

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

A CHAPTER OF THE
VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society; A chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

February 2015, Vol. 36, No. 1



Welcome New Members

Fred Cramer of Vinton

Gretchen Dorsey of Roanoke

Bill Modica of Salem

Pennie Anderson of Roanoke

Letter from the President

By Lou Greiner

Winter is still with us, but most of us are having thoughts of spring.

I look forward to seeing our spring wildflowers during our field trips to Arcadia, Lapsley's Run and Rock Castle Gorge.

However, there is lots to do besides field trips.

This year one of our club's focuses will be to certify our Rain/Monarch Garden. We have declared this The Year of The Monarch. The hope is to incorporate information about this butterfly in our choice of some speakers, education hand-outs and out-reach events.



I hope club members will volunteer to work in our garden, to get it ready for certification, and help with outreach events. We also will have more butterfly friendly plants at our annual plant sale and also hope to include some students or scouts in some events.

I just returned from an all-day gardening symposium in N.C. Though the focus was on all types of planting, most speakers mentioned native plants that would do well and asked gardeners to stay away from invasive plants. The message is spreading.

We look forward to new and old faces and new and revisited floral experiences to come!

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Check out our new website at vnps.org

The Blue Ridge Wildflower Society has a new website.

We made the change to help keep our costs in check and to better coordinate our activities with other chapters in the commonwealth.

The easiest way to visit the new site is to go to vnps.org and click on "Chapters" in the red menu bar at the top of the page. A full listing of all the chapters should appear. Because our name starts with a B, we are at the top of the list. Just click on Blue Ridge Wildflower Society and our information will appear. The full website address is: vnps.org/blueridgewildflowersociety/

Everything from the old web site is there – newsletters, field trips, recipes, and even our proposed bylaws.

The board wants to thank local member Linda Ardrey and state chapter member Sue Dingwell for volunteering to help keep our website updated. If you have anything that you would like to see posted, please contact Linda Ardrey at linda.ardrey@gmail.com or at (434) 996-3520 or contact Sue Dingwell at suedingwell@gmail.com

We also want to thank Mike Overacker for all of his help building and running our former website (www.brwfs.org) for the past several years.

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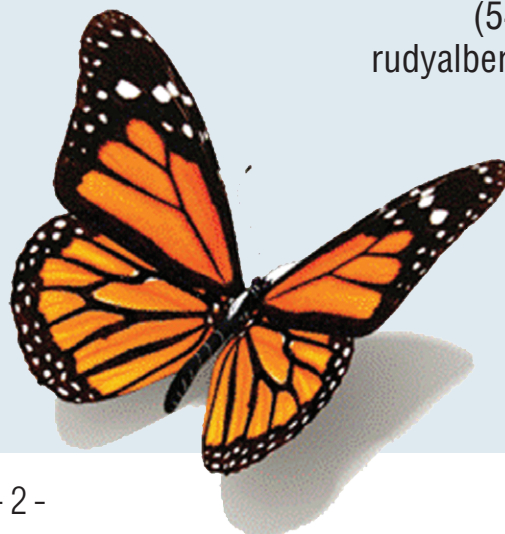
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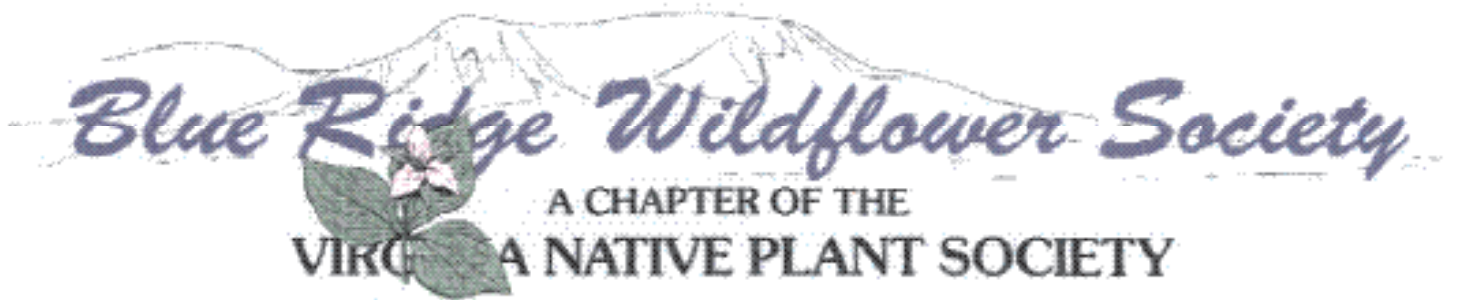
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Spring 2015

Calendar of Events

Vol. 36, No. 1

Monday, February 23

Time: 7 p.m.

Leaders: Lou Greiner

Contact: 774-3975

Meet: Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Ave.

Meeting: Planning, Leading and Participating in Field Trips

Ever wondered what it takes to put a field trip together? Ever thought, "Could I lead a field trip"? Join Butch Kelly for a close up look at planning, leading and participating in a field trip. What can go right, wrong and how to deal with unplanned events along the way. There will be some preview looks at some of the flowers soon to be seen in our woods. A bibliography of wildflower guides also will be available.

Saturday, March 14

Time: 10 a.m.

Leader: Lou Greiner

Contact: 774-3975

Meet: Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Ave.

Workday at the Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs

We will be mulching, weeding and cleaning up the rain-butterfly garden at the center. Any and all help we can get is welcome. Bring gloves, work clothes, pitch fork, shovel, rake and or hand clippers. Refreshments and drinks will be served.

Rain date 03/21/15.

Monday, March 23

Time: 7 p.m.

Leaders: Lou Greiner

Contact: 774-3975

Meet: Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Ave.

Meeting: The Delights and Challenges of Owning one of Virginia's Natural Area Preserves

Marcia Mabee is the owner of Naked Mountain in Nelson County, a property which in 2006 was placed under an open space easement held by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and designated by DCR as the 49th Natural Area Preserve in Virginia. There are currently 61 Natural Area Preserves across the state in a system managed by the Natural Heritage Division of DCR. Mabee will discuss how the Naked Mountain Natural Area Preserve came to be and the discoveries and obligations inherent within the preserve that continue to this day. Mabee serves as Conservation Committee Chairperson on the Virginia Native Plant Society Board of Directors. She writes a blog about living in the middle of a natural area preserve and is writing a memoir titled "Naked Mountain."

Our monthly meeting will be canceled if Roanoke County Schools close for inclement weather.

Saturday, March 28

Time: 9 a.m.-noon

Leader: Michael Belcher

Contact: 989-6384

Meet: Bojangles at Botetourt Commons off U.S. 220.

Car pool from there.

Saturday, April 4

Time: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Leader: Butch Kelly

Contact: 384-7429

Meet: Bojangles Restaurant at Botetourt Commons off U.S. 220 North of Daleville

Saturday, April 25

Time: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Leader: Butch Kelly

Contact: 384-7429 or
butch2410@msn.com

Meet: Wasena Park
10th St. & Winchester Ave.
Roanoke

Monday, April 27

Time: 7 p.m.

Leaders: Lou Greiner

Contact: 774-3975

Meet: Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Ave.

Field Trip: Spring Ephemerals at Arcadia

Arcadia is one of the richest areas for wildflowers. We have sometimes identified 100 plants or more in a single trip. Bring water and a snack or even a lunch if you want to picnic in the area afterward. Although the walking will be short and not difficult, it is on uneven ground.

Field Trip: Lapsley's Run

This trip proves to be one of our best spring wildflower outings. The area offers wonderful early spring flowers such as bluebells, trout lilies and Thomas Jefferson's twin leaf. We also will see a beautiful waterfall and maybe some hawks and golden eagles. The area provides some great views of the James River and Lapsley's Run. There will be very little walking. The plants can almost be reached outside the car door. Bring a lunch or folks can eat at the Three Li'L Pigs Barbecue at Botetourt Commons when we get back.

Earth Day: A chance to give back and a field walk

The Blue Ridge Wildflower Society would like to have a presence at Roanoke's Earth Day. We can only do this if members agree to man the booth to hand out brochures and answer questions about the BRWS.

This is a great opportunity to draw new members and spread the word about our great organization. There are between 600 - 800 people who come to the Earth Day celebration. If you are interested in helping out, contact Butch Kelly. We only are asking folks to volunteer for 1 hour each. However, if we do not have enough members volunteer by April 1, we will not participate.

Butch Kelly will lead a wildflower walk on that day at 11 a.m.

Meeting: Invasive Plants of Virginia's Mountains & Piedmont

Ruth Douglas of Charlottesville (VNPS Director at Large) will present information and descriptions of many of our invasive plants. She will talk about some of the most recent additions to our area. Methods of control and eradication and the effect of invasives upon our forests and neighborhoods will be discussed. We will also learn what is going on at the state level and the establishment of a Cooperative Weed Management Area in the counties around Shenandoah National Park.



For safety and environmental reasons, please leave all pets at home during field trips.

Saturday, May 2

Time: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Leader: Butch Kelly

Contact: 384-7429

Meet: Cave Spring Middle School off
U.S. 221/
Brambleton Ave.

Saturday, May 9

Time: 9 a.m. - noon.

Leader: Lou Greiner

Contact: 774-3975

Meet: Virginia Western
Community College
Arboretum

Monday, May 18

Time: 7 p.m.

Leaders: Lou Greiner

Contact: 774-3975

Meet: Roanoke Council of Garden
Clubs, 3640 Colonial Ave.

**Please note, this meeting is
a week earlier than normal
so as not to conflict with
Memorial Day events.**



Field Trip: Rock Castle Creek in Rock Castle Gorge

Rock Castle Gorge is in the Rocky Knob area 5 miles off the Blue Ridge Parkway off Va. 8. The walk is flat but uneven. The trail can be wet in places so wear sturdy shoes. We will be walking between 2-to-3 miles. There are lots of wildflowers. We should see fire pink as well as showy orchis. This trip offers great looks at a deciduous forest and old CCC work. We will eat at the Tuggles Restaurant right off the parkway or you can pack a lunch. Hopefully we can be back in Roanoke by 3 p.m. Parking is limited so we must carpool. The trip along the parkway offers great views and if time allows we may stop at a few places on the way back.

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society's Annual Plant Sale

The BRWS Plant Sale will be at the parking lot next to the Virginia Western Community College Arboretum greenhouse. We usually have more than 40 species of native plants for sale. Some of the more popular varieties include butterfly weed, New England Aster, bleeding heart, Virginia bluebell, spiderwort, cardinal flower and Jack-in-the-Pulpit. All plants will be in pots ready to take home and plant. There will be folks on hand to help advise where the plants will do best.

If members have plants to sell, please have them potted and labeled and show up by 8:30 a.m.

Members who can help transport the plants from the VA Hospital greenhouse or wish to help on the day of the sale, please contact Lou Greiner (774-3975). All help is welcome. Volunteer for an hour or help for the whole sale.

Meeting: Buffalo Mountain, a natural area gem

Ryan Klopf, a Mountain Region Steward with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, will talk about one of the most significant natural areas in Virginia -- Buffalo Mountain.

Buffalo Mountain boasts 13 rare plant occurrences, 3 rare animal occurrences, and 6 significant natural communities. The combination of high-elevation (3,971 feet), wind-exposed openings at the summit, and magnesium rich soils make it unlike any place else in the Commonwealth.

On the treeless summit, strong winds and boreal climate support subalpine vegetation including three-toothed cinquefoil and Rocky Mountain woodsia. The south face of the mountain contains grassy, prairie-like openings composed of wildflowers and native warm-season grasses more typical to the Midwest than to the Commonwealth of Virginia. Wet, magnesium-rich seeps along the base of the mountain support globally rare grasses and wildflowers such as bog bluegrass and large-leaved grass-of-Parnassus.

We will be planning a field trip to Buffalo Mountain in June or July to follow up with this presentation. More details to come later.

Please be sure to offer a little cash to the driver if you car pool.

Would you like to help with the Food Committee?

The Blue Ridge Wildflower Society has created a food committee to be made up of our club members for our monthly meetings.

Don't worry, it isn't a lot of work, it won't cost you anything, and it isn't a lifelong commitment. You don't even have to be able to bake or cook? Nor do you have to attend every meeting to serve on the committee. All that is required is a little bit of your time, the ability to drive and the free time to attend at least one of the spring meetings.

The club is seeking 2 or 3 volunteers to help provide snacks for our meetings in February, March,

April, and May. We will seek new volunteers to help with the fall meetings.

The club will provide the money for the snacks ahead of time. Sharon Hubbell has graciously volunteered to chair the food committee for the first half of the year.

The food committee members can split the responsibility of shopping among themselves and take turns so no one member has to attend every meeting. If you are interested in helping, please contact Sharon Hubbell at shubbell@cox.net or at (540) 774-8676.

Would you like to help with Earth Day at Wasena Park?

Help is needed at the Earth Day celebration on April 25 at Wasena Park in Roanoke.

The chapter is planning an outreach in the form of a booth from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

We can only do this if members agree to man the booth to hand out brochures and answer questions about the BRWS.

This a great opportunity to draw new members

and spread the word about our great organization.

There are between 600 - 800 people who come to the Earth Day celebration.

If you are interested in helping out contact Butch Kelly at 384-7429 or butch2410@msn.com by April 1. We only are asking folks to volunteer for 1 hour each. If we do not have enough members volunteer, we will not participate. WE REALLY NEED YOU!

Time to vote on new bylaws for the club

The club will vote on our new bylaws for the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society at our Feb. 23 meeting.

This should be a quick vote. We will not read the bylaws word for word before the vote. Instead we ask that everyone interested to please read the rules ahead of time and bring any questions or suggestions to the meeting. After hearing from members, we will conduct the vote.

Ellen Holtman, our vice president, led a committee to rewrite and update the bylaws for our chapter. Also on the committee were Stew Hubbell and Michael Belcher.

The club has posted a copy of the proposed bylaws on our new website. www.vnps.org. After the bylaws are adopted by the club, we plan to leave a copy on the website so everyone has access to them.

We also will send an electronic copy to all club members on our email list so members can read them ahead of time.

If you don't have access to email or the website and would like a hard copy to read, please contact Butch and Betty Kelly at 384-7429. They will mail a hard copy to any member who asks.

Sites To See Wildflowers on Your Own

By Butch Kelly

There are many sites in and near the Roanoke Valley to check out spring wildflowers.

Because our chapter does not have enough folks volunteering to lead walks, the number of organized walks may seem low to some members.

I thought some of our members might want to check out some of the hot spots on their own. Below is a list of places to visit.

Dry Run Branch is between Va. 785/ Blacksburg Road and Va. 624/Newport Road in Montgomery County. Drive up Va. 311 to Catawba, take the second left after the Homeplace Restaurant, and follow Va. 624/Newport Road until you come to a left turn onto Dry Run Branch Road. This gravel road offers spectacular views of hepatica. It is almost as if it snowed wildflowers. Be sure it is a sunny day. The diverse colors will surprise you. Best viewing is late March - early April. You can park your car once you have entered the forested area and just walk the old road as the flowers are on both sides of the road. When you get to the end of Dry Run, turn left and drive until you get back to Va. 311.

Green Hill Park is in Salem on Duiguid Road off U.S. 11/460. Drive as far as you can and park by the picnic pavilion. This offers the best viewing of large-flowered trillium. If you look hard you may find one with 4 petals. Also found here are blue bells, toothwort, twin leaf and paw paw. There are more plants along the river. Mid- to late-April is the best time to visit.

Cascades is a U.S.F.S. recreation area in Giles County. Drive to Pembroke and turn right off U.S. 460. This area offers one of the most spectacular waterfalls in Virginia. From mid to late April this is one of the most diverse wildflower sites anywhere in the state. The trail is a four-mile loop. Although not

steep, it does go through some large boulder areas. You will find 3 species of trilliums and many other species to lure you in. This is a must-do if you've never seen these falls. While 4 miles sounds like a lot, you will be going so slow that you won't struggle to get there. Take a lunch and eat at the falls. The walk back is along an old carriage road and it is down hill.

Roaring Run is in Botetourt County. Drive U.S. 220 north from Daleville. Once you see the turn to Eagle Rock, proceed on U.S. 220 another mile and look for Va. 615 on the left. Follow the signs to Roaring Run. This area is a U.S.F.S. recreation area and offers a beautiful 1-mile walk along and over the aptly named stream called Roaring Run. It culminates with a roaring stair-step waterfall. This a great birding area as well as a delightful wildflower spot. Look for hoary puccoon, columbine and many other species. The best time to visit is late April. Along Va. 615 be on the lookout for shale barrens. They offer some unique species.



Mill Mountain is a great wildflower garden with lots of trilliums, yellow lady slippers and others. Visit this area from late April - early May. Park at the Discovery Center and take the garden loop trail behind it. Take binoculars because this area offers great birding as well.

The Blue Ridge Parkway is a great place to view native plants. For a complete guide of what to see, when to see it and at what mile posts you will find the flowers, visit www.blueridgeparkway.org/v.php?pg=77

It is a long web address to type in, but it's well worth it. This web page will tell you the major flowers from mile post 0 at Rockfish Gap near Waynesboro, Va., all the way to the end at milepost 469 in Cherokee, North Carolina.

We want your ideas and your help!

By Butch Kelly

We have more than 100 members in our wildflower society, and we want to hear your ideas.

Where would you like to go on a field trip?

What subject would you like to learn about from a speaker at one of our monthly meetings?

Would you like to volunteer to lead (or help lead) a walk or give a presentation?

Do you have ideas on how

to improve our plant sale or our picnic?

We also need folks to give off-site programs to other



groups and school children. We are planning on getting together a series of digital slides that can be used by anyone.

We have many knowledgeable and talented folks in our group.

Please be active and share those ideas, wishes, and thoughts by calling, emailing or talking with any member of the board of officers.

Remember, it's your seeds of ideas that produce the rich fruits of our club.

Check the forecast and projected time for trips to plan accordingly with rain gear, snacks and meals.

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

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