



# Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

A chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Spring 2023

VOL 44, No. 1

## Plenty of activities in store this Spring

**Beginning this month, our meetings will begin at 6:45 p.m. to conduct club business and still allow plenty of time for presentations to begin at 7:00.**

**Membership meeting  
Monday, Feb. 20  
at RCGC  
6:45 p.m.**

It's our first meeting of the year! We will hear about "Buzzing Bees and Blooms" from Deana B. Marion and see her professional-level photographs of them. Since 2010, Deana Bea has specialized in photographing bees and blooms at "bee eye level". The images showcase the small natural world and celebrate the art of nature and, as she puts it, "the beauty and wonder God created in colorful bees and blooms, their interdependence and importance."

Notice we will have our business meeting at 6:45 before the speaker begins at 7:00.

**Membership meeting  
Monday, March 27, at RCGC  
6:45 p.m.**

Our March topic will be "Butterflies of Southwest Virginia" with Bruce Grimes from New River. Bruce has been a Master Naturalist since 2015 and has been studying and photographing insects since 2018. At his request, there will be no Zoom or recording of his presentation.



Mindful.org

**A forest bathing experience is on tap for members in June**

**Wildflower walk  
Tuesday, April 11,  
afternoon**

**Green Hill Park**

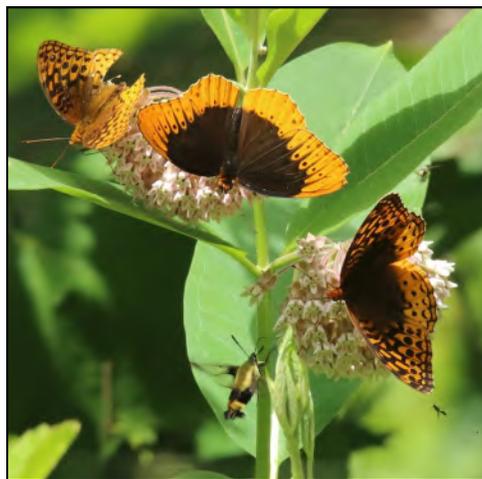
This is our annual trillium fest at Green Hill Park. Bring your wildflower book and your camera to take full advantage of the beautiful display along the trail. We'll see trillium of course, but also blue cohosh, black cohosh, Virginia bluebells, sweet Cicely, dwarf larkspur and even the flowers of the pawpaw tree. Leaders are Linda Harrison, Rebecca

Ross and Ellen Holtman (540-797-2350). Wear sturdy shoes for the trail and dress for the weather. Drive from the main entrance of the park along the river to the picnic pavilion at the end of the road. Begin the walk anytime between 1:00 and 3:00, and follow the flags to see 40-plus species!

**Dorothy Crandall Bliss  
Botanic Garden  
at Randolph College  
2500 Rivermont Ave., Lynchburg  
Saturday, April 15  
11:00 a.m.**

The garden contains more than 200 species of plants native to the southeastern U.S. and includes several endangered and rare plants as well as species of special botanical interest. The garden was established in 1994 through the efforts of Dr. Bliss, Professor of Biology *Emeritus*, and with volunteer help and plant contri-

*Continued next page*



Bruce Grimes

**A Diana butterfly (center) flanked by Great Spangled Fritillaries feeds on common milkweed as a Snowberry Clearwing moth joins them. Master Naturalist and photographer Bruce Grimes is our March meeting speaker.**

**Continued from Page 1**

butions made through the Virginia Native Plant Society and the BRWS. (See separate story about the garden on Page 8.) We will meet for a guided tour by member Sandra Elder at the gates on the Norfolk Avenue side of campus, across from Rivermont Pizza and Rivermont Bier-Haus. The garden is located between the Martin Science Building and Lipscomb Library.

**Wildflower walk  
Tuesday, April 18  
Wildwood Park  
3:30 p.m.**

This will be a lovely afternoon walk at Wildwood Park in Radford. Frank Taylor, who teaches biology at Radford High School, is a Master Teacher for Blue Ridge Public Television and an Elderhostel instructor. He will lead us among the tremendous variety of plants found there. The 50-acre wooded valley park offers a stream, woodland habitat, marshy areas, meadows and limestone cliffs. For more information about the park, including a plant list and a map, go to the park website at <http://wildwoodpark.atwebpages.com/>. Wear sturdy walking shoes, dress for the weather and bring snacks and water. Call Rebecca Ross with questions: 540-345-8353.

We will meet at the Park and Ride lot on VA 311 (Thompson Memorial) near Salem at 2:30 p.m. to carpool on 181 to Radford. If you prefer not to carpool, note that we will meet at the Riverway Trail parking lot off Park Road near the roundabout, NOT the lot on Main Street where we parked last time. Here is a link to a map. <https://maps.app.goo.gl/d16t8U92arofRbsRA>

**Membership meeting  
Monday, April 24, at RCGC  
6:45 p.m.**

Our April meeting will feature "Spring Wildflowers" presented by Dr. Bob Pohlad. Dr. Pohlad is a retired Professor of Biology and Horticulture at Ferrum College and now Professor Emeritus. Dr. Pohlad's teaching interests focused mainly on plants and fungi in the agriculture, horticulture, biology or environmental science programs. He is a strong proponent of experiential learning and the use of technology in teaching. Dr. Pohlad also is a senior scientist for the 36-year Water Quality Monitoring Program on Smith Mountain Lake that was co-founded and coordinated by his late wife, Dr. Carolyn Thomas.

**Ecology walk  
Appalachian Trail  
Brush Mountain  
in Catawba  
Saturday, April 29  
9:00 a.m.**

Some folks think walking the Appalachian Trail is just a walk beneath the trees. It is far from the truth. As one travels the trail many plant communities are traversed. If you look closely while walking near creeks, in mountain coves or up mountainsides you can see that each area differs visibly in trees, shrubs and other plant species.

This field trip starts on the top of Brush Mountain in Roanoke County and ends on Virginia 621 in Craig County. The distance is around four miles, beginning at 3,100 feet elevation, and ends at Craig Creek with an elevation of 1,547 feet. As you can see the trail is all downhill. This section of the trail has very good footing with lots of switchbacks and nice vistas. We will look at rock outcrops, soils, aspect (direction the slope faces) and see how the ecological communities change as we descend. There will be handouts about the plant life and communities we will observe.

We will meet at 9 a.m. on Rt. 311 at the Catawba Grocery on the left just past Rt. 624 (Newport Road). It's about eight miles past the roundabout at 419 / 311. Bring sturdy shoes, walking stick, clothing layers, rain gear, two quarts of water and a lunch. If you are a birder, bring binoculars. It is hard to estimate the time it will take since there is so much to observe. The trip will not be strenuous.

Contact Butch Kelly **by April 8** at (540) 384-7429 or [butch2410@msn.com](mailto:butch2410@msn.com) if you intend to participate. **The trip will be limited to 15 people.**

**Naturalist walk  
Saturday, May 6  
Poor Mountain  
9:00 a.m.**

Poor Mountain State Natural Area Preserve is a favorite hiking and naturalizing haunt, and we will visit it with two experienced naturalists. Butch Kelly, one of our long-time members, and Alina Herron, one of our newest, will lead us for about a mile and a half around the mountain to see plants and note some unique and fun characteristics of what we see along the way. The preserve boasts a population of a globally rare shrub and one of the rarest species on the east coast, piratebush, *Budleya distichophylla*. Read more about Poor Mountain and piratebush on the website of the Virginia

Department of Conservation and Resources, [www.dcr.virginia.gov](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov).

Meet at Cave Spring Baptist Church on Brambleton Avenue (Route 221) in the first parking lot you see driving from Roanoke. Wear sturdy walking shoes, bring water, snacks and dress for the weather. Call Butch with questions, 540-384-7429.

**Membership meeting  
Monday, May 22, at RCGC  
6:45 p.m.**

Donna Haley, president of our local Master Gardeners chapter, will present a program on Moon Gardens. We will learn about beautiful gardens that shine in the moonlight with lots of white or silvery flowers to attract moths and other nocturnal animals. Donna is a BRWS member and a popular presenter. She is an active Master Naturalist since 2012 and Master Gardener since 2006.

**Annual Native Plant Sale  
May 27 RCGC parking lot  
9:00 a.m.-noon**

This is our one and only fundraiser for the year -- and it's lots of fun. It's a busy morning, and we hope to see all your bright shining faces there. See the plant sale article on Page 7.

**Forest Bathing  
Saturday, June 3,  
Meadows of Dan  
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

We will meet for this experience with Julie Sczerbinski at her retreat Magic Tree Sanctuary. Julie is a certified leader for Forest Bathing, also called Forest Therapy, a wellness practice with many health benefits. She will lead us on a mindful stroll through the forest showing us how to slow down and awaken all our senses. See the article on Page 3 for more information, and visit the website for Magic Tree Sanctuary at <https://www.magictreesanctuary.com/>. There is a charge of \$25 per person.

Meet at Cave Spring Baptist Church on Brambleton Avenue (Route 221) in the first parking lot you see driving from Roanoke. We'll meet there at 9:00 to carpool up 221 to Floyd and on to Meadows of Dan. The drive will be less than 90 minutes. Our walk begins at 11:00 and we will stay for a picnic before coming home. Dress for the weather and the trail, and bring snacks, lunch and water. **This adventure is limited to 16 members**, so sign up **by May 10** with leader Ellen Holtman (540-797-2350) and pay her at the meeting place.



Utne Reader

Learn how to slow down, and connect with the natural world

## Forest bathing: A mindful stroll with your senses awakened

Discover a new way to be in nature. Forest bathing, also known as forest therapy, is rooted in the Japanese tradition of *shinrin-yoku* — taking in the forest atmosphere. This science-backed wellness practice naturally reduces stress, boosts the immune system and improves your mood among many other health benefits.

During a one- to two-hour mindful stroll in the forest, your certified forest therapy guide will show you how to slow down, awaken your senses and become fully present while connecting with the natural world. You'll leave this restorative immersion experience seeing nature with a new lens.

Walking distance is no more than a mile. Participants need not be ultra-fit but

should be able to walk comfortably on uneven trail terrain. The event will be held rain or shine.

Since 2016, I have been facilitating nature-based retreats for individuals and groups at my 53-acre retreat space, Magic Tree Sanctuary in Meadows of Dan, Virginia.

My approach draws from training in forest therapy, mindfulness and spiritual arts combined with my belief that nature is always the best teacher. I believe deeply in the power of sacred nature connection to support human and planetary health. I also co-founded The Forest Therapy School, training people around the world to guide meaningful forest bathing experiences.

-- Julie Sczerbinski

## President's message

Although much of the growing and gardening season is quiet, your BRWS board has been busy scheduling walks, lining up speakers for membership programs, publishing this informative newsletter, planning for our annual native plant sale, updating the “to-do” list for our garden bed at RCGC, and keeping up with membership lists and communications. I hope you will be able to join us for some or all of the fun activities planned for this spring and summer!



Recently, I had the opportunity to participate in the Virginia Native Plant Society board meeting as your chapter representative. They are also an active group!

In January, VNPS advocated for two bills related to invasive plant species that were introduced to the 2023 Virginia General Assembly.

The upcoming VNPS 2023 Workshop “A Field of Continued Growth: Recent Botanical Exploration and Discoveries in the Eastern US” will be offered via Zoom and is tentatively scheduled for March 7 and 14 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Last year, VNPS created a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee to assist with reaching and welcoming people of all backgrounds and abilities who have an interest in native plants. The group also will assist with spreading the word about VNPS memberships and events. Kathy Sink has agreed to serve as the representative for our chapter.

What else is new? The VNPS 2023 Wildflower of the Year – Hollow Joe-pye-weed, *Eutrochium fistulosum*! More information and new apparel to come.

For more information about VNPS activities and/or to get involved, please visit the website at [www.VNPS.org](http://www.VNPS.org).

— Jennifer

# At Spikenard Farms sanctuary the bees' needs come first

On Sept. 9 last fall, I and perhaps others in our group of 12 were introduced to a world-renowned treasure in our own backyard. People come from all over this country and the world to take workshops at The Spikenard Farm: Honey Bee Sanctuary (<https://spikenardfarm.org>). The place is imbued with a sense of peace and communion with an insect that many people might welcome only from a distance.

Imagine a nursery where all the children are nourished and loved. Our docent and bee whisperer, Alex Tuchman, even expressed empathy for the killer bees whose nests were robbed of honey so often they learned to become aggressive.

At Spikenard Farm, putting the bees' needs first means that only the honey leftover in the spring is harvested. (Bees eat the honey they produce to survive the winter.) Many commercial beekeepers feed their bees sugar water to increase production, resulting in the loss of the honey's nutrient value and the death of half of their hives annually. At the bee sanctuary, the bees tell the keepers what they need to be healthy. Of course, for that they need the right plants.

We were introduced to many plants that bees love, like Cosmos, Ironweed, and Short-Toothed Mountain Mint.

Workshops are available at Spikenard to make basket hives for home use.

-- Kaye Brandt



Photos by Kaye Brandt



**Alex Tuchman explains about a tree trunk hive (above) and shows a kiln (left) that is only used as a kiln when the bees aren't using it**

## Classes to become a Master Naturalist begin Feb. 21

The Virginia Master Naturalist Program is a statewide corps of volunteers providing education, outreach and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities. Interested Virginians become Master Naturalists through training and volunteer service.

If you are interested in becoming a Master Naturalist, you can now apply through the link <https://rvmasternaturalists.org/join/>

The class is to begin on Tuesday, Feb. 21, 6-9 PM, and will be held at The Unity of Roanoke, 3300 Green Ridge Road, in person. It continues into early June. In the event of inclement weather or another health pandemic we would hope to continue via Zoom. The cost is \$100 for enrollment and the class is limited to 30.

### Contact:

**Regina Prunty**  
VP and Training Chair  
Roanoke Valley  
Master Naturalists  
(540) 840-2856

## Please keep your contact information up-to-date!

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society relies on email to share information about upcoming events and to distribute our newsletter. Please update any changes to your contact information with the Virginia Native Plant Society at [vnps.org@gmail.com](mailto:vnps.org@gmail.com) and BRWS at [brws.membership@gmail.com](mailto:brws.membership@gmail.com)

You can also find Blue Ridge Wildflower Society information on the Virginia Native Plant Society website home page under Chapters and on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/blueridgewildflowersociety>



**Heather Butler brought a display of 10 varieties of acorns**

## October tree walk

About a dozen of us participated in a field trip at Explore Park on October 8 last year. The park encompasses 1,300 acres of woods on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Roanoke. (Note: We did not walk all 1,300 acres!)

Heather Butler, treasurer of our club, led the walk and provided lots of fascinating information about the native tree species along our path. Heather is an Assistant Professor of Biology at Virginia Western Community College, where she teaches General Biology, Dendrology, Plant Science and Plant Life of Virginia.

We learned that the original forest at Explore Park is thousands of years old, but it was cleared some 100 years ago so the oldest tree is about 85 years old. Heather brought acorns from ten varieties of oak trees. She also brought pawpaw fruit for us to taste. We learned that the American chestnut was obliterated by a blight introduced early in the 20th century, but efforts are ongoing to bring it back. There were Chinese chestnut trees there, and seeing the pods I realized there was a chestnut tree in my neighborhood. I gathered a fair number of its chestnuts that fell in the street and roasted them.

We were introduced to Beech blight aphid which smothers a select branch on a tree. It looks like white lint until you touch it and then it starts waving. We also saw the damage of the Emerald ash borer which tunnels through the wood.

**-- Kaye Brandt**



Photos by Kaye Brandt

**Heather discusses one of the native trees at Explore Park (above). She also brought pawpaw fruit to share (left).**



# Beautiful and tall, long-lasting attractions

“False Dragonhead”  
“Obedient Plant”

*Physostegia virginiana*

Obedient Plant, “anything but”, is often the comment that follows when talking about this tall, colorful, native

## President’s Pick

perennial. My mother even reminded me about this

plant’s ability to spread quickly when I mentioned I was adding it to my garden.

After a purchase from the BRWS annual native plant sale, I planted some in full and part sun (slightly damp) areas, in predominately clay soil and it seems to be very happy. It hasn’t required much attention other than occasional watering during drier periods of summer. I haven’t experienced rust or aphids, which are mentioned in some resources.

The past year, the stalks grew nearly as tall as me and the blooms seem to last longer than ever! I delighted in watching bee butts sticking out of



Jennifer McCarthy

**Bumblebees, hummingbirds, moths and butterflies appreciate the delicate blooms of the Obedient Plant**

blooms, wiggling around and emerging only to dive into the next bloom. Hummingbirds, moths and butterflies stopped by for a visit too. There was a constant buzz of activity well into November.

*Physostegia virginiana* is a species in the mint family, *Lamiaceae*. (It was once placed in the genus *Dracocephalum*, prompting the name False Dragonhead.) The name Obedient Plant came as a result of the individual blooms’ willingness to stay in place when manually moved or manipulated. If you’re hesitant to plant due to its spreading nature, know that the clumps and rhizomes pull up easily.

As the sweet lavender blooms neared the season end, I cut stalks and brought them inside for Thanksgiving, as a fun addition to table arrangements. I found this native plant well worth the small investment of time and money to get started in my garden and already look forward to seeing it back in bloom this summer.

Each newsletter highlights one of the planet-friendly organizations that share our goal of protecting healthy ecosystems. Any member who has a favorite group is encouraged to send in a blurb.

Recently, the Piedmont Arts Center in Martinsville received a Project Hope grant from the Harvest Foundation, which will allow the center to begin work on a new Pollinator Trail. The \$9,180 grant will help fund the creation of the native plant trail, which will begin at Piedmont Arts and incorporate other area attractions along Starling Avenue, including the Gravely-Lester Art Garden, First Baptist Church, the Virginia Museum of Natural History, the YMCA, and One Starling.

## Spotlight: Piedmont Arts Pollinator Trail

For the trail project, Piedmont Arts will convert land into a community-led and accessible pollinator garden, starting with an ADA-compliant pathway lined by native plants that promote pollination and support local wildlife. There will be a few raised flowerbeds for community ownership and education.

Piedmont Arts is an art museum and education center. The Harvest Foundation, also in Martinsville, was established in 2002

from the sale of the Memorial Hospital. Its goal is to create a vibrant Martinsville-Henry County for all citizens by investing in programs that stimulate economic development, promote education and improve the quality of healthcare.

If you would like to get involved with the native garden and trail project, please contact Lauren Ellis, Programs and Public Relations Coordinator at [LEL-LIS@piedmontarts.org](mailto:LEL-LIS@piedmontarts.org) or by phone at (276) 632-3221.

-- Jennifer McCarthy



Roger Holtman

**Bruce Boteler (center) and Paul James (to his left) talk about the early days of the BRWS, founded in 1984. Listening are (from left) Cindy Burks, Connie Crites, Ellen Scott and (far right) Butch Kelly. The fountain being dedicated is at the lower left.**

### BRWS fountain dedication

On Sunday, Sept. 25, 2022, a group of 15 gathered to dedicate a fountain and sculpture in memory of the founders and early members of the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society. The fountain, which our club donated in 2019, was installed in the wildflower garden of Virginia Western Community Arboretum. The dedication was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. "Sassy Sally," a bronze sculpture of a salamander on a

sassafras leaf by BRWS member and past president Lou Greiner, is part of the water feature. Two original members of the club, Bruce Boteler and Paul James, entertained the group with stories, often humorous, of the early days of the BRWS and some of the founding members who are no longer with us. Other speakers at the dedication included Butch and Betty Kelly and Ellen Holtman.

## Come and get 'em! Annual wildflower sale Saturday, May 27

The annual BRWS wildflower sale will be on Saturday, May 27, 9 a.m.-noon. In addition to being the club's only fundraiser of the year, it's a wonderful opportunity to purchase flowers, trees and shrubs for your growing native plant garden(s)!

Don't be late! There is always a line before the official opening time and plants sell out early!

Here are some of the plants that will be for sale.

### Wildflowers

Columbine  
Red bee balm  
Black-eyed Susan  
Purple coneflower (not native here)  
Red milkweed/Swamp milkweed  
Butterfly weed  
New York ironweed  
New England aster  
Joe pye weed  
Blazing star  
Blue false indigo  
Cardinal flower  
Blue lobelia  
Lance-leaved coreopsis  
Mistflower  
Anise-scented goldenrod  
Mountain mint  
Jack in the pulpit  
*Trillium grandiflorum* - White  
*Trillium luteum* - Yellow  
*Trillium cuneatum* - Red  
Jacob's Ladder  
*Geranium maculatum*  
Golden Seal  
False Solomon's Seal/  
Solomon's Plume  
Virginia waterleaf

### Trees and shrubs

Crabapple  
Mulberry  
River birch  
White dogwood  
Gray dogwood  
Silky dogwood bush  
Elderberry  
Buttonbush

### Find us online!



fb.com/blueridgewildflowersociety



@blueridgewildflower



Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

Follow along for chapter news, educational plant posts, botany news, virtual plant walks and more!

### Become a member!

Are you seeing our newsletter for the first time and would like to join the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society? Are you already a member and it's time to renew?

The quickest way to do either of those things is to go to [www.vnps.org](http://www.vnps.org), the Virginia Native Plant Society website. Find the Membership drop-down menu, select the appropriate choice (Join or Renew) and take it from there!

And while you're on the VNPS site, be sure to check out all the great resources that are available: information about native plants and invasives, past newsletters and much more.

## Meet a member



### Alina Herron

I've always loved being outside and learning about nature. I studied Biology at Randolph College and Environmental Science as a graduate student at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. I now help protect our waterways by doing stormwater inspections for Roanoke County.

*Editor's note: Alina is a member of the Field Trips and Programs Committee that plans and arranges all of the speakers and club activities. She also is co-leader of a naturalist walk May 6 at Poor Mountain State Natural Area Preserve. Details on Page 2.*

### Welcome new members!

Kelly Ayotte-Phelan -- Springfield  
Sarah Causey -- The Plains  
Jackson Crawford -- Roanoke  
Andrea Cubelo-McKay -- Hamilton  
Melissa Curry -- Roanoke  
Lisa Cusack -- Leesburg  
Erin E. Gore -- Harrisonburg  
Olivia Garrett -- Martinsville  
Julie Hatfield -- Harrisonburg  
Vashti Hill -- Nathalie  
Marc Holman -- Charlottesville  
Eileen Maxwell -- Washington  
Cynthia McGrail -- Vinton  
Sarah Moore -- Falls Church  
Genevieve Neice -- Natural Bridge Station  
Krysta O'Donald -- Virginia Beach  
Ruth Sherman -- Danville  
Douglas Simpson -- Yorktown  
Stacey Smith -- Suffolk  
Erica Terrill -- Salem  
James Wilson -- Bridgewater  
Sherri Wright -- Danville  
Patti Vari -- Fincastle

# An ongoing labor of love

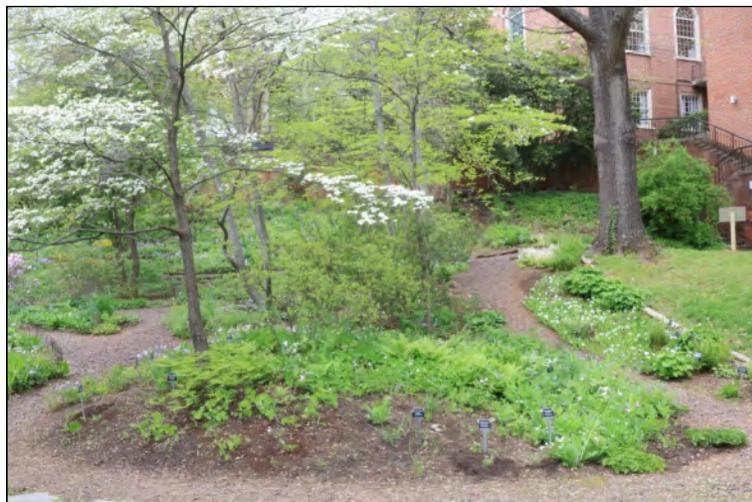
As a botanist and native plant enthusiast, Dorothy Crandall Bliss dreamed of creating a native plant garden on the campus of Randolph-Macon Women's College in Lynchburg. She taught botany at the school, now Randolph College, from 1949 to 1983. In the fall of 1994, Dorothy -- a founding member of BRWS -- started the botanic garden that bears her name.

I have been a volunteer in the Dorothy Bliss Botanic Garden since the spring of 1995. Dorothy was my friend and mentor. In 2008, when she was no longer able to care for the garden, I became the primary maintainer. It has been a challenge. I am neither a botanist nor a very good gardener but I am passionate about native plants and continuing Dorothy's dream.

The garden is much-changed since its beginning. Trees have grown larger, shading more of the garden. The Kentucky coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*) is huge. The first Franklin tree (*Franklinia alatamaha*) died but the second one planted in 2014 is doing well. Some of the original plants have not survived. I have added new plants. Some of them do well at first but don't come back. Others, like Sundrops (*Oenothera fruticosa*), have found conditions in the garden so favorable they would take over if I let them.

There have been surprises. A few plants, like Catesby's trillium (*Trillium catesbaei*), disappeared for years then suddenly reappeared. I have no record of Culver's root (*Veronicastrum virginicum*) ever being planted in the garden, but a couple of years ago one magically appeared.

Deer have been a problem. One of their favorites to munch on is Solomon's plume (*Mianthemum racemosum*). Fortunately,



Sandra Elder

The garden at Randolph College was started in 1994



Dorothy Bliss (left) and Sandra Elder at the garden in 1998



Sandra Elder

**Catesby's trillium**

since I discovered Deer Defeat, it has bloomed and produced seeds. The most troublesome invasive non-native plants are Gill-over-the-ground (*Glechoma hederacea*) and Air potato vine (*Dioscorea bulbifera*). At times, it seems more like a natural area than a garden because the plants meander and mingle. In March, Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) pops up everywhere, thanks to ants

that love the elaiosomes attached to their seeds. I have recorded 50 species of plants in bloom during the month of April. There is something blooming in the garden through October and the fall foliage is lovely. With four benches and meandering paths among the plants, the garden area is appreciated as a quiet place on campus.

The garden is located on Norfolk Avenue and is open to the public year round. You can park in the lot across from the entrance.

-- Sandra Elder

*Editor's note: Sandra is a charter member of the BRWS and was a board member and chairperson for the chapter's Registry Sites. She was in charge of the Fall Plant Sale in Lynchburg for 13 years. She and her husband live in the Forest area.*

## BRWS MEETINGS

Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs headquarters  
3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA

Meetings are held the fourth Monday of the month in September, October, November, February, March, April, and May, unless changed or canceled due to inclement weather and/or Roanoke County School closures. We plan to continue providing Zoom options to view programs, with links provided by email, when available.

Club business is presented in-person at membership meetings, from 6:45 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., prior to our program. Currently, members must be present (in-person attendance) to vote. We also will share club news and updates on our webpage at [www.vnps.org/chapters](http://www.vnps.org/chapters) and via email.

In-person presentations and programs begin at 7:00 p.m. Live-stream (Zoom) options and/or recordings are available when permitted by the presenter. We encourage you to attend in-person when you are able.

## Virginia Native Plant Society

Website: [www.vnps.org](http://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 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:

**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
- To provide outreach to public groups in the way of speakers and guided walks
- To donate money to local conservation efforts

## Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

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

**General inquiries,  
newsletter submissions**  
[info.blueridgewildflower@gmail.com](mailto:info.blueridgewildflower@gmail.com)

**Membership inquiries**  
[brws.membership@gmail.com](mailto:brws.membership@gmail.com)

### Officers

*President*  
Jennifer McCarthy

*Vice President*  
Marilyn Lerch

*Treasurer*  
Heather Butler

*Secretary*  
Kaye Brandt

*Past President*  
Jessica Fleming

### Committee chairs

*Field Trips, Programs*  
Ellen Holtman  
Rebecca Ross  
Alina Herron

*Garden Coordinator*  
Linda Harrison

*Membership*  
Rodelin Palmer

*Plant Sale*  
Michael Belcher

*Newsletter Editor*  
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!



**Blue Ridge Wildflower Society**  
Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs  
3460 Colonial Ave. SW,  
Roanoke, VA 24018

# Come help with the spring garden clean-up!

You are invited to help with a spring clean-up of the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society's wildflower garden at the Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs facility. We are going to gather on Saturday, April 8, at 10 a.m. to remove dead stems and leaves that were left to feed the birds and shelter overwintering insects.

We also will be digging out some non-native flag irises that were mistakenly planted several years ago. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to come and help. It should only take a couple of hours. Our rain date is Friday, April 14, at the same time.

Please contact Linda Harrison at (540) 343-2783 with questions or to sign up.



These photos, all taken in the BRWS garden at the RCGC center, are by Membership Chair Rodelin Palmer. You can watch her video tour of the garden at [https://youtu.be/6F\\_EqE\\_U6Z1o](https://youtu.be/6F_EqE_U6Z1o)

Can you ID the four flowers? Answers are at left.

(L-R) Turtlehead, Rudbeckia, Aster, Virgin's Bower