



**Potomac Valley
Chapter
North American
Rock Garden
Society**



PVC Bulletin

January-April 2016

Colchicum hungaricum 'Valentine' J. McKenney

Colchicum hungaricum 'Velebit Star' J. McKenney

Jim McKenney, Editor jimmckenney@jimmckenney.com
<http://www.pvcnargs.org/>

**You can pay your dues by sending your check for \$15 (payable to PVC NARGS) to Margot Ellis,
2417 N Taylor St., Arlington, VA 22207 4pvctreas@gmail.com**

2016 Calendar

Programs are Saturday mornings and, unless otherwise noted,
doors open at 9:30 am for coffee with lecture at 10 am

March 26 – Local Garden Designer Jane McLeish (Topic TBD). Details to come. Jane has designed and created beautiful gardens of all shapes and sizes for clients with a range of resources and desires. Jane's landscapes offer creative garden solutions that include color, form and structure year-round.
<http://janemacleish.com>

April 29-30 FONA sale

April 30 Saturday USBG Peter Couchman Making Scree Sexy

May 14 Saturday Green Spring sale at Green Spring Gardens Park

May 21 Saturday Potomac Valley Chapter spring plant exchange at the home of Alice Nicolson

Index

President's Message	p. 2	PVC-run trough-planting workshop for FONA	p. 6
Minutes of March 9 Board Meeting	p. 2	Stephen Hamblin	p. 7
Early flowering following a record-warm December	p. 3	Something surprising from Jo Banfield's garden	p. 8
Plant list from Tony Reznicek's USNA talk	p. 4	Remembering past members	p. 8
More about the FONA book sale	p. 5		

The deadline for submissions to the next issue of this bulletin is April 15, 2016

President's Message

It's hard to believe that it snowed here last week. As I write this, the temps are in the low 80's outside, our iguana is scratching on the door to get outside, the Argentinian tegu has awoken from his winter hibernation and I have removed the tops from the cold frame and winter protection from tender shrubs in the garden. It's hard to believe spring is not here, but it wouldn't be surprising if next week brings cold weather as that's March in the DC area, isn't it? Still, the small bulbs are blooming, and many other plants are nosing their way through the warming soil to welcome what I hope is the end of winter. Actually, winter wasn't too bad this year – we had a low temperature of 9°F in Ellicott City which was of short duration, and I'm noticing the *Trachycarpus* palms, *Araucaria*, *Fatsia* and other zone 7 evergreens sailed through without damage. What a difference from the past two winters!

Our chapter is planning an event-filled spring which you can peruse in this newsletter. I'd like to mention that we are planning to hold sales events at FONA Garden Fair (April 29-30) and at Greenspring Gardens (May 14) to raise money for our chapter. It is important to have members volunteer (there's that word again) to help with these events. This would involve helping to plant troughs for the sales, donating plants for the sales as well as helping at the sales events. These are our primary fund raising events of the year and so far they have provided enough funds to offset a membership dues increase. There will be several e-mails going out to the membership for specific volunteer efforts in the next month or two - please help us out any way you can!

PVC Board Meeting March 8 2016

Present: Kevin, Judy, Margot, Jim McK, Sarah, Sharon, Jody via Skype, Jim D and Alice via phone, Anne

FONA SALE.

The FONA sale is on 29 and 30 April. Kevin will hand carry PVC's application to FONA. The rental costs of tent with side-flaps, table and chairs have increased to \$175, exhibit space is \$100 and 10% of sales total goes to FONA. We decide to go with it for convenience sake, and not try to set up our own tent, tables and chairs. Sale items would be about ten troughs of various

sizes we made at the Cobb's in the fall of 2015, eight 8x12 troughs that Kevin bought for \$15 each from FONA. The PVC troughs have been outside since January. Update: to minimize hauling their planting is scheduled at the Cobb's on Sunday April 3.

Plants from Sandy's in Richmond VA, donated rockgarden plants from PVC members. On April 1 Judy and Sarah and Kevin? plan a trip to Richmond to Sandy's to buy plants. Both Sarah and Kevin already have *Sempervivums* left over from the FONA trough planting workshop in February.

Mix of potting soil, sand/grit and turface. Kevin lives close to a Southern States store for purchasing and picking up of grit, turface and potting soil, enough for about 12 troughs plus extra for sale as trough planting mix

Rocks: Jody and Kevin have nice rocks.

Some troughs will be fully planted, some empty. We play around with the idea to offer trough planting services (for a fee) to customers who buy an empty trough or to hold a trough planting demonstration 2 or 3 times a day. We could sell the planted trough or take it apart for the next demo.

Still needed: PVC members to staff the sales-booth.

All the pieces for the FONA sale are taken care of and in place. Kevin is going to ask the membership for a volunteer coordinator.

GREEN SPRING SALE

Judy will register PVC and coordinate PVC's effort at Green Spring Garden Sale on Saturday May 14. We have tent, tables and chairs and PVC banner, membership forms and rockgarden booklets.

As per usual donated plants from members, planted and unplanted troughs, leftover plants from the FONA sale will be sold.

We need potted up plants (from seedlings or plant divisions from their gardens) from members and volunteers to help with the set-up and take-down and at the sales booth.

Judy had such success with sign-up genius for refreshments at the Feb meeting: could this also be useful to get for volunteers for GS sale and could PVC go digital?

PROGRAMS on the schedule:

March 26, Saturday, at Brookside Garden (\$200)
Jane MacLeish: Growing up with gardens:
gardens I have made and gardens I have loved.
April 30, Saturday, at USBG and in coordination
with them the rescheduled January 23 speaker
Peter Couchman: Making scree sexy.
April 29 and 30, Friday and Saturday, FONA
sale at Arboretum.
May 14, Saturday, GreenSpring sale at Green
Spring Gardens Park.
May 21, Saturday, PVC spring plant exchange at
Alice's.

Kevin suggests a field trip to the limestone
quarry near Westminster Md that he and Dick
visited early January.
Fall plant exchange at Kevin's?

BULLETIN

Jim McK reports that the most recent newsletter
and a preliminary version of the next one are
online at our website. The program schedule is
brief as of now. Remembrances from members
of both Jo Banfield and Harry Dewey are posted.
It is possible to continuously update the Bulletin
by additions, hence members should not hesitate
to offer reports (of events) at all times.
Sarah wrote about the FONA trough planting
workshop which was sponsored by PVC.
Sarah and Jody need more volunteer help with
hospitality and will try to make a list of things
that members could do to be helpful.

HOSPITALITY

Often we have talked about how to invite more
members to participate. Ideas for more
socializing are to invite members to stay for
lunch after a plant exchange, to have member's
garden open for visits after appointments. These
would be helpful for then for instance it will
become easier to ask for help with hospitality as
asking to transport a guest speaker to an
appointment, lunch or event. In general
members don't know how they could be helpful
and don't volunteer to ask.
We looked at the list of PVC members and
noticed some have been with PVC for a long
time. Should we feature a little write-up in the
Bulletin about them?
Note: the members' slide show last August was a
very popular event!

The Morris West books at the Feb meeting were

specially selected for PVC members' interests.
More books are at the Arbor House (FONA)
with Mary Jean Meier. Jim D is contact.

Judy will try to get a list of the alpine garden
plants for sale at the Green Spring garden shop.

NARGS news from Betty when she returns from
Arizona at the end of March.

For the silent auction this spring at Brookside we
will donate a trough, PVC membership and
rockgarden starter booklet

Chris Herbstritt asked about a list service a la
Four Seasons for PVC. Judy will talk to Pat Shea
of FS since he is its webmaster about what is
involved and how to go about this for PVC.

Thank you to Sharon for her hospitality.

Adjourn at 9:40 PM.

Early Flowering following a Record- Warm December

December, 2015 was not just warm but,
according to the Washington Post, the average
temperature of 51.2° was 11.5° warmer than
normal and was the warmest December ever
recorded for Washington, DC, exceeding the
previous record by a ridiculous 5.5°. And there
was no snow at all during the whole month for
the first time since 2001. When we made our
annual rounds of our gardens on January 1st 2016
we were anticipating many plants in flower. We
were not disappointed. The flowering list
(below) includes the usual suspects that, barring
a frigid ending to the year, regularly bloom on
this date, e.g. *Galanthus elwesii*, *Jasminum
nudiflorum*, *Mahonia bealei*, *Lonicera
fragrantissima* and *Erica x darleyensis*. Many
others had a few lingering flowers that would
normally be gone by then, such as *Daphne x
transatlantica*, *Tinantia pringlei* and a
'Knockout' rose. Still more, for example a
dwarf *Iberis*, *Eranthis hyemalis* (Winter aconite)
and *Edgeworthia chrysantha*, were just plain
early. Of course, the very cold weather during
the first week of this year knocked out many
unseasonably late flowerers.

Some trees and shrubs, such as *Prunus mume*,
seemed to peak so early that we wondered
whether they would have any significant

flowering later. We expect to have few if any fruits this year. A few shrubs, such as the viburnums, had just a few open flowers that were completely out of season. They looked almost frozen on the plants but the weather had been too warm for that. *Narcissus* ‘Rijnveld’s Early Sensation’, always the first daffodil to flower, had its first open flower on December 16, the earliest ever (even if by only one day). Finally, even a few weeds seemed to be early: dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), bittercress (*Cardamine hirsuta*), and red clover (*Trifolium pratense*).

Overall we had at least 45 different kinds of plants in flower on January 1st. The number would be even higher had we separately listed the different chrysanthemums that were blooming, but we never have had names for most of them. The complete list follows:

Abelia x grandiflora
Camellia ‘Snow Flurry’
C. ‘Winter’s Cupid’ [previously listed as ‘Winter’s Beauty’ but flower color was wrong]
C. ‘Winter’s Star’
Cardamine hirsuta
Chimonanthus praecox
 Chrysanthemums (various)
Daphne odora ‘Aureomarginata’
D. x transatlantica
Dianthus japonicus
Edgeworthia chrysantha
Euphorbia portlandica? [purchased as *E. nicaeensis* ‘Dolce Vita’]
Eranthis hyemalis
Erica x darleyensis ‘Furzyi’
E. x darleyensis ‘Mediterranean Pink’
Eupatorium rugosum
Forsythia sp.
Galanthus elwesii v. *elwesii*
G. elwesii v. *monostictus*
Helleborus ‘Snow White’
Iberis sp. (dwarf)
Jasminum nudiflorum
Lonicera fragrantissima
L. x purpusii ‘Winter Beauty’
Mahonia aquifolium ‘Compactum’
M. bealei
M. japonica
Narcissus ‘Rijnveld’s Early Sensation’
Osmanthus fragrans
Phlox subulata
Prunus jacquemontii
P. mume
P. subhirtella ‘Autumnalis Rosea’
Rosa ‘Knockout’

Rosmarinus officinalis
Symphiotrichum (Aster) novae-angliae
S. (Aster) pilosum
Taraxacum officinale
Tinantia pringlei
Trifolium pratense
Viburnum x carlcephalum ‘Cayuga’
V. ‘Pragensis’
V. rhytidophyllum
Viola odorata
V. striata

Robert Faden
 The Expanding Garden
 7 March 2016

Plant list from Tony Reznicek's USNA talk

Judy Zatsick provided the following list of plants mentioned in Tony’s talk.

Hepatica Americana
Erythronium albidum
Trillium grandiflorum
Geranium maculatum
Erythronium americanum
Dicentra canadensis
Dicentra cucullaria
Uvularia grandiflora
Sanguinaria canadensis
Stylophorum diphyllum
Phlox divaricata
Caulophyllum thalictroides
Caulophyllum giganteum
Pachysandra procumbens
Pachysandra terminalis
Asarum speciosum
Trillium recurvatum
Trillium nivale
Erigenia bulbosa
Enemion (Isopyrum) biternatum
Hydrastis canadensis
Prosartes (Disporum) maculata
Trillium kurabayashii
Trillium (Pseudotrillium) rivale
Vancouveria hexandra, chrysantha, planipetala
Collinsonia canadensis
Solidago caesia
Solidago flexicaulis
Carex plantaginea, platyphylla, eburnea
Trillium grandiflorum, T. recurvatum (yellow and red, wild type) *T. sessile*
Trillium ‘Pamela Copeland’ (double)
Trillium hybrids *T. erectum* × *T. flexipes*

Mertensia virginica
Thalictrum (Anemonella) *thalictroides* ‘Cameo’,
‘Jade Feather’
Sanguinaria canadensis, double form
Sanguinaria canadensis ‘Betty Casto’
Actaea rubra, *Actaea pachypoda* x *rubra* hybrid
Symplocarpus foetidus (yellow form)
Podophyllum peltatum forma *deamii*, cut leaf
form
Cypripedium parviflorum, various colors/sizes
including white (pale form)

Europe and adjacent eastern Asia

Hepatica nobilis pink double, *Hepatica nobilis*
‘Blue Danube’
Oxalis acetosella
Cardamine quinquefolia
Cardamine pentaphyllos
Cardamine heptaphylla
Cardamine enneaphyllos
Anemone nemorosa (white)
Anemone ranunculoides (yellow)
Anemone x *lipsiensis* (cream)
Arisarum proboscideum
Allium ursinum
Lathyrus vernus
Cyclamen coum ‘Lake Effect’, two forms of
Cyclamen purpurascens
Corydalis solida
Corydalis solida ‘Evening Shade’, ‘Forest Elf’,
nice white form
Corydalis solida ‘Harkov’ (deep blue color) let
seed around, much color variability
Corydalis solida best orange seedling
Corydalis pumila
Helleborus niger ‘Potter’s Wheel’ (4.5” bloom)

Temperate SE Asia

Glaucidium palmatum (hard to grow in warm
climates!)
Adonis ‘Fuku Jukai’
Liriodendron tulipifera, *Liriodendron chinense*
Liriodendron chinense in bloom
Jeffersonia dubia
Jeffersonia diphylla
Podophyllum versipelle, *Podophyllum*
pleianthum
Podophyllum delavayi
Triosteum pinnatifidum, *himalaicum*,
angustifolium
Sanguinaria canadensis, *Eomecon chionantha*

Hardy Elements SE Asia Tropical Families

Hemiboea subcapitata (Gesneriaceae)
Begonia grandis, *Begonia sinensis*
(Begoniaceae)
Chloranthus japonicus (Chloranthaceae)
Stemona japonica, *Helwingia japonica*
(Epiphyllous Flowers)

Croomia japonica, *Croomia pauciflora* (E
Asia/E North American disjunction
Ancient split between Monocots/Dicots
Nuphar variegata
Magnolia fraseri, *Amborella trichopoda*
ANITA: Amborellaceae, Nymphaeaceae,
Illiciaceae, Trimeniaceae, Austrobaileyaceae
Schisandra sphenanthera, *Schisandra chinensis*,
Illicium floridanum, *Nymphaea odorata*
Saruma henryi
Saururus cernuus, *chinensis*
Chloranthus sessilifolius “paleoherbs”
“Pre-dicots”: *Chloranthus sessilifolius*, *Sassafras*
albidum, *Asimina triloba*, *Brasenia schreberi*,
Liriodendron tulipifera
Polygonatum cf. *trinerve*, *Polygonatum* cf.
kalapanum
Maianthemum henryi, *Maianthemum* sp.
Maianthemum atropurpureum
Iris tectorum
Podophyllum hexandrum
Helleborus thibetanus
Paeonia japonica
Corydalis buschii, *turtschaninovii*, *ornata*
Corydalis bracteata
Corydalis ambigua var. *lineariloba*
Epimedium cf. *flavum*
Epimedium davidii ‘Woolong Dwarfs’
Chloranthus japonicus
Paris polyphylla
Tricyrtis hirta ‘Alba’, *Tricyrtis latifolia*
Adiantum venustum
Dryopteris sieboldii
Calanthe tricarinata
Shortia x *intertexta* ‘Leona’ (*S. galacifolia* x *S.*
uniflora)
Calycanthus floridus, *Calycanthus sinensis*,
Calycanthus x *raulstonii* ‘Hartledge Wine’
Magnolia ‘Maxine Merrill’
Cypripedium ‘Gisela’
Small Ferns/Plants for Shady Rock Walls
Adiantum pedatum var. *subpumilum*, *Athyrium*
filix-femina ‘Minutissima’, *Asplenium*
trichomanes ‘Incisum’
Asplenium scolopendrium subsp. *scolopendrium*,
Astilbe simplicifolia
Ramonda myconi forms
Ramonda nathaliae
Haberlea rhodopensis ‘Virginalis’
Polypodium x *mantoniae* ‘Cornubiense’
Asplenium tutwilerae (fertile *A. xebeoides*)
x *Jankaemonda vandedemii*, *Jancaea* (*Jankaea*)
heldreichii seedling
Conandron ramondioides
Ramonda myconi seedlings
Shady Trough Plants

Pteridophyllum racemosum
Shortia uniflora, *Soldanella montana*
Shortia (Schizocodon) *soldanelloides* var.
magna (in sunken baby pool)

Heloniopsis orientalis, tubiflora
Ypsilandra thibetica

More about the FONA book sale

One of the books I got from the FONA sale was *The rock gardener's handbook*. This was put together by a committee presided over by Harold Epstein. This is usually dated 1965, but it includes one article dated 1966. That is Joel W. Spingarn's 1966 article "Dwarf and Pygmy Conifers" which ended with something which caught my attention: he mentioned that the then chief propagator at the US National Arboretum, Mr. Skip March was "in quest of new dwarf material". That was written a half century ago. I'm pretty sure I saw Skip March at Saturday's meeting – still very much with us!

J.McKenney

PVC-Run Trough-Planting Workshop for FONA

Sarah Strickler

Pictures by Kevin McIntosh

Friends of the National Arboretum (FONA) enlisted Kevin McIntosh, also on the FONA board, to run a trough-planting workshop in early February. Dick Hammerschlag and I helped out. The 19 participants who took part ranged in age from about 5 years old to 80-something, with many in between. It was a nice mix of generations.

I think I overheard one young couple saying they were apartment dwellers, so a planted trough suited their limited balcony space. These are just the people we've been trying to attract! It is satisfying to know our instincts are on the right track even if they are not members – yet.

Kevin did an excellent job organizing the effort and leading the workshop. He and Dick procured rocks, we all shopped for plants at Susanna Farm Nursery in Boyds, MD, Kevin bought Rob Gimpel's handsome handmade troughs, provided components for a well draining soil, and a useful handout, including lots of information about PVC.

Once we demonstrated how to mix the soil, did a quick planting demo, and showed how to break up the plants into smaller bits, everyone plunged in to create their own trough landscape. We supported their efforts, mixing extra soil, answering questions and providing minor guidance. Feedback from FONA was extremely positive. And, we got at least one new member who showed up at our next lecture. Thanks, Kevin, for leading the way! This was a good outreach effort for our chapter, which should give us confidence to do more.

Here are some pictures:



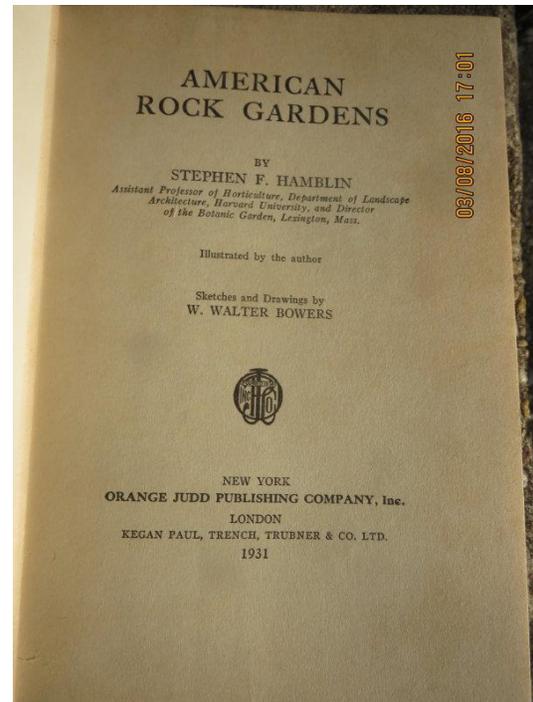


Stephen Hamblin

At the January meeting John Willis and I were talking about things in general when he mentioned that one of his sons had moved to Lexington, Mass. Almost immediately the one thing I know about Lexington popped out : I asked John if he knew about Stephen Hamblin.

I'll bet that not many do anymore, but he's definitely someone of interest to a certain sort of gardener. I learned about Hamblin because his name is occasionally mentioned in early-mid twentieth-century garden literature. Hamblin taught landscape architecture at Harvard in the early to mid twentieth-century. Here's the Lexington connection: Hamblin established his own botanic garden in Lexington, and from there published a series of what he called *Lexington Leaflets*. Each was only a couple of pages long, dense with text. Such pictures as there were might well enough have been omitted: they are mostly poorly focused and framed in the editions I've seen. It's the text which makes them important: Hamblin tried to grow everything: his motto, which appears in the masthead of the editions I've seen, was : "To grow, test and display all hardy herbaceous plants." A note at the end of volume 1 of 1931 suggests that he was growing 20,000 species and varieties at that time.

I picked one of Hamblin's titles at the FONA sale: his *American Rock Gardens* from 1931. When I mentioned this to John, his cheery comment was something like "I just got a copy for my son." I have a feeling both of us will now be keeping an eye out for editions of the *Lexington Leaflets*.

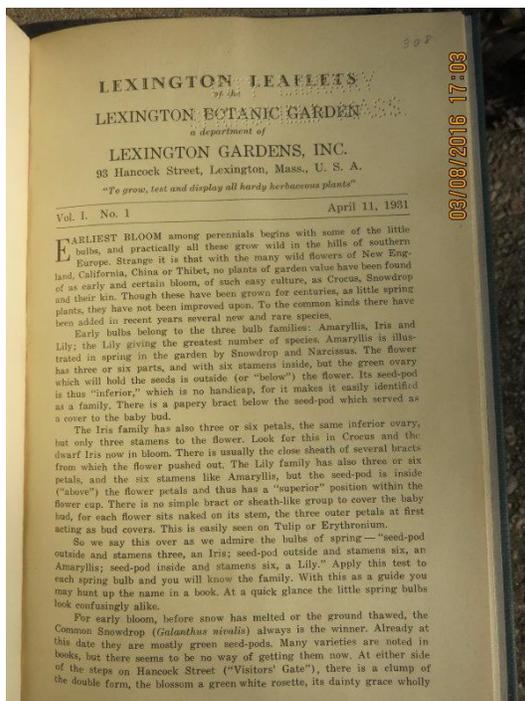


Something surprising from Jo Banfield's garden

I'm getting old, but not so old that there are not some things to learn. When Chris Herbstritt was preparing his notes on the Banfield garden, he encountered a mystery tree. He took some photos, sent them to me, and I too joined the ranks of the puzzled. Finally we called in help: Phil Normandy knew what it was: it's horse sugar.



Symplocos tinctoria Chris Herbstritt



J. McKenney

What? Botanically, it's *Symplocos tinctoria*. Phil had to point out to me that that's *Symplocos*, not *Symplocus*. I've known about the Asian *S. paniculata* for decades. But little did I know that there was a local species, *S. tinctoria*. This species, as it turns out, is (just barely, in Wicomico County) native to Maryland. It's evidently not uncommon in the eastern counties of Virginia. The genus has a family of its own.

J. McKenney

Remembering past members

We've lost three long-time members in recent years. Sasha B, Jo Banfield and Harry Dewey. We've had a remembering Sasha page, and now, thanks to a lot of help from Chris Herbstritt, we have a Remembering Jo page. And there is also a beginning on one for Harry Dewey.

These losses have prompted some members to call for a way of honoring long-term members while they are still with us. We'll be discussing this at a board meeting. J. McKenney

Officers, Committee Chairs and Board of Directors 2016

President Kevin McIntosh kmac53@verizon.net

Vice President Judy Zatsick Judith.Zatsick@fairfaxcounty.gov

Secretary Anne Mazaitis - jmazaitis@verizon.net

Treasurer Margot Ellis - 4pvctreas@gmail.com

Immediate Past President Jim Dronenburg

Membership Chair Gay and Sharon Washburn – gnwashbu@gmail.com, sharonwashburn@verizon.net

Program Chair Jody Fetzer jodyfetzer@gmail.com

Communications Chair Alice Nicolson a.taxonomy@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor & Webmaster Jim McKenney - jamesamckenney@verizon.net

Archivist Bobbie Lively-Diebold b2diebold@yahoo.com

Parliamentarian - open

Hospitality –Audit – open

Outreach and Education - open

Board of Directors: all current officers, the immediate past president and committee chairs