



## NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2018

### FROM OUR PRESIDENT CARMEL TYSVER

Dear Members,

It has taken a bit of work and waiting but I think everything is worked out for Kit Strange from Kew Gardens. She will be speaking in Homer, Palmer, and Anchorage and hopefully we will have a good turnout. I have talked with her via email and she seemed very comfortable answering questions I have posed. She has even offered us the pdf of her talk, which is very generous.

Sears garden day is early this year, Saturday the 7<sup>th</sup> of April. We will be selling used books so if you have any that you would like to donate please bring them to the Sears Mall the day of the sale. Also if you happen to have any plants that you would like to sell also please bring them to the mall.

The next activities we will be having are our annual plant sales. Anchorage sale will again be at the botanical garden and it will be their plant sale also, May 19<sup>st</sup>. The sale in the Valley will also be at the same venue, the garden of Doug and Florene Carney, May 26<sup>th</sup>.

This is the 20<sup>th</sup> year that there has been a rock garden at Alaska Botanical Garden, built and maintained by our members. As board members we think we should plan a celebration. It is the 25<sup>th</sup> year for the ABG. Are there members out there that would be willing to help with planning and producing such an event? You can call me or any of the members of the board which are listed in this newsletter.

I want the members know if you do not hear from me regularly during April and May it is because I will be having major surgery and know I am looking at a six weeks of recovery and may be quite limited.

With all the sunshine lately it won't be long before we will be in the gardens again. I know it is getting close as my son has started his pumpkins. He does better every year. Fun to watch him puttering in the greenhouse and then the garden.

Happy Spring!

Carmel Tysver, Chapter Chairperson

**ALASKA ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY PRESENTATION:  
APRIL 10TH, TUESDAY, 7:00 PM: CENTRAL LUTHERAN  
CHURCH, 1420 CORDOVA ST - \$5 DONATION**

**KIT STRANGE, ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW, will be presenting on "Bulbs of Kyrgyzstan."**

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## CALENDAR

**April 7, 2018, 10AM to 5 PM Saturday: Anchorage. Sears Mall.** ARGS Plant Sale Bring plants to sale and books to donate. Contact (907) 345-5144 or [johnmadge@chugach.net](mailto:johnmadge@chugach.net) for details.

**April 8, 2018, 3 PM Sunday: Homer.** United Methodist Church, 770 East End Road: Kit Strange on "How to be a better propagator." \$5 donation.

**April 9, 2018, 7:00 PM Monday: Wasilla.** Mat-Su College, Fred and Sarah Machetanz Building, 8295 College Drive: Kit Strange on "Floral Treasurers from Eastern Turkey." \$5 donation.

**April 10, 2018, 7:00 PM Tuesday: Anchorage.** Central Lutheran Church, 1420 Cordova St: Kit Strange on "Bulbs of Kyrgyzstan." \$5 donation.

**May 12, 2018, 10 AM—2 PM Saturday: Anchorage.** Meeting in combination with Clean-Up at Alaska Botanical Garden (ABG). Bring beverage, lunch, gloves, and tools.

**May 19, 2018, 9 AM—5 PM Saturday: Anchorage.** Plant sale at Alaska Botanical Garden (ABG). Volunteers needed!

**May 26, 2018, 10 AM—4 PM Saturday: Wasilla.** Valley Plant Sale and open garden at [Snowfire Gardens](#), 3379 Inlet Vista.

**June 2, 2018, 9 AM—2 PM Saturday—Anchorage.** Wildflower Garden Club plant sale at Sally K's, 7435 Old Harbor.

**June 20, 2018, Wednesday: Anchorage.** 20th Anniversary party for the Rock Garden at ABG. [Details next newsletter.]

**July 21, 2018, Saturday: Portage.** Fieldtrip to Portage. Jaime to lead.

### Join Us!

We have about six meetings per year, plus Plant Sales, Field Trips and a Seed Exchange. Our meetings are generally on the third Saturday of the month, Fall, Winter, and Spring, and rotate between the Mat-Su Valley and Anchorage. To join, apply at: <http://www.akrockgardensociety.org/>.

Individual Membership \$15.00 US

Family Membership \$20.00 US

Membership is for the calendar year so renew now if you have not already done so!

**ARGS ENDOWMENT.** ARGS started collecting money for an endowment for the Rock Garden at ABG last March. The endowment is managed by The [Alaska Community Foundation](#). The intent of the endowment is to let the funds grow. The funds will not be used for many years. Present and future ARGS members will determine how funds are used. Some uses of funds include the purchase of plants to replace dead plant, purchase plants for research for hardiness, and general upkeep and maintenance.

ARGS would like to ensure that the Rock Garden at ABG will continue to be an important part of Alaska. We want a place where our children and grandchildren can appreciate the beauty and learn about the plants.

Seed money from our savings was the start of the fund. The money that had been raised for seed expeditions was given back to the club by that group. A donor offered to match any other donated monies up to \$10,000. We are within \$700 of that goal.

Donations can be made directly to The [Alaska Community Foundation](#) or to ARGS, PO Box 244136, Anchorage 99524.



## **Kit Strange, Kew Gardens**

### **NARGS Lecture Series**

#### **Hosted by the Alaska Rock Garden Society**

Kit Strange is a horticulturist at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, working in the Alpine Department where she oversees much of the extensive collections of plants that comprise Kew's world famous collections, particularly the challenging bulb collection including the world's most extensive collection of Scorpiris--the exquisite "Juno" Iris of the Mediterranean, Western and Central Asia.

She also helps stage many fine displays that include there plants at Kew and around Britain, such as the Chelsea Flower Show and numerous shows staged by the Alpine Garden Society and sister societies.

Born in Denmark, Kit has native command of English and is an accomplished, entertaining and polished speaker.

She is a plant explorer who's ranged across much of Europe and Asia and has many other keen interests including fishing, motorcycles and her husband.



Kit Strange in Tadjikistan



Juno iris (part of what Kit manages) at Kew

### **Why garden with rock and alpine plants?**

compact size means more variety in a small space	native plants support pollinators
unique and diverse plants from the mountain regions of the world	small troughs or large crevice gardens can be show-cases
hardy plants, well-suited to Alaska's climate	use of rocks and alpine plants is inspired by nature



## Unusual Trough Plants – Alpine Primula

Submitted by Gina Docherty

A few years ago I noticed a small unidentified plant in one of my older troughs that looked a lot like a tiny primula. No tag, of course, and no recollection of where it came from. I photographed it & posted it on FB on the “Primula Lovers” site. It was identified as *Primula augustifolia*. I was unable to find a source for this plant online, but have emailed Siskiyou Rare Plant Nursery to see if they ever carried this plant, since I’ve ordered from them in the past.

Here’s what I learned from research from Professor Google and Richard’s Primula Book:

*P. augustifolia*, section Parryi, sometimes called “Alpine Primula”, is a dwarf plant lacking meal. Leaves are boat shaped. It is related to the auricula; some hybridization in the wild has been known to occur with *P. auricula*.

Plants are 1-4 inches tall; stems are rarely larger than 1 cm, but elongate when in fruit. Flowers are usually lilac, rose or purple, rarely white, with a yellow eye surrounded by a white zone up to 20 mm in diameter, and may seem disproportionately large for the plant.

This primula is found in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and New Mexico, overlapping the area that *p. pernyi* is found. It grows above the tree line in wet gravelly sites in tundra habitats, e.g., under boulders or in snow melt hollows, and is locally abundant.

It was not specified whether this plant prefers sun or shade, but I would venture to say that the root zone is the most important aspect of placement. My trough faces south but has trees behind it & a large rose arbor to the east that provides some shade.

*P. augustifolia* is visited by a smaller suite of pollinators than *perryi*, and sets less seed, reflecting its adaptation to extreme tundra habitat. Sometimes long lived and fairly free flowering in cultivation, but rarely sets seed.

According to Richards, *P. Augustifolia* is ‘mostly grown in pots under glass, nearly dry in winter but well watered and never allowed to dry out in summer; grows well in troughs, covered in winter, in western Scotland.’ And doing well in a trough in south Anchorage, South Central Alaska, currently covered with about 3 feet of snow.



*Primula augustifolia* – photo by Gina Docherty



**March 8, 2018 Alaska Rock Garden Society –  
Board Meeting at Florene Carney's home**

President:	Carmel Tysver	Present
Vice President:	Florene Carney	Present
Secretary:	Jamie Smith	Present
Treasurer:	Madge Oswald	Present
Past President:	Jaime Rodriguez	Present
Program Chair:	Florene Carney	Present
Newsletter Editor:	Charles Utermohle	Present
Website Coordinators:	Carmel Tysver	Present
	Gina Docherty	Present
Membership Chair:	Gina Docherty	Present
Member-at-Large	Debbie Hinchey	Present

## Old Business:

### Carmel:

Kit Strange, Kew Gardens talks: There was additional correspondence with Kit Strange regarding her talks and topics in April. Carmel will provide Kit with specifics of our climate, and let Kit decide which topics would work for plants here. Better than us trying to choose from the topics list Kit provided, as she knows their content. Decision was made to ask for \$5.00 donation at the door in the Valley and Anchorage. Madge and Gina will take care of notifying Anchorage and Valley garden clubs know the final decision of locations, dates, and topics to help spread the word of Kit's presentations. Carmel will take care of contacting Kit and Panayoti Kelaidis.

### Plant Sales:

Sears Mall Sale - Saturday April 7<sup>th</sup> 10:00am to 5:00pm. We'll have one table dedicated to donated books on gardening. Five other tables are available for plants, crevice tools, garden information, etc. Jaime will have plants to sell, as will others. Set up is at 9:00am; tear down is immediately after closing.

Snowfire Gardens Sale - Saturday May 26<sup>th</sup> 10:00am to 4:00pm. Includes Florene and Doug's Open Garden. Don't forget your camera!

### 20<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration:

2018 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration of our Rock Garden at the Alaska Botanical Garden. Suggestion is to combine our celebration with the Alaska Botanical Garden's Birthday Party on Wednesday June 20<sup>th</sup>. Plans and call lists will be discussed/finalized during lunch at the May 12<sup>th</sup> Clean-Up meeting at ABG. Ginger Hudson's name was suggested as a possible con-

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**March 8, 2018** Alaska Rock Garden Society –  
Board Meeting at Florene Carney's home

tact to head-up/coordinate our 20<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration.

Madge and Gina - Membership/Dues:

Madge and Gina discussed membership lists and dues. We decided CALENDAR YEAR will be Membership Year. Members who pay dues during the last quarter of the year will be considered members until the end of the following calendar year. As for Membership list, Debbie suggested we send TWO monthly notices to past members who have not renewed. If they do not respond by the end of the second month, their names will be dropped from our Membership List.

Newsletter:

Every one at the Board Meeting today agreed to submit ONE ARTICLE a year to the Newsletter. Articles will be sent to Charles by email or text.

Other:

Gina will put a banner on our website to highlight specific events coming up. She will also finalize the NEW Renewal and Membership forms she presented at the meeting.

## New Business:

Garden Tours:

Several possibilities were discussed, but nothing was finalized. If you know anyone who might be interested in being on the tour this year, please contact them and get the information to Carmel or Florene. Contacts will be made, then hopefully we can finalize the tour(s) at May 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Stay tuned for information regarding additional programs and workshops! Don't forget to check our [website](#), also!



## POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

**President:** Carmel Tysver; (907) 727-7645;  
[garden@gci.net](mailto:garden@gci.net)

**Vice-President:** Florene Carney; (907) 376-5390;  
[snowfire@mtaonline.net](mailto:snowfire@mtaonline.net)

**Secretary:** Jamie Smith; (907) 376-7863;  
[topgun@mtaonline.net](mailto:topgun@mtaonline.net)

**Treasurer:** Madge Oswald; (907) 345-5144;  
[johnmadge@chugach.net](mailto:johnmadge@chugach.net)

**Past President:** Jaime Rodriguez; (907) 357-2747;  
[jrtinker@mtaonline.net](mailto:jrtinker@mtaonline.net)

**Members-at-large:** Debbie Hinchey  
Gina Docherty

**Membership:** Gina Docherty

**Newsletter Editor:** Charles J. Utermohle; (907) 231-5460; [Thule@alaska.net](mailto:Thule@alaska.net)

### CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Alaska Rock Garden Society is a diverse group sharing an appreciation for rock gardening. Help make the society valuable to you by contributing suggestions for presentations, articles, plant sales, and field trips.

The newsletter is always looking for meaningful content on rock gardening in Alaska. Send your articles and/or pictures to the editor at [Thule@alaska.net](mailto:Thule@alaska.net). Events related to other gardening will also be posted as space allows.

### ARGS WEBSITE:

[HTTP://WWW.AKROCKGARDENSOCIETY.ORG/](http://WWW.AKROCKGARDENSOCIETY.ORG/)  
CHECK THE [ARGS CALENDAR](#) FOR  
CURRENT AND FUTURE EVENTS.

### ARGS FACEBOOK:

[HTTPS://M.FACEBOOK.COM/ALASKAROCKGARDENSOCIETY/](https://M.FACEBOOK.COM/ALASKAROCKGARDENSOCIETY/)

## Join NARGS

Join the [North American Rock Garden Society](#). Benefits include a subscription to the Rock Garden Quarterly, seed exchange, garden book purchases at a discount, study weekends, and annual meetings, as well as other benefits. Membership in the Alaska Rock Garden Society is separate from NARGS, the national organization. Membership is \$40/year (plus \$10 for additional members). Register online at <https://nargs.org/join>. The NARGS website is at [www.nargs.org](http://www.nargs.org).

## FREE MONEY - NARGS LINK TO AMAZON

Have you ever purchased an item online through [Amazon.com](#)? Most of us have. Are you a regular shopper at [Amazon.com](#)? Many of us are. Have you ever shopped at [Amazon.com](#) through the [NARGS](#) website link? Very few of us do. Do you know what the NARGS [Amazon.com](#) link is? Every time an individual (NARGS member or non-member) goes to the [NARGS.org](#) website and then clicks on the link to [Amazon.com](#), the [North American Rock Garden Society](#) earns a commission on each item purchased. The commission varies based upon the item purchased and typically ranges from 4% to 18%. You make your purchase just as if you had gone to [Amazon.com](#) directly, and there is no additional cost to you. It is free money to [NARGS](#). Make your next [Amazon.com](#) purchase by starting at [NARGS.org](#). It is a winner for us all! Here is how to financially support [NARGS.org](#) through [Amazon.com](#).

Go to the [NARGS.org](#) website.

There is a black banner with a link to [Amazon.com](#). Click on that link and the next web page is the [Amazon.com](#) site. (Mozilla Firefox does not provide the link.) Shop as you normally do.

Shop at [Amazon.com](#) through [NARGS.org](#) web link!

Where Alpines Meet the Sea  
NARGS Annual Meeting, St. John's, Newfoundland,  
July 6-8, 2018.  
Hosted by the Newfoundland Chapter  
Contact: Todd Boland at [todd.boland@warp.nfld.net](mailto:todd.boland@warp.nfld.net)

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Anchorage, Alaska 99503

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2018

WHERE ALPINES MEET THE SEA  
**NARGS 2018**



NEWFOUNDLAND CHAPTER

ST. JOHN'S JULY 6-8, 2018