

## CALENDAR

Spring and Summer 2014

New River Chapter

Virginia Native Plant Society

**Tuesday, April 8. 7 PM: Chapter meeting.** Dr. Christine Small, Professor of Biology at Radford University talk about her research on sustainable harvesting of Wild Ginseng and Black Cohosh. The meeting will be at our usual venue, the Greenhouse Classroom, the small brick building just west of the West Campus Dr. roundabout on Washington St., Virginia Tech campus, Blacksburg. Although this is our last meeting of the 2013-2014 academic year, several interesting field trips have been planned for the spring and summer—see below. More information: Contact David Darnell, Chapter president at (540) 731-4341 (home), (540) 449-8038 (cell) or email: gary\_david@verizon.net.

**Saturday, April 12. 9 AM. Rock Castle Gorge.** Meet in the Lowe's parking lot on Rt. 114 in Christiansburg to carpool to this spectacular area near the Blue Ridge Parkway. We will be hiking the CCC trail at the lower end of the gorge. It has an abundance of spring ephemeral wild flowers, and the populations seem to have increased and spread down slope over the past few years. This trail is reasonably accessible, with several hundred feet of elevation gain to the likely turn around point. Hardier folks could go farther if they so choose. There will likely be several stream crossings; waterproof boots are highly recommended. Bring plenty of water and lunch, since we will probably be out at least five hours, with travel time.

Leader: Vicky Barden (540) 230-3314

**Saturday, April 19. 9 AM Falls Ridge (Town of Blacksburg Parks & Rec.)** This hike to a scenic and wildflower-rich Nature Conservancy Preserve near Blacksburg, is sponsored by the Town of Blacksburg Parks & Recreation Dept., and thus a small fee is charged to cover transportation costs. Sign up by going to [www.blacksburg.gov](http://www.blacksburg.gov) or calling (540) 961-1135. Meet at the Blacksburg Community Center on Patrick Henry Dr. and ride in a Town van to the site. Leader: David Darnell

**Sunday, April 13 2 PM. Wildwood Park, Radford.** Meet at the main entrance off Main St., adjacent to the bank and just east of the Radford Public Library. Wildwood Park hosts a great abundance and diversity of spring wildflowers, and its great network of mostly easy trails make them very accessible. Leaders: Gary Coté and David Darnell (540) 731-4341 (home) or (540) 449-8038 (David's cell).

**Saturday, May 17, 1 PM Claytor Lake State Park, wildflower walk.** Leader, **Mary Rhoades** (540/674-1294) (email: [mrhoades@vt.edu](mailto:mrhoades@vt.edu)). This walk is sponsored by the state park. May 17 is National Kids to Nature Day, so there may be a lot of people, although usually only about six folks show up for my flower walk. Length will be about 1 ½ miles total, and the trail is very easy. **Meet at the Gift Shop in the Water's Edge Meeting Facility building** at Claytor Lake State Park. The park is at Exit 101 off I-81. Hike will be from **1 pm to 2 pm**. The special flower blooming in mid-May at the park is the pink lady's slipper. **Entrance (parking) fee to get into the park is now \$5.00/car on weekends.**

**Saturday, June 14. 8:30 AM Buffalo Mountain (Floyd County).** Leader, **Mary Rhoades**. Meet in the parking lot of the **Food Lion at Gateway Shopping Plaza in Christiansburg at 8:30 am**. This shopping center is the last exit off the U.S. 460 Bypass (driving from Blacksburg) before you get on I-81. It takes about 1 ¼ hours to drive to Buffalo Mtn. from there. Parking at the trailhead is limited, so please count on carpooling. Four wheel drive vehicles would be best. Buffalo Mountain is a Natural Area Preserve, protected because of several rare and endangered plants and animals. Views from the top are spectacular. The trail from the parking area to the top is a little over a mile long, and somewhat steep in places, so hiking poles are suggested. **Be sure to bring water, and lunch or a snack. A hat is strongly suggested because the top is in full sun.**

**July ??- To be announced. Grassy Hill Preserve, Franklin Co.** Ryan Klopff, Mountain area steward for the Virginia Division of Natural Heritage, will lead us through this Natural Heritage preserve at a time to see some of the rare species it protects.

**NOTE: If you intend to go on any of the VNPS trips, please contact the leader at least a day or two in advance so they can plan accordingly. Thanks.**