

# GREAT LAKES CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS)  
**FALL NEWSLETTER, SEPTEMBER 2025**



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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. 13: Fall Meeting with Mark Akimoff**

We'll have drinks and a light lunch.

**MEETING:** 10:30 AM – ca. 3:00 PM  
**PLACE:** Demonstration Room, Research Museums Center 3600 Varsity Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108  
**Programs:** 10:45 AM – Growing Rare Flower Bulbs  
Noon to 1 pm Break - Light Lunch and drinks  
1 pm - 3 pm – **From Habitat to the Home Garden: Cultivating Alpine Plants from Mountains around the World**

Mark Akimoff is the proprietor of Illahe Rare Plants – <https://www.illaherareplants.com/> – a specialty rock Garden and bulb nursery many of us know. He will be bringing some plants and bulbs to sell, so bring your wallet!

Note 1: Patrick and Bonnie will be having people over for pizza that evening (Saturday) for our dinner with the speaker and, as a special treat, Mark will be doing an informal talk: **Building a Geothermal Greenhouse** at the Ions, 6 - 8 pm. – so if you can attend, please let Bonnie know at the meeting.

**Note 2:** the front doors at the Herbarium 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 me 734-996-0692.

### **\*Saturday, Sept. 27: Fall Meeting, Plant Sale, & Garden Tour**

**MEETING:** 11:30 AM – ca. 3:00 PM  
**PLACE:** Tony Reznicek’s garden 890 Wickfield Court, Ann Arbor, MI 48105  
– 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

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

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## Our bus trip and helping out

It was great to see so many people on the bus trip to Bob's Garden Fair. That always fun, and it is nice to not have to drive. And the bus had lots of room for the plants we bought from the many vendors at the sale.

We'd like to do more events like this, but please remember that it takes a little planning to put this together. If you'd like to help out a bit, contact the officers at any of the meetings. It is easy and fun to help out.

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

## Late summer in the rock garden Tony Reznicek

Alpine plants grow in areas where the season is short, so they need to start early and ripen their seeds before winter hits. So naturally, few bloom late and they are typically stressed by our long, hot summers. But there are lots of small dryland and cold desert plants that bloom profusely in summer. Why don't we grow lots of them in the rock garden? Well, many of them don't like wet, rainy weather, especially in the fall. So rotting over winter is a huge problem with them even if we try to keep their crowns dry as in crevice gardens or dryland beds and troughs.

Still, we can grow some things. In shade, *Cyclamen purpurascens* is nice now. Of course, as you can see in the picture with the plastic grating, you need to protect the plants from chipmunks and squirrels! *Cyclamen hederifolium* will be later blooming.



*Cyclamen purpurascens* finishing up.

The smaller *Begonia sinensis* (*B. grandis* subsp. *sinensis*) is also nice—it will brow on tufa and then shrinks down to rock garden size.



*Begonia sinensis* on tufa

A late summer blooming rock garden plant is *Satureja montana*, a tiny shrub from southern Europe and adjacent Turkey. It's a reliable bloomer, and quite nice – I need to do another round of propagation of it.



*Satureja montana*



Of course, another solution is foliage – with lots of options available here, especially rock ferns. My latest hopefully success is *Dryopteris fragrans*, a slow growing fern of acidic rock cliffs, here, as a young plant, in a sandstone block.



*Dryopteris fragrans*

*Dryopteris fragrans* is a native species in Michigan, but rather rare and northern, and it likely is fairly inflexible about pH requirements, so is not going to be easy for people in southern Michigan. But there are many other tiny ferns.

The favorite for Michigan is the easy and adaptable *Asplenium trichomanes*, a vigorous but tiny fern that absolutely loves tufa, but can grow in a range of settings, even “urbanite” walls. Here is a mass of it on a big tufa rock. This was all self-sown, not planted.



*Asplenium trichomanes* on tufa

**Please send address changes to:**

**Linda Gates,  
7880 Ernst Road  
Manchester, MI 48158**

**Do include any updated email  
addresses**



One last late plant – the final few flowers on *Heterotheca* ‘Gold Hill’

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:**

**Great Lakes Chapter:**

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Send \$20.00 per year (check payable to Chapter) to:  
**Linda Gates**  
Treasurer, Great Lakes Chapter, NARGS  
7880 Ernst Road  
Manchester, MI 48158, 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**

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