



News from Stonecrop Gardens

Winter 2009

Their gold, their purples, scarlets, crimson dies,
Their dark and lighter hair'd diversities.
With all their pretty shades and Ornaments,
Their parti-colour'd coats and pleasing scents.
Gold laid on scarlet, silver on the blew
With sparkling eyes to take the eyes of you.

—Poem by Samuel Gilbert,
from *The Florists Vade-Mecum* of 1682,
describing the pageantry of colour

History of the Auricula

Primula auricula is a high-alpine plant growing above the tree line usually on ledges or rocky limestone outcrops in the Alps. It grows over a wide area stretching from the French Alps and the German Black Forest in the west, to the Tatra and Carpathian Mountains in the east. The history of the auricula in cultivation, and the cult status it has held and continues to hold for devotees make for a fascinating study in Western culture, especially as connoisseurship of this alpine beauty crossed nearly impenetrable socio-economic boundaries.

Auriculas were most likely introduced to England in the 16th century by Huguenot silk weavers who brought the plants north with them to the cool moist climate of the area bounded by Burnley, Manchester, Halifax, and Sheffield. There, they were grown and developed enthusiastically by the silk weavers, coal miners, and cutlers.

Auriculas first appeared in English writings in John Gerard's *Herbal* of 1597, as "Bear's Ears" or "Mountain Cowslip," emphasizing their medicinal virtues as they were used as a cure for palsies, cramps, and convulsions. They were, however, already well known in Europe, and 12 varieties of *Auricula ursi*, "Bear's Little Ear" are described in Caspar Bauhin's *Phytophinax* in 1569. In Vienna in 1583 Clusius, later a curator at the Leiden Botanic Garden, detailed six types that he grew successfully for Emperor Maximillian II.



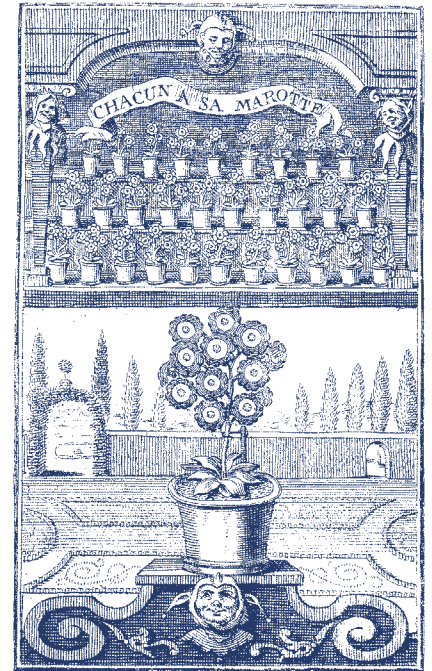
"Beares Eares" from Gerard's *Herbal*, 1597. From the book *Auriculas & Primroses* by W. R. Hecker

Evidence of the production and improvement of auriculas appears in John Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris* (1629), where he details the raising of new varieties and illustrates plants with an apparent threefold increase in flower size over those documented by Gerard only 30 years earlier. In his later work, *Theatrum Botanicum* (1640), Parkinson describes the appearance of striped cultivars. Thomas Hanmer's *Garden Book* (1659) describes the exciting colour range: "We have whites, yellows of all sorts, haire colours, oranges, cherry colours, crimson and other reds, violets, purples, murreys, tawneys, olives, cinnamon colours, ash colour, dunns and wot not."

By the mid-17th century, carnation, tulip, anemone and ranunculus were known as the four "florists' flowers." The word florist originally meant a person who grew flowers for their decorative value, as opposed to a herbalist who grew plants for their practical properties, especially for medicine. In time "florist" came to mean a specialist grower, one who aims to grow flowers to perfection and often who competed at flower shows. By the beginning of the 18th century the auricula had become well established as yet another "florists' flower" and, from horticultural writings of the time, we know that a vast number of new varieties were being raised and named.

The social life of the Lancashire mill towns in the Victorian era often revolved around auricula gatherings where auricula fanciers delighted in presenting their treasures to their friends and fellow growers. These gatherings were held in private houses, but more often in village inns where the event was advertised by a copper kettle hung outside. The kettle was the main prize and a much-appreciated addition to the modest household equipment of the day. Judging was done by passing plants from hand to hand around the table with the decision reached by consensus. The proceedings ended with a meal or feast and an ale toast to the victor. By the latter part of the 18th century, auricula "societies" ran well-attended shows with precise rules regarding the flowers' formation, colour, and proportions.

In 1731 Philip Miller, then Curator of the Chelsea Physic Garden, published his *Gardener's Dictionary* wherein he suggests to auricula growers that as flowers begin to open, their pots should be placed upon rows of shelves, one above another, forming a stage. This suggestion indicates that it had become customary to exhibit auriculas and gives us the origins of the term "stage auri-



Frontispiece to Abbé Guenin's *Nouveau traité de la culture parfaite des oreilles d'ours ou auricules*, 1738. This engraving shows Auriculas displayed on three shelves under the motto "Chacun a sa marotte" (everybody has his obsession or folly). The obsessive care required to produce perfect blooms was a specialty of weavers trained in craftsmanship. From the book *The Flowering of the Landscape; English Pleasure Gardens 1720-1800* by Mark Laird.



Engraving of 'Florists of Olden Times' newly made for the *Florist*, 1851.

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COURTESY OF MRS. ROSEMARY VEREY



Caroline Burgess

One of our goals this year is to go greener with our publications. We already use recycled paper, but we are ready to take our efforts one step further. By late summer, we will make our newsletter and event announcements available to a wider range of individuals electronically, while Stonecrop members will continue to receive these publications in printed form. As many of you may know, the newsletters and most current seed list (the *Index Seminum*) are already posted on our website in PDF format for easy viewing and printing. This new strategy will conserve paper and enable us to better fulfill our educational mission by bringing quality garden information to the broader public. If you are not a Stonecrop member, but would like to become one or would simply like to continue receiving our newsletter albeit in electronic format, please call Stonecrop Gardens at 845-265-2000, or visit our website (www.stonecrop.org) to sign on.

Director's Notes

If winter comes, can spring be far behind?

—Percy Bysshe Shelley

The winter months at Stonecrop are never as peaceful as one might hope, but they are always a period of great anticipation following the autumn's chores. Putting the gardens to bed is quite a production: our vast collection of half-hardy plants takes considerable time to dig out, pot up, and store in various polytunnels; the garden is then cut down and composted; and our bulb planting and mulching usually continues well after the first snow flies. Weather providing, we stay outside until Christmas. Then our indoor tasks begin.

We clean and package an array of seeds collected on site throughout the growing season. Our *Index Seminum* is then compiled, detailing the hundreds of seed varieties we offer and hopefully serving as a trusted garden reference and pleasurable winter reading. Of course, we ourselves start seeds this time of year to prepare for that exciting moment when all danger of frost on our hilltop has vanished. Winter is also when we interview prospective interns for Stonecrop's School of Practical Horticulture. Whilst we are working away, we are also busy dreaming up delights for the next growing season at Stonecrop. In this issue of our newsletter, you will find our calendar of events for 2009. We hope you can come and share the bounty that warmer weather brings to Stonecrop. More than ever in turbulent times, places of wonder and renewal are all the more dear to the human soul, and should be nurtured and cherished.

With all best wishes,
Caroline Burgess, *Director*

Stonecrop Gardens

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Stonecrop's mission is to uphold and demonstrate the highest standards of horticultural practice and to promote the use of such standards among amateur and professional gardeners through aesthetic displays and educational programs.



Rebecca Dymes

Intern Profiles

We welcome Rebecca and Brian to Stonecrop and look forward to watching their knowledge of horticulture develop.

Rebecca Dymes hails from Cortlandt Manor, New York. Her passion for gardening began at the age of five when she kept her first vegetable garden with her father. Later she worked with an arborist, and, for the past four years, as a seasonal gardener. Rebecca has acquired a well-rounded experience in garden installation and maintenance, and comes to Stonecrop with the anticipation of delving deeper into the art of horticulture. In particular, she is keen to make a careful study of soil. Rebecca's hobbies include reading, jewelry making, and hiking.

Brian Moss is a recent graduate of Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology/Ecology and Environmental Biology. As a teen, he helped to establish a landscape business specializing in garden construction and maintenance. A naturalist and aspiring horticulturist, Brian is pursuing these interests at Stonecrop while taking a leave of absence from his job as a University lab assistant researching shiitake mushroom cultivation.

His past experiences coupled with his interest in food production and creating a sustainable lifestyle have shaped Brian's dream to one day acquire land whereupon he can develop a nursery and farm. Brian's hobbies include birding, painting, hiking, crafting walking sticks, and of course, gardening.

Brian Moss



Perennials for Early Spring Bloom and Beyond

In a few short weeks the garden will be awash with a riot of colour. Spring-blooming bulbs such as *Eranthis*, *Chionodoxa*, *Scilla*, and *Narcissus* will decorate the beds with sweeps of pink, blue, yellow, and white. Dainty woodland ephemerals, like *Anemonella thalictroides*, *Dicentra canadensis*, and *Mertensia virginica* will sprout into life, taking advantage of a brief moment in the sun to flaunt their vibrant hues. Alas, all this will soon fade with the heat of summer; a once colourful abundance will retreat to cool subtle green and quiet underground slumber. As gardeners, we resign ourselves to this inevitable seasonal transition; by July and August we are often busy weeding, staking and shopping for exuberant annuals to fill our tubs and borders. Let us stop for a moment to consider a few of those humble, often overlooked, spring-blooming perennials that bravely carry on to delight us even through the dog days of summer.

Among the first to bloom is *Helleborus orientalis*, the “Lenten Rose,” a charmingly variable plant of understated beauty graced with cup-shaped, nodding flowers in colours ranging from chartreuse green, through rosy pink, to a somber slate blue. These exquisite blooms are long lasting, and along with the wide, toothed, glossy evergreen foliage, provide interest well into summer when grown in evenly moist soil, and partial to full shade. Even more spectacular is *Helleborus foetidus* ‘Wester Flisk’, a choice selection of the so-called “Stinking Hellebore” with lustrous, greyish green, narrowly dissected foliage and pendulous chartreuse green blooms whose flower stalks and stems are tinged a rich wine red. This striking plant flourishes even in the dry shady conditions at the entrance to our Gravel Garden.

Brunnera macrophylla, or “Siberian Bugloss”—often known as “Perennial Forget-Me-Not”—produces branched sprays of sky-blue flowers for an astonishingly long time from spring into early summer. It also forms sturdy clumps of attractive, heart-shaped, apple-green foliage that look good all summer long if grown in a rich, evenly moist, woody soil. There are even some choice variegated forms such as ‘Hadspen Cream’ with a broad creamy white border to the leaves, ‘Langtrees’ which has metallic silver spots, and ‘Jack Frost’ sporting beautiful silvery leaves with prominent green veins.

Like *Brunnera*, another member of the Borage family is “Lungwort” or *Pulmonaria* which gets its name from the lance-

Pulsatilla vulgaris



shaped, greyish green leaves heavily spotted or dappled with silvery white spots. It produces short-stemmed clusters of funnel-shaped flowers in rich shades of red, pinkish blue, and white, just as the foliage emerges. There are some 14 species of this durable clump-forming perennial, and along with the many excellent hybrids and cultivars, they all make attractive and easily grown plants for a moist, woody soil. Alas, not a plant for dry shade!

If your garden does include such difficult spots, an excellent choice would be “Barrenwort,” usually known by its botanical name of *Epimedium*. The flowers on all the many species and cultivars are truly exquisite and emerge in early spring before the new foliage. On all but the fully evergreen species, one should cut back old foliage in the fall, often when still green, as by the end of winter the leaves will be ratty, brown, and detract from the emerging flowers. Although *Epimediums* can be slow growing, a few of the more vigorous and easy to cultivate varieties include *E. x rubrum*, *E. x versicolor* ‘Sulphureum’ and *E. grandiflorum* ‘Roseum’.

If you are looking for a plant that really lights up the garden, consider *Euphorbia polychroma*. It is a clump-forming specimen that bursts forth into an almost incandescent display of electric-yellow blooms in early spring, and keeps looking good—though in more muted tones—throughout the summer. Those inclined toward a little more subtle display should try *Euphorbia dulcis* ‘Chameleon’ whose newly emerging foliage is a dramatic, rich plummy purple and which produces loose sprays of greenish yellow blooms in summer.

Another dramatic burst of colour is *Pulsatilla vulgaris*, the “Pasque Flower.” While closely related to *Anemone*, the velvety, six-petalled flowers are more reminiscent of *Clematis* (another relative in the *Ranunculaceae* family) with its dense central cluster of bright yellow stamens and slightly nodding blooms. The blooms are usually a rich violet or dark lavender-purple but there are red, white, and even blue flowered varieties. These are followed by wonderful silky, finely dissected, light green foliage. The flowers then give way to attractive, fluffy *Clematis*-like seed heads. *Pulsatillas* do well for us at Stonecrop, thriving in several locations—on our hot sunny well-drained Rock Ledge and at the woodland’s edge.

As the days lengthen and our thoughts turn back to the garden, don’t leave spring just to the bulbs. Remember, there are many great, tough perennials for both sun and shade that will bloom early and remain handsome garden performers well into the hot summer months.

—Michael Hagen, *Staff Horticulturist*



Helleborus foetidus

Sign On As a Stonecrop Volunteer

Are you an outgoing Stonecrop enthusiast? Would you like to share that enthusiasm with others? Since opening to the public in 1992, the garden has received thousands of visitors from all over the world and that number is growing steadily each year. In order to better serve the gardening public, and share our horticultural knowledge in a more collegial fashion with kindred spirits, Stonecrop is creating a volunteer corps. We are currently looking for volunteers to help greet our increasing number of visitors, promote membership at special events, and assist with general office work. Volunteers that donate at least 10 hours of their time each month will receive the benefits of Stonecrop membership, including free admission to the garden and free or discounted admission to all of our special programs, subscriptions to our newsletter and *Index Seminum*, use of Stonecrop’s extensive library, and member pricing on our choice seeds and plants for sale. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer member of the Stonecrop family, and helping our garden grow, please contact Amy Pelletier at (845) 265-2000.



Greeting visitors at the start of their guided tour.





Staff member Ann Johnson clearing brush at Stonecrop's new picnic spot, "Shad Grove"



Stonecrop's Board of Directors: (left to right), Antonia Adezio, Caroline Burgess, Colin Cabot, Barbara Paul Robinson, Maggie Gordon, Anne Cabot, Frank Cabot, Gerry Seitz and Dick Lighty



Jason Thomas repairs Conservatory windows with the help of crew member, Cholmondeley



Intern Liz Herman prepares *Cornus mas* jam for the Garden Party raffle



Members and guests enjoy Stonecrop's fall foliage at the final guided tour of the season



Stonecrop's beloved *Prunus x yedoensis* after December's ice storm



Intern Liz Herman and staff member Michael Hagen double digging in the Flower Garden



Above, Jason Thomas helps member June Sanderson at the Garden Party with her coveted raffle prize of Stonecrop bamboo harvested from our Grove. Below, Stonecrop staff at the start of the Annual Wheelbarrow Race on Graduation Day



Member Dr. Hal Melnick and guests try to guess "What's in the Box" at the Garden Party

2009

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

February 14

Seed Sowing Workshop: Day 1
9 a.m.–12 p.m., \$50/\$40 members
Registration required.
Please call (845) 265-2000

March 21

Members' Preview Party:
Spring Under Glass, 12 p.m.–4 p.m.*
Seed Sowing Lecture and Invitation to
Spring Under Glass 9 a.m.–12 p.m.,
\$40/\$20 members

March 23–28

Spring Under Glass Week—
open to the public
10 a.m.–5 p.m., \$5/ members no charge

March 28

Seed Sowing Workshop: Day 2
9 a.m.–12 p.m.

April 1

Stonecrop Opens for the Season

April 4 & 18

Open Saturdays

April 14

Guided Garden Tour: Spring Bulbs
6–7 p.m., \$10/ members no charge

April 18 & 19

Trough-Making Workshop
9 a.m.–1 p.m. each day, \$80/\$60 members
Registration required.
Please call (845) 265-2000

April 25

Alpine Plant Sale with Alpines Mont Echo,
Wrightman Alpines, Evermay Nursery
and more
10 a.m.–4 p.m., \$5/members no charge

April 26

Garden Conservancy Open Day

May 2 & 16

Open Saturdays

May 5

Guided Garden Tour: Woodland Garden
6–7 p.m., \$10/members no charge

May 9

Spring at Stonecrop: Garden Walk with
Wine & Cheese Reception
4–6 p.m., \$25/\$20 members
Registration required.
Please call (845) 265-2000

May 10

Garden Conservancy Open Day

May 12

Guided Garden Tour: Alpines
6:30–7:30 p.m., \$10/members no charge

May 23

Putnam County Day, Open Saturday
Free admission for Putnam County
Residents

June 6 & 20

Open Saturdays

June 9

Guided Garden Tour: Shrubs in the Garden
6:30–7:30 p.m., \$10/members no charge

June 13

Secret Garden Tour (to benefit PARC)
10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Please call or visit our website for more
information

June 14

Garden Conservancy Open Day

July 4 & 18

Open Saturdays

July 11

Westchester County Day, Open Saturday
Free admission for Westchester County
Residents

July 14

Guided Garden Tour:
Natives in the Garden
6:30–7:30 p.m., \$10/members no charge

July 19

Garden Conservancy Open Day

August 1 & 15

Open Saturdays

August 8

Dutchess County Day, Open Saturday
Free admission for Dutchess County
Residents

August 9

Garden Conservancy Open Day

August 11

Guided Garden Tour: Ferns
6:30–7:30 p.m., \$10/members no charge

September 5 & 19

Open Saturdays

September 12

Annual Members' Garden Party
1–5 p.m.*

September 19

Tea in the Garden
Self-guided tours, special exhibits &
refreshments

September 20

Garden Conservancy Open Day

September 22

Guided Garden Tour: Dahlias
6–7 p.m., \$10/members no charge

October 3 & 17

Open Saturdays

October 7

Terrarium Workshop
5–8 p.m., \$40/\$30 members

October 13

Guided Garden Tour: Fall Foliage
5–6 p.m., \$10/members no charge

October 30

Stonecrop Closes for the Season

** denotes events open only to Stonecrop members*



Stonecrop Gardens

History of the Auricula

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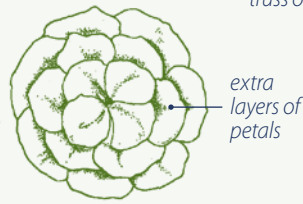


PRIVATE COLLECTION, SUPPLIED BY SOTHEBY'S BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE OWNER

Portrait of Martha Rodes standing by a pot of auriculas. Signed 'C. Steel, 1750'. Though a green edge is not visible this certainly was an edged flower with the typical four circles. Probably the first illustration of an edged auricula.

PARTS OF AN AURICULA

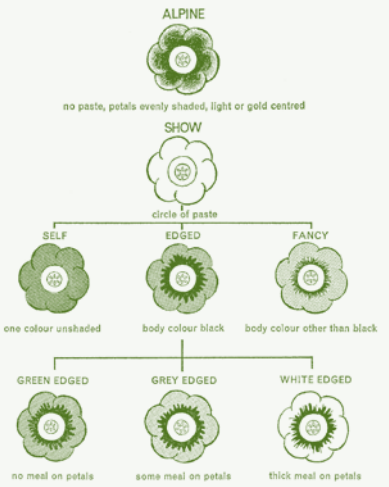
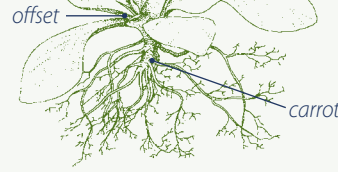
Double auricula



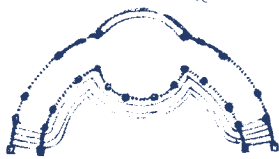
Edged auricula



truss or umbel
stem or scape



Classification of Florists' Auriculas.
From the book *Auriculas & Primroses*



Badminton, Gloucestershire: Detail from Thomas Wright's plan of 1750 for the Duke and Duchess of Beaufort. The top corner of the plan shows a "Chinees Temple wing'd with umbrells to shade the Auricula and other curious kinds of Flowers." The pots of auriculas are arranged on the steps of the temple, shaded by an awning.



Calke Abbey Auricula Theatre, a country house near Ticknall, Derbyshire, England



Stonecrop's Auricula Theatre

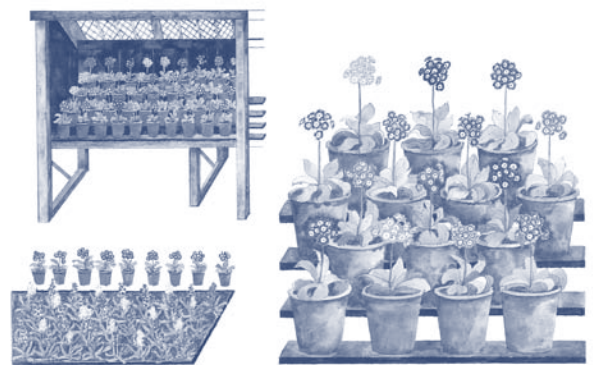
cula." French growers went to even greater lengths to display their plants effectively and used "theatres" specially constructed for the purpose. These theatres were made with planks placed in steps and covered with a roof. The backs were sometimes painted black, or hung with richly coloured velvet curtains, so that the colours of the flowers stood out well. Often mirrors were also used as a backdrop to allow an all-around view of the "staged" treasures.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, florists' flowers lost popularity and indeed some disappeared forever. There was a marked revival of interest in auriculas in the 1870's, partly stimulated by the emergence and recognition of the alpine auricula. This resulted in a special "alpine class" becoming a major division in auricula classification. This renaissance resulted in the formation of Britain's National Auricula Society which was founded in 1872-73. The society continued through the First World War, and held a Victory Show in 1919. Around that time it was decided to award silver spoons for Premier Plants. Between the two world wars the society went through a difficult period due to the deaths of several prominent members and a general lack of interest in florists' flowers. However, as World War II was ravaging Europe, a small group of *Primula* enthusiasts formed the American Primrose Society in Portland, Oregon in 1941. The post war period saw the beginning of a revival which continues to present time. In 1948 the word *Primula* was added to the title of the British organization, which became the National Auricula and Primula Society.

Throughout the history of auricula growing there has been much controversy over their cultivation requirements. In the 18th century, as masses of country folk migrated into the new northern factory towns during the British Industrial Revolution, they found that the auricula stood up to the sooty, acrid conditions better than many plants. Manure from the thousands of urban working horses was freely available, and formed the basis of complex, often secret composts and feeding rituals which fostered the cultivation of these remarkable plants. Well-

known growers like Emmerton, Hogg and Maddock used most extraordinary mixtures. Later it was realized such concoctions were unnecessary: auriculas can be grown perfectly well on a simpler diet.

At Stonecrop our *Primula auricula* collection can be found growing under glass either in the Pit House or Alpine House where they receive good ventilation and protection from the elements including strong summer sun. They are grown in clay pots planted with alpine soil, and sunk in a sand bed to help regulate moisture. The leaves, stems, and flowers of some species are covered with an attractive white or yellow mealy powder called farina. The farina helps the plant control moisture loss through excess transpiration. Care when watering is essential because the farina can be easily washed away, thus destroying the plants' natural protective coating and spoiling its attractive appeal. Auriculas are hardy to Zone 3 and when grown outside they need shade from the midday sun and well-drained soil. Whether you build yourself an auricula theatre or not, we urge you to try some of these fascinating plants in your own garden or glass house.



Reconstruction of the appearance of an auricula stage, with hyacinth bed and polyanthus pots, based on instructions in James Maddock's *The Florist's Directory* of 1792. The different flowers are modeled on G. D. Ehret's paintings, as well as on illustrations in two publications of the period: Robert Furber's *Twelve Months of Flowers* of 1730 and James Sowerby's *Flora Luxurians* of 1789-91.

Barbara Paul Robinson

Stonecrop is most fortunate that Barbara Paul Robinson brings her considerable expertise to its Board of Directors. Widely recognized for her professional and public service leadership, Mrs. Robinson is an attorney, an author, and an outstanding gardener whose Brush Hill Gardens in Washington, CT, are included in the Smithsonian Archive of American Gardens.

Almost forty years ago, Barbara and her husband Charles began restoring their eighteenth century farmhouse set amidst the remains of a gravel mine. Barbara, who says she had never seen seeds sprout from the soil, took on the care of her husband's vegetable garden while he was in Brazil on business. Absolutely thrilled when the peas sprouted, she called Charlie in Brazil only to discover that those little seedlings were the radishes. So began her passion for gardening, and her hands have been in the soil ever since. "I was completely besotted!" she recalls.

Barbara found the tangible pleasures of gardening a satisfying complement to the abstract thinking of her professional life. She is Of Counsel at the firm Debevoise and Plimpton where she became the first woman partner in 1976 and headed the Trusts and Estates Department. This was one of many firsts for Barbara Paul Robinson, as *The American Lawyer* magazine acknowledged when naming her one of its eight Lifetime Achievers of 2008 recognized for professional accomplishment and outstanding public service. Indeed, while president of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York (the Association's first woman president), Barbara oversaw establishment of the Association's pro bono and public service center. She serves on Mayor Bloomberg's Commission on Women's Issues, and she is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She has also been a member of many boards including Volunteers of Legal Services; Catalyst, Inc.; The Garden Conservancy; Yale University, The University Council, Chair of Committee on the Law School; and Practicing Attorneys for Law Students. Among the boards on which she is currently serving are Bryn Mawr College; William Nelson Cromwell Foundation; Fiduciary Trust International Trust Advisory Board; Foundation for Child Development; Wave Hill; and Yale University Executive Committee of the Yale Law School.

A remarkable detour during a sabbatical from the law brought Barbara to England when she arranged to work for two leading garden designers and writers, the late Rosemary Verey (with whom Caroline Burgess worked before attending R.B.G. Kew) and Penelope Hobhouse who, as custodian for the National Trust, was then overseeing work at Tintinhull Garden. In fact, Barbara lived



LAURIE GARABOLDI / THE LITCHFIELD COUNTY TIMES.

Barbara Paul Robinson

briefly in the same cottage that Caroline had called home at Verey's Barnsley House. When asked about gardening for Verey and Hobhouse, Barbara demurs, "Apprentice is far too glorified a term. I was a garden worker... I learned that I knew more than I thought I knew, and I learned how incredibly much more there was to learn." Rosemary Verey, with whom Barbara spoke every Sunday until she died, counseled Barbara to take risks, "Just get on with it. Don't feel you have to follow the rules." And get on with it, she did!

Luckily for the public, one can explore the Robinsons' garden tour de force in person this September, as in years past, through the Garden Conservancy's Open Days Program, and on line at www.brushhillgardens.com. "The charm of the garden," wrote Paula Deitz (*House & Garden*, October, 1997), "lies in its diverse moods.... It is difficult today to imagine the unimproved site as you face a woodland drive, rolling greens that dip down to a pond, and the series of lush gardens—each with its own character." Caroline Burgess, like so many others who have seen it, is captivated by the beautiful Rose Walk at Brush Hill, where lavender *Nepeta* lines beds of older species roses chosen for their fragrance and their hardiness. Among the many other delights awaiting visitors is what Barbara calls "Charlie's Waterworks," their woodland garden through which tumble streams and rills and waterfalls.

Barbara is deeply involved now in gathering recollections and anecdotes about Rosemary Verey, who left her garden writings to New York Botanical Garden. The transcripts of Barbara's conversations and research will also become part of the archives of NYBG. In addition to publishing in the legal field, Barbara has written of the gardening world for *The New York Times*, *Horticulture* magazine, *Fine Gardening* and numerous other publications. Of Stonecrop, she writes, "Stonecrop is a treasure—an extraordinary wealth of plants, many rare and others familiar, in the most beautiful setting."

Alpine Plant Sale

Stonecrop is delighted to announce the third annual North American Rock Garden Society's plant sale to be held on site here, Saturday, April 25th from 10am to 4pm. In addition to Stonecrop, the following nurseries and vendors will participate in the sale:

- **Alpines Mont Echo, Quebec**
Choice alpine and rock garden plants with emphasis on primulas, saxifrages, campanulas, woodland plants, dwarf shrubs.
- **Wrightman Alpines, Ontario**
Grower and supplier of alpine plants.
- **Les Plantons A & P, Quebec**
Nursery specializing in dwarf and unusual conifers and shrubs.
- **Evermay Nursery, Bangor, ME**
Specializing in alpine plants and primula species.
- **Carol's Collectibles, Ashford, CT**
Small nursery featuring unusual and hard-to-find rhododendrons, dwarf conifers, perennials, and rock garden plants.
- **Robert Elwell, Gloucester, MA**
Specializes in succulent container plants.
- **Betsy Knapp, Rochester, NY**
Creates and sells alpine troughs.
- **Debra Pope, Auburn, MA**
Creates custom hypertufa troughs.

We hope you can join us for this special event and take the time to view Stonecrop's spring bulb display. Refreshments will be available for purchase. Admission \$5/members no charge.





Daphne odora

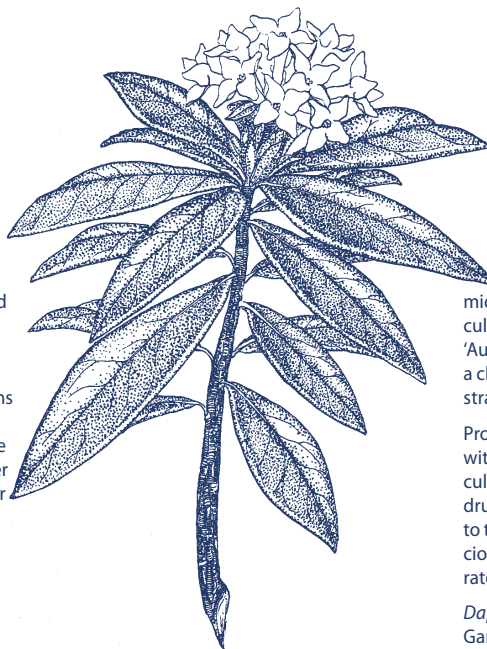
COMMON NAME: Winter Daphne, Fragrant Daphne
 FAMILY: Thymelaeaceae
 NATIVE HABITAT: China

February is an exciting time in the Pit House at Stonecrop.

Collections such as galanthus, narcissus, and helleborus are beginning to bloom, while tucked in a clay pot at the far north end of this glasshouse is one of the season's great stars. With flowers that light up the doldrums of winter and a fragrance that permeates the length of the house and out through the doors, *Daphne odora* is a welcome harbinger of spring and a choice addition to the winter garden or glasshouse.

Daphne odora is a densely branched, evergreen shrub that is hardy to Zones 7–9, but adapts very well to pot-culture. It slowly grows to 3'-4' in height and width. The "Winter Daphne" requires moist, well-drained soil and should be planted in sun or partial shade, while keeping in mind that too much afternoon sun will burn the leaves.

The heavenly scent of *Daphne odora*'s delicate, light pink flowers often lasts well into March. Terminal clusters of up to ten purple buds elongate slowly into long, cylindrical perianth tubes, each with four spreading, ovate-oblong lobes, that open to 1".



Inside the perianth tube, eight stamens are attached to the inside of the tube in two whorls, with yellow anthers visible upon first glance. While the flowers and fragrance of *Daphne odora* typically steal the show, this evergreen shrub is handsome year round. The shiny green, leathery, evergreen leaves are approximately 1½"-3½" long and 1" wide. Each leaf is elliptic-oblong in shape with a strong

mid-rib and acute tips. There are many fine cultivars of *Daphne odora* available. *D. odora* 'Aureomarginata,' with yellow leaf margins, is a classic favourite and a bit hardier than the straight species of *D. odora*.

Propagating "Winter Daphne" is easily done with softwood cuttings. It is a bit more difficult to propagate with seed—a fleshy, red drupe that seldom appears—perhaps due to the genus *Daphne* being typically dioecious, with male and female flowers on separate plants.

Daphne odora is a faithful friend to Stonecrop Gardens and each year the fragrance continues to captivate the hearts of visitors who stroll through the Pit House at our Members' Preview Party, scheduled this year on March 21st, or during Spring Under Glass Week, March 23–28.

—Amy Pelletier,
 Horticulture and Education Coordinator

Stonecrop Gardens A twelve-acre paradise for the plant enthusiast



Stonecrop Gardens
 81 Stonecrop Lane
 Cold Spring, New York 10516

"Stonecrop is a treasure—an extraordinary wealth of plants, many rare and others familiar, in the most beautiful setting."

—Barbara Paul Robinson, Stonecrop Board member

March 21

Members' Preview Party: Spring Under Glass, 12 p.m.–4 p.m.*
 Seed Sowing Lecture and Invitation to Spring Under Glass
 9 a.m.–12 p.m., \$40/\$20 members

March 23–28

Spring Under Glass Week—open to the public
 10 a.m.–5 p.m., \$5/members no charge

April 14

Guided Garden Tour: Spring Bulbs
 6–7 p.m., \$10/members no charge