



# Newsletter

**North American Rock Garden Society**  
Connecticut Chapter January/February 2014

## FEBRUARY MEETING

Sunday, February 16, 2014 10:15 am  
Comstock, Ferre & Co.,  
263 Main St., Old Wethersfield, CT

**Speaker: Matt Mattus**

*Collector Bulbs for the Cold Greenhouse* is the subject of Matt's talk. Matt has a degree in Botany as well as the Fine Arts and has been gardening for his entire life. A bit of a plant geek, he enjoys immersing himself in a particular subject until he masters it. His greenhouse, a 33 x 30 foot heated (minimum 40 degrees) glass house, is full of many things, but mostly rare bulbs, predominantly from South Africa, South America and the Middle East. He will be sharing his knowledge on this subject, tempting us to experiment in our own green-house or on the windowsill. Check his blog: [www.growingwithplants.com](http://www.growingwithplants.com).

Social time begins at 10:15; brief business meeting at 10:45; program starts at 11:00 am. Bring a bag lunch, plants for show & tell. Comstock, Ferre is sponsoring a free seed-sowing workshop that afternoon, so plan to stay if you wish.

**Please note:** the meeting will take place in the upper level front room.

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The **March Meeting** has been **CANCELLED**. Our speaker, Elisabeth Zander, will be rescheduled at a later date.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The buds of the lovely *Adonis* are about an inch out of the ground and some *Galanthus* (near the house) have begun to bloom! Squirrels are unusually destructive in my gardens this year. And, as I write, snow is forecast for today. I am delighted with that news since we need snow cover when the temperature drops, especially for alpinists whose survival is linked to the fact that they spend the winter under the snow where they are protected from winds, loss of moisture and extremely cold temperatures. If you are not a member of the North American Rock Garden Society and therefore, not receiving **Rock Garden Quarterly**, you are missing a great publication.

The invasive snake worm, *Amyntas agrestis*, a probable import from Asia, has been written up in the latest issue of **The Laurel**, the newsletter of the Master Gardener Association: "In the garden, Crazy Snakeworms consume the top organic layer of the soil and mulch and deplete the nutrients that beneficial organisms...need to survive." They are "mostly surface dwellers that also make shallow cuts into the earth where they lay the cocoons containing their eggs under a layer of black castings. U.S. National Park Service research has failed to find an organic control mechanism." I will have more information on controls that gardeners can take in the next newsletter or you can check the website:

<http://blog.uvm.edu/jgorres/amynthas/>.

~Ginny

## Open Garden: Snowdrops

The late-winter Plainville garden of Leslie Shields will be open to members this year at a date to be announced. Leslie, who has been captivated by *Galanthus* for a number of years, began creating a snowdrop woods in her back garden. (See *For the Love of Snowdrops* in the March/April 2012 chapter newsletter.) While the common snowdrops have multiplied, Leslie has also added some choice selections to her collection; these, and the odd early flowering shrub, should provide a delightful first garden romp of the season!

The date of this open garden is dependent on the emerging flowers and is thus a rather last minute decision. Members will be notified by email. If you are interested in attending and do not have email, contact Maryanne Gryboski who will notify you by phone.

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## Upcoming Events

CT Horticultural Society Symposium  
Saturday, February 1  
Speakers: C. Colston Burrell, Jenny Rose Carey, Kevin Wilcox  
See [www.cthort.org](http://www.cthort.org)

Hardy Plant Society Symposium  
Saturday, March 1  
Speakers: Karen Bussolini, Lloyd Traven  
See [www.cthardyplantsociety.org](http://www.cthardyplantsociety.org), click on calendar

CT Master Gardener Assoc. Symposium  
Saturday, March 15  
Speakers: Carole Sevilla Brown, Ed Bowen, Michael Dietz, Nancy Dubrule-Clemente, Carol Gracie, Ellen Hovercamp, Lee Reich  
See [www.ctmga.org](http://www.ctmga.org)

## January 2014 NARGS Book of the Month

The Drunken Botanist: the Plants That Create the World's Great Drinks by Amy Stewart  
(Algonquin Books, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2013).

With a great and delicious approach to the new year, this book answers all of your questions about what to imbibe and why. The reviewer has been blender bound with beverages from the garden for years, yet she really found this book to be informative and fun.

Agave is all the rage and this book tells you why it's such a great substitute to sugars. I never knew that sloe berries made sloe gin; I do like a sloe gin fizz but who knew? As the reviewer says, there is so much to know and do after reading this book. The book also informs us on where to find some interesting concoctions and distilleries during our rock garden botanizing. Enjoy.

The review is by NARGS member, Holly H. Shimizu, executive director at the United States Botanic Garden, Washington, D.C.

The full review can be found on the NARGS Web site: ([www.nargs.org](http://www.nargs.org)). Click on "Plants" and then "Book of the Month."

Betty Spar, Book of the Month Club Chair

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## Himalayan Seed Collecting Expedition

Modern-day plant hunter Chris Chadwell is seeking shareholders in his 2014 Himalayan seed collecting expedition. See [www.chadwellseeds.co.uk](http://www.chadwellseeds.co.uk) for complete information. If anyone is interested in sharing a sponsorship of this expedition, please contact Maryanne Gryboski.

### NARGS CT CHAPTER OFFICERS

**CHAIR:** Ginny Gingras / 21 Timber Ln. / Vernon, CT 06066 / 860.875.9865 / [ginnygingras2013@gmail.com](mailto:ginnygingras2013@gmail.com)

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**PROGRAMS:** Please talk to one of the officers if you are interested in the Programs Chair position.

## NARGS NATIONAL

The following is reprinted in part from comments by NARGS president Peter George addressing why Chapter members might join the national organization:

Today we have 38 Chapters that are active in some manner and that provide some direct benefits to their members. Each of these Chapters organized itself and requested NARGS recognition, which means that the Chapter founders recognized some real benefit from NARGS to the Chapters. Today, for example, NARGS provides Chapters with prominent and well regarded speakers through its Speakers Tours. In the past few years alone we've shared with our Chapters people such as Josef Halda, Peter Korn, Harry Jans, Pam Eveleigh, Cliff Booker, Alan Bradshaw and John Grimshaw, as well as Jim Locklear, Fritz Kummert, Nick Turland, and Ian Young. The opportunity for members to learn from these men and women is a real bonus to the Chapters.

NARGS sponsors both a Regional and a National meeting. NARGS also provides a Web site that each Chapter can use to promote itself and advertise its

*See "National" next page*

## ANNUAL TREASURER'S REPORT 2012

Beginning Balance:		
Webster Checking A/C		\$3995.56
Income:		
Dues	\$400.00	
Fundraising	112.75	
Tri-state rebate	<u>80.38</u>	
		593.13
Expenses:		
Newsletter	< 103.15>	
Programs	<u>&lt;1071.00&gt;</u>	
		< 1174.15>
Ending Balance		\$3474.54

*Sally Katkaveck*

### RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW

Annual membership runs February through January. Membership includes the newsletter, visits to members' gardens, plant sales and auctions, workshops, and access to top notch speakers.

Use the form below to renew your membership for one or more years at the rate of \$10 per year. Also, consider giving a gift membership to a gardening friend or relative: a one-time introductory gift membership is only \$7.

## NARGS CT Chapter 2014 Membership Dues - \$10

Send this form along with check payable to **CT Chapter, NARGS**  
CT NARGS, Sally Katkaveck, Treasurer, 82 Ashford Rd., Ashford, CT 06278

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Gift Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Sending the newsletter digitally saves money. All e-mail addresses are confidential and are not shared.

**CT NARGS needs your time and talents. Please consider volunteering for:**

\_\_\_Programs Coordinator      \_\_\_Workshop Leader

\_\_\_Program Presenter      \_\_\_Garden Host/Hostess      \_\_\_Newsletter Article

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

“National” con’t from pg 3

programs, etc. In short, NARGS provides the Chapters with a variety of valuable resources that make their job of attracting and retaining members much easier.

For individual members of NARGS, the benefits are quite straightforward. First, membership includes a subscription to the NARGS **Rock Garden Quarterly**. Under the editorship of Malcolm McGregor, the Quarterly has become an informative, interesting, and beautiful magazine, providing members with articles, photographs and commentary that enhance our lives as rock gardeners. And it is available online free to our members. A second major benefit is the NARGS Seed Exchange. Each year we offer hundreds of species, including many that are wild collected, to our members at a very modest cost. The SeedEx is now electronic, so members are able to order online. Third, NARGS is reviving its Tours and Expeditions Program, offering our members the opportunity to explore many rarely visited botanical wonderlands at a very modest cost. Finally, we are developing the NARGS Web site into a portal through which all kinds of rock gardening information will be made available to members. We will be implementing dozens of technological initiatives that will enhance our gardening expertise and will provide members (including, importantly, members who are unable to attend meetings) with access to programs, photographic databases, streaming video of workshops, the entire library of ARGs/NARGS’s past quarterly publications (searchable too!), and many other benefits.

Membership is \$30. Make checks payable to North American Rock Garden Society and mail to: NARGS, P.O.Box 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619-8604; or go to the NARGS web site and click on ‘Membership Form’.

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**Correction:** The *Cyclamen hederifolium* cultivar listed in the November/December 2013 Newsletter should be *C. hederifolium* ‘Artemis’. Ed.



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