



Growing Interests

Watnong Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society
✧ Volume XLIV ✧ Late Winter 2020 ✧ Number 2 ✧

Upcoming Programs

Saturday, March 21, 2020 10 a.m.

Frelinghuysen Arboretum

Joseph Tychonievich, Editor of the
NARGS Rock Garden Quarterly,
'Rock Gardening: Reimagining a
Classic Style for Today's Garden'

Please bring a friend, a mug, and a
snack to share! Interesting plants or
blossoms are always welcome, too.

April 25 & 26, 2020

Annual Plant Sale at the Leonard J.
Buck Garden, Far Hills, 07931

Our March Speaker:

Joseph Tychonievich is a life-long gardener and lover of plants. He has worked for nurseries in the US and Japan, has been a repeated guest on public radio's food show *The Splendid Table*, and was named by *Organic Gardening Magazine* as one of "...six young horticulturists who are helping to shape how America gardens."

Joseph is the author of *Plant Breeding for the Home Gardener*, *The Complete Guide to Gardeners*, and *Rock Gardening:*

Reimagining a Classic Style, and is the editor of the North American Rock Garden Society quarterly journal.

Joseph lives with his husband, two cats, a dog, and an absurd number of plants in Williamsburg, Virginia.



Ray Waksmundzki brought some flowering plants to brighten a winter's day. Photo by Ken Johnson.

NEWS FROM THE WATNONG CHAPTER

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. Labeled plants may be dropped off at The Leonard J. Buck Garden Saturday, April 11 until

Thursday, April 23, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

If you have small pots to share, please bring them along to the March meeting.

Can you volunteer your time?

We need members to:

Set up the sale on Thursday, April 23, 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 24, 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 25: 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 26: 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, and let her know your availability and preferred activity, at marthapod@comcast.net or 908-507-6487.

Save the dates for our 2020 meetings and events!

Watnong members only garden tours

Passaic County: Saturday, May 9, 2020, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Details to follow.

Bergen County: Saturday, May 9, 2020, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Details to follow.

Bus trip to private gardens of the Hudson Valley, Saturday, May 16, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.- for details and registration see page 12.

Watnong members only Morris County garden tour, Saturday, July 18, 2020 (Time to be announced).

Watnong members only soiree & plant swap, Saturday, July 18, 2020 5:00 p.m. After the garden tours on July 18, the soiree and plant swap will be held at the home of Debby Zweig. Details to follow.

Watnong members only picnic & garden tour Saturday, September 12, 2020; time to be announced. Paul Sisko will host us at 113 Fardale Avenue in Mahwah, NJ, where he has gardened for over 30 years. The 3.5-acre garden features a fishpond and pool area, surrounded by terraced gardens built with stone relocated from farm walls on the property. There are perennial, annual, and vegetable gardens, and numerous contemporary metal sculptures throughout the property, which were all created by Paul.

9/19/20 Lisa Roper, Chanticleer Horticulturist, ‘Bulbs’.

10/18/20 Randy Heffner, Aquascape, ‘Sarracenia’.

11/21/20 Lori Chips, Oliver Nurseries, 'Container Gardening'.



Heirloom seeds for sale at the February meeting. Photo by Martha Podilchuk.

May 16 Bus trip gardens tour

We will be touring the private gardens of three members of the Hudson Valley Chapter of NARGS, in Westchester County, New York. Rick Plate, Don and Olivia Dembowski and Alex Kenner will be providing tours of their gardens in Larchmont, Hartsdale, and Briarcliff Manor, NY. Tour crevice gardens, rock gardens, troughs, and see rare and unusual plants, including alpine plants and a crevice garden created by Czech plantsman Vojtech Holubec.

Date and Time: Saturday, May 16, 2020.
Be ready to board the bus at 7:45 a.m.;

the bus leaves 8:00 a.m. and will return at approximately 4:00 p.m.



The Dembowski crevice garden, photo by Don Dembowski.



Lewisia in the Kenner garden; photo by Alex Kenner.



Stewartia malacodendron in the Dembowski garden, photo by Don Dembowski.

Watnong Member Garden Tours

Several chapter members will welcome visitors to their gardens on Saturday, May 9, and Saturday, July 18:

Passaic County: Saturday, May 9, 2020, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., the gardens and greenhouse of Renate Gudat, 31 Cliffside Drive, Ringwood, NJ, 07456.

If you are driving north on Rt 287, this garden is on your way to the Bergen County gardens noted below.

Bergen County: Saturday, May 9, 2020, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the gardens of Janet Schulz and Noel Schulz:

Janet Schulz, 16 Colonial Drive, Wyckoff, NJ, 07481.

Noel Schulz, 108 Lincoln Place, Waldwick, NJ, 07463.

You may wish to visit a wonderful nursery as well, Rohsler's Allendale Nursery at 100 Franklin Turnpike in Allendale.



Renate Gudat's greenhouse; photo by Renate.

Morris County: Saturday, July 18, 2020 (Time to be announced)

Sid Jones and Debby Zweig will be open their gardens for touring by Watnong members, followed by our annual soiree in Debby's garden.

Sid Jones, 123 Mountainside Drive, Randolph, NJ, 07869.

Debby Zweig, 85 East Shawnee Trail, Wharton, NJ, 07885.

If you would like to add your gardens to the tours, please contact Noel at 201-445-6445, or noelschulz@verizon.net.

Hospitality is back!

Renate Gudat is our March volunteer; if you can help her please email Roxanne at Roxanne.Hiltz@gmail.com.

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 snacks to share to arrange them for serving. 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.

NARGS Seedex Phase III

A huge thank you to all who helped with the NARGS Phase 3 seed distribution! We had nineteen volunteers involved and filled 560 orders to nineteen countries (including the US) in just under 300 volunteer hours.



Marta McDowell, Annette Tyler and Debby Zweig pulled seed orders in the Jordan House at the Leonard J. Buck Garden. Photo by Hilary Clayton.



Pat Hilgendorf with a finished order and many ship zones to consider this year!

Thank you, thank you to Pat Hilgendorf, Melissa and Don Grossmann, Sid Jones, Terrie Reid, Martha Podilchuk, Debby Zweig, Cindy Hedin, Kirke Bent, Marta McDowell,

Brian Coleman, Ray Waksmundzki, Roxanne Hiltz, Susan & Peter Deeks, Annette Tyler, Tracy Jacobus, and Peter Birnbaum. I would also like to thank those who were unable to come to help but sent along words of encouragement.

This ends our Chapter commitment to the seed exchange for a few years. I do encourage everyone to consider becoming a seed donor. While packing orders we decided to hold a seed/cleaning packing workshop later in the fall; watch for information about the workshop, as well as collecting seeds from your garden, in upcoming newsletters.

Our February Speaker:
Barbara Melera, *The D. Landreth Seed Company and the Story of America's Oldest Seedhouses*

Summarized by Melissa Grossmann

Barbara Melera's fascinating talk wove together history and horticulture to remind us that we were once a nation of gardeners, united in our need to have seeds. The Landreth Seed Company was launched in 1784 in Philadelphia, the residents of which Mr. Landreth had judged to be sophisticated enough to appreciate horticulture. At that time, seeds were sold in small, ceramic containers, resulting in individual cultivars having restricted distributions.

The Shakers then introduced the concept of packing seeds in envelopes, and in 1790, Landreth Seed started gluing the packets shut. With that, the commercial trade of small seeds became practical, and a period of great horticultural expansion followed.



Melissa Grossmann with speaker Barbara Melera. Photo by Martha Podilchuk.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804 – 1806 was the largest, most productive plant collection project ever undertaken, and it was Bernard McMahon, an employee of Landreth, who convinced Thomas Jefferson that plant exploration needed to be part of the expedition. McMahon is also known as the author of the first book on American horticulture, in 1806. In 1811, Landreth Seed introduced the first

white-skinned, white-fleshed (not yellow) potato, resulting in the potato being accepted by the upper classes as “refined” enough to be eaten.

In the 1820’s, Buist’s was established as the first seed company entirely devoted to flowers and ornamentals. Buist also obtained cuttings from Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first U.S. Minister to Mexico, of *Euphorbia pulcherrima*, and commercialized the production of this horticultural staple.

The 1850’s brought the invention of retail display racks for seeds, in the form of wooden cabinets with little drawers for individual varieties. In 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in Tokyo, hoping to reestablish trade and discourse between Japan and the Western world. Among the gifts he brought to the Japanese were American trees and shrubs. The Japanese reciprocated with their own plants, which Landreth was contracted to grow by the U.S. government.

This was a detailed, scholarly presentation, and there were many more stories of the various innovations that made possible the development of modern seeds and catalogs, and of the role of seeds and horticulture in the history of our nation.

Barbara Melera will be offering other classes this spring at Rutgers Gardens. For more information, phone: 732-932-8451 or visit the Rutgers Gardens website: rutgersgardens.rutgers.edu.

NEWS FROM NARGS



Foresight 2020: Exploration and Inspiration

By Carol Eichler, Adirondack Chapter

It's not too early to be thinking about June. And why? As gardeners there are many reasons to look forward to summer and the NARGS Annual General Meeting and Conference I hope is one of them.

The Adirondack Chapter invites you to attend NARGS' Annual General Meeting— whether you are a return attendee or are considering attending for the first time. We promise an action-packed few days that include visiting the public gardens of Cornell Botanic Gardens and some very special private gardens.

We are eager to showcase the beauty of our area that is often described as gorge-ous – which references our many gorges and waterfalls. But we're also

proud of 40-mile long Cayuga Lake, the 2nd largest of the Finger Lakes, and the rolling, wooded hills and verdant gardens that surround it.

Each afternoon, after returning from field trips, you can indulge your plant lust at our plant sales featuring an exciting list of specialty vendors. Dinner and evening talks will follow. We are thrilled to introduce the NARGS community to Kaj Andersen and the Bangsbo Botanical Gardens of Northern Denmark where he and his wife Minna, working alongside Zdeněk Zvolánek, have been instrumental in the construction and care of the world's largest crevice garden. Our other international speaker is Harry Jans, who believe-it-or-not is making his AGM debut and needs no introduction to the rock gardening community. Harry, renowned for his extensive travels, will take us on a whirlwind around-the-world tour in 60 minutes - highlighting alpinists that he considers the best, new, rare, or strange and looking at different survival techniques. For his second talk he will focus on the alpinists of Ecuador and Peru, two countries not often visited by plants people. Rounding out the Conference activities are: book sales and signings, door prizes, and always the camaraderie of fellow plant enthusiasts.

We believe Ithaca is the place to be this June! You might even want to consider extending your stay to more fully experience the Finger Lakes

region. So mark your calendars for June 18-20 and start saving up to make the trip to Ithaca in the heart of the Finger Lakes region in the center part of the New York State.

The NARGS winter Quarterly as well as the website (www.nargs.org/Events) contain the details. Online registration will be opening by the end of January.

**It Grew for Me,
Earlier than Expected!**
Text and Photos by Noel Schulz



How is your garden doing this winter? In my garden, in Waldwick (Bergen County), flowers began blooming about one month earlier as compared to prior years. My *Eranthis* usually blooms from mid-February and finishes blooming about mid-March; this year blooms began appearing in mid-January. My *Helleborus niger* began blooming on January 13, with large white flowers. By mid-February, these flowers began turning pink.

My *Iris reticulata*, usually a March bloomer, appeared on February 19. Last fall, a Johnny-Jump Up *Viola* came up between the cracks on my patio,

sheltered next to a large planter. It bloomed all winter!



**JUDY GLATTSTEIN'S BOOK
REVIEW:**

Nature Into Art, The Gardens of Wave Hill, by Thomas Christopher, photography by Ngoc Minh Ngo

Have you ever visited Wave Hill? It's a superlative garden in the Bronx, overlooking the Hudson River, across to the Palisades of New Jersey. If, for whatever reason you've never been there, *Nature Into Art, The Gardens of Wave Hill*, written by Thomas Christopher and with photography by Ngoc Minh Ngo will have you adding a visit to your bucket list.

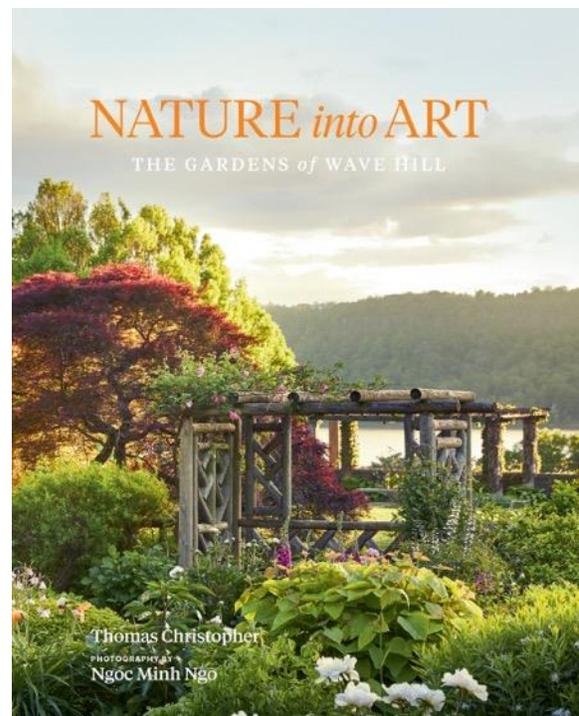
Once upon a time, Wave Hill was a country estate. In 1960 family heirs

donated the 28-acre property to the City of New York. And there things stalled for a while. There wasn't much money for horticultural acquisitions and property maintenance. Marco Polo Stuffano, graduate of the New York Botanical Garden's School of Professional Horticulture, was hired as the founding director of horticulture. The book begins here with some history of the site and principles of design for a garden that grew, incrementally and organically, developed with plants rather than pencil on paper.

Text explores the history of the garden. The use of annuals is explained: in early years, they were raised from seed, and some were discovered to re-seed, and now the use of self-sowing annuals is an important factor in several of the gardens. The pleasant background is enhanced by a few historical pictures but brought to life with cotemporary photographs by Ngoc Minh Ngo of vistas and overviews, and plant portraits. Delightful, informative details - biennials such as foxgloves are started in cell packs in mid-to late July, overwintered in cold frames outdoors, dropped into the garden in late fall as fading plants open up spaces. In turn, as they finish flowering, the foxgloves are hoicked out, replaced by dahlia tubers, gladiolus corms, and tender salvias in mid- to late June to provide late summer and fall color. Labor intensive, with spectacular results.

There's a chapter on The Gold Border - and don't think monochromatic

equates to dull. The Monocot and Aquatic Gardens (adjacent to each other at Wave Hill) are next. There is a page here and there with suggestions for caring for aquatics, and gardening with tropicals, and what the home gardener might do. The shade border offers options and possibilities for country gardens where shade comes from trees. It also provides ideas for city gardens where buildings create the lower light conditions. Text explains, discusses, offers some definitions for shade, while the images of trees, shrubs, perennials, native wildflowers will whet the reader's appetite for plants that thrive in shaded conditions. How to plant, using fertilizer, when and how-to water increase the chances of success.



If I had to choose just one of Wave Hill's gardens it would probably be the

Wild Garden. There you stand at the top of the slope, the twisting paths looking out at strategic points across the Hudson River at the forested Palisades. Continue along and the path curves away. You lose the vista but view plants growing in casual tousled abundance, shrubs, perennials, and self-sowing annuals and biennials planting themselves where they want to grow. There are many spring ephemerals, bulbs that come and bloom and disappear. Text explores the influences that factored into this garden's concept, and the maintenance that staff discretely provides.

Another chapter focuses on the Wave Hill alpine house, as well as where and how Marco Polo Stufano became not merely fascinated with alpines but also convinced they could be grown at Wave Hill. The alpine house is a place to grow select high mountain plants that need the barest modicum of protection and allows them to be viewed by the public. Hypertufa, an amalgam of Portland cement, perlite, and peat moss is used to create troughs for planting miniature landscapes kept outdoors. There is so much detail offered in this chapter – the recipe for making hypertufa, the recipe for alpine plant soil mix- that this chapter could be a little book all on its own. In fact, so could the other specialty garden chapters: The Herb and Dry Gardens, Annual Plantings, Elliptical Garden,

A garden is not static. Growing, it includes the fifth dimension of time. The

concluding chapter, Wave Hill Through the Seasons offers readers a glimpse of the multiplicity of plants and seasons, vistas and enchantment. Walk on the grass. It's allowed. Do smell the flowers. Enjoy the history and magic that grew into a garden which has spread its influence far beyond its actual boundaries.

Make a visit at any season - late into the fall or end-of-winter, not-yet-spring. And until you do visit in person, make a virtual visit through the pages of this informative, attractive book.

Nature Into Art, The Gardens of Wave Hill
by Thomas Christopher, photography
by Ngoc Minh Ngo
Published by Timber Press, Portland,
Oregon, 2019

ISBN 978-1-60469-851-0, hardcover,
\$40.00

A review copy of this book was
provided by the publisher

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. The deadline for our Spring 2020 edition is March 28, 2020.

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2020 SPRING BUS TRIP

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

We will be touring the private gardens of three members of the Hudson Valley Chapter of NARGS, in Westchester County, New York. Rick Plate, Don and Olivia Dembowski, and Alex Kenner will be providing tours of their gardens in Larchmont, Hartsdale, and Briarcliff Manor, NY. We will see rock gardens, troughs, many rare and unusual plants, including alpines, and a crevice garden created by Czech plantsman Vojtech Holubec.

Date and Time: Saturday, May 16, 2020. Be ready to board the bus at 7:45 a.m. Departure is at 8:00 a.m. from Cedar Knolls Plaza, 235 Ridgedale Ave, Cedar Knolls (park at the McDonalds end of the lot, near Ridgedale Avenue). We will return at approximately 4:00 p.m.

Cost: \$40 per member, \$50 per non-member (includes membership for 2020) **No refunds.**

Please bring your own lunch. Water will be provided on the bus (and there is a toilet on the bus). The properties have steep sections, so wear appropriate non-slip shoes.

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.

2020 Bus Trip Registration Form

Make check payable to Watnong NARGS

Members _____ x \$40 = Total \$ _____

Names: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail (for confirmation): _____

Non-Members at \$50 (Please use one form for each new member)

Name: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Address: _____

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**

