



ADIRONDACK
CHAPTER
North American Rock Garden Society

Green Dragon Tales

September 2025

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DATE : SEPTEMBER 20, 2025 AT 10:30 AM.

Terry Humphries, Program Chair

Kerry Mendez :The Perennial Plant Collector's Treasure Chest

(Please note early beginning of the meeting)



What a treat we have in store to kick off fall programming for ACNARGS! Kerry Mendez has been nationally known for decades and is flying in from southern Maine just to share her favorite plant finds with us. We will be meeting early so that she can catch her return flight, but you don't want to miss this one!

Kerry's planned presentation: The Perennial Plant Collector's Treasure Chest is for plant lovers seeking unusual, fun, outrageous or underused perennials that will have heads turning and onlookers mumbling "What is that?" As an avid collector, Kerry Mendez has walked many miles in her muck boots to find unique plants that transform gardens into eye-popping, extraordinary views.

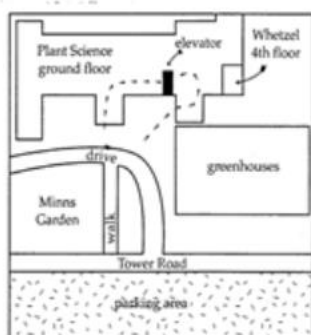
She is an award-winning garden educator, author, design consultant and proprietor of Perennially Yours and is dedicated to teaching the art of low-maintenance flower gardening and landscaping, featuring time-saving gardening techniques, workhorse plants and sustainable practices. Her gardens have been featured in numerous magazines including Better Homes and Gardens, Fine Gardening, Country Gardens, Garden Gate and Horticulture.

A popular educator and communicator, she has presented hundreds of lectures to thousands of gardeners in 23 states. Kerry Ann has been a featured speaker at botanical gardens, arboretums and horticultural societies in 20 states, including the U.S. Botanic Gardens, U.S. National Arboretum, Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park, Wave Hill, Chicago Botanic Gardens, Longwood Gardens and many more. She has been a presenter and keynote speaker at Master Gardener conferences in 18 states plus dozens of flower shows including Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, Ohio and Seattle. In addition, she has been a frequent presenter at nursery and landscaping professional organizations and Green Industry events, including iLandscape, Northern Green, Cultivate, and the Perennial Plant Association's annual conferences.



In 2014 she received the Gold Medal award from the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for "Exceptional teaching and writing that increases public enjoyment and appreciation of horticulture." Kerry Ann has written four gardening books, the most recent two being *The Budget Wise Gardener* and *The Right-Size Flower Garden*. Her e-newsletters go out to almost 10,000 subscribers. Her international gardening Webinars have been enjoyed by thousands. Her monthly e-newsletter and blog go out to over 9,000 subscribers throughout the United States and Canada. To learn more about Kerry Ann, please visit her web site www.pyours.com

Our regular meetings are held in Room 404 Plant Scien, 236 Tower Road on the Cornell Campus.



Currently, the west wing of the Plant Sciences Building has been shut down for renovations. Other than having those hallways walled off, everything should look pretty much as it did last time you were here. Remember the elevator to the 4th floor and then exit right down the long hallway. You will be facing the Whetzel Room.

Just a reminder, we ask all attendees to be fully vaccinated.

Additionally, we will be following CDC, NYS, and Cornell covid protocol, which at this time does not require masks though you may choose to do so. Please do not attend if you are not feeling well.

FROM THE CHAIR

John Gilrein, Chair



A big round of thanks to all who helped make our August plant sale a success! The emcee, the set-up crew for plants and food, those who donated plants, the cashier, the take down crew, and also the buyers. There are always good surprises at the plant sale, both interesting new plants and interesting plants that many of our members already grow. Then I found out that some of those older interesting plants like *Arisaema consanguineum* still have a market. If you missed the August sale, I hope you can make the next one (May 2026). One of the

highlights of the sale was that it went fast, and as a result there was a lot of time to socialize. I remember when I was relatively new to the chapter it took a few rounds of plant sales for me to get organized. I don't necessarily label many days ahead, but I do label a day or 2 before the sale and get the plants in the driveway to make the morning load up easier. That little bit of organization makes the day of the sale easier.

The weather this summer continues to be fickle. I did have a few dry spells here in South Onondaga, but only the upper part of the lawn settled into dormancy. Terry had terribly dry weather this summer after being besieged by unrelenting snow this winter. Here, all the plants' thirst has been slaked by a few rainy nights, and the cooler fall-like weather helps, too. It's a good time for planting those new acquisitions. Having a dry spell/drought is challenging, as many of us do not have unlimited water for irrigation. It does present an opportunity to observe the parts of the garden that are drier and those that are moister. It's not always obvious which are the dry or moist areas of the garden, as it's affected by the water table, underlying drainage, tree roots, soil type and depth. Another opportunity is to determine which plants weather the drought well and which ones suffer. I know I'm not familiar with all of the plants which will go dormant early due to dryness and then recover fully the following season. With continuing unpredictable weather, we all may want to move, or remove, some plants that are unable to cope with the summer dry spells.



Usually, we think of growing plants for our enjoyment. I've also been enjoying the insects that are partaking of the garden. I currently have a few monarch butterfly caterpillars dining on common milkweed (I'm not that fond of the plant, but it's good butterfly larva food). I had at least 1 black swallowtail caterpillar dining on fennel. And a whole tribe of hickory tussock moth caterpillars on English oak. Without realizing it, the rock garden I created is a nesting habitat for pompilid (spider predator) wasps, solitary wasps that nest in the

ground. These wasps also enjoy the pollen of Virginia mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum virginicum*).

I hope your garden weathered the summer well and see you in September!

MEMBERSHIP

Mary Stauble, Membership Coordinator

If you haven't yet renewed for 2024 it's not too late - you already know the many benefits including Plant of the Month. We still have 3 meetings left this year! The mail-in form is at www.acnargs.org/join.pdf or you can join at our September meeting. Membership is for the calendar year; dues are \$15 for individual and \$20 for household. If you have any questions email me at mes2@cornell.edu.

PLANT OF THE MONTH :

Marlene Kobre, POM Coordinator

Watch out for an email with details of the POM for September.

NEWS FROM NARGS NATIONAL

By Carol Eichler, Recording Secretary, NARGS

I'm still thinking about the AGM in Cheyenne that I attended this June. The meeting was so inspirational in so many ways. I loved to see the plants in both the gardens and natural settings. To me, even the weeds were exotic! The plant vendors – of which there were quite a few - offered a vast array of plants at such affordable prices. Because I was returning by plane, I had to restrain myself to what I could contain in a shoe box/carry-on. So, my focus was on western plants that are hard to find “out East.” That meant, Eriogonums, Penstemons, and succulents. Back home, I've given them their own planter where hopefully I can control the amount of rain they receive. Sure, they are what I term “low probability” plants, but what is rock gardening if we don't take a few chances? Don't we love challenges?

Another highlight of the AGM was the Chapter Chairs' meeting. I was so encouraged by the enthusiasm, creativity, and sharing of information – what works, what are our challenges, etc. It has convinced me we need to somehow plan for more of these kinds of meetings. The minutes of this meeting have been posted here: [Chapter Chairs+ Minutes](#), where many details have been captured.

Lastly, I want to mention how great the people I met at the AGM were and how great the conversations were. While there were only a few over 100 attending (and I couldn't possibly have met them all), we similarly shared a love of plants, nature, and gardening, not to mention a devoted connection to NARGS National. I was impressed by the plant knowledge and talent in so many areas of expertise! How can we strengthen that connection and keep those great conversations going all year long? That is the big question that I am struggling with now. Any suggestions? (Contact me: I can be found on NARGS.org)

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

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 selj3@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

Program Coordinator: Terry Humphries, 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

Plant of the Month: Marlene Kobre, mkobre@ithaca.edu

Membership: Mary Stauble, mes2@cornell.edu

New Member Hospitality: vacant

Newsletter Editor: Susanne Lipari selj3@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

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) 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, selj3@cornell.edu. Note: The next issue of *The Green Dragon* will be October 2025.