

The Leaflet

Piedmont Chapter Annual Meeting, October 14—Diane Krumme

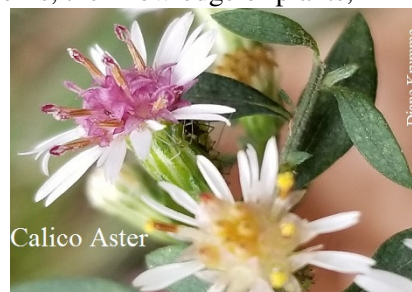
WINTER 2018

We met on a chilly, damp day at Shenandoah River State Park. The meeting was well attended despite the weather. Our annual meetings always include a delicious potluck and this one was stellar. The real heroes of the day were those who brought warm drinks.

Our new board was elected as proposed in the meeting notice in the last *Leaflet*, with the addition of Bryan Payne as director. The list of officers and board members is at the bottom left of page 2. We had door prizes with many attendees winning something. A lot of nice native plants found new homes that day. Thanks to everyone that donated.

After the meeting we went on an interesting walk led by Sally Anderson. The walk started at Cullers Overlook and continued to the Visitor center. As you can imagine, with Sally, Ron Hughes of DGIF, Bert Harris of the Clifton Institute and VNPS state-wide president Nancy Vehrs, the knowledge of plants, lichen and fungus was astounding.

One of my favorite flowers we saw was Calico Aster (*Symphyotrichum lateriflorum*). Even though Calico Aster is found in a variety of habitats in our area and is considered a common plant, you cannot deny its beauty. The discs of the flowers start off yellow and later turn to a purplish-red, so you see many colors on one plant.



Diane Krumme

Calico Aster



Diane Krumme

Pixie Cup Lichen

We also saw Pixie Cup Lichen

(*Cladonia pyxidata*). A lichen is a symbiotic relationship an algae and fungus. Pixie Cup lichen produce cup-like growths that release their spores for reproduction. Pixie cups are generally found on the forest floor. According to folklore these tiny cups are used by wood fairies to sip the morning dew.

Another amazing find was Lion's Mane fungus (*Hericium erinaceus*). This species is known by many names including Bearded Tooth mushroom and Pom Pom mushroom. This fungus

is in the tooth fungus group. It can be identified by its long spines or teeth. The purpose of these teeth is to manufacture and release spores, allowing the mushroom to reproduce. This fungus is mainly white, although it becomes brown or yellow with age. Lion's Mane is commonly found during the late summer and fall on wounds of hardwoods, particularly maple, oak and beech.

Another wonderful annual meeting is in the books. Be sure to attend our meeting next year for food, friendship and an interesting walk.



Diane Krumme

Lion's
Mane

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

The Chapter's email address is piedmontvnps@gmail.com

The Leaflet

Board Meeting at the Piedmont Environmental Council—Karen Hendershot

Sometimes the Piedmont Chapter's Board of Directors needs to take a field trip. Jocelyn Sladen had been telling us what a beautiful native plant garden had been installed at the Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC) headquarters in Warrenton. PEC's missions overlaps in many ways with our own. The organization works to preserve natural resources through sustainable development, and shares our interest in native plants.

On September 11, we held our Board Meeting at PEC headquarters at 45 Horner Street in Warrenton, where we were welcomed by former PEC Vice President, Doug Larson. The headquarters is an elegant structure, part of which had been built in the late 1700s, and has more recently been preserved and expanded in an environmentally supportive way.

We were given a tour of the gardens by Habitat and Stewardship Specialist, Celia Vuocolo. PEC's Director of State Policy, Dan Holmes, created the landscape design, with advisement from PEC Board member and landscape architect, John Magee. The garden at the front of the property was neat and orderly, defying conventional wisdom that natives look weedy. A lovely pollinator garden was installed by Janet Davis of Hill House Nursery. It fit perfectly in the urban setting and attracted butterflies as we wandered through it. The gutter system on the building itself, as well as the landscaping in the steep backyard, was designed to prevent water runoff by capturing rainwater in a rain garden. Native shrubs and trees helped hold the hillside intact. If you go to Warrenton, take a look at the PEC garden – just a couple of blocks off Main Street. It is an inspiration for any native plant gardener.



WINTER 2018

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Cathy Mayes, Diane Krumme, Celia Vuocolo, Jocelyn Sladen and Mary Keith Ruffner tour the PEC garden

Richard Stromberg

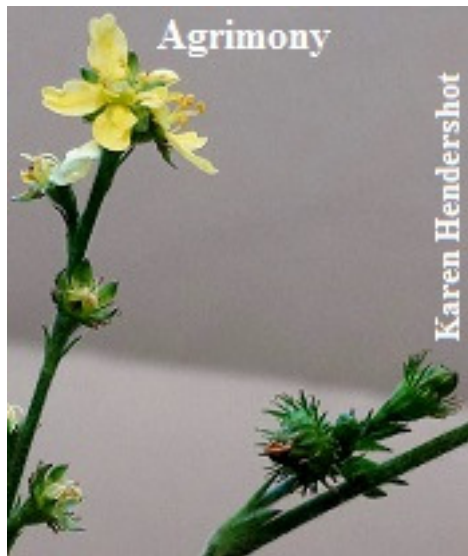


An Old Field's Changing Landscape—Clifton Field Trip – Jocelyn Sladen

At dawn September twenty-third seemed no day for our chapter's Second Sunday walk after rain most of the night. I opened my eyes to drizzle and thick fog outside the window. After a few email exchanges between Piedmont President Karen Hendershot and the walk's co-leader, Sally Anderson, we decided not to cancel, a good decision.

Our destination was Clifton Farm, near Warrenton in Fauquier County. Clifton is headquarters and field station for Clifton Institute, an environmental organization dedicated to understanding the natural world of our region and helping the local community better know and value it. Clifton had been a working farm beginning in the 1800's, but many of the original native plants and warm season grasses of our region have reclaimed their territory, as native plants can do, given the chance. Further restoration efforts are ongoing.

A small but cheery group, we ambled through the drizzle along an old farm road. An old stone wall was just visible through a tangle of Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) and brightly berried Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*). As ever, the non-native and invasive spoilers, Japanese Stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineus*) and Small Carpetgrass (*Arthraxon hispidus*) crowded the trail edges, but good natives like Virginia Knotweed (*Persicaria virginiana*) cheered us on. A bushy sprawl of Calico Asters (*Symphyotrichum lateriflorum*) popped up, the small but bright flowers alight in the mist. Sally Anderson pointed out the distinctive structure of the inflorescence, with tiny disk florets providing the vivid purplish coloration that so appealingly sets off the white ray florets. Emerging into an old field, we discussed this year's unusual abundance of Pilewort (*Erechtites hieracifolius*). Plenty grew here, some plants standing five to six feet tall. A common weed, unkindly named, but native, its ripening seed heads were shimmering that morning.



We spotted dense clumps of Small-flowered Agrimony (*Agrimonia parviflora*). Some plants were still in flower, but most plants were done with the preliminaries and were at the ready with those tiny bristly round seeds that hitchhike on shirts or socks. Our trail emerged from a light woodland where we found Bottlebrush Grass (*Elymus hystrix*), Indian Tobacco (*Lobelia*



inflata) and several Goldenrods, including Lance-leaved Goldenrod

(continued on page 4)



An Old Field's Changing Landscape—Clifton Field Trip (continued)



(*Euthamia graminifolia*) and Gray Goldenrod (*Solidago nemoralis*). We had reached a main destination, Clifton's Upper Woodcock field, so named because of the abundance of Woodcocks in early spring. The field covers 40 acres. While it was for many years dominated by a broad expanse of native warm-season grasses, notably Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), the hardwood trees like Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) are racing to reestablish themselves. Bert Harris, Director of Clifton Institute, explained the organization's plans to restore the grassland ecosystem, using several strategies, including burning.

We talked of the value of this varied native habitat for wildlife, as we passed Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*) and Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), both loaded with berries, and noted the native grasses, particularly Little Bluestem, that provide winter food and cover. We encountered Sumac, both the Shining (*Rhus copallinum*) and Smooth (*Rhus glabra*), the latter with its larger seed heads. Several dense thickets of *Rhus glabra* stood ten feet tall or more. Persimmon trees (*Diospyros virginiana*), loaded with fruit loomed along the trail. In an area dominated by grasses, we took our time to appreciate one of the great native plants for pollinators, Narrow-leaf Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*).

Our boots wet and our jackets covered with hitchhiking Agrimony burs, we returned to Clifton's farmhouse, happy we came.

New Virginia Flora Record for Warren County—Paul Guay

While doing a survey for a native plant landscape design on the property of Phyllis Partain, Phyllis pointed out a 4 foot tall grass and wondered if I could identify it. We collected a specimen in hopes of identifying it later. The site was formerly an apple orchard, located on a somewhat steep, well drained but currently moist hillside in full sun.

After some research, I concluded that it was a type of Barnyard Grass, genus *Echinochloa*. Getting to the species level was difficult, as the species that I thought it might be was not shown to occur in Warren County in the Digital Atlas of the Flora of Virginia (DAFV). So I mailed the specimen to Gary Fleming, curator of the DAFV.



Garry responded, "Your grass is *Echinochloa muricata* var. *microstachya*. Until recently, the two varieties of this species were generally not recognized in Virginia botanical studies, and we only have a skeletal map of var. *microstachya* in the Digital Atlas. I'd like to keep your specimen and make a couple of herbarium sheets out of it to document it in Warren County. I have enough information from what you sent to prepare labels for the specimens. I will deposit them in the herbaria at George Mason University and College of William and Mary." Gary has since put a red dot on Warren County on the DAFV map.

Short Takes on Books We Love (Do you have a nature book you love? Send us a short take.)

Natures Fabric: Leaves in Science and Culture by David Lee (2017, University of Chicago Press).

A little heavy on the science at times, but if you want to find out how leaves work and how they evolved, this book will tell you. [Review by Richard Stromberg]

Do you have a nature book you love? Send us a Short Take!



Fifth Bioblitz at the Clifton Institute–Karen Hendershot

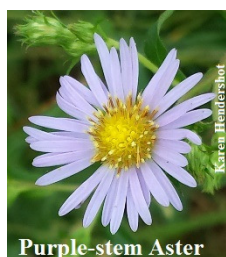
On September 18, we undertook our final Bioblitz of the year at the Clifton Institute, where we have been helping Clifton Director Bert Harris identify plants before restoration of a 100-acre cow pasture. This time we focused on the wetlands, led by Sally Anderson and Emily Southgate. From the beginning, a theme emerged: *Persicaria*! The genus covers plants known by the common names Smartweed, Lady's-thumb, Tearthumb, Water-Pepper or Jumpseed. Our first encounter along the muddy entry path provided a nice lesson of the difference between the native Pennsylvania Smartweed (*Persicaria pensylvanica*), with its larger, paler flowers (foreground) and Asian Long-bristled Smartweed (*P. longiseta*), with red, smaller flowers (background) and long bristles at the leaf joints.



That was the easy part. Soon we were calf-deep in water. But Piedmont people aren't sissies – least of all the intrepid Emily, whose brace on a twisted ankle prevented her from wearing high-water boots but didn't stop her from charging ahead. The wetlands showed us even more *Persicaria*. Large swaths of the graceful, tall Pale Smartweed (*P. lapathifolia*) abounded, as did Arrow-leaf Tearthumb (*P. sagittata*) with small, rounded flower clusters. We also found Dotted Smartweed (*P. punctata*) with its tiny, interrupted flower spikes, and Water-pepper (*P. hydropiper*), whose spicy leaves we sampled.



Other plants like the wetlands as well. Among them were a fragrant clump of Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*) and a Water Horehound (*Lycopus* spp.). Still enjoying the dampness, if not the swamp, were a Flatsedge (*Cyperus* sp.), a sunny clump of Tickseed Sunflower (*Bidens aristosa*), and a solitary Purple-stem Aster (*Symphyotrichum puniceum*), a welcome transition to drier land.



Throughout our work, we came upon spiderwebs with their engineers busily capturing prey. “Watch out!” I said to Sally as her hand was about to crash into a silky construction with a large spider. With curiosity, Sally examined her

neighbor. The spider was carrying both a multitude of little gray babies on her back and an egg casing behind her. “Some mothers just can't let go,” said Sally.





Sunday	Dec 9	1pm	Second Sunday Walk at Banshee Reeks
Loudoun County. Autumn fields at Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve (near Leesburg). Join Phil Daley in viewing grasses, native trees shrubs, and wildflowers gone to seed. For information, contact piedmontvnps@gmail.com			
Sunday	Jan 13	1pm	Sunday Walk: Invasives Control in Shenandoah NP
Rappahannock County. See the progress that has been made in invasive removal from a relatively rare Northern Blue Ridge Montane Alluvial Forest plant community near Sperryville, led by Piedmont Chapter Board Member Robin Williams, who has helped remove invasive alien plants for several years. Space limited. Please RSVP to piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Sunday	Jan 20	2pm	Winter Speaker Series: Historical Botany: Planning for the Future
Fauquier County. Emmanuel Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 9668 Maidstone Rd., Delaplane. Bert Harris, Director of Clifton Institute will explain the organization's plans to restore the grassland ecosystem, using several strategies, including burning. Free, refreshments provided. For more information, email piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Saturday	Feb 9	1pm	Second Saturday Walk: Identifying Plants in Winter
Clarke County. Piedmont Chapter Board Member Emily Southgate will guide us through the Virginia State Arboretum at Blandy for a special pre-Valentines Day walk on winter plant identification with a stop for hot cocoa. For more information, email piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Sunday	Feb 17	2pm	Winter Speaker Series: Historical Botany: Recording the Present
Fauquier County. Emmanuel Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 9668 Maidstone Rd., Delaplane. Anna Ritter, Research Director, Bull Run Mountains Conservancy will talk about preserving and cataloging herbarium specimens of key indicator species from the unique plant communities of the Bull Run Mountains. Free, refreshments provided. For more information, email piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Sunday	Mar 10	1pm	Second Sunday Walk: Weston WMA
Fauquier County. Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries employee Ron Hughes will lead a walk at the Weston Wildlife Management area near Casanova to see Shumard Oaks and the back swamp forest community. For more information, email piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Sunday	Mar 17	2pm	Winter Speaker Series: Historical Botany: Evidence from the Past
Fauquier County. Emmanuel Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 9668 Maidstone Rd., Delaplane. Paleocologist Dr. Emily (Russell) Southgate will discuss the theory and methods she uses to reconstruct past vegetation using pollen preserved in lake sediments and other evidence. Using her data and that of other paleoecologists, she will show how the vegetation in eastern North America has changed over the last 20,000 years, from full glacial time to the present. Free, refreshments provided. For more information, email piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			

Hosting the 2019 VNPS State Annual Meeting–Karen Hendershot

The Piedmont Chapter will be hosting the 2019 State Annual Meeting on September 27-29. Cathy Mays, Diane Krumme, Mary Keith Ruffner and Sally Anderson have made good progress in the planning. They reserved guest and meeting rooms at the Holiday Inn Blue Ridge Shadows, five miles north of Front Royal on Route 522, and arranged for Dr. T'ai Roulston, Curator of the State Arboretum of Virginia, to be opening-night speaker on Friday and Dr. Woody Bousquet, professor of environmental studies and biology at Shenandoah University, to be keynote speaker on Saturday.

Our area is rich with the environmental beauty of the Piedmont and the mountains, which we hope to show off to full advantage. We will be looking for volunteers to help with activities as the time draws near. In fact, we've already wrangled in Marjorie Prochaska and Carrie Blair—both past Presidents of the Piedmont Chapter—to assist with next year's events. They are shown here at the basalt columns on Compton Peak in Shenandoah National Park. Stay tuned for more information.





Blue Ridge Wildlife Center Visit–Emily Southgate

About a dozen people showed up at the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center in Boyce on November 8 to hear about their programs, including wildlife rehabilitation and education using animals that cannot be safely released back into the wild. Rehabilitator and education specialist Jessica Anderson introduced us to a range of animals including a wood turtle, opossum (cuter than I would have expected), a screech owl and a big brown bat (it's name, not just a description). I was especially listening for how this all interacts with native plants. Old hollow trees serve as roosting places for big brown bats, the most common species in the area, and, of course, plants that attract flying insects



provide them with food. Screech owls also nest in these old trees. After the talk and demonstration, we visited outdoor cages and walkway designed for less formal interactions with the animals. They are under construction, and the Director, Hillary Russell Davidson, was enthusiastic about getting advice from us on native plantings when they are completed, using plants that are already there and introducing others that are characteristic of this wooded habitat.

Bad News Regarding Spotted Lanternfly–Mark Sutphin, Agriculture and Natural Resources Associate Extension Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)

- Stomp it
- Squash it
- Scrape it
- Squish it
- Smash it
- Swat it
- Slap it
- Smack it
- Strike it
- **REPORT IT**

Help us slow the spread of spotted lanternfly!

ext.vt/spotted-lanternfly

The known Virginia population area of Spotted Lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) in Winchester/Frederick County has expanded in 2018. The initial Spotted Lanternfly population was determined to be in a 1.5 mile by 1.5 mile geographical area following visual egg mass surveys conducted in February and March 2018 by Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) along with early spring nymphal findings reported by VCE staff. VDACS and USDA conducted herbicide and insecticide treatments this summer/fall to an area approximately two miles by two miles. As of November 2018, VDACS and VCE have had reports from

the public, and VDACS staff has conducted extensive scouting of sticky bands beyond the known population area. The public reports and scouting work have resulted in a known population area approximately six miles long by three miles wide stretching from Tevis Street at Pleasant Valley Road in Winchester to Old Charles Town Road at Martinsburg Pike in Frederick County. [More information about Spotted Lanternfly is in the Spring 2018 issue of *The Leaflet*.]

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Curlyheads (*Clematis ochroleuca*)

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