



June 2025

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**DATE :**

*Carol Eichler, All Around Important Person*

One might say we're taking the easy way out. This year our day tour will piggyback with a tour organized by Tompkins County Master Gardener Volunteers (and I have been one of the two planners so in a way, not really the easy way out). The focus is on native plant gardens and it features gardens by two ACNARGS members. The tour starts at 10:30 a.m. on June 14 at the Cooperative Extension offices at 615 Willow Av. Ithaca, where you pick up the map and the tour schedule. For privacy purposes we are not publishing addresses online.

The schedule is as follows:

10:30 -11:30 Native plant and four-season pollinator gardens at Cooperative Extension. You may wish to visit the other demo gardens there, including the Al Wurster Rock Garden and, in development, the woodland garden. Both of these latter gardens are maintained by ACNARGS.

11:30 -12:30, Libe Slope Wild Garden, located at Cornell University: a dynamic, meadow-type planting that promotes biodiversity through the use of native and near-native plants.

12:30 – 1:30: Gin Mistry's garden, in Ellis Hollow. Many native plants and the preserved rock gardens of the late Nari Mistry.

1:30 – 2:30: Mary Squyres' garden in Ellis Hollow. A congenial mix of natives plus a lot of traditional and unusual perennials. Here and there are planted troughs.

2:30 – 3:30: Deanna English's garden, owner of Grow Wild!, a restoration project to convert an old farm field to a diverse meadow ecosystem, woodland restoration areas, a wetland project and several rain gardens.

## FROM THE CHAIR

*John Gilrein, Chair*

We had a fun and successful plant sale on Saturday May 17: good plants, good food, and a nice time chatting with our fellow gardeners. Thanks to all (Carol especially) who participated in the many tasks needed to pull this off. We seem to always come up with interesting plants to share, in spite of having members only plant sales for several years.

I've included a few photos from my trip out west recently to Canyonlands National Park, Utah, where I was canoeing and hiking in canyons, which ended in one last hike in the national forest near Olathe, western Colorado. As always, I was honing in on plants, and was surprised to see these plants in the high deserts of Utah and Colorado: an amsonia (bluestar), an asclepias (milkweed), a corydalis (fumitory), and a delphinium. These of course were not the same species found in the moister parts of the US.



We want to encourage people to experiment and try new things in their gardens, including new plants and “pushing the envelope” when it comes to zone hardiness and other factors. Zone hardiness ratings are an approximation. Zone pushing doesn't work as well with trees, but there are good opportunities for success with herbaceous plants and dieback shrubs (for example *Caryopteris*/blue mist shrub and *Lagerstroemia*/crepe myrtle that bloom on new wood).

Here are some plants which I have tried pushing the zone on (I'd say I'm Zone 5b), including the results:

- *Santolina chamaecypariss* – does well in the rock garden.
- *Cryptomeria* (Japanese cedar) – one still fine, one dead.
- *Lagerstroemia* – survives winter buried in snow, partial dieback.
- *Salvia Rosmarinus*/rosemary 'Arp' – usually dies, in spite of Z6 rating.
- *Origanum* 'Kent Beauty' - in the rock garden has no problem with winter.

This year my test subjects include these 3 plants:

- *Carex scaposa*, pink flowered sedge from China, Z7a or 6b “at least”;
- *Dudleya cymosa*/orange live forever, a succulent from California;
- *Phygelius capensis*/cape fuschia from South Africa, Z7.

I'm very optimistic about the *Carex*, guardedly optimistic about the *Phygelius*, and not terribly optimistic about *Dudleya*. And what's not to like on a dark green sedge with pink flower spikes? This sedge is newer to cultivation, from high elevations in China, so I expect its actual hardiness in not adequately tested.

Hope your planting is going well and you see lots of sunshine soon!

## MEMBERSHIP

*Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator*

Please welcome 4 new members! They all joined at the Co-operative Extension Plant Sale on May 16 at the Farmers Market. Linda Glaser is from Ithaca, Kait and Will Marrin are from Trumansburg and Carol Teelin is from Newfield.

If you have not yet renewed for 2025 dues are \$15 for individuals, \$20 for a household. Membership benefits include plant-of-the month and the August plant sale! Check my email announcement of the newsletter link for your membership status. The renewal form is at <http://www.acnargs.org/join.pdf>. Contact Mary Stauble at [mes2@cornell.edu](mailto:mes2@cornell.edu) if you have any questions.



Ellen Lane "on the job" at our information booth at the CCE plant sale on May 16th. The troughs attracted lots of attention. We counted at least 48 significant conversations and a number of people expressed interest in joining and/or attending the rock gardening class on May 22. We gained 3 new members too. A special thanks goes out to Susanne Lipari, Elke Scofield, and Ellen Lane who along with Carol staffed the booth over a 4 hour period. With such good results, we should definitely plan to have a booth next year. I think for our purposes, it was more

effective than offering plants for sale.

## NARGS & ACNARGS UPCOMING 2025 PROGRAMS

**NOTE: As of now, we are meeting in-person at Cornell in the Whetzel Room and not recording the sessions.**

## CALENDAR OF SELECT AREA GARDEN EVENTS

For the latest information, visit the websites of these gardening organizations.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. Online class information: [ccetompkins.org](http://ccetompkins.org)

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society monthly meetings – a hybrid of in-person and zoom: <https://flnps.org/> Recordings of past programs are available to view online.

Cornell Botanic Gardens: <https://cornellbotanicgardens.org/explore/events/>

Habitat Gardening in CNY, local Wild Ones Chapter: <https://www.hgcny.org/>

Liberty Hyde Bailey Garden Club: <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/LHBGC/>

To have your garden event listed send all pertinent information to Susanne Lipari [sel3@cornell.edu](mailto:sel3@cornell.edu)

## 2025 ACNARGS BOARD MEMBERS AND CONTACTS

*If you want to volunteer, we'd love to hear from you!*

Chair (aka head honcho): John Gilrein, [basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu](mailto:basecamp@alum.syracuse.edu)

Program Coordinator: Terry Humphries, [terryehumphries@gmail.com](mailto:terryehumphries@gmail.com)

Program Committee Members: Would you like to help? Share your speaker suggestions!

Secretary: Currently rotating amongst "Responsible People"

Treasurer (aka CFO): Marlene Kobre

Plant Sales Chair: Carol Eichler [carolithaca@gmail.com](mailto:carolithaca@gmail.com)

Plant of the Month: Marlene Kobre, [mkobre@ithaca.edu](mailto:mkobre@ithaca.edu)

Membership: Mary Stauble, [mes2@cornell.edu](mailto:mes2@cornell.edu)

New Member Hospitality: vacant

Newsletter Editor: Susanne Lipari [sel3@cornell.edu](mailto:sel3@cornell.edu)

Wurster Garden Coordinator: Carol Eichler

Wurster Volunteers: Elaine Caso, Ellen Lane, Sheila Stone; Others always welcome! Contact Carol Eichler if you wish to be added to the email list.

Book Order Manager: New NARGS program to offer NARGS' members select books at deeply discounted prices. New Chapter position. Looking for a volunteer!

Webmaster, Program Tech: Craig Cramer, [cdcramer@gmail.com](mailto:cdcramer@gmail.com)

## ABOUT US – ADIRONDACK CHAPTER NARGS

We are an all-volunteer organization and one of thirty-eight NARGS affiliated chapters active in North America. Our annual Chapter activities include 6 program-speaker meetings, the Green Dragon newsletter, web and Facebook pages, garden visits, occasional overnight garden trips, hands-on workshops, two plant sales a year, and frequent plant giveaways. Our meetings are informal, friendly gatherings that provide a wealth of information and offer a source for unusual plants, plus the opportunity to be inspired by other gardeners.

The public is always welcome. Chapter membership starts at \$15 a year based on the calendar year. Membership includes these benefits: newsletter sent to you electronically (or option by mail for an extra fee), invitations to our garden day trips, opportunity to travel on our planned overnight garden trips, annual membership directory, and plant sale discounts and member only sales, including Plant-of-the-Month sales.

## ABOUT NARGS NATIONAL

NARGS National is our parent organization: We encourage you to join (online at [www.nargs.org](http://www.nargs.org)) for only \$40 a year. Benefits include a seed exchange, a quarterly publication focused on rock gardening, and an online website featuring a wealth of information including current and archived Quarterlies, recordings of past study days and more. NARGS National also holds its Annual Meeting in interesting places where attendees have the opportunity to visit gardens and take field trips, often to alpine areas, as well as hear talks by outstanding plants people from around the world. More recently, NARGS is offering botanical tours each year, both within the US and abroad.

## GREEN DRAGON TALES

Published eight times a year (Jan./Feb., March, April, May, June, July/Aug., Sept., Oct. Nov./Dec. Submit articles no later than the fourth Friday of the month preceding the monthly publication to Susanne Lipari, [sel3@cornell.edu](mailto:sel3@cornell.edu). Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be July/August 2025.