



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.

September 18th—Cooperative Extension—Anchorage
Plant Swap, bring one or many plants to swap
This was a lot of fun last year!

September 19th—Rock Garden Clean-up at ABG 1:00 p.m.

October 20th—MTA—Palmer
Slugs: How to deal with and plants they don't like.

Seed Exchange coming up!!! Be sure and save seeds of favorite plants.

Yesterday is a cancelled check, tomorrow is a promissory note, today is the only cash you have, so spend it wisely.

-Anonymous

From the President

Jaime Rodríguez

I don't know about anyone else, but the weather this summer has felt like being trapped in the movie "Groundhog Day". The wet weather did make for a bumper crop of cherries on my cherry trees, and there is an amazing amount of seed set on some of the plants in my garden. I am finding I have to harvest them before they are completely ripe, and let them ripen and dry in paper sacks in the house, otherwise they are rotting in place, just like my tomatoes on the vine.

The wet weather has been good for seed germination and seedling transplanting. The September plant exchange meeting should be lots of fun.

We are looking for suggestions for outside speakers or topics folks would like to hear for our meetings in the next year. The Homer Garden Club has scheduled Dan Hinkley for August 6, 2011, mark your calendars. Some of us are hoping to organize a small seed-collecting trip with Dan to the Caucasus region of northern Turkey.

Stay dry. Kill slugs.



Seed Exchange

Mark White

The ARGS Seed Exchange is an annual event. Seeds are sent in to Mark White late Fall and a list goes out in the first Newsletter of the following year. Members select seed and receive it in time to start early spring.

I would really like to encourage each member to send in seed and if anyone has any +- criticisms on how it is done I'm open to change or incorporating the information. I've been asked in the past to add cultural information but don't see where we have space to delve into that aspect.

If seed is wild collected I think it is good to know where?

For the past 2 years I've sent the excess seed to Verna as I think it is sold at the spring fairs or given away at the meetings which is fine with me and as long as it is fine with the members.

Thank You! MW

Mt. Healy June Expedition

On Saturday, June 12th, dedicated members of the Alaska Rock Garden Society and Alaska Native Plant Society met at the base of Mt Healy. In full rain gear the group of twelve intrepid plant hunters set out up the mountain. Although there were few breaks in the rain and going was slow, everyone was able to see some of the most desirable plants. Led by Verna Pratt, the plants were pointed out and photographed as the group progressed up the steep grade. The younger members of the group, led by Anjanette Steer, trekked higher up and at a faster pace. Everyone was able to view over fifty varieties of choice native plants including: *Oxytropis nigrescens*, *Arnica frigida*, *Saxifraga oppositifolia*, *Woodsia ilvensis*, *Woodsia alpina*, *Arnica lessingii*, *Androsace chamaejasme*, *Diapensia lapponica*, *Douglasia gormanii*, *Eritrichium splendens*, *Hedysarum mackenzii*, *Rhododendron lapponicum*, *Saxifraga escholtzii*, and *Silene acaulis*.

At the end of the day everyone agreed that being wet for most of the day was a small price to pay for the beautiful plants they were able to see and photograph.

Sunday morning we were greeted with sunshine and the hike around the Savage River Trail in Denali Park was delightful. The trail was easy hiking and the flora different than we had seen the day before.

A Wonderful Experience!!

Mt. Healy August Seed Collecting Expedition

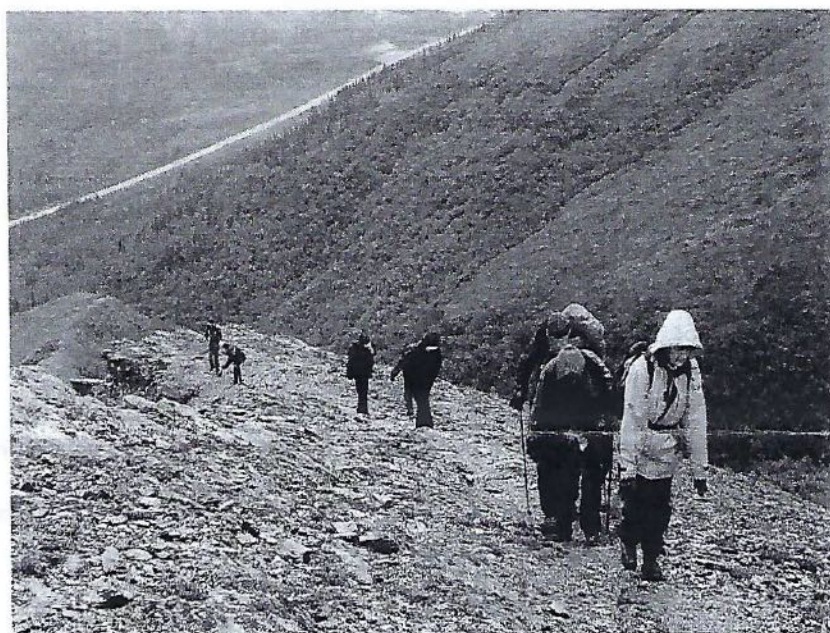
Three hardy members of ARGGS risked the probability of rain to return to Mt. Healy in early August to collect seeds from the plants we saw in June. We were rewarded with the first mostly sunny, dry weekend in 2 months. Jaime Rodriguez, Verna Pratt, and new member, Suzie Tracy had a very successful weekend finding seed from most of the plants we saw in June, and several that we missed on the first trip. Approximately 50 different collections were made.

We did learn a few important things about the three collection sites, the gravel pit, the mountain, and the dome. All of them mature the seed much faster than expected. The seed collecting trip could happen a week or two earlier and be even more successful. The Bison Gulch Dome in particular is remarkably wind swept and dry. While we were having a deluge all summer – Bison Gulch was in a desert-like drought, crunchy, even.

The experiment of marking plants with pink construction flags was a complete failure, but not for the expected reason. Humans were not the culprits stealing our markers. We found more than one of them pulled into Marmot or Pika burrows.

Some of the seed quantities are sadly small, but look for some rare beauties to try in the chapter seed exchange and NARGS exchange.

Mt. Healy Photo Album



**CLIMBING
MT. HEALY
IN
THE
RAIN**

**TAKING
A
BREAK
ON
THE
SAVAGE RIVER
TRAIL**



Notes From the Garden

Carmel Tysver

NOTE: We would like to have "Notes From the Garden" become a regular feature in our Newsletter. If you have a topic you'd like to share please send it to Carmel and it will be included in the next issue.

As fall approaches I start to think about what has happened in the garden this year and thinking of plans for next year. As gardeners we do not have enough time to share with others as to what has worked and for us what needs to be redone. I know we all have these thoughts and ideas so I would like to propose a new ongoing column for the ARGS newsletter. This first column will be from my viewpoint but I would enjoy seeing what other members have done, undone, redone and found new in the garden this year. I will gladly edit the column each newsletter if members will send me their ideas, plans and not so good ideas. Following are mine.

The summer for me started out achy, the arthritis in the hips and feet were felt and I was afraid it was time to start cutting back on the garden, which many of you have seen and it is large. Well I was determined to hike Mount Healy and take the family with me on the June field trip. The trip was what the doctor should have ordered. I came off the mountain with less pain than I had had for years. Movement and osteoarthritis go good together. To keep the momentum going we also went to Thompson pass for a weekend and with clear skies and sunshine we hiked all over the place and actually saw the mountains there. Camped rain free!

The garden still beckoned and most of it needed to be redone. So I started with the tufa garden in the front yard. Many plants were over grown and proved too large for the small crevice garden I had envisioned. The *Phyteuma scheuchzeri* covered several crevices and I wonder if what had been planted underneath was alive. I had a great surprise when the *Saxifraga* and *Androsace* were alive. So out with the *Phyteuma*. Once finished the garden looks like it did when I built it except for I am still having a dilemma as to what to top dress it with. Originally I used chicken grit which was the same color as the tufa but the color of the grit is now a reddish purple. UGH!! Florene Carney did find some fish tank sand that color but I have not found any do far.

A few years ago a friend gave me some tufa from a mine in Cooper Landing. The color is grey with an orange undertone. Also looks good with our pea gravel to use as a top dressing. The tufa had been sitting along side the garage and I decided it needed to be used. Gave away tons of plants and dug another ton to discard plus at least that much sod and built another tufa garden of Alaskan tufa. All of this led to the redesign of the front yard which was also enhanced by the fact the house next door sold and the new owners are not gardeners. I had planted lilies along the driveway which I removed this summer and we graveled the area for them. The garden is still not finished but I need plants which I hope I can collect some at the September meeting at the plant exchange.

Next newsletter I hope some of the members will write notes on what has and has not worked or been redone otherwise I will continue with my ranting. See everyone the 18th.



Rock Garden Tour in the Valley

The ARGS Garden Tours were held in the Valley this year. It seems that every event this year was in the rain and this was no exception. First stop was Jaime's Alpine Garden Nursery and a tour of his budding nursery and rock garden. Jaime always has a few really choice plants for us to see and is a wealth of information. Next on the schedule was Dan and Marion Elliott's beautiful gardens. Marion's rock garden is a study in great rock garden design, including one mystery plant. With the breath-taking view of the Mountains and upper Inlet, the rest of the gardens are delightful as well. Dan's many apple trees and the arbors and their beautiful borders were also a treat. The last stop was Doug and Florene Carney's Snowfire Gardens. The Carney's have added a couple of areas since the last tour of their gardens. A peat garden where an old rose bush used to be and a small tufa garden, that is thriving near the front sidewalk, were added in the last year.

Thank you to all the folks who opened their gardens to us this year.

Plant Profile

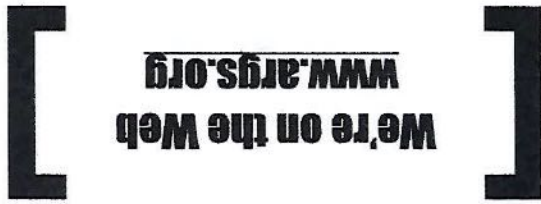
Jaime Rodriguez



Allium

cyaneum

From western China, this tiny onion is a great addition to the late summer and fall garden. It forms a clump of grass-like foliage about six inches tall, topped with small umbels of clear blue flowers. A mature clump will be about six inches in diameter. It prefers well-drained soil in full sun. It blooms late, and only occasionally sets seed here, but is easy to divide. Usually a plant or two is available at chapter plant sales.



Alaska Rock Garden Society
PO Box 244136
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Newsletter

September meeting is in Anchorage at the Cooperative Extension Office. September 18th, 2:00 p.m. PLANT SWAP!!!

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