

THE NORTHERN OUTCROP

A Rock Garden Newsletter

July 2014

Our next meeting will be Saturday, July 19, at [Allen Centennial Gardens](#), where we will help rebuild the tufa bed. We will meet at 9 am or whenever you are able to come. ACG is on the UW-Madison campus at 520 Babcock Dr and suggested driving directions are:

From the east--University Ave.; right turn on Charter St.; left turn on Observatory drive, right turn on Babcock Dr.

From the west-- University Ave. to Campus Dr. (which becomes East Johnson St.); left turn on Charter St.; left turn on Observatory Dr.; right turn on Babcock Dr.

Bring a bag lunch and we will have our meeting at 11, then adjourn to Babcock for some exceptional ice cream. More about ACG later in this newsletter.

the background. RBG provided tools, buckets for weeds and kept those buckets emptied. The weather was perfect!

Plants planted in previous years are doing well, both the traditional alpiners and others like Phlox divaricata "Chattahoochee" that was in full bloom.



After cleaning up the rock garden, our good looking crew adjourned to a nearby restaurant for an excellent lunch, then visited Charlotte Nelson's nursery. This will be her last year in business and she is open by appointment. She specializes in semps and sedum but has some other plants as well as many interesting rocks, some of which are planted with her semps and sedums.

Iza Goroff organized our June visit to the Rotary Botanical Gardens where we weeded the rock garden. The picture above shows some of us working in one small area with a structure from an adjoining garden in

Steve Lesch reported that \$88.12 was raised at the June meeting at his nursery. He donated a percentage of sale proceeds to our chapter and this indicates we found many plants we needed! Thanks, Steve!

Our September 20 meeting will be a tour of Horicon Marsh plus our annual plant sale. As you admire your garden, please consider what can be shared at the plant sale and pot up the plants as early as you can. The plant sale will be at Dave and Joy Collura's cabin which is about 23 miles east of Horicon. More details about the plant sale will be sent by e-mail later this summer.

Horicon National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1941 to provide an undisturbed sanctuary for a number of migratory birds and waterfowl including the redhead duck as well as to provide opportunities for people to connect with nature through many wildlife dependent recreational activities such

as wildlife observation, photography, environmental education and interpretation, fishing and hunting.

We will meet at 10 am to tour the marsh by boat. After a short introduction to the refuge, the boat will leave at 10:30. A guide on the boat will talk about the birds and animals that inhabit the marsh and what to look for in the fall. They suggest dressing for the weather (the boat will go out in light rain, but not threatening weather) and bring binoculars along.

The address is 311B Mill Street, Horicon. Check out their website www.horiconmarsh.com. Please clip the form below and mail it to Debbie Wopat along with a check for \$10 for each participant.

Name _____

Name _____

Phone number _____

E-mail address _____

The charge for the boat tour is \$10 per person. Please enclose a check made out to the WI-IL Rock Garden Society and mail it to Debbie Wopat, N5760 Hill Rd, Rio, WI 53960, (920) 992-3109, ddwopat@gmail.com.

Feel free to add more names to this registration if needed.

ALLEN CENTENNIAL GARDENS

Although this garden is on the UW campus, no university or state dollars are used for any part of its operational budget. It relies on volunteers and private funding. Ed Glover sends out an e-mail for dates for volunteer work parties in the rock garden. If you can join them, please send Ed an e-mail. glover@oncology.wisc.edu Ed provided the following beautiful plant photos as well as information about the rock garden areas and the tufa bed.

The pond developed a leak last fall and the decision was made to totally rebuild it to look much more like a natural water feature and add a biofilter. This involved heavy equipment

and moving lots of rock, thus we had to take apart the section of the tufa bed near the pond. The new pond is shown below.

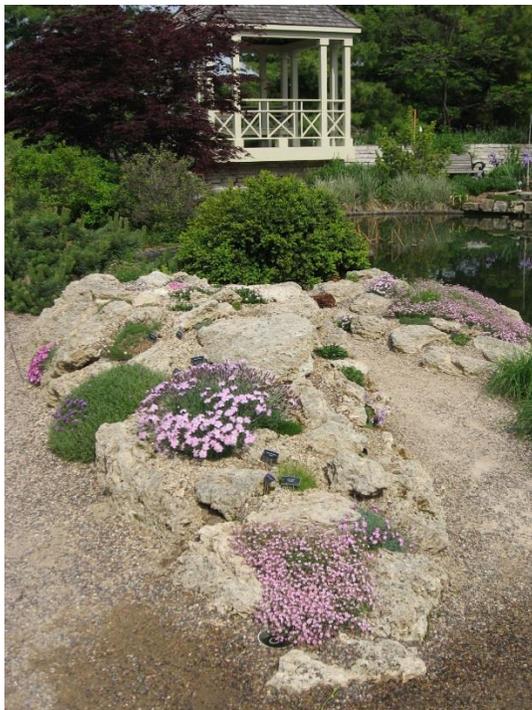


Our next job is to rebuild that section and that is the project where the WI-IL Chapter can help. We plan to work on placing the rocks to create planting crevices and install some plants during our work party. (The big rocks will be placed ahead of time! jah editor)

Below is the site of the tufa bed.



This is what it looked like before, let's see if we can make it even better.



Our Dryland Garden or sandbed, where the plants are growing in pure sand, has been performing very well with lots of bloom this spring. In addition to the usual crop of penstemons, there are a number of really interesting plants.



(Ed has described before how well alpine plants perform in pure sand and some of us have built rock gardens using this easy technique.)

One is *Tetraneris (Hymenoxys) herbacea*, the rare Lakeside Daisy, which is only found on four sites in the US and Canada. It is now available from Arrowhead Nursery in Michigan.



Stellaria chamaejasme can have white, pink or red flowers, but our bright yellow form is found on the stony slopes of western China and Mongolia.



Acantholimons are notorious for their prickly cushions, but *Acantholimon trojanum* has much softer foliage and the pink flowers sit right on top of the cushion.



Gaillardia aristata is a mainstay of this garden and will continue to produce its flashy blooms throughout the summer.



(I took this picture of troughs in ACG, most probably built by Ed or under his guidance. Jah)

We have a number of cacti in the ACG garden and many of them bloomed quite vigorously this spring.



A really nice one donated to us by Stanley Starbucks is the 'Claret Cup', *Echinocereus triglochidiatus*. This cactus has the brightest red flowers of any and the bonus is that they last for 3 to 4 days.



Coryphantha vivipara has eye-popping pink flowers which only last one day but our clusters of these little barrel cacti had enough buds to keep them in bloom for about a week.

(Member Lynn Groeschel shared the following: I had an experience in my garden while weeding. One of the native cacti thorns became stuck in my finger. I used a piece of tape to pull it out. I hope this hint will be useful to someone else with a sore finger.)

The next photos were taken in the moraine area where we have a trickle of water running under the planting medium on the north facing slope of the waterfall.



Phlox subulata 'Betty'

Two very nice dwarf phloxes 'Betty' & 'Herbert' which originally came from the garden of Dick Redfield in New England, the leaves & flowers are both tiny.



Phlox subulata 'Herbert'

The cushion convolvulus are often shy flowering compared to the vines, so we were thrilled to see these brilliant flowers on a tiny cushion about the size of a half dollar.



Convolvulus compactus



Leontopodium alpinum has not proven to be reliably hardy in past years for us, but this cultivar 'Matterhorn', which is touted by Edelweiss Perennials to be especially hardy, survived last winter and is blooming in the garden right now.





Clematis alpina 'Constance' was especially beautiful when it bloomed in our scree area in mid-May.



The crevice garden continues to be a real favorite of visitors to the garden due to its unique method of construction.



It is also one of my favorite areas as the plants which we

placed there are growing nicely. A couple of plants which completely cover themselves with bloom are Edraianthus owerianus and Asperula gussonii, creating masses of bright blue and pink between the rocks.



Edraianthus owerianus



Asperula gussonii

Another convolvulus which forms a nice tight cushion with tiny foliage is Convolvulus assyricus, which this year only had a couple small blooms.



Convolvulus assyricus



UPCOMING MEETINGS

November

Saturday 15th, 1:00PM [Dane County Extension](#)

1 Fen Court, Monona WI

**Annual Chapter Meeting including
Travels with Steve**

Steve Lesch, owner Landscape Design

The chapter gathers in November for a potluck lunch and socializing (we have some amazing cooks!) followed by our annual meeting to review the previous year, elect new officers and make plans for the following year.

After the business meeting, Steve Lesch (owner of Landscape Design) shares a presentation about the travels his extended family make each year. These are always unusual places that contain interesting plants and geography. Always a fun day.

December

Saturday 6th, 9AM to 4PM

[Dane County Extension](#) 1 Fen Court, Monona WI

Annual Seed Sorting & Packing for NARGS

The gathering of the chapter to help NARGS sort, package, and distribute seeds of plants both wild and cultivated, both common and rare. Another fun day with pizza and beverages provided as well as hourly raffle drawings.



If you have ideas or requests for next year's meetings, please share them with Debbie Wopat. Please also consider serving the chapter as an officer. Elections will be at the November meeting which seems like a long way away as we enjoy the heat of summer and the color in our gardens.

Please also consider what you can contribute to our newsletter. Any size article or contribution would be appreciated. We all like to hear what other gardeners are doing, seeing pictures of their prize plants, a history of a garden or public and private gardens we have visited.

Boyd Cline, co-founder of Siskiyou Rare Plant Nursery and strong supporter of NARGS, passed away June 14 at the age of 96. Please click [here](#) for an obituary posted on the NARGS Web site.

Boyd provided four articles for the NARGS bulletins and his obituary page has links to those bulletins. I clicked on the second link and the first article in that bulletin was on Dicentra by Linc Foster, an early pioneer in rock gardening.

Although members need to sign in on the NARGS Web site to read the most recent bulletins, the older ones are open to all visitors. There is a link to a cumulative index of past bulletins which is searchable by author, plant or subject. I haven't explored this yet but plan to use it to research cushion Convolvulus, after seeing Ed's pictures of two species.

After a winter that caused severe damage to many evergreens and other plants, we now know which survived. I finally gave up hope that a Picea glauca 'Rainbow' would recover. Winter protection didn't help this year.

Now too much rain is causing an issue for some of us. Although many weeds pull out easily, they also grow fast. It's surprising how a bed that looks clean of weeds can suddenly sport a very large one.

Some of my plants have really enjoyed this season, especially Eriogonum umbellatum alpinum and Saponaria pumilio which may have been planted too close to each other. Reminder to self—plants that can easily be propagated or transplanted should be planted near plants I know I won't want to move.

An unnamed Achillea which has a nice mat but should easily grow outside the rock garden will be moved since it is creeping too closely to Astragalus angustifolius. The flower stalks are also taller than usually wanted in a rock garden.



THE NORTHERN OUTCROP

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Membership Renewal Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____ **Amount Enclosed:** _____

Dues are \$10 per year. Please clip this form and send it along with your check (payable to WI-IL NARGS) to: Brad McDowell, 1535 Speedway Road, Verona WI 53593

2014 Chapter Officers

Chairperson - Debbie Wopat, N5760 Hill Rd, Rio, WI 53960, (920) 992-3109,

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