



Growing Interests

Watnong Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society
✂ Volume XLII ✂ Late Fall 2018 ✂ Number 7 ✂

Upcoming Programs

**Saturday, November 17, 10 a.m.
Annual Meeting and Luncheon
For Members Only!**

**Speaker Hubert Ling presents
'Shade Gardening: Native
Wildflowers and Ferns'**

**Saturday, February 16, 2019
Janet Novak presents 'Plants of
Newfoundland'**

**Please bring a ready to serve appetizer,
salad, or dessert and any necessary
serving utensils.**

OUR NOVEMBER SPEAKER

Hubert Ling has been excited about nature starting in his youth when he had to pass a test to go to a nature camp. His interest led him to a Ph.D. in Biology. He went on to work in industry and academia focusing on microbiology, mycology, botany and general biology with many publications.

He has served on the board and as horticulturist for the NJ Native Plant Society almost since its inception and

has written many articles for the newsletters. He is an avid native plant gardener. He has shared his expertise as consultant, speaker, and field trip leader for various organizations.

Hubert is now retired from academia but he serves on the board and is a counselor for Northrup Nature Camp, Massachusetts, is on the Bridgewater Shade Tree Commission, and is a monthly contributing writer for the "Gardener News".



Ray Waksmundzki brought a much-admired fruiting Pomegranate along to the October meeting.

NEWS FROM THE WATNONG CHAPTER

We have a nominee for Chair!

Roxanne Hiltz has stepped forward as our nominee for Chair. A long-time Watnong member, she provides here an overview of her past contributions to the chapter:

"I have been a member of Watnong chapter and the national NARGS for about 30 years. Many wonderful memories of gardens visited, good programs, lovely events. For two or three years, I co-chaired the plant sale... and am still an enthusiastic buyer and volunteer for that each year. For about five years, I was chair or co-chair of the program committee, and received a chapter service award. After resigning from that, since we have had no refreshment committee, whenever I am able to make a meeting, I have been coming early and setting things up for refreshments (tablecloth, plates, napkins, plastic ware, a hot or cold drink). If elected Chair, I will need some people to sign up for dates to do that, since I will be tied up in the Board meetings before the general meetings- I will bring the supplies."

This is the only position currently open on the board and up for election at our November meeting.

Dues reminder! Membership Chair Sid Jones will be on hand at the November

meeting to collect dues for 2018. Watnong dues remain a bargain at \$10 individual or \$15 per household/ mailing address. Dues may be paid as cash or check, made payable to Watnong Chapter NARGS. If you can't make the meeting, you can mail your dues to Sid Jones, 123 Mountainside Drive, Randolph, NJ 07869.

CORRECTED DATES FOR 2019!!

Unfortunately the dates printed in our fall newsletter were proposed meeting dates, not confirmed dates. With apologies from the editor, and with thanks to Program Chair Noel Schulz and Co-Chair Mike Wilson, here is the confirmed 2019 Watnong Chapter meeting schedule, ready to ink on your calendar:

2/16/2019 Janet Novak, Delaware Valley Chapter NARGS, 'Plants of Newfoundland'

3/31/2019 David Culp, Brandywine Cottage, 'Residential Meadow Planting'

4/27 & 28, 2019, Plant Sale at The Leonard J. Buck Garden

9/14/2019, Elizabeth Zanders, Connecticut & Berkshire Chapters NARGS, 'Hardy Northeast Rock Garden Plants'

10/13/2019, Joann Knapp, Watnong
NARGS, 'The Frustrations of a Flower
Photographer'

11/16/2019, Michael Hagen, New York
Botanical Garden, 'The T. H.
Everett Memorial Rock Garden: Past,
Present, and Future'

NEWS FROM NARGS

**Registration is now open for the
NARGS Study Weekend, "Rooted in
Diversity", May 3 – 5, 2019.
To be held in Frazer, Pennsylvania
(west of Philadelphia) & hosted by the
Delaware Valley Chapter. For more
information and registration visit
dvcnargs.org/studyweekend.html.**

NARGS Seed Ex Distribution

Watnong members may recall that for the past few Decembers our chapter has worked with Phase 2 of the NARGS Seed Exchange, packing seeds. In spite of the fact that we don't have a chapter chair, we are one of the largest and most active chapters of NARGS, and for 2019 and 2020 we've been asked to handle the main distribution of seeds to members instead.

The main distribution of seeds begins in late December with the receipt of packaged seeds from the various chapters. Seed orders arrive via e-mail and paper mail, and orders are fulfilled throughout the month of January and into February. This year, the Sierra

Chapter filled 596 orders in 16 work sessions, with the help of 19 volunteers overall, far fewer orders than in years past, when orders reached 1500 or more.

The Leonard J. Buck Garden will allow us to use the Jordan House. We'll be able to use the Jordan House every day of the week, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. We'll decide which days of the week to meet based on which days have the most volunteers available, with a bit of flexibility to allow for uncertain weather. Currently the plan is to meet two days during the week and one or both days on the weekend. In order for the Watnong chapter to fulfill this critical role in the seed exchange, we will need a team: for example, someone to handle the computer work, printing out the electronic orders and entering the mailed-in orders, plus keeping stats on orders filled, which can be done at or after the work sessions. Another person can handle the logistics of the seeds: setting up the boxes of packets, keeping them tidy as the stocks are depleted, making additional packets as needed. A third (or more!) person can oversee the mailing of the filled orders by addressing the shipping envelopes, filling out customs forms for Canadian/overseas members' orders (this can be done online), and toting filled orders to the post office, which also can be done outside the work sessions.

General volunteers, who come for a few hours at a time, can handle the filling of the individual orders. These

volunteers don't necessarily have to be NARGS or chapter members; the staff at The Leonard J. Buck Garden has helped in the past, and has expressed a willingness to do so again. We anticipate sessions to set up the space in mid- late December, to start the distribution in early January, and a complete by mid-February.

If you would be interested in helping to run the seed distribution, please contact Hilary Clayton at 908-781-2521 or hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com.

If you haven't had an email from Hilary regarding your availability, you aren't on her list!

Our October Speaker:

**John Lonsdale, 'Fall Bulbs – Untapped Treasures'
Summarized by Melissa Grossmann**

John Lonsdale's garden in Exton, Pennsylvania (zone 6B) celebrates the arrival of autumn's fine weather with the blooming of thousands of bulbs. Under the deciduous shade of tall trees, huge swaths of Cyclamen grow so thickly that they act as a groundcover for nine months of the year, and the spectacle of their multitudinous blooms is something that you must see...so if you haven't visited his website (www.edgewoodgardens.net), go there now!

On his well-drained, south-facing slope, John Lonsdale is able to grow

many more species of fall-blooming *Colchicum*, *Crocus*, *Sternbergia*, *Galanthus*, *Leucojum* (*Acis*), *Lycoris*, and *Scilla* than we usually see in zone 6 gardens. Perhaps there are more species that you could be growing. He accommodates that troublesome *Colchicum* foliage by growing the bulbs among perennials that are tall enough to camouflage the ripening leaves, and the perennials are cut down for the winter before the *Colchicums* bloom.

At Edgewood Gardens, John Lonsdale has collected plants from around the world to create an entire universe of fall-blooming bulbs for the garden and the greenhouse. The extremely detailed website has pictures of all of them, as well as cultural and propagation information.

In addition to his witty and erudite lecture, our October speaker brought a large selection of choice, rare plants for sale.

Laurelwood South Rock Garden Update

Text and Photos by Michael Wilson

Due to four years of efforts by our chapter, the South Rock Garden at Laurelwood Arboretum is coming together nicely and receiving attention. The Laurelwood volunteers have been weeding the garden as part of their maintenance schedule. I spent four Saturdays over the summer doing some follow-up weeding after the volunteers to get any weeds that they missed. The

Laurelwood staff stained the wooden bridge and re-graveled the walkways and has been pruning many of the conifers and trees in the area. This has benefited the South Rock Garden by allowing more sunlight and improving the air circulation, both of which will aid in the culture of alpine.



The South Rock Garden at Laurelwood Arboretum in October 2018.



Allium thunbergii

The second bed that was constructed last year has settled and now has become a prominent part of the garden. It looks very good and rivals any other public garden's tufa bed. A basic planting was done in the new bed last

year, and most of those plants are doing well. Both garden beds need an end-of-the-season weeding and some additional planting, but I was delighted to find a *Gentiana acaulis* and *Allium thunbergii* in bloom when I went to visit the garden on October 20.



Gentiana acaulis

The chapter had originally agreed to a five- year commitment to restore the South Rock Garden. We will complete that commitment next year, and have a plan in place to transition the care of the garden to the Laurelwood staff and volunteers. As in past years, I will schedule days to work at Laurelwood and will send out notices to call for volunteers. In 2019 these workshops will also be coordinated with any Laurelwood volunteers that have an interest in the rock garden. This will give our membership an opportunity to meet new gardening friends and a chance to share their rock- gardening knowledge with others, and all participants will have the opportunity to learn about the culture of alpine.

We plan to encourage our new Laurelwood-based rock garden volunteers to join our chapter with a free one year Watnong chapter membership, and hope they will renew. Having the Laurelwood volunteers partake in the final weeding, planting, and mulching will make for a smooth transition that the chapter can be proud of, and a new rock garden that will bring pleasure for years to come.



A closer look at the South Rock Garden at Laurelwood Arboretum.

The NARGS Tri-State Meeting, 2018

By Ray Waksmundzki

The annual October Tri-State meeting at the New York Botanical Garden featured the well-known and much accomplished Vojtech Holubec speaking on his travels and explorations of the flora of the Tian Shan Mountains and southwestern China. He is touring the country this year as NARGS' sponsored fall speaker

and follows the likes of such prior international luminaries at Tri-State as Ian Young of the Scottish Rock Garden Society, Mike Kintgen of the Denver Botanic Garden, and Yasemin Konuralp who spoke of the fabulous flora of her native Turkey.

Mike Wilson has introduced us Watnong members to some of the flora of the western end of the Tian Shan in his talks on Uzbekistan. Vojtech's presentation starts there and travels eastward across Central Asia for over 1,800 miles into China toward Mongolia. The Tian Shan are snow capped with vast glaciers but their arid feet are rooted in several deserts to the north and especially south. This extreme range of habitats has fostered a huge diversity of unique plants and animals. With exquisite photographs of sublime scenery and astonishing plants both exotic and familiar we were treated to a splendid tour of this spectacular part of the planet. The afternoon session was a tour of the southwest Chinese provinces of Yunnan, Sichuan, and Quinhai, one of the most biologically diverse regions in the world. An astonishing array of *Gentians*, *Corydalis*, *Primulas*, lilies and more was presented which whet the acquisitive appetite of the attendees. The programs were liberally peppered with habitat and cultivation tips, especially for plants recently or about to be introduced into cultivation from the area.

Before, between and after the lectures a sales area had been set up to

satisfy the plant-lust inspired by the images we had seen. Vendors included Lori Chips with her new book "*Hypertufa Containers*", some of her creations, and a nice selection of plants from Oliver Nurseries, from hardy cacti to easy *Gentians* and *Androsace*. Tri-State member/vendors had tables of *Cyclamen*, choice rock garden and border plants and rare plant seedlings grown from NARGS seedex seeds. There was also an auction and a raffle, perennial favorites of attendees. I came home with a boxful of treasures. Look for some of them on the show and tell table in the future.

Our hosts were well organized, friendly, and knowledgeable, providing us with a day of fun and education. To our members who missed the meeting this year or have never been, I urge you to make next year's event a must do. The admission and parking at the NYBG is free to attendees and you are free to tour the general admission areas, which include the rock garden and troughs. But bring some spending money for that special plant you just might decide you have to add to your garden.

WATNONG CLASSIFIEDS

HYPERTUFA TROUGHS



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CoopersHollowFarm@yahoo.com

If you would like to place an ad here, send copy to the Newsletter Editor, hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com.

Deadline for inclusion in our Winter Newsletter is January 12, 2019

2018 WATNONG CHAPTER OFFICERS

Chair	Please Consider	Your Name Here!	
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Treasurer	Don Grossmann	908-604-8060	donmliss@msn.com
Secretary	Debi Graf	201-919-0749	DGRAFatHome@aol.com

2018 WATNONG COMMITTEES

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**THE WATNONG CHAPTER
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