

Why August in Durango?

(A second spring)

The Annual General Meeting of NARGS has been moved to August (4)5-8, 2021

The landscape surrounding COVID and vaccinations had been changing by the day. Potential participants to the conference this summer told us the proximity of a June meeting was simply too rushed for them to be comfortable signing up. The local organizers staging the Conference are glad to have more time to coordinate, and snowpack in the San Juan Mountains has been sufficient that late June would likely be too early for the high mountain hikes planned for the conference.

The first week of August still boasts lots of bloom in the alpine zone. This is peak season for subalpine meadows and forests for which the San Juan Mountains are renowned. Masses of paintbrush, columbines, larkspur, gentians, *Mertensia*, and geraniums will paint the meadows and provide a second spring for attendees. On the tundra you'll still find early spring flowers blooming near snowbanks, and the summer gentians and a wealth of cushion plants will be in top form.

Average August temperatures for Durango are daytime highs of 84° and evening lows at 49°—much cooler than late June and July which average three degrees higher. There is often a second season of flowering at lower elevations as well in August due to summer thunderstorms (the “Monsoon”)—so the sagebrush steppe on Mesa Verde and around Durango should boast a variety of *Eriogonum*, *Erigeron*, and *Penstemon rostriflorus* at their peak, not to mention a daisy-chain of Composites!

Introducing a bus-free conference.

Initially, due to concern for having people packed in close quarters in a bus, the committee has explored the potential of attendees providing their own transportation: a few vans will be reserved for people who cannot drive—but having cars (we do recommend car-pooling) will allow fewer numbers at each trail head and less impact than a large bus at a given site. Having your own or a rental car, provides ideal access to Durango. There is plenty of free parking on the Fort Lewis College campus.

Flying: The Durango airport is served by American Airlines, United Airlines, and (beginning in May) Delta Airlines. There are daily non-stop routes to and from Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW), Denver (DEN), Phoenix (PHX). In May, a route to Salt Lake City Int'l (SLC) will begin. In June, seasonal flights to Los Angeles (LAX) start.

Durango is 336 miles from Denver (6 hours and 7 minutes driving). There are several routes from Denver where you can potentially cross four or more passes over 12,000' one way, and almost as many different passes on your way back. It's a stunning drive through the Rockies.

Durango is 212 miles from Albuquerque, N.M. (3 hours and 52 minutes). The low-fare Southwest Airlines is ABQ's major carrier. The drive will be through the high-deserts of Northern New Mexico or a longer but more scenic trip north to Santa Fe and Abiquiu, past the Georgia O'Keefe Ghost Ranch.

Salt Lake City is 391 miles from Durango (6 hours and 20 minutes). The drive goes over the Wasatch Mountains and into the heart of the Colorado Plateau's high desert and red rock country of Moab and beyond.

If flying into Denver, Albuquerque or Salt Lake City, we recommend arriving in that city and staying the night of Tuesday, Aug. 3. That way, you can get up early for the long drive that will be filled with heart-pounding scenery and floral riches on the way. The same will be true on your way home.



It appears that most everyone who intends to get vaccinations will have an opportunity to do so well in advance of this conference. We will adhere to recommended CDC and local health department guidelines. We expect that attendees who've been vaccinated for COVID will be willing to carpool with friends and share Campus facilities.

We believe Durango is an ideal destination for renewed “in person” meetings for NARGS—sufficiently remote from high population centers that the hiking destinations will not be overcrowded. The campus is scenic and modern and the nearby town offers a wealth of amenities and great charm.

Best of all, there is an enthusiastic community of flower lovers (a very active Botanical Garden and Native Plant Society) who are looking forward to hosting, guiding, and sharing their expertise.

The registration form to sign up is included in the spring NARGS *Quarterly*, and a link to a website dedicated to this conference will appear on the NARGS webpage (www.nargs.org) in early April so that you can sign up on-line.

Conference attendance will be limited to 200 attendees: do sign up, please. Join us in Durango!

Thank you.

Edge of Rockies Organizing Committee

Conference Registration Brochure follows

Lodging Registration Form (Fort Lewis College)

The NARGS annual meeting takes place at scenic Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. Attendees wishing to lodge on campus will stay at West Hall, a modern 90-room facility with the outstanding mountain views. NARGS has reserved the entire building for the conference. At full capacity, there will be room for 180 people.

West Hall offers ultra-economical lodging arranged in two-bedroom suites. Each suite consists of two double-occupancy rooms that share a spacious dual-sink bathroom. Each bedroom has two extra-long twin beds, two desks and chairs, and two wardrobes. Bed linens and pillows are included. In addition, there is a central lounge with flat screen TV and DVD player. Washers and driers are on site. The cost is \$75 per person per night double occupancy. The single supplement is \$25. Each bedroom at West Hall includes two beds and a bathroom shared with the next room. Only guests who have had COVID vaccinations* at least 3 weeks before the conference can be eligible for West Hall accommodations.

***PLEASE BRING PROOF OF COVID VACCINE**

If you're NOT booking at Fort Lewis MAKE SURE YOU BOOK your lodging immediately (see recommended hotels on website).

Room cost (\$75 a day double occupancy, \$100 single occupancy)
4 days shared bathroom \$300 double occupancy, \$400 single

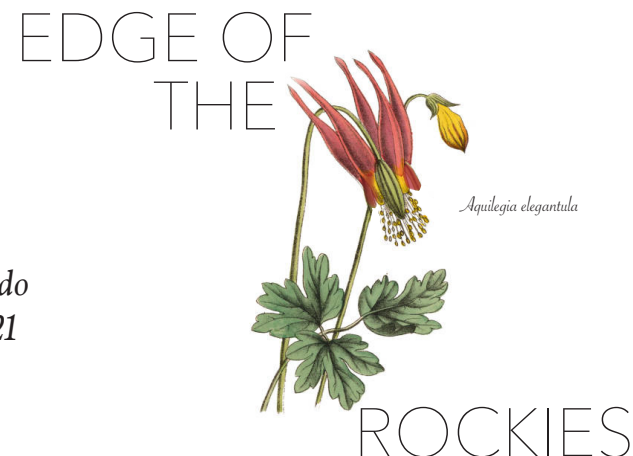
If you have friends with whom you'd prefer to share a bathroom, write name below or let us know at least a month in advance (otherwise, the selection will be random).

Also, if you have a couple or party that you would like in a neighboring suite, please let us know prior to registration and we will try to make that happen.

Name of registered friend: _____

A supplement to Rock Garden Quarterly, vol. 79 #2 Spring 2021

North American Rock Garden Society Annual General Meeting



*Durango, Colorado
August 5 - 8, 2021*

Durango lies not only at the edge of the San Juan Mountains (the most massive range of the Colorado Rockies) but at the edge of the Colorado Plateau's rich canyonlands, and it brushes against the Chihuahuan Desert uplands of New Mexico to the south and east. Mesa Verde rises to the south and west — a blue-gray mesa filled with the largest, densest concentration of Pre-Columbian architecture north of Mexico. In many ways, Durango is the heart of North America.

Space is limited: sign up now!
Join us at the Edge of the Rockies!
A socially-distanced conference*

We invite you to join us from Thursday, August 5th to Sunday, August 8th, to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the North American Rock Garden Society. The base of operations will be Fort Lewis College—a lovely setting for meals, talks, and more. Attendees may stay in the scenic West Hall at reasonable rates or arrange your own stay at dozens of nearby motels/hotels. We have secured several for this conference available on first come basis.

**We will adhere to the current CDC guidelines for this conference.*

Program

We recommend arriving in Durango by late afternoon, Wednesday August 4: whether driving from Denver, Albuquerque, or flying into Durango —we suggest that you should arrive the day before; the actual program will not begin until the afternoon of August 5.

Wednesday afternoon: Open Gardens. Registration 3-6pm.

Thursday, Aug. 5th: Open Gardens. 2pm Annual Board Meeting. 6pm Rooftop Opening Reception on the plaza with drinks and hors d'oeuvres. 8pm Opening speaker Craig Childs.

Friday, Aug. 6th: 6-8am Breakfast in Student Union. 8:30am Depart for field trips, box lunch provided. Return 4pm; Banquet at 6pm. 7:30 lectures.

Saturday, Aug. 7th: 6:30-8am Breakfast hosted by Durango Botanic Garden. Depart from the Garden for field trips, box lunch provided. 6pm Banquet, awards, program.

Sunday, Aug. 8th: 6-8am Breakfast. Checkout by lunch. Mesa Verde Tours; self-guided field trip options provided.

Plant Sale: Thursday-Saturday

Speakers *(pending the lifting of travel restrictions)*

Opening Welcome Speaker *(Thursday 8/5)*

CRAIG CHILDS, *Author; Ancestral ethnobotany*

Keynotes *(Friday 8/6 and Saturday 8/7)*

KAJ ANDERSON, *Bangsbo Botanical Gardens, Denmark*

MARCELA FERREYRA, *Argentina, Author; Tour of Patagonia*

Local Speakers:

ARNOLD CLIFFORD, *Navajo Geobotanist, Curator, and Co-Author*

ADRIANO TSINIGINE, *Navajo Ethnobotanist, Biologist*

MOUNTAIN STUDIES INSTITUTE, *Durango/Silverton Climate Study Group*

Field Trips

Maps are provided for driving to assigned destinations where you will be met by local expert guides. We will be adding to this list as options arise, stay tuned. These will include:

Molas Pass/Purgatory/Andrews Lake for easy-to-moderate access to subalpine and alpine areas.

Engineer Mountain for easy-to-moderate access to subalpine and alpine areas.

Cumberland Basin/Taylor Lake in the La Plata Mountains moderate and also with difficult option to **Indian Trail Ridge (4WD)** for subalpine and alpine areas.

Lime Creek (drivable tour easy 4WD) subalpine

Highland Mary Lakes, Silverton moderate access subalpine/alpine area.

Mesa Verde guided tour by Craig Childs (limited groups Friday)

Program Registration Form *(please print legibly)*

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone number _____ Country _____

Email address _____

May we include name, state, and country of origin be published in program booklet? Yes _____ No _____

May we publish email address in program booklet? Yes _____ No _____

Street address and phone numbers will not be published in program booklet.

Not a NARGS member? Join at \$40 US/Canada; Overseas \$45

www.nargs.org

Online registration starts in April, visit www.nargs.org for more details.

Please send check payments to:

Rocky Mountain Chapter, NARGS

c/o Kenneth Ray

9968 W 84th Pl

Arvada, CO 80005-1201 USA

Cost

Registration including program bulletin for tours, speakers, opening night drinks/hors d'oeuvres, 3 breakfasts, 2 box lunches (gluten-free/vegetarian options available), 2 banquet dinners and maps for tour destinations.

(If you're **NOT** driving here or renting a car check here _____ we will provide a van for a surcharge based on demand and availability.)

Own vehicle: \$350 #registrants _____ total \$ _____

Spouse/volunteer rate: \$180 #registrants _____ total \$ _____

(breakfast, lunch, and dinners included)

Room cost: #registrants _____ x days _____ total \$ _____

(\$75 a day double occupancy, \$100 single occupancy; 4 days shared bathroom \$300 double occupancy, \$400 single)

Grand Total \$ _____ USD

(Checks only, CC must go through website with 3% fee added)