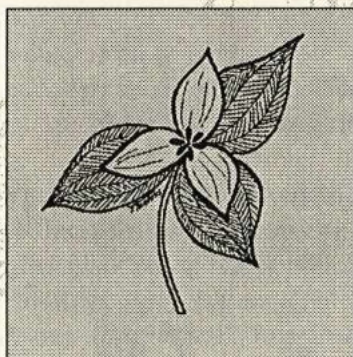


The **TRILLIUM**



Vol. 6, No. 2

*The Newsletter of the Piedmont Chapter
of the North American Rock Garden Society
Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill, North Carolina*

March-April, 1996

Some of you may have received your seeds from the NARGS seed exchange by now; others are still waiting. Remember that our chapter will handle order fulfillment for the 1996-1997 seed exchange. Donna Maroni gives us a good look at what the work will involve on page 5. Speaking of seeds, there's still time to donate seed to the annual ephemeral seed exchange. The details are on page 7.

When you sow seeds obtained through these exchanges, remember to set some plants aside for sale at our September meeting. Funds from the fall seedling sale help to support our programs and this newsletter's publication.

This issue of *The Trillium* begins with an article about our role as rock gardeners in bringing new plants into cultivation for American gardeners. With that in mind, consider keeping records on some of the unusual plants you may be cultivating. Information that you collect on one of your experiments might help another gardener. Let us hear from you.

*Barbara Scott, Interim Editor
e-mail to barbara_scott@ncsu.edu*

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From the chair

With the weather following the calendar and coming only on weekends this winter, we were lucky for a long time; but old man (or woman) Murphy finally caught up with us.

A lot of people were disappointed that the February meeting was cancelled, but the good news is that Tony has rescheduled George Pyne's talk for next September. More good news—as I write this on February 15, the bulbs and hellebores are beginning to bloom, albeit very tardily, so spring has got to be right around the corner.

Many thanks to Gail Seybolt for agreeing to chair the 1996 Garden Tour. This year it will be on Mother's Day weekend—Saturday in the Chapel Hill area and Sunday in the Raleigh area. Gail has a wonderful group of gardens lined up for us, and the details begin on page 8 of this newsletter.

Let's all make a special effort to bring quality plants to the March auction to make up for the February loss.

*Norman Beal, Chair
Piedmont Chapter*

From wildflower to rock garden plant: The role of Alpine-L

by Alexej (Sasha) Borkovec

The trip from our hotel in Christchurch, New Zealand, to our home in Silver Spring, Maryland, took well over 30 hours, which gave me ample time to mull over some of the problems that have slowly emerged and then ripened during the visit to the antipodes and attendance at the Southern Alpines 1996 Conference in Christchurch. One problem, in which I took the stand for rock gardeners of the Northern Hemisphere, raised the fundamental question whether it was worthwhile to bother with many of the Southern Hemisphere plants considering their reputation of being difficult or impossible to grow in an open garden. The answer became quite simple after I saw the South African and South American slides and many of the New Zealand plants in their natural setting. Being as greedy as most rock gardeners I just couldn't feign indifference to these irresistible plants. As long as there is any chance of taming them, yes, they are worth the effort.

With this question answered, what then is to be done, where, and by whom? Can the southern rock gardeners be of assistance? I think they would be invaluable in the initial phases of the effort. At the beginning of each plant now accepted as being rock-garden-worthy stood someone who found it in nature, identified it, determined its occurrence, gathered its seed, took cuttings or other propagation materials, and described it in some segment of the gardening literature. These activities constituted the first step in converting a wildflower to a rock garden plant.

The next, equally important step was to make the plants or their parts available to growers, who had to pass the ultimate judgement by determining whether, where and how the plant

could be grown. During the last two centuries, plant hunters and explorers, some in a heroic fashion, took it upon themselves to fulfill the first step. To a much smaller extent they continue even today, but now they are assisted by a large number of professional and amateur botanists, some of whom are themselves rock gardeners and growers.

The second step, the introduction and acceptance of a new plant in the rock garden and in the trade, can be a very long process. (It is my hope that in the age of Alpine-L, this process will be substantially shortened, but more about that later.)



In New Zealand, some or all of the tasks of the first step have already been accomplished for the majority of its endemic plants. A good number of them have even passed through the second step but, as will become clear later, some retracing may be desirable in this area. A much smaller proportion of alpine plants from other areas of the Southern Hemisphere have reached a point, where growers can get to work with them. A closer look at the rock gardening literature of the past ten years indicates that professional as well as amateur rock gardeners are working hard and successfully in South Africa and in South America. The list of potential rock garden plants originating in these two continents grows by leaps and bounds, but since most of them are not available as seed or cuttings, they cannot participate in the wide evaluation process and are forced to sit, so to speak, on the shelf.

Let's examine again the requirements for a successful performance of the second step, the step that could be called the domestication of a wild plant. In most instances, it is an entirely unorganized community project in which individual rock gardeners from different parts and climatic zones of the Northern Hemisphere test the plants in their gardens and alpine houses and report their experiences at meetings, plant exchanges, and in the rock gardening literature. Specialized nurseries and other commercial growers get their new plants either by directly participating in the process or by gleaning the necessary information from various public or private channels. By commercializing a new plant, they complete the domestication process, although it has also happened that a plant was successfully commercialized and equally successfully forgotten. A *sine qua non* of the entire second step is the easy and plentiful availability of the reproductive plant material. This a difficult problem with no apparent solution but even here Alpine-L may bring some improvement.

If I may now return to New Zealand, is there a chance the local rock gardening establishment will successfully pursue the processes of the second step for those of their plants that are still inadequately known but potentially desirable? My guess is that their efforts will be very limited. Most New Zealanders, and that includes gardeners of all kinds, live in lowlands, in subtropical or tropical climates where rock gardening, if practiced at all, is an entirely different cup of tea from ours. Kiwis, being largely of British stock, are passionate gardeners and it is no exaggeration to say that their cities are mostly large, evergreen, and permanently blooming gardens.

Nevertheless, my estimate is that the number of rock gardens in the

whole country is vanishingly small. I did visit a few private gardens, none was a rock garden, and the only two public rock gardens I saw in Wellington and Christchurch were not exactly awe inspiring. The only place, where I observed some work being done along the step-two processes was Landcare Research New Zealand Ltd. in Christchurch, primarily a herbarium, where a rather large number of mountain plants was cultivated under glass. Some of these were then tested for viability and appearance in open garden beds. However, since all this was done in a climate corresponding to our zone 9 or 10, its relevance to general rock gardening is somewhat remote. In general, the situation is even less promising in South Africa and South America. In other words, whatever is to be done must be done by us, rock gardeners of the Northern Hemisphere.

Now, what exactly should we be doing? The prescription is not very different from what many of us are doing already and have been doing all along. Plant explorers of all kinds, and in New Zealand the members and associates of the New Zealand Alpine Garden Society can be particularly helpful because of their expertise and number, must gather the necessary plant material and disseminate it as widely as possible to the northern rock gardening community. Special efforts should be placed on the origin of the material. For example, a *raoulia* seed

can be harvested at an elevation of 500m, but attempts should be made to gather the seed at 2000m, with a possible improvement in hardiness. The rest of us should try to grow these plants in our own gardens and report the results.

This brings us back to Internet and Alpine-L. Traditionally, rock gardeners are individualists who fiercely resist regimentation. Consequently, the process of bringing a wildflower into cultivation has always been a rather haphazard, unstructured activity spread out over many years or even decades. The primary bottleneck has been the slow and insufficient flow of information, more than inadequacies of the private or commercial growers. Except for a select circle of rock garden gurus whose approval or the lack of it has been noted and quoted, the experiences of other experiment-oriented rock gardeners have remained largely unknown.

Although the rock gardening publications and various meetings alleviated this problem to some extent, the process has been slow and only marginally effective. Alpine-L can be of great help here. In its present form and size, the group is not yet capable of taking on the job described in this article. However, if it continues growing and if its members will be willing to participate actively, the rapid information exchange made possible by the Internet should drastically reduce the time needed not only

for evaluating plants but also for exchanging seed, seedlings or other propagation materials.

Needless to say, southern alpine are not the only plants that will profit from the magic of the Internet. There are many northern alpine and other potential rock garden plants that need more detailed evaluation. The reason for the snail pace of their introduction into our gardens is the same as for the southerners: slow, widely scattered, and generally inadequate flow of information. What better remedy for curing this disease exists than Alpine-L?

Alexej (Sasha) Borkovec is a member of NARGS who gardens in Silver Springs, Md. He posted the above article to the Alpine-L on-line discussion group on 15 February 1996.
email to
aborkove@CAPACCESS.ORG

How to join Alpine-L

To subscribe to Alpine-L, e-mail a note to

LISTSERV@nic.surfnet.NL
with the following message:
**Subscribe Alpine-L your name
city plant zone**

Example:

**Subscribe Alpine-L John Smith
Raleigh NC Zone 7**

Do not add anything else to the message because the free subscription is processed automatically.

National Meeting

July 10-13, 1996. "Utah Flora '96." Annual Meeting of the North American Rock Garden Society, hosted by the Wasatch Chapter. The Snowbird Ski & Summer Resort, Snowbird, Utah.

Speakers: Dr. Elizabeth Neese and Marvin Poulsen

This four-day conference will be held at Snowbird Resort nestled in the Wasatch Mountains at 8,000 feet, surrounded by 11,000 foot-plus peaks, and only thirty minutes from downtown Salt Lake City. One day of workshops and activities will be held in Little Cottonwood Canyon, and there will be two day-long field trips: Bald Mountain in the high Uinta Mountains and Albion Basin in the Wasatch Range of the Rocky Mountains. Don't miss this opportunity to see alpine plants growing in their natural habitat. There will be plant and book sales. Look for the brochure on the meeting that was included in the latest issue of the *Rock Garden Quarterly*.

The call of the garden . . . through the change of the seasons at the Arboretum

by Bobby J. Ward

"When the gardening bug hits full strength, none of us—novice or expert, estate designer or suburban home owner—can resist the call of the garden," writes Dr. Kim Tripp in *The Year in Trees—Superb Woody Plants for Four-Season Gardens* (by Kim E. Tripp and J. C. Raulston, Timber Press, 1995, 204 pages, \$44.95).

Tripp, formerly at N. C. State University (NCSU), and Raulston, the director of the NCSU Arboretum, have produced a volume of some 150 plant portraits, primarily about woody plants, that follows the NCSU Arboretum throughout the seasons to help readers, landscapers, and gardeners select the best plant for a given location. Dr. Raulston says in the introduction to the book that, in a given region of the U. S., only some 40 shrubs and trees make up 90-plus percent of the landscape plants. *The Year in Trees* is an attempt to look to fresh ideas in trees, shrubs, and vines and to increase the variety of plants in our landscapes.

Dr. Tripp, now a Putnam Fellow at the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University, wrote the core of these plant essays while she was a post doctorate in Horticultural Science at NCSU in the early 1990s. They were produced on a weekly basis and mailed out as a university outreach to primarily small daily and weekly newspapers and magazines in North Carolina. The columns were designed to focus attention on a choice plant, underutilized, but one of promise. The columns accrued over three seasons at the NCSU Arboretum where Tripp watched the plants grow or die and penned her thoughts.

The appeal of *The Year in Trees* is that the writing is pitched to a broad audience of nonspecialists. Tripp at times may write about the "clouds of rosy pink blooms that float beside the entrance driveway" (Okame cherry) or of "broad, lonely moors, with wind crying eerily around a moldering mansion" (Scotch broom). However, the heart of the book is her cleanly written, concise descriptions of advocacy plants that ought to be more used in our landscapes.

Complementing the text are over 200 handsome color photographs, most of them by Raulston. The introduction to the book is provided by Dr. Raulston in which he describes his passion for gardening and for woody plants in particular, his own up bringing in Oklahoma, and his plant "introductions" program at the N. C. State University Arboretum. Raulston-ophiles will be familiar with many of the plants in this book, particularly if they have participated in the arboretum lectures and plant giveaways through its Friends program over the years. This collaborative effort by the two authors is a compact and wonderfully informative collection for reference and general reading.

Piedmont chapter member Bobby J. Ward gardens in Raleigh, where he is on sabbatical as editor of The Trillium. e-mail to biblio@nando.net



The seed exchange—giving and receiving

by Donna Maroni

As many of you know, the NARGS Seed Exchange is currently the responsibility of the Berkshire and Connecticut Chapters under the direction of Elisabeth Harmon. In addition, the Hudson Valley Chapter also helped out. At the beginning of this month, I had the opportunity to observe seed exchange activities. Therefore, I'd like to give some of my impressions. A more appropriate source of such a vignette naturally would be Elisabeth Harmon. But, she is probably too modest and, as director of the Exchange, certainly too busy to take the time to describe that amazing operation in any detail.

My observation of NARGS's "Seed Exchange Central," which is headquartered in Elisabeth Harmon's home, wasn't a matter of idle curiosity. Beginning in 1996-97, seed exchange duties will be shared by three chapters: Columbia-Willamette, Rocky Mountain, and Piedmont. The first two chapters will undertake Phases I & II of the seed exchange (Phase I involves seed receipt and seed list preparation; Phase II involves seed packaging), while the Piedmont Chapter will complete Phase III (order fulfillment). I have agreed to serve as the Piedmont Chapter's Seed Exchange Chair. Thus, it seemed prudent for me to have some firsthand knowledge of what is in store for me and for other Piedmont Chapter volunteers.

It is important to note that until now, a single chapter (or, as during the past two years, two neighboring chapters) carried out all three phases of the Seed Exchange. Thus, while I chose to visit Elisabeth at a time when Phase III was in full swing, I also had a glimpse of some elements of Phase I & II. I was overwhelmed, to say the least.

In the course of only one or two months, seed donations stream in; this

year's donations represent 6,841 species. Volunteers first record all donations in a database from which the seed list is to be printed—thanks to the magic of electronic mail, volunteers from around the country participated in this task. Volunteers then combine the individual seed donations, preparing one stock package for each of the 6841 donated species. And finally, volunteers transfer small portions of seeds from stock packages to the numbered glassine envelopes that will be mailed to NARGS members.

When I visited "Seed Exchange Central," substantial remnants of Phases I & II still occupied parts of the first and second floors of Elisabeth's house. Notably, the perimeter of the Harmon dining room was the storage area for many boxes holding hundreds of seed stock packages; and one bedroom on the second floor was devoted to the computer and reference texts used in preparation of the seed list database. After completion of Phases I & II, there is a brief hiatus between the time the seed list is mailed to NARGS members and the time Phase III begins with the receipt of the first seed requests (apparently Elisabeth used this time to good effect—celebrating the holidays).

Then, over the course of one or two months, filled seed orders stream out. The Berkshire and Connecticut Chapters have certainly designed order fulfillment procedures for maximum efficiency. Nonetheless, the job is massive. To minimize drive time for volunteers from the Berkshire and Connecticut Chapters, weekend order fulfillment work parties are held at three different sites: at the Berkshire Botanic Garden in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, at Comstock Ferre in Wethersfield, Connecticut, and at the Jones Auditorium in New Haven, Connecticut.

In addition, for those who prefer not to work on weekends, Elisabeth

holds 'open house' at her home all day and all evening, Monday through Friday. During this open house, volunteers show up whenever they like, perhaps toting a bag lunch—Elisabeth supplies tea and cookies as well as guidance and music. I observed Phase III operations on a Thursday; thus I was participating, along with two other volunteers, in an open-house type work party at the Harmon residence.



The entire 16' X 26' third floor of Elisabeth's house is currently dedicated to NARGS Seed Exchange Phase III. For each of the 6,841 donated seed varieties, about twenty packets of seed had been filed in numerical sequence; this required thirty file boxes which are arrayed throughout the room. The 'file boxes' are, in reality, banana boxes. Yes, indeed, I'm referring to those 16-inch x 20-inch two-part (box plus cover) containers that you have seen in your neighborhood supermarket. The way the banana boxes were customized to serve as file boxes is a particularly apt example of the forethought and ingenuity that went into designing seed exchange procedures.

Banana box customization was as follows: Because the boxes are too deep to allow for good visibility of the identification numbers on glassine seed packets, both long sides of the boxes were cut down, reducing the depth of the box to only a few inches. Also, so that each box would hold 10 to 12 ranks of seed packets, dividers at a spacing of about the width of a seed envelope were inserted into the boxes.

Because the boxes must be transported to different sites each weekend (more about that later), the short sides of the boxes were not cut down—this preserved the cutout handholds that are such a convenient part of banana box design. And, because placing these boxes on tables of standard height would require that volunteers bend over to pluck seed packets from the boxes, the seed-filled boxes are stacked on their respective covers, thus raising them to a more comfortable working height.

For an amusing but precise account of order-filling activities and their associated frustrations, one should read Geoffrey Charlesworth's "The Seed Exchange, View from the Inside Out," which was published last summer in the *Rock Garden Quarterly* [Vol. 53 (3) p. 229]. He says, "You would expect that an order could be filled in five minutes, [but]. . . an average good time to fill an order is 30 minutes, not five."

I must admit to having been a bit skeptical of the 30-minute estimate. Was I ever wrong! When all goes well, in other words when all the requester's first-choices seeds, are available, filling the order is easy—maybe the time can be cut to 15 or 20 minutes per order. That is almost never the case. Tom Stuart's report that Jacques Mommens filled 35 orders in five hours astonishes me. Having progressed in order through 30 banana boxes full of seed envelopes, the volunteer usually must start all over at banana box number 1, this time selecting seed from the requester's list of second-choice seeds. The order-filling volunteer indeed may be feeling sympathy for the requester who is not getting all first choices, but that sympathy is strongly tainted by regret that the tour of 30 banana boxes must be repeated to finish the order.

Then come the checking and rechecking to be sure that the order has been filled accurately. Finally, the

small bundle of seeds that is the culmination of so many volunteers' efforts is stuffed in an envelope and tossed in the outgoing mail bag. This whole order-filling operation must then be repeated more than 2000 times before Phase III is complete.

And imagine this: each weekend, all 30 banana boxes are carried down from the third floor of Elisabeth's house, loaded into a station wagon, and transported to a weekend work-party site. When the weekend is over, the process must be repeated in reverse so that open-house can again be held at the Harmon home.

Even before I arrived at Elisabeth's home, it became clear that the seed exchange is an all-family affair for the Harmons. Mady Harmon, the younger of Elisabeth's two daughters (the one who still lives at home), is credited for the seed list cover art (see bottom inside of the 1995-96 seed list cover page). Mady volunteered to vacate her bedroom for a night or two so that Elisabeth could offer me a bed (I stayed in a motel). And Elisabeth has referred to the "wonderchild" who serves as a seed exchange computer consultant—Mady again.

During my visit, I learned that Mady and Dennis (Elisabeth's husband), spend their evenings helping Elisabeth open seed exchange mail. Finally, Dennis lends his station-wagon when it is needed to transport banana boxes full of seed packets to the current weekend's work-party site. Mady and Dennis, who are not members of NARGS, are nonetheless

amongst the most involved of seed exchange volunteers and deserve special thanks from NARGS. In an earlier article that I wrote for *The Trillium*, I compared the NARGS seed exchange with Nature's mechanisms for seed dispersal. Now that I've seen some of the workings of the seed exchange, my awe for the ingenuity Nature has invested in designing seed dispersal mechanisms is rivaled by my awe for the NARGS volunteers who make the seed exchange work so well—Elisabeth Harmon most of all.

Piedmont Chapter member Donna Maroni gardens in Carrboro, N. C. She will chair our chapter's contribution to the 1996-1997 NARGS seed exchange. She made the above post to the ALPINE-L on-line discussion group on 29 February 1996. e-mail to dmaroni@email.unc.edu



Doing our share

Two Piedmont Chapter members, Tony Avent and Paul Jones, will travel to the Yunan province of China for three weeks in October to collect seeds from wild perennials. The Board has voted to help fund Tony and Paul's trip by purchasing a \$300 "seed share" from each of them. (Some of the plants started from the seeds they collect eventually will be offered for sale during our plant auctions and seedling sales.)

By helping to fund this collecting trip, the Piedmont Chapter will be supporting what Sasha Borkovec calls the first and second steps of converting a wild flower to a rock garden plant (see page 2 of this newsletter). The third step in domestication is sharing information about plants grown from wild-collected seed. Sasha's article focuses on Alpine-L, an on-line discussion group that any gardener can join (see page 3). Other ways to exchange information are corresponding with gardeners and contributing to newsletters like this one.

Resolve to keep records on the plants that you grow from wild-collected seed and to share the information that you develop. Consider doing your share by joining Alpine-L, corresponding with other gardeners about your experiences, or contributing an article to *The Trillium*.

Barbara Scott, Interim Editor
e-mail to barbara_scott@ncsu.edu

Piedmont Chapter, NARGS

Chair: Norman Beal
2324 New Bern Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27610
(919) 231-2167

Vice Chair: Tony Avent
9241 Sauls Road, Raleigh, NC 27603
(919) 772-4794
e-mail plantdel@nando.net

Treasurer: Bob Wilder
1213 Dixie Trail, Raleigh, NC 27607
Telephone (919) 781-2255
e-mail wilder@nando.net

Secretary: Barbara Scott
1321 Chaney Road, Raleigh, NC 27607
Telephone (919) 859-6703
e-mail barbara_scott@ncsu.edu

Board Members at Large:

John Dilley
9400 Sauls Road, Raleigh, NC 27603
Telephone (919) 772-6761

Wendy S. Peterson
8019 Grey Oak Drive, Raleigh, NC 27615
Telephone (919) 846-3512

Call for Ephemeral Seeds

by Tom Stuart

This year several rock gardening groups are participating in an exchange of seed with short viability. When seed of this type goes through the seed exchange and dry storage, it germinates poorly. Appropriate candidates are members of the Ranunculaceae: *Aconitum*, *Adonis*, *Anemone*, *Eranthis*, *Glaucidium*, *Helleborus*, *Hepatica*, *Pulsatilla*, *Ranunculus*, *Thalictrum*; and the genera *Asarum*, *Colchicum*, *Corydalis*, *Cyclamen*, *Dicentra*, *Dryas*, *Erythronium*, *Galanthus*, *Hacquetia*, *Hylomecon*, *Jeffersonia*, *Lysichiton*, *Salix*, *Sanguinaria*, *Shortia*, *Stylophorum*, *Trillium* and *Viola*. This list is not exhaustive, but please restrict offerings to species with known short viability or poor germination after dry storage. If you have seeds to offer, please fill out the form below and mail or e-mail it now; the deadline is March 15.

Donors take heed of the following. Despite a 1995 offering to nearly 1,000 rock gardeners, the most generous donors did not report the response as onerous. Nonetheless, some guidelines seem appropriate.

- A modest offering is advised. If you submitted one or two last year, increase it a little. Do try to offer up to half a dozen species.
- There tend to be many offerings of some taxa. If you have a copy of last year's list, choose items that were not offered or were offered by only one or two members. If you don't have last year's list, keep the one that comes out this year for reference.
- Diversity is one of our goals. Last year we were short in *Adonis*, *Erythronium*, *Galanthus*, *Glaucidium*, *Ranunculus*, and certainly not enough *Shortia*.
- Don't offer items from your garden that you haven't seen flower and fruit. Wait another year.
- Don't be afraid of crop failure. If there's no seed, drop a postcard to the requester and save the request for next year.
- Your experience with germinating these species is important. Include notes, either of any published materials or of your own experiments. I will try to incorporate your report into the final list.

When the seed list is published, these directions will be given: "To request seeds, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the donor. (If the donor is across an international boundary, obtain an International Reply Coupon.) Write the species name on the envelope. If you are requesting more than one species from a donor, send the appropriate number of envelopes. Multiple forms of the same species are safe for a single envelope, but because the seed is requires immediate sowing, it will be dispatched the day it is collected."

Donors should include the following information with each donation:

Ephemeral Seeds for the 1996 Exchange
Your Name & Address (it must be the postal mail address, not e-mail)
Your USDA zone or minimum temperature
Genus, species, form, and collection date, if known, for each offering

The deadline for donating seed is March 15. Seed should be mailed to Tom Stuart, P. O. Box 517, Croton Falls, NY 10519, USA.

Tom Stuart is a member of NARGS who gardens in New York. He made the above post to the Alpine-L on-line discussion group on 29 December 1995. e-mail to tstuart@westnet.com

The Trillium Editor:

Bobby J. Ward (on sabbatical)
930 Wimbeldon Drive, Raleigh, NC 27609
Telephone (919) 781-3291
e-mail biblio@nando.net

Refreshments & Hospitality:

Gwen Farrier
4205 Arbutus Drive, Raleigh, NC 276912
Telephone (919) 787-1933

Seed Exchange Chair:

Donna Maroni
P. O. Box 918, Carrboro, NC 27510
Telephone (919) 829-8863
e-mail dmaroni@email.unc.edu



Gardens on Tour—Orange County
Saturday, May 11, 1996

✿ **Niche Gardens, 111 Dawson Road, Chapel Hill, N. C. 9 a.m. - 3 p. m.** This is Kim Hawks's tenth anniversary at Niche. Most of us are quite familiar with this nursery, which specializes in nursery-propagated wildflowers and natives, perennials, ornamental grasses, and unusual trees and shrubs. The display gardens demonstrate a variety of plants and habitats in very satisfying designs. This is a regular working day for Kim, so she will not be able to be available for the tour; the good part of that is that we may buy, buy, buy!

Coming from Raleigh take I-40W to Chapel Hill. Take exit #273B to Hwy 54W. Follow all signs for Hwy 54W around Chapel Hill to Carrboro. Take the Jones Ferry Road exit, and turn left at the light. Cross University Lake, and take the first right onto Old Greensboro HWY. Go 7.5 miles, turn left on Dawson Road.

Coming from Pittsboro take Hwy 64W; turn right onto Hwy 87N. Go 13.7 miles to the blinking light at Eli Whitney. Turn right at light onto Old Greensboro Hwy. Go 5.0 miles to Dawson Road and turn right.

Coming from Burlington and Greensboro take Hwy 87S (Exit 147) in Graham. Follow 87S 11.2 miles to Eli Whitney. At light take a left onto Old Greensboro Hwy and go 5.0 miles to Dawson Road and turn right.

Coming from Hillsborough take Orange Grove Road 11.6 miles to Hwy 54. Take a left onto Hwy 54E. Go 1.7 miles to White Cross Road and take a right. Go 2.1 miles to Old Greensboro Highway and take a right. Stay on Old Greensboro Highway until you see Dawson Road on the left. Turn left on Dawson Road.

Coming from Durham take Hwy 15/501S around Chapel Hill. Hwy 15/501 merges with Hwy 54W. Remain on Hwy 54W into Carrboro. Take Jones Ferry Rd exit and turn left at light. Cross University Lake and take first right onto Old Greensboro Hwy. Go 7.5 miles, and turn left on Dawson Road.

✿ **Mary Jane Baker, 708 West Main Street, Carrboro, N. C. (929-2807). 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** On a one-third acre lot, Mary Jane has established a collector's town garden with a variety of color themes and exposures. A special feature is antique climbing roses.

From Raleigh take I40W to Exist 273B to Hwy 54W. Follow all signs for Hwy 54W around Chapel Hill to Carrboro. Continue on 54W past the Jones Ferry Road exit to the stoplight, then use these directions:

➡ Turn right at the light (a Crown service station is on the left). This is West Main Street; 708 is about 1/2 mile on the left. Watch for a split rail fence surrounding the lot.

From Durham take Hwy 15/501S around Chapel Hill. Hwy 15/501 merges with Hwy 54W. Remain on Hwy 54 past Jones Ferry Road exit to the stoplight, then follow the directions for Raleigh that appear after the arrow.

From Chapel Hill and Carrboro take Hwy 54W past Jones Ferry Road exit to the stoplight, then follow the directions for Raleigh that appear after the arrow.

✿ **Harold and Marcia Grunewald, 117 E. Queen Street, Hillsborough, N. C. (732-2836). 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.** (Please note the time difference.) The Grunewalds have a delightful garden on a colonial site. Harold has opened up a new area since the garden was last open for tour by the chapter. Boxwood, hemlock, hellebores—lots of good plants.

In Hillsborough, Hwy 86 is Churton Street. If traveling south, turn left onto Queen Street. If traveling north, turn right. 117 is the third house on the left.

**Gardens on Tour—Wake County
Sunday, May 12, 1996**

❖ **David and Karen Duch, 1422 Lake Pine Drive, Cary, N. C. (467-0653). 9 a.m. to**

3 p.m. This urban garden of many unusual plants includes woodland settings as well as a scree garden in the sun.

In Raleigh take I-440 to US Hwy 1 and 64; take Hwy 1 and 64 to the Cary Parkway exit. Bear right at exit and go to Lake Pine Drive. Turn right onto Lake Pine. 1422 is two blocks on the left.

From Durham and Chapel Hill take I-40E to Cary Town Centre Boulevard, exit 291. Bear right at exit onto Town Centre Road and go to Maynard Road. Take a left onto Maynard to Lake Pine Drive. Take a left on Lake Pine and go two miles to 1422, which is on the right.

❖ **Jim Cooper, 5206 Hawkesbury Lane, Raleigh, N. C. (851-4784). 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

A delightful shade garden featuring a wealth of hostas and hellebores as well as daylilies. Although not a chapter member, Mr. Cooper has welcomed many visitors to his garden, which is a popular tour spot.

In Raleigh, go to the intersection of Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street at the N. C. State Fairgrounds, and follow these directions:

- ➡ From the intersection of Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street in Raleigh, go west on Hillsborough Street past the North Carolina State Fairgrounds to Powell Drive. Turn left onto Powell. About 1 mile on the right is Hawkesbury Lane. (Hawkesbury is the first right after crossing Melbourne.) Turn right on Hawkesbury and go to the dead-end. 5206 is the brick house on the right.

From Durham and Chapel Hill, take I-40E to the Blue Ridge Road exit in Raleigh. Turn right at the exit ramp stoplight. The next stoplight will be the intersection of Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street. Follow the directions for Raleigh that appear after the arrow.

❖ **J. C. Taylor, 609 South Lakeside, Raleigh, N. C. (851-3019).**

Although not a chapter member, Mr. Taylor has graciously invited us to visit his garden. On a small residential plot, this space is beautifully planted and meticulously kept.

In Raleigh, go to the intersection of Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street at the N. C. State Fairgrounds, and follow these directions:

- ➡ From the intersection of Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street at the N. C. State Fairgrounds, go west on Hillsborough Street toward Cary. At the second light, get into the left turn lane and bear left at the light. (The West German Garage will be on your right as you make the turn.) At the next light, the road will fork. Take the **right** road, which is Buck Jones. (This intersection is strange but is clearly marked.) Go 1 mile on Buck Jones to Norman Place, which is on the left with low brick entrance pillars marked "Roylene Acres." Turn left onto Norman Place. Continue 1 block to Lakeside; turn right onto Lakeside. 609 is the third house on the left, and it has a split rail fence.

From Durham and Chapel Hill, take I-40E to the Blue Ridge Road exit in Raleigh. Turn right at the exit ramp stoplight. The next stoplight will be the intersection of Blue Ridge Road and Hillsborough Street. Follow the directions for Raleigh that appear after the arrow.

❖ **Suzanne Edney, 1004 Kelly Road, Apex, N. C. (387-1479). 9 a. m. to 3 p.m.** This is a collection of gardens in the woods covering about an acre. Of special interest to rock gardeners is a planted, dry-stacked stone wall. Suzanne is conducting a workshop on tour day, so this will be a self-conducted tour.

From the intersection of NC Hwys 55 and 64 west of Raleigh, go west towards Pittsboro on NC 64. Take the first right onto Green Level Church Road. Go 0.25 mile. Turn left onto Kelly Road. The house is immediately on the right. The number 1004 is on the mailbox. There is a board fence on the road; the house is a gray ranch.

Garden Cacophony—February 11, 1996

by Bobby J. Ward

I felt like a ground hog this morning when I awoke to a bright sunny day—the first weekend since mid-December it seems when I was home and was not having rain, sleet, snow, ice or dreary overcast days outside. Last weekend, for example, we endured ice and snow and zero F in Raleigh. It has been much worse in other areas this season. This type of weather, while common in other locales, is rare for us in Piedmont North Carolina.

The neighborhood where I live has pines, white and loblolly, and they suffered badly from that ice and sleet storm; power was out for hours in some areas of Raleigh, most yards were scattered with limbs and pine needles, and some trees were toppled altogether, particularly the young ones that contained low branches. The yards were so filled with pine boughs that I thought for a moment “Binnam Wood had come to Dunsinane.” But this morning the crocus and snow drops were shining, albeit a bit ragged from the ice damage. An ivy (*Hedera colchica* ‘Paddy’s Pride’) in the far back of the yard blazed in the early morning sun as it snaked its way up a tulip poplar. A robin looked for worms in the wake of the last of the snow that melted yesterday and a eastern gray squirrel busied itself with repairing a nest in a white oak that had been tattered by the ice.

At mid-morning I was finishing my second cup of coffee and reading William Safire’s “On Language” column in the *New York Times* when the door bell rang; it was my neighbor inquiring if it was all right to use my driveway to get a truck and a front end loader to his yard to saw and remove three felled white pines and a huge red bud severely damaged by the ice. The crew must have been waiting for my acknowledgement because as soon as I

said “OK,” the neighborhood filled with the presence of Dueling Chainsaws. No sooner had the crew fired up their saws, than the neighbors behind me began felling damaged trees with chainsaws, and then, up the street, a third chorus of, you guessed it, chainsaws joined in. I figured there must be a law in Raleigh that prevents chainsaws from being used early on Sunday mornings since all seem to crank up at the same time. (I mean to check on that.)



Not to be outdone, the neighbor across the street who maintains a yard as clean as a golf course on his small grassy plot, decided to fire up his riding lawn mower to grind to smithereens the few green pine needles that had fallen. He rode round and round bronco style enjoying the faux spring that had come to Wimbleton Drive as the confused squirrel disappeared and the robin and chickadees left in a flutter, probably to a place some couple of hundred miles north where gardens are still dormant, under snow, and quiet. At the height of the noise, the neighborhood became redolent with Oil of Pine—sort of a kitchen cleaner fragrance.

By mid-day the intruding chainsaws had left and Wimbleton Drive returned to its peace, and the crocus had opened fully: *Crocus imperati*, *C. sieberi*, *C. korolkowii*, *C. chrysanthus* ‘Gipsy Girl,’ ‘Golden Bunch,’ ‘Snow Storm’; *C. susianus* ‘Cloth of Gold’. There were snowdrops: *Galanthus elwesii*, *G. caucasicus*, *G. nivalis*. And Hellebores: *H. orientalis*, *H. niger* ‘White Magic’, *H. ‘atrorubens of gardens’*, *H.*

argutifolius, *H. foetidus* ‘Wester Flisk’. One *Helleborus niger* transplant from Nina Lambert’s garden in Ithaca, New York, called ‘Potter’s Wheel’ had buds that are swelling for the first time. Numerous narcissus were poking up but none were in bloom just yet. *Arum italicum* had emerged and wrinkled poet’s laurel berries stood out in the noon day sun.

When I made “the tour” to see what was in bloom, the noise of the shouting crocus was deafening, though more melodious and symphonic than the cacophony of Dueling Chainsaws.

Chapter member Bobby J. Ward gardens in Raleigh. He is on leave of absence as the editor of *The Trillium*. He made the above post to the Alpine-L garden discussion group on 11 February 1996. e-mail to biblio@nando.net

Spring

Behold the young, the rosy Spring
Gives to the breeze her scented wing,
While virgin graces, warm with May,
Fling roses o’er her dewy way.
The murmuring billows of the deep
Have languished into silent sleep;
And mark! the flitting sea-birds lave
Their plumes in the reflecting wave;
While cranes from hoary winter fly
To flutter in a kinder sky.
Now the genial star of day
Dissolves the murky clouds away,
And cultured field and winding stream
Are freshly glittering in his beam.

Now the earth prolific swells
With leafy buds and flowery bells;
Gemming shoots the olive twine;
Clusters bright festoon the vine;
All along the branches creeping,
Through the velvet foliage peeping,
Little infant fruits we see
Nursing into luxury.

Anacreon of Greece
Translation by Thomas Moore
(Ireland, 1779-1852)

Chapter Picnic

This year, Tony and Michelle Avent have agreed to hold the Piedmont Chapter's annual picnic at Plant Delights Nursery near Raleigh. The picnic will be held on Saturday, April 27, at noon. Bring a covered dish to share (and a lawn chair if you'd like). Those of you who have not been to Plant Delights are in for a treat—a waterfall, shade and sun gardens, and a unique collection of plants. Plant Delight Nursery is about twenty minutes south of Raleigh:

From I-40, take the Lake Wheeler Road exit, then head south away from Raleigh. Go 6.5 miles exactly, then turn left on Hwy 1010. Go 4.5 miles exactly, then turn right on Sauls Road. We are 1.0 miles on the left.

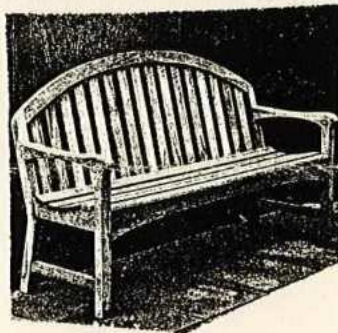
From downtown Raleigh, take Hwy 401 South to the second stoplight past the K-Mart and Wal-Mart complex. Take a left at the Circle K gas station on Old Stage Road. Go 4.3 miles to the stoplight, then take a left on Hwy 1010. Go 1.8 miles, then turn right on Sauls Road. We are 1.0 miles on the left.

News of Note

Piedmont Chapter member Paul Jones served as the nomenclature reviewer for a new book from Timber Press (Portland, Oregon) entitled *Rock Garden Plants of North America*. The book is an anthology of articles from the first fifty years of bulletins published by the North American Rock Garden Society. Timber Press can be reached by phone (1-800-327-5680) or e-mail (orders@timber_press.com).

Your words wanted

Your gardening experiences might be interesting and informative to members of the Piedmont Chapter. If you have ideas for an article in *The Trillium* based on your experiences with particular plants or unusual sites, or both, please contact Bobby Ward, editor, or Barbara Scott, interim editor. Their phone numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses are noted on page 6 of this newsletter. Let us hear from you.



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Who are we?

The Piedmont Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS) is located in the Triangle area of North Carolina, which includes Chapel Hill, Durham, and Raleigh, North Carolina. The chapter meets on the third Saturday of the following months: September, October, November, January, February, and March. Each meeting includes a brief business session, a presentation by a speaker, and a plant auction. Except as noted, meetings are held at 10 a.m. in the Totten Center at the North Carolina Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill, N. C.

The chapter's regular activities also include a seedling plant sale to members at its September meeting, a spring garden tour (which usually occurs in April or May), and an annual spring covered-dish picnic and meeting (which customarily occurs in May). The chapter also publishes *The Trillium*, a newsletter which is distributed to all members on the first of July, September, November, January, and March.

The annual membership fee for the Piedmont Chapter is \$10 for an individual and \$15 for a household. (Household memberships receive a single copy of *The Trillium*.) To join the Piedmont Chapter or to renew memberships, send a check for the appropriate amount to the chapter treasurer, Bob Wilder, at the following address: 1213 Dixie Trail, Raleigh, N. C. 27607.

The North American Rock Garden Society has an annual membership fee of \$25, which includes a subscription to the quarterly *Bulletin*, an annual seed exchange, opportunities to attend national meetings, and NARGS book store purchases at reduced prices. To join the national society, your check for \$25 made payable to "NARGS" can be sent to the Piedmont Chapter treasurer, who will forward it to the national executive secretary.

A list of the chapter's board members and their addresses is provided on pages 6 and 7 of this newsletter. Please contact a board member if you have questions about the chapter or if you wish to make comments about its activities.

Piedmont Chapter Upcoming Meeting. Chapter meetings are held in the Totten Center at the UNC Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill, N. C.

March 16, 1996, Saturday, 10:00 a.m.

Rock Gardening in the South Mildred Pinell, Atlanta Botanical Garden, Atlanta, Georgia

Members whose last names begin with the letters R through Z should bring refreshments to the meeting.

Annual Picnic. April 27, 1996, Noon - 2 p.m. Details are on page 9.

Annual Garden Tour. May 11 and 12, 1996. This year the Piedmont Chapter's annual garden tour will include a total of seven gardens in Orange County and Wake County during the weekend of May 11 and 12. Orange County gardens will be featured on Saturday, May 11; Wake County gardens will be open on Sunday, May 12. The gardens on tour will be open to the public as well, and dividing the tour into two different days should make it possible for more chapter members to participate. Please note that all of the gardens (except the Grunewald's garden in Hillsborough) will be open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (The Grunewald's garden will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.) Descriptions of the gardens and directions for finding them are provided on the enclosed flyer. Thanks to Gail Seybolt in Chapel Hill for organizing this year's tour. If you have questions about the tour, please call Gail during the evening at (919) 942-1871.

Other Events. 1996 Chapel Hill Spring Garden Tour. Saturday, April 13. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For the first time ever, selected gardens in the historic districts and other areas of Chapel Hill will be open for public view. Walk or take an old-fashioned trolley ride to each garden stop. (Rain date is Sunday, April 14, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Tickets are \$10 in advance; \$12 the day of the tour. (Proceeds from the tour will go to the North Carolina Botanical Gardens.) For more information, call (919) 542-5556 or (919) 542-1740.

The Trillium
Piedmont Chapter
The North American Rock Garden Society
Barbara Scott, Interim Editor
1321 Chaney Road
Raleigh, NC 27606



FIRST CLASS

Bobby J. Ward & Roy Dicks
930 Wimbledon Dr.
Raleigh NC 27609-4356

Mailed March 4, 1996