



April 2019 PVC Bulletin

Potomac Valley Chapter
North American Rock Garden Society

Phlox stolonifera 'Blue Ridge', photo by S Strickler
<https://nargs.org/chapter/potomac-valley-chapter>

Spring 2019 Events Calendar

Programs are Saturdays at 10am (coffee at 9:30 am), unless otherwise noted.

April 27-28, **FONA/ US National Arboretum Plant Sale**. Saturday 9am -Noon FONA members only; Saturday Noon-4pm and Sunday 9am-4pm, open to public.

May 3-5, **NARGS Study Weekend**, Frazer, PA, (west of Philly) Hosted by DE Chapter:
<https://nargs.org/news/2017-07-29/study-weekend-may-2019-registration-open> Registration closed.

May 18, **Plant Sale, Greenspring Gardens**, 4603 Green Spring Rd., Alexandria, VA. Set-up on Friday beginning 8am. Sale: 9am – 3pm Saturday

May 25, **Plant Exchange**, Home of Barbara Rose, 10124 Homan Pond Dr, Fairfax Station, VA 22039

June 12, **Field trip to Meadowview Biological Research Station**, Woodford, VA (Details to follow.) A tour of carnivorous plant beds and the opportunity to buy plants – pitcher plants, sundews and others <http://www.pitcherplant.org/The-Joseph-Pines-Preserve/index.html> RSVP to Jim Dronenburg: 2rutlands@comcast.net by Monday June 3rd. Anyone expecting to place a large order must do so in advance.

June 22 **Open Gardens: 9am to NOON**. Visit the gardens of

- Pete Jones, 2816 16th St. S., Arlington, VA 22204; phone: 703- 521-0674
- Linus Chen, 10509 Samaga Drive, Oakton VA 22124; phone: 202-277-2309

Details to follow.

September 28, **Plant Exchange**, Home of Jim Hughes, 6909 Pineway, University Park, MD 20782

October DTBT– **Bradley Evans, USNA Horticulturist, “Spikey Plants (Agaves, Manfredas, and Dyckias) and Sub-tropicals for Washington DC”** Brad is responsible for the gardens around the Arboretum’s administration building and other high visibility areas. He will share his passion for spiky, prickly plants and discuss his care and design of the Arboretum’s north terrace garden where he incorporates many sub-tropicals.

In lieu of paying for a website, the board decided we should use our
FREE NARGS webpage here: <https://nargs.org/chapter/potomac-valley-chapter>

This is where you can find our calendar of events and newsletters. Google ‘Potomac Valley Chapter of NARGS’, and it will come up.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a spring it's been so far, absolutely glorious, the best in years! The magnolias in my yard have been spectacular, no fear of frost destroying the flowers this year. About 30 years ago, I purchased a foot tall rooted cutting of the yellow-flowered cultivar 'Elizabeth' for an outrageous price. That cutting is about 35 feet tall now and this year's flower display is the best I have ever seen. Hopefully a sign of more spectacular things to come!



And you've got to love the month of April in particular. As I walk around the garden, there are new flowers to see and new plants pushing up through the ground every day. I'm thrilled that all the exotic Podophyllums I planted last year are emerging as well as the Pleione orchids that survived the winter under a translucent shower curtain on rotting wood (more on this in a future article). Most of my NARGS seed has germinated and it won't be long before I have to pot up the seedlings. More on this as well (see below).



Many of our members are talented gardeners and a rich resource for information. Let's use this regional knowledge to enrich us all and make us better gardeners. We already do this to a limited degree during our member's meeting when we invite members to talk about their gardens or trips, but what if we were to elaborate on certain topics and have members describe how they do these things locally? We'll be putting out calls for members to give brief talks as part of a larger program on a certain topic. For example, this fall or early next winter, we would like to have a program on seed starting to coincide with the NARGS seed exchange.

Additional ideas for programs include shade gardening, conifers and rock garden construction. If you think you would like to participate in one or more of these programs, please take lots of pictures and alert one of our board members of your interest.

The Green Spring Garden sale is coming soon - May 18th! We are going to need volunteers for setup on Friday, sales on Saturday and takedown late Saturday afternoon. Judy Zatsick is organizing this so please keep a lookout for her e-mails (she has already sent one out). We obviously need plants to sell as well so

consider digging a few nice ones from your garden to offer. This should be done sooner rather than later so the plants look good for the sale. Droopy, just dug plants don't sell well. Remember that this is the single most important event we sponsor to raise money for the club, plus it's a good time to connect with other club members and support other vendors selling plants.

Speaking of Green Spring, we need volunteers to help maintain their rock garden that Don Humphrey created many years ago. Don was a treasured member of PVC, always bringing unique and wonderful plants that he grew from seed, or cuttings, to our plant exchanges. Unfortunately for us and for Green Spring, Don and his wife, Lois, moved to Ohio and there is currently a deficit of help at Green Spring to maintain the garden. If you could spare a few hours on May 25th, please contact Judy to let her know your availability (judyzatsick@hotmail.com).

Thank you and happy gardening!

Kevin

MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS: Thank you to the 37 members who completed the survey.

Whether you participated or not, you will want to see a compilation of the results at the link below on our webpage: (It is on our webpage under 'Newsletters Published by PVC and then you will see it listed under 2019') https://nargs.org/sites/default/files/chapter-newsletters/January%202019%20Member%20Survey_0.pdf

And thank you to board members who helped develop the survey and to Jim Hughes for compiling the results. We, the board, have found it useful and are already applying much of the feedback. This is a members' club, after all.

ETIQUETTE During OPEN GARDEN Visits

Jim Hughes

"The best way to visit someone's garden is alone "*

(*Paraphrase of Francis H. Cabot, creator of The Garden of the Four Winds in Quebec Canada; taken from the documentary *The Gardener*)

When people open their garden for others, visitors are rarely alone. They are often accompanied by many others and the impact on the experience and the garden can be significant. How best should one comport oneself out of respect and consideration for the plants, the host, and others visiting the garden?

Here are a few common sense recommendations:

- Arrive during the designated hours. If you arrive early, wait in your car until the garden opens. Also, do not arrive 10 minutes before the garden closes and expect to see everything.
- Leave Fido at home. Do not bring pets (even though your pet never bothers anyone and is always well behaved).
- Leave large bags or purses in the car or bus. Tours can get crowded and they are often very social. It is very easy to innocently back into plants, pots, or garden ornaments when talking with others.

- Unless it is a specialty garden geared for young children, most open gardens are for adults or mature teenagers.
- Stout footwear is advisable especially if the weather has been unsettled.
- All health and safety hazards cannot be eliminated. Common sense to avoid physical hazards is the responsibility of those visiting the garden.
- You may have questions you would like to ask the host. What was your source for a plant? Who created that sculpture? Others visiting the garden will also have questions. Keep that in mind, especially if the host is leading a tour of the grounds. Refrain from “hogging the host.”
- Stay on the garden paths. Do not step into the bed to get a better picture or get closer to identify a plant. Bulbs, crowns of plants below the mulch, etc. may be unseen.
- In addition to staying on the path, be mindful of plants that may encroach upon the path. They may be a “stepable” plant, but remember that open gardens sometimes involve hundreds of guests. All those steps add up!
- One of the great benefits of visiting other gardens is discovering new plants. Taking a picture is a great way to record the discovery and could help you get the names of the plants later.
- Never break off a piece of the plant for identification, or for any other reason unless given permission from the host. Do not remove any plant labels.
- Never take seeds from a plant without permission from the host. The owner of the garden may want to collect the seeds, participate in a seed exchange, etc. Always ask.
- If you break something like a garden ornament, offer to pay for it.
- Keep in mind that asking for a cutting or division of a plant can be awkward for the host, especially while leading a group tour. Others are probably lusting after the same plant. It is much safer asking for the source for the plant.
- Unless advertised, the home is generally off limits. If one asks to use the facilities, it is not an invitation to roam around the house.
- It is generally permissible to take photos of the garden, but it never hurts to ask the host to clarify his or her photography policy.
- Finally, if the host offers to give a tour of the garden, go on the tour. Stay with the host until the end of the tour. There will be ample opportunity afterwards to socialize with friends. Respect the garden. Respect the host. It's as simple as that.

Visiting open gardens is one of the great benefits of belonging to garden clubs and horticultural organizations. If we keep these suggestions in mind, people will enjoy opening their gardens to visitors, the gardens will not suffer, and everyone wins.

How to Ask for Something You See

Jim Dronenburg

When I read Jim Hughes' 'Etiquette for Garden Visits' and saw the point about "asking for a cutting", I thought I'd put in my own elaboration of it.

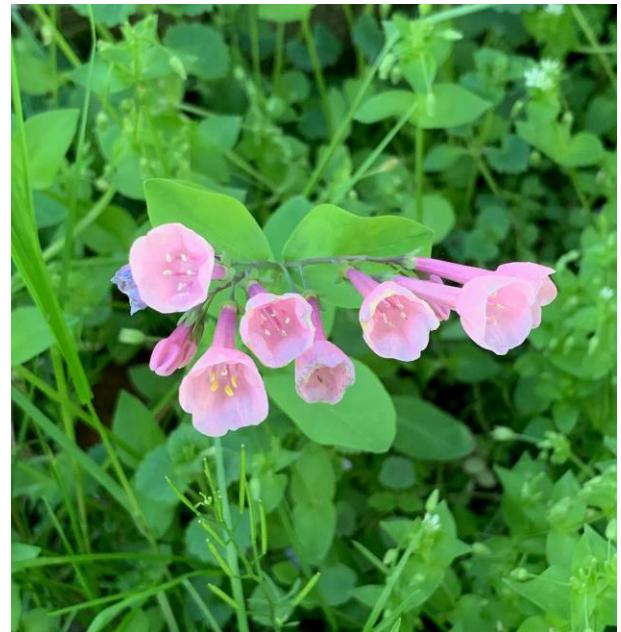
If you are a visitor to a garden, do not hesitate to ask for a piece of something you want. But as Jim says, do it privately, not in the hearing of ten other people. Most people can't give ten divisions of at the same time, and they do not need to make one friend and nine enemies. ☺ Work up to the subject gradually, asking how it is propagated, and when. Ask what it needs. People will be far more willing to give something to someone who is demonstrating that they will work for what they want. And you can force the issue just a smidgen by asking where they got it, so that you can get it yourself. Your host will understand what you are saying, but is not put in the position of saying a blunt "no".

If you are the person being asked for something, always consider the skill level of the gardener asking. You can help things along immeasurably by *offering to give, but in the proper time*. That lets you give something away that you have already given a proper start. For example, a half dozen of my friends would give me tree peony seeds. But so far I have a zilch success rate with peony seeds. That said, I can care for a peony seedling (and I have.) So if you are asked for something – a bulb in flower, for example, or a peony—say, "I will write that down", and do it. (Or more to the point, "Let me mark that particular plant right now so I remember it later, and what's more, you remind me too. That can be divided in _____, and I'll get one for you".) You can see that this protects the health of your plant too.

There are, of course, exceptions to the last paragraph. Someone on a cross country visit, for example. Then you could just do it. And pray. Especially when your guest is from a climate that you reckon gives your plant the chances of the proverbial snowball in Hell. You have exactly 3/10 of a splintered second to weigh this issue. Always reply fast enough that you seem gracious and willing, even if the answer is a gracious "no".

The question also arises of when something is a gift or a purchase. Never in a thousand years would I ask outright for a gift from the personal garden of a person in the business of selling plants. (This is whether or not they actually have that particular plant for sale at the time.) Notice that I said, "ask outright". I didn't say, don't ask. In such a situation always *offer to pay*, and more often than not you'll get it free. (Ask for it free and you won't get it...) I have several people with whom I am in a merry sort of war about giving things. They want to be generous; I want to "have my credit current". One time I was given the gift of a clump of bulbs that I knew this gardener sold at X a pop. I gave in gracefully, went home, counted the bulbs out as I planted them, and sent back a gift certificate to a good, cutting-edge nursery for what I would have spent to buy them. That person has since retaliated....and so have I. MUCH better relationship because of it. ☺

Often, when visiting a garden, one might take a plant along as a gift. Do NOT assume that the recipient even wants it, unless they have specifically asked for it in advance. They may have ten thousand of it... or have none because they despise it. They will of course be ever so grateful to your face, even in the latter case. As you in turn have to be grateful when someone presents you with something. But under NO



Pink *Mertensia* found by Jim D**, photo by Dan W.

from a climate that you reckon gives your plant



Trillium sessile, photo by S. Strickler

circumstances should you assume that *bringing something entitles you to anything back*, except courtesy. PVC member Marianne Willburn has written in one of her columns, also, that when you give something, never ask about it afterwards either—it spares the recipient the possible embarrassment of telling you they don't have it/it croaked/they didn't want it, and it spares you ulcers. It boils down to never giving a gift unasked-for that you can't afford to lose.

But there's another side to that, of course. *When you have a lot of something, give it away freely, asked for or not.* I seem to remember the parable of the Sower. Seed gets sown around; some falls on waste ground and dies, but some falls on good ground and grows. And that "some grows" can be your salvation, when you lose the last bit of what you thought you'd always have. Case in point, I love Bulbine fructescens. I had over thirty, one-gallon pots in the greenhouse, ready for division and planting out/sale the next spring. The heat conked out and they all froze. Nothing left. I'd given it to a friend two states away. She gave it back to me, two years later, when I put out a call for help. She had kept it in a pot, rather neglected—I suspect that she didn't really want it—but she gave it back to me, probably delighted that she could both help me and get rid of the plant at the same time. The old notion of "pass-along plants" is the best insurance against horticultural disaster that you can have.

And always, always, whatever question you ask, if you ask for something, *smile and respect the answer.* It can't hurt you, courtesy costs nothing, and down the line, it usually comes back and helps you.

***Jim and Dan just found the pink Mertensia in their garden. Something to ask them for!? Evil Grins as Jim would say....*

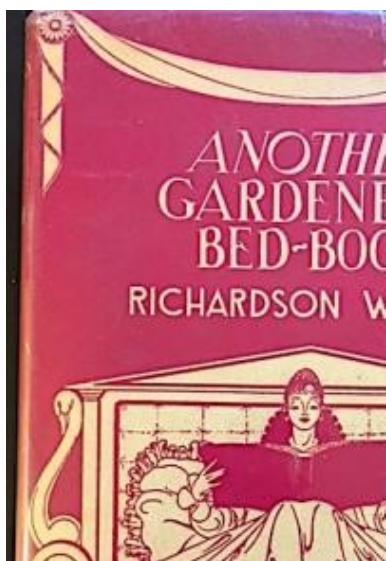
'Another Gardener's Bed Book'*

By Richardson Wright

Reviewer: Jim Dronenburg

This is not a real review, nor is this a book just published and sent around for comment.

Richardson Wright, after the first **Gardener's Bed Book**, compiled this second volume in, or at least copyrighted it in, 1933. Wright was a famous editor and writer in his day (Editor's note: He was editor of House and Garden magazine for nearly 35 years, beginning in 1914), and his object in the **Bed Books** was to have a little essay for each day of the year, read just at bedtime when one was getting ready to sleep—or when one couldn't sleep.



Wright was a searching mind and had a great prose style. The book is not just about gardening, although garden subjects and advice predominate. Essays range from the man who stripped to the waist ("waist" may have been a euphemism) and jumped into his waterlily pool to clean it—just in time for an unscheduled busload of ladies to arrive—to historical figures. One such figure was Mr. Michaux. The essay #27 quotes a newspaper ad from April 14, 1786: "Mr. Michaux, Botanist to His Most Christian Majesty, having purchased a lot of ground in Wehocken, near the Three Pidgeons, is erecting a garden

there, which for magnificence, etc., will exceed anything of the kind in America. In it he will introduce many exotic and domestic botanical curiosities." Then, Mr. Wright goes on to say, "The Most Christian Majesty was the King of France, and Wehocker was Weehawken ((NJ)), but where, we wonder, was the Three Pidgeons..."

Aha, I said, and went to the computer. All of a sudden, this is not a bed book any more; this is a set of doors and windows for the mind. Typing in THREE PIGEONS TAVERN ("tavern" was my supposition) NJ led to a Wikipedia article on that tavern, a favorite meeting place of the Colonial era and after. (It no longer exists, drattit.)

Another essay introduced me to Margaret Haughery of New Orleans. An emigrant from Ireland as a child, she married but lost her husband and child to disease(s). She then started working as a domestic at an orphanage run by nuns. She did so well that she was put in charge of a new, second orphanage; when that was on its feet, she started a dairy, then a bakery. She was known for her work with the orphans, with her business smarts, and for her work feeding the poor. Besides the bread she sold, she gave flour and bread away. All that she made went to orphans. Quick! Enter her name... Wikipedia mentions that she founded, all told, four orphanages, was considered a saint, and that the City of New Orleans erected a statue of her, after her death. (Picture is there too.) I had never heard of her....

There are also the mention of other garden writers and books. A lot, of course, depends on whether you want to plunk down money to get said books—one reference to Bartolemew Anglicus sent me running to the internet, only to find out the cheapest (reprint, obviously) copy was \$40-odd. Another drattit moment...

The world is full of people who have enough to do with their gardens that they do not have the time or the energy to read. But for those who have time, such books as this are a fireworks display across the mind. And they show you where ELSE to go, and what ELSE to research, and what ELSE to think about and do. Gardening and otherwise. ***The Gardener's Bed Book*** and ***Another Gardener's Bed Book***, and the ***Gardener's Day Book***, are all cheaply available, occasionally in the physical used book stores near us, and instantly orderable on line, but, unfortunately, usually for a lot more. (I just went on Abebooks. This book is expensive, ranging from \$73.50 to \$95! I picked it up for \$4 at the Wheaton library used book store. JLD)

*Jim McKinney also wrote about AGBB in the January 2018 issue:

<https://nargs.org/sites/default/files/chapter-newsletters/Jan%202018%20PVC%20newsletter.pdf>



NEW MEMBER Profile: Barbara Rose

Why did you join the Potomac Valley Chapter of NARGS?

To learn more about alpine and rock garden species horticulture in general.

What's a plant you love?

I love trilliums found in the wild and peonies in the garden.

What's a plant you hate?

Not too fond of Knockout roses.

Woodies or Perennials?

I'm planting more and more perennials and aiming for the no maintenance garden!

What's one thing you would change about your garden if you could?

I wish there were more mature flowering trees.

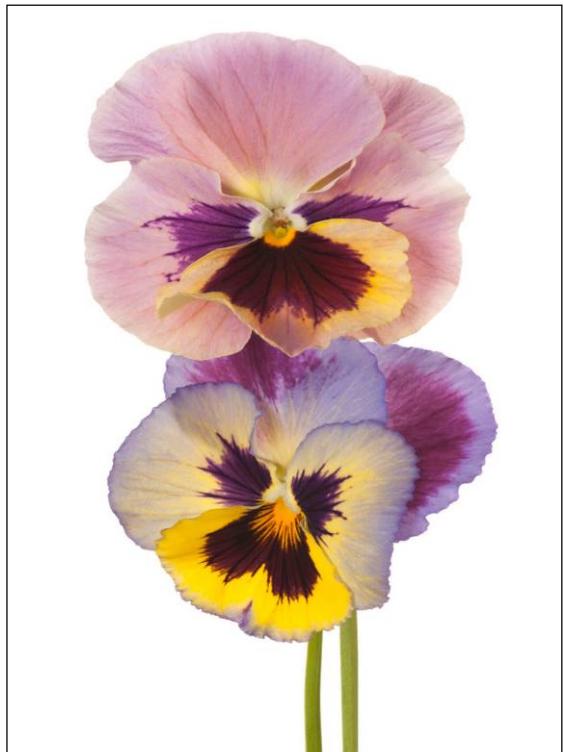
What do you do when you are not gardening?

I love to cook for family and friends, play with my granddaughter, read, and watch British murder mysteries.

A favorite garden author?

Henry Mitchell

Barbara will host our May 25th Plant exchange. Thanks, Barbara!



In the Garden: Pansies and Violets

By **Charles Kidder** Reprinted with permission from the
Crozet Gazette, February 10, 2019

I can hardly see pansies without thinking of the quotation attributed to the late Christopher Lloyd, British gardener/curmudgeon. During a tour of the southern United States, Lloyd finally snapped, blurting out, “Do you think you have quite enough *pahn-zezz??!!*” Poor little pansies. It’s not their fault they’ve become popular to the point of cliché.

Pansies are but one member of the genus *Viola*, in turn part of the Violet family (). We think of violets as herbaceous plants, which they indeed are in our part of the world, but a few are shrubs or small trees. Among the 25 genera comprising the Violet family, most are woody plants. More common in the northern hemisphere, violets can also be found south of the Equator. I spent a few minutes looking at Chilean violets online, in particular one species native to volcanic rocks, resembling a cross between the typical violets, African violets (no relation, actually) and a cow flop. Closer to home, about three dozen violet species can be found growing in Virginia, most of them natives.

All pansies are *violas*, but not all *violas* are pansies. All members of the genus *Viola* have five-petaled flowers, but their arrangement differs slightly. The True Violets have two petals pointing up and three downward, while the True Pansies have four petals pointing upward and one down. The common garden pansy is a complex hybrid, known to horticulturists as *Viola x wittrockiana*; luckily you won't need to know that name to find them at garden centers. In the fall their cheery faces will be smiling at you in a dizzying array of colors. Although they will grow as perennials in most of the U.S., pansies are generally treated as annuals, planted in the fall and growing into the next spring.

The name pansy derives from the French *pensée*, thought. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia distributes flowers, remarking, "There's pansies, that's for thoughts." Pansies go by many other names, often poetic or whimsical, including "Love in Idleness," "Heart's-ease," or "Jump Up and Kiss Me." The Heart's-ease figures prominently in *Midsummer Night's Dream* as a love potion, although Shakespeare was presumably referring to *Viola tricolor*, one of the pansy's wild forbears.

If you want to venture away from the ubiquitous pansies, a few violas may be garden worthy. The little Johnny-Jump-Up (*Viola tricolor*) can charm one with its deep violet, light blue and gold flowers, although this annual (or short-lived perennial) may be weedier than most folks will tolerate. The Horned or Tufted Violet (*V. cornuta*) hails from the Pyrenees. A vigorous grower that can serve as a ground cover, Horned Violet generally tolerates heat well; it may stress out a bit in midsummer, however. Cultivars are available in white, blue, yellow, apricot and the typical violet.

Perennial plant guru Alan Armitage, author of *Herbaceous Perennial Plants*, reports that the Labrador Violet (*V. labradorica*) does well in his Georgia garden, despite its northern provenance. Flowers are mauve suffused with purple; if you want additional interest, the variety *purpurea* adds some bonus color in the new foliage during spring and autumn. Given shade and moisture, Labrador violet will fill in garden areas rapidly and acts as a good companion to foamflowers and mayapples.

Bird's Foot Violet—the leaves are dissected like a bird's foot—is native to much of the eastern and central U.S. and does well given the right growing conditions. Unlike some species that require moist soil, Bird's Foot Violet demands good drainage and should be planted in a shady location, either on a slope or in gravelly soil. The southern variety *concolor* bears larger flowers, with a white spot at the base of the lower petal.

Armitage states that he "would not garden without" the Sweet violet, *V. odora*. As the name suggests, the flowers are fragrant, although the nose only perceives the odor for a short time. It was once raised in great quantities for the perfume industry, but eventually the active chemical, ionine, was produced synthetically.

Flower markets in Athens displayed the Sweet Violet as early as 400 B.C., and it became the symbol of the city; much later it became the symbol of Napoleon's supporters following his exile to Elba. Cultivars come in various shades of blue, lavender, violet and white. Sweet violet will take sun with supplemental water; otherwise, it prefers moist shade.

A few violet species come with a stern warning from Armitage, as in, "I would not knowingly plant any of the native blue violets in the garden due to their self-seeding habit." *Viola cucullata*, *V.papillionacea* and *V.sororia* all are in this group. You have been warned. I suspect that for many of us at least one of these species is already present on our property, never to be banished.

I hesitate to reveal my sources, but if you want to learn more about violets and other plants that grow wild in Virginia, native and exotic, I recommend Weakley's *Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora*(vaplantatlas.org). It provides useful photographs of each plant, along with a map of its distribution by county, as well as a description of its habitat. The digital atlas is a companion to the *Flora of Virginia* book, as well as to an app of the same name.

Enjoy your pansies and violets, no matter what Christopher Lloyd had to say about them.

Charles Kidder, past president of the Piedmont Chapter of NARGS, is a long-time volunteer at the JC Raulston Arboretum where he works in the scree garden, among other places. He spoke to PVC about that garden in the winter of 2010.

BOOK Review

Hypertufa Containers: Creating and Planting an Alpine Trough Garden

by Lori Chips Workman Publications, Inc., 2018 256 pp., paperback. \$24.95 \$21.83 from Amazon \$18.50 on Kindle

This book is a complete guide to every aspect of designing, making and planting fascinating, creative hypertufa troughs. If you are a total novice, Lori's clear, detailed, engaging writing will take you through every step with confidence. I'm definitely going to recommend and make a gift of this book to friends who aren't really gardeners, but would enjoy making and planting a trough to display on their patio



If you are an old hand I think you'll still be thrilled with this book as well. I've made and planted some troughs in my day and thought I knew the process pretty thoroughly, and this book is still full of fascinating information and ideas. I not only learned a lot, but I also got excited again, seeing new techniques and

design ideas that I want to give a try as soon as possible. This is perhaps the best feature of the book. Lori has managed to pull off the nearly impossible by writing a book that is for just about everyone, novice and expert alike.

After a brief chapter making the case for why troughs are so beautiful and essential in the garden, the next two chapters dive into every detail of mixing, shaping and designing with hypertufa. One full chapter is devoted to using sand molds to make troughs. I was familiar with using sand to mold troughs, but Lori lays out numerous exciting and interesting techniques and designs I had never considered before, techniques far beyond the run-of-the-mill trough building workshop.

After a chapter on soil mixes for troughs, Lori dives into planting and placing troughs in the garden. One of the best features of this book is that in addition to being an accomplished gardener and expert trough builder, Lori is also a talented designer and has a gift for communicating how to choose what style of trough to build, putting together plant combinations for troughs, placing stone and placing troughs in the garden. I'll admit I'm far more confident in my ability to grow plants than to put them together in pleasing combinations, and I greatly appreciate Lori's ideas and clear guidance in making troughs work aesthetically.

Despite the title of the book Lori includes a chapter on genuine tufa rock that is fascinating, giving details of how to plant directly in tufa, either by drilling a hole or, in a technique that was new to me, splitting tufa and sandwiching it back together to create something like a tufa crevice that is very cool and I am anxious to try.

The book wraps up with some plant recommendations and a final chapter called "Assorted Wisdoms", full of useful hints and tidbits gleaned from Lori's long experience.

There are many books that I've enjoyed reading, but *Hypertufa Containers* is one of those special books that won't just be sitting on the shelf. It is going to be out with me in the garden, no doubt getting spattered and stained with wet hypertufa.

Joseph Tychonievich is Editor of the Rock Garden Quarterly and author of Rock Gardening: Reimagining a Classic Style. He lives and gardens in eastern Virginia.

Minutes from PVC Board meeting Saturday March 16, 2019

Kevin McIntosh, Jim Hughes, Sarah Strickler, Judy Zatsick, Sharon and Gay Washburn gathered at Sharon's house. A HUGE thank you to Sharon for the drinks and treats.

The discussion was wide ranging and lively. Rather than try to trace the ebb and flow of all the terrific ideas that were expressed, here is a list of decisions made and assignments given (not necessarily in the order in which they were discussed!) People that have action items or follow-up

responsibility for leading these activities are in **BOLD** letters. A **calendar summary** of upcoming PVC events is listed at the end of these minutes.

- Panayoti Kelaides will speak at USBG on Sunday, March 31 at 10:30. All arrangements have been made. People need to register through Sarah or USBG. **Kevin** will introduce him.
- Brad Evans will speak in Sep or Oct about the garden he manages at USNA. As part of his talk he will lead a tour of the garden which is just outside the classroom in the administration building. **Kevin** will reserve the classroom and confirm the date.
- PVC will piggy back on the NARGS 2020 spring speaker, Todd Boland from Newfoundland. He comes highly recommended by John Willis who heard him speak at a NARGS symposium. He will speak in March 2020. **Judy** is the lead person on this. We need confirmation of exact date. Place and time also need to be arranged.
- The board has decided to move ahead with a PVC Facebook page. **Sarah** will set up the group page. It will be open to viewing by the public to encourage new members. **Jim H.** and **Judy** volunteered to initially enter postings to get it going once **Sarah** creates the group page.
- We decided to use our chapter page on the NARGS site as our website.
<https://nargs.org/chapter/potomac-valley-chapter> Sarah has updated the information. We now can direct members and potential members to this page which contains newsletters with upcoming events and items like the Members Survey. This also links us to NARGS our national parent organization and all its rock garden information. **Kevin** will look into expanding the paragraphs that describe our club.
- PVC will have a booth at Green Spring again this year. We will use color coded price tags \$3 \$5 \$7 \$10, and white tags will be for prices below \$3 or above \$10. **Kevin** has the colored price tags. **Judy** needs help on Friday to set up the tent and tables. Judy will also create signage with a key describing the color coded prices. **Sarah** will get our business cards reproduced with the new website and Facebook information.
- PVC plant exchange is scheduled for the week after the Green Spring sale. It is at Barbara Rose's house on May 25th. Members must renew for 2019 by that time or **Sharon** will remove them from the PVC membership list. Anyone given life time or free membership for 2020 should be retained. (Terry Partridge should be listed as lifetime member.)
- **Judy** and **Jim H** will go to USBG on Saturday May 11 at 9:30 to plant 2 troughs that will be housed indoors in the cactus house. All materials will be provided by USBG. PVC will be cited on the signage for these 2 troughs which will be seen by hundreds (thousands?) of people over a period of several months. Hopefully, the signage will reference contact information for PVC - free advertising in return for us donating time and effort to help them create the troughs!
- The rock garden at Green Spring needs volunteers to help do maintenance and also install plantings in the new crevice garden created by Judy Zatsick. It was suggested that we schedule a day once a month for people to help weed and do other maintenance to help the staff at Green Spring. **Kevin** will survey membership to see if we have enough people to do this. **Judy** will coordinate a day of the week that will work well once we are assured of participation from membership. The plants need to go in the new crevice garden soon.
- A field trip to see and buy pitcher plants at Meadowview Biological Research Station in VA was also revisited. No date was set. **Judy** is the lead person on this.
- The board also discussed doing a trough building workshop. A location, date and time needs to be determined along with level of interest. **Kevin** is going to take the lead on this.

- Having open garden days with visits to several gardens the same day, was also discussed. 16 people in the survey said they would open their garden to the club. **Jim H** will identify these people from the survey, compile possible locations that are in the same vicinity, and report back to the board. Then date and time will be decided so we can arrange a day when we can visit several gardens on the same day.
- A talk on conifers for the rock garden was also discussed. In addition to identifying conifers for the rock garden, care and maintenance would also be a part of the presentation. **Sarah** is the lead person on this. She will contact the national conifer society and people at USNA that care for the Gotelli Collection in order to identify a speaker. She will report back to the board so we can schedule a time and place. This talk could precede or follow on another day a tour of the Joe Hallal conifer garden in VA. Once we identify the speaker and schedule the talk, **Kevin** will see about visiting the VA garden.
- A program on seed germination was also developed. **Kevin** and **Judy** will share the stage along with **John Willis** if he agrees. **Kevin** will approach John Willis about doing this. They will each present their approach to growing rock garden plants from seed. They will work together to avoid overlapping and repeating information. Use of heat, cold frames, growing under lights etc. will be covered. All 3 have years of experience to tap. It's going to be a great program and will hopefully encourage more people in PVC to try growing rock garden plants from seed. This also helps to link our group to NARGS.
- We also discussed inviting Jeremy Schmidt who built the crevice garden at Plant Delights. I don't recall a **lead person** on this.
- The results of the survey were referenced throughout the discussions. **Kevin** will send the compiled results of the survey to the current and past membership.

Officers, Committee Chairs and Board of Directors

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