

Virginia Scientist in the Spotlight

Marion B. Lobstein

Affiliation: I retired from Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) in 2010 after teaching there from 1974 and in 2012 became a Professor Emerita Northern Virginia Community College. From 1992-2006, I also taught as an Adjunct Professor for the UVA's field station Blandy Experimental Farm where I am continuing to teach workshops on plant identification and lead fieldtrips. I am a life member of Friends of the State Arboretum and the Virginia Native Plant Society. I maintain memberships in VAS, Nature Conservancy, the Botanical Society of Washington, and the Southern Appalachian Botanical Society, as well as the American Chestnut Society, National Parks Conservation Association, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and other organizations involved with conservation

Education: In 1968 I earned BS in Ed (Biology) from Western Carolina University (WCU), in 1972 a MAT (Master of Arts in Teaching) from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and in 1986 George Mason University a MS in Biology and later completed additional graduate level work.

Your teaching/classes? My teaching credit courses at NVCC ranged from-General Biology, Botany, Microbiology, Human Anatomy and Physiology, Ecology; and Regional Flora. At Blandy Experimental Farm I taught Field Botany for graduate and undergraduate credit and in retirement have taught non-credit workshops on Plant Identification, focusing on use of the Flora of Virginia and the Flora App. In addition, for a number of years I taught a variety of teacher education courses focusing on botany and wetland and Chesapeake Bay ecology for the UVA Northern Virginia Center. I have taught many non-credit courses relating to teacher training, plant identification and ecology for the Virginia Native Plant Society, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalist, Fairfax Audubon Society, and other groups. For twenty-six years I also led fieldtrips and taught plant

identification courses and for the Smithsonian Associates Program.

Your research? Past and current projects? Much of my research has related to spring wildflower life cycles including seed dispersal by ants. In the 1980's I compiled and published checklists of vascular plants in Northern Virginia area. Since the late 1990's, my primary project has been involved with the Foundation of the Flora of Virginia Project (FFVP). With Chris Ludwig and others I helped to establish this foundation and I served on the first Board of Directors and am currently the vice-president of the second Board of Directors. With the development of the Flora of Virginia I did taxonomic and other research as well as editing for the Flora of Virginia and more recently for the Flora App. Currently I am chairing a committee educational modules development for FFVP. I am also offering workshops on plant ID and write articles for VNPS Chapter newsletter on native plants and taxonomic change.

Notable work/publications? I am a co-author of the book *Finding Wildflowers in the Washington-Baltimore Area* as well as a video/DVD "Spring Wildflowers of the Mid-Atlantic Region" (Video and DVD). With my NVCC students, I developed a CD "Welcome to the Chesapeake Bay: Introduction to an Ecosystem." Before the Flora of Virginia was published, I compiled and published three checklist of local flora in the Northern Virginia area. I have co-authored two papers on spring wildflower life cycles published in the *Virginia Journal of Science and Castanea*. I was in research, and editing for development of *Flora of Virginia* 1st and 2nd printings as well as research and editing for development of Flora App. I also served on a Biological Sciences Curriculum Studies design team for development of a college-level textbook *Biological Perspectives*. I have also served as a review of a number of college-level general biology and botany textbooks. As a private consultant, I worked with PDR Consultants to develop displays,



Marion with Saguaro in Tucson, AZ

"Follow your interests and passions; search out those mentors who can inspire and nurture you; maintain broad interests and be open to opportunities."

-Marion B. Lobstein

Sciences Curriculum Studies design team for development of a college-level textbook *Biological Perspectives*. I have also served as a review of a number of college-level general biology and botany textbooks. As a private consultant, I worked with PDR Consultants to develop displays, text, and photographs for a U.S. Botanic Garden exhibit "How Plants Work: A Guide to Being Green." As Botany Chair for the Prince William Wildflower Society, I have been writing articles on local native plants and more recently taxonomic changes at the family, genus, and species levels reflecting in the Flora of Virginia.

Hobbies? Travel, watercolor painting history of plant use and taxonomy, natural history, geology, photography. I have always enjoyed art and the beauty of the natural world, part of my passion for biology and the natural world. In retirement, I am actively seeking out...contd. P.5



Marion with Blandy Field Botany students at Big Meadows, Shenandoah National Park (Lobstein second from left)

Virginia Scientist in the Spotlight *Contd from P 3.*

opportunities to express and develop techniques in watercolor painting.

Advise for students? Follow your interests and passions, make a difference in your world, search out those mentors who can inspire and nurture you; maintain broad interests and be open to opportunities; keep current with your subject and with technology but learn about and respect the rich history of your subject. Volunteer in your community. Seek out professional opportunities for part-time work or internships to gain experience in your academic and future career choices.

Advise for peers? VAS membership to work with colleagues at the state level, maintain your passion for your subject and pass that on to your students and communities. VAS provides opportunities for your students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Inspire and nurture your students and mentor other faculty; develop your interests outside of your subject area, be involved in professional and community activities; remain current and enthusiastic in your subject areas. Volunteer with JVAS (Virginia Junior Academy of Science) and VAST (Virginia Association of Science Teachers) to better understand and encourage the next generation of your students and those middle and high school teachers who are preparing them for higher education.

When did you join VAS? 1977

Your Role in VAS? I joined VAS in 1977 and attended my first Botany Section meeting. Since then, at most Annual Meetings I have presented a paper at the Annual Meetings. Also, I have been active in that section since that time serving as in various sections offices including serving as Councilor from 1992-2016. Also, I have served on the Virginia Flora Committee since 1996. At the Academy level I have served as Treasurer from 1998 to 2001 and as Vice-President for two terms in 2001-2003. In 2003, I was elected as a Fellow of VAS and have actively participated with that group. Since the 1980's, I have been actively involved with VJAS, serving for 6 years on the VJAS Committee and have

judged VJAS student presentation most years from the 1980's to present. In 2017, I had the great honor of having an endowed scholarship established in my name by an anonymous VAS member. At the 2018 VAS Annual Meeting, I had the pleasure to present the first Marion Lobstein scholarship to Graham Matulis, a rising senior in the Biology Department at George Mason University.

Something "cool" about you? My husband and I are avid RV'ers (motorhome enthusiasts). We have been traveling by RV since 1990. Since we retired in 2010, travel for 5 plus months a year with Inky, our black cat. We have traveled in almost all of the lower 48 states and most of southern Canada. We seek out natural and historical areas and enjoy the beauty of the natural world.

Professional Honors

1993: Recipient of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) Outstanding Faculty Award

1993: Recipient of the NVCC Educational Foundation Excellence in Teaching Award

1990: NVCC Alumni Association Teacher of the Year, Manassas Campus

Personal Background and Influences: I grew up in Stanley, NC, a small town near Charlotte, NC. My dad was the town pharmacist. I was actively involved in Girl Scouts, and developed a love of nature. Stanley is the site where Andre Michaux in 1789 discovered *Magnolia macrophylla*, the big leaf magnolia. This magnolia we called "elephant ears" grew in the woods in my family's neighborhood. In 1964, I graduated from Stanley High School and attended WCU (then Western Carolina College) that fall. When I took my first biology course with Dr. Jim Horton, I knew I was a biologist. I still consider Horton my most influential professor along with Dr. Ritchie Bell at UNC-Chapel Hill and Dr. Larry Rockwood at GMU.

As an undergraduate at WCU, I took my first regional flora class at WCU with Dr. Jim Horton using the *Guide to the Vascular Flora of the Carolinas* and later at UNC-CH had a Plant Taxonomy course with Dr. C. Ritchie Bell and

used the *Manual of the Vascular Flora of the Carolinas*. When I moved to Northern Virginia and began teaching at NVCC, one of my first questions was "is there a Flora of Virginia"? I soon learned there was none. When I joined VAS in 1977, I began to learn of efforts to develop a modern *Flora of Virginia* and it was a goal of the Botany section of VAS dating back to the 1920's. When I began teaching plant ID courses at NVCC and later at Blandly Experimental Farm, I used the *Manual of the Flora of the Carolinas* and the *Flora of West Virginia* as well as popular wildflower guides. When the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora* began available, I also used that information and in the 1980's also published checklists of plants documented for Northern Virginia. In the late 1990's, it seemed a good time to see if the Academy would support new efforts to begin development of a modern flora. After much hard work by Chris Ludwig, Alan Weakley, and Johnny Townsend and later editor Bland Crowder and many volunteers, the first modern *Flora of Virginia* was published, 250 years after the last edition of the *Flora Virginica* by John Clayton and Johann Gronovius. VAS and the Fellows became an active partner and supporter of the FFVP. A Flora App for mobile devices, both iOS and Android, became available in 2017. I continue to be active with FFVP and contribution to our goal of "Keeping the Science Current!"

Submitted By
Marion B. Lobstein



President's Message *Contd from P 1.*

several events each year. We look forward to meeting for our first time at Ferrum College on November 3 for the 2018 Fall Undergraduate Research Meeting. Hosted by Timothy Durham and his Ferrum colleagues, undergraduates supervised by faculty mentors will present research proposals and compete for grants to support their investigations during the coming year. Winners will present their results at the Academy's Annual Meeting at Old Dominion University (ODU) in May 2019. The Virginia Junior Academy of Science (VJAS) will also meet at ODU this coming May.

This past spring, the VAS Fellows decided to support the Fall Undergraduate Research Meeting with a generous \$4,000 gift for the second year in a row. That gift will allow the Academy to maintain the recently increased number and size of research grants it awards at the fall meeting. However, the Fellows have issued a challenge to the VAS with their gift: to find and sustain additional funding for the Fall Meeting.

The charge to our Council, officers, staff, and Fundraising Committee is clear. I invite all Academy members to help us meet this chal-

lenge, and to identify sources of support for additional Academy programs as well.

Submitted by **Woodward S. Bousquet**
Professor of Environmental Studies and
Biology, Shenandoah University
President, Virginia Academy of Science

