

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

A CHAPTER OF THE
VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Volume 40, No. 3

Fall Newsletter

September 2019

Welcome New Members!

Donna Jefferson, Union Hall, VA
Zoe Sollenberger, Fort Valley, VA
Richard Stafford, The Plains, VA
Sylvia Dooling, Jacksonville, FL
Amelia Moore, Fishersville, VA
Harry Poulter, Buckingham, VA
Rebecca Williams, Madison, VA



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Next newsletter deadline:
January 1, 2020

President's Pick!



DOLL'S EYES OR WHITE BANEERRY (*Actaea pachypoda*)

Please see the article on page 5

Please submit your photos to editor, Carol Whiteside. Thank you!

VENETIAN BLINDS NEEDED!

Please let us have your old discarded venetian blinds. We will transform them into plant identification sticks for the plant sale. Plastic or metal, it doesn't matter; we will be glad to take them off your hands! Please contact Ellen Holtman 389-1514 or bring them to a meeting. Thank you!

BRWS MEETINGS

No chapter meetings in December, January, June, July and August

Meetings will be canceled if Roanoke County Schools close for inclement weather

**Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA
7:00pm, Fourth Monday of the Month (unless changed)**

September 23 "Using Wildflowers to Enhance Ecosystem Services In Agriculture" by Chris McCullough

October 28 "Native Forest Plants Foraged for Food and Medicine: Impacts and implications for sustainability" by Jim Chamberlain, Ph.D.

November 25 "Oh, The Places You Will Go--Invasive Plants and Their Impacts on Animals and Ecosystems" by Ariel Heminger

Many thanks to **Connie Crites** for organizing the meeting refreshments and to those who contribute!



Virginia Native Plant Society

Website: www.vnps.org

The Virginia Native Plant Society (VNPS), founded in 1982 as the Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society, is a nonprofit organization of individuals who share an interest in Virginia's native plants and habitats. The Society and its chapters seek to further the appreciation and conservation of this priceless heritage.

Our Mission: The Virginia Native Plant Society is dedicated to the protection and preservation of the native plants of Virginia and their habitats, in order to sustain for generations to come the integrity of the Commonwealth's rich natural heritage of eco-systems and biodiversity for purposes of enjoyment, enlightenment, sustainable use, and our own very survival. To this end, we advocate and follow practices that will conserve our natural endowment, and we discourage and combat practices that will endanger or destroy it. We are committed to do all we can to slow the accelerating conversion of natural landscape to built and planted landscape and to reduce its damage to natural ecosystems.

Our Purpose and Services:

State Level:

- Working for measures to protect endangered plant species, and preserve habitats and plant communities of special interest
- Learning and teaching about native plants and their special needs
- Encouraging the appropriate use of nursery or home propagated native plants in public landscapes and private gardens
- Assisting in writing and updating Flora of Virginia
- Providing money for graduate botanical research
- Working with nurseries to protect native species
- Offering a spring workshop on timely botanical subjects
- Offering field trips state wide and some in surrounding states
- Conducting the annual meeting with speakers and field trips provided

Local level, Blue Ridge Chapter:

- To present meetings in spring and fall that offer informative programs concerning a variety of areas and plants they support
- To lead free field trips to a wide variety of local habitats spring through fall
- To conduct an annual native plant sale in May at VA Western Arboretum
- To provide outreach to public groups in the way of speakers and guided walks
- To donate money to local conservation

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society Chapter

Counties of: Appomattox, Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell, Craig, Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Roanoke

Cities of: Roanoke, Salem, and Lynchburg

No chapter meetings in December, January, June, July and August

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

3410 Overhill Trail, Roanoke, VA 24018



2019 Officers

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eholtman@comcast.net

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CONTACT US!

The BRWS Newsletter is published three times annually: spring, summer and fall. Photos and articles are gladly accepted for publication as room allows, and may be sent electronically, by mail, or delivered in person, with a prompt return.

Thank you!

Carol Whiteside

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Next newsletter deadline:

January 1, 2020

Message from your President

Ellen Holtman



Hello Friends!

Welcome to a new year of wildflower walks and talks and fellowship. I hope you and your plants have thrived through this strange summer of heat, drought, and rainfall. Our beautiful Blue Ridge autumn will be here soon, with perfect weather for us outdoor people.

Our memorial bubbler in the wildflower garden at VWCC Community Arboretum is complete! A few plants have been added to our space, and a beautiful little brass sculpture by our own Lou Greiner adds a unique focal point among the rocks. Birds drink and bathe in the steady little trickle, and families have been seen sitting on the Rich Crites bench and enjoying the peaceful area. Soon we will be dedicating the water feature to our founding members and all those who have followed them as part of the BRWS. Stay tuned for information about this special event!

One of our new projects this year will be partnering with the Roanoke Valley Master Naturalists to survey wildflowers along the trails at Explore Park. The group has been working two hours at a time since spring, and they have identified more than 40 species on the river trail. Eventually they hope to produce a pamphlet to help visitors appreciate the native plants they see. The MNs welcome our help and our combined expertise, so any of us can join their ventures just by dropping in. The next survey is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 18, at 9:30 am. I will provide more dates and times as they are announced.

The VNPS 2019 Annual Meeting will be held in Front Royal on September 27-29. This meeting is for you and me and all of us! If you haven't been to a statewide meeting before, I recommend it to you. There is a wonderful variety of activities to choose from, including two distinguished speakers, 8 workshops and classes, and 24 field trips! There are lots of natural areas to explore, including Abrams Creek Wetlands Preserve, and also significant sites such as the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, Blandy Experimental Farm, and the State Arboretum of Virginia. Complete information and registration instructions are at <https://vnps.org/annual-meeting-2019-events/>.

Another activity that might appeal to you this fall as you work in your own yard is a challenge from the National Wildlife Federation. The NWF offers certification to anyone who plans for wildlife in their garden. It's easier than you might think (and of course it involves native plants)! You may already qualify. Your wildlife garden should include: food, water, cover and places to raise young and sustainable practices. When you are certified you will receive a sturdy metal sign for your yard that will announce to the world your priorities and your accomplishments! The secure \$20 application fee and sign purchase directly support the National Wildlife Federation's programs to protect wildlife and its habitat. Find more information at <https://www.nwf.org/CertifiedWildlifeHabitat/login>.



Please mark the date on your calendar so we can all be together for our first meeting of the year, Monday, September 23, and bring a friend!

All the best,

Ellen

2019 Calendar of Events



Monday, September 23, 7:00 pm Chapter Meeting: “Using Wildflowers to Enhance Ecosystem Services in Agriculture” by Chris McCullough. Chris plans to talk about wildflowers and their benefits to beneficial organisms. He will explain what they are doing in their lab as it pertains to wildflowers and insects, and will skew towards bees, but it won’t exclusively be all about them. There are actionable steps that people can take in their yards or other land to help promote these ecosystem services.

Chris McCullough is a graduate student at Virginia Tech in the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences working in the lab of Megan O’Rourke. Chris is originally from Minnesota, and attended Concordia College in Moorhead, MN. He received an M.S. in Entomology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He moved to Virginia in 2016 to pursue his Ph.D. at Virginia Tech. He is currently working on a project that is investigating the effects of wildflower plantings and the surrounding landscape on crop pests, natural enemies, pollination services, and bee communities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Meet: 7:00 pm, Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke

Contact: Ellen Holtman, 389-1514

Monday, October 28, 7:00 pm Chapter Meeting: “Native Forest Plants Foraged for Food and Medicine: Impacts and implications for sustainability” by Jim Chamberlain, Ph.D. Long before the technology existed to cut timber from forests, people were gathering food, medicine and other products. These practices continue today, and are deeply embedded in the culture of our society. Foraging food and medicine from forests has increased over the last decade, with the ‘farm to table’ culinary movement, and increased interest in natural remedies. The presentation examines the ecological and economic importance of the plants and related products. Dr. Chamberlain will explore the potential impacts harvesting has on plant populations. He will discuss the implications of unmanaged harvesting on the sustainability of native plant populations.



Dr. Jim Chamberlain, a research scientist with the USDA Forest Service, is a global expert on non-timber forest products management, production and valuation. Jim received his Ph.D. from the College of Natural Resources at Virginia Tech in 2000, with a focus on managing forests for non-timber forest products. He leads research to quantify and articulate the ecological and economic impacts of harvesting edible and medicinal forest products. He has published extensively on the subject, having recently produced a comprehensive national assessment of these products, relative to climate change.

Meet: 7:00 pm, Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke

Contact: Ellen Holtman, 389-1514

Monday, November 25, 7:00 pm Chapter Meeting: “Oh, The Places You Will Go--Invasive Plants and Their Impacts on Animals and Ecosystems” by Ariel Heminger. Very few introduced species ever become invasive but when they do the consequences can be enormous. On average, invasive species cost nearly \$1.4 trillion worldwide. Plants represent the majority of invasive species and often travel unnoticed to new locations. Invasive plants pose risks to biodiversity, impact landscapes, and may cause detrimental impacts to organisms including many native animals. These findings provide important insight into the overall trends of invasive plants and provide justification for managing invasive plants.

Ariel Heminger is a graduate student in the School of Plant and Environmental Science at Virginia Tech. Her graduate work focuses on how microbes found in the flowers are shaped by the landscapes and pollinators. She has worked with invasive species including the brown marmorated stink bug and the hemlock woolly adelgid. She is an author on the paper “Invasive plants negatively impact native, but not exotic, animals” (Fletcher et al. 2019). Ariel is fascinated by invasive species and is amazed by the impacts that invasive species cause.

Meet: 7:00 pm, Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke

Contact: Ellen Holtman, 389-1514

Our monthly chapter meeting will be canceled if Roanoke County Schools close for inclement weather. For safety and environmental reasons, please leave all pets at home during field trips. There will be no chapter meetings or newsletters during December, January, June, July and August.



Meet A Member

Kathy Sink

BRWS Treasurer



Born and raised in Roanoke, I attended William Byrd High School and graduated from Virginia Tech with an accounting degree. I have one sister who lives in Roanoke.

I worked 34 years at Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield and retired from there in January 2016. I worked in the internal audit and accounting/budget departments. Once retired, I started volunteering at Virginia Western Community Arboretum two days a week. During the summer I grow vegetables in my garden. Since I love tomatoes, I grow different varieties to get the "homegrown" tomato taste. My favorite is Cherokee Purple. I am a Master Gardener, a Tree Steward for Roanoke city and most recently a Master Naturalist.

I joined the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society after I heard Butch Kelly give a talk at one of our Master Gardener classes in 2016. I wanted to learn more about wildflowers and join the club on field trips. I not only enjoy the walks, but also the guest speaker programs.

Wildflowers surround us throughout the year and I love being able to tell friends what they are and why they are important. I like Green Hill Park in the spring with the hillside filled with trilliums. I enjoy driving up Bent Mountain and seeing all the milkweed, goldenrod and ironweed.

At home I mostly enjoy vegetable gardening, but have recently started adding more wildflowers into the landscape. I planted Joe Pye and goldenrod which came from the Virginia Western Arboretum. Last fall I was excited when I saw monarch caterpillars on my milkweed. I have also received some wildflowers from the gardens of Master Gardeners.

I also enjoy reading (mostly gardening books and magazines) and birding. Sometimes when going on bird walks, we look at wildflowers, too. Recently, I have learned to play Mahjong.

President's Pick!

DOLLS EYES OR WHITE BANE BERRY (*Actaea pachypoda*)

**FROM FALL WILDFLOWERS OF THE BLUE RIDGE AND GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS
BY OSCAR W. GUPTON AND FRED C. SWOPE**

An herbaceous perennial about 2 or 3 feet tall, it does not ordinarily produce branches, and it has few leaves. This species is found in rich woods, alluvial flood plains, and in wet thickets. The natural habitats are characteristically shady and moist. All parts of the plant are poisonous.

It is late in the summer and on into autumn before the outstanding and unique feature that is the plant's namesake comes on the scene. The fruit of Doll's Eyes are indeed facsimiles of those structures used in the manufacture of dolls. The pattern of color and form of the fruiting arrangement is certainly one of the more striking wildflower displays.

The few large leaves are divided into several leaflets that are pointed and have margins that are toothed and lobed. The flowers that are present in May and June have narrow petals and numerous stamens lending a tassel effect that is magnified by the many-flowered clusters. The fruits are rounded berries nearly a half-inch across growing at the ends of thick red stalks. The color is usually white with a conspicuous black spot.





Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

6487 Shingle Ridge Road
Roanoke, Virginia 24018

Membership ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Name(s) _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____
E-mail _____

Membership dues:

- ☐ Individual \$30 ☐ Family \$40 ☐ Student \$15
☐ Life \$500 ☐ Patron \$50 ☐ Sustaining \$100
☐ Associate \$40. Organization _____

(Also, please name your delegate above.)

- ☐ Additional, nonvoting chapter memberships, \$5 each.
Chapter _____

Please enroll me as:

- ☐ Member of **Blue Ridge Wildflower Society** Chapter
☐ Member at Large (no local chapter affiliation)
☐ Gift Membership. Please send a card in my name: _____

I wish to make an additional contribution to:

- ☐ Chapter. Amount _____
☐ State office of VNPS. Amount _____

Credit card payments:

- ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Discover

Card # _____

Expiration Date _____

Amount: _____

Date: _____

Signature _____

- ☐ Do not list me in the chapter directory.

VNPS does not exchange member information with other organizations.

Please make your check out to VNPS and mail it to:

Memberships
Virginia Native Plant Society
400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit #2
Boyce, VA 22620

For Office use only

Check No. _____

Date rec'd _____

Amount rec'd _____