



Rhodora

CURIOUS GARDENERS
the Newsletter
of the New England Chapter of
NARGS
May 2017

May 20, 2017 Meeting

Morning

Tour of George Newman's Garden

60 Carriage Lane, Bedford, NH 03110

9:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Afternoon

Field Trip to Ponemah Bog

led by George Newman

Ponemah Bog Trail, Amherst, NH 03031

Notes from the Chair

New Vice-Chair

It's my pleasure to announce that Leslie Milde has agreed to take on the Vice-Chair position for our chapter! Leslie is an accomplished and versatile gardener who credits the family "jungle gene" for her switch from teaching language and literature to teaching horticulture at a local community

college. She has been newsletter editor, judges chair, convention registrar, vice-president, and president of the New England Chapter of the Gesneriad Society, so she is well seasoned in plant society doings.

Leslie has owned and worked blueberry land on the coast of Maine and now lives in New Hampshire, where her husband Helmut has

built an 80-foot tunnel greenhouse. No longer heated, it has become an ideal (unheated) alpine house despite pressure from "the assorted hungry, vegetarian creatures."

Leslie credits our chapter members and the national seed exchange with helping her learn the finer points of plantsmanship, and her appreciation has motivated her to step forward.

Thank you very much, Leslie, and welcome to the Board!



Kalmia polefolia

2017 Rare Plant Auction Results

This year's auction was perhaps a bit light in the rarity department, but there were many beautiful plants and the usual good time was had by all. Thank you to all the many members who brought plants - and bought plants. The chapter realized about \$1200 that will help pay for our speakers in the coming year.

Special thanks to everyone who helped make this event work under the soggy and

less-than-ideal conditions. Marilyn Beaven, Hilde Kneissl, Helen du Toit, Bob & Dee Stewart, and Amal Moamar were super helpful negotiating the daunting logistics. And of course, thank you to Ernie Flippo, our auctioneer; Roy Herold, his friendly assistant; and Rosemary Monahan, our recorder and cashier. It sure took a village this time. We hope that this will be the last time we hold a plant sale event in a space that has a beautiful new carpet in it.

Introduction to the Garden of George Newman

George Newman has been developing his native plant collection, in his current location, for 42 years. His mix of dedicated garden areas and edited woodlands and wetlands, traversed by a network of paths, extends over 3.5 acres at his New Hampshire home. When I visited in May 2016, I spent roughly three hours there, and I could easily have spent longer. George's property



Sarracenia

is an absolute wonder, and no-one who has the opportunity to visit it should turn that down.

In his wild plantings, George works almost exclusively with plants native to the eastern and southeastern US. Because he's studied, collected and propagated these for decades, his property affords a rare glimpse of many of these plants growing as they might in the wild, spreading, self-sowing, and competing with and sometimes defeating each other.

When you set out from the driveway, which is lined with towering rhododendrons, your first stop will probably be George's collection of carnivorous plants. These are grown behind his home in an assortment of watery containers, and include all 10 *Sarracenia* species (to which George introduced

us in his talk last year) and 12 hybrids thereof. When I visited, many of these were in bloom. In a concession to the inevitable, George finally got some help last year with the gargantuan task of

lugging these soggy splendors out of the greenhouse where they overwinter; before that, he did it all himself. In his greenhouse, by the way, George cultivates some enchanting species orchids (from memory, the Central- and South American cloud-forest *Masdevallias* and *Draculas* stand out), but I do not know whether he can take a larger group through there; quarters are pretty tight).

As you depart the *Sarracenia* collection you'll move into the "upland" forest area, replete with many familiar woodlanders: some of George's 10 *Trillium* species, *Kalmia*, *Rhododendron vaseyi*, *Magnolia macrophylla*, *Cymophyllus fraseri*, *Caulophyllum thalictroides*, *Actaea*, sheets of *Oxalis violacea*, *Galax urceolata*, and – the sight no-one can forget – masses and masses of *Shortia galacifolia*. So many of us struggle to establish one small precious patch...George grows it in drifts. Very, very large drifts. As you move down the hill towards the wetland, you'll encounter an extensive self-sowing colony of *Diphylleia cymosa*. Balancing, occasionally precariously, on mossy logs, rocks and hummocks, you move through the wetland, where you encounter *Lysichiton americanum*, *L. camtschatcensis*, and *Helonias bullata*, all of which should have some blooms for our group to enjoy. (If balancing on hummocks does not appeal, I believe you can retrace your steps and bypass the wetland).

The wetland ends in a glorious small stream lined with masses of these semi-aquatics. After you cross over that, you move up into George's sand beds and sandy peat bogs, where you'll see rare phlox species, *Kalmia polifolia*, *Salix* species, and assorted small treasures. From there you move through an open glade replete with *Trillium recurvatum*, *Trollius laxus*, and colonies of *Stenanthium gramineum*. The road runs near the sand-bed area, and on the verge George has planted *Solidago sempervirens*, one of my personal favorites (so I have to give it a shout-out here: it may look ratty growing on the backs of New England beaches, but in cultivation it's lovely, and it seems to withstand any amount of salt that the road crews put on it). As you leave the glade you wind back through the woods (with *Trautvetteria caroliniensis*) and return to the house.

It's an enchanted kingdom, no doubt about it. You'll see vastly more than the few plants I've mentioned; I regret now that I took neither notes nor pictures when I visited last year, but I was too much "in the moment" to think of that. I can only say: go see it. We are extremely fortunate that George has invited us to visit, and I hope that everyone will make every effort to go.

Ellen Hornig



Sarracenia

A Field Trip to the Ponemah Bog Wildlife Sanctuary: Audubon Society of New Hampshire, Nashaway Chapter

The name “Ponemah” refers to the “land of the hereafter” from Longfellow's “Hiawatha.” The 75-acre Ponemah Bog Wildlife Sanctuary came under the protection of the Audubon Society of New Hampshire in 1979 through the generosity of Dr. and Mrs. Homer McMurray and local friends of the Sanctuary. Ponemah Bog Wildlife Sanctuary features a three-acre pond surrounded by a floating sphagnum mat and encircled by upland oak-pine woods. This bog resulted from the last receding glacier, which left a kettle hole pond in the Souhegan River outwash plain. Changes over the last 12,000 years have been recorded by the bog itself, which has preserved, in its layers of peat, pollen blown in from the surrounding woods. The moss mat has advanced over the last 6000 years to gradually fill in the pond with plant remains. The food web is rather simple in bogs: the acid peat locks up most of the nutrients, offering little to support grazing animals and their predators. The bog is home to both hardy northern plants, such as spruce, and southern species, such as [pitcher plants and sundew](#). Ponemah hosts a combination of conifers, including white pine, pitch pine, black spruce, and tamarack, all relics of more southern or northern forests. Today, Ponemah Bog is a living museum, a relict habitat for plants far from home and an outdoor classroom for wetland botany and ecology.



viewing platform at Ponemah Bog

Trail Information Walking: The Bog Trail is a leisurely walk, mostly narrow boardwalk with spur trails to four viewing platforms, where more information about the bog is available. Entering from the southeast corner of the parking lot, the dry upland forest here is reminiscent of more southern forests of pitch pine and assorted oaks. These woods are home to the Whip-poor-will, Eastern Towhee, and .

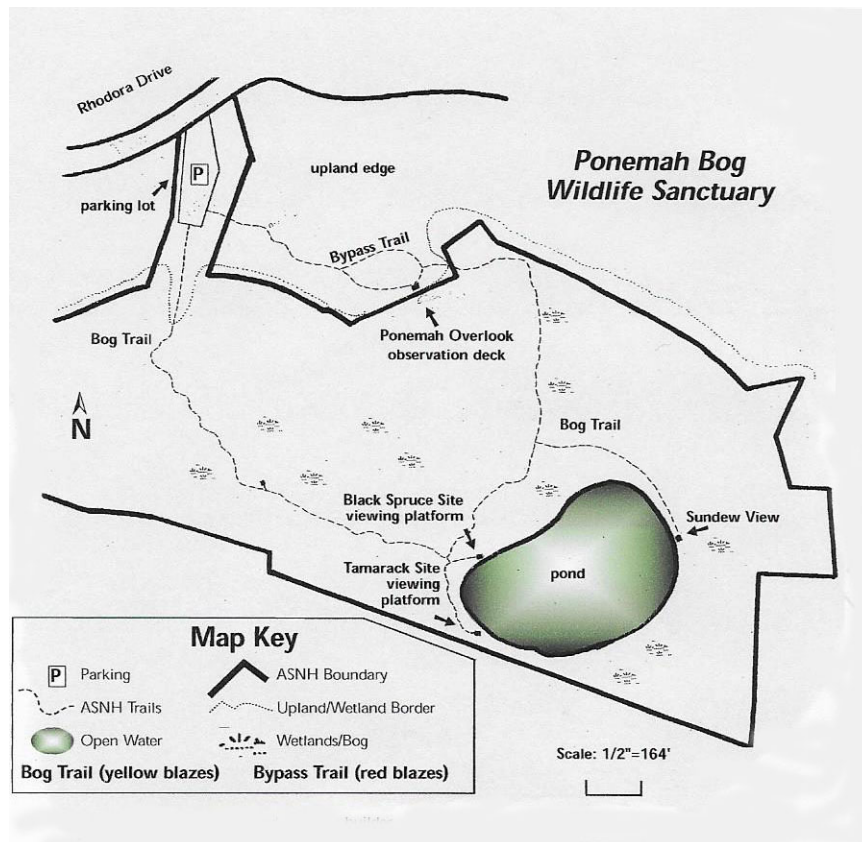


boardwalk through Ponemah Bog

Whitebreasted Nuthatch. Turn right at the fork to the observation deck and to get a vista of the entire bog. The three-acre pond is all that remains of the ancient 100-acre lake. The bog mat has been filling the pond with plant remains for at least 6,000 years. The trail to the left takes you past a small marsh that is becoming a swamp. In May, brilliant magenta rhodora flowers in this marsh. The boardwalk marks the shore of an ancient lake. Along the boardwalk is the varying foliage of [leatherleaf, bog laurel, rhodora, and their kin in the heath family](#). The thick leaves help reduce water loss for these plants, which depend upon rainwater for moisture, as bog water is too acidic. Bog water is normally acid (pH 4.0-4.5) because it steeps in very slowly decaying peat.

NB You might wish to bring binoculars Ed.

Article excerpted from Audubon Ponemah Bog web site at <http://www.nhaudubon.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Ponemah-Bog-Trail-Guide.pdf>



Bring your own lunch. Kindly, George will provide drinks.

Reminder: BE GREEN Bring Your Own Mug

NARGS-New England Chapter Membership and Dues

Membership in NARGS-NE is \$10.00 a year payable January 1 to Ernie Flippo, 264Wales St., Abington, MA 02351. Payment may also be made in person at our meetings. 2017 dues are due.

Local Chapters: –There are thirty-eight NARGS affiliated chapters active in North America. Chapter events include lectures, an on-line Newsletter, garden visits, field trips, demonstrations, and plant sales. These friendly gatherings provide a wealth of information; offer a source for unusual plants, plus the opportunity to be inspired by other gardeners in your region.

Our Chapter meets 6 times a year, February, March, April, September, October and November, and organizes garden tours in May and June.

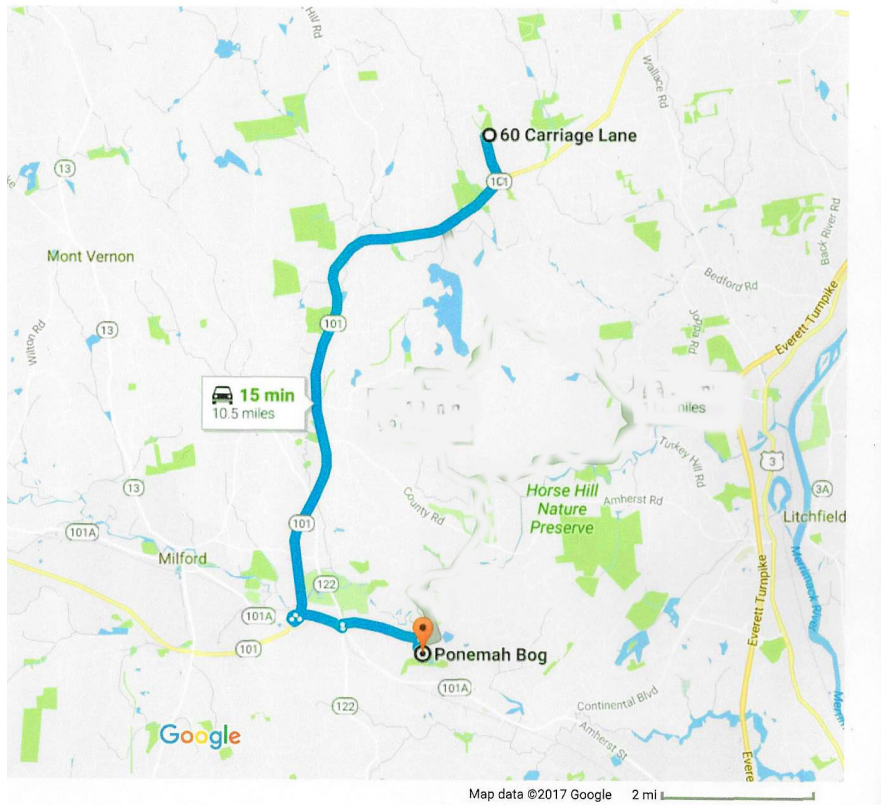
National Organization: We encourage you to join the national NARGS organization. www.nargs.org Dues are \$40.00 a year. Benefits include a seed exchange, a quarterly publication, and an on-line web site featuring an archive of past publications, a chat forum and a horticultural encyclopedia. NARGS national also conducts winter study weekends and holds their Annual Meeting in interesting places.

Directions to George Newman's house. 60 Carriage Lane, Bedford NH 03110

ph. 603-472-3416.....

George's house is in Bedford NH, approximately 8 miles southwest of Manchester NH and one half mile from the Amherst NH line. Take one of the following routes to 101 West - routes 93, 3, Everett turnpike, or 293. Follow route 101 west to Bedford. At the intersection of routes 101 and 114 turn left at the traffic light. Continue on route 101 west 5 miles to Joppa Hill Road. This is exactly 1/2 mile past a Mobil gas station on the left. Turn right onto Joppa Hill Road and take the third right onto Carriage Lane. My house is the second on the right with a deer fence in front. {Note; The second turn is also Carriage Lane but you will have to proceed around the loop to my house if you take this way by mistake.}

Directions to Ponemah Bog Wildlife Sanctuary from George Newman's house



Leave Carriage Lane (west) turn left onto Joppa Hill Road for a short drive to NH 101 W.

Turn right and follow NH 101 in the direction of Milford

Turn left at exit 101A which becomes E. Nashua St.

Drive about 0.5 miles then turn left onto NH 122 and take a quick right onto Stearns Road.

Drive 1.1 miles to Rhodora Dr. and turn right into the Sanctuary.

Chapter Officers for 2017

Chair: Vivien Bouffard: vbouffard55@msn.com

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The Newsletter of the New England Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society is published 4-5 times a year, February, March, April, September, and November, as the spirit moves.