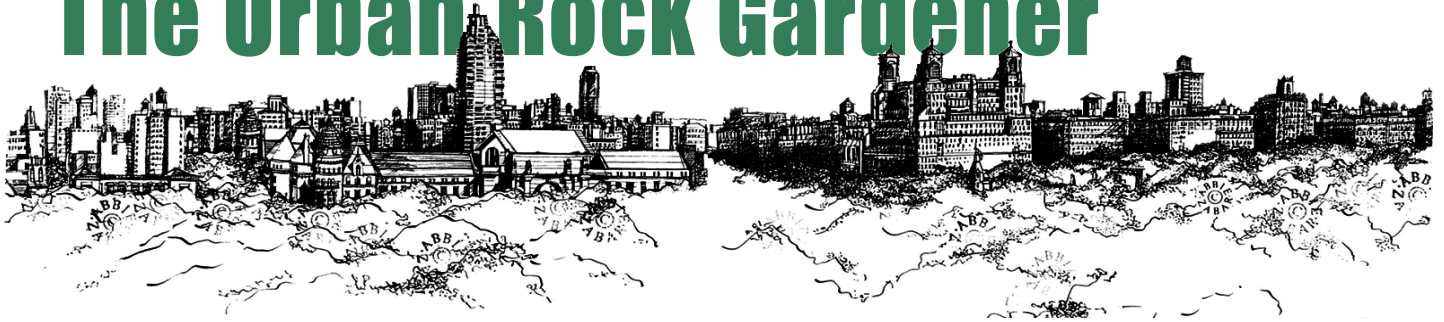


# The Urban Rock Gardener



Volume 29, Issue 5

November/December 2016

## NOVEMBER MEETING

Monday, November 21 at 6 p.m.

NYBG Midtown Education Center, Room A

## THE T. H. EVERETT MEMORIAL ROCK GARDEN: Past, Present and Future

Speaker:

**Michael Hagen**

Curator, Native Plant Garden and Rock Garden  
New York Botanical Garden



**MICHAEL HAGEN** is NYBG's Curator of the Native Plant Garden and the Rock Garden. He previously served as Staff Horticulturist for Stonecrop Gardens in Cold Spring, NY and Garden Manager at Rocky Hills in Mt. Kisco, a preservation project of the Garden Conservancy.

**M**ichael Hagen will talk about the construction, changes and ongoing development of this historic and important garden. He will also discuss some of the exciting current projects happening in the garden and reveal plans for the future.

A newly constructed "Czech-Style" crevice bed is the latest addition to the Rock Garden



The Rock Garden's alpine meadow in summer

NYBG Midtown Education Center is located at 20 West 44th Street, 3rd floor, between 5th & 6th Avenues (General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen Building). This location is two blocks from Grand Central Terminal and near several subways.



## DECEMBER MEETING

Monday, December 19 at 6 p.m.  
NYBG Midtown Education Center, Room A

## EPIEDIUMS – JEWELS OF THE SHADE

Speaker:

**Karen Perkins**

Garden Vision Epimediums



*Epimedium grandiflorum* v. *higoense* 'Bandit'



*E. x 'Sunshowers'*



**K**nown by many as a simple ground cover for dry woodland shade, epimediums are finally getting the appreciation that they deserve. This "perfect shade perennial" possesses a delicate beauty that belies its surprisingly tough, long-lasting nature. Karen will illustrate the many and varied types now commercially available, including some of the exciting new evergreen species from China. Characteristics, growth habit, growing and propagation, pests and diseases, and combining epimediums with other shade perennials in the garden will also be addressed. We will even get a glimpse into the collecting trips to China made by Darrell Probst.



*E. brevicornu*

**KAREN PERKINS** comes to the nursery business via the botanic garden world. Her venture into epimediums was the result of working alongside plant collector and hybridizer Darrell Probst. He started Garden Vision Epimediums in 1997, as a way to pay for his plant collecting passion and to preserve the genus, if not in the wild (where it is often over-collected for medicinal use) than in gardens around the world. Karen is currently the owner of Garden Vision, which offers over 170 species and varieties of epimediums, and other choice, hard-to-find shade perennials.



# THE GLORIES OF GREECE AT THE ANNUAL TRI-STATE MEETING

(Not to mention plants, books & bargains)

October 16, 2016 – New York Botanical Garden



Eleftherios Dariotis

For a number of years this important and inclusive annual event, jointly sponsored by the Hudson Valley, Connecticut, Manhattan and Long Island Chapters, has given its members the opportunity to exchange ideas, buy hard-to-find plants and books, and attend lectures by some of the gardening world's most expert authorities. The Tri-State Meeting has been held in a variety of locations over the years, and since 2014 has found a home at the New York Botanical Garden.

NYBG allows for our use of the magnificent Ross Hall, a generously proportioned amphitheater. This year's speaker was Eleftherios Dariotis (a.k.a. Liberto Dario), who presented two talks: "The Botanical Paradises of Greece" in the morning, and "Mount Olympus" in the afternoon. The 100-plus audience enjoyed a very comprehensive (and magnificently shot) selection of photos taken by Liberto himself.

In "Paradises," Liberto broke Greece down into five major geographical areas: the rocky Peloponnese (the "Land of Stachys"); the mountains of Central Greece (home of Lamiaceae); the arctic-like northern borders; Attika, with its many geophytes; and the islands, which harbor some of the region's rarest species.

In the afternoon, we were taken on a first-hand trek up the slopes of Mt. Olympus, with an in-depth look at its forests, meadows, ravines, alpine screes and rock crevices, including the "Plateau of the Muses." We got to see plants endemic to Mt. Olympus, such as the famous gesneriad *Janceae heldreichii*, *Tulipa orphanidea*, and dozens of other rarely-seen flora.

The physical challenges Liberto faced exploring the countryside and hiking Mt. Olympus were clearly evident, but for those tempted to follow in his footsteps, Greece's impressive variety of plants and environments makes such a trip all the more enticing.

THE PLANT SALE is always a draw for all the attendees, starting from the moment everyone arrives, eyeing those treasures. The classroom set-up allowed generous space for both Chapter and member donations. Unflagging informative support and plant selections were offered by Lori Chips from Oliver Nurseries; the specialist dealer Bill Perron, featuring cyclamen and arisaema; Ernie DeMarie for clivias; and Don Dembowski with his usual diverse collection, this year including that stewartia (in bloom!) I would have loved to find a home for. Michael Riley was equally well-stocked with tropical and indoor plants and the Manhattan Chapter had taken a trip to Tom Stuart's garden for some choice woodland selections.

Generous efforts by Lola Horwitz and other Manhattan Chapter volunteers included collecting, organizing and offering monographs and horticulture books from Larry Thomas and Tom Stuart, thoughtfully presented, with the inclusion of bookplates created by Abbie Zabar identifying these treasures from their respective libraries.

*Continued on Page 4*



Preparing the books



The books are moving!



Judi, pleased with her *Rhexia mariana*



John Rommel flogging the flora



Yukie beams, Nancy browses



The Perrons' cyclamens – which is the "best"?



Kean had the winning bid for this *Epimedium wushanense*



Francisco and Michael with their wares



The market in full swing



On the auction block

Photos: Jack Kaplan



## ANOTHER HOOSIER IN MANHATTAN

By Brendan Kenney, Chair



**G**oji berry, *Lycium barbarum*, an invasive threat to our gardens and ecosystem has been found growing on the Central Park 66th Transverse. This was among the surprising revelations of Daniel Atha's recent talk to Metro Hort. In fact, the New York area is on the forefront of several newly invasive introductions from Asia. *Acalypha australis* is a problem only in New York City and Bergen County, NJ. The attractive *Corydalis incisa* was found to have escaped gardens in the Bronx and Westchester in 2005. Weed identification is important since by the time plants are found on an invasive list it is too late to stop their spread. Daniel indicated that Japanese knotweed, *Fallopia japonica*, should have been dealt with 100 or 75 years ago to avoid the current situation. Some plants have been in the U.S. for many years but for reasons that are not clear, later became invasive. Porcelain berry, *Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*, is another familiar example.

Threats to our gardens and forests seem to be coming from many angles. While back in Indiana at a class reunion, I spoke with former classmate Kelly Kearns, Invasive Plant Coordinator at the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. (She sat in front of me in the first grade and her birthday is the day after mine.)

Kelly described finding *Amyntas agrestis*, known as the crazy worm or crazy snake worm, in the Arboretum at the University of Wisconsin in 2013. This Japan native changes soil structure by rapidly consuming all of the organic matter. The soil becomes too friable to support many plants and the nutrients are leached out of the soil, making them unavailable to plants. The disturbance favors invasive plants and is a great threat to northern forest ecosystems which evolved without earthworms due to glaciation. The impact can also be devastating to urban gardens. First seen in the U.S. in the early 1900's, scientists believe that *Amyntas agrestis* was spread with the popularity of Japanese plants in the 1950's. Crazy worm was found this summer in the Chicago Botanic Garden. Reportedly in New York State, Oregon and Vermont, awareness is critical as it spreads from the South. There is no way to remove worms from soil. Diligence of gardeners is of utmost importance, as plant soil is the means of transport to new locations. Future gardeners will appreciate your efforts to eradicate or at least slow the spread of new threats on the horizon.

ON A LIGHTER NOTE, Michael Riley offered the best of Hoosier hospitality in hosting the Tri-State speaker, Eleftherios Dariotis. Upon arrival, our guest was wowed by Michael's green walls and roof. I then joined them for a day, exploring the horticultural highlights of Lower Manhattan. After strolling the High Line, we lunched at Eataly amongst its green columns. Our panoramic view overlooked Liberty Park, including its swamp oaks, green wall, waterfall at the 2 World Trade Center site and new St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church under construction. A closer look followed. Walking through Teardrop Park and Hudson River Park up to 14th Street certainly could not compare to the wonders of Greece, but Eleftherios was impressed with New York nonetheless. Thanks to everyone who helped make the Tri-State meeting a success.

I RETURNED TO UNTERMYER GARDENS in Yonkers for my first visit after two years. The tour by Timothy Tilghman, Horticulturalist, was astounding. Tremendous progress has been made opening up the vistas. Originally created by Carlo Davite, a Genoese stone mason, the Temple of Love has been enhanced to surpass the original scheme. Most exciting, the Rock Garden is next on the agenda for restoration. Some trees will be removed to allow more sunlight and the stream will be restored. The progress of the project is certainly of interest to us all.

FINALLY, A REMINDER OF THE PLEASURES of the Arsenal roof garden which is close at hand in Central Park, and great to visit in winter, as the American Conifer Society NE Region tends its collection of dwarf conifers, including sixteen different cultivars, nine genera and eleven species. New planting boxes and plants have been installed in the garden, so be sure to visit both sides. It would be a nice respite from seed packing for the NARGS Seed Exchange! The Arsenal is located at 5th Avenue and East 64th Street and is open 9-5 Monday through Friday.

*Brendan Kenney*

*Note: Jane Allison, who lived in the Village for 60 years, wrote a newspaper column called "A Hoosier in Manhattan" for many decades.*

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## TRI-STATE MEETING

*Continued from page 3*

The advantages of NYBG are manifold, and the lunch break for many included quick trips to the Library Building for the Bunny Mellon Art Collection, a view of the Ladies' Border extending the length of the southern end of the Conservatory and originally designed in the 1930's by leading landscape architect Ellen Biddle Shipman, or even a jaunt to the cafeteria and gift shop – a win-win for most all our needs.

Another highlight was the post-lecture tour by Michael Hagen, the curator of the Rock Garden, identifying plants and discussing the many efforts to plan for and improve this magnificent collection. Be sure to join us at our Chapter meeting for his lecture on November 21.

The raffle and auction were held in one of the adjacent classrooms, and the selection of plants and books were well-appreciated by everyone, even by this auctioneer who could not find a buyer for those "Pussytoes" (*Antennaria*) but kept the ball rolling. The funds we raise through our sales, raffles and auctions directly assure the continued participation by all these Chapters.



John Rommel and Sabine Stezenbach in the NYBG Rock Garden, with tricyrtis.  
Photo by Kaitilin Griffin

There are too many to thank and they will no doubt be acknowledged in upcoming local Chapter meetings, but it's the energy and enthusiasm that is always front and center during this yearly event that keeps us coming back, and I am already looking forward to a larger public outreach and member participation at next year's Tri-State!

Same Fall Timing...  
Same Great Location!

JOHN WILLIAM ROMMEL

## CONSIDER THE FRØSNAPPER



© Abbie Zabar 2016

Who would have thought of perks when I originally arranged for our new MCNARGS meeting location? Why, not only is the New York Botanical Garden's Midtown Education Center in a historic building, fully equipped with high tech gear (and support!), and easily accessible to public transportation, but there's even a huge cross-section of specialty ethnic restaurants in the neighborhood for dinner afterward. Plus a mind-boggling array of nearby food kiosks, when you're dining on the run.

Forgive the pun, but discovering the recently renovated Food Halls in Grand Central Station stopped me in my tracks. No wonder the *New York Times* wrote, "The chef Claus Meyer's Great Northern Food Hall is an oasis of simple delights in a fast-paced setting."

How about trying a Danish *frøsnapper*, the braided swirl of flaky dough and almond paste that's overloaded with poppy and sesame seeds? It is one of my most felicitous food discoveries. In a long time. Luckily, the tongue remembers whenever I'm passing by the Great Northern Food Hall – on the way to our monthly MCNARGS meetings.

Until you're in the neighborhood, check this out, though may be not on an empty stomach:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/19/dining/great-northern-food-hall-review.html>.

ABBIE ZABAR

## WHY DON'T YOU?

by Steve Whitesell



*Dig and store tender bulbs* after frost has killed back top growth, and store them over the winter in a cool, dark place such as a basement or attic, in dry sphagnum or wood chips. Check them periodically to see if the bulbs or rhizomes are soft or rotten and discard them if so.

*Continue planting bulbs* until the ground freezes. Bulb companies offer drastically reduced late season clearance prices after

mid-November, so order more when that happens.

*Cut back freely seeding perennials and ornamental grasses* now or you'll be pulling seedlings by the dozen next season. Leave less-vigorously reproducing plants over the winter if you like that look, or cut back everything after a hard freeze and avoid the early spring cleanup.

*Cut some fruiting branches of shrubs and trees like *Callicarpa dichotoma*, *Ilex verticillata*, *Crataegus phaeonopyrum*, and others* to bring indoors for vase display before the birds strip the branches bare. Leave some as a food source for wintering birds, but you deserve a few, too.

## 'TIS THE SEASON FOR SORTING SEEDS

All are invited to help package seeds for the **NARGS Seed Exchange**. Group sessions will take place at Lola Horwitz's home in Park Slope, Brooklyn, and at the Merchant's House Museum in Manhattan.

At the moment, these are the dates:

### Merchant's House Museum:

Wednesday, Nov. 30 from 6:00–9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 6 from 6:00–9:00 p.m.

### Lola Horwitz:

Tuesday, Dec. 13 from 6:30–9:00 p.m.

Additional dates will be announced at our November 21 meeting, and also via email.

Lola lives at 446 6th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues, near the Seventh Avenue stop on the F and G trains. All are welcome to participate but please let Lola know in advance ([llhorwitz@gmail.com](mailto:llhorwitz@gmail.com) or 718-788-5340) if you are planning to come.

The Merchant's House Museum is located at 29 East 4th Street.

Those new to the procedure need not fear – detailed instructions will be provided.

Remember, volunteers are entitled to ten additional packets of seed through the NARGS Seed Exchange. Don't miss out on the fellowship and the seed!



The "tools of the trade"

## MANHATTAN CHAPTER NARGS

### Membership Form

Individual \$20     Student \$15

Individual 3 years \$50     Gift membership \$15

(When renewing, you may give a Gift Membership to a new member.)

Membership renewal is due in January.

Send your check (made payable to MCNARGS) with this form to:

**Yukie Kurashina, Treasurer, 3217 Hull Ave., Apt 8D, Bronx, NY 10467**

We do not use your email for commercial purposes.

### PLEASE PRINT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you want to receive your newsletter via email only?

Yes     No

MCNARGS is a volunteer organization. We would like your participation in our activities. How can you help?

Annual Plant Sale     Newsletter

Hospitality at meetings

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Monday, January 23**

**Galanthia, The American State of Snowdrops**

Speaker:

ERNEST CAVALLO

**Monday, February 27**

**Translating Plants to Paper: 40 Years  
as a Botanical Artist**

Speaker:

BOBBI ANGELL

*Botanical Illustrator*

## THE NORTH AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY



**JOIN TODAY.** NARGS is for gardening enthusiasts interested in alpine, saxatile, and low-growing perennials and woody plants. Annual dues in the U.S. and Canada are \$40, payable in U.S. funds. VISA/Mastercard accepted.

Benefits of membership include: *Rock Garden Quarterly* with articles on alpiners and North American wildflowers, illustrated in color photographs and pen and ink drawings; annual Seed Exchange with thousands of plant species; study weekends and annual meetings in either U.S. or Canada; and book service.

Join online at [www.nargs.org](http://www.nargs.org). Or write: Bobby J. Ward, Executive Secretary NARGS, P.O. Box 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619-8604, USA.

The NARGS *Quarterly* is now online and members have free access at [www.nargs.org/rock-garden-quarterly](http://www.nargs.org/rock-garden-quarterly).

THE MANHATTAN CHAPTER of the North American Rock Garden Society, founded in 1987, is a group of gardening enthusiasts who are dedicated to the propagation and promotion of an eclectic range of plants, with emphasis on alpine and rock gardening selections. Our Chapter programs, designed for a sophisticated mix of professionals and amateurs, cover a broad spectrum of special interests such as rock and alpine, woodland, bog, raised bed and planted walls, as well as trough and container gardening.

*The Urban Rock Gardener* is a newsletter published by the Manhattan Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society.

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## WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE ALL THE UPCOMING MEETINGS

*Submission deadline for January/February issue: December 28, 2016*

### MANHATTAN CHAPTER OF THE NORTH AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY

101 West 104th Street  
New York, NY 10025

### FIRST CLASS MAIL



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