

Letter from the President

By Rich Crites

What a great spring for wildflowers. We certainly see the importance of adequate rain for good wildflower viewing! We have had some great field trips and some really neat programs for our meetings.

Also, the annual wildflower sale was a huge success with many to be thanked for their efforts. I really believe this was the best sale in terms of plant quality and variety. I have heard many comments from individuals buying plants. And, I am already hearing talk about anticipating the sale for next year!

Certainly a lot of work was done by Rudy Albert and Marshall Daniels as they coordinated the selection of plants from the Veterans Affairs gardens and then periodically checking on their progress. I won't name all the others that did important work in advertising, bringing their own plants, collecting the sales, setting up the plants and helping the buyers by answering questions. You all are special and a BIG thank you to all involved!

Our programs at the meetings have ranged from cooking with wildflowers to healing with plants-therapeutic gardens-to a very special program May 23rd. One of our original chapter members, Frieda Toler, gave a program on wildflowers of the various seasons using slides that she and her husband, Bobby, had accumulated over many years of field trips and travels. I can almost remember when they started to really get interested in wildflowers as they took my classes at Virginia Western Community College. I remember Bobby telling me that his doctor told him that he better stop and smell the roses or he was going to soon be pushing them up. I truly feel this is great advice for every one.

At the end of last year, I had concerns about the chapter continuing, but

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Saturday, July 16

Time: 9 a.m. - all day

Leader: Butch Kelly

Contact: 384-7429

Meet: Hamrick's
at Cave Spring Corners
at Virginia 419 and
Brambleton Avenue
(U.S. 221).

Blue Ridge Parkway South and Buffalo Mountain

Join us for a trip south on the Blue Ridge Parkway and a hike to Buffalo Mountain. Along the parkway we should see many meadow flowers. This should include Rosebay Rhododendron. Buffalo Mountain features 11 plant species and six natural communities that are rare to Virginia. The view is spectacular. It is 4,000 feet in elevation and should be 8-to-10 degrees cooler than the Roanoke Valley. The hike to the top is a switch back but does require climbing. Our pace will be slow enough that the grade should not be a problem. Bring lunch, water, snacks, sturdy shoes, sun screen, bug juice and rain gear. This will be an all-day trip.



Rosebay Rhododendron
Rhododendron maximum

Saturday, Aug. 20

Time: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Leader: Rich Crites

Contact: 774-4518

Meet: Orange Market off
Virginia 419 (Thompson
Memorial Blvd. in Salem)

Paint Bank Field Trip.

This trip is always one of the most beautiful our chapter takes. We will travel to Paint Bank on Virginia 311. The trip features the beautiful mountains of Craig County. We will visit a wetland, stop at various areas along the way and conclude with an early dinner at the Swinging Bridge Restaurant in Paint Bank. Flowers commonly seen on this trip are grass of parnassus, purple fringed orchid, cardinal flower and much more. Bring sunscreen, rain gear, bug juice, water, snack and water repellent boots for some bog tromping. (Lots of the plants can be seen if you choose not to wade.) Walking will be minimal. Most plants can be seen from the car very easily. We should be back to the Orange Market by 5 p.m. The trip is long, but well worth it.

Purple
Fringed
orchid
*Platanthera
grandiflora*



Saturday, August 27

Time: noon - 3 p.m.

Leader: Butch and Betty Kelly

Contact: 384-7429

RSVP: By August 20

Meet: 8564 Gravel Hill Road
in Catawba



BRWS Annual Picnic

This year's picnic will be at Butch and Betty's home in Catawba. Bring a covered dish or dessert. Barbecue and drinks will be provided. Also, bring a folding chair. We will include a walk through a meadow and woods if you choose to participate.

Directions: Take Exit 141 off Interstate 81. Go north on Virginia 419 to the red light beside the Orange Market. Turn right onto Virginia 311. Proceed 7 miles to Virginia 785 (Blacksburg Road). Turn left onto the Blacksburg Road and proceed 9 miles to Virginia 650 (Gravel Hill Road). Drive about 1 mile up a very steep hill and look for the house number 8564 on a post and turn right. Go about 100 feet and turn right along the fence row. It is the only house on that lane.

Nature Notes

By Betty Kelly

Sometimes chores pile up and a work day is declared. That means family is invited for some work and a home cooked meal.

That was the case recently at our house. I was assisting my seven year old grandson with planting some spring wildflowers that had been purchased at our BRWS plant sale. Some of the plants were fire pink (*Silene virginica*). I told him that they needed shale to survive. I let him see how easy it was for him to break the shale. I named some other rocks found in our area such as conglomerate and quartz. "Oh, yes," he said. "We are studying pints and quarts in school."

Need I say more.

Later it was time for some baseball practice with grandpa.

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

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the increased enthusiasm and numbers of participants in this spring's activities have really changed my thinking. I want to thank the new board members that have brought fresh ideas and helped move us out of our rut. Keep the ideas coming!

Be sure and check the calendar for upcoming events. Thanks to Butch and Michael for the newsletter. See you soon.

— Rich Crites
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Welcome New Members

Neal Clingenpeel of Vinton
Vicki Kavalaskia of Roanoke
Lisa D. Harris of Jonesville

Tell us what you think

This is your club. If you have ideas or concerns, share them with us. Did we leave out a good walk or forget to give credit to someone who has done a great job? Maybe you have a great photo from a previous field trip that you would like to share. Do you want to recommend a plant-related book, Web site or DVD?

If so, email them to us at:
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Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

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