

THE URBAN ROCK GARDENER™

A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY

MANHATTAN CHAPTER OF THE NORTH AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY
VOLUME 29, ISSUE 3

WWW.MCNARGS.ORG

MAY/JUNE 2016

~MAY MEETING~

ON MONDAY, MAY 23rd @ 6:00 pm CHAPTER MEMBERS
WILL SPEAK ON

THE PLANT THAT ALL ARE PRAISING IS NOT THE PLANT FOR ME

Rock gardeners are hearty souls with their feet on the ground and our roots in the rocks but sometimes we have "quirks." This state of mind keeps us *au courant* and adventurous in our thinking; we take our cue from a quote, attributed to several people, including Thomas Haynes Bayly and Alexander Bain in the mid-nineteenth century:

*The rose that all are praising,
is not the rose for me;
Too many eyes are gazing
Upon the costly tree:
But there's a rose in yonder glen,
That shuns the gaze of other men,
For me its blossoms raising:
Oh, that's the rose for me.*

Ellen Borker will begin by truly praising one or many of the roses in her Brooklyn garden. The *Rosa banksiae* 'Lutea' that thrives in her front garden ... promptly died in her back yard!

Lola Horwitz's eyes are gazing on *Codonopsis lutea*, an underused vine that has a winning quality of intriguingly beautiful flower. The early fall coloration of its leaves unlike other vines. Apparently, those who use medicinal herbs (roots, in this case) appreciate a fellow *Codonopsis* species as a ready substitute for ginseng.

Michael Riley will explain why the prick of the rose is not the only prick in the garden, in his discussion of *Opuntia*. This genus has many qualities of horticultural, culinary and defensive natures; perhaps there is one for you?

YOU can also speak on a plant of your choice. Please contact speaker chair Abbie Zabar to propose your idea and reserve a place on the agenda.

MEETING LOCATION: NYBG Education Midtown Center, 20 West 44th Street, 3rd floor, Room A, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues (General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen Building). This location is just two blocks from Grand Central Terminal and near all NYC subway and midtown.

~JUNE FIELD TRIP~

ON SUNDAY, JUNE 12th THE MANHATTAN CHAPTER WILL TAKE A TOUR OF

MARTIN VIETTE NURSERY, LUKE KREYE'S GARDEN AND THE HUMES JAPANESE STROLL GARDEN ON THE NORTH SHORE OF LONG ISLAND



Rockwork in Luke Kreye's garden

The tour will depart Manhattan at 8:30 AM in private cars. Please let Brendan know if you're able to drive and how many people you could take. Please bring a lunch. The tour itinerary will be:

-Martin Viette Nursery: a full service garden center

-Luke Kreye garden: Generations of garden design knowledge went into construction of the home and garden of Luke Kreye. <http://emilkreyeandson.com>

-Humes Japanese Stroll Garden: A 4-acre garden begun in 1960, which was inspired by a trip to Kyoto. This is a very well executed interpretation of a Japanese garden planted with Japanese and indigenous plants.

Contact Brendan Kenney at Email: nycbeard@gmail.com or tel: 917-544-3288 to sign up. Brendan will be out of town until late May and will confirm your attendance upon return.

~ A NEW EDITOR~

[Editor's note: The appeal for a new editor in the last issue caught the eye of experienced editor and longtime chapter member, Jack Kaplan. Jack has produced newsletters for the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and other organizations and will require YOUR articles and input to produce a newsletter that best reflects the goals and interests of the chapter. Please welcome Jack to his new role and give him your full support.]

Dear MCNARGS members,

It is with pleasure (and a little trepidation) that I look forward to taking over the reins of editing *The Urban Rock Gardener*, starting with the September-October issue. Steve Whitesell has been such a consummate editor and writer that his shoes will be very hard to fill, but I am sure it can be done – with your help. While we will, of course, continue featuring news about the upcoming meetings, I am appealing to everyone for their personal contributions. We welcome original articles, reports, reviews, photographs, “op-ed” pieces, letters and announcements. – in short, anything that might be of interest to the members. Please send material to jkaplan1313@gmail.com.

The deadline for the September-October issue is September 3.

I hope everyone has a pleasurable and productive summer, and I look forward to working on *The Urban Rock Gardener*.

JACK KAPLAN

~THE ROCK GARDEN IN SPRING~

“I have just been browsing through an old book on rock garden plants and have come across a photograph, obviously taken in April, of a titanic struggle between battalions of golden-yellow alyssum and hordes of invading aubrieta. I would like to think that it was included as a warning to those who would recklessly play with bright colours but I fear it is meant to stand as a shining example of the gardener's art and one worthy of emulation. April [May] is a dangerous month in the rock garden. There is an eruption of colour in a relatively small area and unless you are careful you can be knocked over by the flying particles. Alyssums and aubrietas are likely to be your most potent ingredients. They do not need to be kept apart but a thoughtful selection of their different shades and a firm hand in positioning them are essential.

... For associations involving the more aggressively coloured aubrietas, the reddish purples, mauves and carmines, I would always choose the creamy lemon form of alyssum called ‘Citrinum’. In these partnerships either ‘Citrinum’ or the aubrietas can dominate, depending on what sort of effect you want – a channel of cream or a massif of purple. The leaves of alyssum are quite silvery and make a good foil for later flowers“

From *THE STARTLING JUNGLE* by STEPHEN LACEY

~MANHATTAN CHAPTER SERVICE AWARD~

[Editor's note: The chapter's first service award will be given to Tom Stuart at the NARGS Annual Meeting in Steamboat Springs in late June. The following are excerpts from his nomination application. Congratulations to Tom for earning this tribute and many thanks for his generous support of and service to the chapter over many decades.]

Tom Stuart is being nominated for a NARGS Chapter Service Award for several reasons, foremost his generosity to our annual chapter plant sale. Those who have attended the plant sale for many years will remember the surge of shoppers that met Tom upon his late arrival due to the Five-Boro Bike Race, which paralyzed Manhattan traffic. He barely had time to unload his flats of plants before knowledgeable gardeners had seized their prizes, beautifully grown blooming-size specimens of choice plants, including *Cypripedium acaule* v. *pubescens*, *Trillium grandiflorum* v. *rosea*, *Glaucidium palmatum* 'Album', *Jeffersonia dubia*, *Primula sieboldii*, *Anemonella thalictroides* 'Cameo', *Uvularia grandiflora*, *Sanguinaria canadensis*, *Maianthemum racemosa*, *Hepatica* species and cultivars, little known ferns and rare *Corydalis*. This generosity has continued over many years and has been a significant ongoing source of chapter revenue, supporting the speakers program and other chapter activities.

Tom has shared his extensive knowledge of ferns in chapter talks and newsletter articles and has hosted several chapter tours of his and Ernie's steep hillside garden, which features a large collection of rock and woodland plants. Tom has led by example as a grower and propagator and furthered each of our interests in rock and woodland gardening.

In addition to his plant donations, Tom has also stored Larry Thomas' fine collection of garden books in his house, awaiting a time when the chapter could sell them at a suitable venue. Many books were sold in the recent chapter plant sale, and more will be offered at the Tri-State Meeting in October. All sales will benefit the chapter. This award is offered with deep appreciation for all Tom has done for the Manhattan Chapter over many years and serves as an example for all members.

LOLA HORWITZ

~ WHY DON'T YOU? ~

~ Take a few minutes each day to just breathe in spring's heady perfection? Yes, there are infinite tasks to be performed, but appreciate the effects you've achieved and the tasks completed. You'll have plenty of time to get back to them.

~ Pull perennial tap-rooted and rhizomatous weeds while the ground is still soft and moist? Goutweed and ground ivy may not be eliminated in one or even several seasons, but they can be considerably reduced by regular effort. If you remove weeds before they bloom and set seed you're that much further ahead.

~ Make time to see other gardens and borrow the ideas that work for you? Experiment with new and unfamiliar plants, path materials, mulches, fencing and enclosures, horticultural techniques, color and textural combinations.

~ Inventory spring bulb and ephemerals displays before they go dormant? Make note of gaps and bare spots so they can be filled in the fall.

STEVE WHITESELL

~ MANHATTAN CHAPTER PLANT SALE ~

The chapter plant sale was held on Saturday, April 30th from 10 – 1 in the usual location, El Sol Brillante Community Garden in the East Village. It was a beautiful sunny day, the plant selection was extensive and abundant, and hopefully you were there, buying indiscriminately. Many thanks are due to the plant sale committee, Nancy Crumley, Sarah Steinbrock, Mary Buchen and Lola Horwitz, as well as all the chapter members who contributed their time and effort to set up the sale tables and handle payments. According to chapter Treasurer, Yukie Kurashina, the total gross receipts from plant and book sales was \$3259.50, with expenses of \$1193.80 for materials and plants from various commercial sources to supplement chapter member donations. The net profit of \$2065.70 will be used to fund our excellent speaker program, as well as garden tours and other chapter activities. Thanks to all donors and buyers.



Plant sale display table

Photo by Nancy Crumley

~ 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 \$30, payable in U.S. funds. VISA/Mastercard accepted.

Benefits of membership include: Rock Garden Quarterly with articles on alpines 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 to members.

Join on-line at 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. The path is www.nxtbook.com/allen/roga/70-2

~ MANHATTAN CHAPTER NARGS ~

2016 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.*)

Members' dues status is indicated on this month's mailing label. Membership renewal was due in January, so if you owe chapter dues, please take the time to pay them now.

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

Yukie Kurashina, Treasurer
3217 Hull Avenue #8D
Bronx, NY 10467

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The newsletter is delivered via email, except by special request. We do not use your email for commercial purposes.

Gift Membership

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

☐ Plant-O-Rama (last Tuesday in January at BBG)

☐ Annual Plant Sale

☐ Newsletter

☐ Hospitality at meetings

Other _____

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THE MANHATTAN CHAPTER of NARGS, 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, planted walls as well as trough and container gardening.

The yearly membership fee of \$20 entitles members to five informative copies of THE URBAN ROCK GARDENER, to attend all meetings and field trips, as well as tours of unique and private gardens; plus participation in our much-anticipated Annual Plant Sale. If you are not already a member we invite you to be a guest at one of our upcoming meetings.

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~ WE'LL SEE YOU AT THE SEPTEMBER AND
OCTOBER MEETINGS

{Submission Deadline for the September/October Newsletter:
September 3,

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

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You!*

