



# Growing Interests

Watnong Chapter, North American Rock Garden Society

✂ Volume XLIII ✂ Winter 2019 ✂ Number 1 ✂

## Upcoming Programs

**Saturday, February 16, 2019, 10 a.m.**

**Frelinghuysen Arboretum**

**Janet Novak presents 'Plants of Newfoundland'**

**Sunday, March 31, 2019, 10 a.m.**

**Frelinghuysen Arboretum**

**David Culp, 'Residential Meadow Planting'**

**Please bring a friend, your favorite warm beverage, and a snack to share. Interesting plants are always welcome, too.**

## OUR FEBRUARY SPEAKER

Janet Novak is an amateur botanist and gardener living in Philadelphia. She is proud to be a member of NARGS and is Chair of the Delaware Valley Chapter. She also belongs to 11 other plant-related societies, ranging from the Philadelphia Botanical Club to the Eriogonum Society. She created the web site of the Connecticut Botanical Society and contributed many of its photographs. Janet's photos have also

appeared in Horticulture magazine and Peterson's Field Guide to Ferns. Her educational background, however, is not plants but molecular biology, and she works as a medical editor.

## NEWS FROM THE WATNONG CHAPTER

**Dues reminder!** Membership Chair Sid Jones will be on hand at the February meeting to collect dues for 2019. Watnong dues remain a bargain at \$10 individual or \$15 per household/ mailing address. Dues may be paid as cash or check, made payable to Watnong Chapter NARGS. If you can't make the meeting, you can mail your dues to Sid Jones, 123 Mountainside Drive, Randolph, NJ 07869.

## SAVE THE DATES FOR 2019!!

2/16/2019 Janet Novak, Delaware Valley Chapter NARGS, 'Plants of Newfoundland'

3/31/2019 David Culp, Brandywine Cottage, 'Residential Meadow Planting'

4/27 & 28, 2019, Plant Sale at The

Leonard J. Buck Garden

5/11/2019, Bus Trip to visit Edgewood Gardens in Exton, PA., and The Gardens at Mill Fleurs in Point Pleasant, PA. Registration on page 8.

Picnic and Plant Swap, date and location to be announced

9/14/2019, Elizabeth Zanders, Connecticut & Berkshire Chapters NARGS, 'Hardy Northeast Rock Garden Plants'

10/13/2019, Joann Knapp, Watnong NARGS, 'The Frustrations of a Flower Photographer'

11/16/2019, Michael Hagen, New York Botanical Garden, 'The T. H. Everett Memorial Rock Garden: Past, Present, and Future'

## **Hospitality is back!**

Roxanne Hiltz was elected chapter Chair at the November meeting, and immediately set to work recruiting volunteers to help with hospitality at our lectures. The hospitality volunteer needs to arrive by 9:15 a.m. and start tea water, perhaps coffee, put out table covers, paper and plastic ware... all supplies will be brought by Roxanne Hiltz. Members, it's still a good idea to bring a re-usable mug!

## **Volunteers are asked to mark their calendars:**

February 16, 2019: Georgeann Ventola and T. Klein

March 31: Susan Deeks

September 14: nobody yet!

October 13: Lillie Dorchak and Shirley Rovinski

November 16: Michele Guitierrez and CarolAnn Baldowski

If you would like to volunteer for the September 14 meeting, contact Roxanne at [Roxanne.hiltz@gmail.com](mailto:Roxanne.hiltz@gmail.com) or 973-361-6680.

## **2018 Membership Report**

### **By Sid Jones**

Watnong NARGS had a total of 88 paid memberships for 2018, 33 Family and 55 Individual. There were 7 new members and 28 inactive/resigned members, for a net loss of 21 members from 2017.

## **The 2018 Treasurer's Report, by Don Grossmann, appears on page 7.**

## **Our November Speaker**

### **Summary by Hilary Clayton**

Our November speaker was Dr. Hubert Ling of the Native Plant Society of New Jersey. Dr. Ling highlighted the benefits of growing native plants: they are well adapted to our region, and so require little staking or watering, and support our native wildlife, especially birds. Since New Jersey lies within the

Eastern Deciduous Forest ecosystem, most natives are shade tolerant plants.

Dr. Ling then presented a tempting array of plants to try in our gardens. For early bloom, try a 'spring ephemeral', which will flower and set seed before the leaf canopy closes, such as the Blood Root, *Sanguinaria canadensis*. He shared ferns for every condition, from *Dryopteris* for dry zones under trees to *Osmunda* for wet areas to hardy, evergreen Christmas ferns (*Polystichum*) where winter interest is important.

Native perennials and shrubs are also key to the health of the song birds so many gardeners admire. Although many birds feed on seeds and fruit as adults, nearly all bird species rely on insects to rear their young. Here native species truly shine. A native oak tree can support 35 such insect species; a Bradford Pear only supports one.

Dr. Ling's presentation offered many suggestions to make our gardens more beautiful to both people and wildlife. For more information on the Native Plant Society of New Jersey, visit [npsnj.org](http://npsnj.org).

## **The Watnong Guide to Winter Fun**

Our chapter is handling the distribution phase of the seed exchange this year. We'll need many hands to get the job done! You don't have to be a member of NARGS, or even the Watnong chapter, to participate, and

you don't need to put in a full day. Drop in helpers are welcome! Feel free to bring a friend or a responsible Scout in need of service hours!

We'll be working at the Jordan House at the Leonard J. Buck Garden, which is located at 186 Liberty Corner Road in Far Hills.

Weather permitting, we'll fill NARGS Seed Exchange Orders from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. We'll provide warm beverages and sweets, but please plan to bring a lunch and a mug!

We'll begin the weekend of 1/12 and 1/13, and work the Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday of the following week (1/14/19, 1/16/19, 1/18/19, and 1/19/19). The next week we'll hope to meet Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday (1/22, 1/24, and 1/27). We'll set dates for February as needed.

Please contact Hilary Clayton at [hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com](mailto:hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com) or 908-781-2521 (leave a message!) to sign up for a day or ask questions about the seed distribution. If bad weather forces us to cancel an email notice will be sent to those signed up. THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!

Are you wondering just what you're signing up for? Here's a quick guide from NARGS to describe how to fill an order for the seed exchange. After you've filled two or three orders the process is easy.

- 1) Pick up a clipboard, a cardboard box

to hold packets, a pen or pencil, and next order in the to-be-filled pile.

2) Take a look at the order to see if you'll be pulling 25 or 35 packets (members who donated seed get 35 packets).

3) Look for first choice numbers in the seed trays arranged in numerical order on tables around the room.

a. If the number is pulled - put checkmark or X next to the number

b. If number sold out/not pulled – put a circle around the number

c. Keep track of the number of packets pulled. You can use a rubber band to bundle them in groups of 10 or 20 if that's helpful.

4) If there weren't enough first choice packets to fill to the allotted amount- 25 or 35- pull packets from the second-choice list on the order form.

a. First, any Preferred Second choices, listed first with a dark border around the number

b. Then from regular Second choices until order filled

5) If a range of numbers is listed, consider it as one choice and pull any ONE packet from those numbers

6) If you've pulled all the available first and second choices, and still need more packets to fill the order, check to see what 'Accept Substitutes?' on the order form says.

a. If Yes – pull randomly from numbers with many packets until reach allotted amount of packets unless you can tell what they would like.

b. If No – only send the numbers pulled from all choices they listed even if they are fewer than the

allotted amount.

We will only send less than allowed amount if they DID NOT list enough pulled choices AND did not want substitutes.

7) Verify the number of packets and spot-check that correct numbers pulled, then bring your clipboard and box to the mailing table.

Come and spend an afternoon or two with fellow gardeners!

## **The Plant Society**

### **By Michael Wilson**

As I thumb through the classifieds of my most recent copy of The Rock Garden Quarterly, I notice a plethora of plant societies. On the first page there is an advertisement for the American Penstemon Society. The following page list ads for American Rhododendron Society, American Conifer Society, and the Saxifrage Society. The last page lists the American Primrose Society, Pacific Bulb Society, Cyclamen Society, the Hobby Greenhouse Association, the Scottish Rock Garden Club, and finally the Dwarf Iris Society.

The point is that there is a society for just about every genus or group of plants. To quote Michael Dirr (1990) from his Manual of Woody Landscape Plants, "There is an American Boxwood Society that "Boxophiles" should consider joining if all other societies are full!

If you have an interest in a particular plant and want to learn more, you should consider joining a plant society. People join for several different reasons. Some will join a particular society for their seed exchange and a chance to obtain unusual species. For me, I enjoy the rock garden seed exchange because if my germination is successful, I will have high numbers of plants and can put them in natural looking drifts in the rock garden. Others may join for the cultural tips that are often included with newsletters and journals. My wife, Pam, belongs to the North American Lily Society for both the growing tips and seed distribution.

Friendships are often formed by actively participating. I met my hiking partner and friend of 25 plus years through a rock garden tour of private gardens. Again, another quote by Michael Dirr (1990) sums up the experience of belonging to a plant society. "Gardeners are not defined by economics, social status, or education. Their willingness to seek and share dissolves the barriers to forming friendships. The plant becomes the common bond... and all other nuances and quirks seem trivial."

## **It Grew for Me!**

### ***Townsendia parryi***

**Text & photo by Hilary Clayton**

I've been growing seed from the NARGS seed exchange for many years now, and every year make it a point to

try several species of a randomly chosen genera, just to get to know it better. One year we grew five different *Draba*, another year saw a host of *Thalictrums*. It's fun to see the differences between the species up close. Last spring, I seeded three different *Townsendias*.



A member of the daisy family, Asteraceae, *Townsendias* are native to western North America, often at higher elevations, from Nevada north through Alberta and British Columbia. The genus was named in 1833 by British plant explorer William Jackson Hooker for his friend David Townsend, a banker and serious amateur botanist in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Hooker named the genus in part for his gratitude to Townsend for sharing plant specimens

and helping to identify plants native to the Pennsylvania area, including asters.

The *Townsendia* seed arrived from the NARGS exchange in mid-January 2018 and was sown to a blend of pro-mix with 30% perlite. Since winter temperatures haven't been consistently cold the past few years, I've taken to refrigerating seeds, and so set them to chill until early April, when the trays came out and were set in the cold frames.

I find it best not to hover over seedlings in a New Jersey summer; many of ours don't survive the heat and humidity of August, even in the relatively cool and rain-sheltered cold frames. I finally took a good look at the little *Townsendias* in November, as I was settling other plants into the cold frame for winter. There appeared to be a large flower bud on the *T. parryi* grown from seed wild collected in the Pioneer Mountains of Montana, and we wondered whether that would hold until spring. It was a nice surprise in mid-December, when we opened the cold frame one morning and realized we wouldn't have to wait until spring to see it bloom. Transplanted to a small clay pot and set to the cool end of the greenhouse, we could see the blossom up close, and it was a welcome spot of color in a very gray December. In a fun twist, a post on the NARGS website that day showed a different *Townsendia* species blooming in the Denver, Colorado garden of Panayoti Kelaidis, and I learned that although most of the bloom occurs in spring, blossoms can appear into the fall- as late as December.

Will it bloom again in the spring? I hope so, but if not, a single sweet blossom on a dark December day makes the sowing worthwhile.

## NEWS FROM NARGS

**Registration is now open for the NARGS Study Weekend, "Rooted in Diversity", May 3 – 5, 2019.**

**The meeting will be held in Frazer, Pennsylvania (west of Philadelphia) & hosted by the Delaware Valley Chapter. For more information and registration visit [dvcnargs.org/studyweekend.html](http://dvcnargs.org/studyweekend.html).**

**NARGS Seed Exchange is now open! All Main Round orders are due January 31, 2019. If you don't grow from seed but would like to help others, consider joining us to fill seed orders!**

## WATNONG CLASSIFIEDS

### HYPERTUFA TROUGHS



**Coopers Hollow Farm** specializes in native plants with people-pleasing qualities; pollinator friendly and ecologically beneficial. We offer selections of flowering perennials and shrubs, understory trees, shade grasses for dry to wet areas, ferns, and ground covers. Smaller sizes are available for mass plantings. Coopers Hollow is a NJ registered nursery located in Bernardsville, using only organic practices (not certified).

We are open by appointment only. For requests and availability, contact [CoopersHollowFarm@yahoo.com](mailto:CoopersHollowFarm@yahoo.com)

If you would like to place an ad here, send copy to the Newsletter Editor, [hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com](mailto:hilaryh.clayton@gmail.com).

Deadline for inclusion in our Winter Newsletter is February 23, 2019.

## Treasurer's Report for 2018, by Don Grossmann

### NARGS Watnong Chapter

### Five Year Financial Summary

	2018	2017	2016	2015	Final 2014
<b>Revenue</b>					
Membership Dues	\$1,100	\$2,355	\$1,185	\$1,205	\$1,110
Plant Sale Profit - Net	\$3,891	\$3,053	\$4,752	\$3,883	\$5,098
<b>Expenses</b>					
Administrative	-\$129	-\$264	-\$30	-\$122	-\$24
Bus Trip - Net	-\$400	-\$653	-\$390	\$0	\$0
Hospitality	-\$823	-\$1,974	-\$1,961	-\$2,416	-\$1,128
Insurance	-\$327	-\$327	-\$333	-\$351	-\$322
Newsletter	-\$258	-\$325	-\$138	-\$156	-\$225
Program	-\$3,023	-\$2,038	-\$1,931	-\$1,220	-\$1,130
Rent	-\$175	\$0	-\$350	-\$175	-\$350
<b>Donations</b>					
Blackburn Scholarship	-\$500	-\$500			
National NARGS		-\$500			
Laurelwood		-\$1,475		-\$2,245	-\$1,677
Buck Garden				-\$8,000	
Wycoff Ave Garden		\$0		-\$100	
<b>Net Cash Flow</b>	<b>-\$645</b>	<b>-\$2,648</b>	<b>\$804</b>	<b>-\$9,697</b>	<b>\$1,352</b>
Opening Balance	\$11,246	\$13,894	\$13,090	\$22,787	\$21,435
Net Change in Cash Flow	-\$645	-\$2,648	\$804	-\$9,697	\$1,352
<b>Checking Account Balance - as of 12/31/2018</b>	<b>\$10,601</b>	<b>\$11,246</b>	<b>\$13,894</b>	<b>\$13,090</b>	<b>\$22,787</b>

## 2019 SPRING BUS TRIP

Organized by the Watnong Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society

**Tour two gardens: Edgewood Gardens in Exton, PA., and The Gardens at Mill Fleurs in Point Pleasant, PA.** For more information on these gardens, see [www.edgewoodgardens.net](http://www.edgewoodgardens.net) and [www.thegardensatmillfleurs.com](http://www.thegardensatmillfleurs.com)

We will arrive at Edgewood Gardens about 10:30, and after an introduction by John Lonsdale we will tour his gardens on our own. We will leave Edgewood at noon and arrive at The gardens at Mill Fleurs about 1:30 for a guided tour. After the tour, stop by the nursery for browsing or purchases. The bus leaves 3:30 to return to Cedar Knolls.

Date and Time: Saturday, May 11, 2019 Bus leaves 8:00 AM, returns approximately 5:00 PM

Depart: 8:00 AM from Cedar Knolls Plaza, 235 Ridgedale Ave, Cedar Knolls (park at the McDonalds end of the lot, near Ridgedale Ave)

Cost: \$55 per member, \$65 per non-member (includes membership for 2019) **No refunds.**

Bring your own lunch, but water will be provided on the bus (toilet on the bus)

To reserve your seat, please complete the form below and return it with your check payable to Watnong NARGS, to: Watnong NARGS, c/o Noel Schulz, 108 Lincoln Place, Waldwick, NJ 07463. Any questions? Contact Noel at 201-445-6445 or [noelschulz@verizon.net](mailto:noelschulz@verizon.net).

**Your registration and check must be received by Noel no later than May 1. First come, first served.**

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2019 Trip Registration Form

Make check payable to Watnong NARGS

# **Members** \_\_\_\_\_ x \$55 = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (for confirmation): \_\_\_\_\_

**Non-Members** at \$65 (Please use one form for each new member)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2019 WATNONG CHAPTER OFFICERS

Chair	Roxanne Hiltz	973-361-6680	roxanne.hiltz@gmail.com
Vice Chair	Michael Wilson	862-397-9339	miwilson@ramapo.edu
Treasurer	Don Grossmann	908-604-8060	donmliss@msn.com
Secretary	Debi Graf	201-919-0749	DGRAFatHome@aol.com

### 2019 WATNONG COMMITTEES

Membership & Distribution	Sid Jones	973-366-7241	rsj40jr@icloud.com
Programs	Noel Schulz	201-445-6445	noelschulz@verizon.net
Program Committee	Brian Coleman	973-325-3453	bell.coleman@verizon.net
Program Committee	Debby Zweig	201-230-7725	zweig@hotmail.com
Digital Projector	Michael Wilson	862-397-9339	miwilson@ramapo.edu
Publicity	Carolyn Iglesias	973-763-3275	mushroomhouse1@optonline.net
Plant Sale Co-Chair	Jim Avens	908-234-2677x 22	javens@scparcs.org
Plant Sale Co-Chair	Melissa Grossmann	908-604-8060	donmliss@msn.com
Newsletter	Hilary Clayton	908-781-2521	hilaryhclayton@gmail.com

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**THE WATNONG CHAPTER  
NORTH AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY  
c/o The Leonard J. Buck Garden  
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Far Hills, NJ 07931**

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**