



New York Ironweed  
*Vernonia noveboracensis*

Deer resistant, non toxic to  
pets & people, and attracts  
pollinators such as long-  
tongued bees, and bee-flies.

Lucile Kossodo  
President  
757-565-0769

Cortney Will,  
Secretary

Cathy Flanagan  
Treasurer

Emilia Godwin  
Communications

Adrienne Frank  
Plant Sale Chair

Jennifer Nagle-  
Myers  
Stonehouse Garden

Libbey Oliver  
Nature Camp



John Clayton Chapter  
PO Box 1128  
Williamsburg, VA  
23187



# Claytonia

John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

July-August 2024

[vnps.org/johnclayton](http://vnps.org/johnclayton)

Please Join us! Thursday, September 19, 7pm for a lecture on  
Tidal Freshwater Marshes *Preceded by Election of Officers\**



Maeve Coker earned her Bachelors in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology from California University of Pennsylvania in 2014. She has spent several years working with nesting shorebirds for The Nature Conservancy on the Virginia Barrier Islands, and currently works as a Biological Technician for the US Fish and Wildlife Service at the Eastern Virginia Rivers National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

Maeve is a life Member of the Virginia Native Plant Society, Northern Neck Chapter, and is an avid volunteer on the Middle Peninsula and Northern Neck for a variety of citizen science surveys. Currently she serves on the Board of Directors for Friends of Dragon Run as their Citizen Science Chair. Maeve spends her free time birding and botanizing on the Middle Peninsula. She lives in Essex County with her husband Joey, and their rescue hounds Gypsy and Daisy.

With a sense of deep gratitude, we share with members that Lucile Kossodo, current President of the Board, is stepping down after 10 years of serving the John Clayton Chapter. We thank her and wish her much energy and new discoveries on her path forward. We will celebrate Lucile's contributions in a separate article, so if you have photos or anything you would like to share about your collaborations with her, or memories you made together working and having fun while protecting wild spaces and native plants – please send them to [jccvnps2@gmail.com](mailto:jccvnps2@gmail.com)

**Election Information:** We will be holding elections for the Board Officer positions of *President, Vice President, and Secretary* which are now open. If you feel that someone you know is experienced and committed to the mission of the Native Plant Society, we invite you to submit them for nomination, along with a short bio showing the skills and experience that make them a good candidate. Please send your nominations to Emilia Godwin at [jccvnps2@gmail.com](mailto:jccvnps2@gmail.com) by **August 31st**.

So far, we have one nomination for the position of President, Catherine (Cathy) Flanagan, currently serving as Treasurer and Membership Chair as well as Newsletter Editor. If elected for President, Cathy will retain the position of Treasurer for a period of up to one year. In early September, we will send a list of all nominees for the three positions that are open, along with their bios.

The election will be held at our Zoom meeting **September 19th at 6:45 pm\*** before we introduce the speaker. We hope to see many of you there. If unable to attend, you may vote by email. Instructions for voting by email will be included with the list of nominees you'll receive in early September. **Email** votes must be received by **September 18th** **Please see the list of Officer responsibilities on the last page of this newsletter.**

Because I broke my ankle on May 17, in two places, and needed surgery on May 24, in which two screws were placed on the left ankle bone, and a pin placed on the right ankle bone, I missed most of the summer. I have been unable to venture into my garden until now. I had a special boot, but could not, until recently, walk on uneven ground. I began a little walking at Physical Therapy, but still have a way to go.

As you know we've had a bad drought and rain only recently. The result is that the baby plants that were not well established, died. So, I must start all over. I have ordered several bare root plants for this fall. Bare root plants are an effective way of planting natives, and a lot less expensive. The ones I order from Prairie Moon come with a picture showing what to put underground and what to leave above the ground. Some bare root plants need to be planted completely underground, according to the image on the bag. They will need to be watered so that the roots do not dry out. Some will show some growth in the fall, and some will only emerge in the spring. The bare roots are larger than the roots of small plants because they are more mature.

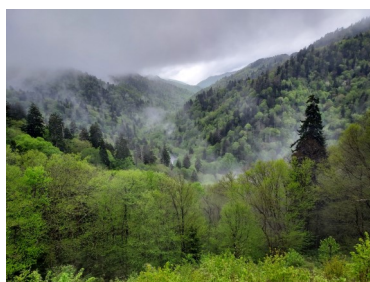
I read an article by Paul Brown in the Guardian August 2, 2024, entitled "Surrounding cities with trees may bring down urban heat" In it he argues that urban heat due to the roads, roof and other concrete and cemented areas bring up the urban heat by 2-3 degrees Celsius. This causes much discomfort and even danger to children and the elderly. While these trees may only cool the cities by .5 Celsius,

it already makes a difference. How does this work? P Brown states: "[scientists have discovered](#) that what grows on the land surrounding the city also makes a difference to the temperature in the center. The reason is that the heat island effect produces a low pressure in the city center. The stifling air rises and sucks cooler air from the surrounding countryside." A lawn or plants do not have that effect on the temperature. In addition, it is also suggested that buildings be painted white to reflect the heat. As we all know it takes many years to grow a tree.

I read an article in the Atlantic entitled "Shade will make or break American cities" written by Emma Maris on 8/2/2024, that answers that problem. Trees have been planted in a Cully Park which opened in 2018, but the trees are still so small that they are "throwing enough shade for maybe a chihuahua." To await the growth in the trees, the designers installed large metal canopies that will shade people or protect people from winter drizzle. These were installed over tables where people meet. The author states that as she walked into the shade, she could feel "her body go from a state of mild alarm to drowsy summer relaxation.

Until a million trees have grown, the metal canopies are the way to go. In places like Arizona where trees do not grow, shade canopies are especially important. Unfortunately, the planting of trees is popular, but the idea of shade structures is not often in the plans of many hot cities.

I hope that you are all keeping cool. As I write this, a heat dome is dominating the climate. Keep watering your native plants as even they can suffer with too much heat and no rain. My yard is full of butterflies on the Common Milkweeds and Butterfly weeds. I saw a Monarch butterfly in May, but not one since then. Perhaps, some of you have seen them. I was happy to have many Pipevine



Swallowtails appear in my yard along with the other swallowtail butterflies.

In May, I returned to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. I was delighted

to feel how good my replacement knee was working. I went on several walks even though the weather was rainy, it was lots of fun to hike. The first hike was walking on the trail that begins at



(1)

the Picnic Area on the way to the Balsam Mountain Road. It was a rainy and foggy day so the whole trail had a mysterious atmosphere, but it was lovely. (1) On the side, there were many flowers blooming - some did look a bit battered by the rain. There was a beautiful wood anemone

(*Anemone quinquefolia*) (2) Further in the trail I could see a lot of



(2)

white trilliums, and I managed to get a photo of a red trillium (*Trillium erectum*) (3) and the Barksdale Trillium (*Trillium sulcatum*) (4) with a red trillium behind it.



However, maybe the red one is how it sometimes appears. It was a careful walk as the ground was very soggy and the flowers were on the side of the sloping muddy trail. I hoped to see a Painted Trillium but that did not happen unfortunately.

After a few more miles we took the one-way Balsam Mountain Road. There I saw a tree that seemed to be floating over a big hole. (5). Spring was quite late this year so there were few flowers to see.

One I did photograph was the composite lead white flowers of the Umbrella-leaf plant (*Diphyllia cymosa*). It certainly has huge leaves. (6). Its range is the far southwest of Virginia, but it can grow here in Williamsburg. I have one in my front yard. Just like in the walk earlier, I only saw one other person on the road. At the end of our one-way drive, I walked for a moment on two trails because I noticed nice flowers on them. This time I was the only one walking in the gentle rain.

I admired the Canada Mayflower or False Lily-of-the-Valley (*Maianthemum canadense*) (7), Bracken Fern, (*Pteridium aquilinum*) (8), and Yellow Pimpernel (*Lysichia anemorum*) (9). There were other Loosestrife plants, but they were not yet in bloom.

The next day I walked the Deep Creek Falls. It was a lovely walk to the waterfall, and I met lots of people there as we walked uphill. I was so happy that with my replacement knee I was able to easily

walk uphill. Deep Creek Falls is beautiful and tall. (10). On the way I saw the beautiful Indian cucumber root flower (11). There were lots of Foamflowers, Partridge-berries, and Meadow-rue blooming along the trail. The interesting thing about the falls is that one can walk behind the falls to the other side. (12) I ate my picnic lunch on the other side of the

falls among the white hanging flowers of the blooming Highland dog-hobble (13). The following day we left the Park and headed home by way of Abingdon.



(3) Red Trillium



(4) Barksdale Trillium



(5) Tree in big hole?



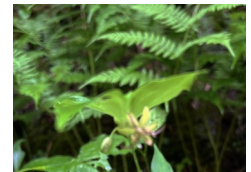
(6) Umbrella-leaf



(8) Bracken Fern



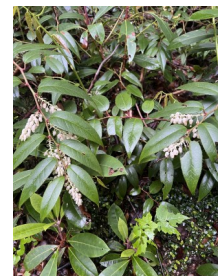
(7) Canada Mayflower



(11) Indian Cucumber-root (flower)



(9) Yellow Pimpernel



(13) Highland Dog-hobble



(12) From the other side of the falls





## Two Interesting Natives *by Helen Hamilton*



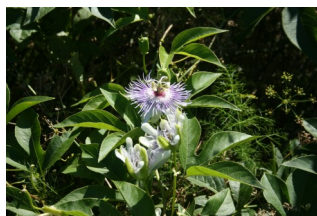
### Mountain Mint

is always covered with insects – bees, wasps, beetles, butterflies, flies – and they are too busy collecting nectar to bother with a hand holding a camera. The

flowers are small, and bloom for only a day, so visitors seeking nectar are assured of a new daily supply. Deer usually don't browse on these plants because the leaves have a minty odor and taste.

**Slender Mountain-mint** (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*) has thin leaves and is common in all but four southwestern counties of Virginia. The leaves of **Clustered Mountain-mint** (*P. muticum*) are dark green and wider; this species grows mostly in the Piedmont region.

Both plants have small tubular flowers huddled together at the end of the stems allowing short-tongued insects to feed easily. Mountain-mints are easy to grow in the home garden, in full sun or part shade.



### Purple Passionflower

(*Passiflora incarnata*) looks like a tropical flower, but is common in Virginia's Coastal Plain. This is a flower that can be pollinated only by large bees – three big

styles in the center of the ovary deposit their pollen only when a large insect crawls under them, seeking nectar at the ovary base.

The Variegated Fritillary butterfly lays its eggs on the leaves of Purple Passionflower – since three broods can be produced through the year, caterpillars are frequently seen chewing on leaves from summer through fall.

The plant is very easy to grow, climbs well on tree bark or supports and will spread as groundcover. The fruits are hollow, making a pop sound when crushed, giving the common name "Maypop." Native Americans used Purple Passionflower in folk medicine – powders of the plant are today sold as remedies for insomnia and anxiety.

## Blooming in My Garden Now *by Emilia Godwin*

Great Blue Lobelia *Lobelia siphilitica*



Eastern tiger swallowtail  
Obedient plant *Physotegia virginiana*



Partridge Pea *Chamaecrista fasciculata*



Bumblebee on Sneezeweed  
*Helenium autumnale*



Cardinal flower *Lobelia cardinalis*

adding new plants and I do not believe in instant gardens, so I try to acquire small plants. The downside is they need a little extra care until established but nourishing plants and getting to know them excites me as much as the beauty they produce. The plants in the photos are just a small selection of the summer-blooming native plants that choose to grow for me. All of the pictured ones have been with me for 3-4 years, whereas the Partridge Pea, *Chamaecrista*

*fasciculata*, was new to me and I grew it from seeds this year for the first time. I do hope that it seeds itself since it is an annual and I'd love to have it next year again. The Sneezeweed, *Helenium autumnale* is also a first-time bloomer in my garden.

Slowly expanding the native plant residents of my garden has been a source of so much learning and fun, and I'd certainly recommend it to anyone who loves to grow a garden or is curious about observing wildlife up-close and personal, whether through the lens of a camera, binoculars or a naked eye. Share your gardening with native plants with us at [jccvnps2@gmail.com](mailto:jccvnps2@gmail.com), and if interested, we can feature some of your gardens or favorite plants in future issues of the newsletter.

## Native Vs Introduced Wisteria



In spring, tall trees in our area are often covered with clumps of beautiful purple flowers, easily identified as wisteria. There are two species of wisteria, one native American Wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*) and two others that are highly invasive – Chinese (*W. sinensis*) and Japanese (*W. floribunda*) species.

These last two plants are very aggressive, climbing to the tops of sturdy trees, building thick stems and branches that will eventually smother the host tree. This flowering vine grows rapidly, spreading by underground stolons and seeds across disturbed forests and fencerows and is nearly impossible to control.

By contrast, the native Wisteria grows slowly and can be pruned to desirable shapes as it

twines around trellises and Superficially both flowers look the same,

but there are important differences. Native wisteria blooms later, after the leaves appear, while the Asian vines produce flowers before the leaves. The heavy sweet scent of wisteria flowers is produced by the invasive plants – the flowers of the native wisteria have no odor. As the flowers fade, they are replaced by bean-like pods that are smooth on the native wisteria, but are velvety on the Asian species.

Hopefully local nurseries know the difference between the native wisteria and the two that are introduced, but be careful when purchasing Wisteria!



## Sensitive Fern Vs Netted Chain Fern

Many local ferns are unmistakable, like the Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum pedatum*). In shaded woodland gardens, the delicate fronds grow in whorls on wiry black stems.

When young, two other ferns loosely resemble each other both Sensitive Fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*) and Netted Chain Fern (*Woodwardia areolata*) are edged with tiny teeth. Further, the Sensitive fern leaflets are opposite each other on the petiole and the latter are alternately arranged.

Their reproduction is very different. The leaves of the Sensitive fern die with first frost followed by a brown stalk with bead-like spores that persists over the winter. Netted Chain Fern reveals its common name as fertile fronds appear with narrow leaflets and chains of spores on the undersides. This plant is very easy to grow, climbs well on tree bark or supports, and will spread as ground-cover.



Alternate leaflets on Netted Chain Fern



Opposite leaflets on Sensitive Fern



Brown stalk with bead-like spores persists over winter



## New to John Clayton?

Chapter meetings are held via Zoom on the 3rd Thursday of every other month.

The meetings consist of a video presentation, followed by an interactive Q&A. The presenters are experts from a wide variety of relevant fields. The Zoom format allows for greater participation and convenience.

The presentations are recorded and the videos may be viewed at the link below:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/8054025>



If you have native plants that are outgrowing their space, we may be able to

help you dig them to donate to our school garden, or sell at our plant sale.

The John Clayton Chapter Annual Native Plant Sale is



a year round project that everyone can contribute to in some

way. Great team work has made this event very successful for us. It is how we fund Nature Camp scholarships, school gardens, local parks, and donations to VNPS initiatives such as the Natural Areas Preserves fund and the Flora of Virginia. Learn about the project and the helpful app.

<https://floraofvirginia.org/>



## Virginia Native Plant Society Annual Meeting! Sep 20-22

Does a weekend in the mountains sound like a refreshing break? Check out the activities planned for this year. To list just a few, there are field trips to a variety of Natural Area Preserves, a buffet dinner and entertainment at the Massanetta Springs Conference Center and the chance to meet people from chapters all across Virginia.

**Link:** <https://vnps.org/events/2024-annual-meeting-and-program/>

### Description of Officer Responsibilities:

#### The President

1. leads the Board meetings on first Tuesday of the month in which there is a chapter meeting
2. introduces the speaker at Chapter meetings
3. writes a "From the President" letter to be included in the newsletter to the membership
4. writes a quarterly report about the speakers, workshops, and other chapter events to the VNPS Board
5. attends the VNPS Board Meetings

#### The Vice President

1. invites speakers for the chapter meetings
2. informs the speakers of the information the chapter needs to have for the meeting: title of speech, bio, photograph, and the physical address where the check is to be sent
3. attends meeting with the president
4. takes the place of the president if he/she cannot attend a meeting

#### The Secretary

1. attends all board meetings
2. takes minutes at the Board meetings
3. is the guardian of the minutes of chapter
4. is the guardian of the votes taken by the Board or chapter

Don't forget to Vote!



Welcome New Members!

If a friend shared this newsletter with you, and you'd like to join as a member, go to <https://vnps.org/johnclayton/membership/> to find out more. Gift membership is also available. Help us spread the love for native plants and wild spaces. *Thank you.*

Pat Litten

Carolyn Stow

Kelly Satava

Williamsburg

Williamsburg

Yorktown

