



The Trillium

newsletter of
the Piedmont Chapter of the
North American Rock Garden Society

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Chapel Hill-Durham-Raleigh, N.C.

Jan.-Feb. 2000

The glories of summer . . .

Rain Lilies: Zephyranthes and Habranthus

by Nancy Goodwin

Rain lilies or fairy Lilies are among the glories of late summer. Many zephyranthes species reach their peak as the days begin to shorten in August. Day after day they produce a fresh crops of flowers each morning. I first met them in mother's garden where she had *Zephyranthes candida* blooming near the back door of her house throughout August and September. This marsh-loving Argentine bulb has exquisite, pure white, upfacing flowers that spread wide when the sun touches them. Clumps of slender, dark green, round leaves often persist throughout winter. Someone once asked me why mother's grew so much better than mine do at Montrose. I puzzled about it for a while and in all honesty had to admit that she was right. Mother did grow them more successfully than I do. I asked her how she did it and she confessed that she poured her dish water

See Goodwin. Continued on page 2

With Watson and Flores . . .

Learning New Plants in Chile

by Bobby J. Ward

In Chile during the month of June, the days become noticeably shorter as late autumn slips toward the winter solstice, a reminder that the seasons in the southern and northern hemispheres unfold during opposite times of the year. From the patio of their home in the town of Los Andes, John Watson and Anita Watson de Flores can see Mount Aconcagua shouldered on the horizon if the weather is clear and smog from metropolitan Santiago hasn't engulfed them. It is the tallest mountain in the southern hemisphere and at an elevation of 22,831 feet is anchored just inside Argentina at its border with Chile. Aconcagua serves as their back yard sentinel and reminds them of the Andean altiplano flora of Anita's native land and John's adopted home.

Here in the Chilean heartland, deciduous trees give up their leaves reluctantly and unhurriedly. No

See Ward. Continued on page 4

Our January meeting of NARGS

Saturday, January 15, 2000

10:00 a.m., Totten Center

N.C. Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill, N.C.

"The Garden in Winter"

Nancy Goodwin

Hillsborough, N.C.

Members last names "A through "H" bring cookies, etc.

Our February meeting of NARGS

Saturday, February 19, 2000

10:00 a.m., Totten Center

N.C. Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill, N.C.

"Four Continents and a Camera:

A Year in Pursuit of Plants

Bobby J. Ward, Raleigh, N.C.

Members last names "I" through "O" bring goodies, etc.

on them almost every day. Rain lilies need water to bloom well. They prefer rain but in the middle of North Carolina we can't count on that. Hillsborough had the driest summers on record during 1998 and 1999. I watered my most vulnerable plants, mostly the large trees, but when Tropical Storm Earl came by in early September 1998 dousing us with over three inches of rain, habranthus and zephyranthes came into full bloom. I am still waiting for rain this year.

These plants are members of the Amaryllidaceae or daffodil family. The name, zephyranthes, means flower of the west wind. Reportedly this refers to the fact that these natives of the Western Hemisphere were carried east to Europe. I prefer to think that the west wind often brings the rain so necessary for their bloom. Habranthus means graceful flower and that it most certainly is. Most of these plants are native to areas with hot summers, and can withstand lengthy droughts, coming into flower and growth when rainfall is adequate. Both are monocots growing from bulbs and often bearing a solitary flower at the tip of each stalk. The flowers have three sepals and three petals with six stamens surrounding a single style. These two genera differ in subtle ways. Zephyranthes hold their flowers vertically at the tops of their stalks and have stamens of equal lengths. Habranthus hold their flowers at an angle at the top of the stalks and have stamens of varying lengths. Many species of both genera produce their elegant, heat-loving flowers in late summer.

They don't all wait until late summer. *Zephyranthes atamasca*, the Atamasco Lily, opens the season in late spring. I don't grow this native rain lily well for it prefers low, damp woodland areas where it blooms before the leaves expand fully on the trees. White flowers tinged with pink or purple appear in mid-spring. *Z. treatiae* and the pinker *Z. simpsonii* are similar requiring the same environment.

Pink flowers shaded to white appear by early June on *Habranthus robustus* growing throughout the gardens at Montrose. This is one of the larger flowered members of this genus and it, too, comes from the Argentine. Throughout summer flushes of flowers appear whenever we have a little moisture in the soil. Fleshy blue-green leaves are flat and much broader than those of *Zephyranthes candida*.

By July many hybrids and species brighten the garden. Near the woods *Habranthus tubispathus* var.

texensis, the common yellow rain lily of Texas and Argentina, blooms before its leaves appear. The flowers seem to lean to one side and bear yellow petals striped with red that come together to form a dark red blotch in the interior of each flower. The back of each yellow petal is shaded bronze. In the Dianthus walk *H. tubispathus* var. *roseus* opens gray-pink, nodding flowers by mid-morning each day. Botanists and nursery people disagree with whether the plant as I have described might be a separate species, *Habranthus texensis* but I believe it is a variety.

On the opposite side of the walk *Zephyranthes citrina* produces successive flushes of flowers throughout the summer. The bulbs of this zephyranthes seem to bloom on cue. Dozens of flowers open on the same day and several weeks later they all do it again. Green leaves have tinges of red-brown near their base but the flowers are pure yellow.

Golden yellow *Zephyranthes flavissima* blooms earlier than most of its cousins. This rain lily, from Argentina and Brazil, surprised me by surviving near zero temperatures for many years. Once it begins to flower, it continues throughout summer, quickly multiplying above ground through seeds and below ground with ever-dividing bulbs. *Z. flavissima* never gets extra water in my garden and remains a constant bright yellow star in the Blue and Yellow garden from late spring into fall.

Zephyranthes x 'Capricorn' has burgundy buds and a spathe with burgundy stripes. The flower opens wide to reveal interior petals with burgundy stripes over a pale yellow base and six stamens held at right angles above their filaments. The petals shade to green on both sides. We put it in the "Difficult Color Garden" where it enhances plants with red flowers and shrubs with burgundy leaves.

John Fairey and Carl Schoenfeld from Yucca Do Nursery found *Zephyranthes* 'Labuffarosea' and named it for the place where they found it. This, one of the most elegant rain lilies, has upfacing flowers and nearly vertical anthers. Broad outer sepals form a base for the narrower inner petals. I grow two forms, one pink and the other white with pink overtones. It blooms in light shade as well as in sun. We see flush after flush of flowers that never look wilted or hot even when I do! Its similar cousin, *Z. morrisclintii*, has smaller, white flowers tinged with pink. This species has bluer, narrower leaves and the flowers do not open as wide as those of *Z.*

'Labuffarosea'.

Z. macrosiphon has a dark burgundy spathe covering the bud. This covering folds back as the flower opens to reveal deep rose-pink petals shaded to white in the interior. This star-shaped rain lily is one of my favorites, for the pink is clear and vivid and the clumps bloom again and again throughout summer.

Z. grandiflora is similar but does not bloom as profusely for me. The flowers have paler pink, slightly crepey petals. This rain lily is supposedly sterile, but occasionally I get a seed pod that I promptly sow.

Zephyranthes drummondii is a taxonomist's challenge. It has had many names and even been considered a cooperia. In the afternoon exquisite pure white, fragrant flowers open at the tops of long perianth tubes. It comes from sites with alkaline soil and may perform better with lime. The similar *Z. traubii*, also white, blooms late in September on shorter stalks but also with a tube about five inches long.

The narrow exterior petals of *Z. commersoniana* are white flushed with pink. The interior of the flower has slender lines that lead to a green throat. Although I can't see that all the stamens are the same length, I accept the name as all I have for it. This rain lily comes from Uruguay and it is hardy for me. As with all of my half-hardy bulbs, I plant most in the garden, but keep one pot in the greenhouse as insurance. *Z. lancasterae* is another white-flowered, long-blooming zephyranthes with petals flushed with pink.

Some of the most beautiful zephyranthes are pale yellow. *Z. smallii* has "primrose" yellow, scentless flowers. Stalk after stalk, each bearing only one flower, appear throughout summer. Each flower almost always produces a capsule full of seeds that I plant as soon as ripe. This zephyranthes must be increased through seeds; it doesn't multiply underground. In cooler weather, each flower will last several days. Mexican *Z. reginae* also has clear, pale yellow flowers off and on all summer. Before I knew the species name, I sold this as *Z. species* 'Valles Yellow'.

The most dramatic and the largest-flowered habranthus in my garden is *H. brachyandrus* with pink flowers and dark burgundy throats. The stalk may be twelve inches tall or taller. We grow it near *Tradescantia pallida* 'Purple Heart', salvias and lespedezas. We get flush after flush of flowers in August

and September.

Most rain lilies grow best in well-drained soil in the sun. I have read that they prefer sand to clay and that the soil should be nearly neutral. I grow mine in clay loam but give them mostly sunny locations. I add a little lime to those I keep in pots. *Zephyranthes candida* is probably the hardiest species but I can vouch only for those growing in my cold Zone 7 climate.

This is far from a complete list of rain lilies. This isn't even all that I grow. I have some that haven't bloomed and I have others that don't fit any description I have seen. A blue-flowered one, labeled "Habranthus from Mexico" defies my taxonomic abilities. Hybrid *Z. 'Grandjax'* has large, clear pink flowers shaded to white and then to green in the throat. It came as 'Aquarius'. After growing *Z. simpsonii* for many years, my one pot of seed-grown plants bloomed in September with a single, pink flower. Narrow blue-green leaves preceding the flower had led me to believe I had the right thing. A year later the other bulbs in the pot bloomed and were correct, with large white flowers suffused with pink in spring.

I will always select seeds of these genera from seed exchanges and I hope I never see their end. Getting to know another rain lily is like getting to know a new friend. I know I will like it because I know its relatives and associates. But I know also that there will be something special about it that makes it different from all the rest.

[Nancy gardens at Montrose Gardens in Hillsborough, N.C. She is one of the founding members of the Piedmont Chapter of NARGS and has served on the NARGS national board. This article originally appeared in a revised form in Allen Lacy's "Homeground," Fall 1998 Used by permission.]

Sources of Rain Lilies

Montrose Gardens sells pots of zephyranthes and habranthus species after garden tours, which are held Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. and Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. Call Nancy at 919-732-7787 for reservations.

Other sources include:

Arrowhead Alpines, Fowlerville, Mich.
Plant Delights Nursery, Raleigh, N.C.
We-Du Nurseries, Marion, N.C.
Woodlanders, Aiken, S.C.
Yucca Do Nursery, Hempstead, Texas

Ward on Chile. Continued from page 1

blasts of chilled winds here nor strong weather fronts, familiar to us in the more temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere, plunge temperatures quickly and rip leaves from trees. This middle part of Chile was originally forested but now has been heavily timbered for fuel and construction, which may explain why the streets of Los Andes, with the exception of an occasional *Araucaria* sp., are lined with a collection of non-native trees: *Morus alba*, *Melia* sp., *Platanus* sp., *Eucalyptus* sp., and *Populus* sp. Some deforestation here has also resulted from the mining of Chile's large copper deposits. The lands in the Central Valley are fertile though somewhat arid with only about 15 to 20 inches of rain per year. Vineyards apron the fields for great distances on either side of the road, and commercial plantings of Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) dot the lower hill-sides.

In Los Andes, sited about 200 hundred feet above sea level and an hour's drive north of Santiago, John and Anita operate Flores & Watson Seed, which was permanently relocated from Petts Wood, Kent (England) in 1996. Prior to that time, John divided his time between England and Chile, the latter becoming a base of operation for seed collecting trips that are now concentrated in the South American Andes, primarily Chile and Argentina, including Patagonia.

When I visited them a few months ago during their austral autumn, several species of humming-birds whirled about their heads just outside the doorway of their home, sipping from numerous feeders Anita had dangled about the yard on clothes lines, grape vines, and the house eaves. The chief gardener of the household here is Anita, and like most of us she maintains an eclectic mingle of plants: primula, snowdrops, and cyclamen—plants that John knew and loved in Kent—and flats of seeds from the Alpine Garden Society and the North American Rock Garden Society. In addition, pots of native bulbs accompany crocus, narcissus, and sprekelia from other countries (I took them several species of rain lilies including our North Carolina native, *Zephyranthes atamasca*).

Because Los Andes was enjoying a spell of mild weather—a Chilean late Indian summer just before the winter solstice—we took a two-day seed collecting trip north along Chilean Route 5 toward Los Vilos. The road from Los Andes veers westward and parallels the coastline, occasionally offering spec-

tacular views of the southern Pacific Ocean. The first plant to attract our attention was north of La Ligua at El Melon pass (at elevation 1200'). It was a seven-foot tall *Lobelia tupa* (Campanulaceae), whose sap John advised causes dermatitis on contact. It has pale leaves and red flowers, somewhat brick colored, that are produced on terminal spikes. We collected seed and were careful not to irritate the plant. At the same location we saw *Eryngium* aff. *paniculatum* (Umbelliferae) growing about knee high on a cliff above a roadside arroyo. Its stiff bracts are gray-white, and its basal leaves are leathery. Anita told me that they have seen this eryngium growing much farther south in Patagonia, suggesting that it might grow in areas colder than the Zone 8 we were collecting in at the time. Across the road we saw yellow cassias, a red-flowered *Tristerix* sp. (a bushy member of the Lorantaceae that is parasitic on shrubs), and *Fuchsia lyciodes*. It was the fuchsia that appealed most to my eye. At six-feet tall, it is a shrub whose diminutive flowers and sepals are pinkish red. The flowers are solitary and shy and are far more beautiful than their bodacious cousins—those cultivars that are widely available as hanging basket plants here in the U.S. A few feet away John showed me *Salpiglossis sinuata*, an attractive member of the Solanaceae, growing about two feet tall. It boasted large purplish flowers with hints of darker throat stripes. The entire plant is a bit sticky and hairy, providing its winsome local name, *panza de burro* or donkey's belly. The Royal Horticulture Society's Index of Garden Plants, however, gives it a rather understated moniker: painted tongue. John told me that various cultivars have been derived from *S. sinuata*—in a range of colors—including the lovely 'Kew Blue'.

It was a bit disorienting for me to see the sun hanging low in the northern sky at noon as we continued along Chile Route 5. Although the road was paved, it was being widened and improved along much of its entire course throughout the country. On the segments we traveled, we were required occasionally to detour around construction equipment or to stop altogether for the convenience of other vehicles. These minor delays meant we were able to take an unhurried look at plants close-up along new road cuts. It was clear that the Chilean construction project was damaging many plants, burying some under sand and new pavement, or inadvertently opening up new opportunities for grazing by goats and cattle. In one area, I saw

rhodophiala and oxalis (both in flower) being smothered by bulldozers.

After a roadside picnic lunch, we stopped near Los Molles at an abandoned pasture that slopes downward and eventually spills onto sandy cliffs overlooking a rocky shore and the ocean about 50 feet below. Here we found *Baccharis* sp. and *Haplopappus* sp. (both of them Asteraceae members), more fuchsia, various cactus, the bright yellow *Oxalis perdicaria* (also known as *Oxalis lobata*) and *Puya* sp. (a bromeliad). We also saw *Tecophilaea violiflora* (Liliaceae), unfortunately not in bloom.

By now it was late afternoon and the coastal sky was gray and foggy; I was not prepared for the startling sight I was about to see: orange-red flowers of *Rhodophiala* sp. (Amaryllidaceae) scattered about the rocky, sandy pasture. It was exhilarating and breath-taking to see flowers 2- to 2 1/2 inches in length on scapes 12 inches tall (a few even soared to 18 inches—up to my knees). Unlike Anita and me, John controlled his enthusiasm with typical British reserve. We were seeing rhodophialas blooming late in the Chilean autumn, essentially the equivalent of early December in the Northern Hemisphere. The flower color, its blooming season, and long supporting scape did not exactly match any species that either John or Anita knew. In *Plantas Altoandinas en la Flora Silvestre de Chile*, which John Watson co-authored with Chilean colleagues in 1998, no fewer than eight species of rhodophiala (or “añañuca de los Andes” as they are known in Chilean Spanish) are catalogued. None of these eight species is the common oxblood lily (*Rhodophiala bifida*, familiar to us in the southern U.S.), nor apparently the species we had just found.

Near sunset at the town of Antilaf, a beachfront town, Anita found the pink flowering *Alstroemeria pelegrina*, the Peruvian lily (Liliaceae), growing among rocks just above high tide. Regrettably there were no flowers to admire. However, in rapidly fading light, Anita, primarily by touch, was able to divine seed scattered at its base. *Oxalis succulenta*, with yellow flowers and a long woody root or rhizome, was perched nearby among other rocks.

We spent the night in Los Vilos, and the next day we continued northward and recorded another species of oxalis—this one with soft, pale yellow flowers; *Cassia coquimbensis* (Leguminosae), now generally cataloged as *Senna cumingii* var. *coquimbensis*; another rhodophiala species with fresh emerging leaves but no flowers; and *Conanthera campanulata*

(Liliaceae). At Socos off Route 5 (near Ovalle road) in yet another pasture we found *Pasithea caerulea* (Liliaceae), the only species of this genus. Although not in bloom, Anita said its flowers are pale blue.

We took time for a mid-afternoon lunch, barbecuing a piece of beef purchased the day before in Los Andes. While Anita and I gathered sticks and firewood for the grill—made from pieces of an abandoned automobile fender we found—John foraged the pasture for new plants and seed. I gathered rocks to construct a primitive fireplace and discovered a scorpion under one (I left it in place and carefully chose more hospitable rocks). We dined while surrounded by *Cestrum* sp. or more likely *Nicotiana glauca*, *Baccharis* sp. *Trichopetalum plumosum* (Liliaceae), *Oxalis perdicaria*—and still more scores of rhodophilias, which were growing in pure sand on the north (sunward) side of a wooded area. None of them were in flower and they appeared to be yet a third species. At this site we also found *Leucocoryne* sp. (Liliaceae), a genus that flowered prolifically in parts of Chile following the El Niño rains of 1998. Unfortunately, survey stakes and markers suggested that this pasture, where we lunched, is destined to become highway property.

On the long drive back home to Los Andes, John and Anita told me of their planned trips to Patagonia with the Alpine Garden Society (in November 1999) and their own seed collecting trips which would keep them in that area and away from their Los Andes home till February 2000, when they will then return and rush to get out their next Flores and Watson seed list.

The next day my return flight from Santiago took me eastward to Argentina, across the backbone of the Andes to Buenos Aires. It was a sunset flight and the pink snow-capped cordillera below me was nothing short of spectacular. As Santiago receded in the distance, I was already planning a return trip—this time to Patagonia to see the plants that John Watson and Anita Flores spoke of so affectionately.

[NARGS member Bobby J. Ward lives and gardens in Raleigh, N.C.]

Book Review . . .

Bobby J. Ward. 1999. *A Contemplation Upon Flowers: Garden Plants in Myth and Literature*. Timber Press, Portland, OR. \$24.95 list; Available from NARGS Book Service for \$20 to NARGS (national) members.

by Jack Elliott

Here is a book that is different, a book that will delight gardeners who wish to know more about the flowers they grow. It is not about their botany or cultivation but about the love and respect or occasionally even fear they engendered in the past, in mythology, in herbalism, and in the writings of the historians, poets, essayists and playwrights who have described them during the last thousand years or more.

A look at the contents page with some eighty chapter headings from acanthus to zinnia might suggest that there is comparatively little to enthuse the rock gardener, but there are such obvious headings as adonis, anemone and pulsatilla, crocus, colchicum, fritillary, gentian, hepatica, phlox, primrose, and violet, pansy, and viola, as well as more general headings like bellflowers, daisies, snapdragon, and speedwell into which to delve, and who could resist weeds as a subject dear to us all. This is not a reference book in which to look up specific plants in your garden but rather a book for the true lover of plants in which to browse. As Bobby Ward says in his introduction "Pick it up and read it front to back, or dart about from flower to flower."

Most of the chapters are similar in form, with a description of the genus or family, a full account of the derivation of its name, and its story in mythology, in history and in literature. Every section contains a fascinating collection of quotations, which are sufficiently full in most cases to give a feeling of the original source. There is a very comprehensive 15-page bibliography which will enable the reader to research further from the original sources.

I think any reader will be impressed with the staggering amount of research that has gone into this book, and will appreciate some of the difficulties faced by the author in bringing together such a wealth of quotation, when one considers how nomenclature and especially the use of common names has changed over the centuries. There are many examples in the text of such problematic pearls as "Narcissus came arrayed in purple Paint, and nu-

merous Spots of yellow stain the Flower," written in 1665. I was interested to read how invaluable to the author the World Wide Web had been as a source of literary databases and the literature itself.

In addition to the chapters on plants the book has a fascinating chapter entitled "Saints of the Spade." Like all the previous chapters this contains much that will be new to the gardener. Apart from our old friend St. Swithin, we are introduced to St Phocas who sadly was decapitated and buried in his beautiful garden, to St. Fiacre who suffered at the hands of a lady gardener, and who was also patron saint of French taxi drivers—an unlikely combination, and to Santa Rosa de Santa Maria, and numerous other minor saints, all fully described for us. The book ends with two very full indices of plant names and peoples names.

[Dr. Jack Elliott is a retired physician who lives and gardens in Kent, England. He is past president of the Alpine Garden Society, the author of several books, and recipient of the Royal Horticulture Society's Victoria Medal of Honour. This review originally appeared in the NARGS Rock Garden Quarterly, Fall 1999. Used by permission.]

Hellebore Open House

Pine Knot Farms Perennials
681 Rock Church Road
Clarksville, Virginia 23927
Telephone (804) 252-1990

Open House for Hellebores: March 4 and 11, 2000
from 9:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m.

Garden and nursery open to the public on Fridays
and Saturdays March to June and September and
October

Directions: one-half mile on left in Virginia on
Hwy. 39, north of Henderson, N.C.

Contact Dick Tyler for further information.

Book Review . . .

Joyce Fingerut and Rex Murfitt. 1999. *Creating and Planting Garden Troughs*. B.B. Makey Books, Wayne, PA. \$21 list; available from the NARGS Book Service to NARGS (national) members for \$17.

by Bob Brotherson

This is a combination how-to and source book written primarily for the beginning trough gardener, but it is also a useful reference book for the experienced trough lover. The book is divided into five chapters. The first one (Introduction to Troughs and Hypertufa) is a short history of troughs, from their beginnings as cattle feeders to their ultimate use as natural stone environments for the smaller alpine and rock garden plants, and the invention and development of hypertufa as a light-weight substitute for stone.

The second chapter (Constructing a Hypertufa Trough) is a detailed discussion on the handling of hypertufa and the step-by-step construction of a hypertufa trough. For the beginner, the instructions here are excellent.

The third chapter (Planting a Trough) covers a wide range of subjects—soil mixes, placement and exposure of troughs, the addition of rocks, companion planting, maintenance and management, ecological settings, timing of planting, positioning of plants—at times overwhelmed by detail, but all of it helpful.

The fourth chapter (Plants for Garden Troughs) opens with the statement "There is no such thing as a 'trough plant'." This is a thrown-down gauntlet for those who believe that trough gardening is an art form with an esthetic as strict as that of bonsai, that these rules are broached when a trough becomes a planter, that the distinction between trough and planter is strong and definite. I think a good example of this is shown on pages ii and iii at the beginning of this book. On page ii, photographs of troughs in Rex Murfitt's garden, taken by Jane Grushow, are presented. These troughs have been planted with cushion plants and other alpine, and the skill and beauty of the plantings are breathtaking. On the opposite page a trough is shown planted with variegated ivy and begonias. This trough is no longer a trough; it has become a planter. The Murfitt troughs point out that trough gardening is a skill unto itself. This chapter also has a very good, very inclusive list of plants for troughs. Note that they are

all mountain plants, all rock garden plants. No begonias here. The fifth chapter (Planting Plans for Troughs) contains schematic drawings of grouped troughs as suggested arrangements of a collection as well as drawings in perspective by Rex Murfitt of plantings in individual troughs.

These five chapters are followed by a section called "Sources and Resources" in which the availability of almost everything presented in the text is listed. The book's format is an eccentric one, which you will see for yourself when you buy a copy, which you should most certainly do if troughs interest you. The book is loaded with information.

[Bob Brotherson lives in Revere, Penna.; this book review originally appeared in *The Dodecatheon*, newsletter of the Delaware Valley Chapter of NARGS. Used by permission.]

NARGS Coming Events

"Chasing the Blues" Eastern Winter Study Weekend

January 28-30, 2000

Syracuse, New York

Hosted by the Adirondack Chapter

Registrar: E. George Erdman, Jr

Telephone: (607) 748-3984

"The Wild, Wild West" Western Winter Study Weekend

February 25-27, 2000

San Francisco Airport, California

Hosted by the Western Chapter

Registrar: Elly Bade

Telephone: (510) 644-1656

"Northwestern Exposures" Annual Meeting

July 26-28, 2000

Seattle, Washington

Hosted by the Northwestern Chapter

Registrar: Alice Lauber

Telephone: (206) 363-7357

Book Review

Daniel J. Hinkley. 1999. *The Explorer's Garden—Rare and Unusual Perennials*. Timber Press, Portland, OR., \$39.95 list; available from the NARGS Book Service to NARGS (national) members for \$32.

by Todd Lasseigne

Upon being asked to review Daniel J. Hinkley's *The Explorer's Garden: Rare and Unusual Perennials*, I at first paused and thought: how does one review any of Dan's works? Then I realized that this could possibly be one of the easiest reviews ever written. Indeed, to review a book so meticulously compiled and so competently and wonderfully written is hardly a challenge. No biting criticisms are needed here. Quite simply, this book stands far and away from a largely mediocre and often poorly-edited, ever-burgeoning mass of garden-oriented books.

Unlike the multitudes of so-called "plant encyclopedias" flooding today's book markets, *The Explorer's Garden* is organized by grouping botanically-related or similarly-used garden plants into a manageable 28 chapters. These are amusingly titled: "Paris in the Springtime," "Cuckoo for Cardamine," and "Beyond Frilly Filler: The Genus *Thalictrum*". Preceding these chapters, however, is an all-too-short discussion (only five pages) of vitally important topics such as nomenclature, ethical issues, nativity, and hardiness. Of these, I particularly applaud Dan's tackling the hardiness question, since he at once both dispels the absurdity of utilizing only the U.S.D.A. or *Sunset* cold hardiness zone maps and intelligently discusses how provenance, microclimate, water, and plant-inherent hardening-off processes contribute to holistic plant hardiness. Finally, readers are exhorted to common sense, being reminded that plant nativity or ecology is not necessarily directly related to apparent ranges in physiological tolerance.

The bulk of this book, of course, is devoted to plants. Of particular service to horticulture is the spotlight given to plants which have received little or no recognition anywhere outside of specialty nursery catalogs, botanical journals and monographs, or floras. Thus, readers are delighted with introductions to the hordes of newly discovered Chinese *Epimedium*'s, the outrageous Asian species of *Podophyllum* (a look at Dan's photo of *P. difforme* on p. 117 will make any plant-lover weep), as well as an unending array of exquisite *Arisaema*'s, *Asarum*'s, and the unearthly umbrella-leaved composites, *Syneilesis* and *Ainsliaea*. Even the omnipresent hardy geraniums are treated unconventionally, exposing

the reader to new and unfamiliar cultivars.

Three points deserve particular mention. I was especially appreciative of the careful attention given other people involved with introducing, hybridizing, or describing plants that are new to science or are poorly understood scientifically. Thus, we learn about Père David, Paul Perny, Wen-pei Fang, Mikinori Ogisu, Roy Lancaster, Martyn Rix, Sue and Robin White, William Stearn, and Darrel Probst, all in the context of only one genus – *Epimedium* of course! A veritable history lesson is provided here. Secondly, Dan carefully discusses nigh-hopelessly confounded plant groups, attempting to alleviate rife confusion among horticulturists and botanists alike (e.g., especially well-done for *Rodgersia*). Lastly, we must all thank Dan for providing basic garden information. After all, not even the much-vaunted *Flora of China* makes note of propagation techniques or garden performance, and certainly no botanical text would ever tell us which plants to group together for maximal design effect.

There are amazingly few nit-picking errors to address in this book, a tribute to author, editor, and publisher alike. For instance, the mention of one native species of *Polygonatum* occurring in the eastern U.S. is incorrect in that a second species (*P. pubescens*) also occurs. Also, a sentence alluding to the current opinion of some botanists that *Smilacina* should be lumped into *Maianthemum* might have been warranted. Also, *Uvularia caroliniana* should read *U. carolina*. Although comments such as these may often portray reviewers as a villainous lot, I must point to the paucity of errors and difficulty in finding them encountered by this reviewer.

In short, buy this book for your horticultural library. Buy it for your friends. Buy it for Lynn Harrison's (and Dan's) sumptuous, flawless, and artistic photography. Buy it so Dan can write the follow-up woody plant volume! Most of all, however, buy this book to gain a better understanding of our lone planet's marvelous and awe-inspiring plant diversity and of each constituent species' uniqueness – this all contributing to a constant enrichment of our gardens.

[NARGS member Todd Lasseigne is a native of Thibodaux, Louisiana. He is completing his requirements for a Ph.D. in Horticultural Science at NCSU. His research interests include stress physiology of ornamental plants, and heat tolerance and mineral nutrition. Todd is also interested in "hard-core plantsmanship;" he has just returned from a botanical trip to China.]

2000 Call for Ephemeral Seeds

by Nancy Swell

A number of us participate 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, Ranunculus, Thalictrum; and the genera Asarum, Colchicum, Corydalis, Cyclamen, Dicentra, Dryas, Erythronium, Galanthus, Hacquetia, Hylomecon, Jeffersonia, Lysichiton, Salix, Sanguinaria, Shortia, Stylophorum and Trillium.

This list is not exhaustive, but please restrict offerings to species with known short viability or those which exhibit dramatic differences in germination when sown promptly.

If you have seeds to offer, please fill out the form below and mail it in now - the deadline is March 15, 2000. The list will be published in a spring newsletter, letters, or e-mails along with the procedure for obtaining seeds.

Some guidelines for submission:

1. A modest offering is advised. If you submitted one or two last year, increase it a little. Try to offer up to half a dozen species, but no more.

2. 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 donors. If you don't have last year's list, keep the one that comes out this year for reference. I have last year's list available for sending.

3. Diversity is one of our goals. Last year we were short in Colchicum, and Epimedium and there is never enough Shortia.

4. Don't offer items from your garden that you haven't seen flower and fruit. Wait another year.

5. 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.

When the list is published, these are the directions that will be given to requesters:

To request seeds, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the donor. (If the donor is across an international boundary, obtain International Reply Coupons). Write the species name on the return envelope. If you are requesting more than one species from a donor, send the appropriate number

of envelopes, though multiple forms of the same species are safe for a single envelope. You are responsible for appropriate packaging and sufficient postage. Donors are not expected to reply or to send seed if you have not included enough postage and protective packaging. Don't forget the postal surcharge of \$0.07 for packages that must be hand canceled.

Submission form (or suitable facsimile):

Ephemeral Seeds for the 2000 Exchange

Your Name & Address:

Genus, species and form

Collection Date

Mail this form to:

Nancy Swell

505 Baldwin Road

Richmond, VA 23229

or e-mail swell@erols.com

The deadline is March 15, 2000.

Join NARGS

Join the **North American Rock Garden Society**. Benefits include a subscription to the *Rock Garden Quarterly*, seed exchange, garden book purchases at a discount, study weekends, and annual meetings, as well as other benefits. (Membership in the Piedmont Chapter is separate from NARGS, the national organization.) Membership is \$25/year.

Send payment to Jacques Mommens, Exec. Secretary of NARGS, P.O. Box 67, Millwood, NY 10546.

Plant Profile . . .

Iris unguicularis - the Algerian or Winter Iris

by Mike Chelednik

Like so many things horticultural, I first became enthralled with the idea of gardening for winter bloom through the writings of Elizabeth Lawrence. Through her suggestions, plus some discoveries of my own, I now have numerous bulbs, plants and woody plants in bloom on any given day during the period of Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day—her, and my, idea of what constitutes winter in the South. Perhaps the most enchanting thing to bloom during this period is the Algerian or winter iris, *Iris unguicularis*. Since my first encounter, I've collected as many selections of this species as possible, and now have blooms during all but the coldest periods from mid-November to early March.

Iris unguicularis is native to the lands of the Eastern Mediterranean, with scattered populations from Algeria up through Turkey and the Greek Pelloponese. There are two basic morphological representations of the species. The mostly Algerian race, and the one most often represented in cultivation, is a plant with wide-ish (to about 0.5") foliage to 12-16" tall. The other, of Greek and Cretan origin, has narrow, wiry foliage to only about 4-5" tall. Botanists have at times tried to relegate one or the other form to subspecific status, but nothing definitive has been done at this time, although the smaller form is sometimes offered under the horticultural sobriquet, *Iris cretensis*.

The blooms of *Iris unguicularis* are borne on elongated floral tubes, rather than true stems, two to six inches long. The petals have the typical iris arrangement, with three upright "standards" and three arching "falls." The specific epithet means, "narrow clawed" and refers to the shape of the base of the petals. The flowers are typically a medium lavender blue, with yellow to orange markings on the falls; but variation does occur. There are white, deep violet, and even pink forms in existence, but these are nearly as scarce as the proverbial teeth of a hen. Most plants have a sweet, honey-like fragrance; but this too is variable.

Although the available literature sometimes states otherwise, the cultivation of *Iris unguicularis* is fairly simple, at least in North Carolina. Sun to high shade is preferable, although I've seen accept-

able plantings in woodland conditions. Good drainage is essential, even though the soil needn't necessarily be gritty, as British sources often state. Lime is also usually advised, but I grow mine quite well in an acid sand. Plants out of flower are in no way attractive, so care should be taken to choose companion plants that will draw the eye from the clumps of haggard, yellowing foliage. I usually take the time during August to clean out the dead foliage from each clump. My reasons for this are twofold: first, I fear that the matted rotting foliage will cause the plants to rot during a hot, wet period, and second, I worry that the dead foliage will provide cover for slugs, which love nothing more than the tender emerging flower buds. Propagation is of course possible, but not always easy. Seed, if procurable, in my experience takes up to a year to germinate, with seedlings blooming in their third or fourth year. Division is fairly simple, provided you remember one thing: *Divide only in early fall*. Dividing in August, just as the plants are coming into growth, is best. I've found that small divisions are fine so long as each piece has an adequate amount of root.

There are numerous selected clones of *Iris unguicularis*. Unfortunately, most of these are simply unavailable in the U.S. Over the past several years, I'm amassed a rather sizable collection of cultivars, primarily via importation. Below are what I consider the best and most interesting.

'Marondera' – this is a rather new selection that originated in a garden in Zimbabwe. In my experience, this large-growing selection is by far the most vigorous of all the forms I grow. Clumps double in size each year, and bloom prolifically during the entire bloom season, which for this clone lasts from late October through early April. The large flowers are a fairly typical color (medium lavender blue), but have excellent form with "strong" standards. The foliage of this cultivar is also reasonably attractive at all times—definitely an asset.

'Walter Butt' – this is an older large cultivar with lovely silvery-lavender flowers. The foliage seems more upright and substantive than typical, and the plants also tend to come into bloom earlier than most clones. It is also one of the most fragrant.

"Alba" – this is a catchall for any number of white forms. These generally have a reputation for being weak-growing and short-lived, but I have a form

that I picked up at Washfield Nursery (U.K.) that seems to be a fairly strong grower. The flowers are a pure white with yellowish-green markings on the falls, and are borne on usually long tubes, up to 12."

'Mary Barnard' – this is a mid-size cultivar with flowers of a deep, velvety purple, marked with gold on the falls. This is a fairly vigorous and striking cultivar, but it rarely blooms for me before the middle of January—a characteristic that detracts from the value of the plant, at least in my mind.

'Abington Purple' – this is a small-foliaged cultivar with the most striking flowers of all: very dark purple, marked with bright orange on the falls. This low growing (~5") cultivar, like all of the smaller forms, are perfect for the rock garden.

Sources of Winter Iris

Due to the fact that it's not the easiest plant to propagate, the plant is not readily available through the nursery trade in the U.S. I know of no nurseries that offer it consistently from year to year. It's a plant that is frequently passed from keen gardener to keen gardener. Visitors to Montrose Gardens in Hillsborough, N.C., can purchase divisions of a floriferous and fragrant, low-growing form. Below are two commercial sources that I have had excellent luck with. The first sends out bare-root plants in the fall which establish easily.

Cultivars

Avon Bulbs
Burnt House Farm, Mid-Lambrook
South Petherton, Somerset, England TA13 5HE
Catalog - \$5 (U.S. bills)

Seeds-

Jim & Jenny Archibald
Bryn Collen, Ffostrasol
Llandysul, Dyfed, Wales SA44 5SB
Catalog - \$3 (U.S. bills)

[NARGS member Mike Chelednik lives and gardens in Greenville, N.C. He is program chair for the Piedmont Chapter of NARGS.]



"Caroline's [Caroline Dormon of Saline, Louisiana] drawing of *Iris unguicularis* [above] was made in January. She has shown a form with shorter leaves than mine. 'I am sending you a sketch of *Iris unguicularis*,' she wrote. 'I know you are going to say, "but the leaves are longer than that." Well, I'm lucky, for mine are the way they are drawn. Maybe it's because the rabbits eat the foliage early in the fall, but my flowers are always in full view. I saw some in Shreveport yesterday, and they were almost hidden by the leaves. And I believe the flowers were smaller than mine.' Caroline's iris is probably the variety *speciosa*, which throws its blossoms well above the narrow leaves, and is more showy in the garden than those with wide, arching leaves that often hide the flowers."

—from *Gardens in Winter*, by Elizabeth Lawrence. 1961. Harper & Brothers, New York.

Message from one Old Gardener to Another

by Geoffrey Charlesworth

When you're feeling crumbly
Take a spade.
Dig a hole.
Don't be afraid
To set your goal
Of planting several trees
Before your knees
Succumb
And hands grow numb
With cold
There's nothing really wrong
With growing old.

When your eye is cloudy
Watch a bird
Flashing by.
It's not absurd
Before you die
To think that you could, too,
Restore true blue
And red
And safely tread
An alp
Before the final hair falls from the scalp.

When your hip is creaking
Sow a seed
In a pot
It's what you need.
It's not a lot
But yielding great reward
If you regard
This toy
A thing of joy:
A flower
Will shine, if Nature wills, at blooming hour.

Are your fingers frozen?
Take a walk
Around the bed.
All flowers talk
And as you tread
The pain will surely ease.
Arthritis flees
Your mind
And then you find
Amazed

Your spirit, from its sadness, has been raised.
When you're feeling ancient,
When your knees are creaking,
When the eye is cloudy,
And your hair is falling,
When your fingers pain you
Go into your garden.
Walk around the garden,
Let the garden entertain you.
There the birds are calling
Bees and bugs are rowdy.
Is this what you're seeking?
Gardens keep you patient.

October 20, 1999
1:43 p.m.

© Geoffrey Charlesworth

[Geoffrey Charlesworth and Norman Singer garden in the Berkshires in Sandisfield, Mass.]

Notice to All Nurserymen and Gardeners

If you are a member of the Piedmont Chapter of NARGS and publish a plant nursery catalog or flier of your plant offerings, you are invited to bring these catalogs or fliers to our meetings to promote your plant sales. Contact M.K. Ramm at (919) 732-7616, who will be happy to work with you to see that your catalogs are made available on a regular basis at our chapter meetings.

In addition, as space allows in each newsletter, we will be pleased to publish notices on nursery or garden open days free of charge to members. The next issue will be a double March-April issue. If you have spring openings, please provide notices by February 19, 2000, to Bobby Ward at (919) 781-3291 or email at biblio@pagesZ.net, or fax at (919) 783-0654.

**Piedmont Chapter of NARGS
Board Members 1999-2000**

Chair: Marian Stephenson, 305 Clayton Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514; telephone (919) 942-5820; email RLLindahl@aol.com

Past Chair: Barbara Scott, 1321 Chaney Road, Raleigh, NC 27606; telephone (919) 859-6703. e-mail barbara_scott@ncsu.edu

Vice-Chairman/Programs: Mike Chelednik, P.O. Box 20361, Greenville, NC 27858-0361; telephone (252) 752-9752; email b5h4j4gv@coastalnet.com

Treasurer: Bob Wilder, 2317 Elmsford Way, Raleigh, NC 27608; telephone (919) 755-0480. e-mail wilder@pagesZ.net

Board Member-at-Large: Rob Gardner, 5423 Bobcat Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27516; (919) 929-7252; e-mail gardner3@email.unc.edu

Board Member-at-Large: Donna Maroni, P.O. Box 1107, Carrboro, NC 27510; telephone (919) 929-8863; email dmaroni@email.unc.edu

Board Member-at-Large: M.K. Ramm, 234 Crawford Road, Hillsborough, NC 27278; telephone (919) 732-7616; email mkr@cs.duke.edu

The Trillium Newsletter Editor: Bobby J. Ward, 930 Wimbleton Drive, Raleigh, NC 27609-4356; telephone (919) 781-3291; fax (919) 783-0654; e-mail biblio@pagesZ.net

**Piedmont Chapter of NARGS
Positions of Responsibility**

Refreshments & Hospitality: Gwen and Maurice Farrier, 4205 Arbutus Dr., Raleigh, NC 27612; (919) 787-1933.

Fall Seedling Sale: Donna Maroni, telephone (919) 929-8863; Tom Sutton, telephone (919) 550-0226; and Laddie Munger, telephone (919) 481-1127.

**Upcoming Speakers for
NARGS Piedmont Chapter**

January 15, 2000

Nancy Goodwin

Hillsborough, North Carolina
"The Garden in Winter"

February 19, 2000

Bobby Ward

Raleigh, North Carolina
"Four Continents and a Camera:
A Year in Pursuit of Plants"

March 18, 2000

Pam Harper

Seaford, Virginia
"My Garden Throughout the Seasons"

April 15, 2000

Panayoti Kelaidis

Denver, Colorado

"Hot Rocks: Rock Gardening for the Southeast"

Special Additional Program

Thursday, June 15, 2000

Rod and Rachel Saunders

Cape Town, South Africa

"Cape Bulbs - South African Gems"

NARGS Speakers Bureau in Co-Sponsorship with
the JC Raulston Arboretum
Time and Place to be Announced
N.C. State University

**\$300 Stipend to Attend
National NARGS Meeting**

The NARGS national organization offers each chapter an opportunity for one of its members to attend a national meeting (see upcoming meetings on page 7 of this issue) by applying for a \$300 stipend. The recipient must be a NARGS national member and have never attended a national meeting before. (Attendance at a chapter-sponsored national meeting is exempted from the latter qualification.)

For information and to apply, contact our chapter chair Marian Stephenson at (919) 942-5820.

New Year's Resolutions. Continued from page 18

Resolutions: Not to go into the garden to water in my bedroom slippers and not to acquire plants for which I have no space. The first (guess who suggested it?) has a much better chance of being adhered to than the second. As I have no spare space, perhaps not to sow more than 100 packets of seed a year would have been helpful!

—Jack Elliott, Charing, near Ashford, Kent ✓

Read the *Rock Garden Quarterly* and other alpine journals with a pencil and paper. Jot down interesting new plants and make notes on all the things to change about the plants I grow poorly: more/less sun, more/less humus, tighter/looser crevice, more/less lime, more/less moisture, more/less fertilizer, and more/less prayer.

—Jack Ferreri, Verona, Wisconsin ✓

Well, after a hiatus without a real garden, all I can resolve is TO garden. This year, for sure!

—Joyce Fingerut, Westerly, Rhode Island ✓

My venerable resolution (which I mostly manage to keep) is to clean up after. That means clean the tools and put them away in a tidy manner, rather than tossing dirt-encrusted shovels higgledy-piggledy into the tool shed; take piles of weeds and trimmings down to the compost heap rather than letting them lay, etc. Along with this is doing chores in a timely manner: tie up plants before they fall over, rather than walk by and think, "Oh yes, that needs some support." "Once begun is half-way done."

—Judy Glattstein, Frenchtown, New Jersey ✓

Find time for art and "high gardening." I think of "high gardening" as taking the time to check the special plants in the frames, keep even moisture on the cuttings, pot and repot what needs it now, plant seed of rare plants the correct way and on time. Another words: cut to the real stuff of rock gardening.

—Phyllis Gustafson, Central Point, Oregon ✓

New year resolution for an absentee gardener: "Don't worry."

—John Grimshaw, Alphen aan den Rijn, The Netherlands ✓

To realize that every action I engage as a gardener can influence for better or for worse the quality of our lives and the health of the planet, and actualize this realization by stepping gently and acting wisely.

—Dan Hinkley, Kingston, Washington ✓

I have just purchased new property, where I will start a garden from a green meadow. I will be moving plants in early spring.

—Vojtech Holubec, Prague, Czech Republic ✓

I will really learn to poison those slugs regularly. Next fall I will plant 2000 bulbs. Next year I will start to label the plants in the new garden. Next year I will let my children buy at least 20 plants each, and I will not hover while they plant them. [Plus 18 more gardening resolutions].

—Gwen Kelaidis, Denver, Colorado ✓

In 2000, I resolve to do a better job of growing seedlings. It's easy to germinate them under lights and to raise them to healthy small size. I seem to lose a number of plants in that next stage, when I transplant them and try to grow them on in the unheated greenhouse. (We do not have indoor garden space to raise them beyond the initial stage.)

—Sandra Ladendorf, Salinas, California ✓

The most important resolution I can come up with is a vow to be very kind to all resident knees. The second, a vow to find more, newer and better ways to make the garden less en-deer-ing to the local fauna.

–Nina Lambert, Ithaca, New York ✓

This is one that I'm certain I won't keep! I resolve to stop ordering plants that I have no hope of fitting into my garden, even with a shoe-horn.

–Jim McClements, Dover, Delaware ✓

Perhaps this is a good time to decide that I will finish my new raised-bed rock garden, which has been half done for two years now while I got distracted with such things as work. On a more general level, I think I am resolving to restock the larger garden with simple, floriferous plants; I had gradually eliminated them as boring, but now I have too much bare space where the unusual and interesting species have died out. And that, of course, is why they are unusual! I think now that to have a garden that is a treasury of rarities, it's best to garden in a climate quite different from the general run of temperate-zone inhabited places; Colorado and coastal Scotland come to mind. Either that, or resign oneself to putting roofs over everything in the winter!

–Jane McGary, Estacada, Oregon ✓

I will eradicate the thug *Euphorbia cyparissias* (cypress spurge) from my garden, which has spread everywhere from a small clump. No, wait. Look at that gorgeous fall foliage against the red-leaved *Trifolium repens* 'Wheatfen'. I'll leave just a little bit; what harm could that do?

–Neal Maillet, Portland, Oregon ✓

As an admitted uncontrollable collector of plants, I will take care of and plant out all my currently neglected collected plants before I buy one more new one.

–Baldassare Mineo, Medford, Oregon ✓

Each year I resolve not to obtain any more plants, until I have mastered those I already have. Also not to develop more garden until I can control what I already have. Not to fill the alpine house to overflowing. Nevertheless, having made those resolutions, I would dearly love to have a collection of *Primula allionii* and maybe a few more saxifrages. So much for resolutions.

–Rex Murfitt, Victoria, British Columbia ✓

Sue's resolution: to teach Andrew not to plant things on top of each other. Andrew's resolution: to teach Sue about close planting. It looks like we will have another dynamic year. We do have a joint gardening resolution, which is a real sappy one: to continue to be grateful for having been blessed with such a wonderful passion.

–Sue and Andrew Osyany, Shelburne, Ontario ✓

With more than 150 seed pots already planted, I am making inroads on one of my resolutions: to plant more from seed and to do it earlier. My biggest resolution for 2000 centers around mapping both my garden and the Sebring Rock Garden in Alton Baker Park in Eugene. A map of the garden will help us to both plan and to educate. It will also facilitate record-keeping. Oops, that is yet another resolution: to keep better records!

–Louise Parsons, Corvallis, Oregon ✓

My gardening resolution for the year 2000 is to stake all my delphiniums early.

–Jaime Rodriguez, Wasilla, Alaska ✓

Since I have just broken last year's resolution (order fewer seeds next year), I don't dare make any new resolutions for this year!

—Norman Singer, Sandisfield, Massachusetts ✓

Rachel: I will not sow any more seeds until I can find space for all of last year's (and the year before's and the year before that's) seedlings. But I know that I will not be able to keep this resolution! Rod's resolution: to tackle that overgrown corner before it becomes a chain-saw job.

—Rachel and Rod Saunders, Cape Town, South Africa ✓

I will not buy more seed than I can sow and I will not sow more seed than I can repot and I will not repot more seedlings than I can grow on and I will not grow on more plants than I can set out. There you have it: four for the price of one.

—Tom Stuart, Croton Fall, New York ✓

I resolve to make up my seedling mix in the fall and carry it down to the basement where it won't be a frozen block when I start potting up seeds. I also resolve to make time during the summer to wash the used seed pots instead of waiting until they are needed, thus necessitating the use of the kitchen sink and generally causing anguish among the non-gardening members of the family.

—Anne Spiegel, Wappingers Falls, New York ✓

Resolved: That I do not attempt more than I can do in the garden. If it isn't fun, it is no longer for me.

—Nancy Swell, Richmond, Virginia ✓

It was hard for me to work out a resolution as everything is ticking along quite nicely, but I decided that giving plants a go might be a new resolution. Instead of growing a new plant in a pot and if it doesn't perform well there dismiss it, I am trying to give it a few chances in different positions. *Salvia ryparia* seemed nondescript in a pot but in the garden it is quite passable.

—Sue Templeton, Lavington, New South Wales (Australia) ✓

I resolve, once and for all time, to finally sow ALL the seed I've had stored in my fridge all these years. I'm too embarrassed to admit how much there is . . . or how old some of it is.

—Larry Thomas, New York, New York ✓

I resolve to grow more shrubby legumes (*Indigofera*, *Colutea*, *Lespedeza*, *Amorpha*, *Genista*, *Cassia*, etc.) They're almost all easy and gratifying. I resolve to keep better records on germination, bloom time, update accessions and list sources. I resolve to propagate and divide more plants for swapping with friends and for our September Manhattan Chapter plant sale. I resolve to find a good squirrel repellent. I resolve to finally move plants that are in the wrong place.

—Steve Whitesell, Kew Garden Hills, New York ✓

To spend the next millennium planting all the plants I bought in the last millennium. To learn to add 2 hardiness zones to the zonation in all plant catalogs (except our own of course). To use gene-transfer technology to insert mountain lion and *Gunnera* genes into a Venus' fly trap to produce a huge deer-eating plant that I can plant as a border around the garden.

—Barry Yinger, Lewisberry, Pennsylvania ✓

Resolutions edited by Bobby Ward. Thanks to all who contributed resolutions.

*From "Empathy and New Year," in a collection titled *The Crystal Lithium* by James Schuyler (Noonday Press, 1972). Suggested by Jacques Mommens, Millwood, New York.

**NARGS Eastern Winter Study
Weekend 2000**

"Chasing the Blues"

January 28 to 30, 2000

**Sheraton University Hotel
Syracuse, New York**

**Sponsored by the Adirondack
Chapter of NARGS**

Speakers include

Jim Archibald

Keith Lever

A. J. Richards

Nina Bassuk

Jane Grushow

Rick Lowenstein

Ludwig Schiessl



Gentiana acaulis

**NARGS Western Winter Study
Weekend 2000**

"The Wild, Wild West"

February 25 to 27, 2000

**The DoubleTree Hotel
Burlingame, Calif.
(near San Francisco Airport)**

**Sponsored by the Wester
Chapter of NARGS**

Speakers include

Richard G. Turner, Jr.

Margery Edgren

Phyllis Gustafson

Panayoti Kelaidis

Bart O'Brien

G. S. Phillips

Roger Raiche

Wayne Roderick

Terry Sozanski

Stewart Winchester

Contact Registrar for further information:

**George Erdman, Jr., NARGS Eastern WSW 2000
269 Bornt Hill Road
Endicott, NY 13760**

(607) 748-3984; gerdman@binghamton.edu.

**Registration fee is \$150 if received by December
31, 1999**

Contact Registrar for further information:

**Elly Bade, NARGS Western WSW 2000
2699 Shasta Road
Berkeley, CA 94708**

(510) 644-1656; bade@math.berkeley.edu

**Registration fee is \$135 if received by February 1,
2000**

Of bedroom slippers, delphiniums, squirrels, and deer . . .

NARGS Members Provide Year 2000 New Year's Gardening Resolutions

"New Year is nearly here and who, knowing himself, would endanger his desire resolving them in a formula?"*

Over the years I have bought some lovely containers for display of plants. But then I look over the planters and think, "Oh, this one is too nice to get dirt all over it" or "This one is much too precious to be exposed to the elements and maybe broken." This year I will, to paraphrase Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth, screw my courage to the sticking point and bravely go where other plant nuts have gone before. I will actually fill the pots with real plants and real soil and stand back to admire the results. Or will I?

—Pat Bender, Seattle, Washington ✓

To remember that almost all advice, however convincing, about the cultivation of plants, is based on experiences that are local and/or contingent.

—Brian Bixley, Shelburne, Ontario ✓

"A man receives only what he is ready to receive, whether physically or intellectually or morally . . . We hear and apprehend only what we already half know . . . Every man thus tracks himself through life, in all his hearing and reading and observation and traveling. His observations make a chain. The phenomenon or fact that cannot in any wise be linked with the rest which he has observed, he does not observe." from Henry David Thoreau.

—Betsy Clebsch, La Honda, California ✓

Resolutions Continued on page 14.

Bobby J. Ward, Editor
The Trillium
Piedmont Chapter of NARGS
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USA

First Class Mail

