got our first glimpse of their magnificent garden. Barb (the gardener and horticulturalist) and



Cliff Booker
and two views of his
Lancashire garden





Barb Wetzel's garden,
Barrington Hills

Barb (in red) & Bob Wetzel and
Sue Booker



Bob (the genial Man Friday / factotum) have created primarily a woodland garden of consummate splendor, a verdant pastel-hued palette of exquisite rhododendrons and azaleas, primulas and phlox, sanguinarias, cypripediums and trilliums and, as was the case with every gardener we were fortunate enough to encounter during our tour of Eastern U.S.A. and Canada, it is hard to imagine the time, energy and commitment that they have expended during their gardening years.

I mentioned that Barb's garden (for she is the driving force) is primarily woodland, but this doesn't pay due homage to the enormous (and recently established) prairie garden, to the meticulous alpine beds, to the splendid rock-formed pond, to the labyrinthine maze of paths and glades that not only guide the fortunate visitor around this enchanting garden but also serve to lose the same awestruck visitor in shrub-filled forest clearings of the utmost beauty. I am uncertain of the exact acreage of this fabulous woodland garden (certainly exceeds five acres), but the maintenance alone must be a gargantuan task, native and alien weeds (buckthorn and garlic mustard in particular) seek to prosper and choke - shrubs, small trees and climbers proliferate in these almost semi-tropical conditions - gardening in the high summer of 2010 became almost impossible for Barb in the face of furnace-like temperatures, swarms of mosquitoes and energy-sapping humidity.

Barb's garden is a tribute to the thousands of hours she spent clearing, creating, planting and perfecting ... she should be immensely proud of her achievement.

Our next duo of lectures (the fifth and sixth of eight) were to be presented to the Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter based in Madison, Illinois, hence there had been a logistical need for an overnight stop with Barb and Bob in beautiful Barrington Hills. But what a pleasure, and now we were halfway through our tour and our next stop would be kindly organized by Ed Glover. A comfortable and conversational drive north took over an hour and a half (quite normal for Barb when she travels to her "local" group) and we were on time to meet Ed Glover, the Chapter Chair, for lunch as arranged.

continues in the next issue

NARGS Bulletin Board

News supplement to the Rock Garden Quarterly

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear NARGS Members,

The gardening season is winding down in central Ohio and is limited to raking leaves in mid-October as I write this, due to the early publication deadline. By the time you read this, it will be mid-winter and the leaves will have given way to snow in my garden.

You are now holding the second issue of the *Rock Garden Quarterly* produced by our new Editor, Malcolm McGregor. In the last issue Malcolm inaugurated color throughout and provided an interesting layout and a pleasing choice of articles. And he promises more changes over time; I cannot wait to see what he's done with this issue! And last year's donations towards the Quarterly are helping fund this change - we really do value them.

Speaking about changes, there are changes within the organization. Our Book Service closed at the end of October. By the time you read this, we will have provided a link from the NARGS Web site to Amazon.com, allowing NARGS members to purchase books directly through the Amazon Associates program. NARGS will receive a fee from Amazon based on the books (or any products) purchased from Amazon through the NARGS Web site. And, the books don't have to be gardening or horticulture related.

Since, I'm on the subject of books, the very observant among you might notice that we have removed the listing for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Library from the last page of the Quarterly. This used to be a popular reference resource for NARGS members. These days, internet and perhaps interlibrary loans have become the reference methods of choice.

In the past three years, the McLean Library received one request that might have come from a NARGS member. Let's give a big hand, virtually speaking, to Janet Evans, the McLean Library Manager, who for 25 years

or more looked after book requests from NARGS members! And just so that you don't get too melancholy about this, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society is staying on as a NARGS member.

There are more changes yet. By the time you read this, we should have a new Web master. Our indomitable Hugh Mac Millan is moving on to other projects and a Committee, chaired by Joyce Fingerut, is searching for his successor.

Alice Nicolson, Chair of the Nominating Committee, and "her people" are searching for a new team of volunteers to run NARGS. This involves finding candidates for the new Administrative Committee (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Recording Secretary) and three Directors of the Board. The nominees will be listed in the spring issue of the Rock Garden Quarterly. The election will be held at the New Hampshire Annual Meeting in June 2011.

Mention of next year's Annual Meeting brings me to the topic of 2012 meetings. Right now, we only have one meeting scheduled for that year: the Northwestern Chapter will extend its Western Study Weekend (March 9 -11, 2012) into the Annual Meeting. I've been looking for an Eastern Chapter to host a Study Weekend but, as of my writing, there are no takers

And finally, NARGS is always looking for volunteers. Let me know what you can do for the organization!

Best regards,

Grazyna Grauer
NARGS President
<grazynalg@sbcglobal.net

At the **2011 Winter StudyWeekend** in Sidney by the Sea (near Victoria, British Columbia), there will be a NARGS Town Hall meeting, on Friday, February 25 at 2:00 p.m. The meeting will be informal and will focus on members' suggestions for strengthening NARGS, volunteers needed, and what the Society should be doing to improve its service to its membership. The Study Weekend, held at the Mary Winspear Centre, 2243 Beacon Avenue, is hosted by the Vancouver Island Rock & Alpine Garden Society.

The Weekend coordinator is Yvonne Rorison: <Yrorison@shaw.ca>

NARGS Membership Directory

As a cost-reduction measure, NARGS no longer publishes a printed copy of its membership directory. However, you can obtain an electronic PDF copy by sending a request to <nargs@nc.rr.com>

Please put **membership directory** in the subject line.

2010 NEWS from the SEED EXCHANGE

The annual Seed List and Order Form of the NARGS Seed Exchange are now on our website <www.nargs.org> and click on Seedex in the navigation bar.

Many thanks to our new donors and the stalwart regulars; we could not even begin without your contributions: No Seeds, No Exchange.

Our gratitude goes out to the many volunteers, all around the country - within chapters and individually and NARGS members and not - who packaged the seeds into thousands of labeled glassine packets.

Many thanks to the volunteers of the Delaware Valley chapter, and their coordinator Joan Haas, for handling the Main Round seed order fulfillment - always a major job. Grateful thanks, also, to BZ Marranca and the members of the Adirondack Chapter, who will reprise their stellar work in filling the Surplus Round of seed requests.

Of course, I hope you all understand that the majority of the work is done by Laura Serowicz, whose title is only Intake Manager, because to list all the many phases of this Seedex that she handles or coordinates would make for a very long and awkward title. Laura is the core and the heart of the NARGS Seedex, and we all owe her our thanks.

REMINDERS

* Seed orders must be received by **February 10th**, the closing date for the Main Round.

Send your seed orders to:

Joan Haas, 70 Iron Bridge Road, Pipersville, PA 18947

* If you did not request a form for the Surplus Round of seed orders, but would like one, send a request to:

Laura Serowicz, 15411 Woodring Street, Livonia, MI 48154-3029

<seedintake@twmi.rr.com>

* Chapter Chairs should contact me if they want a portion of the remaining seeds, which will be sent out in late March following the completion of the Surplus Round.

Joyce Fingerut, Director

NARGS Seed Exchange

<alpinegarden@comcast.net>

8th International Rock Garden Conference: Alpines without Frontiers

An international rock gardening conference takes place once every ten years. The April 14 -17, 2011, conference to be held at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham University, UK, is co-sponsored by the Alpine Garden Society and by the Scottish Rock Garden Club.

Registration is through the Alpine Garden Society:

www.alpinegardensociety.net

NARGS December 2009 Donations Appeal
(breakdown as of November 18th)

DESIGNATED

Rock Garden Quarterly	\$3,249.24
Web site/Web master	350.00
Seed Exchange	1,030.00
Singer Endowment Fund	100.00
Speakers Tour	100.00
In honor of Larry Thomas (General Fund)	50.00
In memory of Pat Bender (General Fund)	150.00
In memory of Carol Fyler (General Fund)	25.00
In memory of Anita Kistler (Singer Endowment)	100.00
In memory of Sasha Borkovec (General Fund)	150.00
In memory of Sasha Borkovec (NARGS Travel stipend)	1,000.00
GENERAL FUND	2,696.35
TOTAL	\$9000.59

NARGS Donors (August 22 to November 18, 2010)

Anonymous donor	Alice Nicholson (Virginia)
Jonathan Dean (Ohio)	Emiline & Marvin Ott (Maryland)
Patsy Jaeger (Oregon)	Richard Rodich (Minnesota)
Kristin Jakob (California)	Theodora Unzner (Germany)
Larry Mellichamp (North Carolina)	Potomac Valley Chapter (NARGS)

Norman Singer Endowment Fund

The NARGS Norman Singer Endowment Fund is accepting applications for grants to support projects that "advance the art and science of rock gardening." Areas that fit the grant criteria include publications, promotion to the general public including public rock gardens, education and preservation, and conservation. Both individuals and institutions may apply. Endowment Fund guidelines, application form, a list of previously funded projects and photos of public rock garden projects can be found on the NARGS Web site, www.nargs.org. Click on "NARGS People," then click on "Responsible People," and scroll down to "Committees" and look under "Norman Singer Endowment Fund." The "Guidelines" are on the right hand side. The application form is there as well.

Proposals for funding to be granted during the current year must be submitted before April 1, 2011 to the Endowment Committee Chair, Ed Glover, by email (glover@oncology.wisc.edu) or mail (503 Johns Street, Mount Horeb, WI 53572). Award recipients will be announced at the Annual General Meeting in June.

Persons who joined NARGS - August 4 to October 31, 2010

Lawrence-Olansky, Lynn, Box 1107, Valleyview, AB T0H 3N0 Canada
Place, Alison, 65 Aero Dr., Nepean, ON K2H 5E3 Canada
Woodrow, Terrie, PO Box 160, Scotland, ON N0E 1R0 Canada
Carroll, Megan, #202 274 Giles Blvd. West, Windsor ON N9A 6H3 Canada
Boterdael, Jean, Les Thibaudieres, St. Julien des Lanes 85150 France
Jockel, Dirk Michael, 29 Nordring, Heiligenhaus 42579 Germany
Erbay, Selma, PK: 20, Ahmetler, Ankara 0660 Turkey
Svoboda, Deb, 4647 Berkshire Pl., Boulder, CO 80301
Feakes, Tina, 6850 Oak Valley Ln., Colorado Springs, CO 80919
Ulrich, C. D. & Julia Ann, 2238 Stratford Ln., Colorado Springs, CO 80909
Kaza, Ravi, 81 Woodbridge Ave., New Haven, CT 06515
Ronis, Elle, 18 Eljays Ln., Stamford, CT 06902
van der Wansem, Wilhelmina, 597 Lowell Rd., Concord, MA 01742
Henion, David W., 98 Montague Rd., Leverett, MA 10105
Kurinsky, Sharon, 31 Paul Gore St., Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
Kubits, Bobbie, 84 E. Pleasant Lake Rd., North Oaks, MN 55127
Schwartz, Michael & Christine Kerwin, 39 Chester Ct., Cortlandt Manor,
NY 10567
Jed, Joyce, 544 8th St., Brooklyn, NY 11215
Schwin, Paul, 38 W. Washburn St., New London, OH 44851
Marquis, Meschelle, 122 E. Warren St., Lebanon, OH 45036
Reed, James, 3016 Geary St. SE, Albany, OR 97322
Breedlove, Donna, 520 Palm St., Medford, OR 97501
Letts, Kate, 9617 Banes St., Philidelphia, PA 19115
Mikkelsen, James E., 568 S. 850 East, Layton, UT 84041
Bennett, Teri L. 2505 Loch Gate Ln., Powhatan, VA 23139
Wodicka, Sonya R., 600 Trents Ferry Rd., Lynchburg, VA 24503
Dube, Richard, 65 Terrien Rd., Huntington, VT 05462
Cretin, Saori & Kevin, 4312 NE 87th St., Seattle, WA 98115
Loos, Bethany, W3593 Chickadee Rd., Loyal, WI 54446

We have learned of the deaths of the following NARGS members

Ed Burekhardt, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Joyce Carruthers, Victoria Island, British Columbia
Robert W. Charnock, Wagga Wagga, Australia
"Puddin" Foil, Concord, North Carolina
Catherine Hull, Manchester, Massachusetts
Caroline R. Jacobson, Kingston, Washington
Judy Macaliser-Passauer, Olinda, Australia.
Irma Markert, Ogdensburg, New York
Betty Prince, Pine Bush, New York
Lee Raden, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania
Gladys Zimmerman, Hartford, Connecticut



North American Rock Garden Society Awards

It's that time of year, again; so many people and gardens need to be recognized for their contributions to NARGS. Please think about nominating that important person in your chapter or NARGS that has made important contributions. There are many gorgeous rock gardens though out our community, yet only a trickle of nominations has been made for the new garden award. Plan to take pictures of those special gardens that have inspired us.

Below are listed the various awards.

For specific details, requirements, updates, and nominating procedures, consult the NARGS website under NARGS People - Responsible People - Awards.

Award of Merit is given to persons who have made outstanding contributions to rock and alpine gardening and to the NARGS. In addition, the recipients will be people of demonstrated plantsmanship and an active member of the Society.

Marcel Le Piniec Award given to a nursery person, propagator, hybridizer, or plant explorer who is currently actively engaged in extending and enriching the plant material available to rock gardeners.

Edgar T Wherry Award is given to a person who has made an outstanding contribution in the dissemination of botanical and/or horticultural information about native North American plants. The recipient does not have to be a member of the Society.

Carleton R. Worth Award is given to an author of distinguished writings about rock gardening and rock garden plants in a book or in magazine articles. The recipient does not have to be a member of the Society.

Marvin E. Black Award is given to a member of the Society who excels at promoting membership in NARGS; organizing study weekends, national, and international meetings. They should also be involved in such activities as planning trips to study plants and to meet other plant people. The emphasis shall be placed on a member who has helped other people to reach their potential in the plant world.

Linc & Timmy Foster Millstream Garden Award is for an outstanding contribution to the North American Rock Garden Society for creating a superior garden. Not meant to be a competition, but to recognize members' great gardens across the various styles and regions of the United States and Canada. Meant to reward the creation of private gardens, there are four categories: Container Garden, the Alpine Rock Garden, the Woodland Garden and the Special Garden.

Questions and nominations should be sent to the NARGS Awards Chair, Lee Curtis at e-mail: <buzz.curtis@netscape.com> or by mail to: 1620 S. Parfet Ct. Lakewood CO, 80232. Deadline for nominations is May 8, 2011.

NARGS Chapter Service Awards - Fall 2010

Debra Wopat (Wisconsin-Illinois)
Barbara Wetzel (Don Havens Award—Wisconsin-Illinois)
Cheryl Philstrom (Minnesota)
Marilyn Moore (Rocky Mountain)
Elly Amade (Rocky Mountain)
Fran Enright (Rocky Mountain)
Pamela Johnson (Berkshire)
Joyce Hemingson (Berkshire)



Wildflowers of Yunnan

June 2011

- Follow in the footsteps of George Forrest and Joseph Rock
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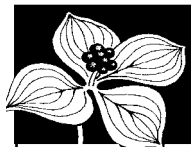
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June 17-19, 2011

with optional post conference trips

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Details on page 85



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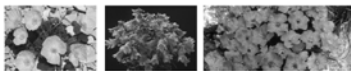
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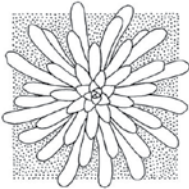
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NARGS 2011 NATIONAL MEETING

Discovering the Flora of New England

NARGS 2011 Annual Meeting, June 17-19

Exciting flora in New England? Come see for yourself!

An old New England farmer once said "My best crop is the rocks I harvest from my field." He was perhaps exaggerating to make a point, but not by much. In northern New England, the rocks left by the glaciers can be a nightmare when planting a new garden. And each spring brings forth a new crop.

So what's one to do? Rather than be cursed as an obstacle, the presence of rocks provides New England gardeners with a unique opportunity to create a garden perfectly suited to its site. Come see for yourself! From the magnificent White Mountains in the north of New Hampshire and the rolling Green Mountains of Vermont, through the Lake Districts and many historic and quaint regions, New England is filled with rock gardens of beautiful flora and unique species.

Colby-Sawyer College, New London, NH, will be the main location for meetings, presentations, vendors, and other activities. This classic colonial campus lies in New Hampshire's scenic Lake Sunapee Region with 360-degree views of mountains, forests, and lakes. The tree-lined campus is nestled in the quaint New England town of New London, a perfect setting for our NARGS Annual Meeting.

CELEBRATE THE FLORA OF NEW ENGLAND

Discover The Fells and Clarence Hay's
80-year-old rock garden

Discover the beauty of Eshqua Bog and
Philbrick-Cricenti Bog, both rich fens

Discover exceptional gardens

Linger after the meeting and discover the
alpine flora of Mount Washington and the
Garden in the Woods, home of the New
England Wild Flower Society

<http://fellschapter.wordpress.com/about/>

SCHEDULE

Friday, June 17

Registration at bus loading.

7:30 or 9:30 a.m. Departures for Eshqua Bog and Highberg Gardens

3:00 p.m. Tours of The Fells and reception

5:30-7:30 Vendors open, Plant Show, Silent Auction, Social Hour,
Ware Campus Center, Colby-Sawyer College

6:30 p.m. Dinner: Ware Campus Center, Colby-Sawyer College

7:30 p.m. Awards meeting

8:15 p.m. Keynote Speaker: Arthur Haines

Saturday, June 18

7:30 a.m. Breakfast at Ware Campus Center, Colby-Sawyer College

7:30-8:30 Vendors open: Ware Campus Center, Colby-Sawyer College

9:00 a.m. Departure for Hewitt, Fenderson, and Fry gardens

3:00-7:15 Vendors open, Plant Show, Silent Auction at College

5:30 p.m. Social

6:30 p.m. Dinner: Ware Campus Center, Colby-Sawyer College

7:15 p.m. Annual Meeting

8:15 p.m. Speaker: William Cullina

9:15-10:00 Final vendor opportunities

Sunday, June 19

Breakfast on your own

9:00-12:00 Visit Philbrick-Cricenti Bog and local gardens.

Sunday, June 19 & Monday, June 20

Post Conference Trip Options, on your own

Post-conference activities could include visits to Mount Washington and The Garden in the Woods.

Visit **Mt. Washington**, the highest peak in the Northeast and discover the alpine flora of the White Mountains during their prime bloom time, including the federally-protected Mt. Washington endemic, *Potentilla robbinsiana*. Botanists, including Arthur Haines, will be on hand on Monday, June 20, to provide you with information, help direct you, and answer your questions. Allow three hours to reach the Mount Washington region so you will want to leave New London on Sunday afternoon. The most interesting route takes you over the Kancamagus Highway. Those who love to shop may want to visit the outlet stores in North Conway, just south of Mount Washington. New Hampshire has no sales tax, making shopping more affordable.

The Garden in the Woods (Framingham, MA), is home of the New England Wild Flower Society, a two-hour ride from Colby-Sawyer College. Monday, June 20, a day when this ever-changing living museum is closed to the public, we are invited to visit the Garden in the Woods, with the largest landscaped collection of native plants in the region, more than 1,000 native plant species, as well as the unique New England Garden of Rare and Endangered Plants.

There are other nearby sites, for gardeners and non-gardeners.

Further information will be available when you send in your registration.

Our Speakers

Arthur Haines (<http://www.arthurhaines.com/>) is a plant biologist specializing in the taxonomy and identification of New England tracheophytes. Among his publications are two user-friendly taxonomic and ecological references, *The Families Huperziaceae and Lycopodiaceae of New England* and *The Viola of Maine*, as well as *The Flora of Maine*. Arthur is a research botanist for the New England Wild Flower Society, writing a new tracheophyte flora of New England, to be published in 2011, and a regional reviewer for the *Flora of North America* project. He will speak about native alpine plants and some of the interesting adaptations we see in New England, and perhaps some comparisons between Mount Katahdin and Mount Washington.

Bill Cullina (<http://www.williamcullina.com/>) is the Director of Horticulture/ Plant Curator for one of North America's newest and most exciting public gardens, The Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay, Maine. A well-known author and recognized authority on North American native plants, Bill lectures on a variety of subjects to garden and professional groups, and writes for popular and technical journals. His books include *Wildflowers of the United States and Canada*; *Native Trees, Shrubs, and Vines*; *Understanding Orchids*; *Native Ferns, Mosses, and Grasses*; and most recently, *Understanding Perennials*, published in 2009. Bill will talk about growing some of New England's challenging alpiners and woodland plants.

Lodging in the New London area

The conference meetings, meals, and sales will be held on the campus of Colby-Sawyer College and registrants need to reserve rooms in and around nearby New London, NH.

Until April 11, all rooms are being held for NARGS members for June 17 and 18, 2011, at the two facilities closest to Colby-Sawyer College: The New London Inn and The Fairway Motel. You must say you are with NARGS when you make your room reservation.

The New London Inn, 353 Main Street, New London, NH 03257

<http://www.newlondoninn.us/home.htm> 800 526-2791

This is the nearest to our meeting site, about a three-tenths mile walk.

The Fairway Motel, 344 Andover Road, (Route 11) http://www.lakesunapeecc.com/content/motel/fairway_motel.php?CID=5 603-526-0202

This is an easy drive, a bit more than a mile and a half from the meeting site.

If these are full, there are other relatively nearby places to consider.

A list of several additional inns and hotels, as well as information on transportation options to New London, NH, will be available when you send in your registration.



HELLO
WELCOME TO NEW HAMPSHIRE!

NARGS ANNUAL MEETING June 17 - 19, 2011
REGISTRATION FORM

Discovering the Flora of New England

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We understand that the format of this meeting is different from many previous NARGS national meetings. Do you have any questions; is there any way that we can help with your planning for this visit? We will be happy to answer any questions:

Thelma Hewitt, Annual Meeting Chair: 603-763-0045; Tkhwitt@aol.com

Joyce Fingerut, Registrar: 860-535-3067; alpinegarden@comcast.net

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