

New England Carnivorous Plant Society

Established 2003

March Newsletter

We've gotten through February, the longest month of the year in the northern hemisphere (despite what the calendar says) and now we are heading finally towards spring. Despite the snows that seem to have targeted us for the past few weeks, we can see signs of the growing season ahead of us, and things are happening at the NECPS!!

This past month the NECPS again had a booth at the RI Spring Flower and Garden Show. Thanks go out to the people who helped out at the show (Bill, Dena, Lauren, Bob, Priscilla, Frank, Judy) to make it once again a success. The Society had an informational booth on the 5th floor of the convention center, where we displayed various CPs and gave out information, along with signing up new members. We had a brand new display that was made with the assistance of John from the RI Orchid society that really made the booth stand out. This display is available to members who would like to set up a booth at any show or event, contact me for information about that. We also had a part in the largest Display Garden ever done at the Spring Flower Show! That display was mainly the work of Craig from Tranquil Water Gardens, and in that garden we had a Bog Garden with Sarracenia (Pitcher plants from the USA) and several Nepenthes, displayed right at the junction of 4 walkways. From the response we got, there is a LOT of interest in the plants we love! Carnivorous Plants were HOT!. Four different booths were selling them, from Fly Traps to very nice sized Nepenthes, to Logee's where they were selling mixed pots of CPs. By the end of the first 2 days of the show, most of the stores retailing plants had just about sold out, with the exception of Logee's. We already have talked about a few ideas for next year's show, and will be discussing these ideas at meetings.

At the Spring Flower and Garden Show, The Society was approached by the Horticultural director for the Roger Williams Park Zoo (one of the Top 10 Zoos in the United States) and the idea for a bog garden at the tremendously popular Dinosaur Walk Exhibit was discussed. Afterwards, the idea was found to be not compatible with the goals of the walk, since there is a paltry fossil record of CPs during the time of the dinosaurs, and the zoo strives to make the walk educationally and informationally sound. But after discussions with Shareen Zaki, the Educational Director for the RWP Zoo, there is a good chance that we will be able to install a permanent exhibit in the

wetlands area of the zoo! This would be a great place to have an outdoor exhibit of the plants growing naturally, and show them off to the thousands of people who visit the zoo annually. Discussions are just starting with this, and we may need volunteers in the future to help with this.

One last follow-up note about the flower show, Roger Swain, the host of the Victory Garden series on PBS for the past 15 years (the Man in the Red Suspenders) stopped by our booth after giving a seminar at the show. Roger is fascinated by the plants, and knew most of the names! Roger spent about 25 minutes or so in the booth, discussing the plants and checking them out, while a crowd gathered around to speak with him, and also look at the plants. Roger seemed more interested in the plants than in the crowd!

Society member Kirk Martin has been working with his wife Janet in securing a visit for our Society to the EcoTarium in Worcester. The NECPS has had an exhibit there since last year, and the visit would allow NECPS members to see the exhibits at the EcoTarium, work of refurbishing our exhibit, show off our plants to other people and let them come to a NECPS meeting. Kirk recently returned from a trip to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens (ABG) and would give a slide show talk about the visit. The ABG has a wonderful exhibit of CP's well worth the trip! Kirk is also started planning and would like to discuss a massive CP educational program for the Hopkinton Ma 4th graders (13 classes!) for Sept/Oct. This will be discussed at the March meeting. The website for the EcoTarium is <http://www.ecotarium.org/>

The NECPS has also been asked to put in a small display tank at the Biomes Educational Center in North Kingstown, RI. The center is mainly for Marine Biology education, but also has exhibits concerning the local FW ponds and ecology. The website is <http://biomescenter.com/> . And last but not least, the NECPS has had a display at the pet store that supplies us with crickets for the October shows, Critter Hut in Narragansett, RI, the area's largest independent pet store has had a 40 Gallon tank displaying plants right at the entrance for a month or so.

We are planning an extra event for NECPS members. Last year we took a bog walk to the Great Swamp in Kingston, RI in July with the RI Wild Plant Society. Members who attended got a chance to see some great Sundews (*D. rotundifolia* and *D. intermedia*) and Purple Pitcher plants (*Sarracenia purpurea*) and some got great pictures close up! (We used society member Becky Swaszek's pictures from that walk in our Flower Show exhibit). The only down part of the

walk was that we visited past the flowering season for the Pitcher Plants. This year the Society will be monitoring the plants, and there will be a “short notice walk” when the Pitcher Plants are in bloom. Most likely an email will go out a week ahead of time that the plants are in bloom, and we will have the walk the following weekend. This should happen in April or May. If there are any other members who have bogs in their areas and would like to monitor them and let members know when plants are in bloom, let us know and we will pass along the information. We are always looking for new bogs to explore!

Webmaster Nathan has put a calendar of events on the website for all to see. We have some (MANY!!) upcoming trips and meetings in different places planned, so check out what will be happening where and when!

The Savage Garden Bog exhibit at the Roger Williams Park greenhouse in Providence was spruced up at the last meeting, with weeding and pruning being done by Society members. The bog has done it's part, and many of the Pitcher plants (*Sarracenia*) are responding to the new light levels by sending up flower stalks. It is possible that some MAY be almost in bloom by the March meeting. There are already some Butterworts (*Pinguicula*) blooming in the garden. Society member Priscilla Purinton recently helped us acquire some wonderfully sinuous Bittersweet vine sections to use in the bog. These sections will not be planted to grow, but will be used to support some *Nepenthes* that were donated by society members for use in the bog. It is planned that they will allow the *Nepenthes* to grow upwards and really put on a show. These should be in place and the *Nepenthes* planted within the next few weeks as the weather warms.

With all the publicity that the Society has recently received, there should be a good number of new members coming to the March meeting. We ask those who are members already to bring a few plants (as always) for the display table, and if anyone has plants for the ever-popular silent auction, please bring them along also. One of the best things about the Society has always been the exchange of plants and growing ideas and tips at the meetings. This has allowed many of us to grow our collections, and grow plants that we may have had trouble with just a short time ago.

The program for the March meeting of the NECPS will be “How to make a Carnivorous Plant Container Garden, and Growing those amazing Fly traps” by “Wild Bill” Matthews. Anyone who has seen Bill's Fly Traps knows he is a master at growing them to amazing

size and colors. Bill has been doing this for years now and he will be sharing some of his secrets with us. He also has done some wonderful container gardens for himself and others, like the one we displayed at the Flower and Garden show recently. This will be a talk not to be missed.

The next meeting of the New England Carnivorous Plant Society will be held at the Greenhouses of the New England Botanical Gardens at Roger Williams Park, Providence RI on Saturday, March 12th at 12:30 PM. As always, there will be the Silent Auction and swap table, and plants will be on display for all. T shirts will be available to NECPS members at the meeting also. Refreshments will be available, and anyone is free to bring a treat for the refreshment table also if they would like. Directions to the meeting can be found at <http://www.rogerwilliamspark.org/> or by calling me at 401~782~4458. I try to arrive at the meeting by noon to set up, and any and all are welcome to arrive early to help or view the Bog exhibit. As always, meetings are over no later than about 3:30 pm. I hope to see everyone at the next meeting of the NECPS, Saturday, March 12th at 12:30 PM in Providence!

Good Growing! ~ John Phillip, Jr, NECPS