



Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

A chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Fall 2020 VOL 41, No. 2

Pandemic necessitates online election

Our club elects new officers for two-year terms in October of even-numbered years. Because of COVID we won't be meeting this October, so we are going to conduct the election of new officers via email. Below you will find the slate of officers the nominating committee has recommended.

As our president, Ellen Holtman, explains in her message on Page 3, a quorum of members' votes is required to elect the new officers. So it's important that you take a moment, review the slate and [email your vote \(Yes or No\) to Betty Kelly at](mailto:bettykelly918@gmail.com)

bettykelly918@gmail.com

Slate of officers for 2021-23

President — **Jessica Fleming**
Vice president — **Marilyn Lerch**
Secretary — **Linda Ardrey**
Treasurer — **Kathy Sink**

Be sure to vote!

President's Pick



Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)

See the article on page 7

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BRWS MEETINGS

7 p.m., Fourth Monday of the month (unless changed)
Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs headquarters
3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA

In normal times, we meet in September, October, November, February, March, April and May unless Roanoke County Schools are closed for inclement weather. This year we will not be able to have meetings because of COVID-19 precautions.

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, to sustain for generations to come the integrity of the Commonwealth's rich natural heritage of ecosystems 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:

Counties of: Appomattox, Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell, Craig, Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Roanoke **Cities of:** Roanoke, Salem and Lynchburg

- 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 needs

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs
3460 Colonial Ave. SW,
Roanoke, VA 24018

Outgoing officers

President

Ellen Holtman..... (540) 389-1514
eholtman@comcast.net

Vice President

Cathy Lauver..... (540) 685-4173
cjl1954@cox.net

Secretary

Betty Kelly..... (540) 384-7429
bettykelly918@gmail.com

Treasurer

Kathy Sink..... (540) 774-8950
kathysink@cox.net

Past President

Lou Greiner..... (540) 774-3975
lougreiner48@gmail.com

Outgoing committee chairs

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Butch Kelly..... (540) 384-7429
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Garden Coordinator

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Historian

Betty Kelly..... (540) 384-7429
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Membership

Terry Lauver..... (540) 685-4173
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Newsletter

Roger Holtman..... (540) 389-1514
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Refreshments

Connie Crites..... (540) 774-4518
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The BRWS Newsletter is published three times annually: spring, summer and fall. Photos and articles for publication are welcome (and encouraged) and may be sent electronically (preferred), by mail or delivered in person.

Thank you!

Roger Holtman, Editor

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540.389.1514

Message from the president

Hello, friends!

The BRWS lives, though it seems like forever since we've been together. The pandemic has changed our lives in many ways, but the flowers are still blooming and we can still get outdoors to see them, even though we can't safely do it as a group. Nature has power to soothe in times like these, so don't forget to get out!

You will find in this edition of the newsletter many places to visit as individuals or families to find flowers. Fall is a beautiful time to be out and about in Virginia, and temperatures will soon be more moderate, so I hope you can plan your own walk in your favorite place. You might even feel safe getting together with a few others too, with distancing and perhaps without carpooling. Also, take a peek at our new Facebook page! The VNPS page is really interesting too.

The Board met on August 10 in masks in the parking lot of RCGC. We decided it is not yet safe to get together in a large group, so we won't schedule membership meetings until 2021. However, we do have some business to conduct. We will elect officers in October as outlined in our by-laws. On Page 1 of this newsletter, we are publishing the slate offered by the nominating committee. We are required to pre-

sent this to members ahead of the election, so consider this your notification. Please email Betty Kelly, nominating committee chair, to vote YES or NO on whether to accept the slate of officers for a two-year term. We need to have a quorum voting, so please send in your vote while you are thinking about it. The new officers will take over in November.



A successful mid-summer plant sale!

Ellen Holtman

Thanks, Betty, for your work getting together a great slate!

I know all of you join me in thanking **Michael Belcher** for his tremendous leadership of the plant sale this year. As you know, we already had hundreds of plants ready to go for the sale on May 9, but COVID safety protocols meant we had to postpone it. Club members cared for our plants for months, then worked in the heat July 18, and we sold most of our plants. Michael sold the rest of them to the New River Chapter (hooray!) for

their sale Sept. 26. Our profits were \$2,299.88 — surprisingly good considering the delay and the hot weather on sale day. So a big thank you to Michael and to each of you who raised plants, worked the sale, and/or donated plants!

I also want to thank the folks who helped this summer in our monarch garden at the RCGC on Colonial Avenue. It's a big garden and I'm sure you know how fast weeds can take over. We have had our share of wiregrass as well as some spreading species trying to take

over the space of other species, so several workdays have been required to control them.

Thanks to **Linda Harrison** who is our loyal Garden Chairperson. She waters faithfully and continually battles the invading grasses, and she appreciates any help she can get.

This summer our helpers included **Connie Crites, Maxine Fraade, Butch and Betty Kelly, Claire Privitera, Rodelin Palmer (twice!), Kathy Sink, Roger and me**. All served during the record-breaking 28 days of 90+ degrees!

You are in my thoughts as I write. While you are at home, let your mind wander to springtime, and let me know where you would like to go as a group to welcome the spring ephemerals.

— Ellen



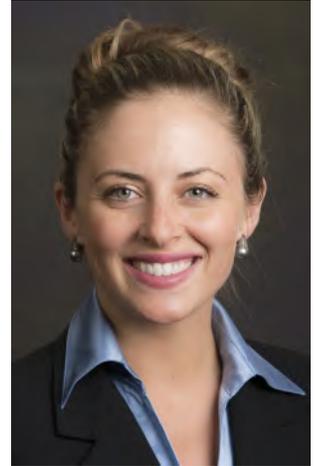
Welcome new members!

Trevor Curtis, *Bristol*
Natalie Detert, *Charlottesville*
Betty Douglas, *Middleburg*
Lois Kelley, *Elkton*
Jennifer McCarthy, *Lynchburg*
Kip Mumaw, *Charlottesville*
Laura Ogelman, *Purcellville*
Laura Reichenbaugh,
Bent Mountain
Blue Ridge Discovery Center,
Troutdale
Carol Clerico, *Free Union*
Steve Knizner, *Roanoke*
Tom Rowley, *Roanoke*
Calista Warden, *Ferrum*
Lisa Horth, *Norfolk*
Wanda Kochhar, *Charlottesville*
Val Leonard, *Arlington*
Mara Seaforest, *Marshall*
Liz Stoner, *Charlottesville*
Milda Vaivada, *Sperryville*
Cynthia Kuhlken, *Bedford*
Kathleen O'Shea, *Bon Air*
Anna Pollack, *Arlington*
Supria Ranade, *Charlottesville*
Gary Shinnars, *Arlington*
Jennifer Troy-Black, *Heathsville*
Sherry Easterbrook, *Stuart*
Ben Kessler, *Afton*
Duane Perry, *Roanoke*
Rob & Ann Simpson, *Stephens City*
Ellen Swecker, *Harrisonburg*
Jacqueline Brown, *Christiansburg*
Kevin E. Heanue, *Alexandria*
Anna Maria Johnson, *Broadway*
Chuck Rowell, *Riner*
Christine Sizemore,
Germantown, Md.
Lindsey White, *Cochranton, Pa.*

Meet a member

Dr. Jessica Fleming

Dr. Jessica Fleming is a second year internal medicine resident at Carilion. She is a member of Carilion's Sustainability Committee, has volunteered in wildlife rehabilitation since 2007, and was the leader of the Brookline (Mass.) Plastic Bag Ban that passed in 2011. After college, she worked at the Harvard Institute of Medicine for two years performing stem-cell research and went on to earn a degree in Clinical Herbal Medicine and Nutrition with high honors from the Colorado School of Clinical Herbalism. In Colorado she worked as an herbal medicine practitioner in an integrative medicine clinic. At the clinic, she also taught classes on how to use plant medicines for healing and led many plant walks through the Rocky Mountains. She is a wannabee native landscaper, avid gardener, bee keeper and chicken mom. She has lost no less than 1,000 hours of sleep thinking about wilderness conservation and how we can restore native habitat to ecosystems. Jessica is thrilled to be a part of the Roanoke community and biodiversity of the pristine Blue Ridge Mountains.



New editor

Greetings, everyone! I am Roger Holtman, the new editor of the newsletter. I encourage you to submit articles, photos or other information for the newsletter. Do you have a favorite wildflower you'd like to highlight? A favorite place to visit that you'd like to share? What would you like to see more of? Let us know! The newsletter is published three times a year: spring, summer and fall. Please send your information, comments and ideas to roger.holtman@comcast.net. I'll be looking for them!

Been missing those wildflower walks?

Here are some ideas for places you can visit on your own

Even though we are in the midst of COVID-19, you still can travel on your own to see some beautiful blooms. Here is a list of places to go for a day's outing to enjoy our late summer and early autumn flora.

Paint Bank

Paint Bank is in Craig County. Take Va. 311 to Paint Bank and turn left onto Va. 600. Watch the ditches and meadows as you travel past the buffalo farm. There are scattered pull-offs on this beautiful drive in the valley between Potts and Peters mountains. Drive about 14 miles to Cherokee Flats (picnic tables) and then turn around. Swinging Bridge is an interesting place with pretty good food. This is one of the most diverse areas for floral viewing.

Here are a few of the species you might see:

Sundrops, New York ironweed, goldenrod, jewelweed, cardinal flower, hoary mountain mint, blue lobelia, clematis, swamp milkweed, monkey flower, New York fern and Jack-o'-lantern mushroom.



Sneezeweed *Helenium autumnale* Butch Kelly

Bent Mountain and Blue Ridge Parkway South

Take U.S. 221 south from Cave Spring Corners to the Bent Mountain post office. Just past the post office take a right and drive to the old Bent Mountain School. Park at the school and walk back along the road you came in on. Walk to the sharp curve and return to the school. There are lots of flowers on both sides of the road.

Once back to the school walk behind the school and follow the short board walk to see a variety of wetland plants.

Return to U.S. 221 and turn right. Follow U.S. 221 for a couple of miles and turn left onto the Blue Ridge Parkway. Once you get to the parkway turn right (south). The best stops are mileposts 154.4 Smartview Picnic Area and 162.4 Rake's Mill Pond. Keep a careful eye on the road sides as you travel. There are lots of little spots to stop.

Here is a list of some species to enjoy:

Sneezeweed, blue lobelia, cardinal flower, New York iron weed, white snakeroot, New England Aster, woodland aster, British soldiers (unique lichen), obedient plant, coreopsis, Joe-Pye weed, lady fern and tall cone flower.

Roanoke County South County Library

The South County Library is across from Penn Forest Elementary at 6303 Merriman Road in the Cave Spring area. The site includes a boardwalk that transects a beautiful wetland. This a nice site with little travel involved and can be visited in an evening.

Some plants to be observed:

Evening primrose, cardinal flower, New York ironweed, goldenrod, blue lobelia, boneset, jewelweed, swamp milkweed, sneezeweed and cattails.

Fenwick Mines in Jefferson National Forest

The Fenwick Mine area in Craig County offers easy walking on a boardwalk through a wetland and a pleasant waterfall. There is a picnic ground and a woodland trail as well. You can enjoy the following plants there:

Goldenrod, evening primrose, New York iron weed, Joe-Pye weed, monkey flower, bull-rush, mullein, chickory, blue lobelia, cardinal flower, Virginia meadow beauty and royal

fern.

Directions: From Salem, take Va. 311 to New Castle. In New Castle turn right onto Va. 615/Market Street and go 5.2 miles. Turn left on Va. 611 and then take an almost immediate right on Va. 685. Turn right onto Old Jeep Road to Fenwick Mines parking area.

Further resources available online

<https://vnps.org/blueridgewildflowersociety/native-plants>

Check out our chapter's website, which is part of the Virginia Native Plant Society's website. If the link above is too long to type, go to <https://vnps.org/> and click on Chapters, Blue Ridge Wildflower Society, Conservation, and then Native Plants.

There you will find a list of many of the walks we have taken since 2010. Included will be a description of how to get there and where to park, the time of year we went, what plants we saw and what was in bloom.

Next newsletter deadline: Jan. 15

Plants added to Virginia Noxious Weed List

*From Blue Ridge PRISM
(Partnership for Regional Invasive
Species Management)*

We are pleased to announce that **Ailanthus**, **Porcelainberry**, **Oriental bittersweet**, **Mile-a-minute**, **Hydrilla**, and **Incised fumewort** have been added to the Virginia Noxious Weed List!

A noxious weed, in simple terms, is a plant that is so bad for the native environment that it must not be sold or brought into Virginia. It is backed up by law and penalties can be severe.

As part of the **Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee**, Blue Ridge PRISM has been working with partner organizations to propose plants to be added to the **Noxious Weed List**. Our volunteers attend multiple meetings, provide plant information and research plant damage — all vital components considered by the committee.

Once a plant is on this list it may not be sold at your local nursery or be moved across state lines (except where a permit has been approved for use such as for experimental research). You are also not allowed to transport it anywhere within Virginia. Any person who fails to comply with this law is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

If you have a plant on this list growing on your property, you will not be prosecuted but we would encourage you to remove it as it is not a plant that we want to keep in Virginia.

For the full list of plants on the Virginia Noxious Weed List, go to <https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/plant-industry-services-noxious-weeds.shtm>

To volunteer with PRISM to add more plants to this list please email: info@blueridgeprism.org

VNPS is part of PRISM, and so are the Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists.

Fall garden cleanup: Go easy with an eye towards next season

When the air gets crisp, shadows grow longer and days become shorter. Autumn triggers something in some gardeners, who get out and clean very thoroughly. However, if you have a bird and butterfly garden, now is the time to do very little cleanup. While that trashy garden area is an eyesore to many homeowners, as far as wildlife is concerned, leaving the plants until spring is best. The plants provide cover, food and help hold the soil in place. As the flowers go to seed they provide a gourmet buffet for many birds.

If your flowers are in the front yard and easily visible, try leaving the bottom 10-12 inches of the dried stem over winter. Most insects lay their eggs near the bottom of the stems. The stems will yield tasty morsels for our avian friends come spring. Sparrows,



Cardinal flower

Butch Kelly

goldfinches, doves, towhees, finches, buntings, meadowlarks, red winged blackbirds and quail all feed on seed-producing plants. Many of these birds overwinter here in the Roanoke Valley.

If you have too much grass to mow and you want to attract birds and butterflies, now is the time to kill a spot in your yard. This can be done using large pieces of cardboard or newspaper with wet dead leaves on top. Next spring, till the area and plant a native wildflower mix and a few warm season grasses. This will bring a huge infusion of color to your property and attract birds galore come fall. Be sure to include common milkweed, butterfly weed, poke milkweed and swamp milkweed to your mix. These will attract many butterfly species. Goldenrods attract a large variety of insects that birds will feed upon.

I've only touched upon a few plants here, but more information on seed and planting sources is available at www.vnps.org.

— **Butch Kelly**

Black-eyed Susan: Beauty for the birds and bees

Many flowers are called black-eyed Susan, but this one is the original, *Rudbeckia hirta*. It is native to Eastern and Central North

President's Pick

America and naturalized in the western part of the continent as well

as in China. It thrives in almost any soil and is hardy in full sun in wildflower gardens as well as in fields and meadows. Its sunny daisy-like composite flower with yellow rays and a dome-shaped disc are a familiar sight in fall. Blooms are plentiful on each plant from June to September. The plant is a biennial, but it reseeds freely so it's easy to maintain a population. Although the plants are drought-tolerant, they will be denser with watering.

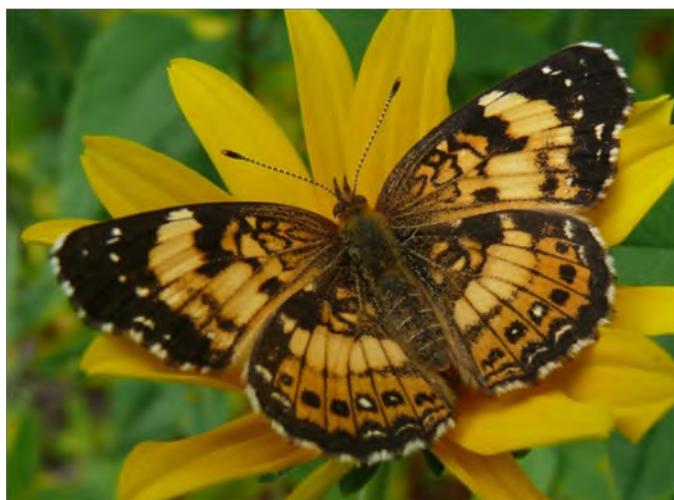
A bit of trivia: According to Mr. Smartyants at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, the Black-eyed Susan and the Common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) are the most common wildflowers in North America. They occur across America and often in vast numbers.

Black-eyed Susan makes a beautiful and cheerful mass planting, and the blooms attract a myriad of



www.flickr.com

Goldfinches are attracted to the seeds of Black-eyed Susan



www.prairiehaven.com

Silvery Checkerspot caterpillars overwinter at the base of old flowers

pollinators including butterflies, bees, wasps, and syrphid flies. The leaves host larvae of the Silvery Checkerspot, a butterfly species of special concern in the U.S. And by the way, this butterfly survives winter by hibernating as a caterpillar at the base of old flowers, and goldfinches eat the seeds, so it's a good idea to wait till spring to clean up the garden!



Blue Ridge Wildflower Society
 Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs
 3460 Colonial Ave. SW,
 Roanoke, VA 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 Blandly Farm Lane, Unit #2
 Boyce, VA 22620

For Office use only Check No. _____ Date rec'd _____ Amount rec'd _____
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