

ROCK GARDEN *Quarterly*



Volume 68 Number 4

Fall 2010



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Mary Ann Ulmann is current membership chair of Delaware Valley Chapter and her husband **Chuck Ulmann** has been chapter chair in the past as well as being active nationally for NARGS. Both rock gardeners now retired from long professional careers, Mary Ann also enjoys growing orchids and selling antiques, and Chuck is curator of the Christian Sanderson Museum in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania.

Steve Whitesell is a 21-year member of NARGS and the Manhattan Chapter and works as a landscape architect in New York.

Front cover: *Phlox diffusa* at Silcox Hut on Mt. Hood, Oregon. Original screen print by Sue Allen.

Back cover: *Androsace*, *Draba*, *Sempervivum* and *Saxifraga* on Robin Magowan's rockery. Photo Juliet Mattila

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ROCK GARDEN *Quarterly*

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From the Editor

JANE MCGARY HAS been the Editor of this journal for ten years, from 2001 to 2010 and has brought stability and such scholarly thoroughness to the job that it will be an intriguing challenge to follow. When I first took up the editorship of the Scottish Rock Garden Club, in the same year that Jane was starting her editorship for NARGS, I was lucky to have the opportunity to spend nearly a week with Jane at her home in Estacada in rural Oregon. This was in the middle of a lecture tour of the western states and provinces so it was particularly nice to have a few days out to talk with Jane and share our concerns. During the day we visited the gardens of Portland, spent hours in Powell's (Portland's magnificent bookstore), spent time on Mount Hood, at Lolo Pass, and in the Columbia River Gorge. In the evening after eating we sat out and listened to coyotes and talked of family and editing. Since then our contact has been sporadic and electronic but it has made my task with the *Quarterly* one that I feel keenly.

The *Quarterly* is just one example of Jane's unshakable commitment to professional standards. Many NARGS members will have appreciated Jane's expertise in her editing of *Bulbs of North America*, *Rock Garden Plants of North America* and *Rock Garden Design and Construction* all published by NARGS with Timber Press. But Jane is known well beyond NARGS with her editing and authorship of many scholarly works particularly ones relating to Native American languages and anthropology. Jane is also the highly-respected president of the Pacific Bulb Society and also of NARGS Columbia-Willamette Chapter.

Along with other voices who follow, I wish Jane every pleasure in her new home on the outskirts of Portland as she has more time to enjoy and develop her bulb collection in the long-planned 40-foot bulb house.

It is obvious to all concerned that the Fall issue of the *Rock Garden Quarterly* always has a larger than average overhead of material relating to Society matters. Every issue now includes the Bulletin Board, but in the Fall issue there are also Awards and the Annual Financial Statement. On top of this, the index for the volume has been appearing in the Fall issue as the last issue in the volume. It is most cost effective to produce a publication of exactly 80 pages. So to alleviate matters this year, the index for volume 68 will appear in the next issue of the *Quarterly*.

There is no more space left in this issue for me to do anything except to say hello and hope that I'll hear from lots of you—and to thank all those who have already contributed, helped me clarify ideas, promised to contribute, or even just wished me "good luck." MMcG.



Looking back & looking forward

A tribute to the editorship of
Jane McGary, NARGS Editor 2001-2010

HANS SAUTER - proofreader for the *Rock Garden Quarterly*

I was a proofreader for the *Rock Garden Quarterly* from early 2001 (with one preliminary engagement, in summer 2000) until this past summer - not quite 10 years; I had initially been recruited by Gwen Kelaidis, who was at that time (mid-2000) about to leave her position as Editor, with Jane McGary to follow her.

Jane assumed the editorship of the *Rock Garden Quarterly* with the first issue of Volume 49 for Winter 2001. On page 57 one will find Jane's inaugural address: one page of pithy and luminous English, "telling it as it is" (always), utterly and positively committed: a manifesto for her plans for the *Quarterly*, point by point. She adhered to this credo steadfastly for the next decade, and produced a shelf of masterfully edited and beautifully illustrated journals of which the North American Rock Garden Society will forever be proud.

For a start, I sent Jane a letter asking for advice on salient points having to do with my assignment as a proofreader. She answered every single question succinctly and to the point; over the years we had many such exchanges on specific questions, which she invariably clarified. Every three months, she would send me the proofs of the forthcoming issue of the *Quarterly* by express mail; I would read these word for word, twice, make notes of corrections, and email these to Jane. As a rule, she would reply to affirm or debate what I had written; over time, these exchanges amounted to an extended correspondence course for me, which I cherished. Not the least bonus for me was the fact that for just about a decade I was able to read every word of every issue of the *Quarterly*, including all the ads and the tables of content, et cetera; an invaluable education about the world of alpine plants, and plants' people – effectively, this was a decade-long immersion in alpine gardening and its literature.

Jane sagaciously edited the photographs provided by authors and members, and presided over an annual photography contest which plainly spurred the members to outdo themselves.

We encountered Jane in person annually at our Western Study Weekends, several of which, over the years, she herself organized with her customary enthusiasm and diligence.

I am now old enough to feel that I had better quit my proofreading while I am still ahead, and Jane's retirement from her editorship was plainly the signal for me to hand my job over to younger enthusiasts with undiminished energy. But I am happy to have toiled in the fields of the *Rock Garden Quarterly* for the last ten years, and I will be grateful to the end of my life for having had the good fortune to do proofreading for such a superb editor, and such a wonderful person.

TERRY LASKIEWICZ - Columbia-Willamette Chapter

Like the fritillaries that she grows, Jane is quite complex, sometimes subtle, sometimes quite vibrant.

I have traveled with Jane on two South American trips and learned that she was a bit of a wild child – coming of age in the 60s in California there are stories and boyfriends that can only be discussed on long trips through the Andes. On these trips we also shared great wines and our dislike of long tunnels and steep cliffs. Jane’s scream, as we edged close to a ravine, is memorable to all who were present.

Of course, Jane is quite energetic, and the typical scene while hiking is that you may be just entering the alpine zone as you glimpse Jane’s head disappearing over the peak, or you suddenly witness Jane expertly riding off on one of the horses, with a few words to passing Chilean *huasos* (cowboys).

Jane’s vivacity is evident in everything she does. Her garden, bulb



collection, seed donations, writing, are all evidence. Now that she surrenders her editorship she will have more time for her new garden and alpine house. Although she may be relinquishing the journal, I know she will continue to contribute in her ever-astounding manner.

BILL KING - NARGS President 2003-2006

Jane carried on in the fine tradition of the many wonderful editors of the *Rock Garden Quarterly*. She worked hard at putting together every issue and if she was short a page or two she would simply sit down and

write some great article to fill the space. Her greatest innovation was her annual photo contest which was a big success in getting more people involved and in providing many wonderful new rock garden photos.

CHRISTINE EBRAHIMI - Columbia-Willamette Chapter

Although I’ve known Jane for some 17 years, few people “really know” Jane. It is only when she happens to mention that she reads and writes several languages, collects unique pottery, lived in Alaska for 12 years,

studied dance, and has taken in at-risk youth, that you discover a few of her many talents and interests. Just last year I sampled her wonderful cooking and finally met her beloved malamutes. Of course, she also travels and has begun to do so in earnest: Chile, New Zealand and Crete to name a few.

Most NARGS members know Jane as a bulb guru. Early every spring she invites chapter members to drive the many miles to her country home to see her bulbs. Many a time we have trudged out in the rain to admire her rare and beautiful flowering bulbs all tucked away under hand-made bulb frames. Her knowledge and passion for these treasures is obvious.

We in the Columbia-Willamette chapter are very lucky to have Jane as our member and once again, our president. Her many talents and endless energy to “get things done” has kept us going over the years. I know I personally await the next tidbit of interesting information that I discover about Jane and I await next spring and a trip out to see her treasured bulbs flowering at her new home.

JOYCE FINGERUT - NARGS Seed Exchange Manager & past President

When a new editor was needed for the *Quarterly*, NARGS was indeed fortunate that Jane was available and interested, as she was supremely suited for the job. Her background was that of a seasoned professional editor which, combined with her talent as a writer and experiences in horticulture, gave her an unmatched résumé.

Always battling the inertia and shyness of American gardeners, who do not write about their experiences as easily or naturally as our British counterparts, Jane somehow managed to fill four lively journals every year. She did this by cajoling articles from writers, supporting non-writing gardeners with her judicious editing, and filling the gaps from her own (seemingly endless) fund of knowledge and experience.

While I recall that Jane’s initial plan was to hold the position for about five years, NARGS has been lucky that she has stayed with the job for this long, eliciting and gathering our articles and images to create a journal of high quality.

GRAZYNA GRAUER - NARGS President

It was a privilege to work with Jane, she took her job very seriously. But not all my interactions with her were serious, it was fun to run into Jane in an antiques mall at a recent NARGS meeting. Jane and I are in different areas of collecting, and we enjoyed our impromptu treasure hunt by looking at things and sharing tidbits about our vintage interests. I hope we can do more of that in the future.

PANAYOTI KELAIDIS - Chair of Rocky Mountain Chapter

I have been lucky enough to work quite closely with every editor that NARGS has employed for most of the last half century. Each has brought something special to the task. I knew Jane McGary prior to her assuming the editorship, but over the course of the last 10 years our paths have crossed quite frequently in many arenas, and I have come to enjoy her style and her accomplishments enormously.

As a rather frequent contributor to the *Quarterly* (and other rock garden journals) over the years, I always send my manuscripts off with a bit of trepidation: I have had facts altered beyond recognition (and credulity), names changed and my tropes trampled. You have to have a thick skin if you write as much as I do. Jane worried me at first when she warned me she would be harsh and slap my work into shape. I have been pleasantly surprised, repeatedly, to find the finished product reading smoothly: she musn't have done much! When I checked back against the original I observed she'd carefully pruned out the infelicities and snipped away solecisms, spaded out some of the loquacity and primped things a bit here and there: just the sort of thing an editor (and great gardener) ought to do. It ended up making me sound more like myself than I do in real life!

Best of all, the facts were kept straight or even straightened, the names were correct, while my occasional original turn of phrase or metaphor persisted to glory in its quiddity. One of Jane's day jobs, of course, is editing, for Timber and Oxford University Presses, so her skills are come by naturally. She has maintained the standard of the long line of previous *Quarterly* editors of being both philologist and phytologist, as it were, comfortably straddling both the world plants and whirling words.

More than a verbal logothete, Jane is an accomplished linguist and student of many languages, and talking words and grammar with her is a pleasure. Being a chronic glossophilic provides a wonderful tool kit for an editor: in her case that kit is supersized.

One adjective I might pick to describe Jane is *formidable*. She's not the sort of person you would choose as an antagonist, and she doesn't suffer fools terribly well. *Formidable* is an adjective that applies to her gardening as well: she created one of the most extraordinary bulb collections in North America in a series of raised beds that positively blaze with color through much of the calendar year. If you were not lucky enough to make the pilgrimage to Estacada where she lived during her tenure as editor, you are likely to have seen her plants at meetings of the Rock Garden Society in Portland or at Study Weekends. Jane invariably brought the most pots and the most luxuriant ones it seemed: I marveled at the brimming masses of *Narcissus*, *Fritillaria*,



and *Cyclamen* she displayed at these meetings, and to see them in her garden, grown and cared for meticulously, was a pleasure.

The drive to Estacada (which looks so short on the map) is formidable in its own right: I know I am not the only one who has been surprised as I drove and drove and drove at just how big Clackamas County was. But the visit is always a delight: the rock gardens filled with many treasures I had never seen before or since. I have been the beneficiary of



dozens (or possibly hundreds) of treasures from Jane's garden: she puts out a coveted bulb list when she divides her treasures. I can honestly say I have never had choicer bulbs come at a more modest price (with many, many bonuses and extras).

Formidable is also a word in French, and the French connotation is most appropriate for this gardener wordsmith who has guided our paper journal through the complicated shoals of an increasingly stormy, digital age. The craft has sailed smoothly and I for one am grateful for her steady navigation and shall dearly miss the captain emeritus!

Thoughts of a First-Timer

TIM ALDERTON

IN THE FALL of 2009, Bobby Ward and Bobby Wilder of the Piedmont chapter of NARGS approached me with the idea of attending the 2010 NARGS Annual meeting in Salida, Colorado. They let me know that there was the possibility of a small stipend for first-time attendees. The thought of the trip excited me as I had not done too much in the way of travel, and I had never been in the interior western USA. The opportunity to see new plants is something that I don't like to miss, and I knew there would be an entirely different palette of plants to see in the Rocky Mountains. Also the opportunity to meet people from around the United States and the world was an incentive as well. The stipend was just the "icing on the cake" as a reason to attend the conference.

I was not disappointed. My first destination after leaving the airport in Denver was to visit the world famous plantsman, Panayoti Kelaidis, and his garden. Panayoti and Bobby Ward introduced me to other NARGS members visiting the garden coming from as far away as Minnesota and central Asia. After touring another garden, we drove to Denver Botanic Garden where I quickly toured the gardens on my way to their internationally acclaimed alpine rock garden. Spectacular gems from all over the world flourished in every nook and cranny of the garden. Of particular interest to me were the *Ephedra* species which might be useful in the JC Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh, North Carolina, where I work, although there were masses of other wonderful rock garden plants that would satisfy anyone's tastes. A dinner followed in the Garden where I met many more people before attending the talks for the night given by Mike Kintgen and Dan Johnson, both horticulturists at the Botanic Garden.

The next morning started at the Botanic Garden where Panayoti gave us an impromptu tour of some of the gardens while waiting on attendees to arrive for the bus ride to Salida. The scenic ride took us through Red Rocks and South Park regions of central Colorado. Wildflowers grew along the roads the entire way, teasing of what we might see in the coming days. We stopped at Kenosha Pass for a quick lunch, socializing, and botanizing; then continued on to Salida.



Frasera speciosa on Weston Pass, CO, 12,200 ft.

Our meeting in Salida was alongside the Arkansas River, at the historic Steam Plant where we would have the plant sale, dinner, socializing, and evening talks for the next few days. Each evening we had two excellent speakers who came from as far away as Kazakhstan and as close as Denver. Both Tuesday and Wednesday, participants had the opportunity to experience the alpine meadows by hiking at several different locations. I hiked at Mount Sherman and Weston Pass, while

others visited Cottonwood, Monarch and Independence Passes, and we all saw so many spectacular species. Climbing to 12,500–13,000 feet gave picturesque views of the mountains and backdrops to the countless wildflowers. Species of note at these locations included, among so many others, *Polemonium confertum*, *Lewisia pygmaea*, *Saxifraga bronchialis* var. *austromontana*, and *Primula parryi*.

The Wednesday evening was a time for celebration and recognition. Members of note received awards. Thanks were given to the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society for hosting the wonderful meeting. Goodbyes were said to new acquaintances before leaving for the night. Thursday, many continued botanizing on their own or on a bus ride back to Denver, but due to scheduling, I had to catch a flight back to Raleigh and miss out on the fun. What I did experience only whetted my appetite for the flora of Colorado, and I hope to get back to the region some day. For those who have not taken advantage of attending any of the NARGS meetings, I highly recommend that you take the time - and don't forget the small stipend for first-time attendees. I look forward to other meetings in the coming years and hope to meet some of you there.

Remembering Anita

In the last issue of the Quarterly there was an obituary for Anita Kistler.

Mary Ann & Chuck Ulmann
add their memories.



IN 1980, WHILE attending the Philadelphia Flower Show, we came across an exhibit of very small plants up on a table. There were primroses, drabas, iris, dianthus, gentians and many other plants, all very small and all blooming. We started talking to the babysitter and it was none other than Anita Kistler. That was the beginning of a 30-year friendship. Anita was always there when we had questions about our rock garden plants.

Our first national trip was to Boulder in 1982. John and Anita were on that trip. Mary Ann soon learned that Anita had the same phobia about being near the edge of high mountain roads with no guard rails and only one lane! We still remember discussing the beautiful plants we saw in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Another trip we took together was to the Mount Hood Meeting in the late 1980s. Anita had arranged for us to visit gardens in Washington State after the meeting. She also arranged a permit for us that allowed us to collect plants in the National Forests in Oregon. While traveling in Oregon we stayed in a unique motel. It even had plants in the room that were growing through the cracks in the walls. We all had a good laugh on that one as we sat on a sofa and sank to the floor! At the end of our trip we had fun wrapping all our plants in newspaper and placing them in cardboard cat carriers to take on the plane.

Over the years Anita could always be counted on to help with programs and workshops and provide wonderful plants for chapter plant sales. She opened her wonderful garden to the Delaware Valley Chapter many times both formally and when members just dropped by.

Anita was part of the program committee when Chuck was the program chair and chapter chair in the 1980s. He needed all the help he

could get as his main attribute was a loud voice to call meetings to order!

Anita called us in October or November of 1982. She had just heard about this young gardener and alpine lover who worked at the Denver Botanic Garden. He was coming east and Anita said we *had* to have him speak! Chuck wasn't even the program chair yet, but Mary Ann made sure that Chuck called this gardener, by the name of Panayoti Kelaidis, and got him to speak to the Chapter.

Once Chuck had Panayoti lined up, he wasn't really sure what do other than have him speak! Anita came to the rescue. She rounded up a number of other members of the chapter and they put together a quick soup and sandwich lunch which was served before Panayoti spoke. It was rather crowded so after eating was finished, Chuck had everybody stand up, grab chairs, move tables to the side of the room, move the chairs back to the center and the talk was on!

Over the years Anita gave us many wonderful plants. Many are still growing in our garden. Last year Anita asked Mary Ann to sell her troughs and remaining plants. At that sale Mary Ann bought the peonies that Anita had grown from seed. On the day we learned of Anita's passing, one of the peonies bloomed. The peonies will be a visual reminder of the wonderful person who got us started in rock gardening.

The Delaware Valley chapter certainly does miss her. She wasn't a founding member of the chapter but was very close to being one!

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Rock Gardening from Scratch

MALCOLM MCGREGOR

ROCK GARDENING FROM SCRATCH is designed to talk about rock gardening in a straightforward way that will be of interest whether you've been gardening for years or are a complete newbie. In future issues we'll look at how to build a rock garden, or plant a trough, how to mix compost, how to take cuttings, where to buy plants, and so on.

But to start with we'll look at what plants you might find in a rock garden. What about bulbs: tulips or *Calochortus*? What about trilliums? What about cacti? And just where do rock garden plants come from anyway? And what do they need?

WHEN YOU START rock gardening, it seems obvious that rock gardens will be full of plants that live in rocky places in the wild – cliffs, canyons and mountain-tops. But it's not that simple – the rockery is an artificial habitat where we want to grow all sorts of different plants together. And to do that it helps to know something about those different sorts and what they might need. Once we know something about a plant we stand some chance of making it grow well, or at least of keeping it alive.

What all these sorts of plants have in common is that they will not grow in our gardens unless we do something special. Understand the natural habitat and you stand a chance in the garden to create a habitat that allows them to flourish. For most of us, grasses, scrub, or trees are the natural vegetation of the district we live in, and unless we intervene they are the plants that win out. Rockeries are just one way that rock gardeners grow the

plants they get hooked on – and rock gardeners get hooked on a whole variety of plants – and they are not all alpine.

High mountain (or alpine) plants grow where there is no competition from trees or grass because the conditions stop these growing. There is usually quite poor soil (no humus in the soil) made up of decayed rock, and there is often quite regular rain in the summer and snow on the ground in the winter (sometimes for months). The most obvious characteristic of high mountain plants is that they are often quite short – sometimes very short, making a mat or cushion – and they often have very small leaves and have flowers right down at ground level.

For the gardener the main thing that needs to be done is to suppress the competition and to create a soil that is sufficiently like a high mountain soil for the plants

to grow. This will mean a soil that is high in sand and grit and low in humus. And plants from high mountains like lots of light; try to avoid rockeries that are too shaded.

Typical plants include (in alphabetical order, for those who will worry otherwise) *Astragalus*, *Douglasia*, *Gentiana*, *Phlox* (such as *P. diffusa* and *P. hoodii*), *Physaria*, *Saxifraga* and *Townsendia*.

Meadow or prairie plants have quite different characteristics. They grow where there are no trees, but there are lots of grasses, and the forbs (herbaceous plants that are not grasses, sedges or rushes) have to compete. This means that both grasses and forbs are upright (rather than cushions or mats), with flowers at the tops of their stems. The actual height will vary.

In short turf, plants may only be 4 to 6 inches tall. Among taller grasses, everything has to be taller – no good being only two inches tall if everything else is two feet tall!

For the gardener the most obvious thing is to try and establish a community of plants with grasses and forbs in some sort of balance (and one thing that will mean is keeping out invasive species). They are usually better grown as communities rather than as isolated individuals.

Typical prairie plants include grasses and coneflowers (*Echinacea*, *Ratibida*, *Rudbeckia*).

Typical meadows can be very rich, with *Camassia*, *Centaurea*,

Geum and *Potentilla*, as well as buttercups, orchids, tall saxifrages such as *Saxifraga granulata* or *Micranthes oregana* and orchids among the many grasses.

Dryland plants (or xerophytes) come in all sorts of shapes and sizes; but again they are adapted to survive in conditions where competition is reduced.

The sagebrush of the American West has grey-leaved artemisias as the predominant vegetation, the hoary leaves helping stave off water loss. Alongside this sort of vegetation, cacti and other succulents can survive long dry spells. They have thick skins to reduce water loss, and tissues which can lose water gradually, shrivelling without being damaged.

... understand the natural habitat
and you stand a chance in the garden

Bulbs (and corms, tubers and rhizomes) are also a common way that plants can survive adverse conditions, waiting out the prolonged dry periods underground.

Growing dryland plants is obviously easier if you have low rainfall. But the pattern of rainfall is also critical. Some bulbs need plentiful water during the spring and early summer but a dry winter. Other xerophytes need a very different pattern of rainfall or watering.

Typical plants include *Agave*, *Artemisia*, *Calochortus* (some), *Sphaeralcea*, *Yucca*, and cacti, as well as bulbs.

Mediterranean habitats have a big range of many sorts of these dryland plants. Prolonged dry conditions give way to rainy periods, usually in winter. Growth and flowering follows the rain and then, as the dry season comes, plants find their different ways to sit it out. Even more extreme than bulbs in this respect are the annuals, which are so common in Mediterranean habitats. Here the parent plant dies away leaving just its seeds to survive till the next rains. Poppies (including

Woodland plants grow in the shade of forest or woodland trees (the trees are of course also woodland plants but for now let's put them to one side). They usually have quite large leaves (to catch as much of the dappled sunlight as possible) and they often start into growth early in the season before the deciduous trees come into leaf. They grow in leafy soils and usually don't like being exposed to winds – in the wild they're sheltered from winds by the trees. Like mountain plants they usually

the sort of plants rock gardeners like tend to be ones that grow where there is little competition

... the rock gardener's job is to manage that in the garden

California poppies), clarkias, and many of the ice plants of South Africa are all annuals.

The major requirement for a Mediterranean garden will be the need for relatively dry summer periods and a well-drained soil.

Typical plants will be bulbs such as crocuses and tulips; aromatic shrubs such as lavender and rosemary; *Cistus* and *Heli-anthemum*, and annuals such as California poppies, *Clarkia* and *Nigella*.

have little competition from grass.

In the garden the main thing is to provide a leafy soil and some protection from winds. Some shade is not a problem for these plants so a rock garden with some shade from small trees such as Japanese maples, dogwoods or magnolias can work well for them.

Typical woodland plants: *Anemonella*, *Arisaema*, *Asarum*, taller *Phlox* (such as *P. divaricata*), *Podophyllum* and *Trillium*.

Wherever you are gardening you are likely to find your local conditions more or less match up with one of these habitats. And that means that one or another of these groups of plants is best suited to your natural conditions. Go out and look at the local countryside and it soon becomes obvious what would happen if you let your yard go wild.

Remember – the more your vision varies from that local climax vegetation, the more work you will need to put in at some stage to stop things you don't want from taking over. The sort of plants rock gardeners like tend to be ones that grow where there is little competition...the rock gardener's job is to manage that in the garden.

***SOME WAYS TO GET RID
of the COMPETITION***

***make sure you get rid of
perennial weeds before you
start***

***use lots of rock and grit on
the surface - less dirt for
weeds to seed in***

***use sandy composts - makes
plants grow good roots - easy
to pull weeds***

***don't feed the plants - it'll
only encourage the weeds -
and rock garden plants don't
need it***

Next time ROCK GARDENING FROM SCRATCH will discuss how to grow rock garden plants from seed with a simple guide to successful sowing. Now all you have to do before next time is get seed from the Seed Exchange – otherwise you'll feel left out – and there's no better way to build up your collection of rock garden plants for less than \$1 a pot.





Gardening Rock Surfaces

Two Halda-Inspired Rockeries

ROBIN MAGOWAN

Photographs by Juliet Mattila

WE CALL OURSELVES rock gardeners, but few would take the call so literally as to devote himself to gardening on the whole craggy surface of a rock.

The focal point of my early garden was a small splintered outcrop of decaying granite, six feet high and some thirty feet wide, that lay a few steps from my writing studio. On its north-facing side I found I could plaster silver and kabschia saxifrages, taking the plant in its nursery-packed sand and pasting it where a thin carpet of moss and lichen offered a toehold. The saxifrages would eventually seed across the rockface, often in quite bare folds. So, with the help of the plants, I was already a rock top gardener.

But my outcrop by no means provided a unified focal point for a garden of diverse plants. Obstructing it were two trenches that the roots of a pair of ash trees had creviced in the outcrop. During his visit to Connecticut, after the 2008 winter study weekend, Zdenek Zvolanek suggested that I make the outcrop the basis for a redesigned crevice garden. All I needed to do was fill in the two crevices by laying the stones vertically and there I was with the focal point for a revitalized garden.

Opposite: Josef Halda at work



Just a selection of the tools deployed

A year earlier, while attending the first Czech International Rock Garden conference, Josef Halda had offered to build me a crevice garden at the first opportunity. I immediately saw a creation of his in front of our home, something more mountain-like than the two small berms filled with meadow plants outside our front entrance. But when Josef showed us a beautiful garden he had made with large, gently sloping black rocks in a farmer's back yard, a few miles from where he lived in northeastern Bohemia near the Polish border, we feared that a garden of this sort might well overpower the house entrance.

While awaiting Josef's arrival, delayed for a year by visa issues, I happened to meet a local mason, Leon Harris, who had access to an unexcavated part of the Conklin quarry in Falls Village, a ten-minute drive from where I live. The rocks he showed me were strikingly fissured white dolomite, some hard enough to be more like marble. Many were interestingly seamed and lined with fossils. They were slated to be ground into highway gravel for which there is a continuous demand. I could grasp the ornamental possibilities offered by gray and white rocks that could stand on the lawn as sculpture and I bought a truckload. Two of the biggest I set as a continuation of the outcrop to the east (unaligned, alas, as Halda would point out, but by then too festooned with plants to be resited).

I expected to paste saxifrages and androsaces on them in the same fashion as I had done with the outcrop. But an outcrop is an extension of deeply buried stone, whereas a quarried rock, however surrounded



Getting rocks from the quarry with heavy truck and excavator



in soil, lacks the requisite moistness, which the rain, or the hose, has to supply. But for all the difficulty, or maybe because of it, I found the siting possibilities enthralling. These were sites that, like a trough, could accommodate tiny gems; only here, clinging in a fissure, they looked as if they actually belonged. Taking Zdenek's advice, I procured from a pottery a pail full of sticky bottom clay, much like the substance from which children make sculptures, and used it to fill in the rock's gaping fissures. Then, wrapping the first plant in a dressing of moss, I inserted it in the clay cavity. Two years later, *Claytonia megarhiza* and *Petrophytum caespitosum* are well-established citizens.

In early May, 2009, I picked up Halda as he neared the end of his NARGS-sponsored speaker tour. I knew that Josef still wanted to build me a garden, but I had no idea what he might want to undertake in the five working days before his next engagement. Rather than be dragged about our vicinity's various gardens ("There are no difficult plants," he exclaimed at one point, "only stupid gardeners!"), I hoped he might turn his talents to a small sun-baked area below my outcrop, composed of the little stuck together boulder clumps he rightfully detested.

Halda is one of those Czechs who actually prefers working to carousing. Kept from becoming a professor of botany by his refusal to join the Communist party, he survived by becoming a man of many occupations. Just one of his taxonomic monuments—on primroses, daphnes, peonies, gentians, and now violas—each magnificently illustrated by his renowned artist wife, Jarmila—would constitute a normal academic's lifetime achievement. So, too, would the several hundred plants new to science that he has discovered and named. I connected with him because of our common interest in travel. I know no one who has traveled more widely, and in more dicey areas, all of it on a proverbial shoestring. When not compiling a taxonomy of all the plants on Irian New Guinea's highest peak (where cannibals presented him with the bones of his recent porters), or working on a long-term project with the Tajik government which required almost monthly visits, or lowering his ransom by outwitting his soldier kidnappers in a Burmese jail, or consulting botanical herbariums and operating a still viable seed-collecting business, Josef builds gardens, well over a hundred in America alone. He made his first, he told me, at the age of six and apparently it still looks good. It was Josef, assisted by Zvolanek, who revolutionized Czech gardening by creating a crevice garden at the May 1980 show of the Prague Rock Garden Club. Had his love of mountains and their plants not dictated the choice of a career, he might well have followed in the footsteps of his beloved uncle, Rudolph Firkusny, and developed his talent as a concert pianist.

A week with a man of such diverse interests, and one not inclined to waste a single instant, can seem long, such is its intensity. For a Josef with a purpose to accomplish, it could seem barely time enough, especially when the building material, the 60 tons of rock he required, was not on hand and had to be personally picked, excavated and trucked.

When I showed Josef the little site I had in mind, I must have mentioned that the soil on the south edge of the outcrop seemed, by my bulb-planting standards, unusually deep. That piqued Josef's architectural curiosity and he spent much of the next day, a Sunday, digging out by hand a long uptilting wing of ledge, and then, three further feet below, a second parallel stratum. The two wings would suggest the striated lines that the rest of the rockery design would incorporate.





The excavated ledge at the back with some rocks laid in front

Up to this point my various rockeries had been limited by what could be carried in the bucket of a tractor. The previous autumn, my caretaker, Swede Ahrstrom, and I had put together and planted a small limestone addition to the granite outcrop. Those medium-sized rocks, Josef felt, he could accommodate, but to build a crevice garden on the scale of the outcrop and the ledge he had unearthed he needed an excavator capable of moving big rocks and workmen capable of lifting and setting them with the help of strong straps. I enlisted once again Leon Harris and his two-man crew, along with his heavy truck and excavator.

Josef and I spent much of the following morning in the cool heights over the Conklin quarry with the masons, tagging rocks that caught our eye and, with the excavator, picking through the wooded hillside buried underfoot. The plethora of untouched rock was such that we could limit ourselves to ones we found utterly irresistible: intensely fissured, full of interesting crystals, seams, and fossils. Many were already gardens in their own right, encased in flattering moss, lichen, desirable ferns, hepaticas, *Aquilegia canadensis*, and other woodland specimens. While waiting for our tonnage to be delivered, Josef set me the task of ripping out the whole of the garden below the outcrop.

I am not against change, but I prefer to do it incrementally, a plant at a time. After almost twenty years I could not help but feel a certain attachment for what the plants and I had created between us. To rip out a whole seasonal intricacy of interwoven plants and submerged bulbs was not easy.



Josef supervising the siting of the rocks

Looking at the devastation that evening, the uprooted thyme, penstemons, veronica, eriogonums, gypsophilas, phlox, all smoldering on the adjacent lawn and the now pocked incline of naked earth, I couldn't help but lament. It didn't help to tell myself that this is the storied way in which the new has always come into being. Krishna the destroyer is merely another avatar of Krishna the creator; out of destruction, new life arises. For me, the five hours spent pulling it all apart were almost too much. Worn out and every limb aching after the intense work, I had no choice but to leave the extracted plants in several piles on the lawn, waiting for my wife's perennial gardeners to heel them into temporary homes in the vegetable garden. I didn't like to feel so exhausted and sad, witnessing how quickly the years of tender devotion and care had vanished.

Among all the debris, a small number of structural plants were left in place: conifers, deep-rooted pulsatillas and acantholimons, a miniature rose, several daphnes, and a couple of rock-covering clumps of *Aubrieta* and *Astragalus angustifolius* which were, like the proverbial banks, too big to fail. Josef saw them as structural points for his new design, while Leon Harris saw them as challenges to his earth-moving ingenuity. Not all of them would survive an unusually rainy summer, let alone the recent winter. Daphnes that had once bestrode their little incline, offering their perfume to the bees if not the wind, now found their fine network of roots saturated by water dripping from rocks newly positioned above them and succumbed to botrytis.

The placing of rocks, next day, proceeded at a pace that left us all differently drained. Lift and set, up and down, no sooner was one great



Josef likes setting larger rocks toward the front

behemoth laid in place than Josef was called upon to select the next from a pile in a field several yards below my studio. Josef would later remark that never in his life had he had to think so fast, so strenuously, about garden structure. Each rock, many of them more massive than the two masons waiting with gloved hands to grab hold of it and ease it out of its straps, had to be scrutinized, turned, sited and, often enough, re-sited, before it met Josef's approval.

It was a subtle and exacting process and, even days later, with much of the stonework in place, none of us could anticipate exactly how Josef would want a particular rock angled, let alone how deeply buried — the design was that turbulent. For my part, I was left numbed by the pinpoint accuracy with which the masons maneuvered the great stones, and their courage as they stood holding for a whole minute or two their knee-buckling load.

In most building schemes bigger rocks, like the bigger plants, are set back; we build towards them. Josef, instead, prefers to set them frontally so they rise in the forefront like one of those ranges on either side of the Owens Valley in California. Set smack against the lawn, they create the illusion of something utterly original: not a rock garden so much as a distinct mountainscape.

Much of Josef's life, from his teen-age days as a rock climber to his current work as a taxonomist, plant finder and seed gatherer, has taken place in the mountains and it is that geologic reality he wants to incorporate in his garden designs, along with the need for variety, for movement. Among the few bits of advice he offered was the suggestion that I should plant in groups. In a rockscape of this kind a single plant does

not have the effect it carries in other situations where my whole art can go into making sure that, no matter how tiny, it stays visible.

Creating a mountainous look might seem difficult when the terrain is merely rolling, as much of mine is. But that's where large rocks, mixed with smaller ones in a tumult of striated lines, can suggest a very different montane composition. Once larger rocks entered the outcrop equation, then the garden in front of my studio, filled with a rich soil that accommodated moisture-loving gentians, *Dicentra peregrina* and several daphnes, came to look far too tiny. This was an area I could more easily abolish. Just keeping the levels of plants in rock garden scale required an attention I could now lavish on the very large rocks with which Josef graced his perimeter.

After Josef's departure, my initial efforts went into making these insertions look as if they had always dwelled there. The process of domesticating big rocks by surrounding them in earth can seem never-ending. There is always another bucket or two of amended soil I can profitably add, thereby extending the available planting area. Despite being filled in, the overhanging roofs still make excellent homes for a range of moisture-sensitive plants, among them lewisias and lupines.

Gardening on a rock shares certain features with trough gardening. We Americans have taken to troughs for much the same reasons that the British use alpine houses. We try out plants that might not survive in the open garden, or gems that would otherwise be overlooked, if not overrun. Troughs have an advantage in offering a depth of soil not easily found on the top of a rock. But only rarely does the stonework on the top of a trough provide the snug crevices plants need if they are to survive an Eastern winter.

The scarcity of soil to plant in makes the rock top far more of a challenge, even if it does hold a prospect of superior drainage, and thus survival. But it is the feel of a rockscape garden, how one approaches it as it were, that makes the experience so different. Only a couple of my troughs can claim to offer anything like the semblance of an entire rockface, let alone a miniature world. Most seem impermanent, mere holding places for plants ultimately destined for the garden, once I can figure out a way to site them. And my troughs, for all their differences of material, tend to resemble one another.

In other Halda gardens the rocks are subsumed into an overall scheme; in mine the larger rocks basically determine what can grow in them. In this compositional galaxy each giant rock comprises a mini-universe. The plants may still regard themselves as the stars; they are what we want to see, precariously poised in hostile sun-baked conditions. But the positions they occupy, covering the whole of a rock, or plummeting off of it, or secreted in an imperceptible niche, all carry a larger purpose, of honoring the rock they occupy. The spectre of a world

within other rockscape worlds, of tiny but replete microcosms, admits much seasonal elaboration. There is always room for more, more depth of soil if not space, a more intensely knotted carpet-like presentation. The rockscape with its sundry eminences, each with its distinct stash of flowering gems, brings to mind that richest of nature's gardens, a coral reef. The longer I hover over a mossy rock, the more it can seem a teeming reef in a floating archipelago of underwater rocks.

How particular alpine plants are about the kinds of soil they prefer, alkaline or acid, is a complex question. Other needs, such as light and water, often take precedence. But just as limestone lies at the source of most of humanity's great mythologies, its weirdest features generating their own stories, so it is not an accident that a porous, easily crumbling fissured rock, with its abundance of possible niches for seed opportunists, should give rise to a much richer variety than granite allows. Compare, for instance, the Bernese Oberland and the Dolomites. A plant's mineral requirements may vary, but if an item in a catalogue or seedlist is to be found only on limestone, that's incentive enough to try it.

In populating a rockscape, the great problem is the one that bare unindented surfaces present. Plants that carpet, spilling in a waterfall over an otherwise unplantable surface, are a great resource, if I can crank up all that rooted artillery to a nearby crevice. But it's no easy matter to limit veronica, thyme, or globularia to a single site. Better are plants that, in contouring themselves to the rock, bring out its visual integrity. For draping a tiny cliff, arenarias are especially choice, as they divide easily and, given a moist medium, can be suspended in a layer of soil atop a rockface. So, too, are plants that root on little soil, such as *Talinum* and, in moist shade, saxifrages and *Androsace lactiflora*. The steeper the incline, the better a saxifrage or a dianthus looks.

More difficult is getting a rock-dweller established. I'm told I can enlarge a recalcitrant cavity by tapping with a geologic hammer and chisel. But as yet I have been far too overwhelmed by the newness of the garden to attempt such fine surgery.

Barring use of the hammer, there are still sites in my rockscape waiting to be seized, the more recondite surely the better. Delicious surprise, after all, is a crevice's prime ingredient, the astonishment that a plant may thrive on an earth-repelling surface. I feel like a miner, that master of the unlikely, tapping away with a skewer-like trowel until I chance on a resonant cavity. As I bemoan the absence of soil, weeds emerge from the decaying moss encouragingly. When all else fails, there are always succulents. Josef suggested *Orostachys*. They divide easily, and each rosette, inserted in a weathered pore, can become a comic monstrosity. Given a slight indentation, a mat of *Sedum* can turn a glaring surface into the semblance of painted perfection. Once pioneers are established, I can begin to add soil behind and beneath it. *Sedum* as it matures creates thus its own



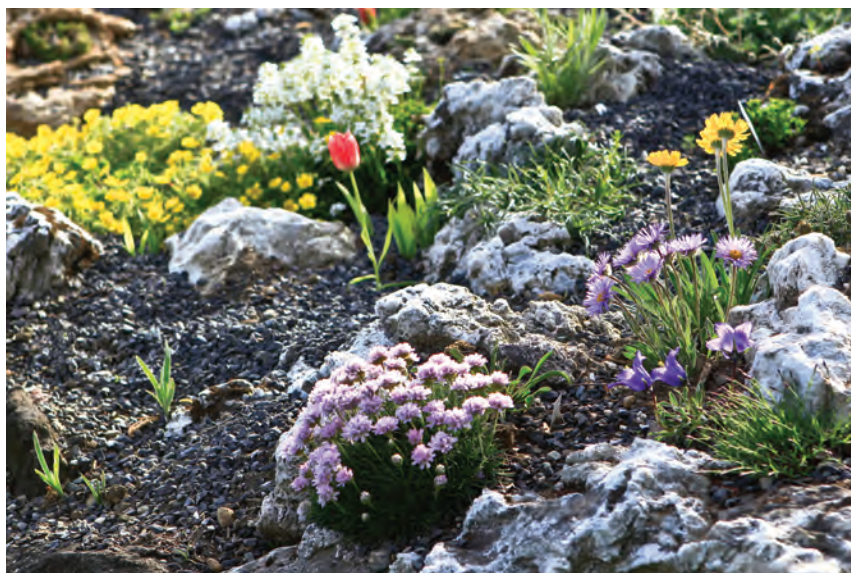
Plants interlace among the gaps between rocks

condominiums. They make a possible planting space for a variety of tiny bushes: *Lithodora oleifolia*, *Moltkia petraea*, *Rhamnus pumilus*.

In my efforts to populate difficult surfaces I have been forced to acknowledge that plants may come to resent being inserted here, there and everywhere. Their long threadlike roots prefer reasonably deep cavities in which to seat themselves. Such security, I feel, reassures them. They need time, too, to settle, but if planted in a gradually warming spring they may not have enough time to adjust to mid-summer desiccation. Rock surfaces shed moisture admirably, good drainage if the plant doesn't burn up. Time for settling is less available in the autumn, when I would prefer to be planting. How, on a rock, a plant manages to withstand full sun is a question that needs to be put to a vast range of dryland species. If I can somehow coax them through the first six weeks, they may be rooted firmly enough to withstand a winter.

Six months after building the rockscape in May, I took the bull by the horns and built a second rockscape in front of our house. I followed Josef's example: the same masons, the same quarry, and even bigger rocks as it turned out, but the effect is rather different. Instead of the perimeter stone being set confrontationally, the great blocks have been laid low along the driveway, where they flow, rippling, one into another. There are a few larger and, quite possibly, more ambitious stones than Josef had access to, but they are set back toward the house.

This front entrance garden has a completely different feeling than the garden below the outcrop, which is wild, tumultuous, and saved



The spring garden laced with tulips

from chaos only by the architectural lines that come from the excavated wings of the ledge.

The garden in front of our house is serene and welcoming. I was surprised to find that the large white stones were not off-putting so far as the look of the house is concerned. Instead they make the vertical stories of the house, rising as they do right off the driveway, look less abrupt, and smaller. The rocks, strange features that they are, domesticate the house. Set on the east side of the house, and thus protected from afternoon sun, it makes for a different growing space than the sun-baked one Josef contrived. Whether I'll be able to grow the mist-haunted Asiatic and Arctic species that tempt me remains to be seen. Most would prefer a peaty, acidic soil. But the rocks, by their very nature, can absorb a quantity of water without the plants being submerged. Fringed soldanellas look distinctly possible.

By now the masons and I knew what we had to do. The fetching of stone from the quarry and the laying of it was very much a collaborative experience, shared with my wife's perennial gardener, Michelle Stimpson, and the trio of masons. The construction process reminded me of piecing together a jigsaw puzzle. We started with the driveway perimeter, working inwards from both sides to an as yet undetermined entrance way. Unlike Josef's deliberate chaos, our stones flowed almost seamlessly, one great chunk into another. Then, after much deliberation, we placed several truly behemoth stones, unearthed from the hillside where the masons had been eyeing them for years.

The subsequent filling in was less exacting than in Josef's design with its sudden changes of level. As with a puzzle, the positioning of the rocks came quicker as space started to dictate what remnant went where. And big rocks are much less intractable than might be thought. Much depends on how they are positioned, turned and set. A shovel of earth, applied to an edge, can mitigate much unseemliness. If, after all that, the rock remains intrusive, it can be patted into submission with the help of a chunk of soft wood, little blows of the excavator's bucket tamping it into the soil. Most of the time all a rock needed was to be turned, sometimes in a very different direction, or buried up to the hilt, or raised a few inches.

We made a crevice garden, with the stones tightly angled against one another. But unlike the conventional Czech arrangement, with its parallel rows of very narrow cavities, we could afford to be generous. What's wrong with big pulsatillas? Or a spring garden, well laced with fritillaries and low-lying species tulips?







Castilleja integra flowering in August 2010 from 2009-2010 NARGS seed (Stephanie Ferguson)

Exchanging Seeds

TODD BOLAND
STEPHANIE FERGUSON
& STEVE WHITESELL

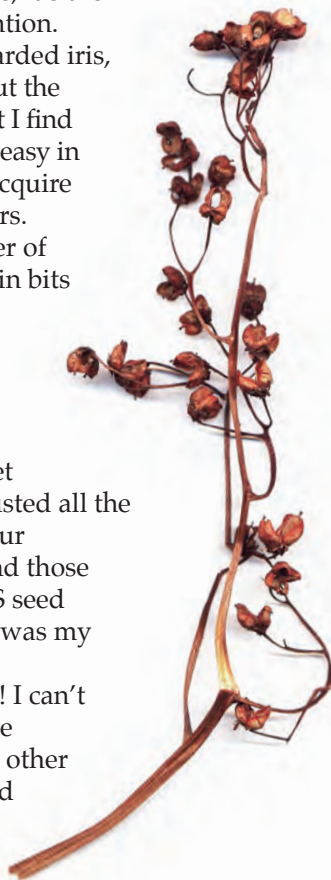
My Passion for Growing Seeds

TODD BOLAND

It seems I have always had an interest in growing unusual plants. Indoors, I concentrate on orchids. Outside, it's the alpines and woodland plants that catch my attention. These latter are certainly not flamboyant like bearded iris, peonies and the like, but there is something about the simple charm of alpines and woodland plants that I find endearing. Access to these "esoteric" plants is not easy in Newfoundland. I found that the easiest way to acquire these plants was to contact like-minded gardeners.

So, in 1990, I joined the Newfoundland Chapter of NARGS. Through our chapter I was able to obtain bits and pieces of alpine and woodland plants, and through garden visits, saw many "must have" plants. Turns out some of our members grew these "unique" plants from seed. Well when in Rome.... thus started my passion for growing seeds. But where was I to find seed? Yes, I did get some from chapter members but I quickly exhausted all the local seed potential. As it happened, several of our local members were also members of NARGS and those members were well acquainted with the NARGS seed exchange. When I saw the offerings, I knew this was my chance to satiate my appetite.

I joined NARGS in 1994 ... my how time flies! I can't believe it's been 16 years! Besides the informative articles found in the *Rock Garden Quarterly*, the other main perk to joining NARGS is certainly the Seed Exchange. With around 5000 taxa offered,



the choice is nearly endless, yet I still search for that special species each year. Whether your gardening interests lean towards alpinists, woodlanders or the woodies, you are sure to find something of interest in the seed exchange offerings.

Wild-collected seed is always in demand. With members worldwide, the NARGS seed exchange is a great way to obtain seeds from exotic alpine regions of the world. Over the years I have grown many wild-collected seeds from Japan, New Zealand, Europe and North America. I wish more members would collect wild seed...you would make me (and others) very happy if you did! With no offerings of native Newfoundland alpinists, I began to offer them to the exchange. I have now been a regular donor to the seed exchange for 10 years, offering not only native Newfoundland alpinists but also seeds of any unusual species I have managed to acquire over the years. Without donors, there would be no exchange so I encourage you to please donate! Did I mention that being a donor gets you 35 packets of seed as opposed to 25?

Among my favourite genera of alpinists are *Allium*, *Aquilegia*, *Primula*, *Saxifraga*, *Campanula*, *Anemone/Pulsatilla* and *Penstemon*. The NARGS seed exchange has allowed me to build up quite a collection of these "locally difficult if not impossible to obtain" genera. Last year I was delighted to obtain seeds of *Pulsatilla campanella*, *P. turczaninowii*, *Primula firmipes*, *P. ioessa*, *Potentilla dickinsii* and *Aquilegia grahamii*. This year I went completely mad. Not only did I get my 35 packets in the first round, I went for 100 packets in the second round then our chapter received surplus seed from which I acquired another 116 packets! These latter will have to wait for next year's sowing since currently I have 183 pots of seeds sown! (I also get seed from other places). Among the choice seeds germinating at the moment are *Clematis hirsutissima*, *Campanula choruhensis*, *Ranunculus amplexicaulis*, *Myosotis traversii*, *Stenotis acaulis* and *Primula yuparensis*.

I do have one word of advice to NARGS members who wish to partake of the seed exchange; seeds can be mistakenly identified. Twice I obtained seeds of *Adenophora bulleyana* only to end up with that nasty weedy *Campanula rapunculoides*; I am still trying to get rid of them! I have always wanted *Allium narcissiflorum*. It wasn't until my sixth ordering of this species from the exchange that I finally got the real thing. Three times I ended up with *A. cyathophorum* 'Farreri' and twice with *A. senescens*. No great loss as I ended up selling them at our local chapter plant sales. Which, by the way, is what I regularly do with those extra seedlings I have left over after I keep the few I want for myself.

So if growing from seed is your thing, or might be, give the NARGS seed exchange a try. If you are trying to obtain that "special" plant, then you might be lucky enough to find it in the exchange. The list varies from year to year. If what you want is not offered this year, try again next

time. The NARGS seed exchange is really a great service to members and allows you to become actively involved in our wonderful society.

Castillejas and Gentians and the NARGS Seed Exchange

STEPHANIE FERGUSON

The NARGS Seed List provides a wealth of opportunity. With more than 4600 entries (in the 2009-2010 list), the difficulty lies in choosing which plants to try. For my part, last year's choices primarily centered around a new interest in castillejas and a determined resolve to grow the recent introductions of Himalayan gentians better.

In the wild, castillejas and gentians often grow in very close association with other plants. The NARGS seedlist was used primarily as a source for suitable (and definitely experimental) growing companions for these. While the gentians had to be sourced commercially, the castillejas and companion species were providentially supplied by the seed exchange. The *Castilleja* species found included *Castilleja rupicola* and *C. integra*.

Companions for these were discovered among the Asteraceae, including especially townsendias and erigerons. These were chosen for a few practical reasons. Their seed

germinated readily and reliably, they were very hardy and long-lived in cultivation, and they were modestly sized – nicely complementing the prospective castillejas with an open, yet protective, growth habit. Initially, the Asteraceae germinated and grew very quickly as compared to the more leisurely castillejas. But, after two to three months, they attained a companionable size and were planted out together.



Townsendia condensata - one of the Asteraceae grown

The Himalayan gentians were treated similarly. Initial trials of these indicated that they retained their vigour better with companionship at the roots. Contacts in the nursery trade reported that gentian seedlings grew better in compots (community pots), before they were potted on individually. This information was supported and confirmed when a friend sent wonderfully detailed habitat photographs back from China, showing gentians growing in the wild. With the possible exception of those growing in the highest screes, these gentians were seldom alone. Using information from these photos, *Leontopodium*, *Anaphalis*, and *Androsace* were selected from the NARGS exchange. In retrospect, other genera such as *Anemone*, *Delphinium*, and *Primula* could also have been experimented with.

At present, *Castilleja integra* and many *Gentiana* seedlings are growing well out in the rock garden — along with their predictably reliable companions. But, as any gardener knows, these are early days and much can, and will, happen yet.

The NARGS seed exchange distinguishes itself for me in two ways. It is a superb source of Western North American plants. These are uniquely irresistible in their physical traits: often scurfy, and resinous, and variously hairy. And, possibly because many are hummingbird-pollinated, North American flowers are often scarlet! The other distinguishing feature of this exchange is the donor provenance number. It is useful to know where the plants are being grown and by whom. And it is even more satisfying to grow the seeds of friends. The NARGS seed list is best approached with an open mind and a spirit of adventure. Those with a predilection for garage sales and “lists in general” will find a treasure trove of material. I am consistently buoyed by the hope that some innocuous entry may prove to be a “different form” ... possibly more dwarf ... or more woolly ... or even spiny!

The Seeds of Avarice

STEVE WHITESELL

My experiences with the NARGS seed exchange can be summarized in one word: avarice. The greed is unrelated to the pursuit of money, however, and focuses instead on the rapacious desire for new plants.

Greed and curiosity are interchangeable. When a plant seen in a public or private collection, in the wild, or in a photograph sets off the acquisition alarm, the name is written on a 3 x 5 inch card and the lengthening list is consulted when the list of available seed arrives in December. Usually NARGS, AGS, or SRGC lists will include the plant

eventually, if not the first year, or else it can be found on the specialty commercial lists like Alplains, Rocky Mountain Rare Plants or Andrew Osyany's late lamented enterprise. Sometimes the lists are culled to remove the impossible. I'd love to grow *Crepis nana*, but it's a long way from Alaska to the 80°F summer nights of New York City.

Different stimuli set off the acquisitive alarm – the spectacular foliar color and texture of *Asphodeline damascena*, *Beesia calthifolia*, or *Potentilla hyparctica*; the brilliant color, low stature, and annual or biennial ease of *Silene mexicana* or *Campanula patula*; or interesting woody plants like *Croton alabamense* or *Ptelea trifoliata* 'Aurea'. Their characteristics are diverse, but the response is the same: "How can I have this? How can I live without it?"

The obvious answer involves an array of pots, planting mix, topping grit, flats, hardware cloth to prevent squirrels from digging, a warm February afternoon, and a bit of patience. The rewards become glaringly apparent when germination occurs, even if that does take a season or more.

The 2010-2011 Seed Exchange

**The seed list will go online at <www.nargs.org>
on December 15, 2010.**

**Paper copies will only be supplied on request.
TO get one you MUST request it before November 15, 2010
by writing to**

**Joyce Fingerut
537 Taugwonk Road
Stonington
CT 06378
USA**

<alpinegarden@comcast.net>

The Seed Exchange
also always welcomes your help
– see p. 274





*I lack places for typical rock garden plants
so I have started to plant
on the roof of my garden shed!*



Why I Use Seed & the NARGS Seed Exchange

or

A Short Story of my Life

TROND HØY

THE FIRST “SOWING” I can remember was when my mum made dinner and sliced the head off the carrots. The head lacked leaves but had a green spot. She sat it in a saucer with water on the windowsill and in a couple of days new leaves sprouted. To me this was very fascinating. I was about two years old I think.

We lived in a flat in Oslo in Norway and had no garden. However, in the summer we left Oslo for two months to stay on the south coast. Here my grandma and granddad had a summerhouse where they grew apples, pears, plums, red and black currants, gooseberries, raspberries, strawberries and cherries. Our parents grew carrots, beans and peas. We children had early to learn how to tend the plants. In the kitchen garden I was introduced to seed and the first I sowed myself was cornflower (*Centaurea cyaneus*). At that time seed was something the grown-ups had, I never thought of where they came from.

Here my sister and I also met our cousins. For two whole months we played together, bathed, took boat trips on the fiord, walked on the islands and ate fruit and berries — not always ripe. The cherries were our favourite



(and strawberries, but only grandma was allowed to pick them). We almost lived in the cherry trees. Another favourite activity was to build a city of stone. Not a big one — over the years the city came to consist of about 12 houses and each house was about 1½ feet square and 6 inches tall. We christened it “Moseby” (“Moss City”) and used small stones to build walls and a flat stone as a roof. The cracks were plugged with moss. Between the houses went roads of sand and two lakes were also inside the city limits. Now this is history — new owners have eradicated it all, only some plants remain.

All the houses had gardens. But as the city was built on glacier-scoured smooth rock outcroppings there was no soil. Still the gardens had many plants. We used different stonecrops (*Sedum acre*, *S. spurium*, *S. album*, *S. rupestre*, *S. anglicum*) and houseleek (*Sempervivum tectorum*). They made do with little soil and we used hare droppings as manure! These plants were easily propagated and we sold and bought different colours from each other. *Sedum spurium* was popular as it came in many colours. The currency was hare droppings!

At that time we had no car so to get to our summer residence took the better part of a day. The train went from Oslo in the morning and four and a half hours later we arrived in the small coastal town of Kragerø. There we had to wait for a boat to bring us to the island where our place was. We had to go looking for the boat-driver at the café and if we were lucky he didn't wait too long to get himself ready. The boat was a slow moving clinker-built motorboat with a motor with one cylinder. The voyage took almost an hour. Today the same trip takes less than 15 minutes!

When we first glimpsed our dock we all were very excited. All hands had to help carrying our luggage when docking and I always fell in the water the very first day. The adventures had begun! (If you ask what this has to do with seeds, the answer is “Everything!” For me seeds are tied to summer, adventures, fresh vegetables and new carrots straight from the soil, from the very first year of my life!)

Many years later, my uncle introduced me to the seed catalogue of Thompson & Morgan. There you could buy seeds that you did not find on the shelves of the local shop. Still we mostly bought seeds of different vegetables. By then I lived with my wife in a little flat in Oslo so other kinds of plants were not to think about ... yet. We both wished to see more of the country before settling down for good so we moved to the west coast of Norway thinking to stay a year or two. We still live there! Our house has a half acre garden and sits by one of the thousand fiords of Norway. The climate is very different from both Oslo and from our summer place. We can grow plants unthinkable when you live in Oslo.

Eventually we started prudently with a kitchen garden but soon other plants came to dominate. I have had my time collecting conifers, rhododendrons and peonies. I managed to crowd more than 30 different kind of conifers in here, many with two or more specimens, and now I have to use my chain saw to get space for other plants and to see the sea. But we have sustained ourselves with wood for the fireplace in all those years. My preference till now has mostly been woodland perennials, but I have tried to make spaces for rockeries in between too.

Plants are expensive, at least in Norway, and you can't always get what you want. Some plants have to be started from seed and with seed you usually get a lot of plants and can experiment more. For many years my seeds were bought from Norwegian and Swedish companies, and Thompson & Morgan of course. Then the internet came to my life and the world changed dramatically. You could look for seed of whatever you wanted from all over the world. My interest grew accordingly and I tried to get hold of everything at once! I sowed (and still do) more than I honestly can manage in a proper way. My worse pests, the snails and slugs, take their share of what germinates, although I try to hinder them. In the oceanic climate here, the pests proliferate quicker than I can decimate them.

Nevertheless many acquisitions have been successes — and more than so. I remember I bought seeds of *Meconopsis cambrica* from T & M and on the second attempt some germinated. Now they are all over the place and one of the main weeds!

Some years ago I found the NARGS site when looking for seed (I can't remember which) and decided to be a member to get access to the seed exchange. I haven't regretted that! Although I have sown quite a few

seeds from NARGS, I cannot point at specific plants and say, "This is from NARGS seed!" It is a long time ago that I gave up recording my plants. I tried with my rhodos and some other shrubs but had to admit that keeping files was not for me! With several thousand plants acquired over the years I do not remember them all either.

Every fall though, I wait for the seed list from NARGS. And every year my wish list is longer than allowed so I have to do the thorough job of eliminating names from that list. Each time I think, "This is the first to add to next year's wish list." But next year there are several new plants I have to add!

Last year was disastrous! In July we left home to stay at our summerhouse as usual. The small plants and seedlings that I not had planted out were in the greenhouse with an automatic watering system. When we came back the water had turned itself off and almost all the plants were bone dry and dead. Only those with the biggest pots survived. But then came the coldest winter in memory and the rest of the plants in the greenhouse froze to death! Those I had planted out fared much better as they were covered by two feet of snow that lay for all the winter. Most winters, we have snow for only a couple of days at a time.

The other dreadful thing that happened was that my order for NARGS seeds disappeared in the mail! (Or maybe I just forgot to post it.) When others told me they received their seeds I got nothing. I had the opportunity to order surplus seeds but decided not to as I had sown about 200 species from other sources.

I have mostly ordered woodland species like *Anemonella*, *Anemonopsis*,



Cardamine waldsteinii

Cardamine, *Cyclamen*, *Helleborus*, *Ourisia*, *Primula* and *Stylophorum* to name a few. I lack good places for typical rock garden plants so I have started to plant on the roof of my garden shed!

When I sow I mix different kinds of soil (often peat-based as this is easiest to get here) with sand and grit depending on the species. I use no formula but "feel" the soil with my fingers.

Species that need stratification I place outside. Other I put in a room with extra light in the basement or in the greenhouse. Roughly 50% germinate the first season and a lot more the next season. As far as pests are concerned my worst culprit is slugs. I have lost more seedlings and plants to slugs than to any other pest even if I do my best to avoid it. But when things are planted out there is not much I can do. The humid climate is favourable for molluscs and poison is impossible to use as the rain removes it fast. I try plants several times and several places if I am not lucky at first attempt.

Now I intend to build more places to grow real rock plants. On my travels to mountains in Africa, South America, Russia and Europe, I have seen lots of plants I wish to try. Also, plants mentioned in the *Quarterly* and other magazines whet the appetite to grow more of this kind. What better source to get many proper plants to sow and try than through NARGS Seedex?

I'M DREAMING OF A ?
..... STUCK FOR A PRESENT?

*Buy them a membership of NARGS for a year ...
subscription to the ROCK GARDEN QUARTERLY,
participation in the SEED EXCHANGE,
plus other benefits.*

*Annual dues: US\$30 for members in USA and Canada,
US\$35 for all other countries. Payment by check on a US bank,
International Money Order in US funds, or credit card (Visa,
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OR WHAT ABOUT THE ULTIMATE PRESENT

Life membership: US\$600, US\$540 for members over 60 years old

Enquiries to Executive Secretary, NARGS

email - nargs@nc.rr.com

or telephone (919) 781-3291

CORRECTION

In the last issue there were two references by Ger van den Beuken to *Oxalis* 'Malcolm McBride', a plant in his collection. This plant was in fact *Oxalis* 'Gwen McBride' and it appears that this plant was mislabelled when Ger bought it from a nurseryman. Apologies to all concerned.

Polish Rock Gardening

Close Encounters In Poland

IV Ogólnopolski Zjazd Miłośników Roślin i Ogrodów Skalnych

MICHAŁ HOPPEL

Translated by Grayzna Grauer

MANY COUNTRIES OF the world do not possess official societies devoted to alpines, bulbs, conifers and other kinds of stuff that grow above the tree line or on hills and steppes. Poland, for example, still does not have a club catering to such passions and ways of spending leisure time, but that does not mean there are no interesting initiatives or meetings.

For the past four years addicts of colorful little plants have been meeting in Poznan, which promotes itself as the "Know-how City," sharing plants as well as experiences concerning the greatest passion of their lives. On April 24, 2010, the Fourth Polish Conference for Enthusiasts of Rock Gardening (*IV Ogólnopolski Zjazd Miłośników Roślin i Ogrodów Skalnych*) took place with the hospitality of the Botanical Garden at the University of Adam Mickiewicz in Poznan. The modern exposition/lecture hall has a capacity of 100 people and this year we had to accommodate 85 attendees, so it's not clear if it's

going to be big enough in the future as the interest in the conference grows.

The hobbyists come from the far corners of Poland, some traveling 600 km to get there.



Polish Conference attendees admiring the show plants in Poznan

These distances are not as big as between the East and West Coast in America, too short for an airplane flight over here, but long and difficult when covered by train or car.

The topics of the conference were varied and offered something interesting for everybody. It began with a virtual trip with Jolanta Jańczyk and Karol Węglarski to one of the longest rivers in Asia, the Mekong, which

extends 4500 km and the presentation depicted this botanically and culturally engaging region of Vietnam. Although the enticing fruit in the color slides tempted to be picked off the screen and tasted, I have to admit that for me, Vietnam would be only a stop on the way to the Himalayas where the really fascinating plants grow.

The second talk dealt with growing various groups of gentians and offered responses to “What



Poznan Conference Show: *Primula allionii* cultivars and various *Dionysia* species

do gentians really want from us?” and “What are the secrets of their cultivation?” Each group has different requirements with respect to placement in the garden, soil and pH, and many of us cannot please them. We were admiring gorgeous pictures of huge clumps of plants grown to perfection, because the presenter, Eugeniusz Radziul, obviously knew what was best for them.

The next lecture discussed biodiversity in the garden and enchanted the audience with

wonderful close-ups of insects and reptiles, all underscored by a supreme sensitivity to the beauty of nature. The owners of the garden in Bydgoszcz demonstrated how, in their small area, they were able to integrate various habitats: rockery, bog, meadow, water and woodland in a pleasing way. I didn't realize that in a garden one can grow interesting varieties of mushrooms and invite rare species of birds into it. This presentation

was most eye-opening. We are hobbyists devoted primarily to growing specific kinds of plants, and even though this presentation was held right before lunch, we listened to it with rapt attention.

After lunch, as we do every year, we had an opportunity to

visit the Botanical Garden. The stroll took place under a sunny sky and uncovered a multitude of signs of nature waking to the new life of spring. The walk had its social merits as well in that it led to many conversations in beautiful parts of the garden, exchange of experiences, and making new friends.

The first program after lunch was scientific in nature and concentrated on Polish terrestrial orchids, of which there are 48 species in 24 genera. The most

common genus is *Orchis* with 8 species, then *Dactylorhiza* and *Epipactis* with 7 species each. All are under protection and are listed in the Washington Convention Appendices (CITES). The lecturer, Wiesław Gawryś, has devoted five years to finding and photographing the species occurring throughout Poland and so he was able to show pictures of 43 species, with only 5 yet to be tracked down. I wondered which country will he go to next?

Hardy cyclamen which can survive Polish winters (zone 5) were the topic of the next engaging part of the meeting with Tomasz Trelka. The detailed description of their cultivation, morphology and propagation created much interest in these plants. For example, several weeks after the conference, I became the lucky owner of several cyclamen tubers and they joined my collection. Such is the effect of the energy radiating from passionate people sharing their experiences!

The last presentation transported the audience to a rarely visited part of Europe, the Gran Sasso range of mountains, located only 150 km from Rome. In June, this highest part of the Apennines (3000 metres or 10,000 feet) was the destination of the *Klub skalničkárů Praha* (Prague Rock Garden Club). Even the daily afternoon storms did not stop Czech and Polish trip participants from admiring beautiful mountain views and plants, the latter offering many interesting encounters, such

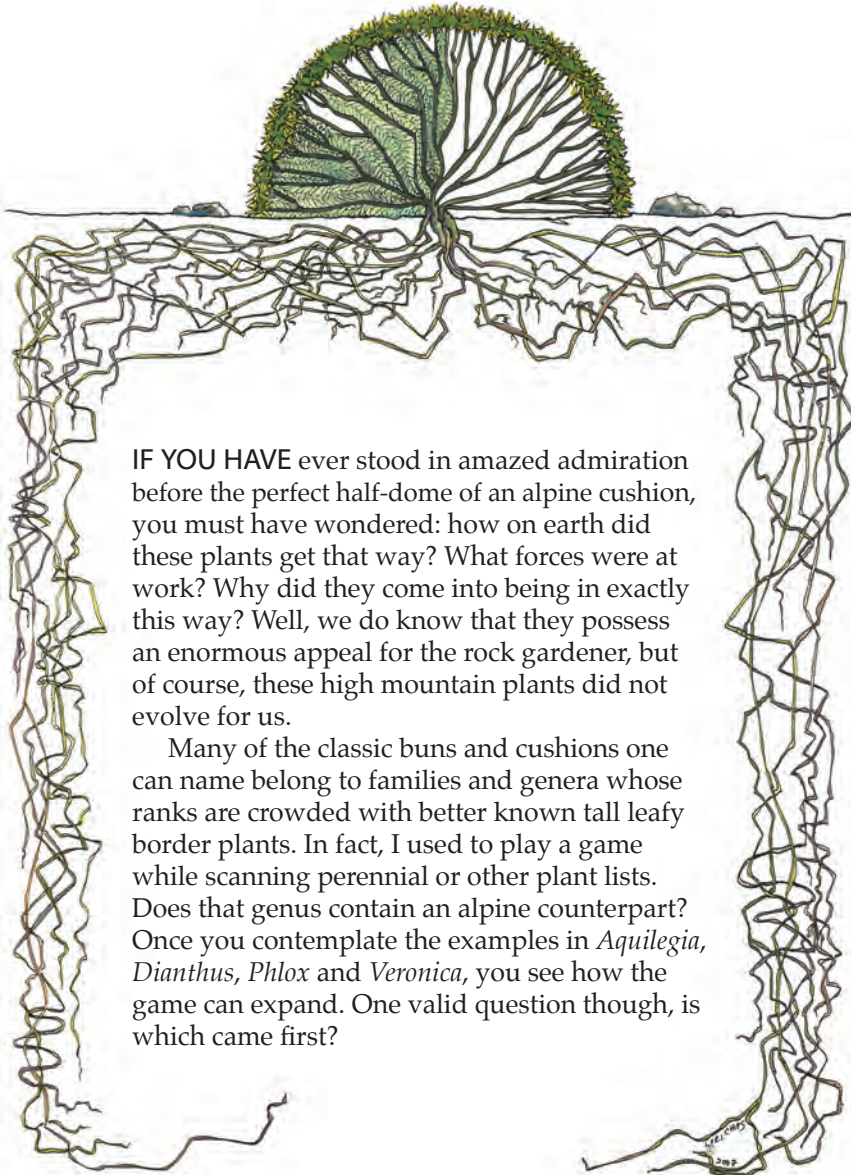
as difficult-to-find *Adonis distorta*, more frequent in gardens than in the Gran Sasso, *Androsace mathildae*, compact *Edraianthus graminifolius*, strange looking *Cynoglossum magellense*, or boldly peeking from under snow cover *Ranunculus brevifolius*. Color pictures of plants and views not only illustrated the beauty of these limestone mountains, but also reminded us of the World War II history, as it was on the Campo Imperatore plateau that German forces freed Benito Mussolini who was imprisoned by the Allies. Back to the *Klub skalničkárů Praha* trip, we unfortunately could not use any of the cablecars, since those were harmed in the 2009 earthquake, which damaged Abruzzi and its medieval city of L'Aquila.

Our conference ended on a distinct note of yearning for the mountains. We were leaving full of great memories and plans for the future. We returned to our homes with dozens of new plants, new contacts, confirmed garden visit dates, recipes for growing mixes, and an intensified resolve to drag rocks around again.

Thanks to these meetings we continue our contacts, get re-infected with our passion, notice new possibilities and improve methods of cultivation of our favorite plants, all things that participants of NARGS meetings probably know well from their own experience. These are the ingredients of our passion. These are the things that make our days more colorful, figuratively and literally speaking.

Anatomy of a Cushion Plant

LORI CHIPS



IF YOU HAVE ever stood in amazed admiration before the perfect half-dome of an alpine cushion, you must have wondered: how on earth did these plants get that way? What forces were at work? Why did they come into being in exactly this way? Well, we do know that they possess an enormous appeal for the rock gardener, but of course, these high mountain plants did not evolve for us.

Many of the classic buns and cushions one can name belong to families and genera whose ranks are crowded with better known tall leafy border plants. In fact, I used to play a game while scanning perennial or other plant lists. Does that genus contain an alpine counterpart? Once you contemplate the examples in *Aquilegia*, *Dianthus*, *Phlox* and *Veronica*, you see how the game can expand. One valid question though, is which came first?

There are in fact fossil records indicating that the direction of plant evolution in the mountains went from long stemmed and tall to short stemmed and compact, with the notable exception of alpine gigantism found in places like Kilimanjaro where plants have evolved other methods to protect themselves from extreme conditions. Lots of things at high altitude make things hard for plants with big soft stems. Consider the wind, desiccation, harsh temperatures, unyielding sun, slithering screes, snowslides plus gravel and stones bouncing down the loose talus slope. So we know that conditions are less than ideal for big plants. But to understand how appropriate the cushion is, we need to pretend for a minute that plants and humans are not that different. Imagine that you yourself are a plant above that stark cut-off called the timberline. So here we are, situated on a breathtakingly beautiful albeit rather inhospitable Alp. What to do? That depends. Lots of clear UV light pouring down? Silver fur might help. Silver, grey or white hairs refract light. Almost all plants with this are found in full sun. The “fur” helps mitigate temperature changes and slows drying out. Conversely, ever have an *Artemisia* ‘Silver Mound’ sog out on you? They were not built for humidity.

Perhaps our pigment needs to change. Another color adaptation that can be produced at high altitudes is the blue, purple or red displayed by some plants’ foliage during cold weather. This is caused by high levels of anthocyanins and is what makes purple cabbage purple and red apples red. Much like the function of pH with *Hydrangea* flowers, what decides the redness, purpleness or blueness, is a matter of acid or alkaline levels in the sap. But hey, why would we, a perfectly reasonable little green plant, choose a different color while on a mountain? Anthocyanins have the ability to transform light into heat that in turn is capable of warming plant tissues. A very valuable trick given the icy climatic swings at altitude. It is a survival tactic we can witness in gardens in winter in the coloration on sedums, sempervivums, even geranium leaves!

Okay, back up on our windswept Alp we have now chosen a color. We have silvered up and furred ourselves all over and are feeling pretty smug. We can’t get sunburned, and dry conditions will not faze us. Except, it’s kind of breezy here; downright gusty. Let’s huddle down, that will help. After all, there’s much less wind at two inches above the ground than at, say, 8 inches sedge level, not to mention the gales blowing at a taller perennial or even at human height! Two inches, much better ... but wait. We can’t help but notice ... a pebble hits us, then another. There seem to be showers of stones periodically raining down on us from outcrops up above. Over time we begin to assume the most protective shape we can and, geometrically, the strongest: the half or hemi-sphere. Not only does the wind flow over the hemisphere

in a very aerodynamic way, a strong shape like this is much less easily damaged when gravel and rocks rattle down. However, being the clever little hemisphere that we are, we've come up with an additional defense against those bouncing stones.

Abscission is a word botanists use to describe a leaf detaching and falling off a plant. It is what all deciduous plants do. So here, up above timberline, our cushion plant has been mulling over this concept. As it turns out, we handle even this inevitability with a bit of a twist. The old leaves do indeed die. But they stay in place. The growing tips push above this structure each spring. The high percentage of dead material in the center of the cushion not only makes the hemisphere stronger, it adds bounce like the stuffing in a baseball and provides added resilience. In fact, until growth begins again, and except for tiny points of green at the tips, many buns look dead over winter. There are even stories, perhaps apocryphal, of enthusiasts exhibiting dead cushions at plant shows and winning first prize! I for one can attest to the sheer strength of these plants. A collection of them remained utterly unscathed after one arctic night when an ice overload shattered and brought down the roof on one end of an alpine house. Humans, in fact, fared much worse as they tried to clean up and distinguish between shards of ice and of glass. Interestingly enough this interior "packing" is one of the causes for failure with growing alpiners at sea level. It can absorb humidity like a sponge, and then the death knell sounds. But on a breezy sunlit mountaintop our cushion remains puffed up like a pillow, trapping air as insulation.

Back at altitude, in the dry crisp air, our alpine plant is happy with all these safety precautions, even a little proud. The next challenge? Sustenance. At this many feet above sea-level, food is hard to come by. Not only mammals but the roots of plants must forage far and wide to meet their nutritional needs. Some high alpiners exist for more than a year on a single hapless decayed bug, a bit of broken-down leaf and a scant pinch of loess blown in off a glacier. Soil up here can be really just a work in progress. Since we must economize on our growth, conservation is the watchword. Unlike annuals and herbaceous perennials that produce stalks, leaves, flowers and fruit all in one season, the alpine bun just builds on what is already there. It is not unknown for a cushion to be ten or more years old before beginning to flower.

There is another unprecedented hazard that does not come from above but from the ground itself. The terrain moves. A cushion plant's habitat is more of a verb than a noun, consisting of shifting scree and tumbling talus slopes. So another adaptation, and a crafty one at that. We have become soboliferous: our root stays put and our crown begins to slide. We keep on rooting and extending and being flexible in our underground portions, while the "mulch" we sit on is terrifically mobile.

The crown of the cushion may have started yards away, but it has been moved and shifted inexorably downslope. Incidentally, soboliferousness may be one answer as to why some high alpiners do poorly in captivity. Who, really, can reproduce such an unstable landscape out in the backyard? Who would want to?

At any rate, back up the slippery slope even a seasoned alpine has to admit that the growing season is woefully short. In some places the plants must complete their cycle in only a few weeks. That's all the time they have between pushing out a flower while drinking deep from the vernal glacial runoff, ice crystals and snow still at their toes, and when they must finish up with viable seed before the first snow flies again in August. To this end, any tactic for success is employed. Alpines can begin to grow and their roots can take up nutrition at just a little above 32°F. They can photosynthesize at a lower temperature than other plants. Many alpiners get set up for flowering the previous year by setting buds. This allows for a very rapid growth and bloom in spring leaving whatever warmth there is in the short mountain summer to be dedicated to the setting and ripening of seed, a process that requires more heat than flowering does.

So at this point our intrepid polster or bun has solved many major life problems. Protection from falling stones, a shield against the relentless sun, long reaching roots stretching and fingering far and wide into the shifting stony soil for moisture and nutrition. But now, as we look around this glorious windswept habitat we begin to realize that yes, it is indeed lonely at the top. We want more of our own kind, not just the brilliant blue sky above and, however picturesque, the krummholz below. The success of any species depends on procreation. The mating game applies to plants as well. Our cushion plant must find some way to project some sex appeal. There are very limited pollinators at the tops of mountains. Its flowers must be big, bright, beautiful, and sometimes even fragrant too. Not to belabor Darwin too much but, up here, it pays to advertise. Let's make these flowers visible across the fell-field. We don't want them up on long stems, either, too fragile. Let's sit those luscious blossoms right down on the cushion. After all, what is cuter than a cushion plant in full bloom? This last evolution could prove to be why we eventually survive at all. Even if we face extinction on our native mountain peaks, humans, with their soft spot for small things with big flowers just may preserve us for posterity in zoos of their own making that they decide to call "Rock Gardens".

This is a revised version of an article that first appeared in the newsletter of Oliver Nurseries.

2010 Awards

Awards of Merit

Established in 1965, this award is given to persons who have made outstanding contributions to rock and alpine gardening and to the North American Rock Garden Society. In addition, the recipients will be people of demonstrated plantsmanship. The recipient must be an active member of the Society. In 2010, Awards of Merit go to Mike Kintgen, Morris West & Nicholas Klise, and Ed Glover.

MIKE KINTGEN

Mike Kintgen has been a member of the Rocky Mountain Chapter and NARGS since he was 11 years old when his father brought him to meetings because he was too young to drive but even then he grew plants and brought them to our annual sale. As time went on, he graduated Magna cum Laude from Colorado State University and did an internship at the Chicago Botanic Garden.



Now he is a senior horticulturist in the Rock Alpine Garden at Denver Botanic Garden, which he has overseen for more than 4 years, raising the standards enormously and expanding the collection in classic high alpinas as well as compact steppe plants. Mike also oversees the lion's share of Denver Botanic Garden's signature gardens: he supervises many employees with great wisdom and effectiveness as well as coordinating an extensive volunteer program to boot.

He is currently vice president of the Rocky Mountain Chapter and he was chosen to go on the seed-collecting expedition to Morocco and has furnished the rock garden with plants from that expedition. He presented an interesting slide show of the trip to Morocco and of his summer exploring from Wyoming and Montana to Mexico.

"It is a pleasure to work for Mike. He has created a congenial atmosphere that permits both hard work and fun. His knowledge of plants is incredible but it is his patient willingness to share this knowledge with the rest of us that endears him to us." HN.

"He has always been an important part of the Rocky Mountain Chapter and never fails to make his time available to answer questions and educate the public about the plants we all love." PC

"Mike is invariably kind and thoughtful, enormously energetic and

unfailingly effective. He writes lucid and entertaining articles full of novel information. I believe he is the most accomplished and promising plantsman I have ever known: his knowledge of plants is truly encyclopaedic. He is one of the best lecturers I have ever heard and a photographer of great talent. His skills are manifold, and deserve recognition, especially considering that he is a mere youngster at 26 years of age. He has surpassed my fondest expectations." PK

Pat Carter, Panayoti Kelaidis, Helen Nelson

MORRIS WEST & NICHOLAS KLISE

Morris and Nick have been involved, active and knowledgeable members of NARGS for many years. They are not only charter members of the Mason-Dixon Chapter but they were instrumental in forming the group. Both have served as chairman of the Mason-Dixon chapter. They also belong to the Delaware Valley chapter where Morris served as chair. Nick was always ready, pen in hand, to produce and design brochures for the national meetings that the Delaware Valley chapter hosted. Morris also served as chair of the membership committee of NARGS. Both attend many of the Winter Study weekends and also the Annual meetings. I would have to say both are well known and active members of our society. We can also count on them to pack seeds for our exchange every year. Nick most recently served as secretary of the Mason-Dixon group.



Nick Klise (left) and Morris West

Nick was a very helpful contributor to *Rock Garden Design and Construction*. Not only did he write a very professional chapter on paths and steps, he also contributed good line drawings that were used in the book with little alteration by the artist who did all the artwork for the book.

Morris and Nick started their rock garden in Red Lion, Pennsylvania, from scratch and do all the maintenance by themselves. This in itself is quite an undertaking as the garden covers several acres. They have many unusual and well grown alpine plants both in the garden and the many troughs around their house. They are very generous and open their garden to various plant societies and NARGS groups that travel to our area. They are very good representatives for NARGS and are very deserving of this recognition.

Dick Arnold

ED GLOVER

Ed has been the heart and soul of the Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter for many years now. He has served in many capacities at various times as Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. Even when not serving in an official capacity, he has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to organize meetings, secure speakers and to present an endless variety of programs.



Ed has also done exemplary work on behalf of NARGS at the national level with his service on the board of directors from 2000–2003 and in the capacity of national Vice-President in 2003–2004.

Many of Ed's numerous talks include slides of the diverse plants which he has seen on the many trips which he has taken in the alpine reaches throughout the west and northwest. He has led numerous workshops on the various ways to make hypertufa troughs, as well as presenting ideas and suggestions to those attending as to what and how to plant them. He has also given talks on how to construct rock gardens and crevice gardens, and has worked with groups to construct them. His generosity in sharing plants to members, non-members, and to our chapter as door prizes, is unlimited.

For all of his accomplishments and contributions Ed Glover is certainly qualified for national recognition.

One of Ed's great successes has been in spearheading the rebuild and refurbishment of the rock garden in Allen Gardens in Madison on the campus of the University of Wisconsin. This included fund-raising for the project, but beyond that, Ed has put in untold hours of work and a good deal of his own fund, to make this rock garden a real jewel which has drawn people to rock gardening. The design, layout and care of this lovely garden is in great part his work – work that continues today.

At home, Ed is an expert gardener. His successes in growing seeds, with his cold frames, his displays of beautiful troughs, and several variations on rock garden habitat beds, have been enjoyed by many garden visitors and inspired many.

It is the people with this kind of drive that make a difference in others, often quietly, humbly, and driven by unselfish passion, that spreads and helps organizations grow. That would define Ed Glover.

Barbara Wetzels, Rick Lupp, Olive Thomson, John Mather

Geoffrey Charlesworth Writing Prize

PANAYOTI KELAIDIS

The Prize for the best article in the *Rock Garden Quarterly* in 2009 has been awarded to Panayoti Kelaidis for his 2009 Spring issue article, p.83, entitled "In Defense of Nonconventional Rock Gardens."

Panayoti always writes with the verve one would expect of such a dynamic gardener and his writing never fails to demonstrate his own generosity.



This award was only initiated in 2008 and has now been given out for the third time. Geoffrey Charlesworth proposed this award to stimulate more articles to be written by new authors. Though Panayoti won this time, do not let this discourage you from submitting your article.

Dick Bartlett, Chair of GCW Prize Panel

Linc and Timmy Foster Millstream Garden Award

Established in 2006, this award is for an outstanding contribution to the North American Rock Garden Society for creating a superior garden.

It recognizes great gardens of NARGS members across the various styles and regions of the United States and Canada.



SANDY SNYDER

I have monitored and enjoyed Sandy's garden in Littleton, Colorado, for three decades and believe this is not only a supreme rock garden, but one of the finest all around gardens in America. Sandy, the primary designer, worked at a public garden for 17 years, and has applied all the skills she learned there to her

private garden. Her husband has been a full partner in helping with logistics, watering and care.

Like most rock gardens, the garden contains a fine collection of alpine plants: there are daphnes galore, all manner of androsaces, drabas, saxifrages, gentians and the classic sorts of alpines, in the dramatic crevice garden in the front yard, and many in the older rock garden on the northwest corner of the house.

Sandy is not content to grow small plants in rock gardens and numerous container gardens of all sorts. She has equally impressive gardens dedicated to xerophytes, bulbs, woodland plants and more. Where else in Colorado would you find quite literally millions of crocuses, tulips and more, growing in several thousand feet of native prairie grasses? And what other garden combines agaves with a giant swath of passionflower in Zone 5? Who else grows fernleaf peony in wide colonies?

What I find distinguishes this from any other rock garden, certainly in my region and perhaps beyond, is the emphasis on design: there are immense collections of plants, to be sure, but they are combined for their optimal health and beauty, alongside their brethren. This is a garden worth visiting any day of the year, and people do in droves, Sandy and her husband always welcoming visitors, and usually sending them home with a plant or division from their garden.

I spent a few magnificent days in Millstream: I believe Linc and Timmy would feel right at home in this garden and certainly they would approve of the fantastic accomplishments there.

Edgar T. Wherry Award

LORAINE YEATTS

Loraine Yeatts was nominated for and awarded the Edgar T. Wherry award for her signal contributions to American botany and to the North American Rock Garden Society

It is doubtful if there is any botanist who has trod more mountains, more frequently, with as keen an eye as Loraine: for sure there is no botanist who comes close to her field knowledge in Colorado. She has dedicated untold hours, weeks at a time, to climbing innumerable mountains, exploring the least frequented hinterlands with her athletic husband, Dick. Probably no week has gone by over the last half century or more when Loraine has not been on an extended field trip. She invariably collects specimens on these trips, and her collections number in the tens of thousands. These comprise the largest number of specimens of any collector at Denver Botanic Gardens' Kathryn Kalmbach Herbarium where Loraine has volunteered weekly for over

four decades. Loraine's specimens are renowned for the exquisite care she exercises in drying and mounting them: they are individual works of art as well as science. Loraine has traveled extensively to the back-country of the American West enriching our local herbariums with her many collections. She has nearly 1,600 herbarium collections in the Kathryn Kalmbach Herbarium at Colorado University and about 5,900 acquisitions in Denver Botanic Garden's herbarium. Loraine has volunteered weekly at the herbarium for 40 years.

Lorraine's research has led to the discovery of hundreds of state and regional records and at least one new species: She first found *Mimulus gemmipara* when doing surveys for Rocky Mountain National Park in the 1980s:



a tiny monkey flower that proved to be new to science. She has conducted similar extensive surveys for Mt. Evans and dozens of other sites across the Rockies.

She has inspired and motivated many to learn more about our alpines with her interesting and enthusiastic presentations. She wrote and revised the compact keying book, the ever useful *Alpine Flower Finder*. Loraine has given many brilliant presentations at our meetings as well as having toured around the USA and Great Britain. Her talks are not only stunning works of art, delivered with finesse, they often end with a musical interlude that leaves the audience moved to tears.

Lorraine is an extraordinary photographer and her collection of native plant photographs is beautiful and informative. It is quite extensive, containing many plants which are seldom seen. To get many of them she has backpacked into inaccessible wilderness. But also she has captured the hearts of our little treasures with her artistic eye.

Rebecca Day-Skowron, Panayoti Kelaidis - photo by Bob Skowron



**See page 295
for more details**

From the President

Dear NARGS members,

In July, I attended the NARGS annual meeting in Denver and Salida, Colorado, organized by the Rocky Mountain Chapter. Gratifyingly, its components pulled together nicely to provide an enjoyable time in the Rockies: plants, weather, food, and particularly, company. We owe thanks for this wonderful event to Randy Tatroe, Chair of the organizing committee, and his team: Bill Adams, Emily Amade, Sally Boyson, Lee Curtis, Fran Enright, Panayoti Kelaidis, Hugh MacMillan, Gesa Robeson, Joan Sapp, and Marcia Tatroe. Well done and kudos to all of you!

Apart from having fun and seeing beautiful alpine flowers, those of us who attended the Board of Directors meeting did a lot of necessary work for the society. Perhaps chief among the issues at hand was the Board's decision on the future of the NARGS Book Service. Board members discussed recommendations of the NARGS Publications Task Force chaired by Michael Riley, and made the following decision:

The Book Service Manager's contract is to be extended through the end of October. The main purpose of the Book Service during this time will be to significantly reduce the current inventory of books and part of the back-issues inventory of the Rock Garden Quarterly.

At the end of October, most of the leftover books will be picked up from the Book Service manager by Dick Arnold, Chair of the Mason-Dixon Chapter, and sold to a reduced-priced bookstore. Books picked up by Dick will exclude six titles: three NARGS self-published books, two NARGS-Timber Press co-published books, and the Caucasus book. These items will be transferred to a volunteer Manager who will keep on offering them to the membership as a continuing Publications Service.

I want to thank Michael Riley and members of his Task Force (Dave Brastow, Maria Galletti, and Betty Mackey) for a thorough study of the Book Service and their recommendations.

Another important decision in our Society's operating practices was a resolution of matters relating to NARGS Board's e-mail voting and adopting a procedure for that purpose. Many thanks to Dave Brastow for guiding the Board through this process.

The subject of on-line seed ordering from the Seed Exchange was also considered. This year we plan to implement the first phase of that project, and

that is to build a membership database that will be integrated with future on-line ordering routine. This project is led by Tony Reznicek and his task force, consisting of Chuck Ulmann and Tom Stuart, who have our appreciation.

At the General Membership Meeting three new Directors of the Board were elected: Jane Grushow (PA), Philip MacDougall (BC), and Anne Spiegel (NY). As I welcome the new Directors we thank the outgoing three directors, Florene Carney (AK), Todd Boland (NF), and Don Dembowski (NY), for their service.

We have somebody else to welcome aboard the NARGS family and that's Malcolm McGregor, the new *Rock Garden Quarterly* Editor. Malcolm offered a spirited introduction of himself at the General Membership Meeting, and highlighted some of the ideas he has for the Quarterly. While we warmly greet Malcolm, we extend NARGS's deep gratitude to our past Editor, Jane McGary. Jane gave NARGS ten years of professional service and unwavering support for the organization. Thank you very much, Jane!

Best regards,

Grazyna Grauer, <grazynalg@sbcglobal.net>

NARGS President on behalf on the Administrative Committee

NARGS Seed Exchange

The 2010-2011 Seed Exchange is in full swing and its scope and success will, as always, depend upon the help of our NARGS members.

We will need help re-packaging all those wonderful seeds contributed by our generous donors. This is a small chore that makes a big difference: by dividing the donated seed into many smaller packets, we can provide so many more members with seeds of their first choosing.

The work is done in the early part of December and can be completed at a chapter meeting, special group session, or on your own. Chapter Chairs, as well as small non-chapter groups, are urged to plan a session devoted to this activity. Chapters that do this annually (like Wisconsin-Illinois and Rocky Mountain)

have reported that it's great fun, and they have lots of ideas to entertain and reward their volunteers. Helping the seedex in this way also earns the individual volunteers Donor status, entitling them to an extra ten packets of seed with their orders, as well as priority in having their orders fulfilled.

The seed list will go online on December 15, 2010. **Printed copies of the seed list will be mailed ONLY if you request one, by contacting, before November 15:**

**Joyce Fingerut
537 Taugwonk Road
Stonington, CT 06378 USA
<alpinegarden@comcast.net>**

**Don't forget if you
want a printed copy
of the seedlist
contact
Joyce Fingerut by
November 15**

Deaths of NARGS Members

Our sympathies to the families and friends of:

Dennis Stewart, Bethpage, New York, a member of the Long Island Chapter.

Erwin Frank Evert, Park Ridge, Illinois.

Diana Nicholls, Gainesville, Virginia, Potomac Valley Chapter.

Daphne Guernsey, previously a NARGS member, Victoria, British Columbia.

Esther May “Candy” Strickland, Puyallup, Washington.

Stanley Brian Wilson, Aberdeen, United Kingdom.

2010 NARGS Meeting Stipend Recipients

NARGS offers a limited number of stipends, currently in the amount of \$300, to attend meetings hosted by the Society. These stipends are intended as a form of a reward for members who are very active in their Chapters and never attended a NARGS (national) meeting except one hosted by their local chapter. This year’s recipients are listed below. Congratulations to all of them.

1. Timothy Alderton, Piedmont Chapter for the Annual Meeting in Colorado. Chapter Chair, David White writes: “Tim is one of the youngest members of our chapter and is also one of the most knowledgeable botanically. He has been attending our chapter meetings for several years since being hired as a Research Technician at the JC Raulston Arboretum (JCRA) at North Carolina State University. He has an exceptional knowledge of plants, has provided guided tours of the JCRA to guest speakers at our meetings, and contributes to our monthly plant sales (both by bringing in plants and by providing horticultural information on plants that other bring in). Most of Tim’s field experience has been in the eastern U.S. He is interested in attending the AGM to gather first hand experience with plants in the Rocky Mountain region and to meet other NARGS members.” Tim writes about his experience on page 226.

2. Linda Boley, Rocky Mountain Chapter for the Western Winter Study Weekend in Medford, Oregon. Chapter Chair, Panayoti Kelaidis writes: “I’m delighted to support Linda for this stipend: she is a charter member of the Rocky Mountain Chapter (34 years!) and an active participant throughout those years - she is now rising to the occasion of NARGS! Let’s encourage her!”

3. Margot Ellis, Potomac Valley Chapter for Annual Meeting in Colorado. Chapter Chair, Betty Spar, writes: “Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to highlight Ms. Ellis’ talents as Treasurer. Besides being an active member of our chapter, especially concerning plant sales and events, she possesses enormous talent at managing our fiduciary responsibilities. Because of Margot’s wise investments, the chapter is in the green for a change. We are indebted to her talents and her desire to take on more responsibilities in the local chapter.”

4. Peter Gallagher, Emerald Chapter for Annual Meeting in Colorado. Chapter Chair, Tanya Harvey, writes: “Peter Gallagher is a valuable member of the Emerald Chapter. He has contributed in many ways, especially when

we rebuilt part of the Sebring Garden in Eugene. He put in many hours of hard labor moving rocks, as much as anyone else involved. And he was the “first gentleman” when Holly was president for 3 years. Their house has served as a site for chapter board meetings many times, several chapter picnics, and their garden has been on open garden tours where the public can see all the rock work he’s done there. He also attends meetings whenever he can and has come on many chapter camping trips and hikes.”

5. Cathy Kurio, Chair of the Calgary Rock and Alpine Garden Society (CRAGS) for the Annual Meeting in Colorado. CRAGS Treasurer, Rob Staniland, writes: “Cathy Kurio was a fellow founding member of CRAGS in its beginnings as an Alpine Study Group in 1991 and has returned in the last two years for a second time to the Board, now as President. She has been a diligent member throughout the life of the club having adopted many other roles, including coordination of the meeting snacks and assisting with the newsletter. Her gardens have been staples on our spring tours, and her workshops have warmly drawn members and especially interested beginners into the world of alpine plants. Until recently she has been a full time science teacher so has had little opportunity to attend a NARGS meeting. The Colorado meeting will expand her knowledge of alpine plants and the workings of NARGS and its chapters, to the ultimate benefit of our group.”

6. Remy Orłowski, Genesee Valley Chapter for the Eastern Winter Study Weekend in Devons, Massachusetts. Chapter Chair, Betsy Knapp, writes: “Remy was that Member who came to everything and took great pictures and emailed them to everyone and always contributed to discussions, etc. And she lives an hour away in Buffalo! When I asked her to co-chair last year with the idea of taking over this year, she not only said yes but within a couple of days she had the website and blog up and running. We think it is very important for her to attend the EWSW, (especially since she is booked for our April meeting to report on the conference). Remy and her husband also have a seed business and sell sample sized seed packets for heirloom vegetables. I think she will be an asset to NARGS as well as to our Chapter.”

7. Debra Wopat, Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter, for the Annual Meeting in Colorado. Chapter Chair, Ed Glover, in support of the application: “Debra Wopat is a long time member of the Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter and she has contributed substantially to the success of the Chapter. She has ably served as Treasurer for many years now and has generously volunteered her time to help at our seed packing workshops and staffing our booth at the Garden Expo. Several times she has organized garden tours at her home and others in her area for the Chapter and she always contributes interesting plants for our plant sale, many grown from seed. She has done all this while working as a full partner with her husband in operating a dairy and a cash crop farm. Because of the schedule of farm work she has never been able to attend a NARGS national meeting. There is no one in the Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter more deserving of the NARGS Meeting Stipend.”

Norman Singer Endowment Fund Projects Approved by NARGS Board, July 2010

1. Alaska Rock Garden Society

Carmel Tysver, 2030 Patriot Circle, Anchorage, AK 99515-2503

The grant is being requested to purchase plant material for a tufa bed that was added to the existing rock garden at the Alaska Botanical Garden in September 2009. The new tufa bed is approximately 5 ft wide by 125 ft long. Funding approved: \$1000.

2. Rotary Botanical Gardens

Mark Dwyer, Director of Horticulture, 1455 Palmer Drive, Janesville, WI 53545

Renovation of six existing alpine segments in our alpine garden. Renovation will include new/modified rockwork, appropriate soil installation, some plants and appropriate labels consistent with our current interpretation program. The funding will cover primarily materials. We anticipate the need for 5 tons of rock to renovate existing beds, many of which were damaged with severe flooding in 2008. Funds will also be used for sand, approximately 200 replacement alpine plants and 200 labels. Rotary Botanical Gardens staff and volunteers will supply labor for this project. Funding approved: \$1500.

3. The Fells, continued renovation of the Clarence Hay Rock Garden.

Karen Zurheide, Executive Director, PO Box 276, 456 Route 103A, Newbury, NH 03255

Completion of renovation of the “forgotten” East entrance of the garden, which had grown in and become overly narrow. Invasive Japanese Barberry has already been removed as a first step toward opening up a more beautiful entrance. Planting of special alpine specimens to fill in gaps created by previous removal of more ordinary plants that had spread throughout the garden, and new planting to beautify bare space beneath a crabapple. Funding approved: \$3500.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Glover, Chair <glover@oncology.wisc.edu>

Other committee members: Helga Andrews, Jan Dobak, Anne Spiegel, and Bev Shafer

Persons who joined NARGS - May 10 to August 3, 2010

Stuart, Rob, 9 Andrea Crescent, Napean, ON K2J 1G8 Canada

JLXSolutions, Oby Vagen 42, Lappohja 10820 Finland

Tirkanits, Beatrix, 3607 Seabreeze Ln, Corona del Mar, CA 92625

Cassell, Nathan, 16849 W. 63rd Ln, Arvada, CO 80403

Fulford, Martha, 225 Jasmine St., Denver, CO 80220

Fulton, Lynn, PO Box 2927, Edwards, CO 81632

Metcalf, Jeffery, 15450 Iola St., Brighton, CO 80602

Pruski, Helen, 1781 W. 3rd Ave., Durango, CO 81570

Schroeder, Delores, 598 Garnet St., Fruita, CO 81521
Sharp, Alice, 7196 W. Vassar Ave., Lakewood, CO 80227
Morrow, Polly O'Brien, 19 Field St., Stamford, CT 06906
Blair, Julia, 226 Orchard St., Iowa City, IA 52246
Whitson, Mary, 738 West Miller Rd., Alexandria, KY 41001
Tychonievich, Joseph P., 1522 Pierce Rd., Lansing, MI 48910
Shrunk, Grace Anderson, 950 113th Ave., NE, Blaine, MN 55434
Pounds, Jaci, 9 Whispering Wind Dr., Center Harbor, NH 03226
Rex, Isa, 11 Ridge Rd, New London, NH 03257
Adams, Daniel Holden, 68 Ryan Rd., Pine Plains, NY 12567
Devine, Kenneth, 5248 Booth Hill Rd., Locke, NY 13092
Didonato, Richard S., 7 Thomas Rd., Poughquag, NY 12570
Grasser, Tish, 41 Hay Market Rd., Rochester, NY 14624
Stewart, Martha, 226 W. 26th, 3rd Fl., New York, 10001
Visco, Mary, 7017 Dunn Dr., Holland, OH 43528
Keeseey, Jane, 73256 SE 56th, Pendleton, OR 97801
Sadler, Nora, 6 Maple Ln., Chadds Ford, PA 19317
Cosby, Christopher D., 3787 Tutweiler Ave., Memphis, TN 38122
Eichman, Jean M., 223 Griffith Point Rd., Nordland, WA 98358
Dulski, Laura, 594 Kelly Dr., Belleville, WI 53508

The following recently became a NARGS Life Member:

Daniel Holden Adams, Urban Forestry Organization (New York)

The following recently became NARGS Patrons:

Judith Dumont (New York)

Amal Moamar (Massachusetts)

Lesia E. von Munkwitz-Smith (Connecticut)

Bonnie & David Swinford (New York)

NARGS By-Laws Revision

The NARGS by-laws were revised at the Salida board meeting. For an electronic copy of the current by-laws, send an email request to <nargs@nc.rr.com> or visit the NARGS Web site <www.nargs.org>, go to the "members-only" area, under "NARGS Business". Look for "Standing Committee Reports." You will need to log-on. If you do not have a password, request one from <nargs@nc.rr.com>.

New Member of NARGS Administrative Committee

The NARGS Administrative Committee is saying "good bye" to Tony Reznicek (Michigan), the Ad Com's appointed Director at Large. At the Annual meeting in Colorado, Tony finished his two-year term in that position, a maximum allowed by NARGS by-laws. Replacing Tony is Lee Curtis (Colorado), Awards Committee Chair. Lee is one of the nine elected Directors of the Board, a NARGS by-laws requirement for appointment as a Director at Large.

NARGS December 2009 Donations Appeal (Donations Breakdown as of 7/21/10)

Designated Funds

Rock Garden Quarterly	3,249.24
Web site/Web master	350.00
Seed Exchange	1,005.00
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 Endow.)	100.00
General Fund	2,586.35
TOTAL	\$7715.59

NARGS Donors (May 9 to July 21, 2010)

Daniel Holden Adams, Urban Forestry Organization (New York)
Amal Moamar (Massachusetts)
Lori Skulski (Alberta)
Mary Ann and Chuck Ulmann (Pennsylvania)
Steven Whyman (North Carolina)

In Memoriam

Alexej B. "Sasha" Borkovec

THE NARGS FAMILY is sad to learn of the death of longtime member Alexej "Sasha" Borkovec, age 84, on June 10, 2010, at his home in Silver Spring, Maryland. He was born in Prague, now Czech Republic, where he earned an undergraduate degree in chemical engineering. After the Communist takeover, Sasha escaped to Germany in 1949 where he met Vera, his future wife, in Munich. Moving with Vera to the United States in 1952, he earned masters and doctoral degrees from Virginia Tech. He worked thirty years for the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a research scientist studying insect reproduction.

Sasha was a member of the Potomac Valley Chapter of NARGS and built his first rock garden in Kensington, Maryland, in 1965, and a later one in Wheaton in 1973. Chapter member Jim McKenney recalls Sasha describing the tons of gravel he moved to build a rock garden on a hillside behind the house, with the main part of the rock garden sited in clear view from Sasha's library. "It's hard to imagine heavily laden gravel trucks making their way up the narrow winding driveway," McKenney says. The unique

feature of Sasha's rock garden was the walls built from stacks of newspapers. He joked at a lecture he gave at a NARGS study weekend that The Washington Post walls lean to the left, while those of The Wall Street Journal lean to the right.

Over the years, Sasha was a regular contributor to the Potomac Valley Chapter's newsletters and to its annual plant sales and exchanges, where he brought Styrofoam cups of cyclamen, dianthus, campanula, and draba that he had germinated. For the North American Rock Garden Society publications, he contributed twenty-three articles on a variety of topics: daphnes, hymenoxys, lilies, dwarf conifers, and violas as well as book reviews. He also created a popular series of articles titled "Musings from a Rock Garden," many of which were earlier published on Alpine-L, the international electronic rock garden society on the Internet. For a period of time, Sasha, was co-moderator of Alpine-L, along with its founder Harry Dewey, another member of the PVC.

In the Maryland climate of warm summer nights, Sasha was an expert at growing difficult rock garden plants, including gentians, *Lewisia tweedyi*, and other "impossible ones." Bob Faden says that Sasha joked he had grown some really nice plants labeled *Silene hookeri* from the NARGS Seed Exchange. "Some were quite nice, but none was the correct species," Bob recalls.

Sasha was active in numerous organizations involving Czech arts and sciences and humanitarian service groups. Alice Nicolson, a member of the PVC, recalls that Sasha and Vera were stalwarts of the expatriate Czech community. On a visit she made to the Czech Republic, Alice photographed *Gentiana pannonica* in the Pannonian region and sent it to Sasha, who told her these were the mountains through which he escaped Czechoslovakia. Vera and two brothers, both in the Czech Republic, survive him. Memorial contributions may be made to the North American Rock Garden Society, Attn: Bobby Ward, Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619 or National Czech and Slovak Museum; Library, Attn: Gail Noughton, Director, 87 Sixteenth Avenue, SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404.
Bobby J. Ward

Jim Archibald

JIM ARCHIBALD, a major figure during the golden age of plant hunting in the latter part of the twentieth century, died at age 68 on August 9, 2010, at his home in Ffostrasol, Wales.

Jim, who operated JJA Seeds with wife Jenny, brought an intellectual approach to seed collecting as reflected in the



Jim & Jenny Archibald (photo Bobby J Ward)

informative, detailed plant descriptions in catalogs mailed to scores of customers around the world. In these writings, he frequently tossed barbs and strong opinions at venerable organizations, especially when it came to horticultural snobbery, endearing him to many.

Jim, a Scot, majored in English literature at the University of Edinburgh, and worked during summers at Jack Drake's fine nursery in the Highlands where his interest in plants began. His first collecting trips were in Corsica and Morocco during the 1960s. Jim's earliest travel logs, published for the Alpine Garden Society, included admirable pen-and-ink drawings. Although concentrating mainly on plants of the Middle East and Mediterranean, Jim and Jenny also collected in the Andes, western United States, New Zealand, Central Asia, and South Africa.

Jim and Jenny, both NARGS members, were well known to NARGS audiences, speaking frequently at annual meetings and study weekends after which they would dash off to see local flora or to visit long-term friends. Panayoti Kelaidis (Denver Botanic Gardens) refers to the Archibalds as the king and queen of contemporary plant hunting. The DBG introduced through its Plant Select program *Digitalis thapsi* 'Spanish Peaks', a foxglove with raspberry-rose flowers, collected by the Archibalds in Spain and Portugal in the 1980s. Their vast seed list included campanulas, saxifrages, irises, hellebores, euphorbias, and bulbs such as *Crocus scardicus* and *Muscari mcbeathianum*.

According to John Grimshaw (Gloucestershire, U.K.), "Jim Archibald's influence on alpine gardening, in the widest sense, was pervasive."

"Jim Archibald was one of the most remarkable plantsman of our era. His discriminating eye and personal integrity led him to select seeds from the best forms of rare and unusual plants throughout the world," says Nancy Goodwin (North Carolina), who frequently purchased from JJA Seeds.

Maggi and Ian Young (Aberdeen, Scotland) described Jim as "one of the truly great privateer plant hunters." They go on to say, "There can scarcely be a single person with an interest in alpine plants or bulbs who is not growing plants derived from the worldwide seed collections of the Archibalds, either directly from seed from Jim and Jenny's seed business JJA Seeds, or from seed grown on by a multiplicity of nurseries across the world."

Currently, at least three plants are named to honor Jim Archibald, the first *Dionysia archibaldii* (from Iran). Janis Ruksans (Latvia) has given the name 'Jim' to a fine cultivar of *Crocus hittiticus* and Ruksans is naming a new crocus species for Jim to be published in a monograph this winter.

A funeral was held for Jim on August 16 in Aberystwyth, Wales. Donations may be made in Jim's memory to the following two organizations: The Beacon of Hope, 10 Baker St, Aberystwyth SY23 2BJ, Wales, United Kingdom (a Welsh hospice association); or Wales Air Ambulance, 3 Palace St., Caernafon, Gwynedd LL55 1RR, Wales, United Kingdom.

Jenny, and a son and daughter, survive Jim. If you wish to send notes of condolences, the address is Jenny Archibald, Bryn Collen, Ffostrasol, Llandysul SA44 5SB, Wales, United Kingdom. *Bobby J. Ward.*

NORTH AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY

Annual Financial Report

For Years Ending December 31, 2009 and 2008

Respectfully submitted,
Randy L. Tatroe, Treasurer
August 20, 2010

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The North American Rock Garden Society, Inc. (NARGS, or the Society) is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1934 and incorporated in New Jersey in 1943 as the American Rock Garden Society. Its present name was established in 1994. The Society encourages and promotes the cultivation, conservation, and knowledge of rock garden plants. To further these objectives, it publishes the Rock Garden Quarterly, supports local Chapters who host conferences each year, sponsors botanical expeditions and supports the publication of books on the subject of rock gardening and rock garden plants. The Society also promotes the knowledge of rock gardening through numerous other activities, such as operating a book service and slide library, awarding grants to projects related to its aims, and providing internships to educational institutions involved in subjects related to rock gardening. The Society promotes cultivation and conservation through its operation of a world-wide seed exchange program. Educational endeavors include a program to bring foreign experts to this country for extended lecture tours for the Society's chapters, and a Program Resource Center to identify suitable and recommended speakers to chapter heads for local meetings. These activities are described on NARGS website (www.nargs.org), along with much other information and illustrations. Financial support for these activities comes primarily from membership dues, contributions, book sales, charges for services, and interest and dividends earned on the Society's investment pool.

The investment funds consist of three restricted funds and one unrestricted fund. Restricted Funds are the Norman Singer Endowment Fund, the Carleton R. Worth Award Fund, and the Robert Senior Award Fund. Unrestricted Operating Reserves principal is available for operations, and income earned from investments from this fund is used for the general purposes of the Society.

The Singer Endowment Fund income is available for grants approved by the Board of Directors. The Carleton R. Worth Fund income goes for cash awards to authors of noteworthy rock garden publications. The Robert

Senior Award Fund was created by the Ohio Valley Chapter in memory of Robert Senior; its income is used to finance awards for outstanding exhibits of Campanulas.

The financial records of the Society are maintained on a cash basis, recognizing income when it is received and expenses when they are paid. Investments (CD's and bonds) are recorded at market value.

The accounts of the Book Service, the Seed Exchange, and the Slide Library are maintained primarily by the managers of those services, and are audited separately, as is the deposit account maintained by the Executive Secretary for membership dues and some other receipts. The accounts of the Society presented here are the consolidated results of all the Society's operations.

The Society's financial condition remains strong, with unrestricted reserves equal to about 1-1/2 times annual disbursements. Membership at the end of 2009 was 2687, down 9% from end of 2008 (2891 members).

2009 AUDIT REPORT

Grazyna Grauer, President
North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS)
5640 Windwood Dr.
Dublin OH 43017

Dear Ms. Grauer,

I have examined the NARGS financial records maintained by the Treasurer, Randy Tatroe. The records, including the consolidated statements of NARGS and affiliated operations are complete and are being maintained in accordance with accepted accounting standards. I have examined the bank statements, deposit records, and balances for the 2009 calendar year.

In my opinion, the report of Assets, Liabilities and Equity accurately reflects the financial status of the North American Rock Garden Society as of December 31, 2009.

This audit does not include records maintained in the office of the Executive Secretary, Seed Exchange, Slide Library or Book Service, only the results as reported to and reviewed by the Treasurer.

Sincerely Yours,

William Adams
330 Carlile Ave.
Pueblo, CO 81004-1054

SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET

	(Revised)	
	12/31/2009	12/31/2008
Assets	\$(000)	\$(000)
Cash in Banks		
NARGS Accounts	52.8	22.4
Membership	19.3	0.3
Book Service	3.7	0.5
Slide Library	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.5</u>
Total Cash in Bank	\$ 75.8	\$ 23.7
Advance to Affiliates	0.0	0.0
Investments (CDs)	323.7	364.1
Book Service Inventory	<u>0.0*</u>	<u>10.6</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 399.5</u>	<u>\$ 398.4</u>
Equity		
Restricted Funds		
Norman Singer Endowment	149.3	149.3
Carleton Worth Award	3.3	3.3
Robert Senior Award	<u>1.3</u>	<u>1.3</u>
Total Restricted Funds	\$ 153.9	\$ 153.9
Retained Earnings	260.7	285.4
Net Income	<u>(15.1)</u>	<u>(40.9)</u>
Total Equity	<u>\$ 399.5</u>	<u>\$ 398.4</u>

* Book inventory had been expensed in prior years

OPERATING ACCOUNTS

	2009	2008
RECEIPTS	\$(000)	\$(000)
Annual Dues and Life Memberships	88.1	89.2
Book Service Sales	10.5	10.6
Seed Exchange Receipts*	4.0	6.4
AGM and Study Weekend Receipts	6.5	13.2
Interest	14.6	19.9
Other (Contributions/Royalties/Advertising)**	<u>4.2</u>	<u>2.5</u>
	\$ 127.9	\$ 141.8
DISBURSEMENTS		
Rock Garden Quarterly	57.3	77.8
Other Membership Pub.	0.0	0.0
Book Service Costs	15.6	21.1
Seed Exchange Costs	12.6	21.3
Expeditions Costs	0.0	0.0
Transfers to Study Weekends	9.7	0.0
Speakers Tour	6.2	8.3
Endowment Grants	6.0	8.0
Meeting Stipends and Awards	1.5	2.7
Administrative Expenses	13.8	19.2
Executive Secretary	16.2	18.2
Other (Database and Web Development)	<u>4.1</u>	<u>6.1</u>
	\$ 143.0	\$ 182.7
Net Income	<u>\$ (15.1)</u>	<u>\$ (40.9)</u>

COMMENTS ON RESULTS

*Receipts for Phase 3 of 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 Seed Exchanges not received until August 2010 and will be reflected in next year's Financial Statement.

**Does not include \$4.0 from 2009 Donations Appeal (this was deposited in 2010 and will be reflected in that year's financial result statement.

MAJOR PROGRAMS RESULTS

	2009	2008
	\$(000)	\$(000)
Book Service		
Gross Sales	10.5	10.6
Operating Expenses	<u>(15.6)</u>	<u>(21.1)</u>
Net (Cost)	<u>\$ (5.1)</u>	<u>\$ (10.5)</u>
Seed Exchange		
Gross Sales	\$ 4.0	\$ 6.4
Operating Expenses	<u>(12.6)</u>	<u>(21.3)</u>
Net (Cost)	<u>\$ (8.6)</u>	<u>\$ (14.9)</u>

RESTRICTED FUNDS RECONCILIATION

	2009	2008
	\$(000)	\$(000)
Norman Singer Endowment Fund		
Balance at 1/1	149.3	149.3
Contributions	0.0	0.0
Share of Investment Earnings	6.0	5.6
From Operations Reserves for Grants	0.0	2.4
Grants	<u>(6.0)</u>	<u>(8.0)</u>
Balance at 12/31	<u>\$ 149.3</u>	<u>\$ 149.3</u>
Carleton Worth Award Fund		
Balance at 1/1	3.3	3.3
Share of Investment Earnings	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Balance at 12/31	<u>\$ 3.3</u>	<u>\$ 3.3</u>
Robert Senior Award Fund		
Balance at 1/1	1.3	1.3
Share of Investment Earnings	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Balance at 12/31	<u>\$ 1.3</u>	<u>\$ 1.3</u>
Total Restricted Funds	\$ 153.9	\$ 153.9

COMMENTS OF MAJOR PROGRAMS RESULTS

Study Weekends and the Annual General Meeting. The Eastern Winter Study Weekend (EWSW) was held in Virginia and the Western Winter Study Weekend (WWSW) was held in Portland in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting (AGM); both showed positive results. The result for 2009 was a positive \$6,535 compared with a positive \$1,400 in 2008.

COMMENTS ON FUNDS RESULTS. Norman Singer Endowment Fund received no contributions in 2009, however, \$2,818.87 was returned by the Manhattan Chapter as unused. In 2009, the Board approved one grant for \$6,000 to The Gardens at Spring Creek, Ft. Collins CO to procure rocks and plants for the new Rock Garden. The amount of the grant essentially equaled the amount of interest earned from investments of the Norman Singer Endowment funds.

AWARDS. **Linc and Timmy Foster Millstream Garden Award** (outstanding Rock and Alpine Garden) was given to Carl Gehenio (Pennsylvania); Outstanding Garden in the 'Special' Category was given to the terrace garden of Lawrence Thomas (New York). **Geoffrey Charlesworth Writing Prize** was given to Andrew Osyany (Ontario). **Awards of Merit** were given to Phyllis Gustafson (Oregon), Jan and David Dobak (Oregon) and Richard Rosenberg (Pennsylvania). **Marcel Le Piniec Award** was given to Harvey and Irene Wrightman (Ontario). **Edgar T. Wherry Award** was given to Dr. James Reveal (New York). **Marvin E. Black Award** was given to Michael Slater (Pennsylvania). **Carleton Worth Award** and **Robert Senior Award** were not given.





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CANADA

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Adirondack (Ithaca, NY)	Billie Jean Isbell - bji1@cornell.edu
Alaska (Anchorage & Mat-Su Valley)	Jaime Rodriguez - jrtinker@mtaonline.net
Allegheny (Pittsburgh, PA)	Patricia McGuire - cmpmam@juno.com
Berkshire (Stockbridge, MA)	Clifford Desch - cedesch@comcast.net
Calgary Rock & Alpine Garden Society (Calgary, AB)	Cathy Kurio - cakurio@shaw.ca
Columbia-Willamette (Portland, OR)	Jane McGary - janemcgary@earthlink.net
Connecticut (New Haven, CT)	Virginia Gingras - ginnygingras@netzero.net
Delaware Valley (Philadelphia, PA)	Betty Mackey, bbmackey@prodigy.net
Emerald (Eugene, OR)	Tanya Harvey, wild.iris@att.net
Fells (Newbury, NH)	Thelma Hewitt, nargs@thefells.org
Gateway (St. Louis, MO)	Ruth Hartsell, ruthhartsell@aol.com
Genesee Valley (Syracuse, NY)	Betsy Knapp, eeknapp@rochester.rr.com
Great Lakes (Southern MI)	John Serowicz, skeptic@twmi.rr.com
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Manhattan (New York, NY)	Michael A. Riley, ManhattanNARGS@verizon.net
Mason-Dixon (Norrisville, MD)	Richard Arnold, r.arnold4@verizon.net
Minnesota (Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN)	Meredith Schurr, meredithis@comcast.net
New England (Waltham/Boylson, MA)	Rosemary Monahan, rosemonahan@comcast.net
Newfoundland (St. John's, NL)	Todd Boland, todd.boland@warp.nfld.net
Northwestern (Seattle, WA)	Claire Cockcroft, ccrft@halcyon.com
Nova Scotia (Halifax & Truro, NS)	John Proctor, onewilderness@gmail.com
Ohio Valley (OH and surrounding states)	Chuck Gleaves, gleaves.charles@gmail.com
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Ottawa Valley (Ottawa, ON)	Judy Wall, jpwall@ripnet.com
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NARGS STRUCTURE _____

The officers of the North American Rock Garden Society consist of a president, a vice-president, a recording secretary, and a treasurer. The officers are elected by the membership at an annual meeting.

The Board of Directors of NARGS consists of the four above-name officers, the immediate past president of NARGS, nine elected directors, and the chapter chair of each NARGS chapter.

The affairs of NARGS are administered by an Administrative Committee (called AdCom) consisting of the president, vice-president, recording secretary, treasurer, and one director who is selected annually by the NARGS officers from among the nine elected directors.

OFFICERS _____

President	Grazyna Grauer grazynalg@sbcglobal.net 5640 Windwood Dr., Dublin, OH 43017
Vice President	Maria Galletti mg.galletti@gmail.com 1182 Parmenter Rd., Sutton, QC J0E 2K0
Recording Secretary	Barbara Wetzel 20 Braeburn Lane, Barrington Hills, IL 60010
Treasurer	Randy Tatroe 17156 E. Berry Pl., Centennial, CO 80015
Immediate Past President	Dick Bartlett, Lakewood, CO

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2010–2013	Jane Grushow, Ephrate, PA Philip MacDougall, Surrey, BC Anne Spiegel, Wappinger Falls, NY

MANAGERS _____

Executive Secretary	Bobby J. Ward (919) 781-3291 PO Box 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619-8604 nargs@nc.rr.com
Book Service	Janet Slater (610) 775-9084 4411 New Holland Rd., Mohnton, PA 19540
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