

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

A CHAPTER OF THE
VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



Welcome New Members

Sharon Burnham of Roanoke, Va.

Eileen Decamp of Charlottesville, Va.

Virginia Savage of Salem, Va.

Letter to the club

By Michael Belcher

Summer is well underway, and although spring ephemerals have disappeared, the summer composites are hitting their glory.

If you haven't seen it before, a trip you can take yourself in early July is to see the liatris field in Jefferson National Forest. If you catch it at its peak, it's very impressive.

We only have a few club trips planned this summer, but they should be great ones. We hope to visit the shale barrens in Botetourt County in July, wetland orchids in Craig and Giles Counties in August and an overnight trip in September to Grayson County to see two new Virginia Natural Heritage Preserves — Grayson Glades and Big Spring Bog. You can read more about those trips on pages 2 and 3.

We again are having a combined annual picnic with the Roanoke Valley Bird Club in August at the Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs. If the weather is nice, we can eat outdoors. If it turns unbearably hot or a thunderstorm rolls in, we can have it indoors.

We also offer a big thank you to all who helped make the 2016 Blue Ridge Wildflower Plant Sale a huge success!

This was a very big year with the club bringing in \$3,801 in gross sales in three hours!

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July 1-10

Liatris Field in Jefferson National Forest

For those interested the Liatris Field in the Jefferson National Forest should be in peak bloom the first 10 days of July. Our chapter will not have an official field trip there. However, if you get the urge to go on a country ride and see some floral beauty here are the directions:

Take Va. 311 north about 8-9 miles to Va. 621 west. Follow Va. 621 for about 15 miles. The liatris (gay feather) is about 2-3 miles west of Caldwell Fields. There is a picnic table and restrooms at Caldwell Fields. The Liatris field is a planted site by the U.S. Forest Service. There are many other flowers there as well as lots of pollinating insects. The ride along Va. 621 is beautiful. The valley has mountains on both side of it. If you are curious and keep going, the road ends on U.S. 460.

Saturday, July 23

Time: 8 a.m. - noon.

Leader: Butch Kelly

Contact: 384-7429

butch2410@msn.com

Meet: Botetourt Commons
in Daleville by the Bojangles
Restaurant

Field Trip: Shale Barrens in Botetourt County

This trip will take us to a shale barren affectionately named by early BRWS members "Hopalong Cassidy Pass." Those of you old enough to remember the old western movies will easily see why this area is called that. Throughout the spring and summer this area has a wide variety of specially adapted plants that grow nowhere else, called endemic plants. This area like all shale barrens has a progression of blooms. We could see up to 8 plants that are rare and endemic to shale barrens. There will be a little walking but bring plenty of water as it is often quite sunny and hot. Because of possible heat we will be back in town before lunch.

Saturday, Aug. 6

Time: 8 a.m.- all day.

Leaders: Butch Kelly

Contact: 384-7429

or butch2410@msn.com

Meet: Orange Market at
Thompson Memorial Blvd and
Va. 311 in Salem off I-81's Exit 141.

Field Trip: Wetland Orchids in Craig and Giles Counties and West Virginia

This trip will take us over mountains and through a spectacular valley with fields of bison. We should see some rare orchids found and named after one of Virginia's orchid experts, Stan Bentley. The plant is named Bentley's coral root. We should see lots of composites along the way as well as other orchids. There will be some walking, but it is mostly along an old rails to trails trail. The trail is flat, but some slightly weedy places. Along the way we will visit a bog right along the road. Bring some boots to wear in the

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

bog. The bog contains some insectivorous plants. This should be a fun day. If interested you can join us by having lunch at the “Swinging Bridge” restaurant in Paint Bank, VA.

Saturday, August 13

Time: 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Leader: Lou Greiner

Contact: 774-3975

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

Sept. 9-11

Saturday, Sept. 17

Time: Overnight.

Leaders: Butch Kelly

Contact: 384-7429

butch2410@msn.com

Meet: Hampton Inn in Galax

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.

VNPS Annual Meeting

See the latest VNPS Sempervirens newsletter for details. This year's meeting is being hosted by our neighbors of the New River Valley Chapter. Come and enjoy good speakers and enjoyable field trips. Annual meetings are always interesting and it provides an opportunity to share botanical interests with folks from all over Virginia.

Field Trip: Bogs, Rare Plants and Mountain Tops

This will be an overnight trip to Grayson County. We will visit two new Virginia Natural Heritage Preserves — Grayson Glades and Big Spring Bog. We will also stop at Mount Rogers on the way home. This trip will give us an opportunity to see rare plants and exotic habitats from bogs to high mountain balds that feature flora found in New England and Canada.

See the details later in this newsletter.

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

“A Summer and Fall With Rare Species and Habitats”

This summer and fall we plan to seek out rare plants in areas our chapter has not visited before. Look up these new words “glades”, “fens”, “mountain bald” and “endemics”. One of the field trips will require an overnight stay.

We will see rare plants that are found no place else except in these small pieces of real estate. Many of the plants are so rare that they are not found in common wildflower books such as Newcomb's and Peterson's field guides.

Hopefully we will see shale barren buckwheat,

shale barren evening primrose, mountain nailwort, hoary mountain mint, grass pink, ten-angled pipewort, large-flowered grass of parnassus, queen of the prairie, Canada burnet plus others.

You can find a description of each in the Flora of Virginia.

We should be treated to some more familiar and favorite botanical gems such as blue lobelia, cardinal flower and fringed orchid. The three summer/fall trips should be exciting and rare to all participants.

Field trip to two southwest Va. Natural Heritage Areas and the grassy balds of Mt. Rogers

Our chapter will visit these areas on Saturday, Sept. 17. We have reserved some rooms that are available on a first come basis at the Hampton Inn in Galax for the night of Friday, Sept. 16.

Three rooms have king-size beds and four rooms have two queen-size beds. These rooms will be held until September 9. Each room has wifi, microwave, and refrigerator. A hot breakfast is included in the price. The price is \$114 +tax. The rooms are being held in the name of the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society. The number for the Hampton Inn is 276-238-4605.

There is a limit of 14 people for this field trip because of the fragile nature of the preserves.

Butch and Betty Kelly are the contacts for this

trip. Please contact one of the Kelly's if interested at butch2410@msn.com or 540-384-7429 before making your hotel reservations. Once the trip is full there will be a wait list formed.

Once the field trip is full, more information will be e-mailed to each participant.

There will be some walking on uneven ground, little climbing and some of the walking surface may be wet. Walking will be short in distance but the areas are wet so wear appropriate footwear. Be sure to bring all the usual gear for any kind of weather. Bring lunch materials for Saturday.

Briefly, we will meet a Natural Heritage representative on Saturday and visit the two sites and stop at Mt. Rogers on the way back to Roanoke.

Club elects new officers and board members this fall

The club will elect new officers this fall. But before then, we need two or three volunteers to be on the nominating committee.

We will read nominations and publicly ask for nominees from the floor at the club meeting in September. The club will vote and elect new officers at the October meeting, and the new officers will take over at the November meeting.

The open positions are president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer.

We also will have one or two non-elected posi-

tions available on the board. Lastly, we need a volunteer to put out the newsletter.

If you think you might be interested in any of these positions, now is the time to speak up. This will allow you to talk with the officers or other board members to learn exactly what the job involves. You may even want to sit in on a board meeting ahead of time.

If you are interested in serving on the nominating committee or running for office, please contact Betty Kelly at 384-7429.

We need your photographic slides to help go digital

The Blue Ridge Wildflower Society is interested in your old slides of wildflowers, club members, previous walks, and club activities.

If you are willing to let the club use the photographs in future presentations or on our website,

we will return the slides to you and give you a copy of them in digital format.

If interested in having your slides of club activities or wild flowers converted, please contact Michael Belcher at (540) 989-6384.

In memorium for Hugh Brown

Our chapter has lost a long-time member. Hugh Brown, whose smiling face was seen at nearly every meeting, died June 20.

Although he was not a field trip devotee, he was very interested in wildflowers and nature. A passionate conservationist, he also was a member of the Sierra Club, Roanoke Valley Bird Club, the Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Roanoke History Society, and the Big Lick Breakfast Club. He also was part of a team that cared for the birds of Woodpecker Ridge for many decades.

After retiring in 1991 from a career as an educator, he perhaps was best known for his work at the Mill Mountain Nature Center where he volunteered for almost 25 years.

Hugh is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Josephine Garrett Brown of Roanoke, and a son and a daughter.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that gifts be made in Hugh's honor to Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway at P.O. Box 20986, Roanoke, VA 24018.

He will be missed by all who knew him.



Hugh Eldridge Brown Jr., 85, of Roanoke.

Would you like to help with the food committee?

The Blue Ridge Wildflower Society food committee could use your help.

All that is required is a little bit of your time, the ability to drive and to attend at least one of the meetings.

The club is seeking 2 or 3 volunteers to help provide snacks for our meetings in September, October and November. We will seek new volunteers for the spring meetings. The club will reimburse

you.

Connie Crites has graciously volunteered to chair the food committee.

The food committee volunteers can split the responsibility of shopping among themselves and take turns so no one member has to attend every meeting.

If you are interested, please contact Connie Crites at (540) 774-4518 or at cardinalisr@cox.net.

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After paying the Veterans Affairs greenhouse and other expenses, we collected \$2,482 in net sales.

That money will help us bring in great speakers, take field trips, and support our mission of promoting a healthier environment through native plants.

Everyone who volunteered their time, vehicle use, sweat, knowledge, and plant donations should

be proud.

Outside of the club, we also thank Corrugated Container Corporation for their generous donation of 100 boxes, so our customers could carry home their purchases.

And, of course, we offer a round of applause to Kevin Henesy, Sandy Lane and all of the people at the Veterans Affairs nursery in Salem for their wonderful work growing so many of the plants that we sell.

Blue Ridge Wildflower Society Officers

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Blue Ridge Wildflower Society

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