

THE NORTHERN OUTCROP

A Rock Garden

October 2014

Our next meeting will be a joint meeting with the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society on Wednesday, October 15, 7:00 PM at Olbrich Gardens Commons, 3330 Atwood Ave in Madison.

Mark Kintgen, Senior Horticulturalist, Denver Botanic Gardens, will speak on *Searching for plants in some of the most beautiful places on four continents.*

Mike oversees the Alpine Collection and nine gardens including the Rock Alpine Garden, and South African Plaza at the [Denver Botanic Gardens](#). He currently gardens in both Denver and Steamboat Springs, Colorado. The two different climates allow him to experiment with a wide range of plant material. Mike is a popular speaker in areas around Colorado on the topic of rock gardening, and botanic travel. He has lectured as far away as Sweden and Argentina on Denver Botanic Gardens and its current focus on steppe and high elevation floras found in semi-arid regions around the world.



Trip to Horicon Marsh and Plant Sale

The weather forecast kept improving as the meeting date approached and we had a beautiful day for our September meeting! The marsh is an important migration stop for birds although we didn't see many on the boat tour. Our guide explained the migration patterns as well as the importance of maintaining the balance between plants and wildlife to keep the marsh healthy.

After the enjoyable boat ride, we met at Joy and Dave's cabin near West Bend for lunch and the plant sale. Many thanks to Joy and Dave for providing the brats, chips and soda along with a great place to socialize while eating.

Our plant sale earned \$290.50. Many thanks to the members who donated plants. We had a nice selection

of plants to choose from. Special thanks to Flower Factory for their generous donation. Some of the FF plants are now in my rock garden. A reminder of the value of sharing special plants. Ed Glover brought some *Tradescantia longipes* which I had shared many years ago. I have lost this plant and had actually forgotten about it! It is a low growing and very well-behaved *Tradescantia* which is a surprise. So I now have it again.



We brought dishes to go along with the food provided by Dave and Joy. We have some great cooks! I asked for the following three recipes which impressed me.

Very Raspberry Cake

Ed Glover's raspberry cake was not only delicious but also very attractive.

Heat oven to 350F
Grease & flour a bundt pan

In mixer bowl blend 1 white cake mix plus 1 3oz box raspberry jello
Add 3/4 cup vegetable oil
Add 3/4 cup raspberry liqueur or juice (I use one half of each)
mix and beat for 4 min
Add 4 eggs, one at a time and mix well for each one
Add 2 cups raspberries and mix gently into batter

Pour into bundt pan and bake for 50 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean
Cool for 10 minutes and invert onto plate

When cake has cooled glaze with (1 cup powdered sugar + 1/4 cup raspberry liqueur)

Banana Mocha (Chai Tea) Cake

from Jane Gahlman

- 3 Bananas (very ripe ones are best)
- 1 ½ Cups brown sugar
- 1 ¼ Cups strong brewed coffee (I used Chai tea)
- 1 Large egg (beaten)
- 1 Cup oil
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 Tbs. cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 ¾ Cups flour
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 Cup chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mash bananas and mix in the brown sugar until blended. Add the coffee, beaten egg, oil, vanilla, apple cider vinegar, cinnamon, and salt. Fold in the flour and baking soda. Pour into an ungreased 9 x 13 pan and top with the chocolate chips. Bake for 30-35 minutes, or until golden brown and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Tomato Salad

from Damon Smith

Thinly slice 1 medium onion
Slice around 3 pounds of paste tomatoes about 1/4" thick. Toss gently with around 2 teaspoons salt in a non-metallic container

Refrigerate, covered, for at least 20 minutes or up to 12 hours

Serve mixed with around 1/3 cup vinegar (wine vinegar is nice) or the juice of one lemon, a handful (around 20-30 leaves) of chopped basil, and freshly ground pepper to taste.

My tomato salad recipe is a bit vague - a bit like those old recipes that use "pinch" and "dash" as units of measurement. The amount of salt is not particularly important - except that you should use more than you would to just season the salad because most of the salt ends up in the liquid that accumulates in the bottom of the container.

Quantities and proportions given are intended as general guidelines: if you really like onions then use lots of them. If you'd rather have tomato wedges then do that instead... A little good olive oil gives the salad a richer flavor. You may wish to drain off the liquid before serving, but save it as a tasty (and salty) addition to soups. I like to use paste tomatoes because they produce less liquid, but a good slicing tomato will work, or even cherry or grape tomatoes as long as they're cut at least in half.



After several attempts to grow *Spiranthes cernua* var. *odorata*, I now have it in two different sites. Only the two long, tall leaves in front belong to it. The plant purchased last year seems to have spread but I

couldn't find it earlier this year and bought another one. The flowers are very small but abundant on the spiraling stalk. They just started to open, from the bottom up, the last few days of September. The spiraling is attractive and intriguing. Since it is supposed to be easy to grow, previous unsuccessful attempts were probably user error!



The [Alpine Garden Society Plant Portrait](#) includes several pictures, one that shows a close up of the flower and one that shows how the plants can appear in a dense stand in the wild.

My plants are probably growing in a drier area than they prefer. The newest addition will be moved to a better site. The other plant, pictured above, is next to the rock garden, on the west side where it gets full sun but the raised area behind it may provide the needed moisture.



May we have a long fall so our gardens can be totally cleaned up for winter! Plant and seed catalogs will soon start arriving. I have seen articles about snowdrops and think I may splurge on some of the uncommon cultivars. They aren't cheap but this plant spreads rapidly, always a nice attribute for the early spring bloomers that die back to make way for other plants.

The seed exchange is only a few months away and this is a good time to think about the seeds we want.

Check out the NARGS bulletins and sites like the NARGS [Plant of the Month](#) page. Information on hardiness, etc, still needs to be checked but the beautiful pictures can let us dream of adding these plants to our gardens.



Paeonia tenuifolia rosea

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 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 unneeded books, seeds, tools or other garden related items, they would be welcome for the raffle.



Please 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 prized plants, or public and private gardens we have visited.

We'd also like to read a history of your garden. What did you start with, how has your garden evolved, how do you decide which plants to add or eradicate, what is/was your path installation philosophy or any other topics you feel like exploring. We all like to evaluate what someone else has done, to see how it may relate to what we plan or need to do.

THE NORTHERN OUTCROP

Editor Jean Halverson

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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

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