

# GREAT LAKES CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS)  
FALL NEWSLETTER, SEPTEMBER 2024



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## CALENDAR OF CHAPTER MEETINGS \*\*meeting details below\*\*

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You can always check our website for information: <http://glcnargs.com/>

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### **\*Saturday, Sept. 21: Fall Meeting with Julia Corden**

We'll have coffee and breakfast snacks.

**MEETING:** 9:30 AM – ca. 12:00 PM

**PLACE:** Demonstration Room, Research Museums Center 3600 Varsity Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

**PROGRAM:** 10:00 AM – “Adventures in Bhutan and the Blue Poppy”

Julia Corden is immediate Past President of the Scottish Rock Garden Club. Julia has been a Garden and Botanical tour guide travelling to many places across the world and has led a number of NARGS tours. She is a Horticultural Consultant and been a Professional Horticulturalist for over 40 years!!

Blue poppies – and the Himalayan flora in general is an exciting one for Rock Gardeners – and Bhutan is less visited than many areas,

**Note:** the front doors will be locked as it is “after hours” so we'll have someone standing by to let people in. Or you can text or call 734-996-0692.



### **\*Saturday, Oct. 19: Fall Meeting, Plant Sale, & Garden Tour**

**MEETING:** 11:30 AM – ca. 3:00 PM

**PLACE:** Tim Karl's garden (13268 Longsdorf St., Riverview, MI 48193) See the plant sale insert for more details

11:30 – ca. 1:30 tour the garden

**BAG LUNCH:** At your convenience while touring the garden

**PLANT SALE:** 1:30 PM

### **\*Wednesday, Oct. 23: Fall Meeting with Connor Smith**

**MEETING:** 7:00 PM – ca. 9:00 PM

**PLACE:** Demonstration Room. Research Museums Center 3600 Varsity Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108

**PROGRAM:** “The Tromsø Botanical Garden”



Connor is the Head of the rock garden at the Utrecht Botanic Garden in the Netherlands. It is one of the largest in Europe and has more than 3,000 different species, and has many innovative features. Connor has worked for a number of nurseries and gardens in North America and Europe. In 2019, he worked for the Schachen Alpine Garden high in the German mountains, about which we recently had a program.

The Tromsø Arctic-Alpine Botanical Garden in Norway is unique in how far north it is and the rare plants from the Arctic and from mountains around the world they can grow. It has a character that cannot be found in any other botanical garden. Here is a unique chance to hear about a garden few people have a chance to visit.

**Note:** the front doors will be locked so we'll have someone standing by to let people in. Or text or call 734-996-0692.

**We'll be making plans soon for the WINTER POTLUCK, and will send out a notice shortly**

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**President's Notes**  
**Sean Zera**

One day about ten years ago, Rimmer DeVries cold-called me to see if I wanted to join the Great Lakes Chapter; he'd seen plant photos I'd posted online and tracked me down. Ten years later I've somehow been elected president, so let me briefly introduce myself. I garden in Pittsfield Township just south of Ann Arbor, and I admit I do not have a proper alpine rock garden. My gardening interests include Michigan natives, species from the southeastern and western U.S. (especially woodies), species irises, manfredas, mountain-ashes and their numerous relatives, and unusual mutations of just about anything. Thanks for having me!

If you haven't already done so, please join our new Facebook group! It can be found at [facebook.com/groups/greatlakesnargs](https://facebook.com/groups/greatlakesnargs). The group is public and anyone on Facebook can see and like the posts, but to keep it on topic only paid GLC members can post or comment. I encourage all members to post lots of photos from their gardens and from our events!

This season we have a full slate of activities. On Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup> we will have Scottish rock gardener Julia Corden at the Research Museums Center, speaking about Bhutan. This year we've pushed the plant sale all the way to Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup> so that everyone can visit Tim Karl's Japanese maple collection in full fall color! The sale will be followed on Wednesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> with Connor Smith speaking to us at the Research Museums Center about the Tromso Botanic Garden, home to one of the most remarkable arctic-alpine plant collections in the world.

Finally, the Winter Potluck will be held at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens, date to be determined. I hope to see you all at one or more of these events!

**Summer in the garden**  
**Tony Reznicek**

Unlike almost all other gardeners, many rock gardeners in our climate rather dislike summer. Too hot for alpiners, and this year, it has been soggy! I've not had to water this year, though some of my daphnes are looking like they might have fungi attacking them... I feel sorry for all my poor weather-beaten plants, attacked by woodchucks, chipmunks, squirrels, rain and more, especially while I was away.

So what's in bloom now? Well we're not quite to the fall things yet. No fall color. The big show of asters and relatives – including some small enough for the rock garden – are just beginning, *Cyclamen* are starting, *Colchicum* are coming out in force, as are hardy begonias. So not terrible. Here are a few things that were looking good over the long weekend.



*Acis autumnalis* by the house – hardware cloth too keep chipmunks away. This is a choice small bulb that blooms nicely in the hottest part of the summer.



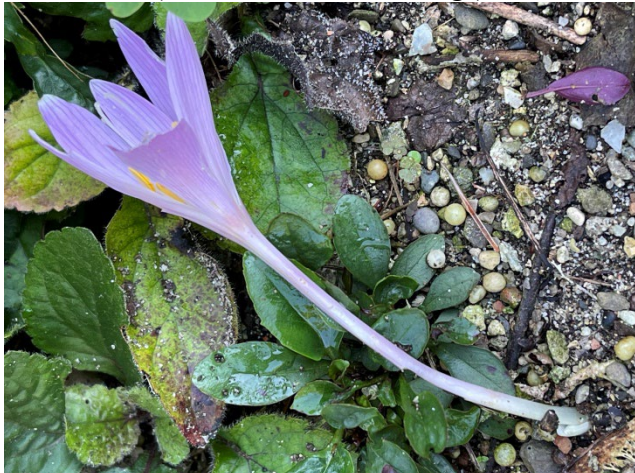


*Colchicum* are lovely now – this I think is just an ordinary single *C. autumnale*, Can't have too many (though you have to have tolerance for the big, floppy leaves.)



One of the best is *Colchicum* x *agrippinum*, a hybrid that has strongly checkered flowers.

There are smaller species – I forget the name on this one (and could not find a tag!)



The little cushion Goldenaster (*Heterotheca* “Gold Hill”) never ceases to amaze – I need to raise a bunch more cuttings of this.

And at the base of a sandstone wall, the compact *Lobelia siphilitica* 'Mistassinica' is blooming.





The *Lobelia* likes it moist, so if you have a moist spot, you can also try *Parnassia glauca*, with its remarkable veined flowers and compact heart-shaped leaves.



If you have shade, besides admiring ferns, you can try hardy Begonias – here is *Begonia sinensis*, (*B. grandis* subsp. *sinensis*) a small species that seems to love seeding into moist, shady tufa growing with *Ramonda myconi*!

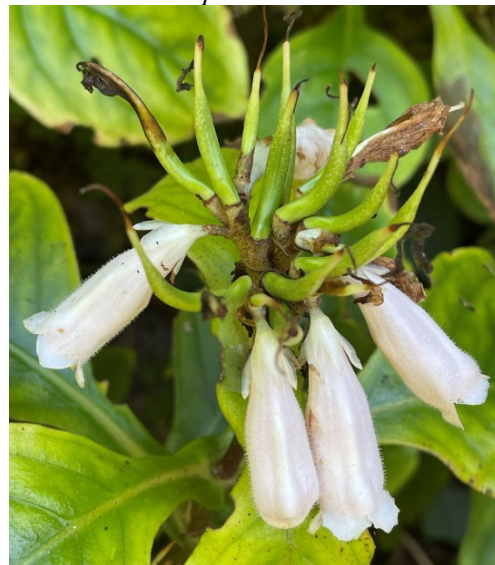


And there are *Cyclamen* – here is a small plant of *C. hederifolium* starting to bloom before the leaves.



Of course, there are *Cyclamen* for all seasons – but *C. hederifolium* does well in Michigan, and blooms late

For a big shady area, there is a large gesneriad that is hardy in southern Michigan – so far – *Hemiboea subcapitata*.



**A note From Panayoti, included in full because he has some very good information is his letter:**

Most of you are aware that NARGS has a robust Tour program that has been built up over the last decade. The only tour currently on the website is to Crete in October, and it is good to go. There are four tours in the works for 2025 (Tadjikistan, Wyoming, Switzerland and the Western Cape of South Africa): they won't be taking place until (starting that is) in April of next year. Nothing in between....yet!

Some time ago I worked with Marcela Ferreyra (who has spoken to many chapters) to organize a trip to southern Patagonia through Denver Botanic Gardens (DBG). We have had several members sign up through DBG, and the trip is being promoted heavily in September. This trip—featuring Torres del Paine and so many fantastic alpinines—is really ideal for NARGS members as well, and has a different itinerary than previous NARGS sponsored trips to Patagonia. If members from your chapters were to sign up for this trip, I will see to it that NARGS gets a generous donation from each who do.

I would be very grateful if you would include a note about this trip in your upcoming newsletters along with a link to the Website where the tour is offered:

**Website for Botanical Wonders of Argentine Patagonia:** <https://www.botanicgardens.org/our-impact/trips-travel>

It may still be toasty summer, but spring can come sooner than you think! Early December in Patagonia is peak season for flowers like Rosulate Violas, Patagonian Petunias and the brilliant red Chilean Fire Tree (*Embothrium coccineum*), not to mention Scarlet Gorse. Join Panayoti Kelaidis (Senior Curator of Denver Botanic Gardens) and Marcela Ferreyra (leading botanist of Patagonia and author of a shelf full of books about this region) on a trip early in December. Do check out the trip description in the link provided—and join us on a trip of a lifetime!

Thank you,

Panayoti



*Calceolaria uniflora* in Patagonia last winter! A plant everyone should see once in their lifetime!

**Please send address changes to:**

**Colleen Mitchell,  
3995 Monks Road,  
Pinckney, MI 48169, USA**

**Do include any updated email addresses**



**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:**

**Great Lakes Chapter:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**email/FAX:** \_\_\_\_\_

Send \$20.00 per year (check payable to Chapter) to:  
**Colleen Mitchell**  
Treasurer, Great Lakes Chapter, NARGS  
3995 Monks Road  
Pinckney, MI 48169, USA

**OR pay in person at the next GLC meeting**

We strongly encourage people to join both the Great Lakes Chapter, and the National Organization.

**National Organization:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**email/FAX:** \_\_\_\_\_

Send \$40.00 dues (check payable to NARGS) to:  
**Bobby Ward**  
Executive Secretary  
North American Rock Garden Society  
P.O. Box 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619

**OR pay through the NARGS website:**

<https://www.nargs.org/join>

**GREAT LAKES CHAPTER FIRST CLASS**  
North American Rock Garden Society  
Newsletter Editor, Tony Reznicek  
890 Wickfield Court  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105-1227