



Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

A chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Fall 2021 VOL 42, No. 3

President's Pick



Butch Kelly

Pirate Bush

(Buckleya distichophylla)

See the article on page 6

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Lindsay Kaplan
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John Magee Zoom presentation kicks off Fall schedule of events

Welcome to fall, wildflower and native plant lovers! After a sweltering summer we can all look forward to some cooler conditions as well as the resumption of our regular meetings.

Because of the rise of the Delta variant, however, the Board has decided to delay indoor in-person meetings at least until November.

But that doesn't mean there aren't great events upcoming!

Our **regular meeting on September 27** will feature a Zoom presentation at 7 p.m. by the renowned landscape designer, **John Magee**. His topic: "Natives in the landscape" He will show us around a few of his award winning projects to help pass along ideas of what we can do in our backyards to help work with nature rather than against it. His company, Magee Designs, regularly uses native plants in the landscape and specializes in sustainable landscaping and eco-friendly designs for public and private buildings. He has served on the Board of Directors of VNPS

How to attend Zoom meetings

1. RSVP for the meeting or talk by emailing Rebecca Ross at wingsross@aol.com
2. On the day of or the day before the meeting, an email will be sent to you with the Zoom link.
3. Click the Zoom link that was sent to you about 5 minutes before the meeting
4. You will automatically be entered into the meeting after clicking the link

Immediately mute yourself

since 2014 and is a well-known host of "The Native Plant Podcast."

On October 16 at 10 a.m., Heather Butler will lead a walk to learn about native trees in Explore Park. Heather teaches General Biology I and II, Plant Science, Dendrology, and the Plant Life of Virginia courses at Virginia Western Community College and is Science Program Head. Those who want to participate

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Looking ahead: Save these dates!

Mark you calendars now!

There are a couple of special events coming up in Spring 2022 that you likely will want to plan to attend.

Quarry Gardens of Schuyler We have arranged a day trip with a picnic lunch and a tour of the gardens for May 5, 2022. It is a weekday, so we will have the place mostly to ourselves to enjoy the native gardens. Armand and Bernice Thieblot, the owners of the property, will be

our guides! You can find information about the site online and in the most recent issue of *Sempervirens* from VNPS.

On June 5 we will tour the Virginia Tech **Catawba Sustainability Center** with manager Adam Taylor. The site is a 377-acre farm and living demonstration site with continuing research on many topics, including buffers for pollinator habitat and native flowers, and agroforestry options with native fruit and nut trees and other food crops.

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 person in September, October, November, February, March, April and May unless Roanoke County Schools are closed for inclement weather. Because of COVID-19 precautions, we are meeting virtually until it's safe for in-person meetings again.

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*

**General inquiries,
newsletter submissions**
Info.blueridgewildflower@gmail.com

Membership inquiries
membership.brws@gmail.com

Officers

President
Jessica Fleming

Vice President
Marilyn Lerch

Secretary
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Committee chairs

Field Trips, Programs
Ellen Holtman
Rebecca Ross

Garden Coordinator
Linda Harrison

Historian
Betty Kelly

Membership
Jennifer McCarthy

Advocacy and Outreach
Lindsay Kaplan

Newsletter
Roger Holtman

The BRWS newsletter is published three times annually: spring, summer and fall. Photos and articles for publication are welcome (and encouraged). Please send them via email to the address above.

Thank you!
Roger Holtman, Editor

Recognizing and celebrating the connectedness of everything

“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.”

— John Muir

If there is one thing that we learned over the past year, it's that we all

President's message

share the same air.

When we hear on the news that there are fires raging on the West Coast, it is easy to say, “that’s terrible, but we are all the way over here on the East Coast, so it’s not our problem.” Here in the Blue Ridge Mountains, we have ample rain and biodiversity to prove it – fires in California can’t touch us! But when the sky became hazy with smoke here in the valley, it was a wakeup call.

What is happening on the opposite side of the continent is our problem. The smoke was a palpable example of our connectedness. Whether we’re breathing in a nanometer-sized virus from China, inhaling a speck of ash from California or ingesting micro-sized plastic from a bite of Pacific salmon, the world shrinks. What was once *their* health problem becomes *our* health problem. We can understand how the 5-centimeter flower we planted in our yard might affect a butterfly in Mexico. John Muir said it eloquently more than 150 years ago in the quote above. The clean air we breathe may seem limitless, but it is shared. It is finite. And, it is precious.

Now, you might ask, “what does sharing air have to do with flowers?” The answer? Everything. Your yard of native plants could be sustaining a butterfly population that overwinters in Mexico and bumblebees that pollinate the blueberries you just ate in your pancakes. It’s possible



Juniper assists Jessica, her mom

Southwest Virginia Natives Campaign and the Virginia Western Arboretum. We also plan to provide plants for Roanoke’s Center in the Square Education Garden.

This fall will be packed with opportunities to learn, as we have many fascinating talks. On September 27, John Magee will give a Zoom presentation about landscaping with natives. There will be a tree walk October 16 and a Zoom presentation with Jamie King, a Virginia Tech arborist, October 25. On November 15 we will learn about native bees on Southwest Virginia wildflowers.

We are hoping that that the November meeting can be held in person. The decisions will be made closer to the dates. Please note that we will require that all individuals attending indoor events or wishing to carpool for walks be vaccinated.

And lastly, remember to save your seeds! We plan to have a native plant seed swap this winter too. More details to come! In the meantime, keep enjoying the warm summer sun and take a big deep breath of that crisp fresh air as we waltz into autumn.

that the habitat you single-handedly restored this spring hosts endangered insects you don’t even know exist! Our choices matter. Any time we restore biodiversity, we “leave it better than we found it.” This affects generations to come and air quality across the globe.

With biodiversity restoration in mind, our chapter held a very successful plant sale this year. The most successful sale in 15 years, in fact! With that money, we have donated to the

— Jessica

Meet a member

Lindsay Kaplan

Hi, fellow native plant enthusiasts! I am a relatively new member of the Virginia Native Plant Society and the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society, and can't wait to meet you all in person one day (hopefully) soon.

I am a naturalist, scientist, educator, and huge outdoor enthusiast — not to mention crazy dog lover. I earned a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife Science as an undergraduate, and have spent my career working in wildlife management and environmental education. I have worked for a variety of organizations, mostly government agencies and non-profits, but I did spend a year as a science communicator at Walt Disney World!

I'm currently a wildlife technician with the federal government, where I work on a lot of invasive plant management and some interesting aquatic projects. I hope to return to school within the next few years to obtain my master's.

I met my husband, Jimmy, when we were both employed as naturalists at the same park. I am completely embarrassed to admit that I knew nothing about plants when I met him. I don't even think I could ID poison ivy but he slowly and patiently worked to teach me about all the interesting flora around me, and his obvious passion for plants inspired a love of them in me. These days, our house is surrounded by a vast collection of native plants, and I can name every single one of them -- in Latin! Oh, how things have changed.



Lindsay and friend

We, along with our dog, Marley, moved to Roanoke from Baltimore last November and became members of the BRWS soon after. Within a few weeks of joining, our current president, Jessica, sent out an e-mail seeking someone to fill an advocacy and community outreach chair position within the organization. I thought it might be a great fit. We set up a time to chat and the rest is history. I have loved getting to work on educational content for the society over the past few months, and am excited to continue teaching all about native plants and their importance!

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should meet at the Explore Park Visitor Center at . The spur to Explore Park is at Mile Post 115 off the Blue Ridge Parkway. *The parkway is closed between U.S. 220 and U.S. 221 and between Mile Post 115 and Vinton.*

Our October 25 meeting will be a Zoom presentation by Jamie King, University Arborist at Virginia Tech. He has served as the Urban Forest Manager and University Arborist at Virginia Tech since late 2019 and is developing the its first comprehensive urban forest management program.

At our November 15 meeting. Bob Whiton will present a talk titled "Meet the Neighbors: The Native Bees on Southwest Virginia Wildflowers." We hope this will be a face-to-face meeting but won't know until closer to the event. Bob is a retired chemist, beekeeper and Master Naturalist who became interested in all the insects foraging on flowers. This led to volunteer work at Pandapas Pond pollinator garden and on the Bumble Bee Watch project.

Welcome new members!

Betty Burke, Roanoke, VA
Dianna Campagna, Amissville, VA
Gael Chaney, Union Hall, VA
Harvey Cohen, Lewisburg, WV
Bob Crawford, Roanoke, VA
Linda Horwatt, Roanoke, VA
Kelly Koller, Goodview, VA
Sandy Lane, Vinton, VA
Patricia Melnikow, Clifton, VA
Margaret Stanton, Sweet Briar, VA
Kathleen Whittle, Chester, VA

Pirate Bush: Endangered and found only in our region

We are very lucky to have the rare and endangered Pirate Bush (*Buckleya distichophylla*) here in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Pirate Bush, a member of the sandalwood family (*Santalaceae*), is found

President's Pick

only in certain small regions of North Caro-

lina, Tennessee, and Virginia. It grows in groups and can be as tall as 15 feet at maturity. Leaves are opposite, pale green, thin appearing. Flowers are tiny and green. Pirate Bush is dioecious, meaning that both male and female plants are required for pollination in order to produce its small torpedo shaped fruits. The fruit is considered a "drupe," known for its similarity to stone fruits, like peaches or plums. In the fall, Pirate Bush turns yellow. A great place to find the plant here in Roanoke is on Poor Mountain. In fact, Poor Mountain has the largest concentration of Pirate Bush known in the world!

The name "Pirate Bush" owes to the fact that Pirate Bush parasitizes an array of other plants, particularly Eastern Hemlock, which it loves. As a hemiparasitic plant, Pirate



The leaves are opposite, pale green

Courtesy of John R. Gwaltney



The bloom

Courtesy of John R. Gwaltney

Bush attaches to other plants via root systems called haustoria. In doing so, it does not solely rely on photosynthesis, but also relies on nutrients from other species it parasitizes.

Pirate Bush is demure, but a heartie indeed! And shiver me timbers, mates, it is very picky about where it chooses to live. If you discover a Pirate Bush, consider



Southern Appalachian Botanical Society

The fruit

it bonafide booty! But if you steal one of the fruits with the hope of propagating your bounty, you will find yourself hanging the jib. Pirate Bush is a mystery – almost as mysterious as the briny deep itself!

(*Final paragraph written in celebration of September 19, "International Talk Like a Pirate Day."*)



Blue Ridge Wildflower Society
 Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs
 3640 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

<p>For Office use only Check No. _____ Date rec'd _____ Amount rec'd _____</p>
