

The



Leaflet

Garlic Mustard Pull at Thompson WMA article and photos by Karen Hendershot AUTUMN 2022

On April 3 Sally Anderson, Emily Southgate, Mary Keith Ruffner and I formed a small but enthusiastic workgroup to remove the alien invasive Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) along the Marjorie Arundel Trillium Trail at the Thompson Wildlife Management Area. The Piedmont Chapter undertakes this activity early each year when most spring ephemerals are still shielded by a cozy cover of earth and are less vulnerable to harm from our footsteps and won't be pulled up by mistake.



Sally Anderson, Emily Southgate, and Mary Keith Ruffner



This was the first “Native Plant Registry Site” of the Virginia Native Plant Society. The registry is a voluntary agreement between the VNPS and landowners, in this case the Department of Wildlife Resources, to protect significant plant communities. In 1990, the Trillium Slope was destined for logging, causing the virtually certain destruction of the most abundant display in Virginia of Large-flowered Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*), sparse examples of the already-endangered Nodding Trillium (*Trillium cernuum*), as well as many other lovely native plants. Advocacy by the VNPS led to the site's protection, with the Piedmont Chapter as its stewards. The trail is named in memory of Marjorie Arundel, a fierce advocate for native plant preservation and mother of Piedmont board member, Jocelyn Sladen. This very precious site is a reminder of the debt we owe to those who came before us for taking a stand to preserve the unique natural beauty we enjoy today.

The early part of the trail was clear of invasives because the chapter has been doing this for 18 years. Farther along, we found an area matted with Garlic Mustard rosettes. “Take care not to pull the wrong thing!” I remembered Sally's admonition from another year to watch out for the emerging native Kidneyleaf Buttercup (*Ranunculus abortivus*). Both it and the Mustard have kidney-shaped, emerging leaves with red stems, but Buttercup's leaves are smoother and not so crinkly as those of the Mustard.



Of course, all work and no play would make us pretty dull! We took time to gaze at the earliest ephemerals, such as the bright-faced Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) and Slender Toothwort (*Cardamine angustata*) just in bud. We were surrounded by Spice Bushes (*Lindera benzoin*) in early bloom. Pale tips of Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) were starting to poke through the

forest floor. These all presaged many more delights to come along the very rich trail.



The Virginia Native Plant Society (VNPS), founded as the Virginia Wildflower Society in 1982, is a non-profit organization of people who share an interest in Virginia's wild plants and habitats and a concern for their protection.

The Piedmont Chapter is a sub-group of VNPS in the northern point of Virginia east of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It includes Loudoun, Fauquier, Culpeper, Rappahannock, Warren, Clarke, and Frederick counties.

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The Leaflet can be seen online in color at www.vnps.org/piedmont

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A Moss Book New to Me by Emily Southgate

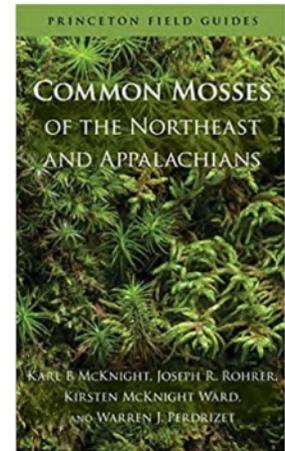
Common Mosses of the Northeast and Appalachians by K. B. McKnight, J. R. Rohrer, K. M. Ward and W. J. Perdrizet. Princeton Univ. Press, 2013.

I opened Common Mosses of the Northeast and Appalachians with rather low expectations. I had tried a number of different guides to identifying mosses and always become bogged down (no pun intended) in the minute details needed for the id. The approach in this book is quite different. First, one needs to read the introductory material, about how to collect mosses, the importance of having both wet and dry specimens, the ecology of mosses, etc. Then go back to the key. The first choice separates out three major categories determined from a whole plant, with clear illustrations and explanations: Acrocarp (stems simple or sparsely forked with forks often running parallel to each other), Pleurocarp (stems freely branching at a wide angle), and Peat Moss (upright with branches in clusters of three). The next two decisions are based on leaves: their basic shapes and whether they have a midrib. (This is not a vein, as mosses have no vascular system.) You need a hand lens and good light for this and other details.

With these three decisions made, you can either use the detailed key at the end of the book or just go directly to the illustrations. The illustrations are grouped based on your first two decisions, using color codes on the edges of the pages, which are visible with the book closed. Go to the appropriate section, and skim through those pages looking at the little pictograph that indicates whether or not the leaves have midribs.

Each species is illustrated (example at left) showing good photographs of moss "clumps," sometimes wet and dry plants for comparisons, individual leaves, and drawings of the sporophytes (the little brown stalks that hold the spore-producing structure on the top). The text also indicates the habitat, growing on the ground, on tree trunks, on rock, etc. and general descriptions: whether they often have sporophytes, similar species, and other details.

I was able to be pretty sure of three mosses I collected from near my house, and am looking forward to figuring out more. I highly recommend the book for those who can't resist trying to figure out "what is that moss."



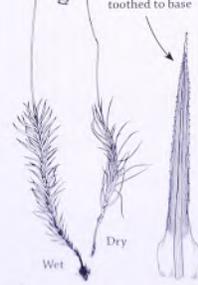
Capsules with and without lid, and covered by hairy hood

Drier plants with in-drawn leaves



Boxlike capsule without disk at base

Leaf edge flat and toothed to base





Cattle Pasture to Wildlife Preserve text and photos by Mitzi Fox

What a long strange trip it's been. The Jones Nature Preserve is a wonderful example of restoration of native habitat which is an inspiration to anyone wanting to develop native habitat.

Bruce and Susan Jones bought a 75-acre property with Bruce's brother as an investment in 1979. They quickly fell in love with the land, their refuge from Annandale and their work life.

It started with the construction of a stream-fed pond. Then they built another pond. Of course, they needed a single bedroom cabin while working on projects. Over time this cabin grew into a beautiful multi-bedroom house. Finally, they retired and moved to the property full-time in 1998.

Their son showed them a "funny-looking" plant from one of his many hikes. They identified it—a Puttyroot Orchid. Then he found a Cranefly Orchid. Bruce was now hooked on native plants.



Now that their attention was piqued, they began to see native plants everywhere. Over time they removed invasives which allowed natives to flourish. They had help from two US Department of Agriculture Programs: the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program to remove cattle and build riparian areas and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program to help with native flora planting (replaced by Environmental Quality Incentives Program).

People started to visit this amazing property and some of them said "This is like a Nature Preserve!" The name stuck because it fit. Bruce and Susan are successful early practitioners of native wildlife and habitat philosophies.

Over 1,000 native plant species were found and identified in the late 2000s by a plant survey led by Sally Anderson and Marion Lobstein. Experts from Blandy Experimental Farm have also noted an amazing number of bees, wasps, and butterflies on the property.

To manage almost 200 acres they either own or lease, Bruce has some help from a gardener once a week and help for large projects as needed. He particularly needs help to deal with the rapid growth of invasives this past decade. Plants love atmospheric carbon dioxide; its increase has fueled the growth of many plants, especially native and non-native vines. Bruce considers it lucky that they started years ago before invasives were so overwhelming.

Bruce's primary objective is to **Grow Wildlife**. He does this by providing the necessary ingredients to support native flora and fauna: providing water and habitat, reducing invasives, and minimizing pesticides and by just loving the land.





Skyline Drive Caravan by Karen Hendershot

Some say it's the destination that counts, others say it's the journey. On July 9 Richard Stromberg showed Sally Anderson, Karen Hendershot, Julie Pineiro, Mara Seaforest, Emily Southgate, and Kristin Zimet the appeal of both as he shepherded us through fascinating plants at stops along 24 miles of Skyline Drive with a sweet treat at the end.

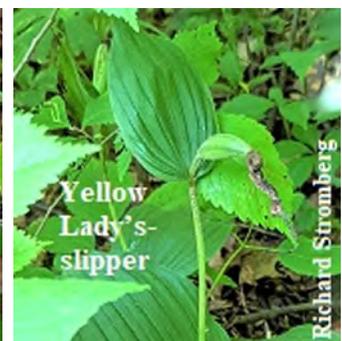
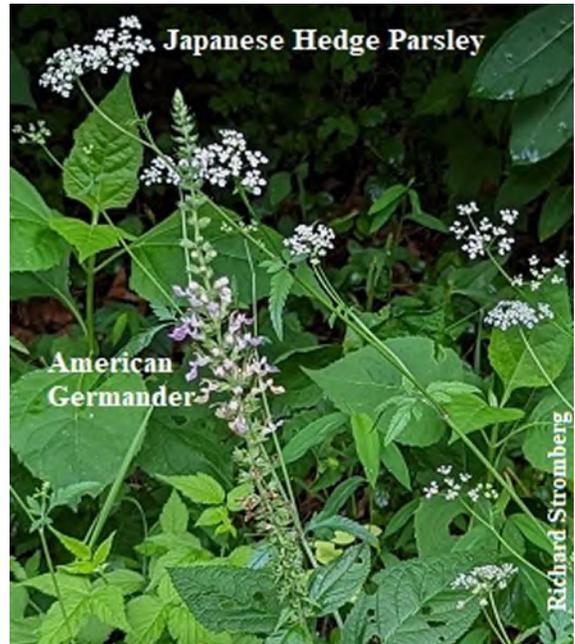
At the Front Royal entrance to the Drive, bright pink spikes of American Germander (*Teucrium canadense*) seemed to beckon us inward, forming a pleasing bouquet with the white umbels of the alien Japanese Hedge Parsley (*Torilis japonica*). The Germander sends out stolons, allowing it to congregate in dense masses. While waiting to get to the Park entrance, we noticed a Kentucky Coffee-tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*) beside the Drive with frilly leaflets on its multi-divided, huge leaves and bean-shaped pods typical of its Legume (*Fabaceae*) Family. Its seeds reminded early settlers of coffee beans.

Our first stop at an unmarked pull-off on the left side of the road after mile-marker 6 was decorated with the delicate panicles of Pointed-leaf Tick-trefoil (*Hylodesmum glutinosum*), whose fat, fan-shaped leaflets narrow to a sharp tip. Woodland Sunflower (*Helianthus divaricatus*), recognizable by its sessile leaves, was also starting to bloom. We saw Sweet-scented Joe-pye-weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*) in bud, promising lavender flowers in a few weeks. Richard led us into the woods to show us interesting fruits of spring flowers: the ridged seed capsules of Perfoliate Bellwort (*Uvularia perfoliata*), the bronze round balls of Eastern Solomon's-

plume (*Maianthemum racemosum*), and the large angular fruit of the Yellow Lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*). A Lopseed (*Phryma leptostachys*) plant

showed its form perfectly: erect inflorescence with tiny, white and pink flowers standing away horizontally on top and fruits collapsed down against the stem.

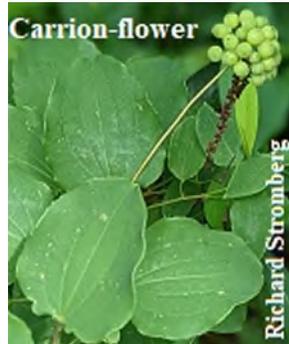
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Skyline Drive Caravan (continued)

Bees were busily collecting pollen from the Fairy Candles or Black Cohosh



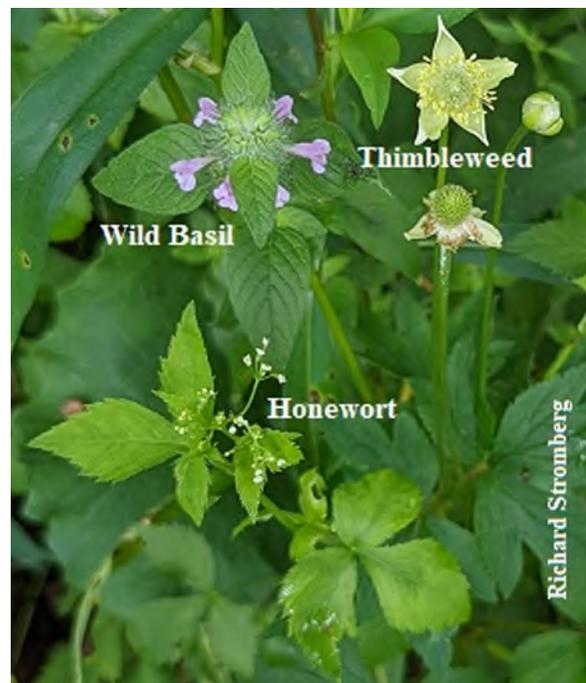
(*Impatiens pallida*) had opened some yellow flowers.



Past mile marker 12 at the Jenkins Gap parking lot we encountered another Smilax, but this one was armed! Common Greenbrier (*Smilax rotundifolia*) has sharp thorns that, along with sprouting rhizomes and tendrils for climbing, enable it to form nearly impenetrable thickets which offer cover to wildlife. More benign companions stood nearby. The delicate Appalachian Meadow-rue (*Thalictrum coriaceum*), Lesser Horse-gentian (*Triosteum angustifolium*), and Common Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*) were beginning to form fruit. Wild Basil (*Clinopodium vulgare*), Thimbleweed (*Anemone virginiana*) and Honewort (*Cryptotaenia canadensis*) were blooming together. Very tall Indian Hemp plants (*Apocynum cannabinum*) was there. Down the short trail from the parking lot to the AT was lots of Horsebalm (*Collinsonia canadensis*) not showing any signs of blooming yet.

AT Gravel Springs Gap (mile 17) held some familiar natives, such as Smooth Sumac (*Rhus glabra*), Fringed Loosetrife (*Lysimachia ciliata*), and the oak parasite Bearcorn (*Conopholis americana*). Aliens were also apparent. The showy pale pink flowers of Soapwort or Bouncing Bet (*Saponaria officinalis*) lined the roadway. We saw the densely-flowered bedstraw Wild Madder or False Baby's Breath (*Galium mollugo*) and Nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*) about to open its small yellow flowers. Some nice native surprises greeted us along the AT at Gravel Springs. Fat green berries of Blue Cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*) could be seen deep within the woodland. Just past a huge blowdown (continued on page 6)

(*Actaea racemosa*) as we entered the Compton Peak parking lot (Mile 10). Tall Milkweed (*Asclepias exaltata*) stood with droopy flower heads. Here, too, we saw masses of Bladder Campion (*Silene vulgaris*), a nonnative nonetheless fascinating for its large, smooth paper-like calyx and relatively narrow, short, white petals. Starry Campion (*Silene stellata*) had unopened buds above the characteristic whorls of four leaves. Outstretched in the grass was a long branch of Carrion-flower (*Smilax herbacea*), so named for the unpleasant smell of its flowers which attract carrion flies for pollination. An umbel of green berries showed that the flies had done their job! Past the chain at the end of the parking lot, where the Appalachian Trail (AT) goes into the woods,

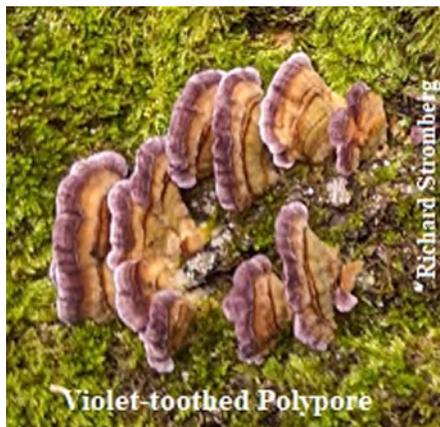
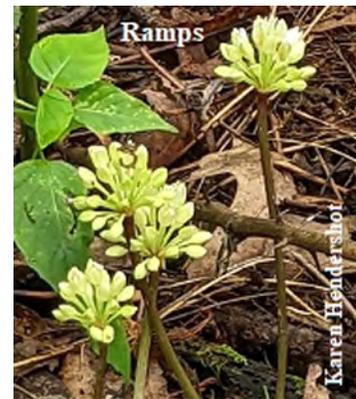




Skyline Drive Caravan (continued)



recently cut into several slices to clear the trail, the cream-colored flowers of the native Ramps (*Allium tricoccum*) rose like tiny lanterns from the forest floor. Violet-toothed Polypore fungus (*Trichaptum bifforme*) contrasted nicely with moss surrounding it on the bark of the fallen trunk.



Since it was past noon, we went to the Elkwallow Wayside at mile marker 24 where Mara Seaforest and I were first in line for blackberry ice cream and lunch, and ate it in that order at a shady picnic table.

Then we went back to Hogback Overlook near mile marker 21. Down the steep hill on the west side Richard pointed out the conical clusters of flaming scarlet berries of Red Elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*) much different than the flat, white umbels of Common Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*) we had seen earlier. While other park visitors gazed at the view to the west, we crossed the road to witness a garden of native delights. Wild Hydrangea (*Hydrangea arborescens*), Goat's-beard (*Aruncus dioicus*), Wild Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), Dwarf Spiraea (*Spiraea corymbosa*), and Purple-flowering



Raspberry (*Rubus odoratus*) were among the many plants forming a colorful tapestry. Virgin's-bower (*Clematis virginiana*) was budding. Heart-leaf Golden-alexanders (*Zizia aptera*) was in fruit. We saw a patch of Heart-leaved Willow (*Salix eriocephala*) and one of Beaked Hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*). They had no flowers or fruit. Some Big-leaf Asters (*Eurybia macrophylla*) had buds starting to show purple. Less familiar were the delicate white flowers of Bowman's-root (*Gillenia trifoliata*) and the white panicles of Fly-poison (*Amianthium muscitoxicum*), a plant whose parts were once (continued on page 7)



Register for these events at piedmontvnps@gmail.com.

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|--|---------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| Saturday | Sep 10 | 10am | Eldon Farm Walk |
| Rappahannock County. Join us to see the conservation efforts at Eldon Farm. | | | |
| Saturday | Sep 17 | | VNPS State Annual Meeting |
| The state 40th Anniversary Annual Meeting will be held at Natural Bridge outdoors with speaker and field trips. | | | |
| Saturday | Oct 8 | Noon | Chapter Annual Meeting |
| Clarke County. Meeting and Election of Officers and Board of Directors at Shenandoah University Cool Springs Campus followed by a walk to the adjacent Rolling Ridge Foundation. Details will be sent to you later. | | | |
| Saturday | Nov 12 | 1pm | Page County Big Tree Auto Tour |
| Master Naturalist Richard Stromberg will take us to some of the largest trees in Virginia. Starting at Skyland Resort in Shenandoah National Park, we will drive to the South Fork of the Shenandoah River and finish up in Luray. | | | |

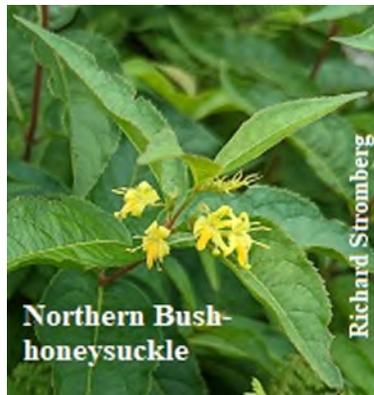
Skyline Drive Caravan (continued)

mixed with sugar to kill flies but which is also highly toxic to other creatures. Totally new for me were Spreading Dogbane (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*) with its sweet pink flowers, Northern Bush-honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*) with yellow ones, and Mountain Maple (*Acer spicatum*), with bright red fruit pointed upward, rather than dangling like other Maples. We also saw the white *Monarda*, Basil



Spreading Dogbane

Richard Stromberg



Northern Bush-honeysuckle

Richard Stromberg



Basil Beebalm

Richard Stromberg

Beebalm (*M. clinopodia*) and Whorled Loosestrife (*Lysimachia quadrifolia*) with yellow flowers looking at us with petals tapering to a point in contrast to the Fringed Loosestrife we saw at Gravel Springs with its flowers more at the top of the plant pointed downwards and with a sharp point protruding from the tip of the petals. Sally Anderson pointed out the white leaf tips that identify Minniebush (*Menziesia pilosa*).



Fringed Loosestrife

Richard Stromberg



Whorled Loosestrife

Richard Stromberg

Richard had provided a list of 65 species he had seen on a scouting trip two weeks earlier. We found another 30. iNaturalist lists 1,101 plant species in Shenandoah National Park, so there are lots more to go back to see.



Minniebush

Richard Stromberg

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Curlyheads (Clematis ochroleuca)

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