



Growing Interests

Watnong Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society

✧ Volume XLI ✧ Late Winter 2017 ✧ Number 2 ✧

Upcoming Programs

Sunday, March 19, 2017, 10 a.m.

Frelinghuysen Arboretum

Speaker Mark Weathington,

**'Making a Mountain out of a Molehill
Rock Garden'**

Annual Plant Sale

Saturday, April 22, 2017, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

and Sunday, April 23, noon - 5 p.m.

**At The Leonard J. Buck Garden,
Layton Road, Far Hills**

Annual Soiree, for Members Only

Saturday, May 6, 2017, 5 p.m.

Presby Iris Garden

474 Upper Mountain Ave.

Upper Montclair, NJ. 07043

Bus Trip!

Saturday, May 20, 2017, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Visit David Culp's Brandywine

Cottage and Charles Cresson's

Hedgeleigh Spring.

Registration form on page 12

Saturday, June 17, 2017 Field Trip!

Walking Tour of the Pinelands with

the Delaware Valley Chapter, at

Brendan Byrne State Forest.

Details to follow.



Speaker Dr. Randi Eckel brought a wide selection of native plant seeds to our February meeting. For more on her presentation see page 8. Photo by Albert Martin

Our Upcoming Speaker

Mark Weathington is the Director of the J.C. Raulston Arboretum at North Carolina State University, where he is passionate in his work to connect people with plants. His career in public horticulture has also included the Norfolk Botanical Garden, where he served as Director of Horticulture, and the Atlanta Botanical Garden, where he worked as a horticulturist.

Mark travels extensively, searching for new plants to diversify the American landscape, and lecturing on a variety of topics to further the J.C. Raulston Arboretum's vision of

“Planning and Planting a Better World.” His explorations and speaking engagements have taken him throughout the U.S., and to China, Taiwan, Japan, Ecuador, Europe, Mexico, and New Zealand.

Mark recently completed *A Homeowner’s Guide to Gardening in the Southeast* for Timber Press and is currently working on several other projects.

He recently revised and updated the *Propagation Guide for Woody Plants* at the J.C. Raulston Arboretum, and has been published in *Horticulture*, *Carolina Gardener*, *American Nurseryman*, *VA Gardener*, and *HortScience* magazines as well as *The Mid- Atlantic Gardener’s Book of Lists*.

Mark lives and gardens in the shade in Raleigh, North Carolina, the City of Oaks, with his wife and two children.

Please join us, and bring a friend!

NEWS FROM THE WATNONG CHAPTER

WE ARE STILL IN NEED OF A CHAPTER CHAIR! PLEASE CONSIDER STEPPING UP TO VOLUNTEER!

Plant Sale Volunteers Needed

By Melissa Grossmann

Preparations are well underway for this year’s plant sale on April 22 and 23 at the Leonard J. Buck Garden. I hope

that I can count on you to volunteer to help, as so many of you have done so dependably in the past. The gift of a few hours from you can make a big difference to the Watnong Chapter, and we have fun working together! The procedures and division of labor have not changed, but for those of you who are unfamiliar with our routine, the volunteer positions that need to be filled are:

Set Up the sale on Thursday, April 20 at the 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 21. 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 22: We need cashiers, plant advisors, and managers for the holding area (where shoppers may temporarily leave their plants). The shifts are 9:45-12, 12-2:30 or 2:30 -5.

Sunday April 23: The shifts are 12-2:30 and 2:30-5.

Please contact Martha Podilchuk if you can help, at marthpod@comcast.net or 908-507-6487.

This year's soiree will be held at the Presby Memorial Iris Garden, 474 Upper Mountain Ave, Montclair, New Jersey, 07043 on Saturday, May 6 at

5:00 p.m. Please contact Noel Schulz no later than April 28 at noelschulz@verizon.net or telephone [201-445-6445](tel:201-445-6445) to let him know if you plan to attend. Members are asked to bring an appetizer or dessert, and a chair. There is a small parking lot on Upper Mountain Ave; additional parking is available at a second lot on Highland Ave., as well as on the street.



Noel Schulz admires a bouquet Judy Glattstein brought from her cool greenhouse: *Narcissus* 'Spoirot', white *Freesia*, and *Muscari* 'Christmas Pearl'. Photo by Albert Martin.

Our bus trip for Saturday, May 20, 2017, to David Culp's Brandywine Cottage and Charles Cresson's Hedgeleigh Spring is filling up fast! Register soon, using the form on page 12.

A walking tour of the Pine Barrens will be led by Delaware Valley Chapter Chair Janet Novak on Saturday, June 17, 2017. We'll meet at Brendan Byrne State Forest for a walk of several miles to see orchids and

more. We will not be coordinating transportation to the park; take advantage of our upcoming activities to find friends to carpool.

Laurelwood Update: Another bed was prepped last fall at The South Rock Garden at Laurelwood Arboretum. Tufa will be added in May or June. If you're interested in working with (or observing!) the process, please contact Mike Wilson, miwilson@ramapo.edu, or 862-397-9339.



Ray Waksmundzki brought a selection of flowering plants to the meeting, and a door prize plant, too. Photo by Albert Martin.

NEWS FROM NARGS

How we benefit from the National NARGS Organization By Rich Rodich & Don LaFond

Hello, my name is Don LaFond. I'm the Chair of the Chapters Committee. This is a new committee charged with the task of getting a conversation going between the national organization and

the chapters. I don't know Rich Rodich but I was sent this compelling essay, written by him. With his permission I ask that you publish this in your chapter newsletters. Don edited a few lines to reflect the current financial situation with NARGS, and wrote a short bit at the end.

Are we a Minnesota Rock Garden Society all by ourselves? Certainly not! Our club would never be what it is today, with all that we know, share, learn, teach, give and receive without the (national) North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS). Actually, we wouldn't even be at all! The National Organization makes our entire existence possible.

So yes, we are here as a Chapter society of NARGS, even though we are not required to be members of NARGS. I wondered what else do we get from NARGS without being members?

The program that we take the most advantage of is the International Speakers Tour. Through NARGS, we are able to book worldwide authorities on plants for presentations at our meetings. Yes, we pay each speaker an honorarium, but the many thousands of dollars needed to facilitate their journeys here is absorbed by NARGS. Unfortunately because of lack of funding the board was forced to discontinue this service; with help this can be temporary.

Knowledge is what we get from NARGS. Whether you access the National Organization's presence through Facebook or the many options through the NARGS website, like all the back issues of the quarterly available on our website (except the most recent) on nargs.org, all this is "free" at your fingertips, but paid for by NARGS. The online discussion forum is available to ask questions, post photos or discuss topics or just eavesdrop. There are rock garden reference pages and a wiki of plants information and pictures. Also available are links to other information sites and related vendors. And let's not forget the worldwide publicity our Chapter enjoys through our own listing and link on the NARGS site.

We are blessed with many knowledgeable stalwarts in our Chapter. These are our "go to people" when we have particular plant related questions. How did they get so smart? Ask any of them: NARGS is integral in their learning experience.

The bookstore used to loom large in the NARGS inventory of benefits, but except for books actually published by NARGS, it is no longer a viable option because of modern commerce changes. So, now, if you plan to visit Amazon.com for buying books (or anything else), go to the Amazon site via the link at the bottom of the nargs.org home page. Doing so will automatically give NARGS a monetary cut of your action on the Amazon site,

without any added expense to you. If you don't see the Amazon link, turn off your browser's ad blocking program for the NARGS home page.

Non-members of NARGS also get plants through NARGS by piggybacking on NARGS members. Those of us who participate in the renowned world Seed Exchange (with over 4000 plant species) bring vibrant and exciting new plants to Chapter plant sales. Individual plant swaps throughout the country can also be facilitated through the NARGS programs, like the forum.

So we receive a whole bunch of free advantages from NARGS that help to make our Chapter a viable, fun, and vibrant society. But to NARGS non-members, don't feel guilty: feel thankful! NARGS realizes that there can be legitimate reasons why some of us don't sign up with the National Society. That's okay. However, if your reason is that you don't get any benefits from the National Society, think again.

Of course, joining NARGS brings more benefits on top of those already mentioned. You will receive the acclaimed Rock Garden Quarterly periodical, but you'll also have electronic access to all the past bulletins. Unlike many, this archive is searchable, too. New members automatically receive the Beginner's Handbook for rock gardeners. While non-members can view the Seed Exchange listing, only members enjoy the privilege of

participating. Members can also receive discount pricing as they attend national and regional education meetings that feature international speakers. First time attendees can apply for a stipend. (The stipend also has been temporarily discontinued due to quite simply not enough cash). A membership directory is available, as well as deals on tours and expeditions.

Wow! We get a lot from our parent National Organization. I am so very proud to be a member of both MN-NARGS and NARGS!

Rich has succinctly stated what NARGS does and could do for its members. I would like to see NARGS continue to do all that it does, I'm sure you do also, but frankly we don't bring in enough revenue to continue to do all that we have done in the past.

That's where the Chapters Committee comes in. We are trying to help chapters to figure out how to build up membership numbers, so we can continue to produce the Quarterly, Seedex, website and restart the speakers tour and stipends. What I see in the gardening community is change. Other gardening organizations, whether they be clubs, magazines, or nurseries, are in a state of flux, all with technology at the forefront of the change. Judging by the amount of garden activity I see in blogs, Facebook and other social media, I don't believe gardening is going away. But interest in the social aspect of gardening is declining. We need to

counteract this trend. We want to hear from you what you think can be done to get people interested in rock gardening, aka, getting new members. The only way we can continue the long-term survival of NARGS is by getting new members. The best place to accomplish this is at the local level. We want to share the ideas that your chapter does to accomplish this with other chapters. One small idea is to have you, and/or your chapter, buy a membership to NARGS for your local library. That is a way to get more eyes in front of our fantastic quarterly. Some chapters partially or fully give memberships to new members.

Each chapter has been assigned a director to manage this conversation, I urge you all to take advantage of this by contacting her or him and let us know what you think, and how you feel we can accomplish this task. Please help us continue this great organization.

On the “other” tour front, I would appreciate it if you would let your Chapter Newsletters know that we welcome chapter members on tours: BOTH our tours this summer have filled (to the Dolomites and also the Bighorns), HOWEVER, there is a possibility for a second Bighorn Tour between July 17-23 (a week before the original tour). Please email Jody (jodypayne1@gmail.com) if you are interested in the second Bighorn tour. And another tour to the Dolomites has likewise been scheduled: please read

the following paragraphs from the Tour Managers (Jody and Malcolm).

Because of the popularity of the [NARGS-sponsored Dolomites tour](#), we now have a second departure (the original tour is sold out) that will run from June 21 – 28, 2017; i.e., the week before our original tour. There are still places available. Full details can be found on pages 56-59 of the winter issue of the Rock Garden Quarterly. In the winter Quarterly our contact at Naturetrek (who is running the tour specifically for NARGS) was listed as Anthony Barton but should have been David Phillips. Further enquiries should be addressed to David <davidphillips@naturetrek.co.uk> or to Malcolm McGregor <mmcg@mmcg.karoo.co.uk>.

From Watnong NARGS Chapters' Committee Representative, Anna Leggatt

After a number of years with substantial financial losses, NARGS virtually broke even financially in 2015 and, as a result of the generous donations of our members, had a significant financial surplus for 2016.

Congratulations to all who helped. However, we must think long term and encourage people to join.

The main NARGS Seed Exchange is now complete and your seeds should have arrived. Surplus seeds are available March 1 - 15. Check

the web site, there are wonderful new plants and old favourites to try.

Don't forget the Wisconsin Spring Garden Gala NARGS Study Weekend, in Madison, Wisconsin, Friday May 19 and Saturday May 20, 2017.

You'll hear two expert speakers and enjoy plant-buying visits to a pair of nurseries stocked with choice varieties. Couple that with tours of two unique private gardens (one with rocks you'll have to see to believe) and a pair of great public gardens, including the University of Wisconsin's famed Arboretum.

This is a plant-filled springtime weekend in Wisconsin you'll really treasure. Make your spring an adventure.

See the multi-page ad in the winter (January 2017) issue of the NARGS *Rock Garden Quarterly* for more information, including how to register. Email questions to NARGSWIS2017@gmail.com (link sends e-mail)
Prices increase on April 19.

Nominations for the new NARGS board have now been closed. On-line elections will be from June 1-15, 2017.

The Piedmont Chapter in North Carolina will host the Annual General Meeting in November 2017. Details to follow!

Please contact me if you have any queries or concerns or an idea for a

botanical trip somewhere at anna.leggatt@sympatico.ca
May all your seeds germinate!
Anna Leggatt

From Betty Spar, NARGS Vice-President:

Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter is sponsoring a Study Weekend May 19 and 20 in Madison Wisconsin. Besides a pig roast, we are visiting members' gardens, the fabulous Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm where you get amazing and rare peonies, plus the Centennial Garden and University of Wisconsin Arboretum. Expect the Lilacs to be in bloom. You all asked for a study weekend, so I am hoping that this one will be a success. We need another study weekend for next year if your chapter together with some others would like to plan one for our pleasure. Remember it doesn't have to be in the winter. It's when it's best for your chapter to put it together.

If your chapter could sponsor an AGM for 2019, I would be thrilled. If you need help planning, it, please contact me.

<bettyannespar@gmail.com>

OUR FEBRUARY MEETING: Speaker Dr. Randi Wilfert Eckel, 'The Role of Native Plants in Landscape Design'

Summary by Hilary Clayton

Photos by Albert Martin



Our February speaker was Dr. Randi Wilfert Eckel, founder of the native wildflower nursery Toadshade Wildflower Farm in Frenchtown, New Jersey. Randi holds a PhD in Entomology, and worked at the U.S.D.A. studying plant and insect interactions. She founded Toadshade Nursery to expand the familiarity and availability of native plants.

The definition of a 'native plant' is not entirely agreed upon. For purposes of this lecture, the working definition of 'native' is a plant that was in North America before Europeans.

Although we gardeners tend to think we create gardens for ourselves, our plants serve to support other creatures in the environment. With a bit of thought we can raise a garden to a higher purpose. For best results, choose plants that are native to your ecoregion. Californian plants aren't native to the east coast, and some east coast plants act as invasive species in California-*Geranium robertianum*, Herb Robert, for

example. Some plants are native over a large range, such as *Baptisia australis*, which occurs from Maine to Georgia. A plant adapted to the southern end of that range isn't likely to perform well in the northern end. For restoration work, it's best to work with plants from within 50 miles of the site.

Recent trends in plant breeding have introduced the 'nativar': a cultivar of a native plant. In breeding ornamental plants, such traits as height, color, scent, disease resistance, or single versus double flowers are often the focus of a project. Insect preference in taste and nutrition are generally not considered. Doubled petals may be beautiful to look at, but they are often achieved at the expense of pollen, nectar and seeds, making some 'nativars' unrecognizable as food to insects.

Native plants are important components of successful landscapes. Functioning plant communities have fewer pest problems and support a vast array of wildlife. Glaciation in North America has given us a great biodiversity: New Jersey counts 2200 native plant species, with habitats ranging from seashore to mountain top and all areas in between. Let your existing environment determine your plant and landscaping choices rather than fight to make your site something it isn't.



Even a small garden has room to create diverse habitat: a tree, bush and groundcover fill the roles of canopy, mid-story and understory plants. Butterflies spend nights in vegetation; moths spend days against the bark of trees. Creating a diverse garden gives them a place to rest as well as feed. It's also important not to be too neat: butterflies overwinter as pupae in garden debris. A patch of mixed native plants of at least one square yard is both aesthetically pleasing and supports wildlife.

Birds are also welcome visitors to the garden; most of them feed their young caterpillars. More caterpillars bring more birds to the garden. A diverse habitat can support a whole range of wildlife, birds, bees, butterflies and moths, turtles, rabbits, amphibians and snakes.

Whatever garden conditions you have, there are native plants you can grow to welcome wildlife. Randi encouraged us all to explore the possibilities to make a difference to the gardener, the garden visitors, and the world as a whole.

IT GREW FOR ME!

Paris polyphylla

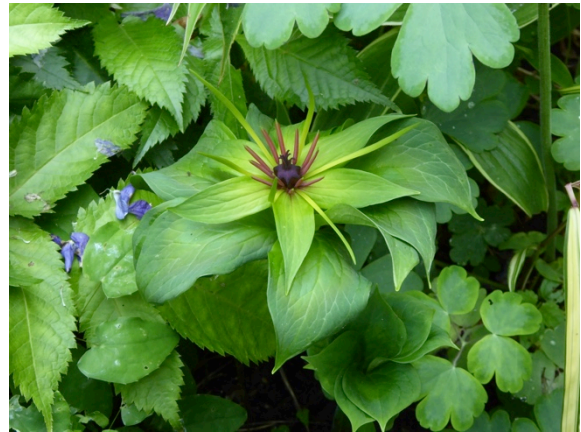
Words & Photos by Sid Jones

The genus *Paris* is rarely found in the nursery trade. It is related to *Trillium*, and at first glance could be mistaken for a *Trillium* on steroids. It consists of a single stem, up to 3 feet tall with a single whorl of pointed oval leaves. As the name indicates, there are many leaves in the whorl. When the rhizome is mature, a single stem rises from the

leaf whorl and produces a complex flowering structure (see photo).



Paris polyphylla, June 2, 2016



Paris polyphylla, June 4, 2016

I first encountered *Paris polyphylla* at Sissinghurst, UK in September, 2002 as a large clump growing under high shade. The plants were so visually striking with their orange red fruit held at the top, that I became determined to try to grow it, if hardy in New Jersey. It is native to moderately high elevations from China to Nepal where the climate is similar to our own. It took me eight years and numerous purchases before I obtained a vigorous specimen in November, 2010. Whether my many

failures were due to poor siting by me, the fact that the rhizomes were frequently desiccated, or a combination of both is uncertain.

I have decided that the most critical environmental requirement is constant moisture during the growing season, from emergence in late May until killing frost. Most cultivation advice includes partial to full shade, however, my clump has expanded from a single stem to six stems in 2016 while growing near the bottom of a north facing slope with only late afternoon shade.



Paris polyphylla, July 1, 2016

The structural complexity of *Paris* flowers is fascinating and they provide an exotic addition to the garden. After many years of attempts to establish *Paris* in my garden, achieving success gives me the pleasure of saying: 'It Grows for Me.'

WATNONG CLASSIFIEDS

HYPERTUFA TROUGHS



SPRING SHRUB PRUNING

Woodhull Hedge House and DIG IT! Magazine team up to present Spring Shrub Pruning 101, the first workshop in the series How To Restore An Apocalyptic Garden, on Friday, March 10, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. (rain date Friday, March 17). Held at Woodhull Hedge House in Chester, NJ., instructor Roman Fabiyan will lead this unusual, hands-on opportunity to learn how to prune while reviving a classic garden featured in Dig It Magazine. Learn which shrubs to prune in the spring, how to prune for best flowering, to restore vitality, and to correct form. Roman is a gardener at The Leonard J. Buck Garden in Far Hills, where he has been pruning shrubs and small trees for 15 years.

A fee of \$50 includes lunch, and 2.5 Master Gardening CEU credits are available. Space is limited to 30, first come, and first served. Registration

applications can be found on line at Dig It Magazine, www.dig-itmag.com. Email Linda Pastorino for payment processing: info@singkiang.com

If you would like to place an ad here, send copy to the Newsletter Editor, hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com. Ads are free to Watnong Chapter members. Deadline for inclusion in our Spring Newsletter is March 25, 2017.

2017 WATNONG CHAPTER OFFICERS

Chair	Please Consider	Your Name Here!	
Vice Chair	Michael Wilson	862-397-9339	miwilson@ramapo.edu
Treasurer	Caroline Ford	973-993-9426	Carolineford7@gmail.com
Secretary	Debi Graf	201-919-0749	DGRAFatHome@aol.com

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2017 SPRING BUS TRIP

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

Tour two gardens: David Culp's Brandywine Cottage in Downingtown, Pennsylvania and Charles Cresson's Hedgeleigh Spring in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania

Date and Time: Saturday, May 20, 2017 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
(approximately)

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

Cost: \$55 per member, \$65 per non-member (includes membership for 2017)

Note: Bring your own lunch, but water will be provided 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.

2017 Trip Registration Form

Members _____ x \$55, # Guests _____ x \$65 = Total \$ _____

Make check payable to Watnong NARGS

Names: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail (for confirmation): _____

If you print this newsletter, please recycle it when you're finished.

**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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