



Growing Interests

Watnong Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society
✧ Volume XLIII ✧ Late Winter 2019 ✧ Number 2 ✧

Upcoming Programs

Sunday, March 31, 2019, 10 a.m.
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
David Culp, 'Residential Meadow Planting'

Annual Plant Sale April 27 & 28
The Leonard J. Buck Garden
11 Layton Road, Far Hills, NJ 07931

Saturday, April 27, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Free Lecture at 1 p.m.,
Dorothy Smullen presents
'Butterflies and Dragonflies'
Free Guided Garden Tour at 2 p.m.

Sunday, April 28, 12 noon – 5 p.m.
Free Lecture at 1 p.m.,
Rachel DeFlumeri presents
'Composting'
Free Guided Garden Tour at 2 p.m.

Members Only Field Trip
Saturday, May 11- see page 8

Please bring a friend, a mug, your favorite warm beverage, and a snack to share to our March meeting.
Please donate some divisions of your favorite plants to the sale, see page 3 for details.

OUR MARCH SPEAKER

David Culp is the creator of the gardens at Brandywine Cottage in Downingtown, Pennsylvania. David has been lecturing about gardens nationwide for more than 15 years. His articles have appeared in *Martha Stewart Living*, *Country Living*, *Fine Gardening*, *Green Scene*, and many other publications.

The former contributing editor to *Horticulture* magazine, he has served as chairman of the Mid-Atlantic Hardy Plant Society. David is Vice President for Sunny Border Nurseries in Connecticut, and the author of *The Layered Garden* (published by Timber Press), the 2013 winner of the coveted *Best Overall Book* by the Garden Writers' Association. Brandywine Cottage was featured in the Garden Conservancy's new book *Outstanding American Gardens*. An expert on perennials, David is an herbaceous perennials instructor at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania.

David is the developer of the Brandywine Hybrid strain of Hellebores and was recently cited in the *Wall Street Journal* for his expertise on snowdrops.

His garden has been featured several times in *Martha Stewart Living* and on HGTV. Brandywine Cottage is listed in the Smithsonian Institution Archives of American Gardens.

He is a recipient of the Distinguished Garden Award from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and has also been awarded the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Award of Merit. He serves on the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Gold Medal Plant Selection Committee.

David bought his 1790s farmhouse and adjoining two acres in 1990. The house sits on a relatively flat, rectangular acre below a steep hillside of roughly equal size. The farmhouse is located between forks of the Brandywine Rivers and nestled into the hillside. Affectionately referred to as "Brandywine Cottage", its many gardens are planted in a naturalistic style. It is his version of a Pennsylvania country garden, and includes many collections such as *Galanthus*, Roses, *Hepaticas*, *Cyclamen*, *Euphorbias*, *Arums*, Peonies, Iris, and of course, the specialty of the house, Hellebores. The garden contains a series of plant habitats dedicated to four seasons of interest.

NEWS FROM THE WATNONG CHAPTER

Save the dates!

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

5/11/2019, Bus Trip to visit Edgewood Gardens in Exton, PA., and The Gardens at Mill Fleurs in Point Pleasant, PA. Registration on page 8.

Picnic and Plant Swap, date and location to be announced. WOULD YOU LIKE TO HOST THIS EVENT? CONTACT NOEL (see page 11)

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'

Hospitality is back!

We have a hospitality committee now and need more volunteers! One, or preferably two, people should sign up for each of our program meetings. Roxanne will bring the supplies. Volunteers should arrive at 9 a.m. on the day of the meeting to set out table covers, paper and plastic ware, beverage fixings, and start the water for tea or cocoa, which takes about 40 minutes to heat. Hospitality volunteers will also help those who arrive with goodies to arrange them. After the meeting, allow at least five minutes for those who want

a post meeting snack, then clean off the covers, pack up the remaining supplies, and help carry them out.

Hospitality volunteers are asked to mark their calendars:

March 31 Susan Deeks

September 14- nobody yet!

October 13 Lillie Dorchak and Shirley Rovinski

November 16 Michele Guitierrez and CarolAnn Baldowski

To sign up, or for more information, email Roxanne.hiltz@gmail.com

The Plant Sale is coming soon!

There are many ways that you can help! Plants donated by members greatly add to our profits. As you start your spring gardening, **please consider potting and labeling your extra seedlings or divisions. Donated plants may be dropped off at The Leonard J. Buck Garden Saturday, April 13 until Thursday, April 25, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.**

Can you volunteer your time?

We need members to:

Set up the sale on Thursday, April 25, at the Leonard J. Buck Garden, 9:30 a.m.: Insert price labels into all of the pots and arrange the pots on tables. This process takes several hours. Lunch is provided.

“Babysit” the sale tables on Friday, April 26, 10-12, 12-2 or 2-4: Inform

visitors to the Buck Garden that the sale does not open until 10 a.m. on Saturday.

Saturday April 27: We need cashiers, plant advisors, and managers for the holding area (where shoppers may temporarily leave their plants). The shifts are 9:45 a.m. -12 p.m., 12 p.m. -2:30 p.m. or 2:30 p.m. -5 p.m.

Sunday April 28: The shifts are 12 p.m.-2:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. -5 p.m.

To volunteer, please contact Martha Podilchuk, plant sale volunteer coordinator, at marthpod@comcast.net or 908-507-6487.

Please consider printing a copy of the plant sale flyer on page 9 and posting it at your favorite local business, or on the window of your parked car.

The NARGS Seed Exchange Phase 3 Seed Distribution is complete! Coordinator Hilary Clayton extends many, many thanks to the Watnong members who volunteered their skill and expertise, an all-star cast listed here more or less in order of appearance: Jim Avens and the staff at The Leonard J. Buck Garden, Pat Hilgendorf, Martha Podilchuk, Don and Melissa Grossmann, Terrie Reid, Sid Jones, Debbie Zweig, Cynthia Hedin, Marta McDowell and Kirke Bent, Brian Coleman, Ray Waksmundzki, Wendy Utberg, Peggy Kremetz, Susan and Peter Deeks, Lorette Cheswick, Mary

Masilamani, Tracy Jacobus, Peter Birnbaum, Lainie Beavin, and Lucinda Putnam. Thanks are also extended to those who offered to come but whose visit was cancelled by weather or circumstance. Together we filled over 500 orders and logged over 300 volunteer hours.

If you weren't able to join the fun this year, you'll have another opportunity next January! We'll again be working at the Jordan House at the Leonard J. Buck Garden, located at 186 Liberty Corner Road in Far Hills.

Our February Speaker
All Photos by Janet Novak
Summary by Hilary Clayton



A large group of *Cypripedium parviflora*

Our February Speaker was Janet Novak, Chair of the Delaware Valley Chapter of NARGS. She shared her photos and experiences from two trips to Newfoundland, one in 2005 with the Virginia Native Plant Society and one in 2017, a NARGS trip led by Todd Boland. Todd is the Research Horticulturist at

the Memorial University of Newfoundland Botanical Garden and the author of the guidebook *Wildflowers and Ferns of Newfoundland*.



Silene acaulis



Kalmia procumbens

Janet visited in mid-July, a particularly good time to see showy plants. Newfoundland is at the same latitude as southern Alaska, and is chilled by the Labrador Current, which makes for a short growing season. A good portion of her trip was on the west

side of the island, from Deer Lake up to the Great Northern Peninsula.



Primula laurentiana

She shared photos from visits to a wide range of habitats: forest, wetlands, beaches, and both limestone and serpentine barrens, a globally rare habitat.

She offered some travel tips as well: for example, although the Newfoundland cuisine is light in vegetables, the seaside loving Oysterleaf, *Mertensia maritima*, has edible blue leaves to liven up a picnic sandwich. Compared to other places with such beautiful native flora, there are relatively few mosquitoes in Newfoundland. She shared her experiences at the Burnt Cape Ecological Reserve, a World Heritage Site, and at L'Anse-aux-Meadows, an 11th Century Viking settlement.

Janet closed her inspiring talk with an invitation to the upcoming study weekend, 'Rooted in Diversity', to be hosted by the Delaware Valley Chapter. See page 7 for more details.



Saxifraga paniculate

The Canadian Hemlock, Provider of America's First Dwarf Conifers By Frank Goodhart

Canadian hemlocks, *Tsuga canadensis*, were the first dwarf conifers that I ever bought and collected. It was about 1980 when I first visited the now-closed Watnong Nursery in Morris Plains. The owners, Don and Hazel Smith, established a nursery in their backyard after retiring. They specialized in rock garden plants, dwarf conifers, and other plants that were rare and of interest to the keen collector. They were enthusiastic, kind, and empathetic to all who visited their nursery. Indeed, among their many contributions was the education of all their clients via long and patient discussions.

Sometimes they stocked 10-15 different Canadian hemlock cultivars at one time. In those days these plants didn't have much availability anywhere in the United States; on the east coast many were acquired from other hobbyists and collectors including American Conifer Society charter members Bob Fincham in Pennsylvania, Eddie Rezek and Joel Spingarn, in New York, and Tom Dilatush, in New Jersey. The Verkade and Vermuelen nurseries also stocked Canadian hemlock cultivars. Don Smith propagated some cultivars by rooting them in a Nearing frame.

Canadian hemlock, *Tsuga canadensis*, is one of the four hemlocks native to the United States. Its growth range extends from Quebec and Nova Scotia into the New England states, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, where it is the state tree. There are disjunct populations in Ohio, Illinois, northeastern Minnesota and the Appalachian mountain range as far south as Georgia. As a landscape plant it grows well in both sun and shade. Its natural habitat begins at 1000 feet and extends up to several thousand feet in mountainous areas. One may often observe them in cool shady ravines.

The other tree native hemlocks are Carolina Hemlock, *Tsuga caroliniana*, Western Hemlock, *Tsuga heterophylla*, and Mountain Hemlock, *Tsuga mertensiana*. Carolina Hemlock grows in the Blue Ridge Mountains from Virginia to Georgia; the Western

Hemlock grows on the west coast, from California to Alaska. The Mountain Hemlock has a distribution similar to the Western Hemlock but at higher elevations. There are four species of Asian hemlocks: *chinensis*, *diversifolia*, *dumosa*, and *sieboldii*. Cultivars of these species are uncommon except for a few selections of *T.diversifolia*.

The wood of Canadian Hemlocks has not historically been used for general construction purposes because of its softness and lack of durability, but it has been used as a source or pulp in the paper industry and to make crates. In the past it was mercilessly harvested solely for its bark, which has a very high tannin content of about eight to ten percent. The bark stripped logs were left behind to rot.

Virgin forests of Canadian hemlock are non-existent today. They were an important part of forest ecology, making up as much as one third of the forest in some areas of the Northeast. However, there are some very large trees remaining in several states. The current data may be found on the Eastern Native Tree Society (ENTS) website. Recently a tree in the Great Smoky National Park was 173 feet tall, though this tree is now dead from hemlock woolly adelgid. Diameters of existing isolated hemlocks range from two feet six inches to five feet eleven inches and are about 150 feet tall.

It is perhaps the most graceful of our native conifers, with its gentle weeping

branches and informal conical shape. It has been used effectively as a hedging tree since it can be pruned regularly to increase branch density while controlling its overall height. As a specimen tree it can grow to 70 feet high and 25-35 feet wide. It doesn't tolerate heat and doesn't grow well in urban areas.

This article will be continued in our next newsletter.

NEWS FROM NARGS

Registration is now open for the NARGS Study Weekend, "Rooted in Diversity", May 3 – 5, 2019.

The meeting will 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 Surplus Seed Distribution is now open! All surplus seed orders are due March 20, 2019.

OUT AND ABOUT

'After The Fall- Nature's Fall Beauty Exhibit', the work of former Growing Interests Photographer Albert Martin, will be on display from March 10 through April 28 at JCC MetroWest, 760 Northfield Avenue, West Orange, NJ 07052.

A number of local gardens, including

The Hay, Honey Farm in Far Hills, will host Open Days to benefit The Garden Conservancy on Saturday, April 27. Admission is \$10 per garden. Visit www.gardenconservancy.org/open-days for more details.

WATNONG CLASSIFIEDS

HYPERTUFA TROUGHS



Coopers Hollow Farm specializes in native plants with people-pleasing qualities; pollinator friendly and ecologically beneficial. We offer selections of flowering perennials and shrubs, understory trees, shade grasses for dry to wet areas, ferns, and ground covers. Smaller sizes are available for mass plantings. Coopers Hollow is a NJ registered nursery located in Bernardsville, using only organic practices (not certified).

We are open by appointment only. For requests and availability, contact 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 Spring Newsletter is April 1, 2019.

2019 SPRING BUS TRIP

Organized by the Watnong Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society

Tour two gardens: Edgewood Gardens in Exton, PA., and The Gardens at Mill Fleurs in Point Pleasant, PA. For more information on these gardens, see www.edgewoodgardens.net and www.thegardensatmillfleurs.com

We will arrive at Edgewood Gardens about 10:30, and after an introduction by John Lonsdale we will tour his gardens on our own. We will leave Edgewood at noon and arrive at The gardens at Mill Fleurs about 1:30 for a guided tour. After the tour, stop by the nursery for browsing or purchases. The bus leaves 3:30 to return to Cedar Knolls.

Date and Time: Saturday, May 11, 2019 Bus leaves 8:00 a.m., returns approximately 5:00 p.m.

Depart: 8:00 a.m. from Cedar Knolls Plaza, 235 Ridgedale Ave, Cedar Knolls (park at the McDonalds end of the lot, near Ridgedale Ave)

Cost: \$55 per member, \$65 per non-member (includes membership for 2019) **No refunds.**

Bring your own lunch, but water will be provided on the bus (toilet on the bus)

To reserve your seat, please complete the form below and return it with your check payable to Watnong NARGS, to: Watnong NARGS, c/o Noel Schulz, 108 Lincoln Place, Waldwick, NJ 07463. Any questions? Contact Noel at 201-445-6445 or noelschulz@verizon.net.

Your registration and check must be received by Noel no later than May 1. First come, first served.

2019 Trip Registration Form

Make check payable to Watnong NARGS

Members _____ x \$55 = Total \$ _____

Names: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail (for confirmation): _____

Non-Members at \$65 (Please use one form for each new member)

Name: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Address: _____

**Leonard J. Buck Garden &
Watnong Chapter of North American Rock Garden Society**

2019 Spring Plant Sale

Saturday, April 27 10am-5pm

Sunday, April 28 12pm-5pm



Spring is finally here and there's not a better way to refresh and rejuvenate than to come to Buck Garden's annual plant sale for botanical treasures! Exquisite selections of perennials, ferns, alpines, woody plants including deer resistant and pollinator-friendly varieties. Handmade troughs will also be available to purchase.

Buck Garden staff and Rock Garden Society members will be on hand to advise visitors about plants and gardening.

- ◆ Free inspiring garden talks given each day at 1pm
- ◆ Free guided tours of Buck Garden each day at 2pm



Somerset County
Park Commission

SOMERSET COUNTY PARK COMMISSION LEONARD J. BUCK GARDEN

11 Layton Road, Far Hills, NJ 908 722-1200 Ext. 5621 www.somersetcountyparks.org

If you have individualized needs due to a disability, please call 908 526-5650 after you register for the program and we will be happy to arrange reasonable modifications. Three weeks notice is required to ensure that appropriate modifications can be provided.

2019 WATNONG CHAPTER OFFICERS

Chair	Roxanne Hiltz	973-361-6680	roxanne.hiltz@gmail.com
Vice Chair	Michael Wilson	862-397-9339	miwilson@ramapo.edu
Treasurer	Don Grossmann	908-604-8060	donmliss@msn.com
Secretary	Debi Graf	201-919-0749	DGRAFatHome@aol.com

2019 WATNONG COMMITTEES

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Plant Sale Co-Chair	Jim Avens	908-234-2677x 22	javens@scparcs.org
Plant Sale Co-Chair	Melissa Grossmann	908-604-8060	donmliss@msn.com
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**THE WATNONG CHAPTER
NORTH AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY
c/o The Leonard J. Buck Garden
11 Layton Road
Far Hills, NJ 07931**

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