2022 CHAPTER PLANT SHOW

In-Person! Saturday, April 9, 2022 at 10AM
Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill, 8855 Germantown Ave., Phila., PA 19118
...submitted by Co-chairs Rad McFarlane, Gwynne Ormsby, and Michele Hall

The true aim of the spring plant show is education as well as being a friendly and informal competition.

Plant registration will begin at 9:00 am and member judging will start at 9:30 am.
Following the morning lecture presentation, winners will be announced and prizes awarded to all First and Second place winners in each class as well as an overall Best in Show.
Please note the schedule of classes has changed from previous years. Please review the classes and simple rules and start grooming those winning plants!

**While the judges tally, Mike Slater will share some photos from the trip he and Jan made to Chile in late spring of 2019 (November/December that is!)-see page 5.

Plant Show Rules
• Entries must have been in the exhibitor’s possession for a minimum of 3 months prior to the date of the show.
• There is a maximum of three plants entered per class by an exhibitor.
• Winners are decided by popular vote for each class plus an overall “Best in Show.”
• Plants should be potted in clean pots, well groomed, mulched, disease and insect free, and tagged with their correct botanical names.
• Plants must be entered between 9 to 9:30 am.

Schedule of Classes
2. Foliage: Rock garden plant exhibited for outstanding foliage: green, silver, variegated, etc.
3. Succulent: Sempervivum, Sedum, Jovibarba, Rosularia, etc.
5. Container: Trough or container with one or more plant.
6. Seed Plant: Any rock garden plant grown from seed by the exhibitor.
7. Shrub: Rock garden shrub (evergreen, non-conifer, or deciduous).
8. Woodland: Any appropriate woodland plant including ferns, grasses, shrubs, etc.
10. Whimsical: A rock garden plant or plants in a design of your creation.

MEMBERS’ PLANT SALE IN MAY

In-Person! Saturday, May 14, 2022 at 10AM Sharp!
...submitted by Janet Novak, Plant Sale Coordinator

This year, the spring members’ plant sale will be a month earlier than usual—Saturday, May 14. The earlier date makes it feasible to sell plants that go dormant early, such as spring wildflowers. The location will be the same as last year’s plant sales: Morris Arboretum.

Chloraea magellanica - Porcelain Orchid in Chilean Patagonia. Photo courtesy Mike Slater.

Continued on page 4
2021 CHAPTER OFFICERS:
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Phila. Flower Show Coordinator:
Jerry Rifkin
Plant Sales: Janet Novak
Plant Show: Radford MacFarlane & Michele Hall
Pot Shop: Sharee Solow
Web Master: Janet Novak

For membership info, the latest program changes and bad weather cancellations check out our web site: www.dvcnargs.org
We do send out email notices from time to time between issues of The Dodecatheon to those who have given us email addresses.
Please check your email address in the membership list and if it is wrong, send us the right one!

THE CHAIR’S CORNER

My winter was not spent scanning online plant websites or paging through seed catalogues in front of the gas log fire. Well, perhaps a few hours scanning the NARGS seed list. With Jerry Rifkin’s help on January third, he and I set up the NARGS seed exchange at the Barnes Arboretum. Rick Ray helped with transporting supplies and unloading. Paula Burns stopped in with extra helping hands. With all of the chapter volunteers, over 450 seed orders were filled; about 100 of those were international. Thanks to Dan Fabian for bringing his three children to help fill orders on Martin Luther King Day, after their outdoor activity had been canceled due to weather. Three Barnes horticulture students were also enlisted to help pull orders, which even inspired one of them to join the local and national societies. To all who helped, I can’t thank you enough. I’ll be seeking your help in January 2023, as our chapter will again do main round fulfillment. Right now though, I need a vacation!

With the seed exchange in the rearview mirror, I look forward to the resumption of live, in-person activities. Taking a break from Zoom, in April our plant show and talk will be held at the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill in a spacious, airy, indoor setting. Located about 6 miles from the Greater Plymouth Community Center, it is easily accessible and has lots of free, onsite parking. Get those plants and troughs ready for some friendly competition. Check the Dodecatheon for updated classes and entry information.

We will welcome spring on March 20th at 11:33 AM this year. A season to look forward to, especially as I watched snow falling while I wrote this. Which signs of spring have you noticed? The unexpected fragrance of witchhazel in February when I walked out my door, and the sight of snow drops pushing through leaf litter, with pearly pendant orbs, urged me to garden. Early morning birdsong reminds me that nature’s inhabitants know a change is coming. Join me in embracing spring in the rock garden.
MEMBERS’ 10 MINUTE TALKS, RECAP

...submitted by Hope Punnett, Recording Secretary

January’s meeting was our traditional Show-and-Tell, moderated by Jill Evans with each speaker limited to 10 minutes.

The first speaker was Lisa Roper who gave us some of her tips for successful garden photography using a cell phone. Each tip was well illustrated with garden photographs. First, clean the lens before shooting. Then, tap on the subject to focus. Avoid bright light. Note the difference that overcast or back lighting can make as compared to midday light which tends to bleach colors. Remember the rule of three for composition, with many examples, and frame the view. We may not all produce results like Lisa’s but we thank her for sharing her tips.

Craig Wakefield followed with examples of sculpture in the garden, both his own and others. Having admired sculpture in both public and private gardens, examples of which he illustrated, he began collecting and designing for his own garden. He began by searching antique stores, yard sales and Ebay. He found pieces for each of his garden rooms. He found pieces from modern sculptors, and then designed some of his own, even including raised beds. His most recent is a colorful kinetic which he designed and fabricated.

Hope Punnett shared her love of cyclamens, with examples of the florist’s C. persicum on her window ledge, as well as woods filled with the small wild ones in Israel, blooming in late winter. It is these from which the large indoor house plants have been developed. She also showed the many different leaf patterns on C. hederifolium and C. coum, in her garden as well as seedlings she grows to select the more interesting leaves.

Charles Cresson displayed his collection of miniature fragrant hoyas. His criterion for selecting varieties is that they must be small and fragrant. They are ideal house plants for the forgetful gardener, since they are succulent and hate wet feet they can go unwatered for weeks with no ill effects. Charles showed his window, filled with different hoyas and a few other plants. He grows them in orchid bark in small pots since they do best when pot bound. He demonstrated his watering method and showed a number of species and varieties. Especially lovely is H. krohniana ‘Eskimo’ with mottled leaves. The most unusual is H. longifolia, with 5” leaves like stringbeans. Most hoyas bloom several times a year on the same stem so be careful not to cut off that dead-looking bit.

Sharee Solow gave us a rundown on this year’s new plants. First on the list: Lavandula stoechas ‘Violeta Purple’ the first repeat blooming Spanish lavender from seed. Other introductions included several Dianthus species, the most unusual being ‘Hellow Yellow’, a dark purple Arabis, continuous blooming Buddleia and two interesting sedums, now Hylotelephium, namely ‘Banana Split’ and ‘Back in Black.’

Louise Clarke, together with Eva Monheim, has been rewriting the manual for the American Battle Monument Commission, which maintains our military cemeteries in seventeen countries in the world. Louise showed us their basic design, with gravesites laid out with formal military precision, surrounded by woodlands. Among the artifacts to be seen are foxholes and bullet holes, ordinance left from battles and even some still unexploded.

Rick Ray demonstrated an improved deer fence, using pvc poles and deer fencing. The fencing is invisible from a distance, except for the poles. From the Trade Show, Rick showed a new, two-tone Daphne that is an improvement over D. ‘Carol Mackey’. A new redbud Cercis ‘Flame Thrower,’ has multicolored leaves and lavender flowers. Two new barberries are being introduced to replace the banned species. A power plant bulb auger is now available in 3 sizes. For anyone using a power pruner, a new protective “Michael Jackson” glove can prevent injury. The power is immediately shut off if the pruner comes near the glove.

BBC GARDENERS WORLD EPISODES ONLINE

...submitted by Louise Clarke, Chairperson

Thanks to Kathy Purdy, NARGS member from Oxford, NY, for alerting me, and now you, to the availability of BBC Gardeners’ World episodes online. If you’ve gone to the BBC website in search of them, you’ve encountered the message: “BBC iPlayer only works in the UK.” Oh, sorry, it’s due to rights issues. That’s not right! If you’re a Britbox subscriber, you have access. But for the rest of us yearning for gardening shows of substance, the source is HDClump (hdclump.com).

Once you reach the landing page, the tabs across the top include Cooking, Gardening, and Documentaries. Hover your mouse over Gardening, and a drop-down menu shows you all of the gardening content. Gardener’s World leads the list, but there is so much more- Monty Don, Alan Titchmarsh, Chelsea Flower Show - the list seems endless. I got distracted by the Chelsea Flower Show 2021 while writing this.

When you’ve finished reading The Rock Garden Quarterly, tune in to HDClump for endless hours of excellent garden programming. I know I’ll be binge watching Gardeners’ World as winter meanders towards spring.
MEMBERS’ PLANT SALE IN MAY

In-Person! Saturday, May 14, 2022 at 10AM Sharp! Morris Arboretums’ Bloomfield Farm
...submitted by Janet Novak, Plant Sale Coordinator

As always, we rely on members to donate plants. The May 14 date opens up new opportunities for plant donations. If you’ve never donated that *Galanthus* or *Erythronium* because it’s dormant by June, now’s your chance. Also, it will be an excellent time to donate plants that bloom in mid-May—plants in bloom always sell well.

The sale is open to DVC-NARGS members and their guests, so feel free to invite some friends.

- **Schedule:** 8:30-9:30: Plant donations accepted
  10 AM: Sale opens (and, for our first-timers, it goes very quickly)

- **Location:** Morris Arboretum’s Bloomfield Farm (305 E. Northwestern Avenue, Lafayette Hill, PA). This is directly opposite the entrance to the public part of the Arboretum. A restroom will be available. Note that the sale will be in the open, so if the forecast calls for rain, wear a raincoat!

- **Plant Pricing:** We are asking you to price the items you donate yourself. We’ll provide color-coded price markers and a pricing guide. If you want help with pricing, a volunteer will be available. If you are donating 20 or more items, you can consider pricing them ahead of time at home. I can mail you pricing stickers and a pricing guide (contact me at viola@indri.org).

- **Sales Period:** As usual, the sale will open with a short shopping period for plant donors. Donors are entitled to buy one early-choice plant for every 10 plants donated, up to 5 early choices. Then the sale will open to everyone. *Plants sell fast, so don’t be late!* Plants will be arranged by first letter of the scientific name.

- **Payment:** We accept checks or cash. Exact change is appreciated.

- **Lend us a table?** Renting tables for the sale is a substantial expense for the chapter. If you can lend us some tables, we will be very grateful. Every table lent saves the chapter $10-$15! We’re looking for folding tables that can be used outdoors. You would need to bring the tables to Morris before 8:30 AM. If you’re willing to lend us one or more tables, contact me (viola@indri.org or 215-248-2642).

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*Adonis amurensis* will be offered at the Members’ Plant Sale. Photo courtesy of Janet Novak.

*Not in the plant sale: Eryngium ‘Big Blue’ above the Pond Wall at Hedgleigh Spring. Photo courtesy of Charles Cresson.*
2022 CHAPTER PLANT SHOW SPEAKER: MIKE SLATER “THE END OF THE WORLD”

On April 9, 2022 at Chestnut Hill Presbyterian Church (next door to Chestnut Hill Hospital), longtime DVC member Mike Slater will share some pictures from the trip he and Jan made to Chile in late spring of 2019. All photos are by Mike Slater.

Chile, the longest country in the world, has fantastic plants, scenery, birds and other wildlife. Mike will show many plants and flowers from some of Chile’s wildly diverse habitats. We’ll briefly visit central Chile where Mike will have us touching down in the dry Andes Mountains near Santiago in Central Chile, then hop to the temperate rainforests of Chiloé Island home of the Chilean Fire Tree (*Embothrium coccineum*) and Giant Chilean Rhubarb (*Gunnera tinctoria*); then we’ll take a short flight south to the ancient Prince Albert Yew forest (*Saxegothea conspicua*) in Pumalin Park.

Mike will also take us to visit a King Penguin colony, where there were also many tiny flowering treasures snuggled in the tundra-like setting including the stunning Fuegan Blue Edelweiss (*Perezia magellanica*.) all protected from grazing sheep here in a special bird sanctuary.

We’ll finish by visiting the alpine scenery of Torres del Paine National Park and vicinity. The spectacular, ice-carved mountain peaks in the world famous park always draw your eye, but the area has beautiful flowers in its varied habitats. Orchids and other flowers lurk in the ancient Southern Beech forests of *Nothofagus dombeyi* and *N. antarctica*, including the stunning and Magellanic Porcelain orchid (*Chloraea magellanica*). Many “alpine” flowers hide among the cushion-shaped shrubs of the vast Patagonian scrublands including: Purple oxalis (*Oxalis laciniata*), Patagonian scarlet gorse (a.k.a. guanaco bush, *Anarthrophyllum desideratum*) and Mike’s favorite, the Darwin’s slipper flower (*Calceolaria uniflora*).

Come join us for this special program to see the flowers and wildlife at “The End of the World.”
Gothenburg Botanical Garden has one of the largest collections of Bulbs and Alpines in the world. Ever since the 1960’s, starting with the famous Norwegian botanist Per Wendelbo (Director at GBG 1965-1981) who made numerous expeditions to Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey, botanizing and collecting, the focus on bulbs and Alpines has been of big importance at Gothenburg. A large rock garden and a number of alpine houses are home for these collections today. History, growing regimes, propagation aspects and passion for these collections are the ingredients in this presentation.

Johan Nilson is the Horticultural Curator of Bulb Collections at Gothenburg Botanical Garden in Sweden. He has been working at the Alpine Department at GBG since 2009 where he looks after large parts of the “Alpine and Bulb Collections,” including the Himalayan/Asian part of the rock garden. Johan has a broad interest in plants and travels widely to botanize. Besides numerous expeditions to various parts of the Himalaya, he has visited countries like Greece, Turkey, New Zealand, East as well as the Western USA, to name a few. Growing and propagating rare and unusual plants is one of his big passions and something that his positon at the Alpine Department enables him to do daily.

ROCK GARDEN MANIFESTO

Why on earth would rock gardening require a manifesto? Whose barricades would we want to storm, anyway? Admit it: what really appeals to all of us is the wonder of plants—rock plants especially of course—those enchanting little waifs that thrive where bold, brash perennials would fear to tread! As the poet John Shade “discerns/Upon the rough gray wall a rare wall fern” we are fascinated by the frequent partnership of rock and plant whether moss campion embracing a speckled granite boulder on Mount Evans, paintbrush bursting into scarlet flame in a crevice in Canyonlands, or Asplenium ruta-muraria festooning a rustic wall in the Lake District. And we strive to create habitats in our gardens where we can replicate these vignettes.

In Britain, most rock gardeners replace rock with a clay pot—and grow all manner of rock plants to a size and glory most can never attain in nature. To wander through a British rock garden show must approximate the ecstasy the devout believe they’ll experience daily in Paradise for eternity (not sure I’d be able to put up with it that long and may be better suited for the other place as a consequence).

There are perhaps a dozen journals published around the world dedicated to rock gardening—and most focus on single plants, or plant genera (although you often find travelogues about trips to remote mountains to see alpines in habitat as well). The photographs contained in these journals often show plants—gorgeous plants, often rare and unobtainable plants—growing contentedly in pots or by themselves in a garden. The North American Rock Garden Society’s Quarterly has had a few of these images as well—not to the extent of European societies, however.

...submitted by Panayoti Kelaidis, President NARGS
If you’ve been lucky enough to watch any of this year’s NARGS Webinars (you can always sign up to do so, by the way: they’re available ongoingly on the Quarterly web pages) you’ll notice than none of the three this year feature alpines on rocks or in pots. What’s afoot?

There has been another current that has run through rock gardening from its hoary wellsprings in Britain, Central Europe and before that even in China and Japan: the early practice of rock gardening was really about landscape: creating a vignette not of a few plants and a rock, but a scene you might find on the Alps or in East Asia—some of those fantastically stacked mountains. Often as not, a stream winds through and there’s a waterfall. Rock gardening as we practice it is a late born child of the Romantic Movement which glorified nature and attempted to replace the squalor of the Industrial Revolution by bringing the Alps piecemeal into burgeoning suburbs of London or Prague.

A millennium or so before that, Chinese bureaucrats dreamed of capturing something wild and rugged in their cloistered gardens, while the cities and farms were obliterating all traces of wilderness over thousands of square miles of East Asia.

Theoretically, you could grow alpines in a highly formal, ”modernistic” style—tuck them into crevices of otherwise rigidly rectilinear walls or rigid, mid-century modern quadrants. Dwight Ripley—one of the supreme gardeners of the 20th century—did just that at his last house on Long Island. But almost all of us try to create free-form, naturalistic constructs around our highly rectilinear built spaces. Much of the charm and fascination with our art is how we go about fitting our round garden spaces in the square holes of Civilization.

Meanwhile, humanity has replaced so much of the globe with those built spaces—farms, cities, suburban and exurban waste spaces that the Romantic ”nature” of the past has become restricted to remote mountains in distant places, to rapidly shrinking prairies, woodlands and postage stamp parklands and token forgotten corners subject to development at a moment’s notice. Douglas Tallamy’s powerful premise is that we can transform our suburban and urban gardens back to something resembling the natural ecosystems that we’ve displaced. That way the fantastic array of native insects that eschew our sterile lawns and pesticide infested gardens can return, along with the birds that depend on them. Tallamy’s gained some traction, and his philosophy makes great sense in the Eastern hardwood forest—which can regenerate surprisingly quickly if homeowners can be de-programmed from bluegrass lawns.

Even in wooded areas, not everyone wants to live among towering trees. I am always struck how sparse and treeless neighborhoods often are in California or the Pacific Northwest: in cloudy and rainy climates people often yearn for sun. Likewise, those of us who live in arid or semi-arid climates may not want to have our landscape revert entirely to treeless prairie or gravelly desert pavement.

That’s where rock gardening comes in. The contemporary rock gardener’s home landscape is often a mosaic: most of us have portions—often large portions—dominated by native vegetation. In my case, I have a miniature patch of shortgrass prairie—not unlike what would have grown where my garden is now. But most of our us have trees—and often these are not native. We do so for shade, for their beauty in different seasons—and for rock gardeners because we love to grow the woodland plants that grow in tree shade. Lots of us have desert-like corners—sometimes under the eaves of roof overhangs on the hot sides of the house where we may grow cacti and other xerophytes. And so our gardens transform into a sort of microcosm of the temperate world. This is not altogether unnatural: nature is a master of microenvironments. I know a spot in Baca County, Colorado, where cardinal flower (Lobelia cardinalis) is massed along Tecolote Creek, a shady rock face is festooned with thousands of two foot fronds of Venus hair fern (Adiantum capillus-veneris var. modesta), and on the hill above a sparse rocky pasture is studded with eight-foot Walking stick chollas (Cylindropuntia imbricata). Not many homeowners will go that far with our microclimatic manipulation—although most of us would like to try!

May I suggest that rock gardeners are of course hobbyists who love to grow small plants in rock gardens for the sheer aesthetic joy it brings us. But rock gardening is more. Our hobby is a serious laboratory where we conduct pretty ambitious research on an enormous spectrum of wildflowers, shrubs and trees. Much of this research finds an outlet in our amazing Seed Exchange, but also as we learn to adapt wild plants to our urban settings—we are also forging landscapes that are much closer to natural processes than your clipped lawn, sheared juniper and yew foundation plantings.

I’d like to suggest our gardens in and of themselves are manifestos celebrating the science of horticultural experimentation as well as the art of garden design. And the Quarterly bulletin of NARGS and chapter newsletters are a voice for a vibrant community: These are timely bulletins and lifeline communications among gardeners who are working to create harmony between what’s left of the truly wild and the ever-expanding juggernaut of Civilization.

THANK YOU TO JEREMY SCHMIDT FOR “FROM BIG ROCKS TO LITTLE ROCKS”

...submitted by Sharee Solow, Editor

Our February 12 Zoom meeting was a detailed look at stone setting on a grand scale focusing on Tony Avent’s Juniper Level Garden and the speaker’s personal garden. He analyzed the what, where and how of creating zone-specific habitats for specialized plant collections.

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SHOW AND TELL THANKS

...submitted by Jill Evans, Show and Tell Coordinator

Profuse and sincere thanks to those who stepped up to the plate and volunteered to give a presentation for our January Show & Tell Zoom meeting! Bravo! Let’s give all these wonderful volunteers a round of applause! Thanks again.

Delaware Valley Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society

Join at dvcnargs.org or by using this form

Please print the information as you would like it to appear in our membership directory. This directory is solely for NARGS activities.

Name(s) ____________________________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________________________________________
City __________________________ State ______ ZIP __________________________

[] Individual $15.00  [] Household $20.00

Phone number: _______________ Email Address: _______________

Circle the committee(s) in which you might like to participate:
Plant Sales  Phila Flower Show  Special Events  Programs  Hospitality

Make your check payable to DVC NARGS and send it to David Lauer, 49 Cornell Ave., Churchville, PA 18966.

*New members joining after July 1 pay one-half of the annual dues.

LOOKING AHEAD

Delaware Valley Chapter NARGS – Meetings and Activities

March 12, 2022, Saturday: Chapter Zoom “Bulbs and Alpines at Gothenburg Botanical Garden” Johan Nilson

April 9, 2022 Saturday: Chapter Flower Show and Lecture on Patagonia by Mike Slater, Chestnut Hill Presbyterian Church (next door to Chestnut Hill Hospital)

May 14, 2022 Saturday: Chapter Plant Sale, Morris Arboretum’s Bloomfield Farm

June 11, 2022, Saturday: Chapter Garden Tour, Location TBA

August 20, 2022, Saturday: Public Plant Sale, Fall Garden Market

Check The Dodecatheon and the DVC/NARGS website (www.dvcnargs.org) for details before each meeting.