



# Newsletter

**North American Rock Garden Society**  
Connecticut Chapter January/February 2015

## FEBRUARY MEETING

Sunday, February 22, 2015 10:30am

Tolland Agricultural Center

24 Hyde Ave., Rte. 30, Vernon, CT 06066

The first meeting of the calendar year will feature **Adam Wheeler**, speaking on *Dwarf and Slow-growing Conifers*. Adam is propagation and plant development manager at Broken Arrow Nursery and has a degree in landscape horticulture from the University of Vermont. His presentations are always informative and are certain to fill us with plant lust. Please note the new location for the meeting.

Social time at 10:30; program begins at 11:00; business meeting to follow. Bring a bag lunch and any plants for show and tell.

Directions to TAC: From I-84, take exit 67. If traveling eastbound, take left off the exit; if traveling westbound, take a right. Turn right at the light at Rte. 30. TAC is on the right, past the Rockville Bank.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

UConn Perennial Plant Conference - March 5<sup>th</sup>  
[www.2015perennial.uconn.edu](http://www.2015perennial.uconn.edu)

CT Hardy Plant Society Symposium - March 7<sup>th</sup>  
David Culp on *Galanthus* and Don Leopold on  
*Terrestrial Orchids of the Northeast*

UConn Garden Conference - March 19<sup>th</sup>  
[www.ladybug.uconn.edu](http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu), click on 2015 garden conf.

Friends of Goodwin Forest - March 20<sup>th</sup>  
Barry Glick on *Woodland Wonders*

CT Master Gardener Symposium - March 21<sup>st</sup>  
[www.ctmga.org/2015-symposium](http://www.ctmga.org/2015-symposium)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

There are many hellebores in my gardens and one is called the Christmas rose, but it has never bloomed until spring when all the others did. This year, I have enjoyed a new Christmas rose that actually began blooming in December, *Helleborus niger* 'HGC Jacob'.

As gardeners, we know the importance of soil. The United Nations is calling attention to soil by designating 2015 as the "International Year of Soils". This attempts to bring worldwide attention to the importance of soil sustainability as the basis of food systems, fuel, and fiber production and to raise awareness of the limits on our soil as a natural resource. There is a calendar put out by the USDA showcasing the importance of soil with monthly themes, e.g., January: Soils Sustain Life; February: Soils support urban life. The National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) has copies of the calendar, *2015 Soil Planner*, which is very informative. Check out the website, [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov).

~Ginny

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The CT Flower & Garden Show 2015 will be held February 19 – 22. Seminars of particular interest to our members include Kyle Turoczi: *Working with Wetlands on Your Property*; Peter Picone: *Ways to Create & Enhance Wildlife Habitat in Your Surroundings*; and Ken Druse: *Making More Plants – Propagation*. For a complete list, go to [www.ctflowershow.com](http://www.ctflowershow.com).

## MEMBERS' CORNER

When I read that the NARGS annual general meeting would be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan, I knew immediately that Steve and I would want to attend. We met at The University of Michigan and spent eight happy years in the state, discovering a myriad of places to see spectacular displays of wildflowers. From the ravines of the Grand River in the south to the ladyslippers near the Straits of Mackinac in the north, to the waterfalls of Munising in the Upper Peninsula we discovered treasures. I have photo albums filled with Steve's pictures to prove it. Nowhere else, for example, have I seen swaths of *Trillium grandiflorum* so extensive that it is easily identifiable while speeding 70 mph down the interstate.

As a New Englander born and bred with a lifelong love of wildflowers, I have to say that Michigan has us beat for variety and sheer abundance. To have a chance to see those stands of wildflowers in their full May glory is an opportunity not to be missed. I hope to see you there.

Judy King

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Houseplants can purify air and remove toxic agents such as benzene, formaldehyde and trichloroethylene which are found in glue, paint, particle board, paper, carpets, paint stripper and spot remover. Indoor plants will also benefit the air by making oxygen levels higher because a few types will release oxygen at night. Most of these are succulents, moth orchids, dendrobium orchids, and bromeliads. These would make great plants for the bedroom. A home with a lot of houseplants will have 50-60% fewer mold spores and bacteria. A study in Australia found that indoor plants reduce anger by 44%, fatigue by 38% and depression by 58%. Plants also are natural humidifiers.

Some air cleaning plants are *Aloe vera*, areca palm, *Dracaena deremensis* 'Janet Craig' (this can be poisonous if eaten), dragon tree, English ivy, *Ficus* 'Amstel King', ger-

bera daisy, peace lily, rubber plant (*Ficus elastica*), snake plant, spider plant and weeping fig (*Ficus benjamina*). The culture of each plant needs to be adhered to in order for the plant to grow well, information that should be available with a Google search. A good source for most of these plants is Logee's Greenhouses in Danielson.

Marcia Kilpatrick

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## BOOK REVIEWS WANTED

Make my New Year happy by agreeing to review books for the NARGS Book-of-the-Month program. I would like to encourage anyone who has a favorite gardening related book to write a review and send it to me. The book doesn't have to be about alpiners, just garden or natural world related. The book should be either in print or readily available on the second hand market, and not previously reviewed on our website. Make my day; write a review.

Jan Jeddleloh

Reach Jan through the NARGS website: [www.nargs.org](http://www.nargs.org).

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Eugenie and Jonathan Shaw of Sandwich, MA will once again host a **Snowdrop Tea** on March 18 and 19 to benefit the wildflower garden of the Thornton W. Burgess Soc. Seating is limited. See: [www.thorntonburgess.org](http://www.thorntonburgess.org).



*Galanthus* 'Armine' and *G.* 'Diggory' in the Shaw garden.

## NARGS CT CHAPTER OFFICERS

**CHAIR:** Ginny Gingras / 21 Timber Ln. / Vernon, CT 06066 / 860.875.9865 / [ginnygingras2013@gmail.com](mailto:ginnygingras2013@gmail.com)

**VICE-CHAIR:** Dave DeLucia / 26 Overlook Dr. / East Haddam, CT 06423 / [mrdcac@aol.com](mailto:mrdcac@aol.com)

**SECRETARY:** Barbara van Achterberg / 359 Silver Hill Rd. / Easton, CT 06612 / 203.261.2156 / [bvanachterberg@yahoo.com](mailto:bvanachterberg@yahoo.com)

**TREASURER:** Sally Katkaveck / 82 Ashford Rd. / Ashford, CT 06278 / 860.974.2563 / [sallybillkat@charter.net](mailto:sallybillkat@charter.net)

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** Maryanne Gryboski / 88 Eager Rd. / Franklin, CT 06254 / 860.822.6589 / [strollgarden@aol.com](mailto:strollgarden@aol.com)

**PROGRAMS:** Please talk to one of the officers if you are interested in the Programs Chair position.



## HIKING THE ALPS

By Bonnie Maguire

During the first two weeks of June my partner, Bill Hoover, and I traveled to Switzerland to hike in the Alps. We stayed in Reuti, a village on Hasliberg Mountain between Lucerne and Interlaken in central Switzerland. We made our arrangements through Untours which, in addition to providing us with guide books on sites to see as well as an in-country coordinator, also arranged our travel passes.

The guest apartment where we stayed was on the ground level of a family's home; we enjoyed a stocked fridge when we arrived and great views. Mornings began with a trip to the village market for fresh fruit. Then it was off to catch a bus, then one or two trains, boat rides, and then one or more cable cars before we finally began our hike.



Top: *Gentiana acaulis*. Bottom: *Gentiana verna*.

On one day we had as many as seventeen transfers to get to and from our hiking area so having the Swiss Pass certainly came in handy.

Our first day when we hiked to Magisclap, two cable stations up Hasliberg Mountain, was the best day for seeing alpines. We took one cable car and then had an easy, but steep, hike

up a paved road that twisted through meadows of wildflowers. The five hour hike to get back down was on a steep trail but there were scads of gentians in bloom. Since I love gentians, I especially liked to see masses of them along the trail.

I had read that the Schynige Platte Botanical Alpine Garden was a must-see but, to my disappointment, this garden didn't open until the end of June. Instead, we went to Allmondhubel, a "paradise for hikers" above Murren, at an

elevation of 6273 feet. Here, all plants were set in widely caged areas and clearly identified.

We loved seeing the meadows full of flowers as we hiked and it was of interest to me that the farmers are paid to not cut some fields until after July 15<sup>th</sup> so the wildflowers can set seed. And I was struck by the sight, in the middle of June, of a hillside covered with alpine crocus.



Top to bottom: *Dryas octopetala*, *Potentilla nivea*, and *Veronica satureioides* var. *kotchyana*.



*Crocus albiflorus* at high altitude in June.

### RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW

Annual membership runs February through January. Membership includes the newsletter, visits to members' gardens, plant sales and auctions, workshops, and access to top notch speakers.

Use the form below to renew your membership for one or more years at the rate of \$10 per year. Also, consider giving a gift membership to a gardening friend or relative: a one-time introductory gift membership is only \$7.

And while you are at it, don't forget to renew your membership in NARGS or join if you are not already a member. You will receive the NARGS **Rock Garden Quarterly**, have access to the seed exchange, and full access to the NARGS website which is a wealth of plant information. Membership is \$30. Make checks payable to **North American Rock Garden Society** and mail to: NARGS, P.O.Box 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619-8604; or go to [www.nargs.com](http://www.nargs.com) and click on 'Membership Form'.

**Renew now while you're thinking of it!**

### ANNUAL TREASURER'S REPORT 2014

Beginning Balance:		
Webster Checking A/C		\$3474.54
Income:		
Dues	\$450.00	
Fundraising	207.65	
Tri-state rebate	80.65	
Workshop	<u>180.00</u>	
		918.30
Expenses:		
Newsletter	< 29.64>	
Programs	< 960.00>	
Facility rental	< 40.00>	
Workshops	< <u>282.14</u> >	
		< <u>1311.78</u> >
Ending Balance		\$3081.06

*Sally Katkaveck*

### NARGS CT Chapter 2015 Membership Dues - \$10

Send this form along with check payable to **CT Chapter, NARGS**  
CT NARGS, Sally Katkaveck, Treasurer, 82 Ashford Rd., Ashford, CT 06278

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Gift Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Sending the newsletter digitally saves money. All e-mail addresses are confidential and are not shared.

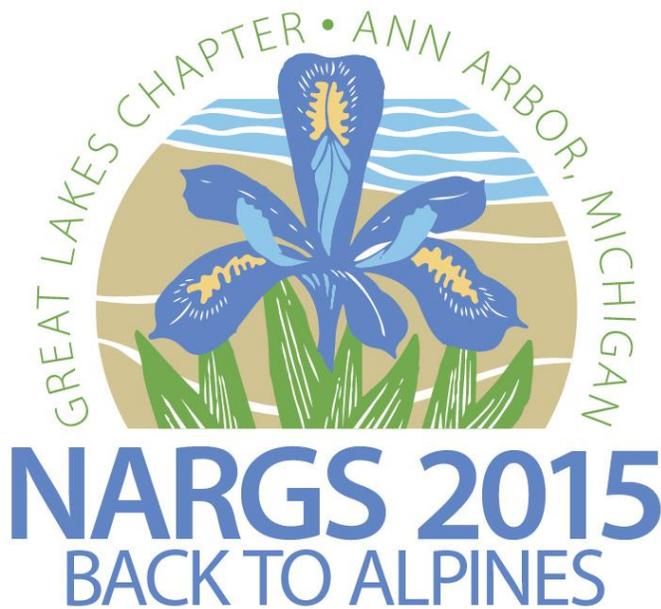
**CT NARGS needs your time and talents. Please consider volunteering for:**

\_\_\_Programs Coordinator      \_\_\_Workshop Leader

\_\_\_Program Presenter      \_\_\_Garden Host/Hostess      \_\_\_Newsletter Article

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## BACK TO ALPINES – OUR UPCOMING NATIONAL MEETING



The last time our Chapter was on the docket for a National Meeting was 2003 – when we conducted a successful Winter Study Weekend. This time, we are “on” for the Annual Meeting, and we have a great program outlined. Our venue will be Ann Arbor’s own Weber’s Inn.

This will be a superb chance to see and hear great speakers and see great gardens, to say nothing of buying super plants, tufa, troughs, and books!

We hope as many of you as are able will take advantage of this meeting. It is also a rare chance to meet and talk with Rock Gardeners from all over the US and Canada together in one place. We need support from our membership – and feel free to pass this Newsletter to gardening friends who may be interested. If you are local, you can attend while staying at home, and just take advantage of Weber’s fine dining and facilities. If you are out of town, we have negotiated a very favorable rate of \$99 per night (plus tax).

A brief DRAFT outline of our events is below:

### **THURSDAY, MAY 7**

4:00 – 5:30 Dinner on own

4:00 – 5:30 PM Sales area & Silent Auction open

5:30 – 6:30 PM: Evening Reception (hors d'oeuvres, cash bar)

6:30 PM: Door Prizes & Auction

7:00 PM: Introductory Remarks [brief program after this commenting on past inspirational gardeners of the Chapter that we have lost recently – including Betty Blake, Fred Case, Leila Bradfield, Dick Punnett]

7:30 PM Evening program – **Tony Reznicek** – *The Michigan Landscape and Gardening in It*

8:30 – 11:00 PM Sales area & Silent Auction open

### **FRIDAY MAY 8**

7:00 AM: Breakfast

8:30 AM – 3:30 PM Bus tours of local gardens and natural areas

4:00 – 5:30 PM Sales area & Silent Auction open

5:30 – 6:30 Evening Reception (hors d'oeuvres, cash bar)

6:30 PM: Door Prizes & Auction

7:00 PM: Dinner

8:00 PM **Ger van den Beuken** – *Growing High Alpines at Sea Level or Below*

9:00 PM **Ger van den Beuken** – *Argentina & Chile in 50 minutes* - for dedicated gardeners

10:00 – 11:00 PM Sales area & Silent Auction open

### **SATURDAY MAY 9**

7:00 AM: Breakfast

8:30 AM – 3:30 PM Bus tours of local gardens and natural areas

4:00 – 5:30 PM Sales area & Silent Auction open; Silent Auction Bids end 5:30 PM

5:30 – 6:30 Evening Reception (hors d'oeuvres, cash bar)

6:30 PM: Door Prizes, & Auction & Silent Auction wins

7:00 PM: Dinner

8:00 PM NARGS Awards, etc.

8:30 – 9:30 PM – **Malcom McGregor** – *Rock Gardening – or What’s a Heaven For*

9:30 – 11:00 PM Sales area open

### **SUNDAY MAY 10**

10 AM – 5:00 PM: On your own – Open Garden Tours, Nursery visits, etc.

12:30 PM – Departure of Post Conference Trip

### **OUR SPEAKERS:**

**Tony Reznicek** – *The Michigan Landscape and Gardening in It*

Tony is Curator at the University of Michigan Herbarium, expert on the Great Lakes region flora and sedges, and an avid gardener, used to battling the climate and local fauna.

**Ger van den Beuken – *Growing High Alpines at Sea Level or Below & Argentina & Chile in 50 minutes*** Ger is an internationally known Dutch rock gardener, experienced with growing and propagating choice alpinists, especially Daphne, and the use of tufa.

**Malcom McGregor – *Rock Gardening – or What’s a Heaven For*** Malcolm is a popular lecturer known to us all as Editor of the Quarterly, and is an expert on and author of a comprehensive book about Saxifrages.

These are all great speakers, sure to be both entertaining and informative.

**VENDOR LIST** (Still tentative):  
Arrowhead Alpines, Benedict’s Nursery, Duvall Nursery, Don LaFond’s Troughs, Great Lakes Orchids, White Raven Books, Wrightman Alpines, and our Chapter will also have a table or two – and lots of tufa!

**THE GARDENS** we will be visiting with the bus tours are all local, keeping driving time to a minimum:

**Don & Mary LaFond:**



**Tony & Susan Reznicek:**



**Jacques & Andrea Thompson:**



**Bev & Bob Walters:**



Along with these four gardens, we will have brief (20 min) workshops at each garden as a “how to” showcase of some of the unique elements in the garden.

Plus, we will be visiting two **NATURAL AREAS** – a sand barren NW of Ann Arbor where we should be able to celebrate a large colony of the Bird’s foot violet, the



finest eastern North American species and also a rich deciduous forest where we will show visitors our beautiful burst of spring bloom, especially trilliums.



There will be **OPEN GARDENS & NURSERIES** to visit on Sunday, May 10.

Plus, we will have **POST CONFERENCE TOUR**, May 10-12. The post conference field trip will be to the “Straits Region” of Michigan, about 280 miles north of Ann Arbor, with stops on the way there and back. The focus will be on natural rock gardens and rock garden plants in the wild. We will look at shaded and sunny rock outcrops, rocky, gravelly, and sandy beaches, and open communities back of the beaches, plus a stop to see large stands of trilliums, and brief stops for other selected items including sand dunes, and, if time allows, jack pine barrens. It will be early for large scale bloom, but we should certainly see bloom in many species with some nice displays. This is limited to 24 people.

**REGISTRATION:**

We would prefer if you register through the NARGS website [www.nargs.org](http://www.nargs.org) but if you do not have computer access, please fill out this form with check payable to “NARGS – Great Lakes Chapter” and mail it to:

**Libby Greanya, Conference Registrar,  
2204 Vandemere Dr., Jackson, MI 49201 USA**

Keep in mind that you need to be a NARGS member to register (though you can join on this form or online if you are registering online). If more than one member of a household is registering for the meeting, please

complete a registration form for each person. If you will be accompanied by a guest who will **not** be attending the trips and programs, but wishes meals, please also fill out an additional form for them. Thanks.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Mailing address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State /Prov.:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Postal/Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Country:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone:** (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Vegetarian:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Yes / No**  
**Any other special dietary requirements:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Registration (enter amount on space to the right)**  
**Registration US\$290 (US\$325 after March 20, 2015)**  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**1-year NARGS membership (if not a member):**  
**US\$30** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guest** (meals only, include another Registration Form with their name, etc.): **US\$120** \_\_\_\_\_

**Post-Conference trip, May 10–12:** US\$235 per person, double occupancy; US\$295 per person single occupancy (cost covers transportation, lodging in St. Ignace, box lunches, and refreshments. Breakfast and dinner will be as a group, but at local restaurants.)  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**[NOTE: Sorry, no refunds after April 20]**

**GETTING A ROOM AT WEBER’S**

Our host hotel is Ann Arbor’s own Weber’s Inn (Weber’s Restaurant and Boutique Hotel). Weber’s is an Ann Arbor institution, a family owned hotel, restaurant, and conference center renowned for its food and local atmosphere. Rooms are available at a special NARGS rate of \$99.00 per night. Please contact the hotel directly, before March 20, 2015, and use the Code: MAR050715 when registering. Toll Free Number: (800) 443-3050, Local Number: (734) 769-2500.

The address is:  
Weber’s Restaurant and Boutique Hotel, 3050 Jackson Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48103. [www.webersinn.com](http://www.webersinn.com)



NARGS Connecticut Chapter  
Maryanne Gryboski, Editor  
88 Eager Rd., Franklin, CT 06254