



Newsletter

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Coming Events

All Meetings are scheduled for Board Meeting at 1:00 p.m. and Regular Mtg. at 2:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

May 15th 1:00 p.m.: Alaska Botanical Garden Clean up
 Information call Verna at 333-8212

May 21st 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.: Plant Sale at Sally K's
 Information call Verna at 333-8212

May 28th 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Plant Sale at Snowfire Gardens
 Information call Florene at 376-5390

June 11th 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Alaska Botanical Garden Fair

June 12th 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Alaska Botanical Garden Fair
 Information call Carmel at 522-3490

June 25th: Plant viewing Trip to McClaren Summit (See page 3)

July 30th: Seed collecting trip to McClaren Summit

Sept. 10th 2:00 p.m. Cooperative Extension Office—Anchorage
 Bill Terry on Blue Poppies
 Information call Carmel at 522-3490

Climate is what we expect. Weather is what we get.

- Mark Twain

Clean-up at the Alaska Botanical Garden

Clean-up of the Rock Garden at the Alaska Botanical Garden is scheduled for May 15th at 1:00 p.m. This is the time to clear all the winter debris, put down some new top dressing, plant new plants and in general spruce up the rock garden for summer. If you have not participated in the past, load up a rake, your garden gloves, a bottle of water, a trowel, and whatever else you might think is necessary and head on out there. It is a lot of fun. Working with Verna, Jaime, Carmel and many other of the very experienced rock gardeners in our area is like attending a free workshop. You get the gardens cleaned and have access to lot of information that you can put to use in your own gardens.

From the President

Carmel Tysver

I have been puttering around a little bit in the garden and it is so good to see the plants return. Everyday is a new bloom or bud. *Bulbocodium* showed its first bloom around the middle of April. Then about a week later a *Saxifraga* in a trough bloomed bright pink a wondrous sight with snow patches still present. This year the troughs were still in their winter storage area so we could see the blooms from the dining room windows. Leaf buds are on the roses and can see starts of the rhubarb and the Tarragon which will soon to be added to salads!

In this newsletter you will find the schedule for the summer plant sales and tours. We also need your help in cleaning up the rock garden at the Alaska Botanical Garden. This year we will be adding more plants to the tufa bed with the money from the NARGS grant. The ABG is as excited by the new garden as we are. If you have not been to the garden at ABG lately I am happy to report that Verna called and said there are plants blooming!

While attending the WWSW this past February in Sydney-by-the-Sea on Vancouver Island, Canada, we heard a local speaker on the blue poppy. His talk was very interesting and informative. I am happy to report that I was able to talk with him and he has agreed to come to Alaska and give a talk or talks. His name is Bill Terry and his book is "Blue Heaven". We have scheduled him here in Anchorage Saturday, September 10th and looking at other venues for him to speak.

Happy gardening and see you during the summer at one of the sales or tours.

Carmel Tysver



Plant Profile Dwarf Willows

The Arctic Willow, *Salix arctica*, grows in tundra and rocky moorland, and is the northernmost woody plant in the world, occurring far above the tree line up to the northern limit of land on the north coast of Greenland. It also occurs further south in North America on high altitude Alpine tundra south to the Sierra Nevada in California and the Rocky Mountains in New Mexico and in Asia to Xinjiang in China.

Salix arctica is typically a low shrub growing to only 1-15 cm (0.39—5.9 in) in height. In the Pacific Northwest it may reach up to 20 inches in height. It has round, shiny green leaves 0.39—1.6 inches long and broad, rarely up to 3.1 inches and 2.4 inches broad; they are pubescent, with long silky, silvery hairs. Like the rest of the willows Arctic willow is dioecious, with male and female catkins on separate plants. As a result the plant's appearance varies; the female catkins are red-colored, while the male catkins are yellow-colored.

Despite its small size, it is a long-lived plant, growing extremely slowly.

As a rock garden plant the willows add a lovely artistic feature with their twisty stems and in the spring and summer the lovely catkins above the bright green leaves add yet another dimension to the regular buns and ground covers of the rock garden.

There are several hybrids that are known to live in our area including *Salix articola* and *Salix glauca*. A lovely *Salix arctica* "Petrea" has been growing for several years in the driveway rock garden at Snowfire. It has stayed very small, trailing along the ground at about 2 inches tall.

In their 2010 Catalog, Wrightman's offered five different dwarf willows.

Alaska Botanical Garden Fair

Saturday June 11th from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. the Alaska Rock Garden Society will have their booth open at the Botanical Garden Fair. Be sure and volunteer some of your time to help sell plants and then go visit all the wonderful vendors at the Fair. If you have plants to sell, call Carmel at 522-3490 for information on where to drop them off, times to work and where to park. This has always been a good money maker for both the vendors and ARGs as well as being a lot of fun for all!

Plant Sales Are Near!

ANCHORAGE PLANT SALE: May 21st from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Sally K's, 7435 Old Harbor Ave., in Anchorage. Last summer the plant sale at Sally K's was deemed to be one of the most successful in ARGs History. Be sure to get there early as the most prized plants sell quickly. The sale starts at 9:00 a.m. Vendors are encouraged to bring plants the day before (Friday May 20th from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

VALLEY PLANT SALE and Open Garden: May 28th from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Snowfire Gardens 3379 S. Inlet Vista Circle (off Mile 5.2 Fairview Loop Rd. in Wasilla) Tables will be set up Friday evening so vendors can bring plants until 9:00 p.m. or come early Saturday morning. Docents will escort visitors through the gardens and many beautiful plants will be for sale. Coffee and tea will be served so come and plan to spend time visiting with some of the most knowledgeable rock gardeners in the State!

Plant Viewing & Photography Trip

Verna Pratt

This year's Plant Viewing and Photography Trip will be at McClaren Summit on the Denali Highway, approximately 37 miles from Paxton, which is at the junction of the Richardson and Denali Highways. On Saturday, June 25th at 9:00 a.m. meet at the McClaren Summit to view plants available for seed collecting at the end of July.

Several Lodges are available as well as camp sites along the east end of the highway. I found several on line as well as a mile by mile tour of the highway starting at Paxton and ending at McClaren River Lodge. Some of the camp sites will be closed due to restoration and there may be road maintenance along the highway. The highway is paved part of the way to McClaren Summit.

Seed Collecting Trip

On Saturday, July 30th the club will return to McClaren Summit to collect seeds from the plants that were viewed in June. Meet at the summit at 9:00 a.m.

NOTE: Lodging is scarce along the Denali Highway so we recommend making reservations early for both of these trips.

We're on the Web
www.args.org

Alaska Rock Garden Society
PO Box 244136
Anchorage, AK 99524-4136



Newsletter

Check out the May Plant Sales!!!

To join the Alaska Rock Garden Society or renew membership, fill out the form below and send, along with a check payable to ARGS to: Alaska Rock Garden Society, PO Box 244136, Anchorage, AK 99524-4136

ARGS Membership: New ___; Renewal ___; w/o Changes ___; w/change ___
Dues: \$15 US—Individual, \$20 US-Family/Canada, \$25 US—Foreign

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____, State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail Address: _____ Telephone: () _____ - _____

ARGS may share its membership list with like-minded, non-profit organizations. If you DO NOT want to receive these notifications, please check here: _____

Membership is for the calendar year