



The Mason-Dixon LINE

*Newsletter of the Mason Dixon Chapter,
North American Rock Garden Society*

July 2014



Summer-blooming Astilbe on July 1, 2014

**Hello everyone,
and happy summer.**

Like you, I'm still cleaning up from the harsh winter we had. Not only do I have the usual broken tree limbs, dead branches and run-over-by-a-snowplow casualties... I also have a mystery ailment (not me, the garden.)

I have many plants in the garden that look like they have been side-swiped by herbicide. I would normally attribute this to my carelessness but not this time. Many types of plants are affected, even ferns, and they are in widely different places in the garden. So that leaves out the careless gardener excuse.

My guess is that this winter was beneficial to a type of fungus and it's now having a party throughout my property. If you can't blame the government, blame a fungus. I would like to hear from you if you are experiencing the same thing.

Hope to see you at upcoming events.

Joan King

June 2014

Meet your Fellow Gardeners

Eden after the Fall: Woodland Retreat in Baldwin, Maryland

Just off of Long Green Pike in Baltimore County lies the lovely, established, two-acre garden owned by Bath Babikow and tended by Beth, Rene Monaghan of Garden Time Designs, and Beau, a standard French poodle who keeps the deer and the squirrels at bay. Although I missed the member visit in May, I was able to tag along with the Master Gardeners on a gorgeous day in early June.



Beth with Bigleaf Magnolia blossom, which is bigger than she is. Right, Silphium borders the driveway.



Beth's garden was started about 35 years ago when the house was new and the area was primarily a meadow. Over the years, the trees have matured, a plant collection has grown, and Beth has obtained her Master Gardener's certification. Water, stone, sculpture, light and shadow combine to create many peaceful scenes that invite the visitor to walk slowly and pause often to take in the views and scents.



Above left, blue atlas cedar overhanging a variegated, low-growing bamboo creates a beautiful study in contrast of texture and color. Right, a weathered footbridge across a bog garden draws the view to a meadow.

Meet your Fellow Gardeners: Beth Babikow's Garden (continued)



Contemplative places. Above left, dappled sunlight highlights a picnic table; right, a meditative frog anchors a planting of yellow bamboo. Below, a waterfall emerges from a rock wall separating two elevations in the back garden. Prostrate ginkgo echoes the falling stream and is repeated in miniature with the yellow-blooming corydalis below.



Adding Contrast with Big Leaves



Being a quilter, I know that it's a good idea to use contrast to make a design more lively. It's easier and safer to stay with the "mediums" — medium color, medium scale — yet very important to include large and small, dark and bright, busy and bold in order to keep things interesting. Beth's garden includes at least three plants with really big leaves that illustrate how adding contrast creates excitement. Several times, the group of visitors I was with came to a complete stop, pointed at a plant, and refused to move until Beth provided plant data. — Susan Stiles

Silphium (Prairie Dock)

Prairie dock is a tall, rough, native perennial which occurs in limestone prairies and meadows. From a basal clump of huge oval to heart-shaped, dark green leaves (to 2' long) rise smooth, almost leafless stems branching at the top to a height of 10' tall. Sunflower-like flowers (to 3" wide) with yellow rays and yellow center disks bloom in loose clusters on the upper parts of the plant in mid to late summer. Beth has hers in a fairly sunny spot along the driveway (see photo, page 2).

Petasites (Butterbur)

Petasites is a rhizomatous perennial that has huge basal leaves that form dense spreading clumps of foliage to 3' tall and 5' wide. It is native to Korea, China and Japan where it is typically found growing on wet stream banks in woodland areas. It likes moist soil and part to full shade; if grown in the sun, it will get wilted on warm days when the sun hits it, but will recover as long as the soil is consistently moist. Petasites has fragrant, yellowish-white, daisy-like flowers that appear in spring. The genus name supposedly comes from the Greek word *petasos* meaning wide-brimmed hat, in reference to the large spreading leaves. The leaves were reportedly once used to wrap butter in hot weather, hence the common name.



Magnolia macrophylla (Bigleaf magnolia)

Beth's garden has many mature specimens of this lovely native. It is a deciduous, flowering tree that has the largest simple leaf and single flower of any plant native to the US. Mature leaves can be three feet long and over a foot wide; this is a clue that it is a primitive species. It is pollinated by beetles, which pre-date bees and butterflies. This is an understory tree, and will do fairly well in a woodland setting even where other trees outcompete it. It prefers undisturbed soil and good moisture with reasonable drainage. A location protected from strong winds will help prevent the leaves from becoming tattered.

Annual Picnic: Saturday, July 19, Garden Open at 12:00 Noon, Lunch at 1:00 PM

Our annual garden picnic will be at the home of Jim Dronenburg and Dan Weil in Knoxville, Maryland, near Harper's Ferry, WV. Please bring a dish to share. Seating is available for a large group, rain or shine, and members of the Potomac chapter are also invited. You will receive an email from Marika with additional details. Please RSVP directly to Jim (his email address will be in the email from Marika). Your RSVP is appreciated so that Jim and Dan can anticipate the number of people coming. To get there: The address is 3536 Cemetery Circle, Knoxville, MD 21758. Use GPS if you want but once you hit Cemetery Road, use these directions.

Take your best route to Frederick MD (for most people I suspect that will amount to coming around the Baltimore beltway and west on I-70). At Frederick, take the off ramp for Rte 340 West/Rte 15 South. (NOTE: There is highway construction here and a 55- MPH speed trap; they are building a new bridge, so it will still be there in July.) After about five miles, Rte 340 and Rte 15 split. 340 is the right hand fork; take it. Go approximately five more miles. Pass the Rte 180 exit. The next exit (3-4 miles) is Rte. 17; take it. At the top of the ramp is a traffic circle; go around it and OVER Rte 340. At the other side is another traffic circle; turn right, so that you leave with the Sheetz gas station on your left and McDonald's on your right.

Go 1.5 miles. You will come down a long hill, then start to see houses on the right; they will all have individual bridges to them, across a stream. Then two houses right up to the road—GO SLOW—then a tiny stone AME Zion church. Just between that church and the next building is a tiny little alley, Cemetery Road. Turn right on Cemetery. Go STRAIGHT up Cemetery 1/10 mile, DISREGARDING "Cemetery Circle" coming in from the right. That side of the Circle is vertical and you don't want to try it. At the 1/10 mile point, the road turns sharply up and right. Go up the (steep) slope, and take the first driveway on the left, #3542, a stone house set back from the road. Halfway up the driveway is a ramp up to the lawn on the right. Take that and park on the lawn, away from the house.

From your car, walk away from the road and the stone house until you get to the belt of trees at the highway cut, turn left and walk down hill to the house, which is the brick house on the down-side of the stone house. Jim is currently digging a new bed which is bordered with RR ties, and likely it will still be in progress in July. Just at that bed, turn left and you should see the north side of the house. Come in without knocking. If you get lost, call Jim at 301-834-6515 and he will guide you in.

Spring Garden Visits: Photos by Dan Weil

Earlier this spring, Jim Dronenburg and I spent a wonderful three days, including two garden visits with NARGS. We went to the FONA (Friends of the National Arboretum) sale, where Jim worked as a volunteer and I schmoozed with friends and shopped, then to Pamela Harper's, our hostess and co-traveler for the weekend, and on Saturday to Coleston Burrell's garden, Bird Hill, and Courtney Daniel's amazing garden. The next day Pam toured us through her beautiful, lovely, tranquil and fascinating garden. Throughout the whole weekend I took a lot of photos. You can see a large selection of them at the following links. I hope you will enjoy the photos as much as I enjoyed the gardens and taking the photos. I'm sorry there are so many, but the gardens were worth it, and apparent duplicates really show something different in each. — Dan Weil

COLESTON BURRELL'S GARDEN: <http://www.danielweil.com/GardensandNurseries/Bird-Hill/>

COURTNAY DANIELS'S GARDEN: <http://www.danielweil.com/GardensandNurseries/CD-Garden/>

PAMELA HARPER'S GARDEN: <http://www.danielweil.com/GardensandNurseries/Pam/>

FONA SALE: <http://www.danielweil.com/GardensandNurseries/FONA-Sale/>



Trough by Susie Leslie

Note!

Trough Planting Workshop Rescheduled

Due to a scheduling conflict, the August 2014 trough planting workshop has been postponed. Plans are underway to hold the workshop in June, 2015, in conjunction with the spring plant sale. More details in a future newsletter!

2014 Calendar of Events and Meetings

We meet at the Norrisville, MD branch of the Harford County Public Library, located at 5310 Norrisville Road (MD Rt. 23) in Norrisville/White Hall, MD 21161. The meeting room is open at noon for our lunch social. Bring your lunch! The meeting begins at 1:00 PM. In the event of inclement weather, Marika will notify members by email by 10:00 AM on the day of the meeting if the meeting is canceled. If you do not have email, and are not sure if the meeting is canceled, please call Marika at 410-461-1923 before 10AM.

July 19, Saturday Arrive 12:00, Lunch at 1:00 pm Knoxville, MD
Annual members pot luck and garden visit at the home of members Jim Dronenburg and Dan Weil. Knoxville, MD is about 5 miles before crossing the Potomac to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Jim will invite members of the Potomac Chapter of NARGS to enjoy the day together. Seating is available for a large group, rain or shine. Please see page 5 for directions and other information.

August 9, Saturday — No Event
The trough planting workshop has been postponed to 2015.

September 20, Saturday 10:00 am 2058 Nelson Mill Road, Jarrettsville, MD 21084
Dick Arnold (410-692-9622) will host our chapter fall plant sale and plant dig (yes, Dick says he has plants to spare). We conclude with a pot luck lunch. Please bring a dish to share.

October 18, Saturday 12:00 noon social, 1:00pm meeting Norrisville Library
John Lonsdale speaking on woodland plants. We will have visited John's garden in April, so you can request additional information on plants that interest you, and ask questions. Cyclamen will be for sale.

November 15, Saturday 12:00 noon social, 1:00 pm meeting Norrisville Library
Joan King will present "A Remnant Prairie Habitat in Southern Ohio." Joan's report on a trip she and Tim Draude took last August to a dolomite habitat featuring *Buchnera americana* (blue hearts), *Hexalectris spicata* (crested coral root) and four species of *Liatris*, along with many other plants.

December TBD Possible seed-packing get-together; information to follow.

January 17, 2015 Saturday 12:00 noon social, 1:00 pm meeting Norrisville Library
Members meeting. How did your 2014 garden grow? Please bring slide shows or photos to share with other members. A projector and laptop will be provided.

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RETURN UNDELIVERED COPIES TO:
Jerry Hudgens, Membership Chair
3115 Woolsey Drive
Churchville, MD 21028

Yearly dues for the Mason-Dixon Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS) are \$10 (single or joint at same address). Make checks payable to M-DC/NARGS. Mail to Jerry Hudgens at above address. Please contact Jerry for more information. Phone: 410-826-2469
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