



Vol. 30 No. 2

June, 2009

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 25 Grassy Hill Natural Heritage Preserve Field Trip. We will be led by Bryan Wender, Mountain Region Steward of the VA DCR, Division of VA Natural Heritage. Bryan will take us to Grassy Hill Preserve, a special area protected by our state near Rocky Mt., VA. It features a nice trail through a Piedmont oak-hickory forest. In addition to several rare plants such as fame flower, and a species of coneflower. This trip should prove quite interesting. Bryan is giving up his evening to lead us. So please come one come all. We will meet at the Lowe's parking lot beside the Play It Again Store off U.S. 220. Walking may be a little weedy in spots so bring bug juice and long pants. We will depart Lowe's at **6:00 p.m.** Contact Butch Kelly (540) 384-7429.

July 11 Bent Mt., Poor Mt. and Blue Ridge Parkway Field Trip. Join co-leaders Rich Crites and Butch Kelly for a look at some high elevation flora. We should see lots of summer composites, bergamot, butterfly weed and fly poison to name just a few species that bloom in mid-summer. There should be lots of butterflies to add to the color. A camera should be a must. Bring a lunch. We will probably be botanizing into the early afternoon. Little walking and easy walking. We will meet at Cave Spring Middle School off U.S. 221 south of Rt. 419. We will meet at 9:00 a.m. Contact Butch Kelly (540) 384-7429.

August 8 Fenwick Mines Wetlands Field Trip. Join co-leaders Rich Crites and Butch Kelly for a visit to a **new area**. This area exhibits a diverse habitat. There are woods, meadows, and wetlands. We should see many wetland species as featured in Tony Pepin's talk in March. This area is great for fishing and birding so we should not be bored. Most of the walking will be on a boardwalk or flat areas. We will meet at the Orange Market on Thompson Memorial Ave, Rt. 419 at 9:00 a.m.. This market is off of I81 exit 141. If you are driving south turn left at the light at the end of the ramp onto Rt. 419 and drive about 3/4 miles. If you are driving north turn right at the light at the end of the ramp. Drive about 1 mile. The Orange Market is on the left. Contact Rich Crites (540) 774-4518.

August 22 Annual Picnic and Twenty Fifth Anniversary of the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society. We will celebrate our twenty fifth year as a society dedicated to the enjoyment and protection of native plants in our area. The picnic will be held from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. at Garst Mill Park. Bring a covered dish or a dessert. The club will provide barbeque and drinks. We will celebrate with a cake. Please bring albums or photos of club activities if you have any. The club historian will have an album of our activities over the years. Rich Crites may lead us around the area where some wildflowers have been planted. There is a picnic shelter and restrooms, so come rain or shine. Directions: At the intersection of Rt. 419 and Brambleton Ave. go north on Brambleton Ave. At the first traffic light (Exxon on left) turn left onto Garst Mill Rd. Drive a short distance until you see a silo on the left and turn left onto Halevan St. Go one mile and the park is on the left. Please **RSVP** to Butch Kelly (540) 384-7429 or Rich Crites (540) 774-4518 by August 15.

Letter From the President

Here we are coming up on June. Our best month for spring wildflowers is about over. This spring has truly been exciting with the tremendous number of flowers. I do not remember ever seeing a spring as beautiful as the one we are finishing up. The abundant rain and the nice temperatures have been ideal for the plants. The leaves are about as lush as I ever remember. We have enjoyed some good outings, good programs and a successful wildflower sale. Thanks to all who brought plants. Even though the weather was threatening, there was a good supply and selection of plants at the sale. THANKS TO ALL!! It wouldn't have been successful without your help and support.

I want you to remember June 6, as that is our annual Rhododendron Day field trip at the Peaks of Otter. If the rhodos are anything like our other plants, it should be magnificent. Come and join us!! Rudy Albert will be leading this walk. Also, note the schedule of events elsewhere in the newsletter. This is our 25th anniversary and we would like for all to join us at the picnic in August. After the board meeting, there will be time to share memories and fun. Note that the fall State VNPS meeting is in September. We really want you to be thinking of things you can donate for the silent auction. Also, there will be interesting lectures and fieldtrips available during the weekend.

I also want to thank those of you that have given talks and presentations to other organizations. Also, some of you have volunteered your expertise to various groups. And I would like to inform you that our chapter has donated a book, Remarkable Trees of Virginia to the Roanoke County Public Library. A special thanks to Michael Belcher for the great features in the Roanoke Times. These articles have brought a great amount of attention to wildflowers.

Rich

VNPS Annual Meeting Comes to the Roanoke Valley

The Blue Ridge and New River Chapters will host the VNPS Annual Meeting from September 25-27 at the Salem Civic Center. We need folks to help man the registration table and assist with the silent auction. We need folks to donate items for the auction. Items could include flower prints, plants, decorative pots, CD's pertaining to plants, garden hand tools, shirts with plants, gift certificates to nurseries, or other items that would represent our native plant mission. These items can be brought to a field trip, the annual picnic, or call one of the following members for your donation to be picked up— Rich Crites (540) 774-4518, Rosemary Ellis (540) 989-1683, Jim Bush (540) 929-4775 or Butch Kelly (540) 384-7429. Items can be brought to the Annual Meeting on Friday evening at the Salem Civic Center. Watch out for the July VNPS Newsletter for all the details.

BOOK REVIEW

A Natural History Guide to Great Smoky Mountains National Park

By Donald W. Linzey

244 pages ISBN-13:978-1-57233-612-4 \$24.95 (soft cover)

Reviewed by Carole Massart

The Great Smoky Mountain National Park is one America's most beautiful, most accessible and most popular national parks. The park is home to more than 100,000 species of plants and animals. The grandeur and sheer scale of the park have been captured in Don Linzey's book. Written from the perspective of a naturalist who has spent over 50 years conducting research in the park, this book provides a thorough overview of everything a visitor would need to know, without complex jargon.

Dr. Donald Linzey, wildlife biologist and ecologist and professor of biology at Wytheville Community College, has succeeded admirably in developing an especially comprehensive and fascinating account of the natural history of the park. He initially served as a seasonal park ranger-naturalist and as a graduate student pursuing his Ph.D. research on mammals during the 1960's. This book is of excellent educational value for scientists, officials, and especially the general public. He employs an informative and readable style of presentation throughout the book, which any reader will appreciate.

The park is a treasure-trove of biological diversity and this book is replete with more than 165 beautiful color photos, maps and charts. Each chapter begins with a quotation written by well-known and revered naturalists and conservationists as well as a "Do You Know" section with questions to pique the interest of the reader and focus on the important concepts in the chapter. The text spans time from the geologic origins of the park and pre-park history up to the present including what the future may hold. A chapter on the Natural History Research in the Park focuses on the naturalists, such as Arthur Stupka and Don Defoe and others. Linzey includes the use of modern technology to track and estimate the current populations of flora and fauna. Of particular interest is the report of the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) undertaken in 1998 through December 2007 in which 861 species new to science and 5,203 species new to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park have been found. Comprehensive lists of flora and fauna are described in the text and appendices.

This book is a great read as well as an excellent resource to tuck in your backpack for your next trip to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park!

BRWS News

The BRWS has been really busy over the last 3 months. Our February and March meetings each drew over 30 people. Our membership has increased since last fall. We have been featured in the Roanoke Times. Proceeds from the plant sale was \$1252. A digital slide projector and screen have been purchased. The society has agreed to sponsor the *Trilliacese* family in the forthcoming Flora of Virginia publication. Marcia Albert and Jim Bush have presented outreach programs to several garden clubs. This spring's field trips have been very successful with lots of new faces in attendance. We always learn something new at our programs and field trips. If you have been inactive come join us.

Hot Web Site For Wildflower Enthusiasts

The VA Natural Heritage has an inviting article for wildflower enthusiasts and travelers. The article is "20 botanical Hot Spots in VA Mts," Check it out at:
www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage.

Pollination Revisited

By Butch Kelly

Recently Rich Crites presented an informative program on pollination. There is a great follow up article in the June/July 2009 National Wildlife Federation magazine. The article is entitled "The Buzz on Native Pollinators". The article covers several native pollinators and discusses the imported honey bee and how it may not be as crucial as once thought. The story also includes several web sites. Below you can see them as well as the ones that Rich shared in his May presentation.

www.nwf.org/waxing This covers North American native bees.

www.pollinator.org This covers National Pollinator Week of June 22-28, 2009.

www.nwf.org and www.xerces.org Find out how to plant for pollinators.

www.nwf.org/gardenforwildlife Learn about protecting native pollinators.

www.vnps.org Click on the Prince William Chapter and read Marion Lobstein's article on spring wildflower pollination.

www.pollinator.org/guides.html This connects you to North American Pollinator.

www.nytimes.com/2009/04/30/30GARDEN.html This is an article that compares native and nonnative plants and pollination.

Attention board members! The board will meet on August 22 at Garst Mill Park at 11:00 a.m. before the picnic.

Attention members if you received this newsletter by mail you can save the society money by getting it by e-mail. Send your e-mail address to butch2410@msn.com.