

# The Trillium

Piedmont Chapter  
North American Rock Garden Society  
Chapel Hill, Durham, Raleigh, NC



Toby Musgrave

Dr Toby Musgrave is one of the United Kingdom's leading authorities in garden history and landscape design. Since leaving Reading University's Department of Horticulture he has embarked on a freelance career as a television and radio presenter, author, journalist, consultant, designer and lecturer.

In 2004 Toby began writing as the Gardening Correspondent for *Jyllands Posten*, Denmark's leading broadsheet. He also continues to build on eight years of experience as a regular contributor to a number of British national magazines and newspapers, including *BBC Gardeners' World Magazine*, *The Garden*, *Gardens Illustrated*, *The English Garden*, *The Saturday Telegraph* and *The Sunday Times*; and was until last year, the Gardening Correspondent for the *Bristol Evening Post*.

2004 also saw the publication of Toby's fourth book - *Cottage Gardens*, which followed on the successes of *Courtyard Gardens* and *Empire of Plants* (2000) and *The Plant Hunters* (1998). To date, the latter has sold in excess of 25,000 copies. His latest book, *Passions and*

*Pleasures: The Secret History of Gardens* will be published in Spring 2006.

In 2002 Toby acted as Horticultural Consultant for the award-winning BBC landmark series, *How to be a Gardener*, for which he also wrote the horticultural content for the Educational Television Award-winning and BAFTA-nominated website. This followed positions as Consultant Garden Historian to the award-winning television series *Royal Gardens* (BBC, 2003) and *The 20th Century Garden* (Channel 4, 1999.)

*Continued on page 3.*

## A Quick Trip to the Hellebore Homeland

We were fortunate enough to travel through the Balkans with a group of people who are interested in the *Helleborus* species. We left RDU on March 30 to fly into Munich, drive to Slovenia then through Croatia, to Hungary, Bosnia and back through Austria to Munich and home on April 12, 2004. Although there is still much study to be done, I will try to give a bit of information on the 9 hellebore species we studied on the trip.

*Helleborus atrorubens* is not a widespread plant, with the full range of its natural habitat reaching less than 150 square miles in Slovenia and Croatia. We found plants in several locations at woods' edge or in open meadows. In the meadows we found plants with flowers in a range of colours from rusty red through dark purple or wine red to violet, pale green and blued green. Flowers often had a green interior and some were spotted or veined. Plants were growing in full sun with meadow grasses that were mown for hay in early to midsummer. Growing in the grasses with the hellebores were *Bellis perennis*, *Convallaria majalis*, *Erythronium dens canis*, as well as a number of meadow and field flowers like geranium, ranunculus and veronica.

Another *H. atrorubens* site was a field that merged with woodland going up the side of a small mountain. Here we found plants growing with *Allium ursinum*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Anemone ranunculoides*, *Corydalis solida*, *Galanthus nivalis*,

*(Continued on page 2)*



### NOTICE

September meeting is  
on a different date, the  
4th Saturday.

SEPTEMBER 24



*Hellebore atrorubens*



## Hellebore Homeland

Continued from page 1.

and *Pulmonaria saccharata*. On the hillside where the forest cover was dense we saw *Cardamine enneaphyllos*, *Epimedium alpinum*, *Erythronium dens-canis*, and *Hedera helix* as companions.

*Helleborus croaticus* is similar to *H. atrorubens* and like *H. atrorubens* has a very limited range. In one afternoon we visited *Helleborus croaticus* growing in three distinct locations, a wooded hillside, a shady, moist creek bank and a sunny open field. Flowers are violet or purple, sometimes blue green outside and green inside. Some plants have green interiors with purple veining radiating from the center out toward the edge of the sepal. In the wooded area the forest canopy consisted of beech, birch and carpinus. Herbaceous companions included *Allium ursinum*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Corydalis cava*, *Lathyrus vernus*, and *Vinca minor*. Our next stop was a very moist ditch close to a stream. A bit further along the road we stopped beside a field where we could see the hellebores flowering from the road. All over this wide open meadow, the grass closely cropped by sheep and cattle, hellebores were in flower. Also in the meadow were large ant hills, some up to a foot tall. Between the cattle and sheep droppings and the anthills this



*Helleborus croaticus*

field had its own particular kind of land mines.

We found *Helleborus dumetorum* at a number of sites in Slovenia and Croatia, growing in woods and fields and in floodplains close to streams. This species is small in stature, but produces many starry flowers. Plants

form nice mounds of flowers and foliage. The blooms of *H. dumetorum* are green often star shaped. Occasionally plants are found with a pale edge, almost a white rim. Companions in woodland areas are *Ajuga reptans*, *Anemone nemorosa*, *Corydalis cava*, *Galanthus nivalis*, *Hacquetia epipactis*, and *Leucojum vernum*. In one field plants were growing with *Anemone ranunculoides*, *Fritillaria meleagris*, and *Urtica dioica*.

*Helleborus multifidus* wins the most confusing hellebore contest hands down. *H. multifidus* is, at this time, composed of a number of subspecies; we saw *H. m. ssp. istriacus*, and *H. m. ssp. multifidus*. The one subspecies we felt fairly certain that we had a correct identification on is *H. multifidus subsp. istriacus*, but with species hellebores there is almost always question of identity. Since these plants were growing on the Istrian Peninsula in the Adriatic, and fit

the description, we felt fairly safe with the nominal "istriacus". The blooming plants also had mature foliage at warm sea level and we were able to see the various sizes and different shapes the foliage can exhibit. At sea level *H.*

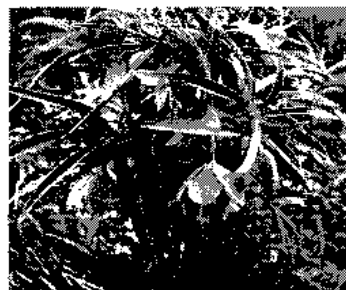


*Helleborus torquatus*

*istriacus* plants were growing in open woodland with blooming euphorbia and *Cyclamen repandum*. On the mainland in the coastal mountains, the *H. istriacus* were also in bloom, but were surrounded by snow, so no new foliage was apparent.

In the Bosnian/Croatian borderlands we observed several sites where the plants were apparently *H. multifidus multifidus*, but the flowers ranged from the traditional pure green to green and purple, some were red-edged or dark veined. We found blooms undistinguishable from *H. torquatus* over the hills in Bosnia, perhaps from hybridization. The dried foliage was variable as well, with some leaves having fifty to sixty segments, while an adjacent plant would have less than a dozen divisions.

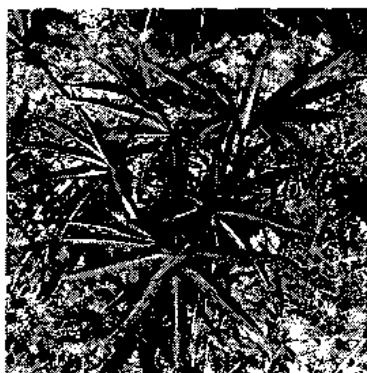
We found *H. multifidus* growing in woods and fields, as well as limestone depressions called dolines. Companions are crocus, *Galanthus nivalis*, and *Primula vulgaris* in the dolines and fields. In sea level woodlands plants grew with *Arum italicum*, *Cyclamen repandum*, *Hepatica transylvanica* and *Asarum europaeum*. *Helleborus niger* has to be the one species we came across the most often; in Germany, Austria, Slovenia, and Croatia. We found them growing happily beside the highway in drainage ditches, hanging from rocks on cliffs and in ravines, growing in deep dry shade under fir trees, in open sunny meadows, and along the banks of mossy streams. The colours of the flowers were almost as assorted as the locations where they grow. We saw *H. niger* flowers in pure white, in greenish white and creamy white, in pale pink, rosy pink and almost completely red. Flower shape ranges from small rounded blooms 2" in diameter to star shaped



*Helleborus dumetorum*

flowers 5 to 6" wide. Growing above *H. niger* in woodland were mixed beech and carpinus, shrubs *Cornus mas* and *Daphne cneorum*. Blooming with the hellebores were *Anemone nemorosa*, *Cardamine enneaphyllos*, *Corydalis solida*, *Cyclamen purpurascens*, *Hacquetia*

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*Helleborus multifidus* s.s.p. *multifidus*

*epipactis*, *Hepatica nobilis*, *Isopyrum thalictroides*, *Pulmonaria saccharata*, and *Scilla bifolia*.

We observed *Helleborus odorus* in Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, and Bosnia growing along roadsides, in meadows and in woodlands.

Flower size and colours are quite variable, but not

nearly as variable as *H. niger*. The colours range from apple green, chartreuse, to yellow green. Some plants may have scented flowers, while the plant growing beside it produced flowers with no fragrance. Companions were *Corydalis solida* and *C. cava*, *Cyclamen purpurascens*, *Lamium maculatum*, *Primula vulgaris*, *Pulmonaria saccharata*, and *Ruscus aculeatus*. In meadows and sunny areas the plants were growing with bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) which would completely cover them in summer.

We only encountered *Helleborus purpurascens* in one location, the Pilis Mountains north of Budapest, an 8 hour drive each way. We found the plants in a beech forest growing in golden brown leaves that were still fresh and crunchy. We were early in the season here and the flowers of *H. purpurascens* were just beginning, almost hidden by the beech leaves. This hellebore blooms without foliage, the flowers opening at ground level as they emerge from the soil. The Hungarian form of *H. purpurascens* is



*Helleborus multifidus* s.s.p. *istriacus*

green inside with a purple on the reverse, the colours seem to shimmer with an opalescent glow. The only companion we found blooming was *Galanthus nivalis*.

We went into Bosnia to see *Helleborus torquatus*, the one area where we felt nervous. In Slovenia and Croatia any remaining land mines

have usually been cleared, with the exception of those in odd forgotten corners. Bosnia is different; the Landmine Survivors Network advises that Bosnia is still heavily mined. One of the problems is the people who originally laid the land mines are often long gone, and there is no record of where the horrors were in the first place. While many sites are posted with warning signs there are others with no, or missing, warning notices.

Even with the threat of landmines the trip into Bosnia was worth every knot in our stomachs. Seeing the field of *Helleborus torquatus* near Bosanski Petrovac was an unbelievable experience for all of us. On a hillside studded with large, outcropping limestone boulders grew hundreds and hundreds of plants of *Helleborus torquatus*. Some of the plants had multiple flowering stems, signifying very old plants. We found large plants growing pressed up beside boulders, in between boulders and even in the crevices of boulders. The rocks offer protection from grazing, machinery, and the fire that farmers use to clear their fields each spring. Some plants have flowers that are deep, very dark purple both inside and out, while others are purple outside and blue green inside. Different plants have red purple blooms, some are all sea green. There are plants with markings inside, the veining ranging from very intricate lines covering most of the surface to just a few lines.

We did not sell as many plants over the Easter weekend in 2004 as usual. Perhaps if we were better businessmen we would not have taken the time away to visit hellebores in their homeland during such a busy season. But then, if we were businessmen we would most certainly not own or work in a plant nursery! Everyone needs to do things occasionally that simply enhance their knowledge and broaden their outlook. This trip certainly broadened our minds, both about hellebores and their native lands. We would not trade our time in the Balkans for a year in Las Vegas, or ten years on a cruise ship. We're foolish, perhaps, but we are happy.

Judith Tyler

## Musgrave *Continued from page 1.*

On screen Toby, presented HTV's 8-part series *The Great Garden Guide* in 2003, previous to which he hosted two series of *Lost Gardens* for Channel Four (1999 and 2001), and joined the design team on ITV's *Better Gardens* (1999). And 2004 saw Toby's debut on radio, as conceiver of, and major contributor to, *The British Garden*, a 6-part landmark series for BBC Radio 4 exploring this love affair.

Toby designs gardens across the world. Current projects include a series of gardens for a spiritual retreat in upstate New York and recent assignments include a 2 ha. woodland garden in Long Island and a roof garden in Bombay.

He lectures on garden history to audiences across Britain, including Oxford University, Oxford University Botanic Gardens, the University of Bristol and the Royal Horticultural Society.



## *Last Chance to Renew*

### **MEMBERSHIP FORM** **Piedmont Chapter, NARGS**

The date on the mailing label indicates when your membership expires, i.e. July 2006 means you have one more year left. **If your mailing label has a RED MARK on it, your membership is due before the September meeting.** You can send dues for multiple years. **Note: single membership per year has increased from \$10 to \$15 per year, household membership from \$15 to \$20.** Household Memberships will receive one copy of The Trillium.

Please update your membership now instead of at the September meeting. This permits preparation of Name Tags for members of Active Status. Your cooperation will be appreciated.

Circle one:

Single Membership \$15 / Year

Household Membership \$20 / Year

Circle one: For number of Years Paid

1 Year

3 Years

5 Years

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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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Are you a member of North American Rock Garden Society?

Circle one: Yes No

Membership in NARGS is: \$30/year. Include in check to have it forwarded to NARGS secretary.

Checks made payable to: Piedmont Chapter, NARGS

Mail to: Bobby Wilder, 2317 Elmsford Way, Raleigh NC 27608

Phone: 919-755-0480 Email address is [wilder@nc.rr.com](mailto:wilder@nc.rr.com)

Contact me if you have any questions.

### *Bring A Plant To Sell*

The annual Piedmont Chapter fund-raising plant sale will again be held following the September meeting. This sale helps to fund the excellent programs at our meetings. We are asking all members to support our chapter by contributing plants for the sale and purchasing plants at the sale.

Let's make it a 100% effort. Bring some and buy some more! See you there.

For further information regarding the sale, contact Kirt Cox at 489-7892.

### **Pine Knot Farms**

**March 15—June 15 and**

**Sept. 15—Oct. 15**

**open every Friday and Saturday,  
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and the first Saturday in March**

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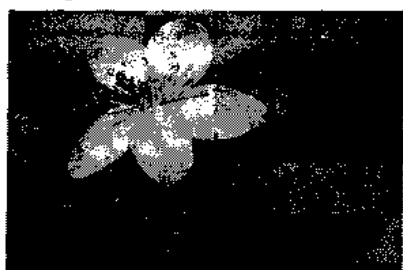
[www.pineknotfarms.com](http://www.pineknotfarms.com)



## You'll Rue the Day You Didn't Grow These Plants

Among the plethora of the woodland spring ephemerals are two species that always have seemed to attract my attention – rue anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*) and false rue anemone (*Enemion biternatum*). As members of the Ranunculaceae, these woodland plants are attractive both for their delicate, usually white, flowers and their divided, *Aquilegia*- or fern-like foliage. Both species occur naturally in the Carolinas and throughout the eastern U.S., although *E. biternatum* is curiously absent from Georgia, Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, and does not extend into northern New England.

You might say that you have never heard of these plants, but that you do know of *Anemonella thalictroides* and *Isopyrum biternatum*. If so, you are yet another victim of taxonomic abuse, a terrible syndrome that afflicts nearly all horticulturists and gardeners throughout the world. Yes, both of these plants are known by multiple botanical names. The rue anemone is best known as *Anemonella*, but now has been lumped into the large genus, *Thalictrum*, within which it seems out of place. Rue anemone has also been called *Syndesmon thalictroides* in the past. Furthermore, not everyone agrees that *Anemonella* should be sunk into *Thalictrum*. The false rue anemone has not been spared the taxonomic knife, either. Much better known as *Isopyrum biternatum*, it has been re-classified into the genus *Enemion*. Therefore, don't be fooled into thinking that there are even more types of rue anemones, as multiple names may abound in nursery catalogs for the same plant.



*Enemion biternatum*, by Thomas Barnes, Tenn. Vascular Plants Atlas

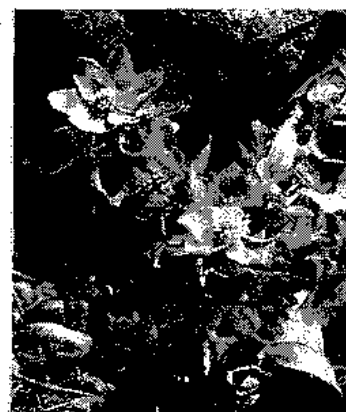
Although the fundamental difference between these plants is that they differ in the type of fruit – an achene in the rue anemone and a follicle in the false rue anemone – these are technical differences that most laypeople will not be able to discern. However, in flower, the two plants are readily told apart, even though they

are superficially similar, in that *Enemion* always has 5 sepals (which look like petals), while *Thalictrum* has many more. *Enemion* includes about five other species native to the western U.S. and eastern Asia; while *Thalictrum thalictroides* is unique among the thalictrum in its appearance and has no obvious Asian counterpart as do so many of the Ranunculaceae. *Enemion biternatum* is much more rarely encountered in the wild than is *Thalictrum thalictroides*.

Although cultivar development has eluded the false rue anemone, it is still a delightful woodland shade plant, beautifying the garden not only with its graceful flowers, but also with its delicate foliage that long outlasts the floral show. *Enemion biternatum* is 6-8 inches tall and spreads from a branched rhizome, creating a ground-cover mass under good gardening conditions; while *Thalictrum thalictroides* usually remains as a tight clumping plant. Both plants will prosper under mesic site conditions (not too dry, and not too wet), usually in a spot where the soil stays moist but not flooded. Shade for these plants refers to shade after leaves have emerged from overstory deciduous plants, and not the dark, permanent shade of broad-

leaf evergreens. During the peak floral performance, both species will prosper and flower more profusely in the brightest of the early spring sunlight, but later in the hotter seasons will go into a resting state in shaded, cooler, soils.

In stark contrast to *Enemion biternatum*, *Thalictrum thalictroides* has undergone the selection and naming of many diverse and beautiful cultivars. These differ almost exclusively in the color of the flowers and in the degree of flower "doubleness" (or the modification of the anthers into additional petal-like structures). These naturally-occurring, and outstandingly beautiful, mutants have persisted through cultivation in



*Anemonella thalictroides*, NARGS, by Iza Goroff

horticulture, but nowhere have they become commonplace garden plants. Sixteen cultivars (or unnamed clones) are listed in Larry Hatch's "New Ornamentals Database;" while 18 are listed in the current, online RHS Plant Finder. To be sure, as is so often sadly the case for our eastern U.S. natives, availability abroad (particularly in England and Japan) of these select forms is more widespread than in the U.S. However, Asiatica Nursery ([www.asiaticanursery.com](http://www.asiaticanursery.com)) does list 6 cultivars.

Of all the places I have ever seen these plants grown, I have been most impressed with a display of potted specimens growing at The Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden in Seattle. In attractive clay pots, a total of over 5 different kinds were displayed in magnificent full flowering splendor, and I was captivated by their presence. Perhaps my favorite is 'Green Dragon', a cultivar bearing green petal-like sepals (more sepal-like than petal-like, in fact), with twisted and thickened, white floral parts that were half-anther and half-petal in appearance (almost resembling the anthers of *Fothergilla* in some ways). More folks would probably prefer 'Oscar Schoaf' (better known as 'Schoaf's Double Pink'), however, for its rich medium-pink, fully double flowers. Other cultivars include 'Alba Plena' (also called 'Double White'); 'Cameo' (double and very pale pink; often white in warm climates such as ours); 'Tairin' (single, rose-pink); and several other green-flowered cultivars such as 'Betty Blake', 'Green Hurricane' and 'Jade Feather'.

Bring horticulture back to native plant gardening by growing this spectacular duo of spring ephemerals, especially appreciating the diverse selected forms that Mother Nature has so kindly given us and that wise plantspeople have propagated and preserved.

F. Todd Lasseigne, Executive Director,  
Paul J. Cienier Botanical Garden



### **Piedmont Chapter Meeting**

**September 24, 2005, 10 am**

**Toby Musgrave, UK**

**"Lost Gardens"**

**October 15, 2005, 10 am**

**Dick and Judith Tyler, Pine Knot Farms**

**"Hellebore Homeland in the Balkans"**

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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**Trillium Editors:**

Dave Duch and Marian Stephenson

### **OTHER SIGNIFICANT POSITIONS:**

Sept. Plant Sale Manager: Kirtley Cox

Refreshments: Gwen and Maurice Farrier

### **REMINDER**

We encourage you to bring goodies to share during the meetings this year. If your last name begins with the letters below, we hope you'll bring something to the appropriate monthly meeting. Thanks.

**Sept. A—E**

**Feb. N—Q**

**Oct. F—J**

**March R—U**

**Nov. K—M**

**April V—Z**

**Jan.—Dinner meeting**

**May—Picnic**

*The Trillium*, Newsletter of the Piedmont Chapter

The North American Rock Garden Society

1422 Lake Pine Drive, Cary, NC 27511



### **First Class Mail**

**Bobby J. Ward & Roy Dicks**  
930 Wimbleton Drive  
Raleigh NC 27609

July 2009

### **A MASTER CLASS IN ROCK GARDENING**

**January 27-29, 2006**

The Manhattan Chapter of the North American Rock Gardening Society invites you to register to enjoy the Eastern Winter Study Weekend. The lineup includes:

**Robert Rolfe**, Alpine Garden Society show specialist, author of "The Alpine House," speaks on "Growing for Gold - the Hows and Whys of Competitive Showing" & "The Best of the New Alpines."

**Rich Lupp**, Mount Tahoma Nursery's master propagator-owner, teaches his secrets of alpine propagation and introduces the newest campanulas from the Caucasus and Near East.

**Beryl Bland**, England's saxifrage specialist, examines the genus saxifrage around the world.

**Peter Bland**, plant explorer and small shrubs specialist, their use in the rock garden.

**John Lonsdale**, expert grower of fritillaries, Juno irises, cyclamen, daphnes, will show how he does it.

**Abbie Zabar**, noted gardening artist-writer, will discuss "Beyond Buns - the Shape of Things."

For additional information, see the Eastern Winter Study Weekend web site at nargs.org.