



Newsletter

North American Rock Garden Society
Connecticut Chapter March/April 2017

MARCH MEETING

Sunday, March 26, 2017 11am
Tolland Ag Center, Vernon, CT

Joseph Tychonievich
Rock Gardening: Reimagining a Classic Style
For Today's Garden

Joseph earned his BS in horticulture from Ohio State University, went on to work at Shibamichi Honten Nursery in Saitama, Japan, has been a repeated guest on public radio's food show **The Splendid Table**, spent two years working at Arrowhead Alpines and was named by Organic Gardening Magazine as one of "...six young horticulturists who are helping to shape how America gardens."

Joseph is the author of **Plant Breeding for the Home Gardener** and **Rock Gardening: Reimagining a Classic Style**.

His presentation includes a survey of gorgeous rock gardens from around the world, the techniques and methods specific to creating and maintaining a rock garden, and profiles of some top rock garden plants.

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.

APRIL MEETING

Saturday, April 29, 2017
Home of Jeana Richo
841 Litchfield Tpke., Bethany, CT

Styrofoam Trough Workshop

This is a repeat of the of the 2013 **outdoor workshop** where we transform good-sized Styrofoam boxes into

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

After a mild fall and winter, with a 17" snowfall in 8 hours on February 9th, I eagerly await signs of spring. Sunday the nineteenth greeted me with the sight of winter aconites (*Eranthis hyemalis*) in bloom near the house where the snow had melted! Then, I noticed *Hamamelis* 'Arnold Promise' had begun to bloom.

I am reading a gem of an article, *Unusual Ways with Alpines*, written by Graham Strong. The subtitle: *The diminutive size and special needs of alpines set a difficult challenge for creating original and effective displays in the garden.* The article appeared in the March 2002 issue of **The Garden: The Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society** and presents many interesting ways to bring alpines into our gardens and yards. I am anxious to share it with members and hope to make copies for display at the March meeting; I will also attempt to send it in an e-mail.

It is always a delight to consider new and novel ideas. And, to add to that thought, we need to consider similar ways to increase membership in our NARGS chapter. Bring your ideas to the March meeting or e-mail them to me.



~Ginny

PRUNING DEMO January 22, 2017

By Marianne Gryboski



Although short notice was given for the rescheduled January pruning demo, ten members arrived at the garden of Leslie Shields that mild Sunday afternoon.

Kevin Wilcox began his demo by describing the tools best used for the job and showing us how to maintain them. He advised us to use by-pass pruners to cut small diameter stems as they slice through wood, wounding the plant less than anvil pruners which crush stems; loppers on anything up to 1 ¼" diameter; and a pruning saw on branches thicker than that. If you are struggling with your tool and wiggling it to force your cut, you may be causing permanent warping to the blade: use a more appropriate tool to avoid damage. When cleaning and sharpening your tools, take them apart so you can reach all surfaces. Kevin suggests photographing the tool at each step so you will have visual evidence of how to put it together again. Use 70% rubbing alcohol to sterilize it – a bleach solution needs to be carefully wiped dry so as not to rust the tool whereas alcohol evaporates. On a pruning saw, clean by saturating a rag and using it to pull out all that you can from the teeth. Sharpen the beveled edge of your pruner by working in a circular motion on a diamond sharpener. Finally, rub all metal parts with a light 3-in-1 oil before reassembly and always keep blade and saw edges away from your body.

- Prune woody plants during growth or before the start of growth so the plant can heal prior to entering dormancy. On large branches, do an ABC cut: under-cut 1/3 of the way into the stem a bit away from the branch collar; over-cut further out for a clean break; then find the collar and come out ¼" to make the



final cut. NEVER cut or wound the branch collar.

- Water sprouts should be pruned when the plant is in leaf because shade helps to prevent their recurrence.
- To cut a stem with a slightly larger diameter than the tool is designed for, put downward pressure on the stem.
- It is always better to cut with the tool blade facing down or on the horizontal.
- Shortening a branch should only be done to keep it in line with the size of the tree.
- Let cuts dry to prevent infection from invading.

For an extended reach, Kevin used a Fiskars Power-Stroke which has a chain pull mechanism instead of rope and a blade head that rotates for precise angles.



Photo by Jeana Richo.

NARGS CT CHAPTER OFFICERS

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**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES
ARE DUE NOW**



Hepatica nobilis and *Primula vulgaris* in bloom.

By Bonnie Maguire

In April of 2015, Bill Hoover and I traveled to the old Yugoslavia. We visited Plitvice National Park, a World Heritage site in Croatia, with its thousands of waterfalls, sixteen lakes and a tremendous number of wildflowers growing in the surrounding woods. At Lake Bled in Slovenia yellow primroses and hepaticas grew through the grasses. There were cliffs just packed with all manner of wildflowers, including hellebores. An amazing place!



Hellebores pushing up through the leaves.

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troughs that resemble stone. The boxes will be provided but plan to bring rasps or files, a stiff metal brush and any gouging tools to create a rough, textured look. After the box is roughed up, we'll go over it with a heat gun which will be available for use. Be prepared to be covered in tiny balls of Styrofoam, so wear old clothes. If you wish to paint your trough that day, bring old brushes and rags; the Chapter will provide some acrylic paints for use but consider bringing any appropriate left-over exterior paints which you may have hanging around. Starting time is 9am but those who come later can easily catch up.

Those wishing to make a trough should contact Jeana fricho@snet.net by April 23rd so she can have some idea of the number of boxes to have on hand. Bring your lunch and plan to visit nearby Broken Arrow Nursery after the workshop.

From I-84 eastbound, take Rte.8 south via exit 19. Go 4.8 miles to exit 27/Maple St. Go straight onto S. Main St., which turns into Rte.63, for about 5 miles. Turn slight left onto Litchfield Tpke.; go 0.2 miles to house.

From I-84 westbound, take exit 26/Rte.70 toward Cheshire/Prospect for 0.3 miles. Turn left on Waterbury Rd./Rte.70 for 0.2miles. Turn right on Summit Rd. for 3.1 miles. Turn left on Rte. 69 and follow for 3.5 miles. Turn right on Rte. 42 for 1.2 miles, then left on Rte.63/Rte.42/Amity Rd. for 0.4 miles. Turn left on Litchfield Tpke.; go 0.2 miles to house.

From Merritt Pkwy., take exit for Rte.69 just west of tunnel. Go north and take first left on Lucy St. Take first right on Amity Rd./Rte.63 for 8 miles. Take sharp right on Litchfield Tpke.; go 0.2 miles to house. If you lose your way on day of event, call **203.393.0007**.

NARGS Tours

NARGS is sponsoring two tours this summer: the Dolomites and the Bighorns. While both original tours have filled, second tours have been added and are open to chapter members.

A second tour to the Dolomites is scheduled for June 21-28. The group will be based in the Fassa Valley and will visit the Rolle Pass, Pordoi Pass, Cimon della Pala, the Paneveggio National Park and the Rosengarten. Group size 10-16, walking 4-7 miles/day. Price \$1949. Contact davidphillips@naturetrek.co.uk or Malcolm McGregor mmcg@mmcg.karoo.co.uk. The second Bighorns tour is June 14-19. Email jodycpayne@gmail.com for information.

June Trip to Coastal Maine Botanic Garden

Joyce Fingerut has arranged a 3-day trip to CMBG in June. The van can seat a maximum of 8 people and van seats will fill on a first come basis. See tentative itinerary below. To express interest contact Joyce: alpinegarden@comcast.net or (860) 535-3067.

Day 1: Tuesday, June 13: Travel to and visit Coastal Maine Botanic Garden; check into hotel(s); wander around and dine in Boothbay Harbor.

Day 2: Wednesday, June 14: Carol's Collectibles Nursery <http://carolscollectibles.com>; lunch at Chase's Daily, a famous vegetarian restaurant in Belfast <http://www.chasesdaily.me>; afternoon visit to a nearby coastal garden; possibly alpacas, yarns, soaps in Belfast <https://www.goodkarmafarm.com>; on the return trip to Boothbay Harbor: Fernwood Nursery, native & woodland plants, peonies, sheep/yarn <http://www.fernwoodnursery.com>.

Day 3: Thursday, June 15: Return trip: O'Donal's Nurseries <http://www.odonalsnurseries.com>; Estabrooks, perennials (*Meconopsis*), peonies, woodies <http://www.estabrooksonline.com>.



NARGS Connecticut Chapter
Maryanne Gryboski, Editor
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Transportation costs:

Enterprise Van - 12 passenger/5 bags (Ford Transit, or similar) for more than 4 people ~\$600 (van and gas) divided among the riders.

Add costs for:

- Hotel: 2 nights (half-price if you share a room)
- Meals: 3 lunches; 2 dinners; 2 breakfasts (which may be included in hotel)

.... and Plant Shopping!!

Accommodations: arrange your own and we can shuttle you there in the van, and again to dinner.

Howard House Lodge: www.howardhouselodge.com

Flagship Inn and Suites:

<http://www.hotelsone.com/boothbay-harbor-hotels-us/flagship-inn-and-suites.html?>

Beach Cove Waterfront Inn:

<http://www.beachcovehotel.com>

Boothbay Harbor Inn:

<http://www.boothbayharborinn.com>

Tugboat Inn: <http://www.tugboatinn.com>.

Dinners: choose your own.