

# ALASKA ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY



# NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 25, ISSUE 3

NOVEMBER 2021

## CALENDAR

*Membership Meeting, Saturday,  
November 20, 2021, 10:00 AM*

*Via ZOOM*

*(Link will be Distributed Separately)*

### Agenda

Welcome and comments

Minutes

Treasurer Report

Board Meeting Update

Program: **“Hardy Plants for the Alaska Rock Garden”**

by Florene Carney

## FROM OUR PRESIDENT, FLORENE CARNEY

As we close out 2021 and head into 2022, the ARGS Board reviewed the last year and started preparing for next. Surprisingly, we were able to complete the majority of the events that we planned last year. It was challenging but I'm proud to say that our membership persevered and even progressed through it all. We took on ZOOM meetings and gained membership. We were able to book a couple of distance speakers who presented on ZOOM, as well as several of our local speakers did ZOOM programs as well. This appears to be the wave of the future and a life saver for those folks who are more remote or don't like to drive in the winter.

Programs for the next year and beyond are being planned so if you have something you'd like to learn more about

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or a program you have heard of that is exceptional, let us know. If you haven't joined NARGS (North American Rock Garden Society) I'd recommend you check it out. Their WEB site has information on speakers and topics that you may find exciting. With COVID some of our fundraisers were cancelled so we may not have as much money for speakers but may get relief in grants or free speakers through NARGS.

Both of the rock gardens that ARGS cares for (Palmer Visitor Center and Alaska Botanical Garden) are looking good as we go into Winter. I was wishing my home rock garden looked so good and then I realized that the Palmer Garden alone has received many man hours of work – five people every Thursday all summer for two hours = 120 or more hours. Sometimes we worked longer and occasionally someone couldn't make it but I think that is a pretty close number.

We were happy to have a couple of plant sales in person and a "Blueberry Hill Hike" in Anchorage (great reports back from that one) and a "Hatcher Pass" hike in the Valley that included a tour of Les Brake's garden and we were allowed to jump into the Willow Garden Club's tour for a delightful tour of an extra garden. We are thinking both those hikes or similar ones should be an annual event. We also had a couple of "Pop-Up" gardens. Fran Durner opened her garden in Anchorage and Dorte Mobley in the Valley. Thanks to both. I'd like to see this as part of our program for next year, also.

Due to COVID we are adjusting some of our activities and will continue to try to serve our entire membership. We did not charge dues last year and anyone who paid will have that payment adjusted. Our Treasurer, Madge Oswald, will contact those members. Dues will be charged for 2022. They help pay for speakers and programs for the coming year. Look elsewhere in this Newsletter for information on programs and updates. Thanks to Charles for continuing to put out our Newsletter and Crevice.

We are going into the season for planning and dreams – when we look at all the beautiful gardens

on the Web and in magazines and plan more than we can ever do and order more seeds than we will ever plant AND dream of a year spent in the garden in peace and tranquility.

Wishing you a great time of planning and dreams,  
Florene Carney  
President

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**PROGRAM: NOVEMBER 20TH  
"HARDY PLANTS FOR THE ALASKA  
ROCK GARDEN"  
FLORENE CARNEY**

This program was originally designed by Florene Carney and Verna Pratt to showcase many rock garden plants that have been proven to survive in Alaska. This is the follow up to Jaime Rodriguez's October program on "Building a Rock Garden". Once you have your rock garden built you need to add plants. This program will help you identify plants that will work in your new rock garden. At this time of year when we are hungry for color and flowers, this program fills the bill. It's a chance to see what's growing in local public and private rock gardens. Florene will ask for input from those watching about what kind of success (or failures) they have had with the plants being presented. A list will be available to print to help you plan for next spring.

**WHY ARE YOU A MEMBER OF ARGS?**

**Madge Oswald (Anchorage)** I read somewhere that you don't start as a rock gardener, but grow into it. I grew into it. In 2000 when I retired, we bought this house, and I started serious flower gardening. After three or four years I had most of the usual perennials such as delphiniums, ligularia, lilies, and the like. I got bored. I went on many garden tours and saw rock gardens at Florene's, Verna's, and Amelia's. I had the time, energy, and the space to expand so a rock garden was logical. I would look out my window and imagine a rock garden. I don't watch tv but my husband does, so I would sit and google plants and nurseries while I sat with him, and I would want to try out plants that I saw online. It was lots of hard physical work. I personally unloaded truckloads of dirt and gravel, and had hired help for most of the rocks. Every rock was positioned multiple times by my helper. I even went inside to look out the window to be sure they looked okay. I was lots younger then. I would never start what I have now at my age.



## 2021-2022 Proposed Activities

**November** Plants for troughs/rock gardens Florene Carney

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<b>January</b>	Crevasse Gardening	Paul Spiggs
<b>February</b>	Primulas	Ed Buyarski
<b>March</b>	Pulsatilla	TBD
<b>April</b>	Fritillaria	National speaker?
<b>May</b>	Plant sales	TBD
<b>June</b>	Hike/tour Anchorage area/ABG	
<b>July</b>	Hike Matsu Valley “Mini Conference” @ Florene Carney’s	
<b>August</b>	Trough Workshop, Building your trough @ Florene Carney’s	
<b>September</b>	Trough Workshop, Planting your trough @ Florene Carney’s	
<b>October</b>	Lewesia	National speaker?
<b>November</b>	Gentian	National speaker?
<b>December</b>	No meeting	



Plant Profile: *Erigeron linearis*

By Jaime Rodriguez

Desert Yellow Fleabane, or Narrow Leaved Fleabane is a lovely native North American Asteraceae perfect for a rock Garden. The extremely silver tufts of narrow fuzzy leaves are topped by masses of bright yellow daisies two to eight inches tall. This is another plant I grew for many years from an early selection of NARGS seeds. It germinated easily at room temperatures indoors. The seedlings grew very slowly. A small colony persisted in my garden for many years, but was continually crowded by more aggressive plants. It eventually vanished, because it did not like the disturbance or competition. Both the foliage and the flowers are attractive when it is happy. I'm hoping to get fresh seed to try it again. Once established, it is drought tolerant, and forms a woody caudex, shrubby set of branches. It would be an excellent candidate for a trough or crevice garden in full sun to part shade.





Plant Profile: *Synthyris missurica*

By Jaime Rodriguez

Mountain Kittentails is a very showy native North American wildflower in the Plantaginaceae family that has been reliably hardy at the Palmer Visitor's Center Rock Garden for about ten years. It is a very early spring bloomer, with a dense raceme of blue-violet flowers over a basal cluster of round leaves. In the wild it grows in moist open or shaded mountain slopes, often at forest edges. It is a rhizomatous perennial hardy to Zone 2. A happy clump can grow six to twelve inches tall, and a foot or two in diameter. After several years of trying, seed from the Palmer plant germinated last summer and hopefully some of these showy





ALASKA ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY  
Executive Board Meeting  
ZOOM  
October 7, 2021  
10:00 AM

MINUTES

October 7, 2021 Alaska Rock Garden Society - Executive Board Meeting

President:	Florene Carney	Present
Vice President:	Dorte Mobley	Present
Secretary:	Jamie Smith	Present
Treasurer:	Madge Oswald	Present
Past President:	Carmel Tysver	Absent
Program Chair:	Dorte Mobley	Present
Newsletter & Crevice Editor:	Charles Utermohle	Present
Website Coordinators:	Carmel Tysver	Absent
	Florene Carney	Present
	Gina Docherty	Present
Membership Chair:	Gina Docherty	Present
Palmer Visitor Ctr Chair:	Jaime Rodriguez	Present
Library Chair:	Kathy Swick	Present
Aline Strutz Award Chair	Jerry McEwen	Absent
Sunshine Committee Chair	Dorte Mobley	Present
Seed Exchange Co-Chairs:	Debbie Hinchey	Present
	Carmel Tysver	Absent

Florene Carney called the meeting to order at 10:05am, welcoming all who in attendance  
Review of Past Year: We accomplished a lot considering Covid restraints/mandates.  
Using ZOOM, we had Membership Meetings, Speakers, Presentations, etc.

Palmer Visitor Center Rock Gardens were tended weekly by our group of 5 Valley members who cleaned up winter's mess, weeded, and generally kept the gardens looking good all summer. Seeds were collected in the Fall, also. The intent is to grow them to for future use in these gardens, add to the Rock Garden at ABG, sell at Plant Sales, etc.

Kathy Swick reported the Rock Gardens at the Alaska Botanical Gardens look good. Again, a core group took care of them all Summer. However, the Tufa bed is looking poorly due to shade from the trees. Will Criner trimmed birches this Fall, and Kathy planted more plants in front as she could. She's still working with Will on possibly trimming or removing more of the trees. New member Bonnie Friedman is eager to help in the ABG Rock Gardens.

Debbie Hinchey moved we should put up some funds up to help defray the cost of tree trimming/removal. Seconded by Charles Utermohle. Cost is usually \$200 per tree; Paul's Tree Service is already doing tree work at ABG. Kathy will research cost and report back at next Exec Board Meeting. A more



firm dollar amount will be discussed at that time.

Plant Sales were successful! Madge Oswald reported the Plant Sale at Alaska Botanical Garden made \$3903.00, and the Valley Plant Sale at Florene's made \$3021.00.

Hikes: The Blueberry Hill and Hatcher Pass hikes were enjoyed by all who attended.

Jaime Rodriguez recommended we do Blueberry Hill in the Fall to collect seeds.

He also recommended we add the Hatcher Pass hike to the list for 2022, as folks were asking about doing it again.

Pop-Up Garden tours: A few folks - Fran Durner, Dorte Mobley, and Madge Oswald - made their gardens available for these tours. Each of the gardens was beautiful!

Thank you all.

Discussion of meeting schedule for coming year

Dorte Mobley is working on the Program List for 2021-2022. She has several interesting topics and presentations, and is working to finalize the list.

Oct 16, 2021: 'Day Dreaming' Jaime Rodriguez will do his presentation on 'Rock Garden Construction 101.'

Nov 20, 2021: 'Seeds: Selecting, Growing, etc.'

Dec, 2021: No Membership Meeting.

Tentative 2022 Program List is attached

Madge Oswald suggested we have 'Seasonal Meetings', which led to the following discussion:

Florene Carney said we had tried those before and it didn't work.

Jaime Rodriguez commented we only have 6 meetings a year already (Sept, Oct, Nov and Jan, Feb, Mar), with summer months reserved for working at the Palmer Visitor Center rock gardens and our rock garden at Alaska Botanical Garden.

All AGREED we would stick with our current schedule.

Madge Oswald suggested we have two Social Events - one in Early to Mid-June at the Palmer Visitor Center, and one at Alaska Botanical Garden. Dates and times would be coordinated with each location individually. The goal would to use the events as a way of advertising Alaska Rock Garden Society, showcase what we do, and entice people to become members.

Honor for Carmel Tysver at ARGS Rock Gardens at Alaska Botanical Garden

Florene Carney - We need to pursue the suggestion of a Special Honor for Carmel Tysver as we weren't able to do it during the 2020-2021 year. Florene will contact Jerry McEwen, Committee Chair, regarding the award. Jerry has a long history with Carmel so he should be involved. Florene will contact him as he has suggestions/ideas regarding the award. Dorte will take the lead on 'making this happen' this year. Florene will help Dorte. After much discussion, this topic was placed on HOLD until coordinating can be done. Dorte and Florene will report back at next Exec Board Meeting.

Membership, Dues, Election of Officers

Membership

Jaime Rodriguez reported we currently have 1,100 members on Facebook. He receives requests to join our Facebook page, and he has 3 questions for them to answer. If they respond with POSITIVE replies, he adds them to our Page. If not, he deletes their request.

(Please refer to II.c for Madge's Social Event suggestion as a way to increase membership.)



### Dues

Madge Oswald reported some members have paid their dues. She will contact them to say their dues are paid for 2022.

Jaime Rodriguez made the Motion to collect dues for 2021-2022, keep our schedule as it is, and continue ZOOM meetings. Debbie Hinchey Seconded the Motion. UNANIMOUS decision.

### Election of Officers

Florene Carney - Should we keep the election of officers in the Fall and start serving in January? Discussion:

Jaime Rodriguez recommended holding the election in Fall 2022

Florene Carney - Have a slate of officers in October 2022 with election in November 2022

Jaime Rodriguez - Are current officers willing to serve one more year and plan to have election in Nov 2022? All agreed to serve one more year.

Charles Utermohle requested we find someone interested in taking over the Newsletter and Crevice SOON as he'd like to mentor them for a year before they take over his position of Editor.

Madge Oswald asked if Kristina Tornqvist might be interested.

Dorte Mobley said Kristina's already doing the paper for another garden club and may not be interested on taking on another paper.

Debbie Hinchey recommended Bonnie Friedman. She's already a member and was also recommended by Kathy Swick.

Charles will contact Bonnie.

Madge Oswald recommended we have personal contact with people to ask if they're interested in serving on the Executive Board rather than just sending out emails.

Dorte Mobley recommended contacting Verna Pratt's grandson to ask if he's willing to serve as an Officer.

Jaime Rodriguez recommended we have this discussion as the Business part of the Membership Meeting Nov 17, 2021. ALL AGREED

Coordinate with Alaska Botanical Garden for Rock Garden speaker at the Spring Conference

Debbie Hinchey mentioned Stacey Shriner, the Program Director at ABG, is willing to work with us regarding a speaker.

Madge Oswald added that if we have a Rock Garden speaker at the Conference, it will broaden our contact with more interested people.

Jaime Rodriguez suggested we contact Members of other Rock Garden clubs to be a speaker. He also asked if we pay for the speaker or split the cost with ABG. That will be checked out prior to asking speakers.

Madge Oswald recommended we aim for 2023 instead of 2022 as it may be too late to get a speaker. Gina Docherty disagreed, instead recommending we at least try for 2022 first before dismissing the possibility.

Jaime Rodriguez said his experience has been that speakers are arranging their speaking engagements 2 years in advance.

Madge and Jaime will work together to see what speakers might be available for



2022 or 2023. A list will be made for each year.

Debbie Hinchey is already on the ABG Conference Committee and said they're looking at possibly having the Conference in March. However, that month isn't 'set in stone'.

Florene Carney: We'll TABLE this until January 2022. Debbie will let ABG know we're thinking of 2023 not 2022, and we're OK with that. Debbie will check on other speakers as well.

#### Seed Exchange

Florene Carney asked the Board if we should continue to have a Seed Exchange or encourage Members to participate in NARGS Seed Exchange.

Dorte Mobley made the Motion to NOT have the Seed Exchange. Madge Oswald Seconded the Motion. All agreed EXCEPT Gina Docherty. Discussion followed: Debbie Hinchey agreed to do the physical work of cleaning, sorting, etc the seeds if someone will do the communication work.

Gina Docherty agreed to help Debbie and will do the communication.

Dorte Mobley will make the announcement on ARGS Facebook Page.

Florene Carney placed subject on HOLD for further discussion at a later meeting.

#### Review Programs that are set for coming year

October 16, 2021: 'How to Build a Rock Garden' - Jaime Rodriguez

November 20, 2021: 'Hardy Plants for the Alaska Rock Garden' - Florene Carney

March or April 2022: Debbie Hinchey and Gina Docherty will work together on a 'Fritillaria' program. Florene suggested we have a speaker familiar with Zone 4 plants.

Dorte Mobley said we need a speaker familiar with Northwest seeds and plants, and where people can obtain the seeds or plants. Florene will help Dorte out on this subject.

Debbie Hinchey would like to see more information on plants at ABG. Charles Utermohle has lots of photos of ABG plants he's willing to share with someone familiar with the plants and willing to do the presentation. Florene asked Charles to forward the photos to her. She and Jaime will coordinate to create a program.

Dorte Mobley will develop a list of programs using above suggestions, then send it to the Members prior to the next Executive Board meeting.

#### Closing comments:

Charles Utermohle will put an announcement for the October Membership Meeting in The Crevice

Jaime Rodriguez will put the announcement on Face Book.

Dorte Mobley made the Motion we adjourn; Seconded by Charles Utermohle. Meeting adjourned at 11:45.

###



Alaska Rock Garden Society  
Financials report  
September 30, 2020

Opening Balance 9/1/20	\$8242.93
Income total. \$107.	107.00
Membership \$15	
Digger sales. \$92.	8349.93

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Expenses	45.00
Spoon Frog Graphics \$45	
Check not cleared bank.	
Balance available	\$8304.93

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**NARGS ROCKS:**  
**CREVICES**  
**HORIZONTAL & VERTICAL**  
**A VIRTUAL STUDY DAY.**  
**AT YOUR CONVENIENCE.**

The North American Rock Garden Society [NARGS] will present its second virtual study Zoom session from February 6th on-demand from the web. The cost is \$25 for NARGS members; and \$50 (which includes an introductory NARGS membership) for nonmembers. [[nargs.org](http://nargs.org)]

**Paul Spriggs** - How did we get here? A brief history of Crevice Gardening

**Kenton Seth** - Crevice Gardening for the Masses and recent News

**Jeremy Schmidt** - From Big Rocks to Little Rocks

**Susan Sims** - Between A Rock and A Hardscape or When Schist Hits the Fan

**Jay Akerley** - Crevice Gardens for Small Spaces

**Roslyn Duffus** - From the Mighty to the Modest

Moderators: **Mike Kintgen** and **Elisabeth Zander**



## POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

**President:** Florene Carney

**Vice-President/Program Chair:** Dorte Mobley

**Secretary :** Jaimie Smith

**Treasurer:** Madge Oswald

**Past President:** Carmel Tysver

**Membership:** Gina Docherty

**Newsletter Editor:** Charles J. Utermohle and Bonnie Friedman

**Seed Exchange:** Debbie Hinchey

**Librarian:** Kathy Swick

**Palmer Visitors Center Garden:** Jaime Rodriguez

**ABG Rock Garden:** Madge Oswald

**Sunshine Committee:** Dorte Mobley

## JOIN NARGS

If you are not already a member, considering joining the North American Rock Garden Society (NARGS). You can enjoy the Rock Garden Quarterly, featured plants and books of the month, photo galleries, blogs of interest to rock gardeners, and information about upcoming events. Go to [www.args.org/join](http://www.args.org/join) and give yourself the gift of national membership this holiday season.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

### 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, and receive this newsletter, send your name, address, Phone number, e-mail address and a Check payable to ARGS at 12001 Audubon Dr., Anchorage, AK 97516 or on the web at <https://www.akrockgardensociety.org/membership.html>

:  
 Individual Membership \$15.00  
 Family Membership \$20.00  
 Canada Membership: \$20.00 US  
 Overseas Membership \$20.00 US

Membership is for the calendar year and includes all issues of the newsletter for that year. The ARGS Newsletter is published 6 times per year. We invite your contributions. Please contact Charles Utermohle, at [thule@alaska.net](mailto:thule@alaska.net) or Bonnie Friedman, at [Bonnief@gci.net](mailto:Bonnief@gci.net)

**CURRENTLY A MEMBER?  
 YOU WILL NEED TO RENEW  
 YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR  
 2022!**

[WWW.AKROCKGARDENSOCIETY.ORG](http://WWW.AKROCKGARDENSOCIETY.ORG)

Webmasters: Carmel Tysver, Florene Carney,  
 and Gina Docherty

ARGS is on FACEBOOK at:

<https://www.facebook.com/alaskarockgardensociety/>



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