



Growing Interests

Watnong Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society
✧ Volume XLIII ✧ Summer 2019 ✧ Number 4 ✧

Upcoming Programs

Members Only Picnic & Plant Swap
Saturday July 27, 2019 Noon – 4 p.m.
At The Hay, Honey Farm
130 Stevens Lane
Far Hills, New Jersey, 07931
RSVP by July 13, details on page 2.

Saturday September 14, 2019 10 a.m.
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
Elisabeth Zanders of the NARGS
Connecticut and Berkshire Chapters
‘Hardy Northeast Rock Garden Plants’

Annual Picnic and Plant Swap

Our annual picnic and first ever plant swap will be held Saturday, July 27, from noon to 4 p.m. at The Hay, Honey Farm in Far Hills, New Jersey.

Since 1989, the extensive gardens of The Hay, Honey Farm have been carefully added to the landscape in a naturalistic manner, with a respect for the history and topography of the site, and consistent with the broader surrounding atmosphere of Pleasant Valley. The plant collections reflect the diverse interests of the owners, Chuck and Pat Crafts, and the resident horticulturists, Hilary and Michael Clayton, your hosts for the afternoon.

Approximately twenty acres of the farm have been deer fenced since 1991, with most garden areas established by 2000. In late July, visitors can anticipate bloom in the walled border, hosta gardens, and the mostly native meadow, and the vegetable garden will be in full production. While the Rhododendron garden will not be in full bloom, it holds a number of choice, shade-loving herbaceous plants. The Wild Garden, deer fenced in 2006, has a native



A beautiful day and a long line of eager customers greeted the annual plant sale April 27. Photo by Tricia Scibilia, Somerset County Park Commission Interpretive Gardener, Leonard J. Buck Garden. More photos on page 3.

herbaceous layer that has served to attract a growing assortment of songbirds, and birding enthusiasts are welcome to bring binoculars. Of special interest to rock gardeners is the Terrace garden, with an array of dwarf conifers, and a series of troughs.

Hilary will lead a tour of the gardens at approximately 3 p.m. This is a member only event, but if you have a friend or family member who would like to come there's still time to join! Dues are \$10 per person, or \$15 per mailing address. Make the check to Watnong Chapter NARGS and mail it to Sid Jones, 123 Mountainside Drive, Randolph, NJ 07869.

Members are asked to bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert, and any necessary serving pieces. For the plant swap, please bring pest -free plants in good health, labeled to the best of your ability. Please RSVP to Hilary by Saturday, July 13 at hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com.

The farm is most easily reached from the center of Peapack: take Peapack Road, Route 512 to the center of town, and turn on to Willow Avenue. Follow Willow Avenue approximately one mile, then turn left on to Branch Road. Follow Branch Road 7/10 mile to a green steel bridge. CROSS THE BRIDGE on to a private, gravel road, and bear left.

The picnic will be held at the second driveway on the right, 4/10 mile from the

bridge. The street address is 130 Stevens Lane, Far Hills, 07931. Most GPS systems will find the property, but please be aware that the signal may be lost about a quarter mile away. Also, some systems announce 'you have arrived' as soon as you are on the gravel road, so look for a white barn with window boxes and large green doors.

NEWS FROM THE WATNONG CHAPTER

Save the dates!

9/14/2019, Elizabeth Zanders, Connecticut & Berkshire Chapters NARGS, 'Hardy Northeast Rock Garden Plants'

10/13/2019, Joann Knapp, Watnong NARGS, 'The Frustrations of a Flower Photographer'

11/16/2019, Michael Hagen, New York Botanical Garden, 'The T. H. Everett Memorial Rock Garden: Past, Present, and Future'

Hospitality is back!

We have a hospitality committee now and need more volunteers! One, or preferably two, people should sign up for each of our program meetings. Roxanne will bring the supplies.

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 goodies to arrange them. 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.

We still need hospitality volunteers for our September 14 meeting!

October 13 Lillie Dorchak and Shirley Rovinski

November 16 Michele Guitierrez and CarolAnn Baldowski

To sign up, or for more information, email Roxanne.hiltz@gmail.com

The Plant Sale Report

By Melissa Grossmann,
Plant Sale Co-Chair

A hearty round of applause for everyone who contributed to the plant sale! As a result of the beautiful weather, your generosity, and whatever mysterious alchemy makes things go right, we had one of our most profitable years ever. Thank you, faithful volunteers, for your time, your expertise, your plants, your patience, your commitment, and for purchasing plants. Thank you to the Buck Garden staff for your hospitality and for the

expert execution of the many steps that add up to our success.

And from Treasurer Donald Grossmann:

The 2019 Plant Sale had gross sales of \$18,867.90, exceeding last year's sales by \$2,196. The net profit for the sale is \$10,469.69, setting a record for the chapter. The profit is shared equally by the chapter and the Somerset County Park Commission. Thus, the chapter's share for 2019 is \$5,234.85



Carole Stober and Tracy Jacobus at the Thursday set-up session. Photo by Kathleen Apt, Somerset County Park Commission Administrative Assistant Leonard J. Buck Garden



Anne Franges made sure all the plants were well prepared for the sale. Photo by Kathleen Apt.



Lots of enthusiastic shoppers! Photo by Tricia Scibilia



Photo by Tricia Scibilia.

THE SPRING BUS TRIP

By Debby Zweig, Program Committee

On a rare sunny Saturday this past May 11, 32 members of the Watnong Chapter of NARGS enjoyed a bus trip to two gardens in Eastern Pennsylvania.

The morning was spent touring Edgewood Gardens in Exton, Pennsylvania, the one and one-half acre residence of Johns Lonsdale. Mr. Lonsdale presented a lecture to the Watnong NARGS last October, titled "Fall Bulbs-Untapped Treasures".

Not an ounce of lawn seed was wasted on this plantsman's Garden. Everywhere you looked, there were many layered gardens. Narrow pathways crossed a steep slope covered with rich woodland plants such as Trilliums, Hellebores, Epimediums and Cyclamens. John explained that he adds organic matter to his woodland garden by collecting the leaves in the fall, shredding them and returning them to the garden as mulch.



The Woodland Garden at Edgewood Gardens, photo by Debby Zweig.

John took full advantage of the micro-climates on his property by amending the soil on the sunny south facing side of his house to grow cacti and other succulents. The lowest area on his property was transformed into a Bog

Garden with Jack-In-The-Pulpit and Pitcher Plants.



The Bog Garden at Edgewood Gardens, photo by Debby Zweig.

In the afternoon, we visited the Garden at Mill Fleurs in Point Pleasant, Pennsylvania. Wedged between a natural rock cliff face and the Tohickon Creek, this garden was started in 1993 by furniture designers Barbara and Bob Tiffany.

Barbara explained that she sees color very vividly and designed her garden into color groupings to produce a serene effect. For example, one area was a yellow garden with flowers and foliage tilting toward yellow in the color wheel.

The driveway to the Grist Mill and Old Saw Mill, which is now their residence, was lined with red and pink flowering Rhododendron, Mountain Laurels and Red Japanese Maples. The front of the house had plants featuring black tones.

There was an area featuring miniature Hostas to charming effect. Much of the garden was filled with shade loving plants such as *Epimediums*, *Hosta* and *Astilbe* and the trees and shrubs featured variegated foliage or interesting bark. Many members of our group commented that they could have spent the entire day in this lovely garden.

For more information about these gardens, please visit www.edgewoodgardens.net and www.thegardensatmillfleurs.com.

The 2019 Blackburn Scholarship Awards

By Sid Jones

On June 9, 2019 the Friends of Frelinghuysen Arboretum held their annual meeting. During the meeting the winners of the Blackburn Scholarship were announced. These awards, given annually, are sponsored jointly by FOFA and Watnong Chapter of NARGS. They are given to one or more outstanding students in the Landscape and

Horticultural Technology Program and County College of Morris. Applicants submit their CCM course and grade records, recommendations from faculty and others, a short essay and photos showing their work. The Scholarship Committee, Heather Emelander from FOFA and Sid Jones from Watnong review the applications and select one or more winners.

This year Scholarships were awarded to Jennifer Thomas of Long Valley and Dzovig Mahseredjian of Oak Ridge. Jennifer left her career in R&D in the food industry to start a second career, focusing on Landscape Design at CCM. Dzovig holds a BS degree in Agriculture from the University of Jordan, with specialization in soil, water and irrigation science. She is fascinated by a climate where there is abundant rainfall! Her focus at CCM is Landscape Design and Garden Center Management.

NEWS FROM NARGS

Delaware Valley's Splendid National Meeting

By Starr Roxanne Hiltz,
Watnong Chapter Chair

Our sister chapter of NARGS put on a spectacular gathering that was a national annual meeting in everything except the official name of "study weekend." It was held May 2 to 5 near many of the famous public botanical and

private gardens in Fraser, Pennsylvania, south-west of Philadelphia and just over the Delaware border. "Plant diversity in the Delaware Valley and around the world" was the theme.

For me, the best parts were the pre-trip and local garden visit days. As long as Murray and I are making a trip we plan to go early and see some other things... usually too many things! This year we met my daughter Kate at Longwood Gardens for the day on Wednesday. Longwood is spectacular but "unreal"- despite the cold, wet spring it had acres of perennial gardens in full out of season bloom, from plants grown in the greenhouses; for example, there were three- foot tall red Snapdragons, and Delphiniums.



Roxanne and her daughter Kate with some terrific red Snapdragons at Longwood Gardens. Photo by Murray Turoff.

The buses for Thursday were scheduled to leave at 7:30 a.m., so one had to be up by about 6 to have breakfast and get a good seat before then. It featured about three stops at various

Eastern Woodlands sites with spring ephemerals such as *Trilliums* and *Primula* and *Phlox*. Friday was pushed back to a 7 a.m. departure... too early for us! Those who went said they loved the Jersey Pine Barrens, but we had seen them a few times before and opted to “sleep in” till 8 a.m.

Instead, we went to the wonderful Brandywine Museum, which features three generations of Wyeth painters, and also has some display gardens and trails. After lunch, we only had time for one of the many open member gardens in the area, since they closed at 2 p.m., David Culp’s ‘Brandywine Cottage’. You may remember that he spoke to us this year about meadow gardens. He had a stunning display of thousands of white lily-flowered and purple Darwin- type tulips, plus many other things in bloom.

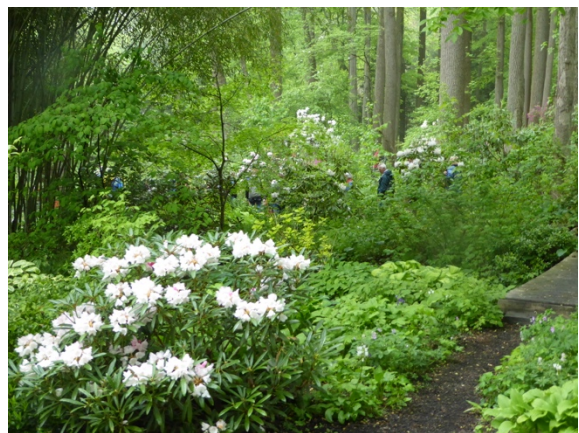


David Culp’s Brandywine Cottage, photo by Murray Turroff

Plant sales and show opened at 3, followed by happy hour with sales of raffle tickets (Melissa and I helped with this). Each of the three days of the

meeting had new items for the raffle, and many of them were quite nice. I may have been my own best customer, buying 21 tickets, but I did “win” once, and chose an assortment of six little alpine plants from Wrightsman (three of them are actually still alive and uneaten....) After the dinners each evening, there were three speakers with slide talks, with everything ending by 10 p.m. (past my bedtime...)

As is traditionally the case, Saturday was all day field trips, scheduled 8 a.m. till 3:30 p.m., but we actually did not get back till almost 5. Two private gardens were spectacular. Wayne Guyman’s garden in Chadds Ford Pennsylvania has a huge pond with an island, trails around it, and a hillside planted with thousands of azaleas in bloom at the time, and also thousands of many kinds of Hostas.



Wayne Guyman’s garden, photo by Murray Turroff.

Rad MacFarland’s garden in Wilmington Delaware has diverse types of rock gardens and troughs, including

huge stone troughs all around a raised patio, and extensive garden paths with “fairy” features nestled beneath plants and hanging from trees. It is especially nice to tour these gardens with the owners, who talk about the history and their design philosophy and the different plants.



Rad MacFarland’s rock garden. Photo by Murray Turoff.

All the buses were supplied with box lunches for our guided tour at Mount Cuba. This is a DuPont garden with a difference... the emphasis is on native plants, including dogwoods. We only had about two hours for a partial tour, of the “woods path,” the formal gardens near the house, and lunch, and could easily have spent all day there. Afterwards—more raffle ticket sales, banquet, slide talks etc. till 10 p.m. (If I were planning a meeting, I would leave time for a nap before dinner!)

Sunday dawned rainy, and I had slept little in the noisy hotel, so we opted out of breakfast that started at 6:30 a.m., more slide talks, business meeting, and

open gardens in the area from noon till 4 p.m. and headed home with our buckets of plants from the plant sales.



Mount Cuba Woodland Walk; photo by Murray Turoff

Why was this just a “study weekend” instead of the official Annual Meeting? It seems that another chapter had put in a bid for the annual meeting before Delaware Valley. They subsequently cancelled, but Delaware Valley had already advertised as a ‘study weekend,” so.... Bureaucratic red tape.

NEXT YEAR! You should plan to go! The Annual Meeting will be at Cornell University in Ithaca NY, June 18-20. I have heard that the pre-tour from June 15-17 is full but has a waiting list; in any case, there are lots of other things to see

in that region, before and after the meeting, and on the way there and back.

The Canadian Hemlock, Provider of America's First Dwarf Conifers

By Frank Goodhart

Part 3, the conclusion, continued from the Spring Newsletter

Landscape use of Canadian hemlock is very limited today because of hemlock scale and wooly adelgid. Hemlock scale was identified in the Philadelphia, PA area in the 1970's and was very prevalent in northern New Jersey about 50 years ago. Trees died slowly over a period of time. The hedgerow of hemlocks at the Watnong Nursery was removed in the 1980's due to scale infestation. Soon afterwards wooly adelgid appeared and killed off nearly all the remaining trees in the northeast. Fear was put into the hearts of dwarf conifer collectors who abandoned collecting and using dwarf hemlocks. But after a few years it was found that these pests are not prevalent in cultivars and it appears that there is no well-defined reason for this. But it has been hinted that the insects are spread by birds and that they don't visit smaller plants.

Hemlock scale was introduced to the U. S. in 1908. It is commonly known as the elongate hemlock scale

or as the fiorinia scale (*Fiorinia externa*). Infested branches have flat waxy elongated deposits under the needles. Female eggs hatch to form a type of nymph that crawls to the undersides of unaffected leaves. Nymphs insert their mouth parts into the needles and remove plant fluids and at the same time inject a toxin, causing the leaf to yellow and die. This cycle repeats itself several times in the growing season. It progresses throughout the tree in succeeding years, disfiguring the tree as more and more branches die.

An even more serious pest of Canadian hemlock is the wooly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*). It first appeared in western North America in 1924 and later in the area of Richmond, VA in 1951. The insect has been traced to southern Japan, where it has not affected native hemlocks, either due to natural predators or tree resistance that has developed over time.

Hemlock wooly adelgid (HWA) is easily identifiable as it produces white foamy looking egg masses that look cottony on the undersides of the leaves. Larvae hatch in the spring and feed on the phloem sap of young tender twigs on the outer part of the branches. HWA asexually reproduces and there are frequently two generations per year. Tree branches die back each year once infected and if untreated die within four to ten years.

There seems to be a correlation between the cold hardiness of the HWA limiting the effect on trees. Recently I have seen Canadian hemlock in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia and in New Hampshire that were free of adelgid. A U. S. Forest service map seems to affirm this theory.

The insect can be partially controlled by application of horticultural oil. The timing of treatment is important, but this can be overcome by more frequent spraying and using an IPM approach. Trunk and soil pesticide injections are also effective via licensed professionals.

More recently it has been found that the black lady bug (*Pseudoscymnus tsugae*) from Japan has been an effective biological control. It has a life cycle similar to HWA and been shown to be 47-88% effective in five months at sites in New Jersey, Connecticut, and Virginia.

Two other predators have been evaluated for control of HWA. These are *Laricobius nigrinus* native to the Pacific Northwest and *Laricobius osakensis* native to Japan. *L.nigrinus* beetles prey naturally on the HWA and have been released in a hemlock grove near Lansing, New York. It is hoped that it will be established after two to three years. No pesticides will be used in the area and final evaluation will be made after ten years.

L. osakensis, a relative of *L. nigrinus*, has also shown promise in field trials. It was first evaluated at Virginia Tech for several years before obtaining approval from the USDA for release for evaluation in some natural forest sites in Virginia. It has been effective in reducing HWA infestations and has survived and reproduced naturally in the forest.

A different approach has been taken by Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Georgia. Instead of seeking a predator for HWA the researchers created in vitro cultures from Canadian and Caroline hemlocks that were not affected by HWA. The extracted germ plasm was cryogenically frozen for several months, then thawed, and grown into trees. Success was attained from all three samples of Carolina hemlock and one of two samples of Canadian hemlock.

Having now found several means to arrest the decline of Canadian hemlock there is now optimism that someday they will regenerate naturally in the forest. Perhaps they will once again be planted as a landscape tree, and the cultivars will regain their former place in the garden. Unfortunately, the availability of hemlock cultivars is much less than it was 25-30 years ago. Aside from the insect and disease problems, nurseries who formerly grew them are now

closed. It appears that the wide range of cultivars will no longer be available except from collectors and perhaps small local nurseries. One may refer to the websites of Iseli Nursery, Stanley and Sons Nursery, and others to see what cultivars are in their catalogs. Generally, the listed cultivars are available on a rotating basis depending on their propagation schedules.

WATNONG CLASSIFIEDS

Would you give a friend a ride?

Long time Watnong NARGS member Ann Wiss would like to continue to attend our meetings and activities but needs a ride to and from. If you live near Short Hills, New Jersey, please consider bringing her with you. For more information contact Hilary (see below).

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.

Deadline for inclusion in our Late Summer Newsletter is August 10, 2019.

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**THE WATNONG CHAPTER
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