
Rock Garden
Quarterly
Winter 2013/2014

NARGS



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QUARTERLY
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NARGS



Sierra Nevada Wildflowers

An Exploration of the Alpine Flora of California

July 5-12, 2014

Trip Leaders:

Stew Winchester

Horticulturalist, Professional Botanist, and Natural Landscape Interpreter

John Baston

Former National Park Ranger and Guide for Mountain Travel Sobek

ITINERARY

We have planned this trip to coincide with the normal yearly peak bloom of this region. But as we all know one year can be very different than another in terms of temperature, rainfall, and perfusion of the bloom. With this in mind we have considered options to the proposed itinerary and will remain flexible as to the exact location of our field trips. To our advantage the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada is fairly steep and a full range of habitats can be accessed in a relatively short distance. Species lists for the areas we visit as well as a suggested reading list will be provided.

We will provide various options each day that should suit everyone's desired level of exertion. There will be options to move slowly and closely examine the flora as well as to hike longer distances in the mountains and cover more terrain.

Saturday July 05 Arrive in Reno, Nevada

Not so long ago it took several months with a wagon train to get to Reno. Now we can get there in one day! There are shuttles every half an hour from the Reno Airport that will bring you to the Peppermill. You should try to arrive in Reno by 5pm. Here we will begin our trip, meet other trip participants and NARGS staff and gather for a welcome dinner.

Peppermill Resort Hotel (Dinner..)



Sunday July 06 Tahoe Rim

We will travel up the eastern escarpment of the Sierra Nevada towards Lake Tahoe. This route traverses several thousand feet of elevation change. Depending on the bloom we have various locations planned for stops along the way. We will try to stop at Mount Rose (10,778') along the way to Squaw Valley.
Village at Squaw Valley (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Monday July 07 Top of the Mountain at Squaw Valley

We ride the lift to the top of Squaw Mountain (8,200'). From there we can explore subalpine rock gardens. There are ample opportunities to stroll around casually in this beautiful place or to take on a more ambitious hike.
Village at Squaw Valley (Breakfast, Lunch…)



Tuesday July 08 Carson Pass

We will drive south and up towards Carson Pass (8574') to explore the flora near Lake Winnemucca and up towards Round Top Peak. We can have a visit to Grover Hot Spring in the afternoon and soak in the hot mineral waters. Tonight we stay in a Rustic Mountain Inn.
Woodfords Inn (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Wednesday July 09 Virginia Lakes

Our Exploration continues southward to Virginia Lakes (9770'). There is a restaurant there in the beautiful high setting where we can have lunch. Hiking can be as ambitious as individuals like. We continue past Mono Lake on the way to Mammoth Lakes (7,880') where we will stay for three nights.
The Village at Mammoth (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Thursday July 10 Yosemite National Park

We will drive to the top of Tioga Pass, at the eastern entrance to Yosemite National Park. The mountains rise precipitously to the west and we can drive up to the 9,943' pass and explore this famous area known as Tuolumne Meadows.
The Village at Mammoth (Breakfast, Lunch..)



Friday July 11 Little Lakes Valley

From Mammoth Lakes we will take a day trip to Little Lakes Valley. The road ends at 10,300' and from there we explore the rock gardens of this beautiful place.
The Village at Mammoth (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Saturday July 12 Return to Reno on HWY 395

HWY 395 is certainly one of the most scenic roads in the United States. The rising Eastern Light on the Sierra Nevada has been the subject matter of photographers ever since the camera came to California. We return by this scenic drive directly to Reno. We should arrive in Reno about 2pm.
You can depart on afternoon flights (please book after 3pm).
(Breakfast, Lunch..)

ITINERARY INCLUDES

One night **Peppermill Resort** in Reno, Nevada

Two nights **The Village at Squaw Valley** near Lake Tahoe, California

One night **Woodfords Inn** near Carson Pass

Three nights **Juniper Springs Resort** in Mammoth Lakes, California

All **transportation** in two 15 Passenger vans (with luggage trailers)

Two **professional driver /guides and a Mountain Travel Sobek guide**

A **professional regional botanist / naturalist, Stew Winchester**

Use of **Conference rooms** for slide shows and presentations

Meals as noted in the itinerary

YOU WILL ARRANGE

Air to and From Reno, Nevada

Arrive in Reno, Nevada by July 05 (ideally by 5pm)

Leave Reno, Nevada on July 12th (after 3pm) If this is too late for you to fly out you should consider staying the night in Reno. We will provide a list of suggested lodgings. As it is in Nevada there are many casinos and entertainment and can be a fun place.

The cost for this trip is **$ 3800** per person (16-22 Trip participants)

BOOKING

To reserve a place on the trip please call Laura Parent at Mountain Travel Sobek 510-594-6041. You can also reach other booking agents at 510-594-6000.

For questions about the trip you can contact John Baston at Mountain Travel Sobek. 510-594-6035.

There is a $400 non-refundable deposit. A complete payment schedule and other trip details will be sent to you upon booking.

NORTH AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY

NARGS

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All illustrations are by the authors of articles unless otherwise stated.

Bill Beuerlein is a long-time gardener and retired mechanical engineer who enjoyed transforming his technical writing expertise to writing about something he has loved for years. Gardening runs in the family. In fact, Beuerlein translates to "little farmer" which could be taken loosely to mean gardener. Bill gardens in Cincinnati and his garden is always open to visitors.

Trond Høy earns his living as a high school teacher in science and math. His main spare-time interest is gardening. He lives in Førrestfjorden in Norway.

Elin Johnson is a lifelong resident of Sweetwater, Tennessee. After working for 33 years at Bowater, Inc., a large paper mill, she began gardening seriously. She is a Tennessee Master Gardener, longtime newsletter editor for the East Tennessee Hosta Society, and has been a volunteer at the University of Tennessee Gardens in Knoxville for many years.

Jane McGary gardens in a suburb of Portland, Oregon. An avid grower of bulbs, Jane is active in the Pacific Bulb Society and has held a number of posts in the Columbia-Willamette Chapter. Jane was editor of the *Rock Garden Quarterly* from 2000 to 2010.

James McGee began growing flowers to attract hummingbirds when he was twelve years old. He began rock gardening between college semesters after his parents moved to a new home with gravel and boulder displays lacking any plants. He now lives in Schaumburg, Illinois, with his wife and son. He continues to develop his gardens to attract pollinators, grows many native species, and has volunteered for a number of groups working to restore native ecosystems.

Bobby J. Ward and his partner of 43 years, Roy Dicks, live, write, and garden in Raleigh, North Carolina. Bobby's most recent book is *Chlorophyll in His Veins: J. C. Raulston, Horticultural Ambassador*. Roy is the author of *Rhapsody in Green: the Garden Wit and Wisdom of Beverley Nichols*.

Abbie Zabar wrote, illustrated, and designed *The Potted Herb* in 1988. This received the Award for Excellence from the Garden Writers of America; it also revived an interest in growing topiaries, started a craze, and quickly became a gardening classic. Since then Abbie, Program Chair for the Manhattan Chapter of NARGS (McNARGS), has taught topiary workshops at botanical gardens, horticultural societies, garden clubs, law firms, and to public school students.

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Contents

From the Editor 3

Call for Nominations: 2014 Election 4

Ode to an "LT" Pot, ABBIE ZABAR 6

What Meets the Eye, and Otherwise: Public and Private Rock Gardens, JANE MCGARY 10

Midwestern Carex for the Rock Garden, JAMES MCGEE 18

The Green Closet, BOBBY J. WARD 36

Among Giants in East Africa, TROND HØY 38

"Our" Mountains, ELIN JOHNSON 56

Rock Gardening in Cincinnati, BILL BEUERLEIN 66

Bulletin Board 82

Online extra at <www.nargs.org>

Itinerary and booking details for NARGS *Sierra Nevada Wildflowers* expedition – an exploration of alpine flowers in California – July 5-12, 2014

ROCK GARDEN QUARTERLY

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From the Editor

THE WINTER ISSUE of the *Quarterly* gets to most members around New Year, at the start of that long cold period when there is little happening in the garden but so much to look forward to. There are some, of course, who are on quite different timetables. In the Southern Hemisphere, the flowering season will be in full swing. In southern South America, plant tourism is getting into its annual stride; in New Zealand, likewise. But for those of us back at home, in the variously frozen north, we must find our pleasures where we can.

My main horticultural pleasure in the autumn of 2013 has been as part of the Royal Horticultural Society's panel judging the trial of *Saxifraga fortunei* cultivars. These are late-flowering plants, most of which have arrived in Europe from the Japanese plant trade. Some start flowering in late September with others coming into flower through to mid- or late November, when the first proper frosts (27F/–3C) curtail them. There are around 60 cultivars in the trial at the RHS gardens at Wisley, the largest assembly of these plants ever seen in the UK, and among them are some glorious plants. There is one more year to go in the trial (typically such trials last for 3 years) and, when it's complete, I'll report back. And if you are in the UK next fall they make a point of having a look at them.

Mid-winter brings the pleasures of the seed exchanges and I've been gradually assembling my lists of wants and hopes through the fall. Enticingly, three-year-old irises and tulips, from seed collected in Kazakhstan by a friend, are appearing at the moment in pots in the alpine house. So, is my gradually awakening interest in growing bulbs from seed going to win out over my long-standing love of cushion species? Garden seed or wild collected? And there are the commercial seed collectors (there are four advertising in this issue) who can, at least in theory, provide me with almost any rarity.

If seeds aren't your thing, which is a shame since this winter's NARGS Seedex is still open, there are the members' tables at NARGS chapter meetings where anything can turn up – never mind the presentation, buy the plants! On behalf of members who love their chapters and the plant sales, thanks to those who help make the chapters what they are.

"But" you cry, "I have no chapter within reach!" For us, there are the catalogs from plant nurseries (and there are 12 of them advertising) – catalogs progressively becoming internet-only listings but instantly accessible – not the same thing at all, but often with wonderful photos to spur purchases – a great way of passing happy hours contemplating which of their contents is looking for a home in our garden. And already various people are starting to list bulbs to order for next fall to be delivered late August. Promises, promises.

Have fun!

NARGS needs you!

Call for Nominations for 2014

The NARGS Nominating Committee announces its call for nominees for the 2014 election of three directors and two officers: President and Vice-President. It is up to all members to consider whom they might nominate. Self-nomination is also acceptable. Please refer to the By-Laws at <nargs.org/laws> to read a description of the duties of officers and directors.

PRESIDENT & VICE-PRESIDENT

The current President and Vice-President both come to the end of their terms of office in 2014 having served a two-year term followed by a further one-year term. They cannot stand for a further term of office and so a new President and Vice-President are needed. Candidates stand for a two-year term (2014-2016) with the possibility of an additional year.

Note. The Recording Secretary was elected to his first two-year term in 2013 while the Treasurer was elected to his second and final two-year term at the same time.

DIRECTORS

Directors serve for three years. Every year three new directors are elected as three directors have completed their term. Directors cannot be elected for two consecutive terms.

Our mission as Nominating Committee members is to select candidates for the positions of directors and officers who want to serve, have the qualifications to serve, and who fulfill as much as possible the need for geographic diversity between the continuing board members and the new members. Geographic diversity can not always be achieved.

We will accept names submitted by any current member of NARGS for these five positions. Please provide the following information for each nominee:

1. Name, chapter (if applicable), e-mail address, and position for which each person is nominated.
2. Bio of nominee (100 words or less, written by nominee)
3. Picture
4. Note of acceptance from (new) nominee indicating a willingness to be one of the above officers of NARGS (two-year term) or a NARGS Director (three-year term).
5. Your own reasons for nominating the person.

Note: The bio and picture will be used for publication in the Rock Garden Quarterly if such nominee is on the final slate. All the above is for use by the Nominating Committee.

The deadline for nominations is February 14, 2014.

Nominations should be emailed to Lola Horwitz, chairperson of the Nominating Committee at <llhorwitz@gmail.com>.

They can also be posted to Lola Horwitz, 446 6th St., Brooklyn, NY 11215 USA.

Nominating Committee: Gail Gray, Anna Leggatt, Jody Payne, Lori Skulski, Mike Slater, Carmel Tysver.

Timetable

The Call for Nominations is Stage 1 of the election process outlined below:

STAGE 1: Timetable & call for nominations are published in Winter Quarterly. Nominations deadline to Nominating Committee February14, 2014.

STAGE 2: Nominating Committee agree on slate to be published on website on March 31st.

STAGE 3: From the floor nominations April 1-30.

STAGE 4: Combined list of candidates to be published in Summer Quarterly (deadline May 1 for dispatch June 20)

STAGE 5: Election online July 15-30 prior to late August AGM.

STAGE 6: Announcement of election results at Annual Meeting in late August 2014.

Ode to an “LT” Pot

Abbie Zabar



TO ME IT has a most agreeable shape, this thick-walled, pink-hued clay pot with a hint of reverse rim going around the base and the "LT" he would incise on the underside after I repeatedly suggested he honor his work. Of course I offered to design a little logo for my dear friend, or even a modest chop mark. But Lawrence ("Larry") B. Thomas, ever the humble teacher, simply hand-scored two initials into the damp clay with his tools, and totally eliminated the sturm und drang over typefaces that I bring to any design discussion.

Larry worked on the potter’s wheels at Marymount College, just a few blocks from where he lived and gardened on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. Equally convenient, he taught ceramics classes there, which

allowed him the use of their kilns. Never one to let inexperience stand in his way, Larry learned how to throw pots – he would rationalize – so that he could have an (endless) inventory of high-fired Long Toms plus loads of other shapes to accommodate an ever-expanding collection of alpine plants growing all over his terrace. He was a devoted teacher – to a fault – and if his regular Saturday morning ceramics programs often conflicted with our spring rock garden tours, the Founder of the Manhattan Chapter of NARGS would never think of cutting class.



I believe this was one of my very first Larry Thomas pots. That it's still intact is nothing less than a miracle. Especially when clay pots are workhorses for the container gardener. Even with the best of intentions, buckets of shards grow exponentially off in a dark corner of my garden, alongside the graveyard of labels from plants that I have also lost.



I originally chose this pot, suspecting it would be perfect for a topiary standard. In fact, it has embraced many topiaries, again and again. Rosemaries, myrtles and lavenders – French, English and Spanish varieties. Plus beginner olive trees, now five-feet tall but started from mere wisps of cuttings, too spindly to imagine they'd ever become as grand as they are. And fig twigs that would mature into fruiting trees, bearing a harvest as I write this story. Plus the pathetic-looking lemon verbena I bought at the Union Square Market – all covered with white fly, for the same price – that has become a stately standard topiary with the best scent in any garden.

Maybe it's just my good potluck pot, or perhaps a "premier cru" usually ages with a protective mantle about it, but right now it harbors the small *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica* 'Morris Midget' that I bought from Paul Waterman at the 2012 Tri-State Meeting for $8, and notorious for its slow habit of growth. If what they say is true, that 'Morris Midget' might reach two feet, after twenty-five years – then maybe this pot has met its last lodger.

I've already limbed it up to suggest a little tree with shiny evergreen leaves. I admire athletes who practice visualization exercises, envisioning what their goal is right from the kick-off and so I try to simulate how my plants should shape up in the endgame. For me gardening is an exquisite process and a work-in-progress needs to be good-looking at every stage. With an LT pot I believe I can't grow wrong.



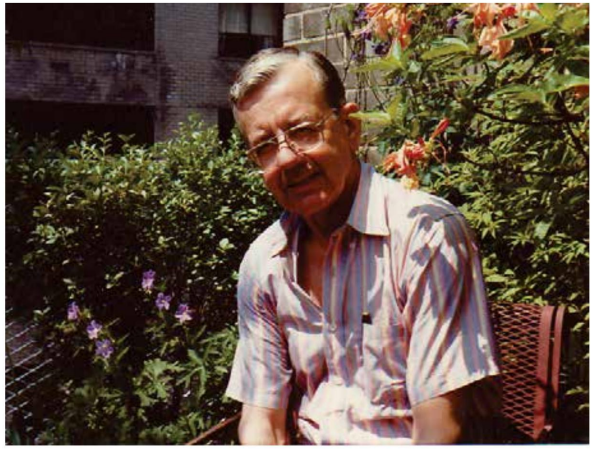
POSTSCRIPT. In May 1990, Larry Thomas began hosting his terrace garden parties for members of the Manhattan Chapter of NARGS. However, here was one of his last invitations, for April 7, 2009:

"You are cordially invited to join me for wine and cheese and to celebrate the restoration of my terrace. From five to seven thirty. As some of you know, I have been without a garden for almost a year, and this is a period of Thanksgiving. As an added incentive: I have an excessive amount of hand-thrown ceramic pots … literally dozens of them which are yours for the taking … as many as you want or can carry. First come, first served. All I ask is that you make a small donation to the Manhattan Chapter, whatever you feel like giving."





Members of the Manhattan Chapter (from left to right: Michael Riley, Judi Dumont, Lola Lloyd Horwitz, Lori Chips, Abbie Zabar, John Rommel, and Gelene Scarborough) with some from their collections of Larry Thomas pots. The NARGS Millstream Garden Award given to Larry in 2009 for his terrace garden is at the center of the table. (Brendan Kenney.)



Larry Thomas (December 17, 1926 – May 7, 2013)

Readers who want to remind themselves of Larry's writing, or read him for the first time, might like to know that they can access his articles in the *Rock Garden Quarterly* archive on the website:

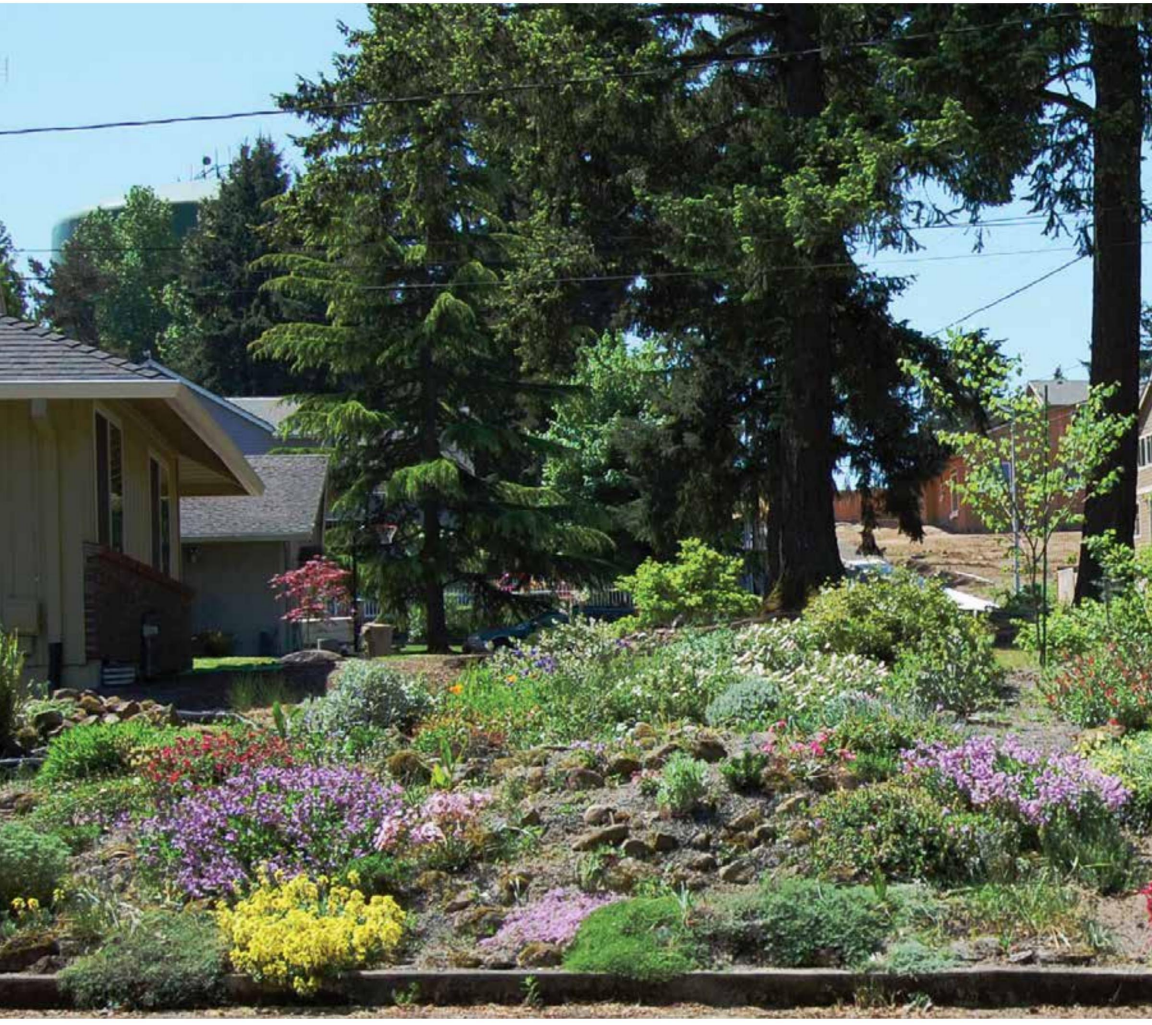
"Hypertufa update" vol. 48-3, Summer 1990, p.220

"Alpines in containers" vol. 52-4, Fall 1994, p.271

"A city terrace garden in winter" vol. 56-4, Fall 1998, p.289

"Rock Gardening on a Balcony" vol. 68-1, Winter 2010, p.39

Photo of Larry Thomas: Lola Lloyd Horwitz.



The "public" rock garden in front of the author's house

What meets the eye, and otherwise: public and private rock gardens

Jane McGary



THE "PUBLIC" ROCK garden, in this article, does not mean one regularly open to the public, which might range from a single trough in a city mini-park, to an extravaganza like that of the Denver Botanic Gardens. Rather, I'm writing about the rock gardens we make near our homes, in places where passers-by will see them, admire them, and, we hope, feel moved to emulate them. In contrast, the "private" rock gardens I'll discuss are those where we experiment with techniques and treasures, whose eccentricities and inevitable failures are perhaps best hidden from the gaze of the horticulturally naive.

If you garden in a rural area, as I used to, all your garden is likely private. Shrubs can mingle, perennials can naturalize, bulb beds can lie dormant all summer, and the rock garden can be whatever suits your fancy. When I moved to a suburb of a large city three years ago, however, I knew I had to clean up my act. I was smart enough to choose a half-acre lot in an unincorporated area of the county, in a mixed neighborhood where there was no danger of neighborhood committees passing judgment on one's landscape design. The street and the neighbors are, however, pleasant enough that I didn't want to offend.

What meets the eye

Since the only steep slope on my new property is near the road, that was the obvious place for a rock garden, and I decided to design it for public view. This road is a favorite with walkers and joggers, and even drivers have to proceed slowly because of a nearby elementary school. The public rock garden, thus, went in quickly and was filled with plants I knew would grow successfully and provide a long season of colorful bloom. They're not "rockery" subjects, though – no basket-of-gold (*Aurinia saxatilis*) or silver chickweed (*Cerastium tomentosum*). The plants I chose included both familiar ones available at any good garden center, and unfamiliar ones, especially western American natives, along with a number of *Draba* species and other alpines grown from the NARGS Seed Exchange leftovers.

Once I'd had some Douglas firs removed, and cleared the slope of ivy, I hired a friendly workman operating as Dirtbag Excavation to load up the rocks from my former home, where I had made a number of berms using native basalt fieldstone. He dumped them on top of the bank and went back for a load of used potting soil from my bulb collection, which went on the slope below the rock pile.

Before I spread out the potting soil (a 2:1:1 mix of coarse sand, ground pumice, and forest humus) to depths ranging from about 6 to 12 inches (15–30 cm), I literally threw baskets of extra bulbs from my collection on the bark-and-clay soil and shoveled the sand over them. I didn't even bother to turn most of them right side up. They figured it out.

Since then, the lower part of the rock garden has produced a long succession of surprises, from fall crocuses and miniature colchicums, through winter crocuses, fritillarias, narcissus species, alliums, themids (the *Brodiaea*-complex, the Themidaceae), and even a *Calochortus* or two. Some of them came in with the used potting soil, too, as bulbs or seeds. I had tossed ungerminated seed pots into the potting soil, so I got another bonus: a very handsome *Eriogonum* I haven't been able to identify yet.

Once the new soil was distributed, I set the rocks in a series of ledges on the steeper part of the bank and in random-looking groups on the less steep part. The largest rocks (I could hardly believe I had moved them single-handed 15 years earlier) I rolled into scattered groups on the nearly level top of the bank – more about that later. Then I was ready to plant. As I planted, I top-dressed the soil with quarter-ten (¼ to ⅒ inch) crushed rock to stabilize the surface until the plants had spread out.

Many of the plants I put in were brought from the old garden as mature specimens, or divisions and cuttings I had propagated, and of course there were many pots of seedlings. I also bought some new things, especially the *Helianthemum* cultivars that afford a long season of color here on the Pacific coast. I was surprised at how well some mature plants moved, especially a *Kalmiopsis leachiana* that had grown atop a crevice bed for at least 15 years.

Another delight was lifting my single plant of *Penstemon newberryi* subsp. *sonomensis*, a form with exquisite ruby-red flowers, and finding that I could easily propagate the basal shoots. Having removed them



Penstemon newberryi subsp. *sonomensis*

(they all struck), I put the old plant halfway down into a large pot of sandy mix and covered it halfway up with grit; it responded just as you would expect of a species that has evolved to survive in moving scree and volcanic cinder, by growing with greatly renewed vigor. Now the public rock garden is dotted with these fine penstemons, including their

rejuvenated parent, and my fellow chapter members have some too. Other shrubby penstemons, such as *P. fruticosus* and *P. barrettiae*, enjoy this setting too.

Some of the simplest plants are pleasing to any eye, whether the dog-walker who grows only annuals, or the visiting rock gardener. There are *Pulsatilla* species, from *P. vulgaris* in all its vulgar glory, to small-flowered *P. albana* and *P. alpina* subsp. *apiifolia.* I didn't disdain to dot the slope with sedums and sempervivums, especially our native *Sedum spathulifolium* in select forms. Late in the summer *Origanum* 'Kent Beauty' and similar ornamental oreganos offer a display, as do several zauschnerias (*Epilobium canum* forms) cautiously placed out at the margin of the rock garden. The helianthemums are the main dwarf shrubs on the lesser slope, along with a prostrate *Ceanothus*, but in the steeper, ledge part I've planted a number of dwarf *Daphne* species and hybrids where more vigorous growers can't swamp them. There are lewisias in both sections, not only *Lewisia cotyledon* but also *L. tweedyi*, *L. columbiana* subsp. *rupicola*, and the deciduous *L. oppositifolia* now freed from the bulb frame. I moved an old plant of the well-known hybrid *Lewisia* 'Pinkie' from the crevice bed, and it exploded, tripling its size in a year and producing vast amounts of bloom; perhaps it isn't long for this world.



I have a strip about 10 feet (3 m) wide above this bank that's fairly flat, with the impoverished soil expected under Douglas firs, so here I'm developing a western American/Mediterranean shrub community, known here as chaparral, which should do well without any summer water once the plants are well rooted. Species and hybrids of *Arctostaphylos*, *Ceanothus*, and *Cistus*, are its backbone, with a few interesting small trees at the back: a madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) from local-area seed, silvery-leaved *Lithocarpus densiflorus* subsp. *echinoides*, and the Afghan redbud (*Cercis afghanica*) I couldn't resist ordering when I saw it in the Forest Farm list. This spring I've been laboriously toting buckets of gravel up the slope to mulch the chaparral, and adding a few taller penstemons and salvias among the shrubs. Bulbs, of course, will find their way there soon, especially the 20 or so species of *Tulipa* I grew from seed last year.

The public rock garden looked well-established very soon. Now the dog-walkers stop to look and even snap photos with their phones. I haven't yet put out a sign saying "You can do this too: visit www.nargs.org," but I've thought about it. I know I'll have to replace and even eliminate some of these simple rock-garden plants in the next few years, but I get a lot of pleasure out of it too. In the evening the westering sun shines through the flowers, setting them aglow, and I stand in the driveway and wonder why I ever thought rock gardening had to be difficult.

The main front garden is only slightly sloping, and I've remade it into several large beds planted with small trees, shrubs, and interesting perennials, especially liliaceous plants, and surrounded with grass paths that I regretted until I broke down and hired a lawn service. I set a

Penstemon and *Helianthemum* provide an eye-catching extravagance



lot of cheap crocuses (*Crocus tommasinianus* and *C. vernus* selections) and a hundred or so *Narcissus obvallaris* (the little wild daffodil of Britain) into one section of lawn, which thus remains uncut until mid-June, first delighting and then offending the neighbors. Behind the retaining wall, along the road, is a bed stuffed with larger *Colchicum* species and hybrids for fall color and hundreds of hybrid daffodils for spring, also offensive for a short period, but I hope the dog-walkers understand.

And perhaps better out of public view

Like the reverse of a certain appalling male hairstyle, my specialist gardening is now "party in the front, business in the back." More or less concealed by a trio of gigantic roadside firs, the county-mandated "rain garden" (bioswale) full of lush growth, and a rose-clad chain-link fence, lies the serious gardening. The bulb collection has moved into a 20- by 40-foot commercial greenhouse, modified with hardware cloth (small wire mesh) sides to afford perfect ventilation, where the bulbs have been loosed from their pots into raised beds. They think they've gone to paradise, and a paradise without deer and rabbits at that, but they still present a fairly hideous spectacle in their declining weeks, and bare gravel in July and August.

Acis autumnalis growing through penstemon



On the pea-gravel-surfaced area between the bulb house and the fence I built two tufa beds that will house demanding lime-lovers planted with hope but not with great optimism. Finally, a little well-lit potting shed, set up to house seed pots and young seedlings now stands in a corner between bulb house, neighbor's garage, and my modest vegetable beds. This business side of the garden also has room for herbs, close enough that I barely get rained on when stepping out for them; a cutting garden; a place to throw annual seed; and (God help

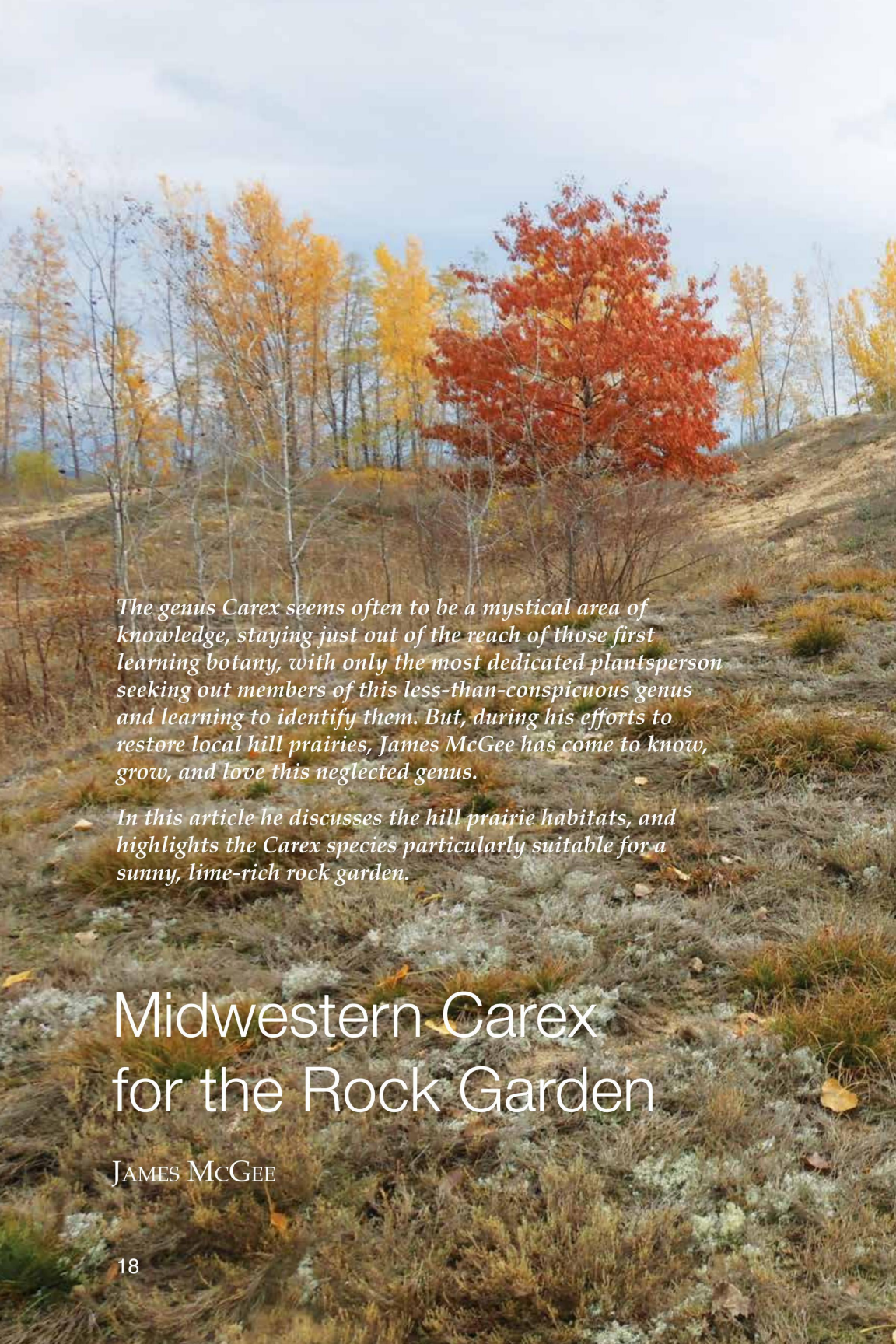
us) an experimental plot of specialty chrysanthemums, since I had the misfortune to discover a nursery nearby that sells rooted cuttings of them.

With a lot this size, I was able to consolidate the seasonally unattractive gardening, and the sites for plants that may not do well or appeal to anyone but us, into a single area, fortunately on the "blind" side of the house next door. The rest of the back garden I meant to be restful, with its shady patio, lawn, trickling fountain, and border of flowering shrubs, hybrid peonies, and lilies. But you can't restrain a plant maniac. I tried to develop its one good slope into a home for dwarf ericaceous plants, but they hated the move down from the hills: gentians, however, thrived there, so now it's an alpine meadow. Higher up, I moved in my species peonies, most of them grown from seed collected years ago by Josef Halda. Many more peonies, mostly from the Archibalds' lists, are now near the public rock garden on a sloping site with afternoon shade, which these plants enjoy.

Even on a smaller lot there are opportunities to separate public and private rock gardens, one to please and even convert others, and one to indulge our obsessions. The private rock garden may be a compact tufa berm (tufa is so expensive it's likely to be compact), or just a trough or two. It is the intellectual playground of the true rock gardener, and the magnet to visitors who really know what lies before their educated gaze.

Cyclamen graecum in spectacular flower in back garden tufa bed





The genus Carex seems often to be a mystical area of knowledge, staying just out of the reach of those first learning botany, with only the most dedicated plantsperson seeking out members of this less-than-conspicuous genus and learning to identify them. But, during his efforts to restore local hill prairies, James McGee has come to know, grow, and love this neglected genus.

In this article he discusses the hill prairie habitats, and highlights the Carex species particularly suitable for a sunny, lime-rich rock garden.

Midwestern Carex for the Rock Garden

James McGee



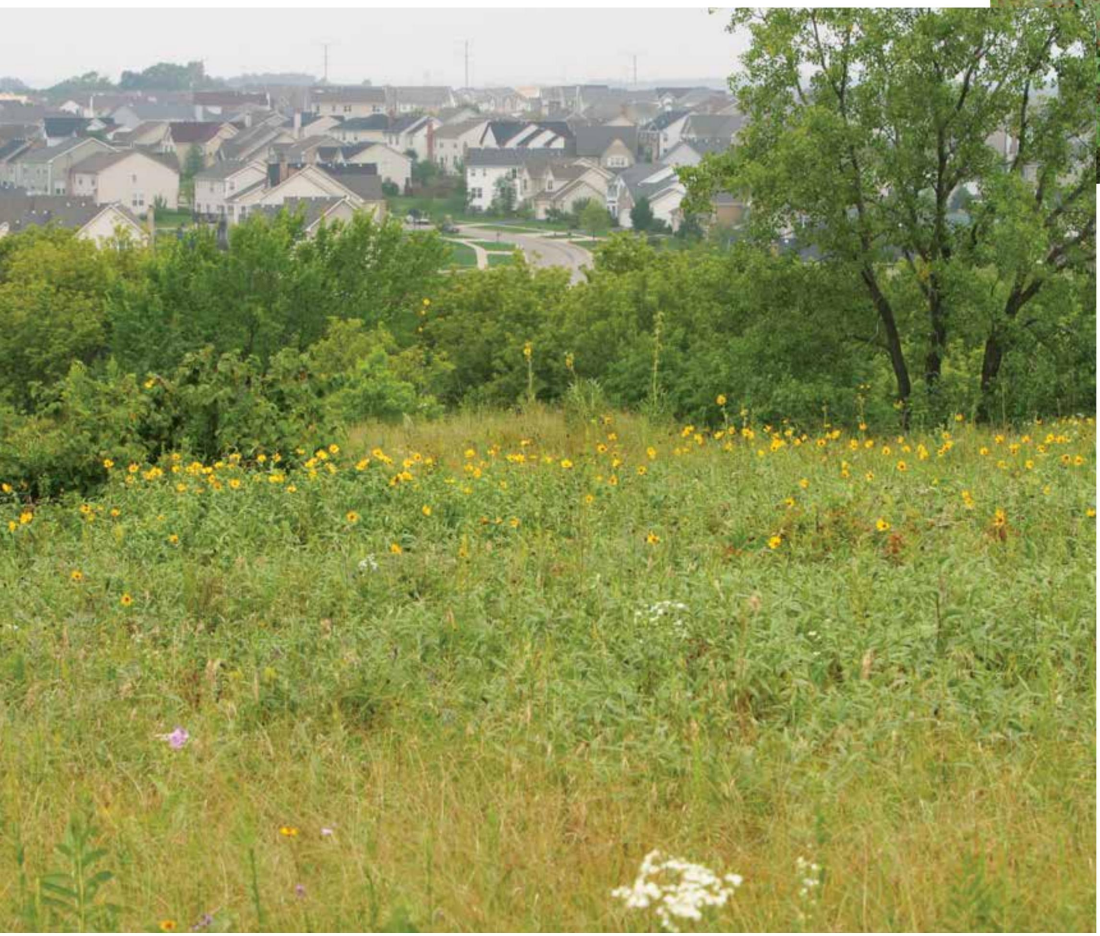
Carex habitat in fall, Plattsburgh, Lake Champlain, New York (Michael Peden)

WHEN I SAY I am growing sedges for the restoration of hill prairies I often get the response "Sedges? I thought those only grew in wetlands."

It is true that many sedge species grow in wetlands. However, sedges are also a primary component of woodlands and even of the driest hill prairies.

Tall grass prairie is an ecosystem much more imperiled than the rainforest. It is frequently stated that in Illinois, the prairie state, less than one tenth of one percent of original prairie remains. But, if you do the math, this number is too high by a factor of ten: the Illinois Department of Natural Resources states that only 2300 acres of high quality prairie, just 4 square miles, remain in a state that was originally covered by 22 million acres in 1820. Many of the best remaining examples were saved from the plow only because they were old cemeteries.







Above: Cook County preserve from the top of a kame, looking south.

Left: The view towards a recent development, from the same location, communicates the precarious situation for the rare species in the preserve.

This piece of remnant prairie (above and right) in a Cook County preserve is only nine acres and exemplifies many of the issues. It was only saved because it was too rocky to plow. Luckily, it was preserved before it was acquired by those who would mine it for gravel. Although many rare species inhabit this preserve, one federally-listed species has not been observed to set seed in recent history. The local extinction of pollinators or a lack of genetic diversity are both problems that must be overcome when working to conserve species in small islands of preserved habitat.

The photograph (above) from the top of a kame (a feature created by retreating glaciers), includes a large glacial erratic, and portrays one habitat of *Carex umbellata* and *C. meadii*. This view is looking to the south across the nature preserve where *C. richardsonii* inhabits local summits and the north-facing slope of this kame. Volunteers have been working to restore native vegetation to the rolling treeless area in the distance for 23 years. This photo was taken four years ago and you can still see strips where collected seed had been sown into a field that was previously used for row crops.



The prairie in which *Carex* flourish in the Midwest is home to many associate species: *Sisyrinchium albidum* (above) with *Pedicularis canadensis*; and *Orobanche uniflora* (below).





Polygala senega, another *Carex*-associate species.

Challenges to preserving the small remaining pieces of original prairie include lack of fire, invasive species, isolation (prevention of gene flow), small size (local extinction of species more likely), inability to migrate as the climate changes, and damage done by disrespectful people.

And it is not simply the graminoids (grasses, sedges, and rushes) that are part of such habitats. Prairie habitats are home to whole communities of associate species that provide the rock gardener with great subjects.

There are different associations of hill prairie species in the foreground of this spectacular photograph of this McHenry County preserve (also shown overleaf).

The foreground is dominated by the reddish color of little bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium*, the yellow green color of prairie dropseed, *Sporobolus heterolepis*, and the less obvious arching spikes of side-oats grama, *Bouteloua curtipendula*. These are all excellent mid-height grasses for establishing a dry-to-mesic prairie that does not get so tall that it can hit you in the face.

Ridges formed by glacial moraines can be seen in the background of the landscape. These ridges contain *Carex richardsonii*, *C. umbellata*, and associates. Bright green areas at the bottom of the ridges are Eurasian pasture grasses. The native prairie vegetation remains only on the steep slopes and ridge crests.



I have been told that eliminating grazing and returning fire has allowed the prairie vegetation to slowly move back down the slope overtaking the Eurasian pasture grasses.



"Prairie Under Dramatic Sky." (David Schwaegler)



"Tour group near fen at preserve in McHenry County, Illinois."
(David Schwaegler)



The background of this photograph (of the same preserve as on the previous page) shows the driest south-facing ridges in this preserve which are almost completely dominated by a very short form of *Carex meadii*.

CAREX FOR THE SUNNY LIME-RICH ROCK GARDEN

The main requirement for the genus is cool growing conditions. So the species that grow on hot dry hill prairies tend to flower and fruit early in the season. Flowering during the cool moist spring allows a few members of this cold-loving genus to thrive on exposed gravel kames left by recent glaciations. Another adaptation of some species is the ability to survive summer drought by going dormant. All the species I mention have the ability to thrive under a regime of frequent burning.

It would be surprising that gardeners have largely ignored such a populous genus as *Carex*, with some 2000 species in it, if it were not for the fact that they do not have showy flowers. Indeed, many people see *Carex* and incorrectly call them grasses.

The genus does have a place in the rock garden. I believe the *Carex* species I am writing about here, and many others, can fill the same niche in the rock garden that larger grasses currently occupy in the perennial border. I also believe there is merit in combining plants in gardens that occur together in nature. For the grower of alpine flowers, the inclusion of the alpine grasses and sedges would complete their miniature landscapes.

Carex umbellata spikes in the wild in late spring



I am beginning the descriptions of individual species with *Carex umbellata* because of its small size. I could give you leaf measurements and other technical details, but I believe the picture (right) shows the smallness of this plant best. The small group of brown scales circled (just up and left of my fingers) is the pistillate spike, known to gardeners as the seed head, while the other spikes are staminate spikes. *Carex umbellata* is known for having the





Carex umbellata in a flat in early fall

Carex umbellata in a baked dry habitat

pistillate spike at the base of the leaves just off the ground. The seeds have already dispersed from the spike in the photograph. My mid-May visit was already too late for capturing a photo of the plant with seeds.

I believe both the toughness and miniature size of this plant would make it particularly appealing to rock gardeners. *Carex umbellata* is able to tolerate the driest and hottest position on local hill prairies. The habitat photo was taken at the summit of a calcareous hill prairie. This photo shows the baking-hot dry habitat where *C. umbellata* is often found, although it also inhabits vernally wet areas of limey prairie with *C. crawei* as well as sandy habitats. The taller grass in the photo is porcupine grass, *Stipa spartea*.

Another species that tolerates the driest hottest position on hill prairies is *Carex meadii*. In hill prairies to the west of my location in Illinois this species only reaches a couple of inches tall. In my local area, this species reaches about a foot (30 cm) tall. This taller variety might be too large for most rock gardens, but it would make an excellent plant for a low meadow

Carex meadii has a nice gray-green color that contrasts well with the foliage of other plants. A plus for me is that this sedge always seems to grow with hoary puccoon, *Lithospermum canescens.* Hoary puccoon is a





Carex meadii in nursery pots (right) and in the wild with spikes along with *Amorpha canescens* (above)

species I have had difficulty growing to maturity from seed in the past; but this year I was able to germinate hoary puccoon and have about 150 plugs which I plan to offer for sale locally next year.

The next species I will suggest for rock gardeners is *Carex crawei*. The attribute of this sedge that the rock gardener will find the most appealing is its preferred habitat. Although *C. crawei* is known best for growing in fens, surprisingly it is the best-adapted *Carex* species for limestone pavement and alvar (a habitat with very thin soil supporting depauperate grassland over limestone). I found this sedge growing locally in a small scrap of native prairie along a railroad. *Carex crawei* lined temporary pools, but had also colonized the seasonally-dry thin soil covering part of a tufa outcrop. Since this sedge can tolerate both temporary flooding and



Carex crawei at the discharge of a downspout with the recently planted wild associate balsam ragwort (*Packera paupercula*)

very dry summer conditions, I have planted it where a down-spout discharges into my xeric beds. It is thriving.

A fourth species that is worth considering for rock gardens is *Carex granularis*. Like *C. meadii,* some populations of this species may be too

Plug tray of seed-grown *Carex granularis* (right) and growing in gravel bed (below)





large for most rock gardens and would be best grown in a low meadow. In lean dry-mesic sites this sedge does stay small enough for the rock garden. The most notable characteristic of this species for gardeners is the wide glaucous (waxy) leaves. These leaves contrast well with those of other *Carex* species providing a different texture in the garden.

The last species I am recommending is *Carex richardsonii* because it is best only for those in more northern areas. It tends to be limited to north-facing gravel slopes and the absolute tops of gravel kames in my area. I believe this species is only able to inhabit the sunnier summits of kames because of the unobstructed cooling wind. It is also possible that *C. richardsonii* only resides in these areas because the intensity of the frequent prairie fires is reduced. You can see the old burned-off culms (stems) and exposed rhizomes in one of the pictures of this sedge. It would undoubtedly be a frequent species on south-facing slopes farther north.

Although *Carex richardsonii* only ventures a few counties south of here, it is found from coast to coast in Canada. I think that of all the species I have mentioned, this one has the most beautiful seed heads. I really like the mahogany color of the scales.

I have been working on developing seed stocks of the pictured





Carex richardsonii spike and rhizome (right) and seed-grown plants in tray (below)

species for a number of years. *Carex crawei* and *C. meadii* were first collected as seed beginning two years ago. They were grown into plugs last year. The first planting in the garden occurred last fall and this spring/summer respectively. All other species were collected as seed last year and germinated this spring.

There are other *Carex* species that would be candidates for a moist limey rock garden. *Carex aurea* and *C. viridula* are two sedges that are found with most of the previously listed species near Lake Michigan. I am not currently growing either species because I have not found them locally. *Carex aurea* has beautiful yellow-orange fruits which would be valued by gardeners; *C. viridula* has nicely shaped seed heads. *Carex tetanica* is found locally in wetlands and is very similar to the previously mentioned dry to dry-mesic prairie species *C. meadii*. Some consider *C. meadii* and *C. tetanica* to be varieties of a single species.

Carex buxbaumii and *C. stricta* are two larger sedges that would be excellent for a moist, limey sedge meadow. I love the bluish tint of *C. buxbaumii* and the huge hummocks that can be formed by *C. stricta*.

All these species are merely those that I believe are small enough to be worthy of inclusion in the sunny rock garden. There are many other species that carpet woodlands which would be indispensible for shady rock gardens.

As I mentioned previously, including alpine species of *Carex* would help complete the scene of the alpine garden. Not only does the inclusion of grasses and sedges complete the garden landscape, but these plants also serve an important purpose for their flowering companions. The grasses and sedges cool neighboring plants by shading and evaporation. The cooling provided to more showy flowering plants can alter the local environment enough to make the difference between health and decline. The straw created by grasses and sedges makes mulch with excellent insulating qualities. This mulch will help protect less hardy plants through cold winters. Even if you cannot find *Carex* attractive or exciting, wise gardeners will make good use of this genus in their garden.

Rain garden with *Carex crawei* (short, in front) and *C. tetanica* (blue-gray, taller, behind)



RESTORATION



The people who have spent most of their free time helping to bring back the prairie have created quite a bond with one another. The people who dedicate themselves to giving back to nature come from all occupations and political affiliations. Although people differ on how to run the country, their love of the physical countryside brings them together.

These gardeners, of a different sort, often spend little time on their own properties. Their gardens are not their own, but a preserve for public enjoyment and the preservation of nature. The efforts of home gardeners seem minuscule in comparison to those who steward preserves of many hundreds or even thousands of acres. The natural-area stewards grow plants in their home garden to obtain more seed for their restoration efforts. The efforts to restore hill prairies could be considered rock gardening on the largest scale.

The oldest prairie restoration effort was begun in earnest in 1934 at the University of Wisconsin. Restoration has had great successes. Declining rare bird species now have a home. Certain rare plant species have returned. However, even the oldest and best restoration efforts have not been able to completely return the land to the quality of an original prairie. This is the reason those 2300 acres are so valuable.

Restoration efforts often try to expand original prairie into adjacent crop fields to reduce the threats caused by isolation and small size. However, soils are very slow to recover. Certain insects stay faithful to original prairie, never migrating into adjacent restorations. Once an original prairie has been destroyed it may take as long for it to expand as it takes to grow a new grove of giant sequoia. We really do not know. All we do know is a human lifetime is not nearly long enough to create virgin prairie.

If you are interested in helping to preserve or restore prairie, I suggest you donate either your time or money to one of the many



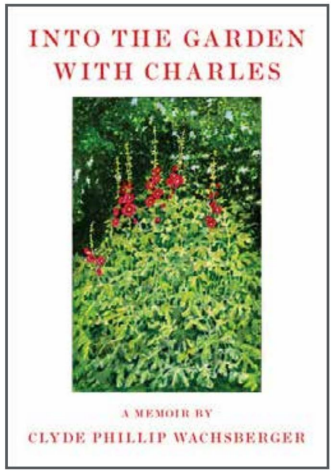
Carex in fall, Plattsburgh, Lake Champlain, New York. (Michael Peden)

projects sponsored by the Nature Conservancy or the National Audubon Society.

Thanks are due to Michael Peden, Dale Shields, and David Schwaegler for permission to use their photographs. More of David Schwaegler's photographs can be found on his website <www.davidschwaegler.com>

The Green Closet

Bobby J. Ward



I RECENTLY READ Clyde Phillip Wachsberger's *Into the Garden With Charles* (2012), a memoir about his partner, Charles Dean, and their life together in New York City and at a garden in a village on Long Island. The late J. C. Raulston would have greatly admired Wachsberger's book and, in particular, a comment that garden writer Amy Stewart posted on the Web site *Garden Rant*: "The love story of gay gardeners must be told."

Raulston, founder of the NCSU Arboretum (now the JC Raulston Arboretum) in Raleigh, North Carolina, realized he was gay at age 35. In the late 1970s, seemingly making up for lost time, he organized an informal network of gay men and lesbians called the Lavandula Society, consisting of students and professionals in botany, horticulture, landscaping, and public garden management, as well as nurserymen and serious amateur gardeners. Initially, it was a small gathering, often at members' homes, a nursery or garden centers, and primarily held after hours in conjunction with professional horticultural meetings held around the U.S. One such gathering was held at J. C.'s home in Raleigh in January 1990 during the NARGS Winter Study Weekend. As membership grew and more women began joining, he acknowledged them by renaming the group the Lavandula and Labiatae Society. The society met once or twice a year and stayed connected through sporadic newsletters and membership lists, organized by states, that J. C. mailed out, at his own expense, until his death in 1996, the victim of an automobile accident.



J.C. Raulston (Karen Jones)

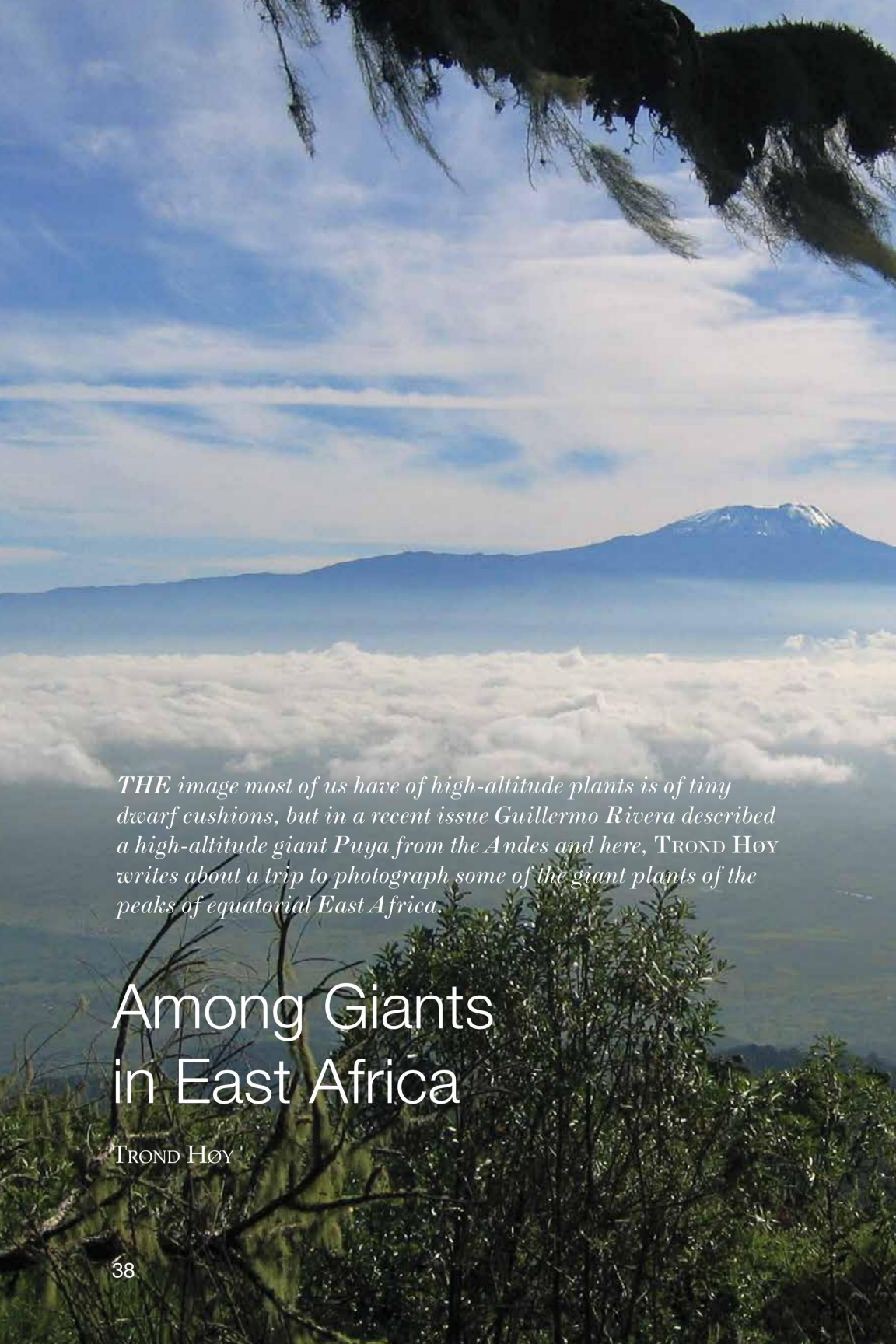
J. C. developed a slide presentation called "The Green Closet" that identified contemporary gay and lesbian gardeners, including couples, whom he had met in his horticultural travels, as well as historical gardeners, such as Beverley Nichols and Vita Sackville-West. Besides factual biographical information, J. C. included lighthearted humor. "The Green Closet" was never presented to general garden organizations, but only to gatherings of the Lavandula and Labiatae Society and to gay and lesbian business and professional groups. While working on J. C.'s biography (*Chlorophyll in His Veins: J. C. Raulston, Horticultural Ambassador*), I came to feel that his "Green Closet" lecture ought to be updated and presented to a more accepting general public. Perhaps with societal changes and the ability for gay and lesbian couples to marry legally in a growing number of American states, J. C. would now call it "Out of the Green Closet."

Thinking of "The Green Closet," I recalled Norman Singer and Geoffrey Charlesworth, both NARGS stalwarts, and of their meeting in 1944 at Bletchley Park (England), both as code breakers during World War II, and afterwards their long-term partnership of 57 years. Norman worked as a performing arts manager in New York City and Aspen and Geoffrey as a mathematics professor, the two of them gradually spending more and more time at their weekend home and garden in Sandisfield, Massachusetts, until full retirement. Their life together would have made an equally fine gardening memoir, judging by the decade of personal correspondence from Norman to me about their relationship.

J. C., who received the NARGS Marcel Le Piniec Award in 1991, introduced many new plants to the landscape, but his greatest contribution may have been the connections made among gay and lesbian gardeners in the comfortable network he created through the Lavandula and Labiatae Society. Many who attended the meetings became business and/or life partners and today are working as nurserymen, horticulturists, garden managers, and garden writers. The gatherings became a haven for those in the process of "coming out," giving them a comfortable place to be themselves.

J. C. had his own love story, but it was cut short after four years by the death of his partner. Nevertheless, J. C., as well as Norman and Geoffrey, would have been delighted with Wachsberger's memoir and its "love story of gay gardeners."

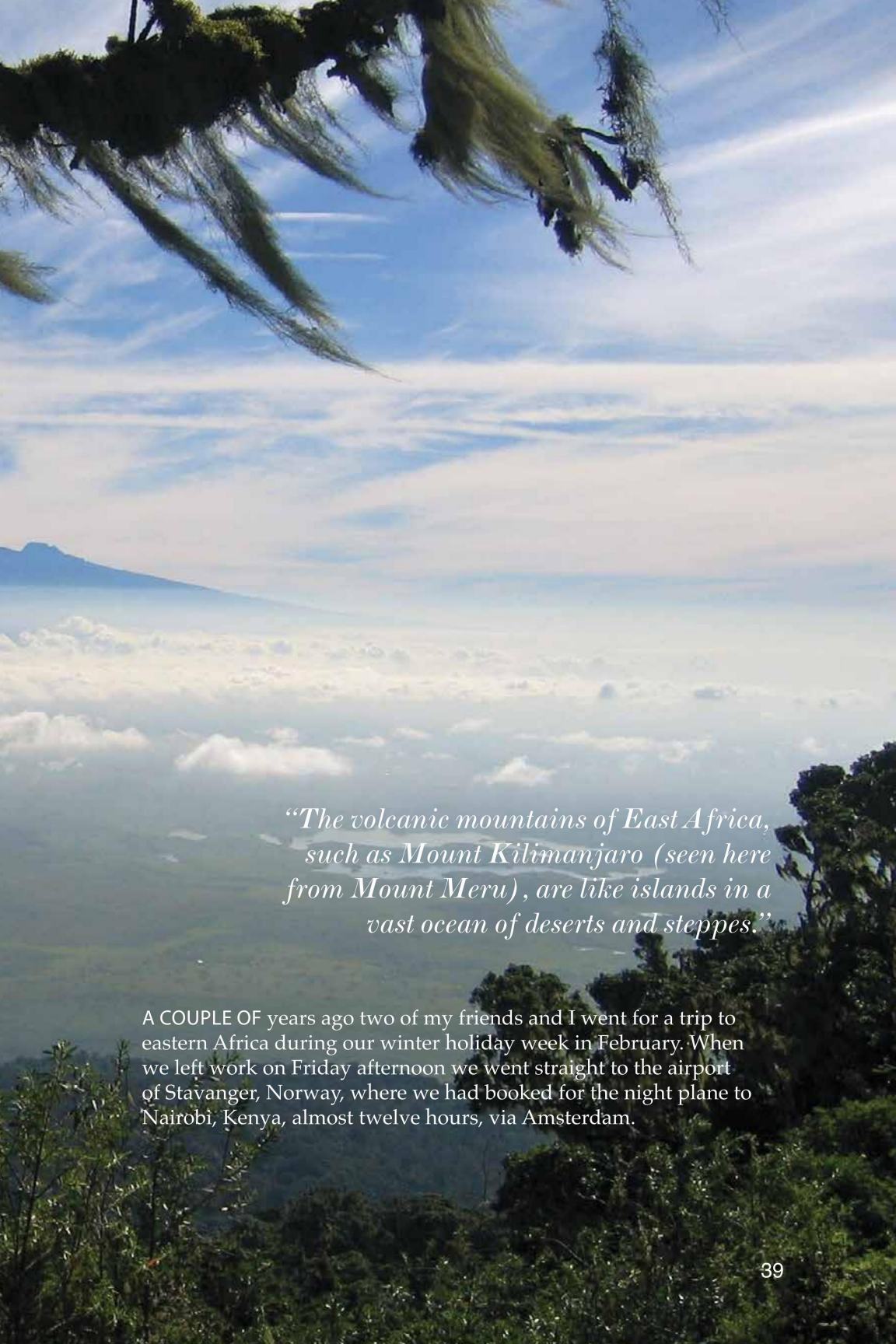




THE image most of us have of high-altitude plants is of tiny dwarf cushions, but in a recent issue Guillermo Rivera described a high-altitude giant Puya from the Andes and here, Trond Høy *writes about a trip to photograph some of the giant plants of the peaks of equatorial East Africa.*

Among Giants in East Africa

Trond Høy

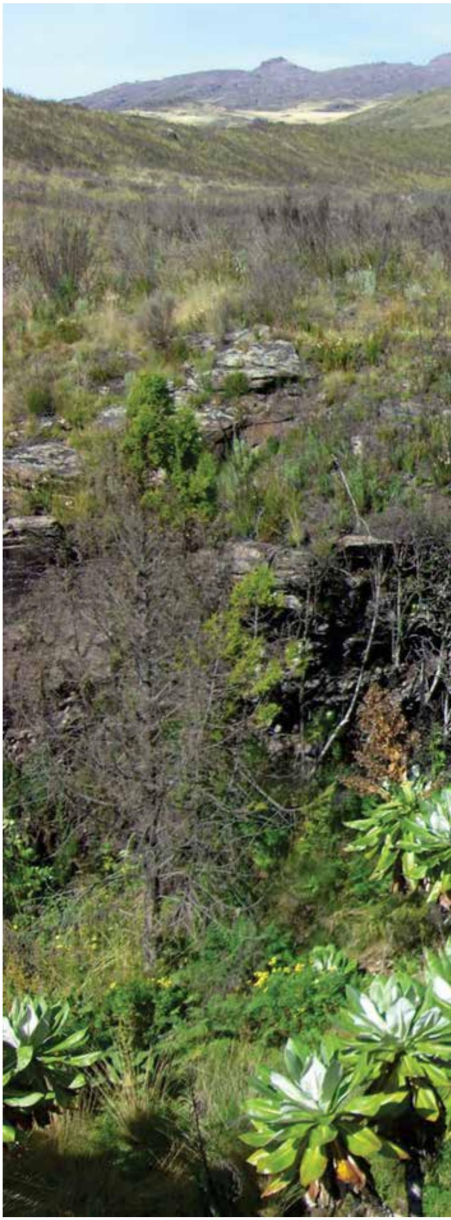


"The volcanic mountains of East Africa, such as Mount Kilimanjaro (seen here from Mount Meru), are like islands in a vast ocean of deserts and steppes."

A COUPLE OF years ago two of my friends and I went for a trip to eastern Africa during our winter holiday week in February. When we left work on Friday afternoon we went straight to the airport of Stavanger, Norway, where we had booked for the night plane to Nairobi, Kenya, almost twelve hours, via Amsterdam.

Our ultimate goal was to ascend Kilimanjaro (5895 m/19340 ft) in Tanzania, but we had to acclimatize first and so our tour included a trip to Kenya. Here we spent some days walking around Mount Kenya (5199 m/17057 ft) which is just north of the Tanzanian border.

We didn't climb the highest peak as that includes a little technical climbing, but one morning we greeted the sunrise at about 5000 m. Then we went by bus (by the way, a very interesting drive and border crossing) to the city of Moshe, Tanzania where we set out for the summit of Mount Meru (4566 m/14980 ft) before the grand finale. We had booked our flight home the next Sunday! To make it short: all went well; we climbed three mountains in 9 days and arrived at home in time to go to work Monday morning!



The rich animal life in East Africa is well known, and although we didn't see lions we encountered almost all the other famous animals at close range. The very first night we slept in a hut at 3300 m at Chogoria camp on Mount Kenya after a long drive from Nairobi. Suddenly I woke up by a large buffalo scratching his bottom at the corner of the cracked hut where I slept by the window. His large head and right eye was only centimetres from my face on the other side of a pane of glass. I could easily have touched his body through the holes in the wall and I smelt the strong reek of the animal. I lay perfectly still and barely breathed but was more excited than afraid. The next day we had to follow a path through the shrubbery which brought us only ten metres from a herd of foraging elephants.

However, this isn't about the mountains, animals, or our walk, but about the plants we saw. My two companions are not as interested in plants as I am, but they too were utterly impressed by the flora. Large animals aside, we hadn't walked far the next day before we observed the first of another kind of giants – an enormous "palm" with cabbagey



Dendrosenecio battiscombei around waterfall, Mount Kenya

leaves; a giant groundsel (*Dendrosenecio*). After that first sight, they got common along the track.

The volcanic mountains of East Africa are like islands in a vast ocean of deserts and steppes. The mountains create their own weather and

generate lots of precipitation too, which falls as snow on the peaks. Although there are some similarities, each mountain has also evolved a unique flora. On the foothills you find rainforests; higher up the forests give way to shrubs and grassland, and often more xerophytic plants as the climate gets drier. The most striking plants here are the gigantic species of *Senecio* and *Lobelia*. Another group of interest is the drought-tolerant, silver-leaved *Helichrysum* and relatives.



At this altitude of 3500 m and above, the solar radiation is strong and dangerous to the skin. It is warm in the daytime but the nights are cold, especially when the sky is clear. We slept most nights in tents and the third night on Mount Kenya is the coldest I have ever experienced (although I have had quite a few nights in tents and snow holes in Norway in wintertime!) because my sleeping bag had become wet the previous night.

Above 4000 m we experienced freezing temperatures every night, and the few tarns and puddles we saw often had a crusty rind of ice in the morning. Plants have to cope with huge shifts in temperature during a day and night cycle. Mount Kenya has some snowdrifts and Kilimanjaro even has a glacier. Mount Meru is lower (the summit was lost in a great volcanic blast similar to Mount St Helens) and is dry compared to the other two and less wooded, but has a richer animal life. It is in the middle of Arusha National Park renowned for its animal life including leopards. We had to bring an armed park ranger for safety.

You will find the giant groundsels and lobelias on Mount Kenya, Mount Meru and Kilimanjaro (and other mountains in East Africa).



Dendrosenecio keniodendron, Mount Kenya

On Mount Kenya we found *Dendrosenecio keniodendron* (endemic in the high and dry alpine zone), *D. keniensis*, also endemic but at a lower and slightly moister part of the alpine zone, and also *D. batiscombei* (which occurs on many mountains) at even lower altitude. The tallest specimens can grow to about 6 m with *D. keniodendron* the biggest of the three. We did not see any giant groundsels on Mount Meru (if we had it would have been *D. meruensis*) but we did see at least one species on Kilimanjaro. This was probably *D. kilimanjari,* which grows above the tree line and the *Erica* forests.



Campsite high on Mount Kenya surrounded by *Dendrosenecio keniodendron* and *Lobelia telekii*





Dendrosenecio keniodendron and low-growing *Helichrysum* sp., Mount Kenya





Taller *Helichrysum* sp., Mount Kenya

Low-growing *Helichrysum* sp., Mount Kenya







Dendrosenecio keniodendron inflorescence and detail showing individual flowers, Mount Kenya

About 11 species of *Dendrosenecio* have been described in eastern Africa. According to studies done by Knox and Palmer the closest relative of *Dendrosenecio* is not *Senecio* but *Cineraria deltoidea* (Eric B Knox and Jeffrey D Palmer, *American Journal of Botany* 82 (12): 1567–1573, 1995). The hypothesis is that one species within a lineage in *Senecioneae* (which also contain *Senecio*) containing *Euryops* and *Cineraria* evolved into *Dendrosenecio* in isolation on Kilimanjaro and later spread to other mountains and gave rise to the other species.

Dendrosenecio keniodendron (and probably other *Dendrosenecio* species as well) shows something called nyctinasty, or "night bud," when the leaves close up, to make a big kale-like head during the frosty nights. This protects the new soft growth from freezing temperatures.

Each rosette is monocarpic and dies after flowering but new rosettes emerge at the base of the flower stalk producing a multiheaded tree after many years. The old leaves stay on the stem when they die and easily catch fire when poachers illegally burn the shrubbery. Some rosettes or whole plants die in wildfires and many plants showed signs of fire.



Dendrosenecio keniensis with white-backed leaves, in flower (above), and (below) with *D. keniodendron*, some showing effects of fire, in the background







Seedling *Lobelia telekii* (above) with *Helichrysum* sp., and (below) two mature flower spikes with skeletal remains of *Dendrosenecio keniodrendron* in background





Lobelia telekii with flower spike before foliage dies

When we reached 4000 m, we found the first huge rosettes of *Lobelia telekii*. At first we didn't realize that the huge football-sized rosettes and the towering, 2-m-tall flowering spikes (sometimes even up to 3 m) were in fact the same species. We had to look twice for the flowers though as they were hidden among the long bracts and soft hairs.





High-altitude tarn with *Dendrosenecio keniodendron*, group of *D. keniensis* (silver-backed leaves, across tarn), and *Lobelia telekii,* Mount Kenya

Lobelia telekii was very common especially on the higher and drier ground but *L. keniensis*, another giant *Lobelia* species, was rarer, at least where we went, and is found in moister valleys. These plants grow for several years, often more than ten years, before they flower and die. The plants protect the soft growth against freezing by keeping water in the rosettes. When the water freezes it give off heat and keeps the centre of the rosette frost-free.

In my opinion Mount Kenya was the most exciting of the three mountains we visited during our stay in East Africa. The landscape was terrific and the plants were awesome. We also had the mountain to ourselves while Kilimanjaro especially was crowded, except for the first two days when we went up a little-used but very scenic route (up Umbwe – down Mweka) through the mixed forest of hardwood and softwood. But here we encountered the lichen-covered tree heather *Erica arborea*, that I knew from the Atlantic island of Madeira, which formed a very special kind of high-altitude forest not seen on the other mountains.

So every mountain was great and each was unique and well worth a visit! And, remember, we did get back to work on Monday morning!

Erica arborea woodland, Mount Kilimanjaro





Guide among *Dendrosenecio kilimanjari*, and *Erica* sp., Mount Kilimanjaro

View of Mount Meru from the woodland of Mount Kilimanjaro





Moss, hillside and rocks (Nancy Robinson)

"Our" Mountains

ELIN JOHNSON

MY FATHER LOVED the mountains. He learned to hike and fish the mountains from the time he was just a boy. Our little town, Sweetwater, Tennessee, lies about 25 miles west of the North Carolina line at the southern end of the Appalachians. When he was a boy there were only logging roads and animal trails between Tellico Plains, the town nearest to the mountains, and the Tennessee-North Carolina border. Daddy walked them all. He made friends with some of the old-timers who fished in the mountains, and they taught him to fish the little high-mountain streams where the native brown trout still lived. He listened to the tales the old men told and learned from them and from his own observations.

I was just a little girl during World War II. When the war started Daddy was a teacher at Tennessee Military Institute which at that time was affiliated with the U.S. Army. He enlisted in the spring of 1942 and served in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, and then Germany. He was gone until the end of the war, and I missed him terribly! I was an awful



Bald River Falls on the Tellico River, Tennessee

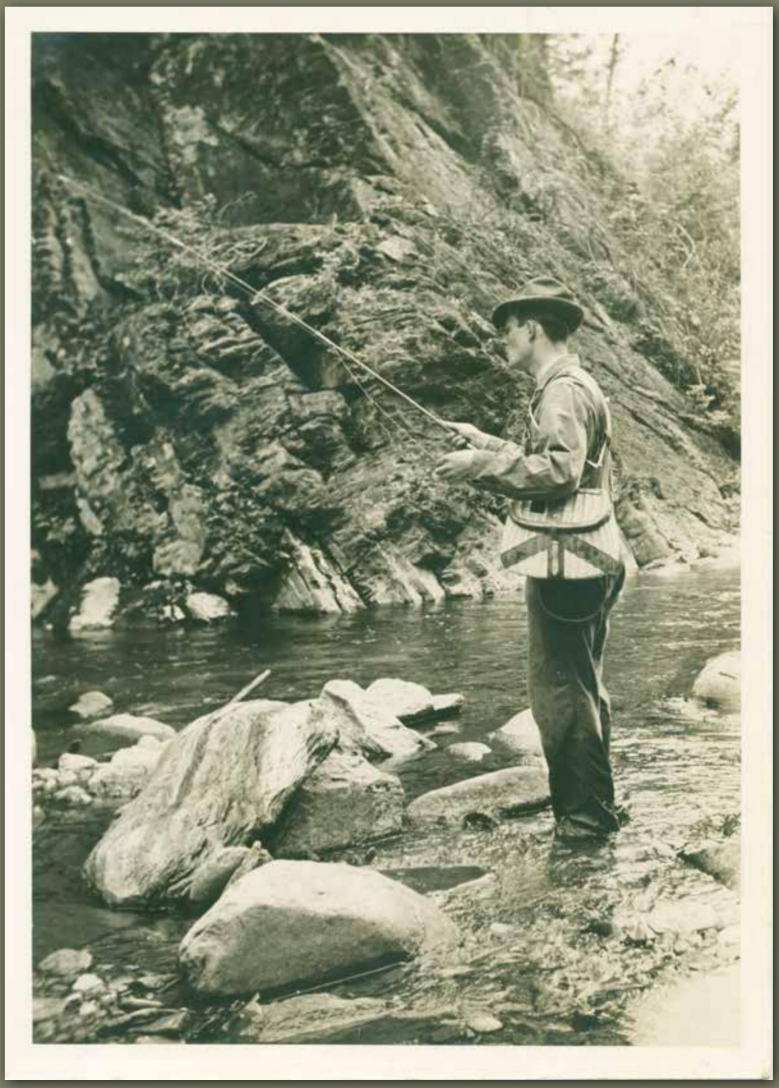
tomboy, and Mother never understood why I wasn't a lady like she was. Daddy thought I was okay.

After the war, Daddy resumed his fishing trips in the mountains, and we also visited there pretty regularly for picnics. By then a road had been built alongside the Tellico River from Tellico Plains, Tennessee, to the North Carolina line (although a lot of it still wasn't paved), so we could go pretty far up into the mountains. Our mountains were part of the Cherokee National Forest. Daddy especially liked to take us up to North River, a small stream that came off the high mountains and meandered down until it joined the Tellico River. He would always stop the car on the bridge over the Bald River where it joined the Tellico so we could enjoy looking at Bald River Falls. This is one of the most beautiful sights in the Southeast.

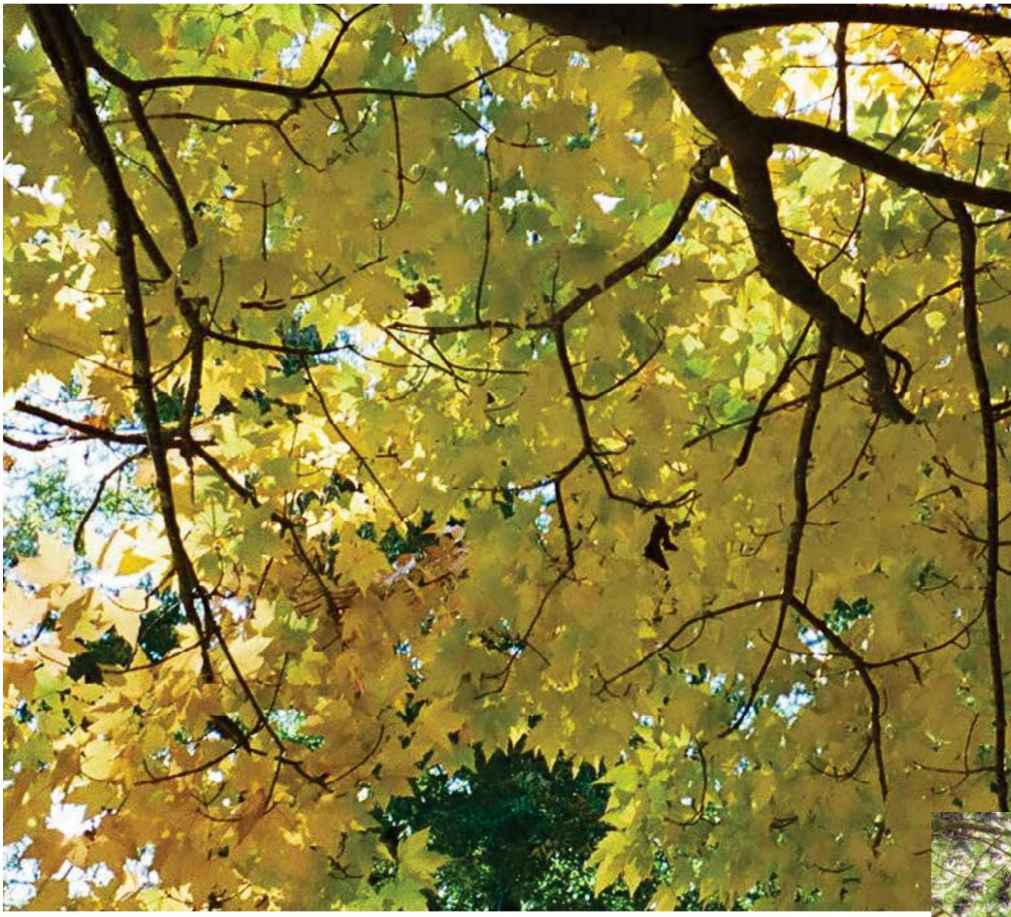
Daddy was a natural teacher, and he loved to tell us about the rocks, the plants, and the wildlife. I listened to Daddy tell about the ruffed grouse and the way they would sit on a hollow log and make a booming sound with their wings to attract a mate. And then one day I heard one. He showed me tracks in the soft mud beside the river where the deer crossed and the hand-like tracks of the raccoons. He told me about the serviceberry trees and how they bloomed in the early spring and were called "service" berry trees because the circuit-rider preachers would arrive at the time they bloomed to perform weddings in the isolated mountain communities. He told stories about the moonshiners and how from the high mountains he had seen the smoke from their fires rising up out of the woods where they had hidden their stills.

A few times he let me follow him as he fished in North River, marveling at the grace with which he plied his fly rod. I was not very good at wading the river behind him—I always managed to fall in. I watched him pick small branches off hemlock trees and layer them in his brown wicker creel to keep the little trout fresh until he got them home. And when we got home I would hang over the kitchen sink and watch him clean the fish with his pocket knife which he kept as sharp as a razor. Daddy's hands were square and strong, but their movements were as sure and agile as any surgeon. Nothing was wasted – the remains were passed on to the cats.

I learned to love the mountains, too. I saw the white dogwood blossoms and the bright lavender redbud trees in bloom. And Daddy pointed out places near the road where there had been homesteads before the government took over the land. You could identify these places in the spring by the daffodils and the apple and pear trees that bloomed near the ruins of the rock chimneys that still bore witness that people had once lived there. I saw tiny bluets carpeting the ground in spring, and clusters of little blue iris hugging a bank in May. Here and there I could find lovely white or yellow mountain violets tucked away



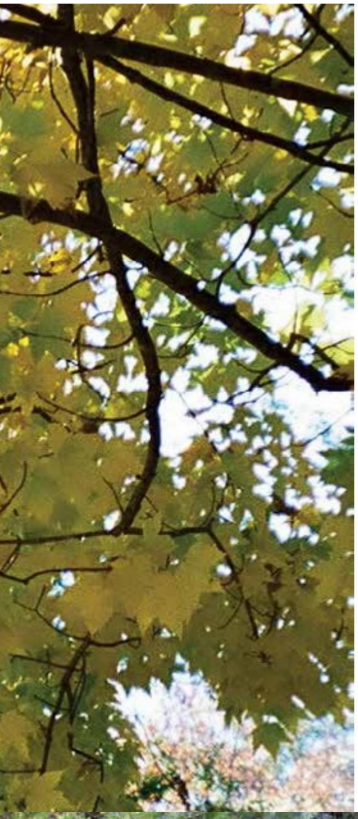
Daddy fishing in "our" mountains



Acer saccharum

in the path. I heard the gurgle of tiny rivulets that worked their way down the mountain between worn mossy rocks and fallen tree trunks. There were masses of pink and white panicles on the mountain laurel hugging the side of the mountain. Daddy told us about the laurel hells in the deep mountains where they were so thick that people had gotten lost and never been found. I saw some huge yellow and black hornets that had a nest in an old stump. (I got away from there fast!)

Daddy showed us how the rocks (where the road had been cut into the mountain) were tilted in many places, and he explained how rocks were formed in the bottom of ancient seas and then pressurized. He told us how earthquakes caused them to slant and slide over each other. He showed us slate that would break into flat pieces, limestone that sometimes contained fossils of tiny sea animals, and pieces of beautiful



white quartz that flashed in the sun.

He liked to take us to the fish hatchery at the ranger station. He knew the ranger and would stop to talk to him. It was fun to look at all the baby rainbow trout of varying sizes swimming in the long hatchery runs, and he told us how the rangers would turn them loose in the river for the fishermen to catch.

I liked to dangle my feet in the icy cold water sitting on a rock in the stream. I looked into the clear water and watched the crawdads moving on the bottom and the tiny darters swimming in the pools. The pebbles on the bottom were magnified in the sun, and their colors were a mosaic of brown, orange, yellow and white with an occasional dab of black and red. When I tried to take some home I discovered that when they dried their colors faded to a uniform beige. The magic was gone and they became just river pebbles. I saw the water spiders skipping across the top of the water in the still places.

In late summer I saw swarms of black swallowtail butterflies congregating in muddy

Falls on Tellico River, upstream from Bald River Falls





Acer rubrum

places in the road after a rain. I picked blackberries by the roadside, washed them in the creek, and stuffed them in my mouth. They were so sweet! I saw poplar flowers that had fallen to the ground—orangey, tulip-like flowers that bloomed in the tops of the immensely tall trees. I heard the songs of the wood thrushes, the most beautiful singers of all the birds.

I saw the moss—the lush, dark green moss covering everything in the darker parts of the woods. I saw great tree trunks (probably old chestnut trees) that had fallen to the ground and were completely covered with moss as if being warmed by a huge green blanket,





Viola hastata (Nancy Robinson)

Resurrection fern - *Pleopeltis polypodioides* (Nancy Robinson)



the dark green punctuated by lighter green lace—the graceful native ferns, Nature's most beautiful creation. Being in the mossy deep woods was a somehow spiritual experience. I felt the presence of something powerful and moving--a feeling of timelessness. This must be the way it has always been—before there were people. I remember taking off my shoes and walking across the mossy ground. Moss is as soft as velvet under bare feet.

I had the same feeling of reverence when we would drive down the mountain in the late afternoon. The golden, setting sun shining through a stand of enormous old-growth hemlocks was like light through stained glass windows of a huge cathedral. The rays of light seemed like gilded pathways slanting from the ground to the canopy as if golden highways to heaven.

In the fall hickory nuts littered the ground in places and squirrels barked nearby. And acorns could be found all over the place—all sizes from the tiny round ones to the great big golden brown acorns with cups the size of a quarter. The colors in the canopy were spectacular. Maroon red dogwoods and scarlet sourwood trees could be found in October. On the roadsides goldenrods glowed and purple asters added their beauty. Then the bright scarlet and orange of the mountain maples would appear and the patchwork quilt colors of the sweet gum trees. The finale was the bright yellow of the spicebushes, the glowing gold of the hickories and poplars, and the warm russets and browns of the oaks. Looking up through golden foliage against the blue sky on a clear fall day is one of the greatest pleasures of life.

The love of the mountains has been with me throughout my life. This was the beginning of my love for high places, rocks, flowering trees, flowing water, wildflowers, greenness, peace. "Our" mountains: nature's wild garden.

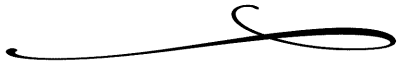


These are my memories of the Southern Appalachians from some sixty years ago and also a tribute to my father. The location is on the other side of the mountains from Asheville where the 2013 Annual Meeting was held, but the environment is very much the same. The road into the mountains we traveled then is still called the "river road," which follows the Tellico River into the mountains. Today's modern route, generally parallel to and just a few miles from the old road, is State Route 165, the beautiful Cherohala Skyway, which crosses the mountains from Tellico Plains, Tennessee, to Robbinsville, North Carolina.

Instead of inserting Latin names I have listed them below (in order of appearance). I felt their insertion would interrupt the flow of what is essentially a "story" instead of a scientific piece. Most people who live in the eastern US know them anyway.

Ruffed grouse	*Bonasa umbellus*
Serviceberry tree	*Amelanchier laevis*
Hemlock	*Tsuga canadensis*
Dogwood trees	*Cornus florida*
Redbud trees	*Cercis canadensis*
Bluets	*Houstonia* (or *Hedyotis*) *caerulea* and *H. michauxii*
Little blue iris	*Iris cristata*
Yellow/white violets	*Viola canadensis, V. hastata* and *V. blanda*
Mountain laurel	*Kalmia latifolia*
Black swallowtail	*Papilio polyxenes*
Tulip poplar trees	*Liriodendron tulipifera*
Wood thrush	*Hylocichla mustelina*
Hickory trees	*Carya* spp.
Sourwood trees	*Oxydendrum arboreum*
Goldenrod	*Solidago* spp.
Asters	*Aster cordifolius* (or whatever they are calling asters now)
Mountain maples	*Acer spicatum, A saccharum* and *A. rubrum*
Sweet gum trees	*Liquidambar styraciflua*
Spicebushes	*Lindera benzoin*

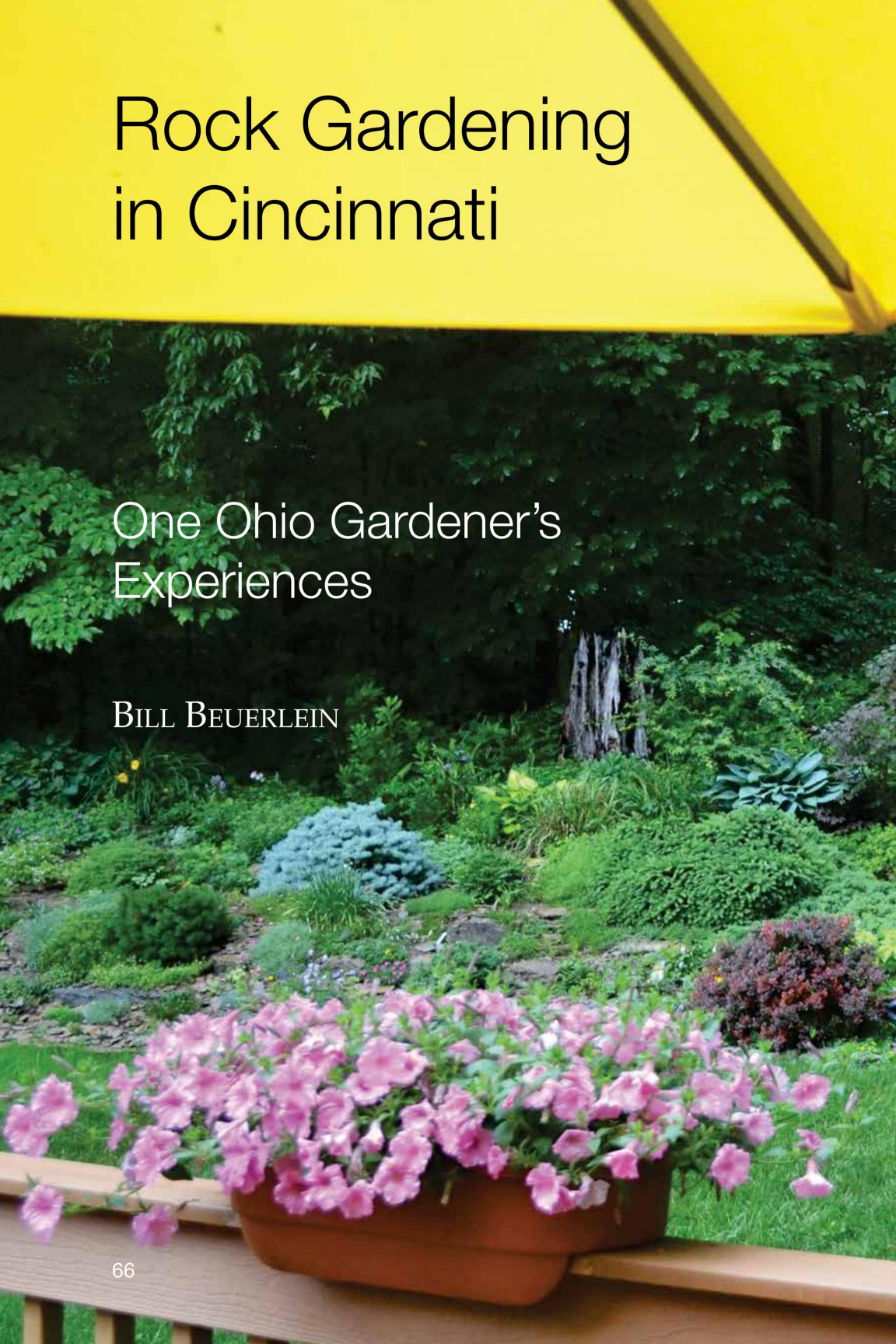
I wrote this in 2005 which is when it appeared in the newsletter of the East Tennessee Hosta Society, but it was only read by some fifty people. I have edited it a little since then.

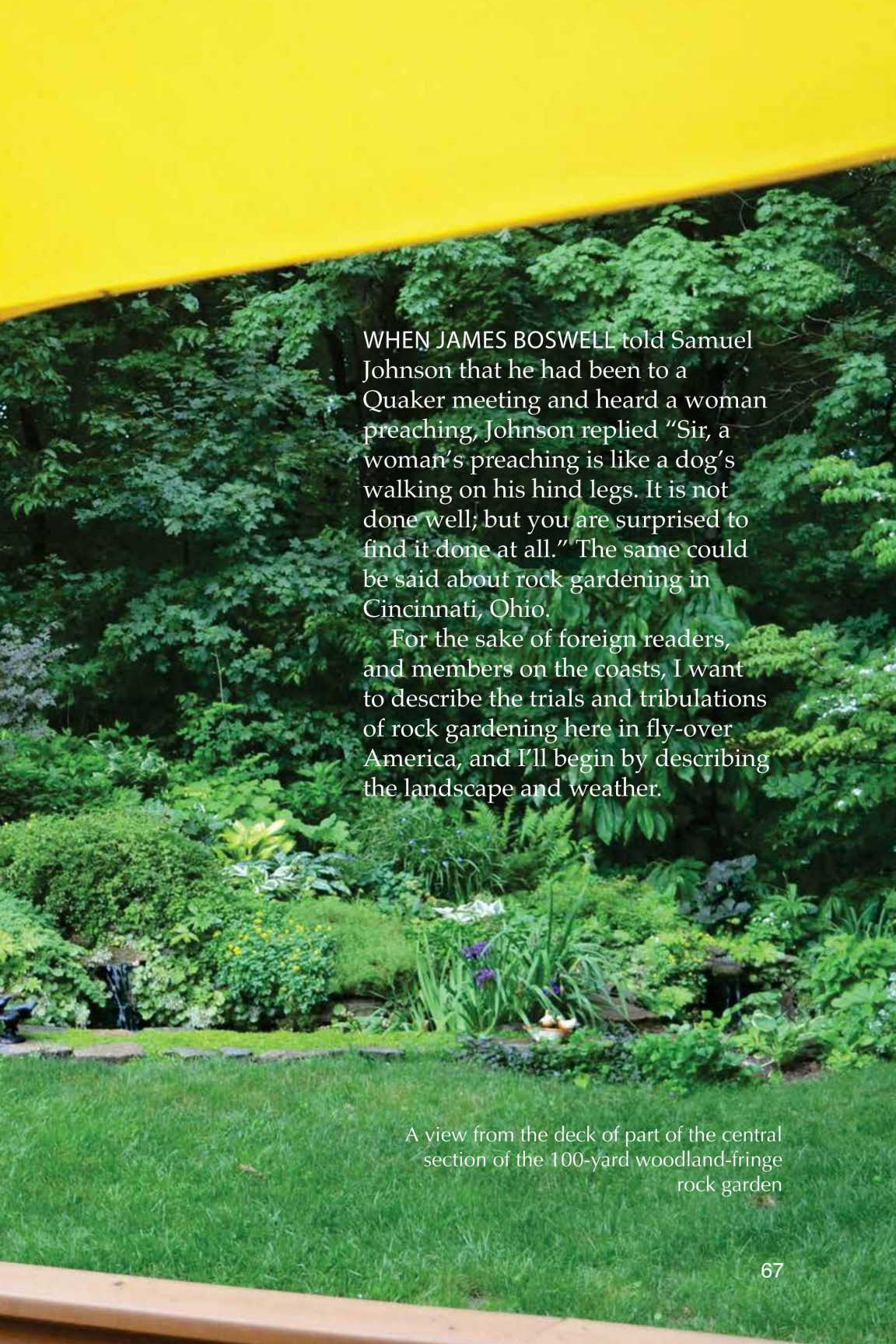


Rock Gardening in Cincinnati

One Ohio Gardener's Experiences

Bill Beuerlein





WHEN JAMES BOSWELL told Samuel Johnson that he had been to a Quaker meeting and heard a woman preaching, Johnson replied "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all." The same could be said about rock gardening in Cincinnati, Ohio.

For the sake of foreign readers, and members on the coasts, I want to describe the trials and tribulations of rock gardening here in fly-over America, and I'll begin by describing the landscape and weather.

A view from the deck of part of the central section of the 100-yard woodland-fringe rock garden

The Cincinnati area has an interesting geological history. Long ago, layer upon layer of limestone and shale were deposited on the floor of a shallow inland sea that covered this area. These are the rocks covered with fossilized clams, scallops, and corals that we find today on eroded hillsides and highway cuts. These are also the materials of choice for local rock gardeners. To the south (Kentucky) and west (Indiana), these limestone deposits become very thick and extensive as evidenced by Mammoth Cave in Kentucky and commercial limestone mines.

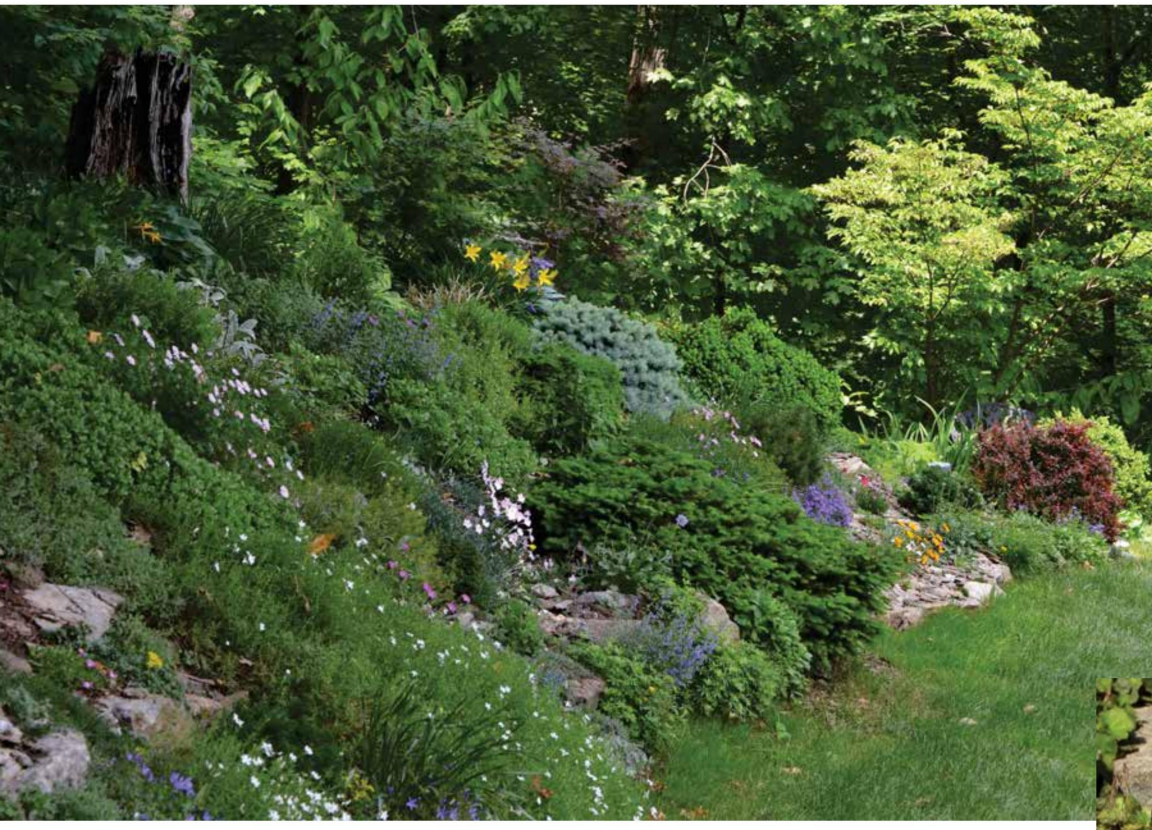
Later, geologically speaking, successive glaciers ground their way south, stopping here. While these glaciers "planed" the ground beneath them, the combination of glacial meltwater as they melted, and failure of ice dams, caused even small seasonal rivulets to carve valleys out of all proportion to the flows we see today. Those who drive south on Interstate Highway 71 will notice the wide and deep valley of the Little Miami River as they cross the Jeremiah Morrow Bridge without considering the size of the river that carved it. The path of the ancient Ohio River was blocked by ice, forcing it to cut the relatively new and narrow valley we see from our parks in Cincinnati. With all these deep valleys the area looks quite hilly.

Before Europeans settlement, the area was covered by the deciduous forest that stretched from the Allegheny Mountains to the Mississippi River. While much was cleared and developed, trees still dominate the landscape. Steeper hillsides tend to be "slippery when wet" and, as a result, have not been developed and are covered with trees. Trees have been planted along city streets and in previously developed neighborhoods. As a result, as you fly into Cincinnati, except for the occasional school or shopping mall, you might think that you wer over a forest. Now let's talk about the weather. Cincinnati boys are said to make good soldiers because they can take any weather that is thrown their way. At latitude 39°N, Cincinnati falls on the same line as southern Italy, but without the moderating Mediterranean (Cincinnati is just over 200 miles south of Lake Erie, 250 south of Lake Michigan), temperatures are much colder and hotter and more changeable.





The central section of the rock garden looking south



Northern end of rock garden

Cincinnati falls in USDA Zone 6B (–5F to –10F). The smart money buys plants for Zone 5 but you might get lucky and have a Zone 7 plant last for years. Our average highs and lows for today (January 9, 2013) are 38F and 23F, but, you just never know. During the winter of 1976-77 Cincinnati had 84 days below freezing, and on January 18 the temperature reached –25F. The "Freezer Bowl" football game was played not on the frozen tundra of Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wisconsin, but at Riverfront Stadium here in Cincinnati on January 10, 1982 where the game time temperature reached –9F with a wind chill index of –59F.

As bad as the ultra cold might be, our typical winters might be worse for choice rock garden plants. With averages highs above, and average lows below freezing, we might have a freeze/thaw cycle nearly every day. Rain falls more frequently than snow, and when snow does fall it is generally wet and heavy and melts quickly. A week of warm weather in the early spring might bring things out prematurely only to have them zapped by a late frost of hard freeze.



And then there are the summers. Again, you never know. The summer of 2011 was delightful with moderate temperatures and ample rainfall. Last year, spring came early and never left. Peonies and irises bloomed a month early. Days became hot in June and remained hot through August. Cincinnati recorded 21 days above 90F. This included 5 days above 100F. While some days might be dry and desert-like, on others the humidity might reach 70%. Rains were infrequent and I found myself dragging hose almost every day.

While sitting baking at our granddaughter's soccer game in San Jose, California, the woman sitting next to me remarked how hot it was. When I replied that at least it wasn't humid she said, "What's humidity?" Let me just say that while you might not be able to define it you will certainly recognize it when you feel it. We call it the air you wear.

So how and why do folks get started rock gardening in an area with an unfavorable climate and absolutely no alpine areas nearby? Speaking for myself, erosion control.

Our second home came with one of the hillsides that I mentioned and the previous owner, being unable to maintain a lawn on it, stood large rocks on end like tombstones and filled in between them with creeping

Corydalis ochroleuca



phlox, and bearded iris. Little else had been done and so when we moved in lawn grasses and wild onions were mixed in. While I had always gardened on flat ground, I instinctively knew that this would not do and began by digging up the whole mess and arranging the rocks like I might see on a typical hillside. I also went to the public library and found a dusty copy of *Rock Gardening* by Lincoln Foster. Soon after, I was hooked. What I soon discovered, however, is the lack of local sources for all but the most rudimentary rock garden plants (true even today). Of necessity, therefore, I began by planting dwarfish border plants such as the ubiquitous creeping phlox, pinks, armeria, and candytuft along with donated sedums and hens and chicks, and every year I would order more by mail to add a few from Foster's book. Eventually my rock garden looked pretty good, but was never finished, for in 1990 we moved to a condo.

This "stand-alone" unit, the jewel of the development, sits at the end of a private street with its back to the street and its front and patio facing a 700-acre county park. For the first two years that we lived here I resolved to let the association landscaper handle everything, but by the third year the weedy hillside bordering the woods began to tug at my

A shady corner with hellebores, epimedium, hosta, heuchera, aquilegias and fern.



creative spirit so, after receiving permission from the board, I was back in business. Since the hillside is about 100 feet (30 m) long, I started by developing only a small portion of it.

The site faces east and receives about 6 to 8 hours of direct sun on summer days. With the park directly behind it, tree roots and afternoon shade are an issue. While I am not able to remove the park's trees (nor would I want to), I can remove or thin lower branches to let in more light. I cope with roots by watering deeply and frequently and fertilizing. I also have a trowel with a serrated, ginsu-knife-like edge.

Soils are spotty with woodsy top soil in some areas and clay in others. In my haste to get started I made the mistake of not amending the clay soils or addressing drainage. This may limit some of my plant choices to this day. What the soil lacked was rocks.

While you can buy rocks, I am basically a cheapskate so I found mine by scouring construction sites, highway cuts, and creek beds, for rocks with "character" and brought them home in the trunk of my car. My definition of "character" excludes all rocks not near the car, and all rocks larger than I can handle. Rocks passing these tests were then judged for appearance. Occasionally, I recruited my son to help collect "two-

Campanula portenschlagiana, Dianthus, and *Coreopsis auriculata*



man" rocks. Rocks were arranged to simulate the layered look of local hillsides and highway cuts. While placement of rocks is important most have been covered by plants. Today I find myself actually removing rocks to add more planting spaces. I mulch between rocks and plants with rock chips and fragments collected from the same sites as the rocks themselves. Purchased gravel looks like, well, purchased gravel.

When it came time to plant, the cheapskate in me took hold and I decided to ask the current owner of my old garden if I might take a few "starts." She replied that she wasn't interested in gardening and that I could have anything I wanted. What a break! While I could not bear to dig up the large clumps and mats I was able to stock my new garden with material I knew and was able to salvage several choice dwarf conifers.

Over the next several years the garden grew stage by stage with each stage being planted with "starts" from the first stage and the occasional plant found locally and by mail. Then, in 1995, my wife gave me membership in the NARGS as a birthday present (the gift that keeps on giving) and I began growing plants from seed.



Aquilegia chrysantha



By design, I consider the garden to be a structural feature and plant it with what does well. It is not a collection of fine alpines. I do, however, continue to try new plants purchased from mail order sources and grown from NARGS and SRGC seed lists. Some live and some die (my wife refers to the tags standing behind dead plants as their tombstones). I can be hardheaded



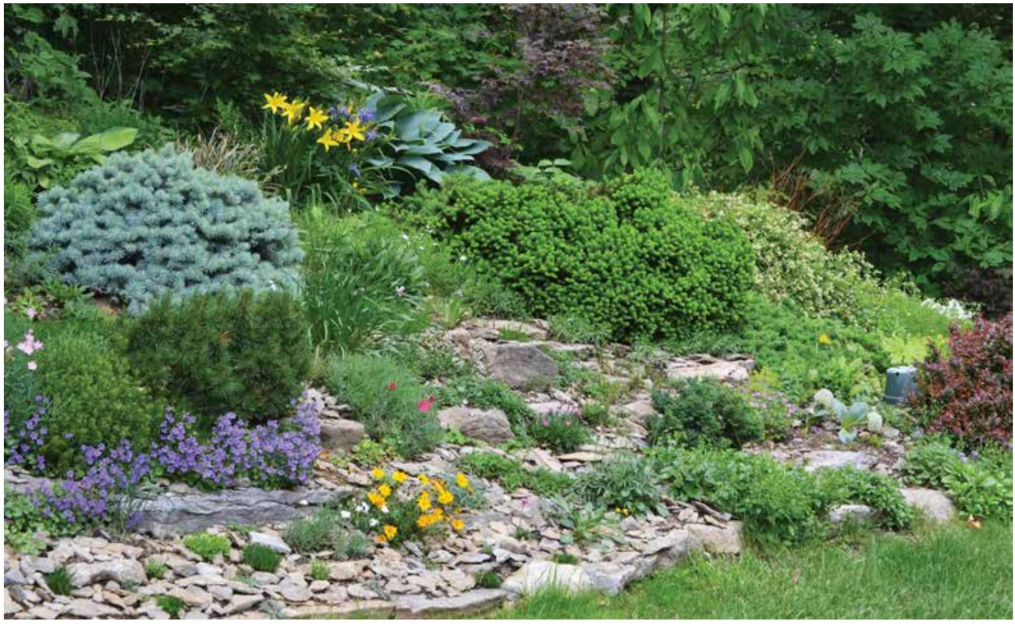
Aquilegia buergeriana

and may try some plants a second and even third time and have found that patience might just pay off.

Neighbors actually walk down the street to see the garden in April and May, which are peak bloom times. I keep trying to find plants to extend the season. So what grows here and what doesn't?

I have grown fond of small *Aquilegia* species such as *A. flabellata* and *A. buergeriana*. Both are easy to grow from seedlist seeds. While they may come and go, self-sown progeny remain. While I have grown *A. bertolonii* from seed, and maintain it in a trough, I have not been able to keep one in the garden for more than one season but will keep trying.

I get a lot of mileage out of the campanulas. *Campanula portenschlagiana* is used to fill spaces between rock layers [*Ed. For me this is a beautiful but ineradicable thug*]; *C. poscharskyana* is used as a ground cover (it blooms in shade); *C. garganica* is lovely framed by rocks; *C. glomerata* and *C. punctata* do well (the latter a bit too well). *Campanula cochleariifolia*, *C. collina*, and several named varieties of *C. carpatica* have been failures. I continue to try new ones.



North end of rock garden

A selection of seed-grown *Dianthus*









Section of rock garden during refurbishment





Dianthus alpinus, D. gratianopolitanus, and most named cultivars do well and form the backbone of the garden. It would be easy to have nothing else. I suspect they would bloom heavier if planted in a sunnier location. *Dianthus arenarius* has proven permanent but not overly vigorous. *Dianthus nardiformis* (from seed) is a work in progress while *D. deltoides* and *D. myrtinervius* last a season or two and depart. I have yet to try the true alpine species

Primroses (*Primula veris, P. elatior,* and polyanthus primulas) do well in the shadier areas. While I have had no success with alpine

Primula veris









Nepeta mussinii

Corydalis lutea







Symphyotrichum (Aster) ericoides

varieties, I have been fairly successful raising primulas from seed and generally add one or two with every year's seed order.

While avoiding a monoculture I still have several large mats of *Phlox subulata*. A sterile *Nepeta mussinii* has proven permanent and well mannered. *Erigeron aurea*, grown from seed on an impulse, has proven to be very attractive and easy. The garden has been filled in with familiar choices such as *Aurinia* (*Alyssum*) *saxatilis*, various *Armeria*, candytuft, smaller hardy geraniums, helianthemums, scabiouses (easy from seed) and sedums. *Corydalis lute*a is either the best plant, as it blooms all summer, or the worse weed. The armerias and helianthemums live for a while and then die suddenly but are worth replacing. While I have several saxifrages, their names have been lost but one that is extremely successful is *Saxifraga stolonifera* around the small pond and waterfall. I have tried repeatedly to grow *Lewisia* without success.

The garden is also home to a variety of dwarf evergreens and shrubs. All seem to do well. Several (a bushel-basket-sized *Picea pungens* 'Saint Mary's Broom', and a *P. mariana* 'Nana'), salvaged from my old garden, are nearly fifty years old. I also have a gnarly *Globularia meridionalis* that is nearly as old although it rarely blooms.

Even though my wife insists that at my age I should start with

Small waterfall with *Saxifraga stolonifera* and *Corydalis aurea*



gallon-sized plants I cannot resist growing plants from seeds. I start by ordering some seeds of plants that are generally considered sure to germinate and easy to grow. It's very discouraging, especially for first timers, to have nothing to show for the effort. I then look for seeds of plants that I might have read about in the *Quarterly* or the SRGC's *Rock Garden*. I find that the SRGC's list often contains varieties that are not commonly found in North America. I may then add some chosen by the "dart-board" method. I choose second round seeds much the same way. I find it amazing how you can Google the most obscure plant by its Latin name and find pictures and growing instructions.

As the garden matured weeding ceased to be a problem. When I see a weed (mostly tree seedlings) I pull it. My biggest "weed" problem is controlling over-active plants, which I solve by potting up the surplus plants and donating them (along with surplus plants grown from seeds) to plant sales or using them as trade bait.

The garden is never finished. As conditions change I replant or remodel the garden. If things do not look good I make adjustments by moving or removing plants at any time of the year. I have added several water features to the rock garden and have added woodland gardens to the wooded flanks. These might also be material for the future.

Saxifraga stolonifera



NARGS Bulletin Board

Seed Exchange

A huge thank you is in order for all who donated seeds to this year's Seed Exchange. Without your generous donations this most popular of member benefits could not exist.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Because of increased postal and other costs, beginning with this 2013-2014 Seed Exchange, NARGS will have to charge all participants, including overseas members, for all seed orders. Main Round orders will not be filled until payment is received, either by using the online order payment program, which accepts many major credit cards, or by mailing check or money order (in US funds only) for $15.

Online ordering began December 15 with order filling to start shortly after the first of the year. The Main Round will finish filling orders on Feb 5th so all orders must reach them before that date. The Potomac Valley Chapter is again handling the Main Round of seed orders. Using the online system speeds delivery of your order to them and increases your chances of receiving more of your first choices (and seed donors also get priority filling). If you haven't placed your order online yet we hope you will give it a try - it's quick and easy to do.

To gain access to the seed list online ordering program you will need to log in to the NARGS website using your email address or user name and password (same login you use to view the latest RGQ online or post to the Forum). The Login button is found in the upper right-hand corner of the home page. If you have not registered on the website yet you will need to "Create new account" before you are allowed into the members-only areas of the website.

To mail in a print order, send your filled-in order form along with US$15 to:

Betty Anne Spar
206 Wolfe St
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
USA

Other enquires about Main Round orders should be addressed to:

Dick Hammerschlag
Potomac Valley Chapter
7106 Deer Valley Rd
Highland, Maryland 20777
USA
or email Dick at <peachnfrog66@comcast.net>

Main distribution will close on February 5. Inventory of the remaining seeds will be taken and posted on our website on March 1, at which time the

Surplus Round will begin. Surplus Round pricing will remain US$5 per 20 packets, with a maximum of 100 packets allowed.

To receive a printed list of the Surplus Seeds, you mustcheck the appropriate box on your Main Round order form or contact Laura Serowicz, 15411 Woodring, Livonia, MI 48154-3029 USA or email <seedintake@mi.rr.com>

Happy planting! (And remember to collect and donate seeds for the seed exchange next fall)

Thank you.
Maribea M. Marranca
<mmm10@cornell.edu>

Norman Singer Endowment Fund

The NARGS Norman Singer Endowment Fund is accepting applications for grants to support projects that "advance the Art and Science of Rock gardening." Areas that fit the grant criteria include publications, promotion to the general public by creation of public Rock Gardens, education, preservation, and conservation. Both individuals and institutions may apply. Endowment fund guidelines, application form, a list of previously funded projects and photos of public rock garden projects can be found on the NARGS web site <www.nargs.org> home page.

Proposals for funding in 2014 must be submitted by April 1, 2014, to NARGS Executive Secretary, Bobby Ward, preferably by email <nargs@nc.rr.com> or by mail to Bobby Ward, NARGS, PO Box 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619-8604.

Award recipients will be announced at the Annual General Meeting.

NARGS Donations Appeal

Donations between August 1 and October 31, 2013 - $18,875

Frank Bennion (United Kingdom)
Wilbert Danner estate (British Columbia)
Amy Fluet (Wyoming)
Doris Armstrong Goldman (Pennsylvania)
Jane Grushow (Pennsylvania)
Lesa von Munkwitz-Smith (Massachusetts)
Philip N. Pearson (Washington)
William A. Plummer (New York)
Linda Vaxvick (Alberta)

NARGS AWARDS

Nominations still open until February 1, 2014

There is still time to nominate candidates for the following awards. Full details can be found on the website.

Award of Merit

Marcel Le Piniec Award

Edgar T. Wherry Award

Carleton R. Worth Award

Marvin E. Black Award

Linc & Timmy Foster Millstream Garden Award

Betty Spar, NARGS Awards Committee Chair
<bettyannespar@gmail.com> Tel: (703) 549-0214.
206 Wolfe Street, Alexandria VA 22314

Linda Meyer

Rocky Mountain Chapter Award for Service

After 30 years of gardening in Portland, Oregon, Linda Meyer moved to Colorado a few years ago and joined the Rocky Mountain Chapter at a plant sale. She quickly set to work learning about gardening in Colorado, and she soon also began to make her mark on our Chapter. Linda has contributed numerous articles to *Saximontana* (the chapter newsletter), conducted a survey of members, and spearheaded implementation of survey recommendations. She put the Chapter's best foot forward and attracted new members in 2012 when she developed a new brochure for the Chapter and chaired and organized the Chapter's booth at the Echter's Nursery spring open house.

Linda has served as Chapter Vice President since 2012 and has been instrumental in bringing in and hosting great speakers, organizing a variety of hikes and other activities, finding and reserving meeting spaces and handling many other behind the scenes details required to maintain our Chapter's smooth operations. This year, she organized the Chapter's spring garden tour and welcomed members to her own lovely new garden in northeast Denver.

In addition to her work for the Rocky Mountain Chapter, Linda volunteers on a regular basis for Denver Botanic Gardens at Chatfield. As a volunteer she learns and practices plant propagation and is an invaluable asset to the programs and plants produced by the Denver Botanic Gardens.

In short, Linda Meyer's service truly exemplifies the spirit of ourChapter.

Prepared by John Brink
Rocky Mountain Chapter

NARGS Speakers Tour

As I write this Speakers Tour update, the Eastern Fall 2013 tour with Ian Young is just finishing up. The feedback I have received thus far has all been positive as has my experience of attending two of Ian's presentations. A big congratulations goes out to all NARGS members for their generous support of this program and especially to the individual members who helped organize the tour and the hosts who generously extended their services. The 2014 tours have been scheduled with Mike Kintgen doing the Eastern Spring Tour and Martin Walsh the Western Fall Tour. Check the NARGS website <www.nargs.org/speakers> for the schedule and topics. Hopefully, I will have the 2015 Speakers Tour speakers lined up by the time this update is published.

NARGS membership is the engine that drives this program, the coordinator is simply a drop of oil in the works. As the coordinator, I would like to invite input from members regarding the tour. In an effort toward fairness and equity, chapters can only reasonably expect to have a speaker every two to three years. This means that chapters who have not had a speaker in the past two or three or more years will have priority in scheduling. The other factor encouraging equity is flexibility in scheduling. I know that many chapters have "special considerations" regarding flexibility and I will endeavor to accommodate those chapters whenever possible, relying on the good will of chapters that express the ability and willingness to be flexible. I have set an arbitrary date of July 31 the year preceding the tour for requests, as many chapters try to set their schedules in the latter half of the year for the next. I fully anticipate that some chapters will miss that deadline and I will try to accommodate requests as they come in. You will note that the 2014 tours have a couple of holes that could be available for chapters logistically appropriate.

I really want to emphasize that the Speakers Tour belongs to NARGS membership with the stated purposes of edifying members and attracting membership in local chapters and in NARGS. It only works when we all work together cooperatively to the benefit of all. Please feel free to contact me with your thoughts and suggestions regarding the tour. You will find my contact information on the NARGS website. I also suggest you peruse the history and purpose published by my predecessors on the site and take a look at the hosting guidelines.

Harold Peachey <hlpeachey@gmail.com>
Speakers Tour Coordinator

Billie Jean Isbell
Adirondack Chapter Award for Service

What inspires someone to become a rock gardener? For Billie Jean Isbell it was the Andes Mountains of Peru, which she visited regularly as part of her professional career as a cultural anthropologist. She has transformed her property into a series of named gardens and meandering pathways, entering a world that combines plants, with stone, water, and structures.

Through her unique rock gardens – which she continues to expand, Billie Jean has been a leader by example to the rest of us in the Adirondack Chapter. She has welcomed visitors to her garden for both NARGS and non-NARGS events, hosted our workshops and picnics, and continues to share her plants generously. Leadership positions she has held in our Chapter include coordinating Plant of the Month, programs, and trips as well as serving as Chapter Chair. Chapter members still rate the trip to Quatre Vents and other Quebec gardens that she planned as one of our most memorable.

The Adirondack Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society wishes to recognize Billie Jean Isbell for her contributions to our Chapter by awarding her a 2013 Chapter Service Award.

Prepared by Carol Eichler
Adirondack Chapter

David White
Piedmont Chapter Award for Service

David White joined the Piedmont Chapter in the fall of 2000 and NARGS in 2007 and is currently serving as chair of the NARGS By-Laws committee.

He served as chapter chair from the fall of 2007 until September 2013. During that time he has home-hosted some of the visiting chapter speakers from outside the area, has attended NARGS annual meetings, and given presentations on his travels to our local chapter.

Of significance was his organizing the NARGS annual meeting in Asheville in May 2013. The highly successful meeting was a result of many trips and meetings with chapter volunteers that David carried out, with help from his wife, Carolyn, during two years of planning that led up to the meeting.

David was presented the service award at the Piedmont Chapter's September 21, 2013, meeting by incoming chapter chair, Charlie Kidder.

Prepared by Bobby Ward
Piedmont Chapter

Patrons

The following recently became a NARGS patron:

Boyd Hutchinson (Massachusetts)

Dick Rosenberg
Delaware Valley Chapter Award for Service

Every NARGS chapter has a person who helps out all the time with all those 'things' that rock gardeners really don't want to do. Someone has to take care of annual renewals, the membership list, the book store, the bar, and finances for the 'big things' that NARGS chapters get involved in.

This person even helped out the national organization by being the treasurer for a number of years. The Delaware Valley Chapter 'go to' person for this kind of duty has been Dick Rosenberg!

Dick and Ann have been members of the Chapter since 1989. Dick's latest job has been running our bookstore. He also helped make the call that we should shut it down because nothing was moving! He knew when to say it is time for something to go away. His stewardship of the funds returned a significant amount to the chapter treasury! He now is doing a little of 'this' and a little of 'that'.

He handled the business end of a number of national meetings for the chapter. That is a LOT of work. He even had to handle a situation where a hotel refused to honor our contract and was able to find another location on very short notice! He handled the membership list for many years.

He was able to get people to pay attention at meetings when announcements were needed. He moved chairs. He moved tables. He set up events. He cleaned up at events. I don't know if he does windows (Ann?).

If for no other reason, he is deserving of an Award for Service for being the NARGS treasurer--no easy job! We have been fortunate to have him working on lots of things for the Delaware Valley Chapter for well over 20 years. We expect this to continue and to be able to enjoy his company for years to come and find some more work for him!!

It is with a great deal of pleasure that the Delaware Valley Chapter nominates Dick Rosenberg for a North American Rock Garden Society Award for Service.

Prepared by Chuck Ulmann
Delaware Valley Chapter

PLEASE CAN YOU HELP - FAIRLY URGENTLY

Jim Locklear has just been commissioned to revise and update for a new edition of Claude Barr's classic book, JEWEL OF THE PLAINS. Jim says he is excited about this, since this book, beloved by rock gardeners and native plant enthusiasts, has been out of print for many years.

Since Claude Barr was very involved in the American Rock Garden Society, Jim is hoping to solicit anecdotes from NARGS members who may have known or corresponded with Barr, or who have grown some of his plants. The time-sensitive aspect is that he needs to get the revised manuscript to the University of Minnesota Press by April 1, 2014, so he needs this information as soon as possible.

If you can help please don't delay - email <jmlocklear@gmail.com>.

New Members

Welcome to all those who joined between August 1 and October 31, 2013.

Annette Bax, 45 Garden Grove Crescent, Kirwan, Townsville, Queensland 4817, Australia
Margaret Howard, 1042 Mary Gilmore Way, Ariah Park, NSW 2665, Australia
James Ellison, Green Optics, 10 Klondyke St., Kentville, NS B4N 1J2, Canada
Sherill Allard, 939 Eagle Dr., Burlington, ON L7T 3A5, Canada
Donna McMaster, 45 Victoria St., Stouffville, ON L4A 3R7, Canada
Jim Sharpe, 6231 Watt Street, Halifax, NS B3H 2B9, Canada
Jay Akerley, 13049 62B Ave., Surrey, BC V3X 1R3, Canada
Garry Edwards, Plants by Design, 279 Janetville Rd., Janetville, ON L0B 1K0, Canada
Christina Schindler, Via Urbano III 4, Milano 20123, Italy
Graham Menary, "Carmen Cottage", 10 Augustine St., Waimate, 7924, New Zealand
Adam Lapott, H. Sawickiej 25/6, Kalisz 62-800, Poland
Pierrette Georgi, Arruffens 9, Romont CH-1680, Switzerland
Hayrettin Karaca, Karaca Arboretum, Samanli Koyu, Yalova PK-64, Turkey
Paul Cumbleton, 11 Ferry Lane, Hythe End, Wraysbury, Staines Upon Thames TW19 6HG, United Kingdom
Mary Gastil-Buhl, 1527 Robbins St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Deborah Nicolls, 6340 Morning Canyon Rd., Placerville, CA 95667
Cynthia Pygin, 1107 Green Ln., La Canada-Flintridge, CA 91011
Timothy Venhuizen, 1401 Ames St., Lakewood, CO 80214
Margaret Cox, 3022 Springdowns Place, Colorado Springs, CO 80906
James Smith, 375 Roast Meat Hill Rd., Killingworth, CT 06419
Corey Thompson, 1423 W. Berteau Ave., No. 2, Chicago, IL 60613
Kevin Duerfeldt, 1333 Mayfield Dr., Apt. 203, Ames, IA 50014

Alan Blum, 292 High Head Rd., Harpswell, ME 04079
Robert Schulze, 6 Garage Rd., Sunderland, MA 01375
Karen Perkins, Garden Visions Epimediums, 10 Templeton Rd., Phillipston, MA 01331
Sean Zera, 5635 Thomas Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48108
Clare Beelman, 2 September Dr., Missoula, MT 59802
Sarah Mustin, 53 Wilber St., Keene, NH 03431
Peter van Berkum, van Berkum Nursery, 4 James Rd., Deerfield, NH 03037
Mary Day, 34 Harbor Rd., St. James, NY 11780
Patricia Rolland, 140 Cabrini Blvd., #64, New York, NY 10033
Catherine Wilfert Katz, 1917 Wildcat Creek Rd., Chapel Hill, NC 27516
Robert Jones, POB 14101, Archdale, NC 27263
Leigh Blake, Oregon Outcroppings, POB 330, Trail, OR 97541

Michael Mizin, Plant Magic Perennials, 120 Sickler Rd., Jermyn, PA 18433
Bridget Wosczyna, Wynn McGarry LLC, 500 N. Gulph Rd., Suite 505, King of Prussia, PA 19406
David Samples, POB 99, Norris, TN 37828
Ann Capurso, 19043 North Fork River Rd., Abingdon, VA 24210
Nancy Keith, 11325 Bartlett Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98125
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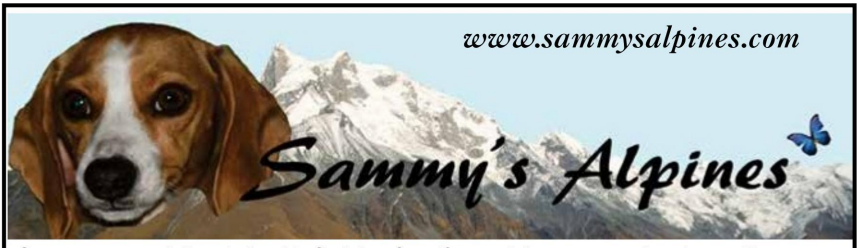


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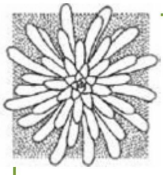
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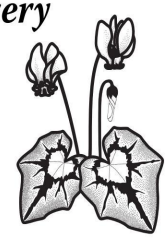
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Alaska (Anchorage & Mat-Su Valley)	Carmel Tysver - garden@gci.net
Allegheny (Pittsburgh, PA)	Len Lehman - lclehman1@verizon.net
Berkshire (Stockbridge, MA)	Judith Brown - jloveys@nycap.rr.com
Calgary Rock & Alpine Garden Society (Calgary, AB)	Cathy Kurio - cakurio@shaw.ca
Columbia-Willamette (Portland, OR)	Jan Jeddeloh - janjeddeloh@gmail.com
Connecticut (New Haven, CT)	Virginia Gingras - ginnygingras2013@gmail.com
Delaware Valley (Philadelphia, PA)	Mary Ann Ulmann - ulmannc@msn.com
Fells (Newbury, NH)	Thelma Hewitt - thelmakh@gmail.com
Gateway (St. Louis, MO)	Bruce Buehrig - buehrig31@aol.com
Great Lakes (Southern MI)	Patrick Ion - ion@ams.org
Hudson Valley (Westchester Co, NY)	Don Dembowski - dondembowski@optonline.net
Long Island (Oyster Bay, NY)	Donald Ohl - donohl@yahoo.com
Manhattan (New York, NY)	Michael A. Riley - ManhattanNARGS@verizon.net
Mason-Dixon (Norrisville, MD)	Joan King - jsking11@juno.com
Minnesota (Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN)	Michele Wallace - mrewallace@mwap.us
New England (Waltham/Boylston, MA)	Rachel Ross - h.rachel.ross@comcast.net and Helen du Toit - NJGarden@aol.com
Newfoundland (St. John's, NL)	Todd Boland - todd.boland@warp.nfld.net
New Mexico (Santa Fe/Albuquerque)	Jean Warner - jean@cybercomp.net
Northwestern (Seattle, WA)	Donna Wylie - donna@dpwylie.com
Nova Scotia (Halifax & Truro, NS)	Jeff Morton - jeff.morton@dal.ca
Ohio Valley (OH & surrounding states)	Mary "Maggie" Whitson - mkw513@hotmail.com
Ontario (Don Mills, ON)	Donna McMaster - dmcmaster@rogers.com
Ottawa Valley (Ottawa, ON)	Zandra Baines & Linda Nishikawa - president@ovrghs.ca
Painted Hills (John Day, OR)	Gail Klodzinski - gailkathryn3@hotmail.com
Piedmont (Raleigh, NC)	Charles Kidder - chas36kid@gmail.com
Pikes Peak (Colorado Springs, CO)	Bill Adams - sunscapes@comcast.com
Potomac Valley (Alexandria, VA)	James "Jim" Dronenburg - 2rutlands@comcast.net
Quebec (Montreal, QC)	Robert LeClerc - leclercr@bell.net
Rocky Mountain (Denver, CO)	Mary Jenson - maryjenson@gmail.com
Sierra (Sonora, CA)	Dianne Szymanski - dgszymanski@gmail.com
Siskiyou (Medford, OR)	Lillian Maksymowicz - lillian@jeffnet.org
Southern Appalachian (Asheville, NC)	Mary Blackwell-Kemp - sargsnc@hotmail.com
Wasatch (Salt Lake City, UT)	Tony Stireman - tonystireman@msn.com
Watnong (Far Hills, NJ)	Michael Wilson - missycat10@verizon.net
Western (San Francisco Bay area, CA)	Ted Kipping - tkippingsprint@earthlink.ne
Wisconsin-Illinois (Madison-Chicago)	Debra Wopat - ddwopat@gmail.com

Two chapters (Genesee Valley (Southern MI) and Shasta (Etna, CA)) are currently inactive.

NARGS Structure

The officers of the North American Rock Garden Society consist of a president, a vice-president, a recording secretary, and a treasurer. The officers are elected by the membership.

The Board of Directors of NARGS consists of the four above-named officers, the immediate past president of NARGS, nine elected directors, and the chair of each NARGS chapter. Chapter chairs are required to be NARGS members by NARGS by-laws.

The affairs of NARGS are administered by an Administrative Committee (called AdCom) consisting of the president, vice-president, recording secretary, treasurer, and one director-at-large, selected annually by the NARGS officers from among the nine elected directors.

Officers

President	Peter George, petergeorge@verizon.net PO Box 833, Petersham, MA 01366
Vice President	Harvey Wrightman, wrightman@golden.net RR#3, 1503 Napperton Dr., Kerwood, ON N0M 2B0
Recording Secretary	Ben Burr, bnfburr@verizon.net PO Box 549, Bellport, NY 11713
Treasurer	Bill Adams, 330 Carlile Ave., Pueblo, CO 81004-1054
Director-at-Large	Betty Anne Spar, 206 Wolfe St., Alexandria, VA 22314
Immediate Past President	Grazyna Grauer, Dublin, OH

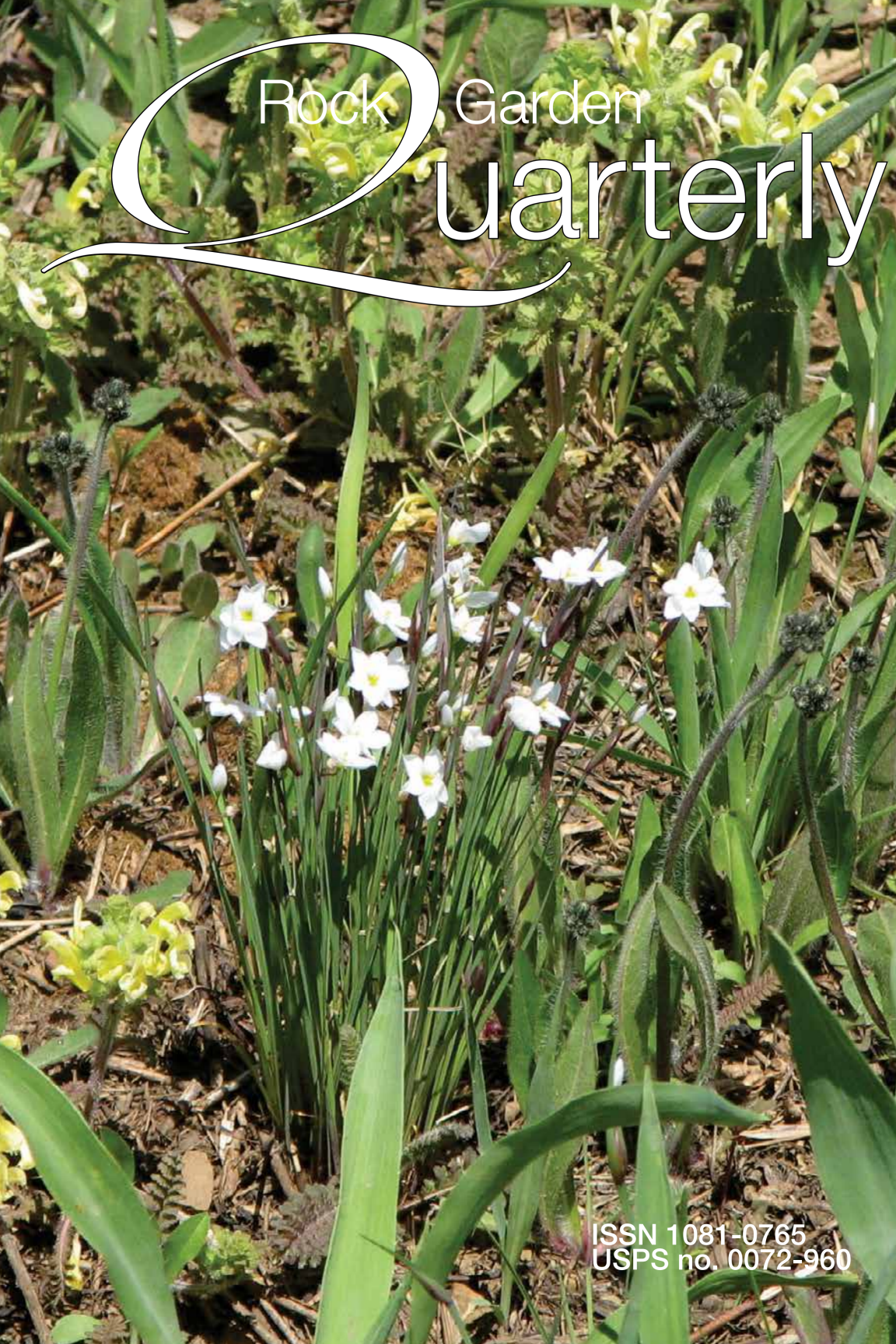
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