



Growing Interests

Watnong Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society
✧ Volume XXXIX ✧ Late Winter 2015 ✧ Number 2 ✧

Upcoming Programs

Sunday, March 15, 2015, 10 a.m.
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
Paul Trader presents:
'Principles of Integrated Pest Management for the Home Landscape'

Saturday, April 25 & Sunday April 26
Annual Plant Sale at
The Leonard J. Buck Garden, Far Hills

Bring a friend, your favorite early flowering branch or blossom, a warm beverage, and a snack to share.

Our Upcoming Speaker

Are you looking for ways to prevent and control insects, diseases and weeds in your yard and garden, without using traditional pesticides? Come and learn the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for the home landscape, with an emphasis on non- and least- toxic products and techniques.

Speaker Paul Trader is the retired Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland County, New York. He served as the commercial and consumer Horticulture Educator there for 15 years, and now teaches classes on Integrated Pest Management (IPM), insects, and diseases of landscape plants at the New York Botanical Garden. He earned a BS degree in Horticulture from Michigan State University and an MS in IPM from Kansas State University, with an emphasis on turf grass management. Bring a friend!



***Eranthis hyemalis* with a honey bee.**
Photo by Judy Glattstein

NEWS FROM THE WATNONG CHAPTER

Our annual plant sale, scheduled for Saturday, April 25, and Sunday, April 26, needs you! Volunteers are also needed to set up Thursday, April 23, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Martha Podilchuk has once again graciously agreed to serve as volunteer coordinator. Contact her at marthapod@comcast.net, or 908-647-4681.

Melissa Grossmann, Plant Sale Co-Chair, is looking for a volunteer who can bring donuts and bagels on Saturday morning before the sale begins. The Breakfast Treat Volunteer will be reimbursed! Look for more details on the plants to be featured at the sale in the next newsletter. You can contact Melissa at donmliss@msn.com, or at 908-604-8060.

Plants donated by members are very important to our profit margin! You can drop off your donations at The Leonard J. Buck Garden between April 11 and 23, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday 12 noon to 4 p.m. Please pot your donations as soon as possible, to allow them to be well settled into their pots before the sale. Plant donations must also be accurately labeled. Please, please do NOT donate any invasive species! If you need pots, please contact

Hilary at hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com, or at 908-781-2521. If you'd like a receipt of the value of your donations for tax purposes, contact Melissa as above.

Pam Wilson & members interested in developing a plant list for the Laurelwood Arboretum South Rock Garden met immediately after the February 14 meeting. Pam is currently developing a "shopping" list, and may also request divisions from members. A tentative planting date is scheduled for 9 a.m. on May 2, 2015. For more information, or to help, contact Pam at doubledaywilson@icloud.com, or 973-328-3723.

Albert Martin spent an afternoon at Laurelwood Arboretum a few weeks ago. To see the garden in winter, visit Albert's web site, www.AlbertMartinPhotography.com. The photos are accessible from the home page or use this link to the 'Laurelwood in Winter' gallery: <http://www.albertmartinphotography.com/Watnong/Laurelwood-Winter-2015/i-g8qCGBz/A>. The link must be entered into the web browser as one long line.

The Watnong Chapter now has an on-line presence! To check on scheduled meetings and more, visit the NARGS website, www.nargs.org, and look for 'Local Chapters' under the tab 'About Us'. The site is available to everyone, regardless of membership at the national level.

If you're feeling a bit winter weary, Carole Stober suggests a visit to Stony Hill Gardens at # 8 Route 24 in Chester for their 27th Annual Orchid Open House, March 6th, 7th and 8th 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., with Blizzard Dates of March 13th, 14th, and 15th. The event is free and open to the public, offers free wine and cheese tasting, and free daily lectures as well. Carole will present 'Growing Orchids at Home' daily at 11 a.m. 'Repotting your Orchids' will be presented daily at 2 p.m. More information is available at www.StonyHillFarms.com.

Mary Masilmani would like to inform everyone of the upcoming Native Orchid Conference to be held in Gorham, New Hampshire, June 1 -4, 2015. Field trips that time of year are likely to include some Alpine flowers as well! More information is available at <http://www.nativeorchidconference.info/conferences.html>.

The Leonard J. Buck Garden in Far Hills will host an Art and Photography Exhibit in the Visitor Center weekdays from February 23 through March 13. Admission is free. The exhibit features photographs, paintings, and drawings of the Leonard J. Buck Garden. Two of the photos on display are the work of Watnong's own Albert Martin.

If there's information you'd like to share with fellow Watnong members in the next newsletter, please submit it to Hilary by April 3, 2015.

NEWS FROM NARGS

Janet Novak, the Program Chair of the Delaware Valley Chapter of NARGS, would like to invite Watnong Chapter members to a talk by NARGS tour speaker, Dieter Zschummel, Thursday, April 16, at 7:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in Plymouth Meeting, a few minutes off the Pennsylvania turnpike north of Philadelphia.

Dieter's talk will be "**In the Land of Dionysia and Imperial Crown: Plant Exploration in Iran.**" The Delaware Valley Chapter expects this will be an exciting talk, and wants to make it available to NARGS members in the region. They would also enjoy meeting members of the Watnong Chapter.

More details are on the Delaware Valley Chapter website, <http://www.dvcnargs.org/events>.

The NARGS Annual Meeting will be sponsored by the Great Lakes Chapter in Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 7 to 10, 2015. Visit www.nargs.org to register.

Albert Martin would like to remind everyone of the **NARGS Photo Contest**. Capturing a beautiful picture of the transition from winter into spring can be challenging, and rewarding. In the Fall 2014 *Rock Garden Quarterly*, NARGS announced the rules for the 2015 photo contest. **The submission deadline is April 15, 2015.** There are six "classes":

1) The Rock Garden in Winter, 2) Portrait of a Plant in Cultivation, 3) Portrait of a Plant in the Wild, 4) Natural Scene with Plants, 5) Close-up or Macro of a Single Plant, and 6) North American Native Plant in the Wild or in Cultivation. The classes should be self-explanatory. For more information, see the *Rock Garden Quarterly*, Volume 72, No. 4, page 306.

There's still time to capture a beautiful moment in your garden this winter! Take out the camera, and snap away!

FROM THE CHAIR

Dear All,

I believe the last time I wrote, I stated that the winter did not compare to last year's and there was a lack of snow cover. I now stand corrected, because as I write, my garden is blanketed, and we are having another three to six inches of snow. This winter certainly does compare to last year! When it all starts to be too much, just remember that your plants are benefitting from the insulation. Remember that spring is less than 30 days away, and you will soon be able to evaluate your gardens and make decisions about what to add.

If you are considering some new plants for your yard, keep in mind that our annual plant sale at Buck Gardens offers a diversity of plants. Rumor has it that our Plant Sale Co-Chairs, Melissa

Grossmann and Jim Avens, were able to place some early orders this year, and it looks like we'll have some long hoped for plants that in the past were unavailable to us. As you know, the sale does not run itself, and our chapter relies on the volunteer help of its members. Some of our members have volunteered for the plant sale for many years, and look forward to doing so. If you have never volunteered at the sale, please consider it! You will find there are a variety of jobs to do, and that plant knowledge is not always necessary. You will also find that volunteering is a great way to learn more about rock garden plants, and can serve as a great introduction to many new and interesting plants. Interaction with other members teaches me something new every year!

If you would like to keep up with chapter events and have misplaced your newsletter, you can now find it on the internet. Thanks to Hilary Clayton, we now have a web page as part of the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS) website. To find our web page, go to the home page for NARGS. Scroll over the tab titled About Us. Under Organization, click on the tab for Local Chapters and scroll down to the Watnong Chapter. Also, under the Organization section, you can click on Chapter Newsletters and find our current newsletter. While there, feel free to look at other chapters' newsletters to see what they are doing and to gather ideas for our chapter.

The website is also a good way to learn about NARGS. Unless you are a member at the national level, you cannot access the entire website. I have been a member of NARGS for over 20 years and do find the benefits rewarding. As a chapter, we benefit through the speakers tour, a web appearance, and grant possibilities. Take a look at the website, and see if you might also consider a membership with NARGS.

Time to get away from the computer, put on the snow shoes and go enjoy the snow before it is gone! See you at the March meeting.

Regards,
Mike Wilson

Little Bulbs for Rock and Woodland Gardens in New Jersey

By Judy Glattstein

Geophytes for the Rock Garden

A rock garden is, for preference, located in full sun, has a well-drained gritty soil, and generally has a mineralized, infertile soil. Choose small, dwarf geophytes that will appear in proportion to the other plants such as *Phlox subulata*, *Iberis sempervirens*, and thymes. Both spring and fall flowering crocus are good choices, as are little tulips such as *Tulipa kaufmanniana* and *T. greigii* and their cultivars, as well as species such as *T. bakerii*, *T. hageri splendens*, *T. clusiana*, and others. Dwarf

species of alliums will do well. Spring flowering *Bulbocodium vernum* is another good choice, along with *Iris danfordiae*, *I. histrioides*, and *I. reticulata*. Both spring and autumn flowering crocus are another excellent choice.

Geophytes for the Woodland Garden

A wide range of geophytes will grow quite well in woodland areas, springing into growth, flowering, and then going dormant as the trees leaf out. In light to moderate shade, at the edge of woodland, or under a small tree such as a flowering dogwood, *Cornus florida*, grown as a specimen in a lawn, there are options for planting from among a wide diversity of little geophytes. Grecian windflower, *Anemone blanda*; glory of the snow, *Chionodoxa* species; cyclamen, *Cyclamen coum* and *C. hederifolium*; winter aconite, *Eranthis hyemalis*; dogtood violet, *Erythronium* species and cultivars; Guinea hen flower, *Fritillaria meleagris*; snowdrop, *Galanthus* species are just a start. Wood hyacinth, *Hyacinthoides hispanicus* and English bluebell, *H. non-scriptus* like room to spread. Spring snowflake, *Leucojum vernum* prefers a somewhat moist but not soggy site. Deer resistant daffodils, *Narcissus* species and cultivars thrive in light shade. Our native *Arisaema triphyllum* and the many Asian species of *Arisaema* are excellent choices. Do not overlook all the wonderful native woodland wildflowers that have lumpy underground structures: Dutchman's breeches, *Dicentra cucullaria* and

squirrel corn, *D. canadensis*; spring beauty, *Claytonia virginica*; dogtooth violet, *Erythronium* species and cultivars; bloodroot, *Sanguinaria canadensis*, and *Trilliums*.

Geophytes for Planting Under Groundcovers

Remember that the geophytes must be vigorous enough to reach daylight from beneath the groundcover. In shady sites where running myrtle, *Vinca minor*, is a familiar option, select larger geophytes such as winter aconite, *Eranthis hyemalis*, or even *Galanthus nivalis*. In sunny area try species crocus with thyme.

Geophytes for Damp Sites

For a damp meadow, a sunny grassy place that might be temporarily inundated but then subside to merely moist, consider growing Guinea hen flower, *Frilillaria meleagris*; three-cornered leek, *Allium triquetrum*; camassia, *Camassia quamash*; or *Lilium superbum*.

Editor's note: In addition to her own wonderful slides, Judy shared some scenes of tulips in their native habitats, courtesy of Tulips in the Wild. A slide show may be viewed at <http://www.tulipsinthewild.com/index.html>



The Laurelwood Arboretum Rock Garden – A Winter Visit

Text & Photo by Albert Martin

Up before the sun- 4 a.m.!- I get dressed with insulated underwear, water resistant pants, my favorite hiking shirt, a down hiking vest and my winter coat, which I bought for use in Wisconsin winters. I check my layered clothing – ready for the cold. I check my camera and all the contents in its backpack – ready for taking pictures. I check my snowshoes – ready for hiking. Eat a hearty breakfast - check. I do not look at the clock. And, finally, off to Laurelwood Arboretum.

There is a method to this madness. The weather report is for snow later in the morning, with a cloudy start to the day. Good sunrise photographs can be very dramatic, as the rising sun colors everything with a reddish glow while imparting strong shadows to the scene. If the sun itself did not appear, I might still catch some falling snow to lend a sense of action to the picture.

Surprisingly, even though I got to Laurelwood before the sunrise, the sky was light. I put on my snowshoes,

shouldered my photo backpack with attached tripod, and started hiking. Those of you who helped build the base for our rock garden know that it is located about half a mile from the parking lot, almost at the farthest point from the entrance. Much to my surprise, the cross-country skiers had been on the trails, cutting a ski-wide pathway on the trail. The snow had also hardened on the top, leaving light powder under the hard, icy, crust. Walking out to our rock garden was either like walking on a single railroad rail, or cracking the surface and sinking in almost a foot, even in snowshoes.

The sky remained cloudy, no sunrise and no snow. The light was “soft”. As some of you know, cameras are different from our eyes. A human eye can look at a well-lit scene and sense both the bright and dark areas. The camera cannot. Soft light means that the sensor could record all the available light.

But soft light also means that there are very few shadows and certainly no sharp or harsh shadows. In this light our garden looks like a blanket has gently fallen over it, a soft covering, a time to rest, waiting for spring to come. It looked as though one could smooth a hand over this blanket of snow, just the way we smooth our hands over blankets over our sleeping children.

That is how I see our rock garden this winter. It is sleeping peacefully underneath its soft cover of snow, full of promises to come.

WATNONG CLASSIFIEDS

HYPERTUFA TROUGHS



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120+ Species of Native & Tropical
Ferns raised from spores or divisions
Visits by appointment only.
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Art & Photography
EXHIBIT
LEONARD J. BUCK GARDEN

Weekdays, February 23–March 13 10am–4pm ▪ Free

Showcasing the four seasons at Leonard J. Buck Garden, this exhibit will feature photographs, paintings and drawings of Buck Garden. See the garden's many faces through the works of talented artists and photographers. This exhibit will be held at the Leonard J. Buck Garden Visitor Center, 11 Layton Road, Far Hills. For additional information please call 908 234 2677.

www.somersetcountyarks.org

Presented by
Somerset County Parks & Recreation

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**THE WATNONG CHAPTER
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