

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

A CHAPTER OF THE
VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Vol. 6, No 1

January 1989

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

February 18 - Field trip to Bent Mountain. Meet at 10 A.M. at the old Mick or Mack on Route 221 (just South of Cave Spring Corners). Bring a bag lunch.

- February 27** - General membership meeting. 7:00 P.M., Center in the Square. Details below.
- March 25** - Arcadia Field trip. Meet at 10 A.M. at Winn-Dixie on Route 11 near Truckstops of America (I-81 Exit 44) or meet in Arcadia at the parking lot adjacent to the creek at 11:00 A.M. Bring a bag lunch.
- April 16** - Field trip to Blackwater Creek. Sponsored jointly by Friends of Lynchburg Streams and Valleys and the BRWS. Meet at 1:00 P.M. at Kroger, Route 460E, to carpool to Lynchburg. Or, meet at the end of Thompson Drive, in Lynchburg at 2:00 P.M.
- April 21** - General Membership Meeting. 7:00 P.M., Virginia Western Community College. Speakers will be Dr. Jerry Via and Dr. Rick Fell, V.P.I. The program will be "Birds, Bees and Wildflowers." A reception will follow.
- April 22** - Field trip to Martinsville area. Meet at 9:15 A.M. at Tanglewood Mall or at 10:30 A.M. at Stanleytown Elementary School (just off Rt. 57W in Martinsville). Bring a bag lunch.
- April 28-30** - Science Museum of Western Virginia Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage.
- May 5-7** - Overnight field trip. Details to be announced.
- May 13** - Annual plant sale. Rain date is May 20. (More to come later.)
- May 21** - "Let's go South on the Parkway." Meet at 10:00 A.M. at Smartview Picnic Area. Flame Azaleas will be in bloom. Probable stop at a winery. Bring a bag lunch. You may want to consider having your evening meal on the Parkway also.
- June 4** - Field trip to Booker T. Washington National Monument. Meet there at 2:00 P.M.
- June 10** - Rhododendron Weekend. Meet at the Peaks of Otter Visitor Center at 10:00 A.M. Bring a bag lunch.
- June 24** - Blacksburg field trip. Details to follow. May be moved to June 25.
- June 26** - General Membership Meeting. 7:00 P.M., Center in the Square. Dr. Ed Williams will speak on orchids.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

DATE: February 27, 1989

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

PLACE: Hopkins Planetarium, 4th Floor Center in the Square

Program: The Nature Conservancy

Speaker: George Fenwick, Vice Pres. and State Director,
The Nature Conservancy.

Come and Bring a Friend

Letter From The President

by Bruce Boteler

Our new name, Virginia Native Plant Society, better reflects our interest and concern for all our native plants: wildflowers, trees, shrubs and other plants. However, our basic charter remains the same. That is, the conservation and preservation of our native plants.

The Center for Plant Conservation, a non-profit corporation based in Massachusetts, recently released the findings of a two year survey. Of the more than 25,000 plants that are native to the United States, an estimated 3000 are at risk of extinction. Of these, approximately 700 may disappear over the next decade. The executive director of the Center said that every part of our economy is vitally dependent upon the health of the environment. James T. Kilpatrick, syndicated columnist, considered the news release from the Center for Plant Conservation of sufficient importance to write a column about it under the title of "Vanishing Species."

How do we, as a chapter, develop a spirit of preservation and conservation among our membership and community? I believe we start by having an agenda of enjoyable programs and field trips that stimulate interest and awareness in our native plants. This, in turn, leads to education and to conservation and preservation. With that in mind, your officers and board members have put together what I believe will be an enjoyable and informative schedule of events for the first six months of this year. The schedule is included in this newsletter. I recommend that you do two things. First, mark your calendar so you can attend some of the many events we have scheduled, and second, plan to invite some friends to join you as you participate in the upcoming Blue Ridge Wildflower Society activities.

Of Note

by Virginia Klara Nathan

The W. Atlee Burpee Company (Warminster, Pa., 18974) has just announced that from now on, they will sell only nursery propagated woodland wildflowers, native ferns and bulbs. Burpee's, the country's largest mail-order supplier, is working with the Nature Conservancy to preserve native species. Add their name to your wildflower suppliers' list.

A 1987 federal law mandates that one quarter of one percent of federal landscaping money for new highway landscaping

must be devoted to planting wildflowers.

The USDA has published a bulletin called *A Small Scale Agriculture Alternative, "Wildflowers."* For a free copy write: Bud Kerr, USDA-CSRS, OSSA, Suite 342, Washington, D.C., 20251-2200.

The Center for Plant Conservation in the United States is located at 125 The Arborway, Jamaica Plain, Ma., 02130.

The Soil Conservation Service (SCS), an agency of the USDA, can provide important services to home gardeners. The SCS mission covers three major areas: soil and water conservation, natural resource surveys, and community resource protection and development on non-federal lands. Landowners who need help determining what kind of soil they have and those who plan to build ponds should contact their local SCS district office for advice. The number is listed in telephone directories in the government section under "United States Government, Dept. of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service."

Another way to get information about soil type is to contact your local Cooperative Extension Service. Soil testing is free. Your extension agent can provide you with a container and instructions for collecting soil samples. Soil analysis results will get back to you quickly if you submit them in fall or winter.

The American Horticultural Society Plant Conservation Roundtable, an *ad hoc* committee composed of individuals from various conservation organizations and government agencies throughout the greater Washington, D.C. area, has developed a set of sixteen plant conservation guidelines for scientists and teachers. The guidelines are intended to serve as self-policing rules-of-thumb for those individuals involved in the collection of native American plants for use as herbarium specimens, as research material for biochemical analysis or anatomical study, in teaching, or in experimental horticulture. This information would be useful to anyone involved in gathering and studying plants, and would also make excellent handouts for high school and college courses dealing with plant collection.

Separate plant conservation guidelines for amateur gardeners and naturalists and for nurserymen are available through the AHS. For a copy of the scientists' and teachers' guidelines, send \$1 to cover postage and handling to Associate Editor, American Horticultural Society, P. O. Box 0105, Mount Vernon, Va., 22121.

Peaks of Otter

The final field trip of 1988 was at the Peaks of Otter on November 5. The thirteen who attended met at the Lodge and enjoyed a delightful buffet breakfast and visiting with each other.

It was a real surprise and pleasant treat to have Nicky and Loren Staunton and Jenifer and Brad Bradford join us. Nicky, as you know, is the new president of the VNPS. Jenifer produced the last issue of the state newsletter. All four are members of the Prince William Chapter and Brad is president of the chapter.

The weather was not too agreeable, so rain prevented the group from a walk at the Peaks. That was a disappointment but it was nice to meet as a group and enjoy a lazy, rainy morning together. Who saw the two deer by the road at the parking lot of the Lodge as they were leaving?

Attending, besides the Stauntons and Bradfords, were Bruce and Judy Boteler, Sam and Dora Lee Ellington, Paul and Lucille Cowens, Bill Hunley and Bobby and Frieda Toler.

Sweet Briar College Walk

October 16, 1988, was a perfect autumn day for the walk at Sweet Briar College. Dr. and Mrs. Ernest Edwards were the leaders and there were thirty-two participants, including two guests from Australia.

Dr. Edwards showed the group various trees and their fruit while Mrs. Edwards pointed out the wildflowers. Of special interest were a very large bald cypress, *Taxodium distichum*, with many knees, and a larch, *Larix laricina*. Many other trees were in their full fall colors and were especially beautiful. These included red, white, black, spanish and scarlet oak, ash, maples, dogwood, persimmon, black gum and sourwood.

Morrow's honeysuckle was new to some of the group and bittersweet was full of berries.

The more familiar fall wildflowers were everywhere, including ironweed, blue lobelia, several asters and goldenrod. One wildflower that was different was a white Deptford Pink.

Sweet Briar is a beautiful campus and our thanks to Ernest and Mabel Edwards for sharing it with the BRWC.

Which Hickory Is That?

by Greg Lipscomb

The hickories are in the genus *Carya* and there are four commonly found species in our area. They are Mockernut, Shagbark, Pignut and Bitternut. The different species may hybridize, causing confusion. Here is a key to these species.

Mockernut, *Carya tomentosa*, has compound leaves with, commonly, 7 or 9, rarely 11, separate leaflets. The leaves are woolly-hairy below and give off a strong odor when crushed. The leaf petiole is hairy. The buds are large, blunt and hairy with loose outer scales which fall away in autumn. The bark on young trees is coarse and shallowly furrowed, becoming more deeply furrowed, but never shaggy, on older trees. The fruits are large and round with the husk about one-quarter of an inch thick. The Mockernut hickory is a stout and often irregular-looking tree. This tree is frequently found in dry soils, upland woods and near wood edges.

Shagbark, *C. ovata*, has compound leaves with commonly 5, rarely 7, separate leaflets. The leaves are coarsely toothed and similar in texture to *C. tomentosa*. The leaves may have a mild odor when crushed. The leaf petiole is usually somewhat hairy.

The buds are also similar to *C. tomentosa*, hairy with loose outer scales which fall away in autumn. The bark is quite distinctive. It is very shaggy and peels in long, loose, sometimes curled strips. The bark of a young tree may not be shaggy, or may be only slightly so, near the very top of the tree. The fruits are the largest of this group of hickories. They are large and round with husks no less than one-quarter of an inch thick and often thicker. The Shagbark hickory is moderately coarse and less stout-looking than *C. tomentosa*. This tree is often found in cove forests, rocky woodlands and on mountain tops.

Pignut, *C. glabra*, is a variable species and some botanists speculate there may be two different varieties. The leaves are compound with commonly 5 to 7 separate leaflets. The leaves are toothed and hairless with a mild odor when crushed. The leaf petiole is smooth or glabrous. The buds are small and hairless with the loose outer scales falling in autumn. The bark is shallowly furrowed on young trees, later becoming deeply furrowed with interlacing ridges. Often the bark becomes shaggy or flaky on older trees. The fruits are small and egg shaped with a thin outer husk one-eighth of an inch thick or less. The growth

habit produces a fine-textured tree with a dense, twiggy crown. This tree is often found in coves, dry woodlands and on rocky ridges.

Bitternut, *C. cordiformis*, is a variable tree according to location. The leaves are compound with commonly 9 or 11 separate leaflets. The leaves are toothed and occasionally hairy below. Sometimes the leaves are very narrow and almost willow-like in appearance. The buds are distinctive; they are yellow-hairy and somewhat flattened. The bark is close and shallowly furrowed. It may become corky and flaky, though never shaggy, on some river-bottom specimens. The fruits are small and egg shaped with very thin, often yellow, husks. This species has the thinnest husk of our previously discussed species. The growth habit is similar to *C. glabra*. This tree is often found along river bottoms, near streams, rocky ridges, and on mountain tops.

VNPS Board Members

In addition to the officers listed in our last newsletter, the following people are on our Chapter board.

Judy Boteler	(703) 774-4072
Frank Coffey	(804) 332-5757
Rich Crites	(703) 774-4518
Sam & Dora Lee Ellington	(703) 989-4742
Bob Eubank	(804) 239-9756
Bobby & Frieda Toler	(703) 366-0239
Bob Tuggle	(703) 647-1205

Forestry Conference

The second annual conference co-sponsored by the VPI Forestry Department and Jefferson National Forest, entitled "Public Involvement and Plan Implementation" was held November 5, 1988 at VPI, Blacksburg. It included exhibits, lectures, and workshops.

Our thanks to Dr. W. B. Gross and Dorothy Bliss of the Blue Ridge Chapter who set up a display of photographs of Virginia wildflowers, talked to those attending and answered any questions that were asked concerning Virginia flora.

Our thanks also to Bobby and Frieda Toler for the photographs used in the display. Their beautiful pictures always attract people to our booths.

Wildflower Seed Exchange

Now is a good time to sow wildflower seeds. Following our February meeting, we will have a large selection available. If you have any extra seeds and would like to share, please bring them. See you at the meeting.

Dora Lee Ellington
Propagation Chairman

NOTICE

If you have a colored round sticker on the front of your newsletter, your membership has expired and this will be your last newsletter. Please, we encourage you to renew your membership and help save Virginia's native plants.

BOOKS

By Bruce Boteler

Currently in stock at the Science Museum of Western Virginia Gift Shop:

The Wildflower Gardener's Guide by Henry Art. Cost is \$10.40.

Collecting and Preserving Plants for Science and Pleasure by Ruth B. MacFarlane. Cost is \$11.25.

Wildflowers of North America from Golden Books. Cost is \$10.40

Dried Flowers--How to Prepare Them. Cost is \$1.25.

Wildflowers by Roger Tory Peterson. Cost is \$13.55.

Weeds from Golden. Cost is \$4.15.

Wildflowers of North Carolina by Bell. Cost is \$15.60.

Wildflowers of Tidewater by Gupton. Cost is \$13.55.

Herbs, Ornamentals and Wildflower Seeds are \$1.05 per package.

Wildflowers Seeds (4 ounce canister) is \$5.75.

Flower Presses are \$14.65 for large, \$11.00 for medium, and \$7.35 for small ones.

Lynchburg Area Members

by Dorothy Bliss

On November 2, an evening program entitled Autumn Fruits and Flowers was presented by Caroline Bates and Dorothy C. Bliss. The commentary was enhanced by a display of fall fruits and flowers and superb slides. Another evening meeting has been scheduled for March 15 at Randolph-Macon Woman's College. See below.

We are looking forward to an active spring program with numerous field trips not far from Lynchburg. In addition to those already scheduled for our area, let's include several others such as a repeat of our fall trip from James River to Otter Creek Lake. Our earlier trip indicated that this would be a rich area for spring flowers. A trip to Buffalo Creek and to the trail on Flat Top are two places where we could see *Mertensia virginica*, Virginia Bluebells, which has been selected as our Virginia Flower of the Year. Dates can be selected at our evening meeting.

As a special project why not check on the populations of Trout Lily in our area? Do we have both *Erythronium americanum* and *Erythronium umbilicatum*? Let's keep a tally of the occurrence and relative abundance of these species in our mountains (Arcadia, Buffalo Creek, etc.) See the article in this newsletter by Bob Tuggle.

Wed., March 15, 7:30 P.M. Evening program in Room 225, Martin Science Building, Randolph-Macon Woman's College. Program to be announced.

Sat., March 25. Arcadia field trip. See general listing for chapter events.

Sun., April 1. Buffalo Creek. Meet at 2:00 P.M. at Westvaco parking area on Route 24. Rich area for Trout Lily and Virginia Bluebells.

Sun., April 16, 2:00 P.M. Blackwater Creek. Sponsored by Friends of Lynchburg Streams & Valleys and Blue Ridge Wildflower Society. Meet at end of Thompson Drive. Wealth of spring flowers.

Sun., April 30, 2:00 P.M. Trillium Walk. Meet at Thunder Ridge parking area on Blue Ridge Parkway.

Please contact Dorothy C. Bliss (804-845-5665) for further details. Any new ideas?

RICHARD BRAATEN

On November 10, 1988, Richard Braaten of Roanoke, Virginia, passed away. He was a well-known photographer in the Roanoke area, with his work appearing in many local and national publications. He was a member of the Virginia Native Plant Society.

BRWS — VNPS

There has been an extensive explanation of the name change of the Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society to the Virginia Native Plant Society in both the state newsletter and the last BRC newsletter. Also, there is mention of it in the president's letter elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter.

At the October 24, 1988, General Membership Meeting, there was much discussion and the final vote was that this chapter will be the **Blue Ridge Wildflower Society—a Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society.**

This is reflected in the new heading for the newsletter and will be on all letterheads, envelopes, etc. in the future.

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The financial records of the BRC, VWPS for 1987 and 1988 have been examined and found to be in order. We had \$4,388.02 in our treasury on November 1, 1988. This marked both the beginning of a fiscal year and the change in Society and Chapter names.

Which Trout Lily Did You See?

by Bob Tuggle

From an article by Milo Pyne in the N.C.W.P.S. Inc Newsletter, Spring, 1988:

"In 1963, Dr. James Hardin of N.C. State University and Dr. Clifford Parks of U. N. C. -Chapel Hill, ...applied the name *Erythronium umbilicatum* to the earlier flowering trout lilies of the southeastern United States (*Brittonia*, Vol. 15, pp. 245-259, July, 1963). This species has an indentation at the apical tip of the ovary where the style is attached, and the developing fruit is positioned on the ground surface by the bending of the peduncle. This is in contrast to the rounded ovary tip and horizontally-held fruit of the more widespread *E. americanum*. The two species have slightly different petal shapes and different chromosome numbers."

A trout lily with a navel!! By looking at the unattached end of the ripening fruit or at the center of the flower where the style is attached we should be able to determine if *E. umbilicatum*, also called the Southern Trout Lily, is in our area. The *Atlas of Virginia Flora* recognizes this as a separate species and furthermore shows both species scattered throughout Virginia and both recorded in many counties.

The blooming period ranges from early March to mid-April. If each reader will check the Trout Lilies in your area and let me know (903 N. Daniels Creek Rd., Collinsville, 24078), I'll share the survey information in a later newsletter.

New Publications

Ferns and Fern Relatives of Virginia: A Checklist, based on the 2nd edition of the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora* by Harvill, et al. Compiled by Dorothy C. Bliss, Professor Emerita, Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg. The 8 pages are a convenient 3 1/2 x 7", fitting easily into a pocket. Both scientific and common names are shown, arranged alphabetically by family, genera, and species. Order through VNPS, P. O. Box 844, Annandale, Va., 22003. The price is \$1.25 including postage and tax. Orders of 12 brochures to one address are 65¢ each plus \$1.00 postage.

These will be available at our February General Membership Meeting.

Also available at the February meeting will be **Spring Wildflower Checklist of the Blue Ridge Mountains**. This, too, is one you will want to have before the spring flowering season begins. Cost is the same as that of the fern checklist.

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

A CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

This interim newsletter is to inform you of additional programs and field trips that have been added to our schedule since our January newsletter. Be sure to note that the April General Membership Meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 21 at Virginia Western Community College Business Service Building auditorium at 7:00 p.m. See the schedule for the program. Also note the date of May 13 for the Annual Plant Sale.

BRUCE BOTELER

- April 14 -** Program "Rare Native Plants of Virginia" by Dr. Duncan Porter at 7:30 p.m. at Virginia Museum of Natural History, 1001 Douglas Avenue (off Memorial Blvd.), Martinsville.
- April 15 -** Field trip - Smith River Basin - Martinsville Sponsored by Virginia Museum of Natural History - Martinsville. Meet at Museum's parking lot at 9:00 a.m. Leader - Bob Tuggle. Bring a picnic lunch.
- April 16 -** Field trip to Blackwater Creek. Sponsored jointly by Friends of Lynchburg Streams and Valleys and the BRWS. Meet at 1:00 p.m. at Kroger, Route 460E, to carpool to Lynchburg. Or, meet at the end of Thompson Drive, in Lynchburg at 2:00 p.m.
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- April 22 -** Field trip to Martinsville area. Meet at 9:15 a.m. at Tanglewood Mall or at 10:30 a.m. at Stanleytown Elementary School (just off Rt. 57W in Martinsville). Bring a bag lunch. Expect to see dwarf ginseng, dutchman's breeches, trilliums, bleeding hearts, and more.
- April 28-30 -** Science Museum of Western Virginia Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage.
- April 30 -** Field Trip - Trillium Walk. Meet at Thunder Ridge Parking Area. MP74.7 on Blue Ridge Parkway at 2:00 p.m.
- May 5-7 -** Overnight Field Trip. Croatan National Park, N.C. Visit three diverse habitats. Expect to see sundews, pitcher plants, fly traps, seashore plants and more. Meet at Carteret Technical College parking lot, Morehead, N.C. at 9:00 a.m. on May 6, Saturday. Maps and motel lists are included on newsletter. Information will also be available at April 21 meeting at Virginia Western Community College. Bob Tuggle will coordinate the trip. 703-647-1205.
- May 13 -** Annual plant sale at home of Paul James. From Roanoke take 220 South to Franklin County line - Beyond Greer Gun Shop turn right on 613 - Cross two bridges and look for signs. Rain date is May 20.
- May 14 -** Field Trip. "Afternoon Lady Slipper Walk on AT." Meet at Bear Willow Gap, MP90.9 on Blue Ridge Parkway at 2:00 p.m. Sponsored by Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club.
- May 20 -** Field Trip. Wildflower walk from James to Otter Creek Lake. Meet at Boonsboro Shopping Center at 1:30 p.m. or at James River Visitors Center at 2:15 p.m. Bring a picnic supper. Sponsored by NBATC. Leader - Dorothy Bliss 804-845-5665.
- May 21 -** "Let's go South on the Parkway." Meet at 10:00 a.m. at Smartview Picnic Area. Flame Azaleas will be in bloom. Probable stop at a winery. Bring a bag lunch. You may want to consider having your evening meal on the Parkway.
- June 3 -** State VNPS Board Meeting at 9:00 a.m. at Booker T. Washington National Monument.
- June 4 -** Field Trip - Booker T. Washington National Monument. Meet at 2:00 p.m. at Booker T. Washington.
- June 10 -** Rhododendron Weekend. Meet at the Peaks of Otter Visitor Center at 10:00 a.m. Bring a bag lunch.
- June 24 -** Blacksburg Field Trip. Details to follow. May be moved to June 25.
- June 26 -** General Membership Meeting. 7:00 p.m., Center in the Square. Dr. Ed Williams will speak on orchids.

Contact Bruce Boteler for map, food and lodging information for May 5-7 Field Trip.