

# Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

A CHAPTER OF THE  
VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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

May 2015, Vol. 36, No. 2

## Welcome New Members

**Nora Cox** from Lynchburg

**Cheryl Crowell**, from Roanoke, won a free membership at Earth Day

**Francene Grace** from Crozet

**Sandra Hoke** from Roanoke

**David and Patricia Williamson**  
from Roanoke

**Ann Wilson** from Roanoke



<b>President's Letter</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>New Members</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Calendar Events</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Photos from Smoky Mountains</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Chapter Officers</b> .....	<b>6</b>

## This has been a bountiful and fruitful spring

By Lou Greiner

As I write this, my thoughts go back to my recent trip to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

John and I and a few other club members were lucky enough to go on the VNPS sponsored trip lead by Sally Anderson and Butch and Betty Kelly.

This year was rich in spring surprises.

On rough and sometimes slippery paths we saw clusters of showy orchis, large colonies of bearded iris, three types of trillium in more abundance than I have seen in our state, and a beautiful silver bell tree with large white flowers. **See pages 4 and 5 for some photos of the trip.**

Although this area is known for its diversity in salamanders, we only saw a few after turning over rocks.

Birders were delighted to hear many different warblers. If Butch and Betty recover

Continued on Page 2

**Continued from Page1**

and lead this trip again, sign-up if you can!

## **Earth Day**

Our club participated in our first Earth Day Celebration.

It was a well-planned event. Although rain dampened turnout, our booth still managed to sell some native plants, sign up two new members and spread the word about the Virginia Native Plant Society, our group and protecting monarch butterflies.

## **Annual plant sale**

Our annual plant sale was a great success! In fact, it was the third most successful one financially. This was because of a wonderful turnout of more than 20 volunteers and the many members who donated plants. The largest donation of plants was from Gail MacFarland, who also included free skullcap plants for children.

All of the time and plant contributions made for a smooth sale and lots of new native plant gardeners. We had a check-in for volunteers this year, but I am sure I have missed some names. Here is a list of whom I do have:

Marcia and Rudy Albert, Linda Ardrey, Michael Belcher, Jim Bush, Rich and Connie Crites, John and Lou Greiner, Linda Harrison, Ellen Holtman, Stew and Sharon Hubbell, Judy Kniskern, Judy Langenhorst, Alex Newmark, Sharon Rohrback, Rebecca Ross, Brenda Satchel, David Williamson, Anne

Wilson, and others I might have missed!!

A BIG THANK-YOU TO ALL for our success!!

## **Wildflower station at Garden Club**

If anyone is interested in helping keep up the wildflower/monarch butterfly garden at the Garden Center, please contact our garden coordinator Linda Harrison at (540) 343-2783 or via email at [lindaharrison29@hotmail.com](mailto:lindaharrison29@hotmail.com). There is nothing scheduled right now but we would like to put together a list of potential helpers.

## **Field walks this summer**

Although we will not have scheduled speakers this summer, we do have a few field trips planned and hope to see you there.

Have you ever been driving along a road at 50 mph and wondered what are those flowers over there? Butch Kelly will lead a walk this June to teach us how to identify plants like that.

Later in June, he will lead a walk to the “Liatris Field” in Montgomery County.

In August, Ryan Klopff, who gave a wonderful presentation about Buffalo Mountain at the May meeting, has generously agreed to lead a walk there. Unlike many of our stop-and-look car field trips, this walk will involve some “real walking.” So be sure to wear good walking shoes or boots, bring a hiking stick, dress appropriately for the weather, and bring food and drink.



**Saturday, June 13**

**Time:** 9 a.m. - noon

**Leader:** Butch Kelly

**Contact:** 384-7429

**Meet:** Orange Market  
on Thompson Memorial Blvd,  
Salem, VA

**Field Trip: Catawba Sustainability Center**

What is that blaze of color along the road as you buzz by at 50 mph? We will walk along sleepy old Va. 311, which was once a busy highway in Catawba. We will look at the flowers that frequent our roadsides and learn where they came from and how they got here. After the walk we will visit the experimental chestnut grove at the Sustainability Center. We will walk about 1.5 miles by the time we are done.

**Saturday, June 27**

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

**Leader:** Butch Kelly

**Contact:** 384-7429

**Meet:** Orange Market

**Field Trip: Jefferson National Forest Liatris Field**

When this field is in full bloom it is spectacular. It was planted by the USFS for wildlife and pollinators. Look for an e-mail photo later in the summer before the trip. You won't want to miss this blaze of color and flurry of insects, including some of the 15 butterfly species found locally.

**Saturday, August 8**

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

**Leader:** Ryan Klopf

**Contact:** Michael Belcher  
989-6384

**Meet:** Cave Spring Middle  
School in the front

**Field Trip: Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve**

Ryan Klopf, the Mountain Region Steward of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, has generously offered to lead the group on a field trip to Buffalo Mountain. Buffalo Mountain is one of the most significant natural areas in Virginia. It boasts an amazing 13 rare plant occurrences, 3 rare animal occurrences, and 6 significant natural communities.

**Saturday, August 15**

**Time:** 2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Leader:** Lou Greiner

**Contact:** 774-3975

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

**Annual Picnic**

Mark your calendars now for the chapter picnic and plan on bringing your favorite side dish or dessert. We will be having the picnic with the Roanoke Valley Bird Club. The Bird Club will provide fried chicken and the BRWS will provide barbecue. Plates, utensils, and drinks will be provided. This is a great opportunity to meet some great birders and make new friends. Because of last year's weather, we are having this year's picnic at the Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs. If the weather doesn't cooperate, we can eat inside and watch some slides of flowers and birds.

# Monarchs are disappearing, but you can help with a wildflower garden

By Melissa Erickson, Galva (Illinois) News

Scott Hoffman Black grew up in Nebraska. He remembers playing outside as a child and seeing hundreds of monarch butterflies in the summer sky. On his last visit back with his two children, only a few of the easily identifiable orange, black and white butterflies could be seen flitting around.

In danger of disappearing, the monarch butterfly needs your help. Black, executive director of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, is part of a multinational effort to reverse this trend.

“There is hope. If we all work together, we can recover this butterfly,” he said.

Once common all over the Americas, monarchs — weighing less than a fifth of an ounce with a wingspan of about 4 inches — have experienced a population decline of over 80 percent, Black said.

These spectacular migrants travel an incredible 3,000 miles to spend the cold months of the year in the high mountains of Mexico and woodlands of California, where scientists count their numbers.

“Last winter there were 56.5 million monarchs, down from a billion monarchs in the mid-1990s. Monarchs matter and “should be saved because they are a beautiful, familiar backyard species that have been part of the childhood of every generation of Americans up until now,” Curry said. Monarchs are

found in every state but Alaska.

“The decline of this once very common backyard species is an indicator of how much harm we have done to the environment in the past few decades with pesticide use and sprawl,” said Tierra R. Curry, senior scientist at the Center for Biological Diversity. “We must do a better job of taking care of nature or we are at very real risk of losing even common species.”

A legal petition seeking to protect the monarch as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act was filed with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is now under consideration. The monarch is the victim of insecticides and agricultural herbicides that have decimated native-growing milkweed. Monarch larvae appear to feed exclusively on milkweeds, making it vital to the monarchs’ recovery.

While their habitat is dwindling, you can help by planting flowers. All butterflies use nectar for food. Also, plant milkweeds that are native to the region where you live and make sure that your garden plants have not been treated with insecticides.

“Garden plants that say they are resistant to aphids have been treated with pesticides and can harm monarchs. “Make your yard a mecca for the monarch by planting a buffet of flowers and milkweed,” Black said. “It doesn’t have to be all native plants, but native plants are the best.”

# Wildland Ecosystem Services: Did YOU Know?

- ✿ The annual economic value for global ecosystem services is estimated at \$33 trillion!
- ✿ Nearly 1/4 of prescriptions written in the U.S. are derived from wild species.
- ✿ Soil erosion leads to losses of services, such as nutrient storage valued at \$27 billion per year for the United States alone.



## POLLINATION

- ✿ For the U.S. alone, pollination of agricultural crops by wild pollinators has an estimated value of \$4.1 to \$6.7 billion per year.
- ✿ 80% of the world's crop species (fruits, vegetables, coffee, tea, cocoa, spices) are pollinated by wild and semi-wild pollinators.
- ✿ Honeybee crop pollination services are 60-100 times more valuable than the honey they produce.



## WETLANDS

### Water Purification, Commodity Production, Flood Control

- ✿ A Presidential science commission calculated that it would cost \$6 - \$8 billion to construct a water treatment plant for New York City to replace wildland water purification services.
- ✿ A minimum of \$5 million would be required to replace the water purification services of the Congaree Bottomland Hardwood Swamp in South Carolina.
- ✿ The marshes of Louisiana produce over \$200 million in annual commercial fish and shellfish harvest.

- ✿ The Army Corps of Engineers estimated \$17 million in flood damage if wetlands in the Charles River watershed in Massachusetts were destroyed.



## RECREATION

- ✿ 77 million Americans spent \$101 billion in 1996 on wildlife-associated recreation, including bird watching, wildflower viewing, and hiking.
- ✿ Wildlife-associated recreation supported over 1 million full and part time jobs nationwide in 1996.



## FORESTS

- ✿ A 1989 study found that in the Pacific Northwest, harvest and sale of mushrooms and other non-timber forest products was a \$128.5 million industry employing more than 10,000 people.
- ✿ National Forest roadless areas in the 48 contiguous states have a value of \$1 - \$1.5 billion per year in ecosystem services such as carbon storage, water purification and waste treatment.
- ✿ An average acre of sustainably managed tropical forest is worth approximately \$220 per year. This includes: \$69 from non timber forest products (mushrooms, fibers), \$17 from recreation, \$10 from watershed functions including flood control, and \$110 from timber.

The Ecological Society of America defines Ecosystem Services as the processes by which the environment produces goods and benefits often taken for granted, such as clean water, fertile soils, timber, habitat for wildlife and fisheries, and pollination.

*Native Plant Conservation Campaign*  
emilyr@plantsocieties.org \* (415) 531 4439





## Photos from the VNPS trip to the Smoky Mountains



**Painted Trillium**  
*Trillium undulatum*



**Lousewort / wood betony**  
*Pedicularis canadensis*





**Variegated Solomon's Seal**

*Polygonatum odoratum* var. *pluriflorum* 'Variegatum'



**Showy Orchis**

*Galearis spectabilis*



**Carolina Silverbell Tree**

*Halesia carolina*



**Tiger Swallowtails**

*Papilio glaucus*



## Blue Ridge Wildflower Society Officers and Board Members

**President.....Lou Greiner**  
(540) 774-3975  
louart.min@rev.net

**Vice President.....Ellen Holtman**  
(540) 389-1514  
eholtman@comcast.net

**Treasurer.....Stew Hubbell**  
(540) 774-8676  
stew22xtra@cox.net

**Secretary.....Judy Kniskern**  
(540) 890-2148  
jknis@cox.net

**Historian.....Betty Kelly**  
(540) 384-7429  
bettykelly918@gmail.com

**Garden coordinator.....Linda Harrison**  
(540) 343-2783  
lindaharrison29@hotmail.com

**Membership.....Butch Kelly**  
(540) 384-7429  
butch2410@msn.com

**Newsletter.....Michael Belcher**  
(540) 989-6384  
michael.belcher@roanoke.com

**Online Coordinator.....Linda Ardrey**  
(434) 996-3520  
linda.ardrey@gmail.com

**Plant sale coordinator.....Rudy Albert**  
(540) 774-2279  
rudyalbert38@aol.com

**Refreshment chair.....Sharon Hubbell**  
(540) 774-8676  
shubbell@cox.net

**Don't forget to visit our website at**  
**[vnps.org/blueridgewildflowersociety](http://vnps.org/blueridgewildflowersociety)**

### Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

P.O. Box 20385  
Roanoke, Va 24018

