

# The Apical Meristem

Volume II, Issue II

Winter/ Spring 2007

## Meeting Program

### Highlights

Meetings begin at 7:00pm and are held at the Va Tech Greenhouse classroom located on Washington Street

- Mar 13: Carol Wolfe presents "Woodland Spring"
- Apr 10: David Darnell presents: "Weed Laws and Wildflowers"
- May 19 Spring picnic at Bissette Park, Radford, VA

Check out the Calendar on Page 3 for more!

## Plant Walk

### Highlights

Call the contact person for additional information and meeting time and place

- Mar 24: Poverty Creek Skunk cabbage in flower
- Mar 31: Glen Alton Wildflowers of the woods
- April 14: Wildwood Park, Radford, VA
- April 28: Rock Castle Gorge on the Blue Ridge Parkway
- May 13: Cascades, Pembroke, VA

Check out the Calendar on Page 3 for more!

## 1st ANNUAL MEETING

On November 13 we held our first Annual Meeting. With a bit of naivety based on inexperience, we also had a wonderful slide show on the wildflowers of Western Australia. Cramming thirty pounds of potatoes in a twenty pound sack, we thank Warren Pierce, our presenter, for graciously sitting through our business meeting.

We discussed and made final amendments to our By-laws. This completed a major component of our chapter formation. However, upon submission to the state executive committee several errors were found—like, we scheduled our Annual Meeting for November, but the VNPS fiscal year ends the end of October...we need to have our annual meeting before the fiscal year is completed. Regardless the By-laws have been voted on by the membership, and next year we will again vote to make the By-laws "legal" to the state organization.

We elected officers and board of directors. However, the office of Vice President remains vacant. Please consider offering your time for this position. Most people are reluctant to nominate his or herself so if you know someone who would make a good officer please suggest his or her name to a board member—you can remain anonymous...

The last order of business was to vote on our annual budget. There was some discussion as to how expense items were determined. Essentially, all expenditures were estimates or guesses. We will keep careful records and next year there will be a spending history to guide our budgeting process.

It has been a couple of years in happening, but the New River Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society is an official organized chapter. Congratulations and please continue to support the development of this club.



Fire Pink

## Book Review

By Jan Spahr

This fall the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens (BBG) published *Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants* in its series of All-Region Guides. In her introductory essay, editor Janet Marinelli states, "This handbook is concerned with those nonnative plants that not only establish viable populations in but also alter the structure and/or functioning of those ecosystems"

For those of us who attempt to propagate native plants in our yards and gardens, the "Encyclopedia of Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants", which forms the heart of the book, is an invaluable resource. The encyclopedia is divided into sections of trees, shrubs, vines, herbaceous plants, and grasses. In addition to a thorough description of each plant, including range and growing conditions, a list of attributes is given. For example, for trees, the list includes height, growth pattern, bark, leaf form, fruit, and fall color. For shrubs, similar information plus flower color and time of bloom is included. Additional native alternatives are offered on BBG's website,

[www.bbg.org/nativealternatives](http://www.bbg.org/nativealternatives).

Finally, a reference list of invasive garden plants with scientific and common names and states where they are invasive, is included.

## President's Message

We have come a long way from our first organizational meeting in the spring of 2005 till now. Over the past year and a half when things got difficult I offered the reassurance that we were having meetings and leading outings. These are the fundamentals of a local native plant society. But, as with any group there are also the mundane tasks such as planning and record keeping that need to be done. And so far, we have accomplished the fundamental and the mundane. It is terrific that this past November we held our first Annual Meeting approving our by-laws, electing officers and a board of directors, and accepting a budget.

Our club is progressing well, but *WE ARE NOT YET SELF-SUSTAINING*. I don't refer to our financial circumstance (that will probably be a future topic). What I see as a concern is the maintenance of the mundane—sounds like fun doesn't it? With only a few individuals taking care of all the managerial duties two problems can develop: burn out and lack of new ideas. If limited number of people are tending the chapter's business, and one or two people resign, the lack of experience, knowledge and labor could lead to the end of the chapter. The second concern is

that with limited input, programs and field trips may become repetitive or non-existent.

Over forty members of the Virginia Native Plant Society have chosen the New River as their home chapter. There is interest in our chapter. Meetings and outings are well attended. But we need more input from the general membership. There are several forms of service from simply offering your ideas for activities to serving as a board member or officer—currently we have a vacancy at Vice President.

I hope that with time the management of our chapter becomes well established and easy. A key to a well functioning organization is good communications. I welcome any phone calls, emails or personal conversations. Currently we are setting up our chapter page on the VNPS web site in which chapter news will be posted and, I think...you can post comments. Please help make this organization self sustaining, so that as people rotate in and out of offices our chapter continues to function.

David H. Jones

## Ventures Out and About

Though fall is the end of the growing season our club led three outings. In September we went to Wildwood Park in Radford, VA to see the fall composites in flower. It was a nice warm day and David Darnell helped identify the flowering species, albeit as on most of our outings, it was a group effort as questions came up about herbaceous plants, trees, fungi and birds.

In October we visited Pandapas Pond to try and connect fall tree foliage color to species. We found oaks were often brown to reddish brown. The hickories and poplars represented the yellowish/gold colors. And the maples and black gums were red. The pines and hemlocks gave a final color category, green or evergreen. At the end of the walk David Jones suggested a review. Asking what trees were red, he held up a red maple leaf that was bright red. Asking for examples of yellow, he held up a red maple leaf that was pale yellow. Asking what turned brown, he

again held up a red maple leaf which was brown. Asking what was green, yet again he held up a red maple leaf. Smiling he concluded by saying some trees cannot be categorized by color and as an example held up a red maple leaf that was mottled red, yellow and green.

Our last outing was in November when there are few if any wildflowers to view. We were seeking and found the last wildflower of the season: the witch hazel. After discussing this flower, attention was directed to the trees and how to identify them using *Woody Plants in Winter* by Core and Ammons. David Jones picked a tree and worked his way through the plant key to come to the end and find that he had made a mistake. Scrambling to recover from this *faux pas* David pointed out that doing things wrong is a helpful learning experience, and that when demonstrating the use of an unfamiliar plant key it is useful to know the species you are trying to key out.

### Apical Meristem?

What is the name of our newsletter? *Apical meristem: a meristem (embryonic tissue) at the tip of a shoot or root that is responsible for increasing the plant's length.* This is the site of our chapter's growth! To submit any comments or contributions call or email David Jones: 552-3058 or [dhjones@together.net](mailto:dhjones@together.net).

## 2007 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Mar 13**

**General meeting: 7:00 pm**

*Carol Wolf presents "Woodland Spring" a slide show of her photography. She focuses on the spring-blooming, woodland wildflowers and the natural landscape in which they grow.*

**Mar 24**

**Field trip:**

*Poverty Creek—Skunk cabbage in flower*

Leader: David Jones, 552-3058

**Time: 9:30; Meeting location:** YMCA Thrift Store parking lot on North Main St, Blacksburg, VA

**Mar 31**

**Field trip:**

*Glen Alton (USFS recreation area near Big Stony Creek in Giles County)*

Leader: David Jones, 552-3058

**Time: 9:30; Meeting location:** YMCA Thrift Store parking lot on North Main St, Blacksburg, VA

✧ **Apr 10**

**General meeting: 7:00 pm**

*David Darnell presents "Weed Laws and Wildflowers." This will be a discussion of issues that may arise over attempts at naturalistic landscaping.*

✧ **Apr 14**

**Field trip:**

*Wildwood Park with Gary Cote and David Darnell*

Contact: David Jones, 552-3058

**Time: 9:30 in Blacksburg, 10:45 in Radford;**

**Meeting location:** YMCA Thrift Store parking lot on North Main St, Blacksburg, VA, or at the Wildwood Parking lot East Main St in Radford, VA

**April 21**

*Blacksburg Flower Festival*

Is there interest in having a New River VNPS table at this function? Contact David Jones, 552-3058 or dhjones@together.net

**April 23-29**

*57th Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage*

Great Smoky Mountain National Park, Gatlinburg, TN

<http://www.springwildflowerpilgrimage.org/>

**Apr 28**

**Field trip:**

*Rock Castle Gorge*

Leader: David Jones, 552-3058

**Time: 9:00; Meeting location:** Our Daily Bread parking lot on South Main St, Blacksburg, VA

✧ **May 13**

**Field trip:**

*Cascades with Carol Wolf*

Contact: David Jones, 552-3058

**Time: 9:30 ; Meeting location:** YMCA Thrift Store parking lot on North Main St, Blacksburg, VA

**May 19**

*Spring picnic at Bissette Park and Wildwood Park walk*

Contact: Lori Tolliver-Jones, 552-3058

**Time: 4:00-9:00**

**Meeting location:** Picnic shelter #1 Bissette Park, Radford, VA



*May 2006 Picnic—Wildwood Park*



### Check This Out!!

*Wildwood Park Species of the Week returns for 2007 on the webpage:*

<http://www.radfordpl.org/wildwood/index.html>

Photo From: [home.cfl.rr.com/usainfo/Flowers/WhitePineCone.jpg](http://home.cfl.rr.com/usainfo/Flowers/WhitePineCone.jpg)

NEW RIVER CHAPTER  
VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Post Office Box 10134  
Blacksburg, VA 24062



## *Wanderings:*

### All in the Family Along The Poverty Creek Trail

*By David Jones*

Locally, when on a summer's walk in a moist woods I often find wonderful large ferns. Bright green and standing waist high these ferns accommodate my handling and perusal without having to bend over nor stoop. I love to meet these ferns face to face so to speak. Typically, these plants are either the cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*) or the interrupted fern (*Osmunda claytoniana*).

If the fertile fronds are present the identities are self evident—the one with the cinnamon colored spores is the...well it's not the interrupted fern. If upon looking at the fronds you see a break midway up with several ranks of shriveled looking pinna and then a return to the typical broad bladed pinna, well this is the interrupted fern. These are two of the three North American species of the family Osmundaceae.

If you happen to spy these two ferns growing beside one of the small streams along the Poverty Creek Trail at Pandapas Pond, I suggest you backtrack a few steps or yards, and look over in a wide spot at the apparent small black locust seedlings. Walk up and take a close look at this regal plant and don't make assumptions. This is not black locust! It is not even a seed bearing plant: what we have is the royal fern, *Osmunda regalis*. Up close this fern looks strikingly like the blacks locust—what fun. And though I am always delighted to find the royal fern, here we have the added pleasure of seeing the complete North American "family" of the Osmundaceae.

*"Wanderings" are personal observations or descriptions of plants and/or the places they live. Please contribute.*