

Newsletter

***North American Rock Garden Society
Berkshire Chapter October 2013***

Next Meeting:

Saturday, October 12, @ 10:30 AM

Berkshire Botanical Garden Exhibit Hall
BBG is located 2 miles west of Stockbridge,
MA at the junction of Routes 102 & 183

AM: Ian Young: Highland Gathering

"This talk was developed for the 2011 International Conference looking at the development and philosophy of our garden."



Lunch – BYO

We welcome dessert contributions.
Lunch will be followed by our Plant
Sale

PM: Ian Young: Bulbs in The Garden

"How we use bulbs in the garden to create interest and color for as many months as possible - concentrates on the use of bulbs rather than their botany."



AUTUMN COLOR IN THE ROCK GARDEN



Autumn is an interesting time in the rock garden for me. First, there's the ongoing task of removing leaf litter, which increases every day until Halloween here in north central Massachusetts. At the same time I'm planting bulbs, collecting seed for the NARGS seed exchange, transplanting choice volunteers that I missed last month in my rush to get them ready for our plant sale, planting out the last few seedlings from last year's sowing that are finally big enough for the open garden, and finishing up the weeding I neglected in August. And of course I'm enjoying the flowers that grace my garden in the fall, which are surprisingly plentiful and beautiful.

The most rampant of my fall favorites is *Chrysanthemum weyrichii*, a spreading daisy from Sakhalin Island and northern Japan, which starts to bloom in mid-September every year. I have the white variety. This plant has

taken over a large portion of one bed, increasing about one foot per year in all directions. It's not hard to control if you keep at it, and the reward in September is well worth the trouble. Right now it's covered with blooms, which in turn are covered with bumblebees every afternoon when the sun warms them. All you need to do is put a plant in the ground, water it a couple of times, and it will grow. It needs some sun, but is quite amenable to almost any set of conditions.



Chrysanthemum weyrichii

More reserved, but still beautiful, are the several daphnes which are currently blooming for the first or second time. Among them are *Daphne caucasica*, which was a gift from John Bieber about five years ago. It's a medium sized plant, but John says it can be restrained (if necessary) by "pinching and pruning." It's well worth the space, given the lovely white flowers, which are showing up for the second time this year. It's now about one and a half feet tall and wide, and I hope to keep it at no more than two feet in both directions. I have it growing in full sun in well drained soil with a pH of 7.

Another daphne showing off now is *Daphne x mantensiana*, which I bought from Rick Lupp two years ago. This is a dwarf variety that blooms a dark, highly fragrant rose with deep lavender inside and glossy green rounded leaves. The flowers, suitable for cutting, appeared first in the spring and re-blossomed a few weeks ago. It's planted in full sun in a gravelly soil that I keep fairly moist.



Daphne caucasica

One plant that is almost too common, but so beautiful when it blooms that I have it in several locations, is *Sedum sieboldii*. This lovely mound-like species splays out from the center like a miniature fountain. It has half-inch rosy flowers in the fall and blue-green leaves with matching rosy margins. Temperatures in the mid-30s, which we have recently been experiencing overnight, bring out the pink in the leaves. *Sedum sieboldii* grows to four inches tall and about twice as wide. It's growing in full sun but does reasonably well in part shade, as long as it gets at least four hours of sun a day. And it's not likely to seed everywhere, as some sedums are wont to do!



Tricyrtis macranthopsis

The last fall bloomer I'll mention is *Tricyrtis macranthopsis*, a very choice toadlily. I bought 2 from Oliver Nursery 4 years ago, at Lori Chips' suggestion, and I've been extremely pleased with the plant. It needs shade and

moisture, which this year was a challenge given the extreme heat we experienced in August, but I must have watered it enough, and although it's not as beautiful as usual, it's blooming and the blooms are quite.....well, exotic.

All in all, autumn is a lovely time to be a gardener, and one we often diminish given the explosion of color we experience in May and June. But it certainly is not to be overlooked.

TEXT AND IMAGES BY PETER GEORGE

SHOCK AND AWE



TEXT BY DEAN EVANS

First of all I would like to thank our President, Judy Brown, for her article (July 2013 issue of the BNARGS newsletter) describing my garden. She only mentioned but a small amount of what she actually saw. One thing that surprised me was her failure to comment on the three Jersey bull calves in my back yard, but I assume many of you have found how useful they can be, and have your own! I bring bull calves home from the farm each spring as summer pets. They're therapeutic and watching them graze relaxes the mind. A cow extends its tongue, using it to sweep grass towards its mouth, and then rips the grass off with its teeth while moving its neck side to side or upwards. A cow only has teeth on the bottom – its top jaw has hard rough gums. Horses also use their lips and will pull the grass out by the roots and eventually destroy a field if not moved to another grazing field. Cows also clean up brush by eating the leaves – this stresses the saplings and they will start to die. My calves get very friendly throughout the

season because I feed them well and give them treats. For example, while watching TV I cut up apples in chunks. This year there has been a massive quantity of apples, enough so that limbs that were not propped to give them support oftentimes broke. Unfortunately people don't have the time or the knowledge required, and many good trees have been destroyed this year. I asked a gentleman if I could have some apples from a tree in his yard and he agreed. I backed my pickup truck under one large limb, stood in the box and shook a huge quantity off. Even so there were still more apples left on the limb than there would be on it in an average year. My calves are not only very pretty but perform a valuable service. When I pull weeds, they go into a pail along with a small quantity of grain. The calves eat them up and process them so they decompose much faster in the compost pile than they would if they were thrown in directly from the garden. The compost pile worms have even learned to listen for my footsteps. When Judy and her husband left my place I recognized their expression as what I call "shock and awe".

All gardens have a theme or reflect the gardener's personality. I have been able to blend those two great American classics: Tobacco Road and Lonesome Dove.



In the past I have written at length about slugs and have stated that few alpine plants have developed defenses against slugs. It is heartbreaking to plant a pot of seedlings that you

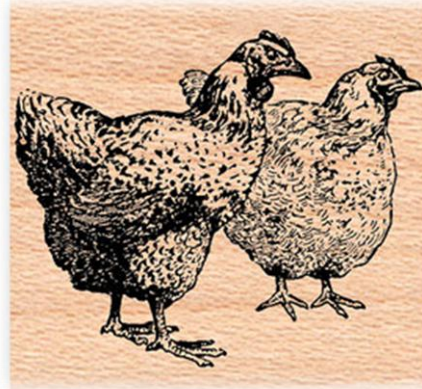
have grown with such pride, waiting for the day you will see these plants bloom as they appear in beautiful color pictures in the Quarterly, only to find that the slugs have eaten them. Sometimes the culprit has stayed on after full sunrise to complete the job. This has driven me to develop strategies to control their numbers. One thing I do is put some organic material down – weeds, leaves and the like – in a small pile. I cover this with a flattened cardboard cereal box to retain moisture, and I also spread a plastic potting soil bag over the whole thing which is weighed down. When I check these there are always worms and occasionally some large slugs. The largest worms go into the compost pile because I can pick them quickly. The large slugs are put into a different un-flattened cereal box. When I am done checking piles, the box containing the slugs is thrown into my outside soil-cooking woodstove. Oftentimes I move the pile over and allow the area to dry. This leaves a quantity of worm castings which can then be swept up using a whisk broom with a small dustpan and placed in a 5 gallon plastic bucket for future use potting house plants.



It is remarkable how little cereal comes in a box these days. They say the contents settle but they won't shake the box while filling to give the purchaser real value. So you end up buying a box with a picture of a smiling sports hero or other expensive advertising artwork that costs more than the contents. I at least get some value out of the box.

I checked in the barn and I only have eighteen 6 and 5 gallon polytainer seed pots cooked and stored so far, a testament to how the rain and this worn out hip have hindered my activities. Of

course I spend a lot of time with my dog Tommy, sitting around, taking rides out to the Amish farm and produce auctions on Tuesdays and Fridays and kicking a half-inflated soccer ball for him to chase, bark at and fetch. But I am all in at the end of the day. I've been medicating myself using hen cone injections. When I am at the auction I buy the old scaly leg hens. I make soup and my favorite meal, chicken and dumplings. It's a staple in my diet. The cones I razor off and cook down to a syrupy slimy gelatin which I inject into my right hip as a lubricant, mixing in a small amount of Butazolidin. I use an old pair of logging boots that were in the attic out at the farm – they had quite a history as they were used by my uncle in the 1932 Winter Olympics at Lake Placid when he was recruited as a ski jumper by the logging crew of Blount Lumber. I screwed a hook into each sole so I can hang upside down from a pipe placed in a doorframe. While in this position and using a large syringe that I obtained while apprenticing at Vernon Downs years ago, I inject my relief medicine. Of course it would be much more painful if I didn't clean the injection site with hard cider as well drink a quart-size canning jar first! In a day or two I am back strutting around in the barnyard, but I am going to have this hip replaced on Nov. 12 of this year.



BNARGS PROGRAMS FOR 2013

October 12

Ian Young – NARGS Speakers Tour

November 2

Our **Annual Luncheon** at the Red Lion Inn and a program by Mike Stewart on Dwarf Rhododendrons

Our November Luncheon Meeting

Lunch Information

November 2nd 12:30

Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge, MA

Price: \$29.00 per person



1st course - Salad

2nd course - Pan-seared salmon with chive
puree

Or

Herbed grilled chicken with lemon-thyme jus

Dessert

Seasonal Fruit Crisp with whipped cream

Please contact Dean Evans, 27 Firetower Road,
Stephentown, NY 12168 for reservations.

revans8@nycap.rr.com

518-674-6038

IMPRESSIONS FROM A HILLBILLY OR A MICHIGAN POTATO FARMER IN THE BERKSHIRES

TEXT AND IMAGES BY DON LAFOND

There's a lot of rock out in your fields, a rock gardener's dream, a farmers nightmare. Out here rock is available but not as ubiquitous as it is in your area, and it's mostly glacial till. Your rock is more suited to building a rock garden, more angular, easier to create crevices, of which I saw many nicely done. We on the other hand must purchase rock from rock dealers or be willing to go fairly far distances to find it.



Colchicum agrippinum – Peter George's Garden

It was much appreciated to be able to participate in your plant sale, thank you. I bought and was gifted some very nice plants. It's interesting to see what plants were in the sale, as was seeing what you grow in your gardens. Each garden I visit, of course, has different plants growing in it. That usually reflects what I see in local nurseries. But more than that, it reflects what grows well in your area. I saw a lot of diversity, but as I always say, try more things, kill 'em three times before you give up and let's make grass an endangered species! Also, and at the risk of sounding presumptuous, and as it is in our club also, (Great Lakes Chapter), some of



Bruce Lockhart's Rock Garden

you seem reluctant to pick up the small seedling pots. I encourage you all to be more adventurous and pick up the small seedlings, even though I won't get as many. Small plants establish better than big ones, especially in tufa.

Something I saw your group do in your plant sale I thought was particularly thoughtful and helpful was, people were asked to say something about what they brought. It showed some warmth before the intensity of the sale, and encourages the less experienced gardener. I will encourage our group to try this simple and pleasant practice also.

This was the first time I put on that talk. I was flattered and pleased that so many of you said nice things to me. Thank you so much for opening your gardens to me and for all of your hospitality. I hope to see you all in Michigan in 2015!



Lobelia siphilitica 'Mistassinica' – Peter George's Garden

FALL GARDEN TREATS

TEXT AND IMAGES BY ANNE SPIEGEL

A tour of the garden in the fall is usually very quiet compared to the riot of color in the spring, yet it has many rewarding plants.

Starting at the top level, I can enjoy *Malus* 'Red Jade'. This small tree, which was developed at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden, has a beautiful weeping habit and always elicits comments when it is covered in the spring with pinkish-white blossoms. The tree has been trimmed over the years to the shape of an umbrella and this year a bumper crop of bright red, small crabapples is making a brilliant display. Near the rock garden, the large white to pale pink flowers of *Chrysanthemum weyrichii* are spotted here and there, thanks to the policy of letting them grow where they are happy. Daisies under foot make autumn a cheerful season, and these spread delightfully, but are absolutely never a nuisance.



Zauschneria californica 'Etteri'

In the rock garden itself, September is quite subdued – unless, of course, you have discovered *Zauschneria*, a member of the Onagraceae. The name is a bit unwieldy but it is attached to an amazing group of plants. They are from our west, mostly in California. There is a plethora of common names attached to these plants, among them; "Arizona Fuschia", "Firebird Chalice", "California Fuschia", and "Hummingbird Trumpet". (You can see why the gardener would be lost without proper names.) They are mostly xeric plants but many are surprisingly tolerant of garden conditions.

The colors range from mid-oranges all the way to a deep red-orange which give a clarion call to any hummingbirds in the area. These are colors I usually avoid because it takes a fair amount of skill to harmonize them with the pinks, blues, reds and yellows of spring. *Zauschnerias*, however, don't start blooming until August or early September and then continue until heavy frost. At this time of year in my garden there isn't a great deal of color competition, so the *Zauschnerias* are encouraged to spill their brilliant colors everywhere.



Zauschneria californica 'Etteri'

The first *Zauschneria* in the garden was *Z. garrettii*, because it was touted as the hardiest, and the likeliest to have time to hit prime bloom in a cold climate. Seed is obtainable from Alan Bradshaw at Alplains. It is a large plant, far larger than I would want in the rock garden, but there are some smaller named varieties available. *Zauschneria garrettii* 'Orange Carpet' was the first to be tried. This one is much smaller and is ideal for the top of the wall. It grows like a large ground cover, reaching 8" high and then spilling its soft branches gracefully over the wall. It is supposed to prefer afternoon shade but it's doing fine here in full sun and very fast-draining scree. It is also said to want extra watering during its flowering season but it doesn't receive that here and the bloom is still very good. It would probably be even better with water, but this is an unwatered garden thanks to a very finite well. I've seen photos where the flowers totally obscure the foliage. The small leaves are green and the flowers a soft mid-orange. Here it has already been flowering almost a month. It was selected by David Salman of High Country Gardens (my original source) and was the 2001 Plant Select winner.

Zauschneria californica 'Etteri' grows in semi-desert conditions and is the earliest of the *Zauschnerias* to flower in my garden, where it is planted in a crevice between two giant rocks and splashes its almost startlingly brilliant, deep red-orange flowers against the stone. It is supposed to stay low (10") and spread two feet wide. It started blooming here the second week of August and the display is still going strong and getting better and better, definitely a very flashy plant. To see this plant in flower is to love it. My source for this was Bill Adams' Sunscapes Nursery in Colorado.



Zauschneria garrettii 'Siskiyou Dwarf'

Another small *Z. garrettii* in my garden is *Z. garrettii* 'Siskiyou Dwarf', also with green foliage. They're planted in crevices on the back of the cliff in full sun and blasting wind, where they make a 6" high soft, small mound. They have retained this height for three years now and are slowly increasing their girth. In general, crevice planting tends to encourage slower growth, but the plants are protected from the ups and downs of our winter temperatures and will sail through conditions that can devastate other parts of the rock garden. The flowers of *Z. garrettii* 'Siskiyou Dwarf' are a deeper orange but the plants are not yet in full bloom. Fall bloomers in my garden are always a guessing game – will they hit their potential before we have a deep frost? For most of the *Zauschnerias* growing here the answer has been "yes".

The last one in the garden is *Z. latifolia* v *prostrata*, a very congested plant with grey-green foliage that is living up to its name. It is planted in a wall crevice where it is closely hugging the stone as it creeps over. So far the quantity of bloom has been disappointing. The few flowers were a mid-orange and came in

August. I'm hoping that the blooming will improve with age because the growth habit makes this one very desirable for a wall or crevice



Zauschneria garrettii 'Orange Carpet'

I started planting Zauschnerias very cautiously, because there was so much uncertainty with the hardiness. So far, they've responded wonderfully and now caution has been thrown to the wind. Next one on the "to try" list in the spring will be *Z. californica* 'Wayne's Select', which Bill Adams says has silver foliage. The flowers on all these plants are narrow tubes which trumpet open at the ends. They are not huge on the ones I grow, but there are so many of them over such a long period and the colors are so bright that they can't be ignored. Too bad that the main flush of garden visitors comes in



Zauschneria latifolia 'prostrata'

the spring and they will miss seeing these in bloom. Our winters can be tough, so no dead branches are removed nor are the plants cut back until spring is firmly established. They all seem to be root hardy and I've never had to prune *Z. g.* 'Orange Carpet' at all. The Zauschnerias have behaved like the xeric plants most of them are, tolerating full sun and wind and no supplemental watering. They're also blooming

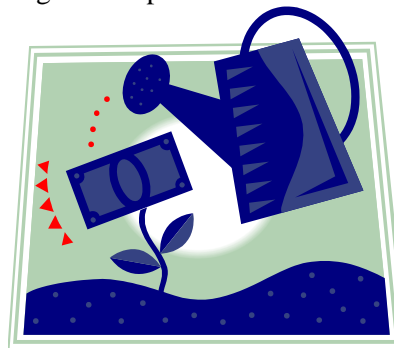
at a time of year where I can freely admit that I really like every shade of orange and red.

SOURCES OF ZAUSCHNERIA SEED AND PLANTS

www.Alplains.com
www.wrightmanalpines.com
www.highcountrygardens.com
www.sunscapes.net
www.laporteaavenuenursery.com
www.rockgardenplants.com
www.nargs.org/seed-exchange

THE BIG PLANT SALE WAS A SUCCESS!

The total amount of revenue from the September meeting plant sale was \$1,214.00. This includes both the sale and auction of plants. We asked that people price their own plants since there were hundreds of them. Peter George ran the sale and provided good opportunities for both the donors and participants a fair shot at getting the plants they wanted the most. This also makes it fun and beneficial to the Chapter's treasury. Tom Flanigan calmly took money from plant buyers and made change faster than I could imagine was possible.



It was great to see so many members and a few guests at this meeting. I hope you all will return on October 8, when we will have the pleasure of hearing this year's NARGS Speaker's Tour speaker, Ian Young.

Judy Brown - Chairperson

FUTURE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

ELIZABETH ZANDER – PROGRAM CHAIR

At the September meeting we discussed several options for future programs that would ensure a larger audience turnout, cut expenses and generate new members. Currently we have 10 meetings a year from March through November, generally on the first Saturday, October always excepted. And some years there is an additional Saturday when we meet on the second one due to BBG scheduling. The afternoon session of two of our meetings is our luncheon meeting as well as our BIG plant sale. All the rest have 2 lectures each. Our members travel from several states, some three or more hours away.



Over the past couple of years, the August and May meetings have been very poorly attended. It was discussed that in summer months, people would rather be in their own gardens. On our May date, there always seem to be many other meetings nearby and nationally. When we used May for a garden visit, it only drew a few people. Bringing in a speaker for two talks can range from \$400 to \$800 for a single meeting. Our bank account is healthy but we are not re-depositing that kind of money through our plant sales or auction efforts. In the past we drew heavily upon our very knowledgeable

membership for lectures. Also several members generously donated funds. Since our policy has been to not give members honorariums or expenses, the chapter was able to make very generous donations to the BBG and also increase our bank balance.

Proposed ideas include dropping the August and May meetings. We might also use those meetings for a picnic or open garden visit as our membership has many great gardens. We have already decided to dedicate our April meeting to a workshop (for 2014 it will be making a trough for the chapter to sell/ and possibly making one for yourself if time). Another idea is to hold an additional summer workshop (maybe June or July) on cuttings. And we could have a picnic tailgate sale at a June or July meeting during a members garden visit.



Troughs in Ian Young's Garden – image by Elizabeth Zander

Right now I should be starting to schedule programs for next year. The BBG has requested our dates. Let's get some discussion and comment via email or snail mail so we can finalize a decision at the October meeting. And please, let's make a list of who is willing to have the chapter visit their garden so we can group them by area. Also please signup now for the April trough workshop, since, depending on who is coming, we may schedule at some location other than the BBG. (It would be great to have a cement mixer.) You can email me at [canbya @gmail.com](mailto:canbya@gmail.com)

Visit Elisabeth Zander's blog, called
'Seed-aholic Times @
<http://www.seed-aholic.com/>

WHO IS IAN YOUNG?



Ian has been interested in the natural sciences all his life and began to discover the mountain flowers in Scotland at an early age and had his first introduction to wildflowers in the European Alps on family holidays in his teenage years.

Along with his wife, Margaret, he has gardened for nearly forty years. Their garden is densely planted with alpinines and woodland plants as well as a large number of trees and shrubs though Ian's passion is to have a garden which is more of a landscape than a plant collection.

The Youngs and their garden have been featured several times on UK television: it has been amusing for them to have been contacted from as far afield as Tasmania as a result of those programs being repeated on satellite television!

Ian has concentrated his attention on studying bulb cultivation for nearly 20 years now but not to the exclusion of other plants. He grows a great many bulbs both in the garden and in pots under glass.

He is a regular contributor for 'The Rock Garden' the twice yearly journal of the Scottish Rock Garden Club. He has also written for 'The Alpine Gardener' as well as other gardening magazines and his plant photographs have been widely published.

Every week since January 2003 Ian has written a Bulb Log Diary for the SRGC: <http://www.srgc.org.uk/logs/>

The Bulb Log with its record of Ian's methods and musings is eagerly anticipated and read by many thousands each week.

Ian is a popular speaker and has lectured widely in the UK, Europe, Scandinavia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. He is also a regular broadcaster on BBC Radio Scotland. Both Ian and Margaret regret that they are no longer able to exhibit on the same scale as before but as Judges and as Show Secretaries for Aberdeen, they are still much involved in the Show scene. When they were keenly active as exhibitors at the SRGC Shows, the Youngs won 9 Forrest Medals and 10 Gold Merit Medals, and several times won by a landslide the Plantsman of the Year Award for the premier exhibitor, (known as the Alpine Garden Society Salver and given by that society to the SRGC). They have also won a number of Gold Medals for displays of bulbs.



Ledbouria cooperi LEG 270 – image by Ian Young

Ian is also known for developing the method of turning polystyrene (Styrofoam) fish boxes into troughs that mimic the appearance of real stone; the SRGC has won many Gold Medals and Best in Show Awards at National Shows using these troughs and this method has been taken up widely, with demonstrations of the technique being given across the UK, in New Zealand, Canada and America by all sorts of different alpine groups.

Ian has been on the SRGC Council since 1989, serving as President from 2000 to 2003. He is a member of the SRGC contingent of the RHS Rock Garden Plant Committee.

Since 2003 Ian has led the development of the SRGC internet presence and been Chairman of the web site. In 2007 he and Margaret were honored to be (jointly) awarded the Queen

Elizabeth, the Queen Mother Medal by the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society for outstanding service to Scottish horticulture. In 2008 Ian was awarded the SRGC Golden Jubilee Salver for outstanding service to the SRGC.



Trough in Ian Young's Garden – image by Elizabeth Zander

In 2010 he established, with Margaret Young and Zdeněk Zvolánek as co-editors, the online magazine 'International Rock Gardener' which appears each month on the SRGC website, to encourage further interaction of the wide international fellowship of the alpine plant world.

Ian is also an accomplished artist and sculptor and has had a number of successful solo and group exhibitions and has work in many public as well as private collections. He has always had a great love of music but nowadays his time for music is limited to some guitar playing as he formulates his next project in the garden!

Editor's Note: This descriptive article first appeared on the Alpine Garden Society website, in the events section. Ian Young was a speaker at the 8th International Rock Garden Conference, and this was his 'introduction' to the potential attendees.

<http://www.alpinegardensociety.net/events/2011/speakers/Ian+Young/31>

"Though an old man, I am but a young gardener."-- Thomas Jefferson

FROM STEVE WHITESELL OF THE MANHATTAN CHAPTER OF NARGS



Date: Oct 20, 2013 - 8:30am
Location: Carriage Barn @ Lyndhurst
Tarrytown, NY

Tri-State Meeting

Ian Young - NARGS Speakers Tour

Ian Young and his wife Maggie produce The International Rock Gardener. Ian gardens in Aberdeen and his success with bulbs is legendary to readers of The Rock Garden, the journal of the Scottish Rock Garden Club. Ian is also familiar to past attendees of the Tri-State meeting and a must-see for all rock gardeners. Please plan to attend this special meeting, plant sale, and raffle. Second talk begins at 1pm.

Ian Young will give two talks:

Bulbs in the Garden - "How we use bulbs in the garden to create interest and color for as many months as possible - concentrating on the use of bulbs rather than their botany."

Nature, the Gardener's Tutor - "Looking at the lessons that I have learned from both visiting plants in the wild and observing them in the garden."

There will be vendors, door prizes, an auction, a raffle and plentiful victuals for the attendees.

NOTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 7 MEETING

JACQUES MOMMENS – MEETING RECORDER

Don LaFond was our speaker that day. The range of plants he likes and grows is enormous: tulip species such as *Tulipa vvedenskyi*, *Iris bucharica*, *Iris paradoxa* (must be dry in winter), *Erythronium americanum* (and yes, his are blooming nicely), *Erythronium revolutum*, *Trilliums*, including the famous double, *Oxytropis* (in lean soil and with good air circulation), *Astragalus monspessulanus*, *Astragalus sericoleucus*, *Cardiocinum glehnii*, *Disporum maculatum*, *Lewisia tweedyi* (high shade, drainage, very fertile soil, almost pure compost), *Lewisia rediviva* (in a mixture of sand and turface, totally dry during the Summer),



Daphne cneorum 'Benaco'

Campanula zoysii. And daphnes, including a very exciting new *Daphne cneorum*, a deep red which is not yet in the trade. Don talked mostly about what happens in his garden, for each plant mentioning the type of soil, exposures, and other conditions that he provides. He is a true hands-on gardener: he grows a lot from seeds and has firsthand experience and knowledge of the plants at all stages of their development. Don talked for about one hour. He could have talked twice as much and still we wouldn't have had enough. But, here is the good news: it seems that there are plans to have the 2015 NARGS Annual Meeting in Michigan, and we shall have the chance to see the real thing, along with such

fantastic gardens as Jacques Thomson's.



Stewartia rostrata

http://1003gardens.blogspot.com/2011_05_08_archive.html

In the afternoon we had the BIG plant sale. After hearing Don LaFond, we had renewed dreams, enhanced hopes and expectations: we were not disappointed. The Big plant sale was very successful. Perhaps not the biggest in terms of quantities, but certainly deserving high marks in terms of quality and varieties of offerings. Many members had brought rather special plants and gave a few useful and welcome comments on the plants, their needs or their origins. The list goes like this: Lori Chips, Dean Evans, Peter George, the Kenners, Judith Sellers, John Spain, Judith Sellers, Anne Spiegel, and Elisabeth Zander. Is that all? No, there were more but they were too shy to show their plants, unreasonably and unjustifiably so. For example, Harold Peachy had brought (among other things) a nice and unusual *Podophyllum (pleianthum?)*; Elaine Chittenden had donated the rarely seen *Stewartia rostrata*. To all who donated plants to the sale, we owe a BIG thank you. The plants offered were always of high quality and in very good shape. There were too many varieties to list, but to give an idea of the range, the list comprised: *Penstemon rupicola*, cacti, Redfield strain of primulas, *Rhododendron kiusianum*, *Colchicum*, etc., even a magnolia and fig tree with 3 figs. One plant must be singled out: the new red *Daphne cneorum*, donated by Don LaFond. Wow! That deserves special Thanks.



FOUR SMALLER DAPHNES FOR A TROUGH

TEXT BY HARVEY WRIGHTMAN

The smaller *Daphne* species, beautiful as they are, can be troublesome to grow – not impossible, but demanding. With the increasing popularity of trough culture, slower growing, woody plants are sought after to add some sense of scale to plantings. Not everyone wants to wait and fuss over one of the *Daphne petraea* clones or even *Daphne velenovskyi*. They are never big to begin with and they take time to settle in and produce growth. Travelers to the Lake Garda region will find *Daphne cneorum* growing in close association with *D. petraea*. Plantsman Arthur Hill, in the 1930's, recognized natural hybrids between the 2 species. Not much attention was given these until 30 years later. Collectors now have brought back and propagated a wide variety of material, varying in size, but with a good many of them retaining a dwarf stature and with their hybrid vigor, easily grown by anyone. Here are few notes about some we have grown.



Daphne arbuscula 'Muran Castle'- image by Esther Wrightman

Daphne x 'Kath Dryden' - this is a cross Robin White selected out of a batch of seedlings in 1997, the best one being named after one of the best English growers. Leaves are small, linear and a dark, almost blackish green. Broad and bushy in habit, it will curl itself into a rocky setting. Most distinctive is that the bright red buds retain the dark coloration when they open. The dense compact habit makes it easy to trim the plant to keep it within bounds. As with other

daphnes, after the spring flush, a sporadic re-bloom can come with cooler temperatures in the fall.



Daphne x 'Kath Dryden' – image by Esther Wrightman

Daphne x 'Aurora' - this is a splendid hybrid from Rick Lupp who used *Daphne. cneorum* 'pygmaea alba' with *Daphne petraea* 'Grandiflora' capturing the white flowers (with just a hint of pink) – very striking set off by the dark green leaves. The habit is compact with longer, linear/ovate leaves. The flowers are large and very fragrant.



Daphne x hendersonii (ex Rick Lupp) – image by Esther Wrightman

Daphne x 'Rick Lupp' – This one is a bit of a puzzle. I got it from Barrie Porteous' Muskoka garden a few years ago. He had no name for it, but recollected it came from one his western excursions, remembering that he would often ask one-off oddities that every nurseryman has. This one a unnamed seedling that Rick was not interested in keeping, and when I asked rick about it, the question drew a blank. It resembles a typical *Daphne x hendersonii* but the branches and leaf arrangement give a wonderful cascading, columnar effect not seen in other forms. Flowers are a medium pink, quite

fragrant. This is a plant that immediately attracts attention of garden visitors. It is a favorite, and once again we have Barrie to thank for growing it.

Daphne arbuscula 'Muran Castle' - Not a hybrid of course, but this very dwarf form of *Daphne arbuscula* was one of 4 clones Halda gave us. *D. arbuscula* 'Muran Castle' is by far the best. For 20 years it has occupied a slope in our limestone garden, gradually increasing its territory, never ceding any back. Growing on a blazing hot southern slope, the dark and glossy leaves never burn no matter how cold or hot it gets. Its home in Slovakia is close to the border with Ukraine, and on those snowless cliffs high above the Muran River valley, minus 30 C would easily be hit and sometimes minus 40. I have put it in troughs close to the edge where it can grip the stone and cascade over the lip. The dark green of the needles is really enough. The flowers, soft pink have the delicate *daphne* fragrance. You can never get too much.

ODDS AND ENDS

Planning for the 2014 NARGS Annual General Meeting in Santa Fe is almost complete. It will be held in Santa Fe, New Mexico in late August. Bill Adams and I are currently wrapping up negotiations with the hotel, and we should have the contract done by October 10th. We are planning a 3-day meeting followed by a pair of post-conference expeditions. I'll keep everyone apprised of the details as they develop.

The 2015 NARGS Annual General Meeting will be held in Ann Arbor during the second weekend of May. The meeting host will be the NARGS Great Lakes Chapter, and they are expecting three outstanding speakers. We will be visiting the excellent open gardens that abound in that part of Michigan. There will also be a post-conference trip to the Upper Peninsula – an unusual opportunity, and one that promises to be quite exciting. We'll be getting you more information over the next couple of months.

We are working with the leading American adventure travel company to develop an exciting range of expeditions over the next few years. The first one, to the Sierra Nevadas, is tentatively scheduled for late June or early July of 2014. Again, watch the website and the Quarterly for updates.



It's almost Seed Exchange time again. Hopefully you've all been collecting seed and getting ready to send it in before the end of October. The selection has gotten better each year, and again this year we're getting a large supply of wild collected seed from Alan Bradshaw of Alplains, so everyone who grows western plants should try to participate. It's easy and inexpensive, but you must be a member of NARGS. Just go to www.nargs.org and click on "SeedEx."

Finally, please remember that when you plan to buy anything through Amazon.com, you should go to www.nargs.org, click on the Amazon logo, and then make your purchase. For a few seconds of extra time, you'll be getting NARGS a 6% royalty on your purchase, which we most certainly need and appreciate. And, of course, **join** if you are not yet a member. Again, you can do it on the website, and it's really easy.

I look forward to seeing you all at our next meeting on Oct. 12th, and although it is late in the planting year, we still have time to get a few more plants in the ground. So bring a few for the plant sale.

PFG



Positions of Responsibility

Chairperson - Judy Brown
Vice-Chairperson – Dean Evans
Secretary – Carol Hanby
Treasurer – Pamela Johnson/Tom Flanigan
Archivist – James Fichter
Audio Visual Chairperson - Joe Berman
Greeter – Open
Independent Director – Erica Schumacher
Newsletter Editor – Peter George
Meeting Recorder – Jacque Mommens
Plant Sale Chairperson – Peter George
Program Chairperson – Elisabeth Zander
Proofreader – Martin Aisenberg
Refreshments Chairperson – Joyce Hemingson
Speaker Housing – Anne Spiegel

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Pamela Johnson

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Peter F. George, Editor
Berkshire Chapter NARGS
PO Box 833
Petersham, MA 01366