

GREAT LAKES CHAPTER

North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS)
SPRING NEWSLETTER, APRIL 2026



CALENDAR OF CHAPTER MEETINGS **meeting details below**

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

****SUNDAY, April 19: Spring meeting,**

MEETING:	10:30 AM – ca. 2:30 PM
PLACE:	Matthaei Botanical Gardens Auditorium
PROGRAM:	11:00– NOON Tim Alderton: “Outstanding North Carolina Wildflowers”
Lunch Break	NOON – 1:00 PM Light Lunch and drinks
PROGRAM:	1:00 – 2:00 Tim Alderton: “Botanizing the Croatan”

NOTE: THIS MEETING IS ON A SUNDAY DUE TO AVAILABILITY OF THE BOTANICAL GARDENS AUDITORIUM

Tim Alderton is a native of Brookville, Pennsylvania and graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 2002 with a BS in horticulture. Following his graduation, he interned in the education department at Callaway Gardens in Pine Mountain, GA. He moved to Raleigh in March of 2005 to accept a position at Plant Delights Nursery. In January 2006 he started at the JC Raulston Arboretum as their horticulture technician.

He is a member of the National and Piedmont chapters of the North American Rock Garden Society. In recent years he has been travel about North Carolina and other parts of the country botanizing getting to know the flora of our country as well as participated in the 2023 NARGS trip to Argentine Patagonia.

Tim regularly speaks to the Piedmont chapter and has also spoken to the Allegheny, Potomac, and Rocky Mountain chapters. In 2017 he spoke at the annual meeting in Raleigh and in November of 2025 he was a speaker for "The Wandering Rock Gardener, Stories from High and Wild Places."

This should be a great meeting, and we can actually grow most plants from North Carolina!

Saturday, May 23:

SPRING MEETING and Plant Sale at Barbara Chamberlain’s – stay tuned for details!

NARGS ANNUAL MEETING, Calgary, Alberta: June 25th – Jun 28th, 2026 – see last article below.

Early spring plants for the (Rock) Garden

Tony Reznicek

Well, since almost all really early (March blooming) plants are small, they almost all can be thought of as Rock Garden plants. Of course, some are plants of richer soils, so not always suited to a lean, rock garden mix, but we can adapt. Crocus, snowdrops, winter aconites, and some other bulbs, corms, and tubers are at peak now, near the end of March. Even some native plants are beginning to come into bloom.

Yesterday, I saw my first spring beauty in the Ann Arbor area, looking for a patch of harbinger-of-spring (*Erigenia bulbosa* – a tiny but lovely thing that should be great to display in a trough – it looks just like an alpine).



Claytonia virginica in bloom March 28.

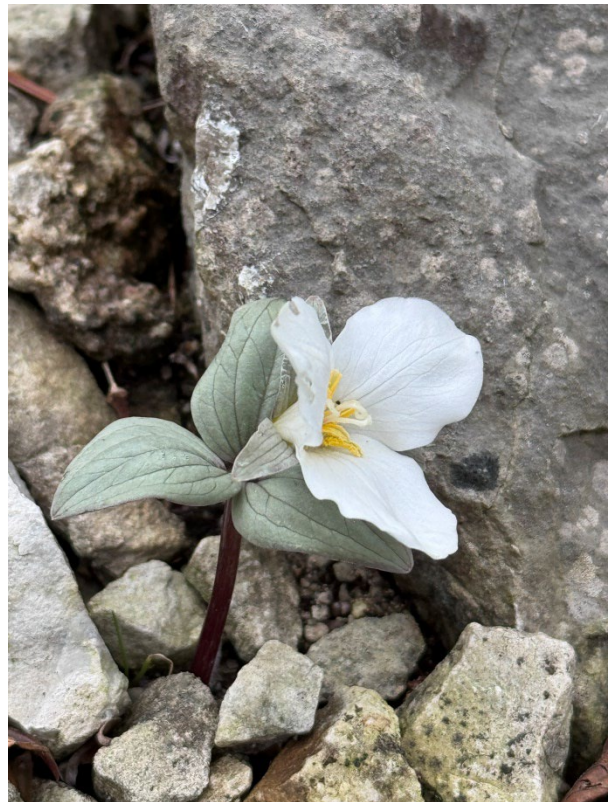


Erigenia bulbosa in bloom March 28.

Now here are a few garden plants out in the rock garden, in bloom March 29.



Draba (aizoides?) – Always the earliest.



Trillium nivale – does well in sun and gravelly limestone soils, even though in the wild it is a plant of woodlands in calcareous soils.



Noccaea (Coluteocarpus) vesicaria just beginning to open.



Ficaria kochii – large buttercup flowers (that would be open if the day were sunny) A great small plant from western Asia, blooming very early.



Not a flower, last year's fruiting heads of *Carlina acaulis* – but cool looking...

News from NARGS for April 2026

Carol Eichler

I'm excited that April 16 is just around the corner – and no, it's not because the tax filing deadline is behind us for another year. It's because we are planning a Chapter sharing event.

The NARGS Membership Engagement Committee (of which I am a member) is extending an invitation to all Chapter Chairs and any of their members who would like to join in for a zoom discussion on the topic of "Recruiting and Retaining Chapter Membership."

That date again is April 16th with a 7:30pm EDT start time.

A panel of presenters including Rebecca Lance from the Sierra Chapter, Janet Novak from the Delaware Valley, and Leslie Kaplan and Barbara Kline from the Allegheny Chapter will each give a brief presentation on techniques that have worked (or not) for them. Then we will open the session to questions and discussion. Barbara Rose from the Potomac Valley Chapter will moderate. The Manhattan Chapter will host. Plan for a 90-minute session, though we hope we won't need that much time.

More information will be sent soon to Chapter Chairs for sharing including a sharable zoom link. So please let your chair know if you are interested in joining this session.

We plan to send out notes from this session and post them to the NARGS website. (Note: there is a Chairs+ meeting scheduled at the Calgary AGM as well. We are working with the CRAGS chapter to make this a hybrid meeting.)

We hope you will be as enthusiastic to attend as this committee is to be able to facilitate this program.

**NARGS 2026 Annual General Meeting
Calgary Alberta-- High & Dry in the
Chinook Zone June 25 – 28 Calgary,
Alberta, Canada**

The Calgary Rock and Alpine Garden Society (CRAGS) invites rock gardeners to Calgary next June to celebrate rock-loving plants and rock gardens. Calgary is located on the western edge of the Northern Great Plains, within sight of the Rocky Mountains. Owing to its elevation (1045 m, 3400 ft) and associated cool nights, Calgary provides favorable conditions for rock and alpine gardens, despite the challenges of warm, drying winds (chinooks) that punctuate otherwise cold winters. Nature abounds in the Calgary region, including five UNESCO World Heritage Sites with either alpine or dryland rock-loving vegetation within a three-hour drive.

The 2026 meeting and associated activities promise to be engaging and informative. Confirmed speakers include Vojtech Holubec (Czech Republic), Jay Akerley (Kamloops, British Columbia), Todd Boland (St. John's, Newfoundland) and Stephanie Ferguson (Calgary, Alberta). The opportunities and challenges of gardening in the chinook zone will be discussed during visits to the personal gardens of CRAGS members and municipal rock gardens that the club helped develop. Field trips to the nearby Front Range of the Rocky Mountains will provide guided introduction to the native alpine flora.

The meeting schedule will be posted in the winter 2026 issue of the Quarterly and on a forthcoming meeting-specific website. Also consult the CRAGS website (crag.ca) for current information.

Registration will open in January 2026.



Primula vulgaris subsp. *sibthorpii* – in bloom since mid-March! Anybody know if this is some special cultivar? Plants of the world on line calls it *Primula vulgaris* subsp. *rosea*. A great plant, whatever the name, and immune to cold!



Scilla bifolia colors, left to right: normal (blue), forma *rosea* (very pale pink), pure white form, richer pink form

Please send address and contact information changes to:

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

Do include your up-to-date email address.

Thank You.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:

Great Lakes Chapter:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

email: _____

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

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: _____

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>

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FIRST CLASS