

The Leaflet

Honoring Sally Anderson

WINTER 2012

To celebrate Piedmont Chapter's Sally Anderson's nine years as State President of the Virginia Native Plant Society, donations came in from individuals all over the state to plant a Tulip-tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) in her honor at the State Arboretum at Blandy, where she has volunteered for thirteen years. It was planted in the Woodlands Restoration of the Nancy Larrick Crosby Native Plant Trail on October 26th. Sally has coordinated the maintenance of the Native Plant Trail for many years. Many of Sally's friends and supporters attended and enjoyed the speeches and refreshments afterwards.



Jocelyn Sladen & Sally



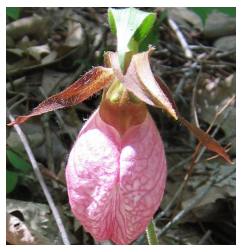
Sally & Nicky Staunton



Sally waters her tree

September Second Sunday Walk at Jones Nature Preserve—Cathy Mayes

Jones Nature Preserve is a property in Rappahannock County where the Bruce Jones has been cultivating native (mostly) Virginia plants for several decades. It was the first gloriously fall-like day of the season, and several participants lingered long past the official two-hour walk enjoying late summer flowers, fruits, and foliage. Bruce started his collection with woodland plants decades ago and now has an amazing



variety. The highlight of the walk was a group of Pink and Yellow Lady's Slippers with large fruits. Bruce pollinated them with a Q-Tip. Recently, Bruce has been working to restore cow pasture to native meadow plants and grasses. He has had disappointments as well as successes, and is willing to share his experiences with anyone who wants to shorten his learning curve. Each trip to Jones Nature Preserve provides new things to see, new lessons to learn, and renewed appreciation for efforts to preserve beautiful natives.





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 geographically defined subgroup 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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November Second Sunday Walk at Bears Den Trail Center and Overlook—Carla Overbrook

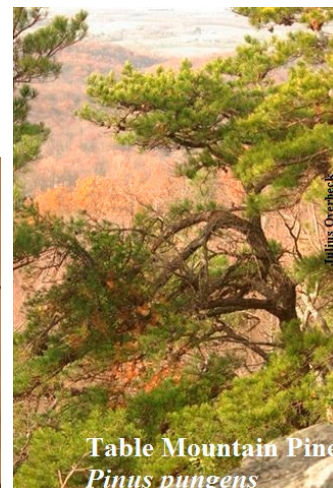
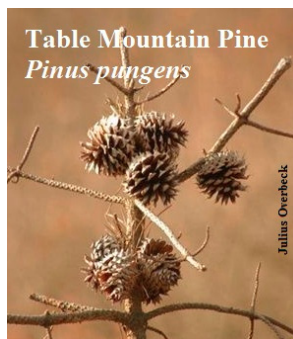
Seventeen eager participants joined guide Kristin Zimet at the parking lot of the Bears Den Trail Center near Bluemont on November 11th. On a picture-perfect day, Kristin explored the theme of “the edge” as we walked along a forest path and made our way to the Bears Den rocky overlook. While we mostly discussed characteristics of various trees, Kristin explained how to distinguish a Blueberry bush from a Huckleberry: Blueberry has green branches, especially closer to the ground, and Huckleberry branches are brown. Several in the group hotly debated the specific identification of a type of aster growing in a crevice on the rocky overlook, a flower making a living “on the edge”.

Participants were encouraged to ask about anything they saw that piqued their interest and to use all of their senses. I could put my hand sideways in the craggy crevices of a large Chestnut Oak's (*Quercus prinus*) bark. Similarly, the sap of a Pitch Pine (*Pinus rigida*) was flowing towards the roots of the tree, leaving a sticky residue on the bark for us to feel. Mature Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) leaf buds were tightly rolled in a caramel-colored pointed oval, ready to burst into life in spring but protected before that by the sharp tips we felt at the ends of the buds.

We marveled at Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) chutzpah in putting out its yellow flowers in the fall, getting pollinated in fall or winter, and then waiting to be fertilized early in the spring—living “on the edge” in contrast to the rhythm of most other flowering trees. A Table Mountain Pine (*Pinus pungens*) was another example of literally living “on the edge”. A dead Table Mountain Pine still held its huge pine cones, while a live example showed somewhat stunted and windblown growth compared to what the tree would have done in the valley.

We saw many different types of trees. Two stood out to me. Some of the needles of the already described Pitch Pine grew directly on the trunk as well as higher up on branches. Finally, the leaves of the Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) tree were not uniform—many had three lobes, while others looked more like a mitten, and some were more oval-shaped.

Thanks to Kristin, Sally Anderson and Carrie Blair, who answered individual questions and gave short group presentations, for an enjoyable afternoon.





Fall Flowers in the UP—Carla Overbrook

I generally like to visit my home town of Norway in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (UP) in late spring to look for woodland flowers. This year, however, an important high-school reunion was held over Labor Day weekend, so we made an early fall visit instead.

We started in Marquette on Lake Superior so I could pick up copies of ancestors' marriage, divorce, and death certificates. With the evening free, we drove to Presque Isle Park, which juts into Lake Superior, and climbed the rocks at the end of a woodland trail. Purple Harebells (most likely *Campanula rotundifolia*) grew on rocky outcrops in exactly the same kind of environment shown in my *Wildflowers of Michigan Field Guide* by Stan Tekiela.

The next day we drove to Norway and hiked in our usual places in the area before the 7:30 reunion festivities began. Piers Gorge, a rocky area along one side of the Menominee River, boasted blue asters. At Strawberry Lake in town with a walking trail around the lake that was formed by mining operations, we saw a variety of *Helianthus*, a gorgeous yellow sunflower, along with more blue asters.

On Labor Day, with all the reunion festivities (except for golf) completed, we drove to the Porcupine Mountains in the far western portion of the UP. While hiking trails above Lake of the Clouds, we saw a beautiful Goldenrod (*Solidago*) different from our varieties in Virginia.

The *pièce de résistance* came at nearly the end of the afternoon as we hiked along a long, winding nature trail that started at the visitors' center. As we stumbled further along the woodland trail, all the while wondering if it really was going to lead us back to civilization, all of a sudden I stopped in my tracks and cried out, "Doll's Eyes!" I don't believe I have ever seen the fruit of this plant before (*Actea pachypoda*), but it was unmistakable. An assistant naturalist at the visitors' center later called it White Baneberry, but it will always be Doll's Eyes to me.





Sunday	Dec 9	1pm	Second Sunday Walk
Warren County. Master Naturalist Richard Stromberg will lead a walk on Dickey Ridge Trail from the north entrance of Shenandoah National Park. The focus of the walk will be trees and remnants of summer flowering plants. We will meet at the pull-off parking just past the “You are Southbound on the Skyline Drive” sign, before the Park Entrance Station. For more details, please contact Richard at piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Tuesday	Jan 8	2-4pm	Piedmont Chapter Board Meeting
Clarke County. The Chapter Board of Directors will meet at the State Arboretum at Blandy. All Chapter members are welcome. For more details, please contact piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Sunday	Jan 13		Second Sunday Walk
Being planned. For more details, please contact piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Sunday	Jan 20		Winter Speaker Series
Fauquier County. Janet Davis of Hill House Nursery will speak on “Covering Your Tracks & Climbing the Walls: Using native groundcovers and vines” at Tri-County Feeds in Marshall. Contact piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Sunday	Feb 10	1pm	Second Sunday Walk
Being planned. For more details, please contact piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Tuesday	Feb 12	2-4pm	Piedmont Chapter Board Meeting
Warren County. The Chapter Board of Directors will meet at the Daily Grind Café on Main Street in Front Royal. All Chapter members are welcome. For more details, please contact piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			
Sunday	Feb 17		Winter Speaker Series
Fauquier County. Program being planned to be held at Tri-County Feeds in Marshall.			
Sunday	Mar 17		Winter Speaker Series
Fauquier County. Marion Lobstein will talk about the newly published <u>Flora of Virginia</u> .			
Sunday	March 24	10am-1pm	Garlic Mustard Pull
Help eliminate invasive Garlic Mustard at Thompson Wildlife Management Area. Meet at the Trillium Trail Parking Lot. Contact Richard Stromberg at piedmontvnps@gmail.com .			

The VNPS Piedmont Chapter is a “Friend of the Mountains”—Brenda Crawford

Piedmont Chapter was honored as a “Friend of the Mountains” in recognition of VNPS conservation and educational work as well as work done in cooperation with Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains in restoring trails and removing invasive plants in a park on Mount Weather in Loudoun County. The park, which is not yet open to the public, has new trails, a pavilion, camping sites and a lot of invasives, notably Oriental Bittersweet and Mile-a-minute.

Our Chapter started to work with the Friends in 2008 when Carrie Blair and Kristin Zimet surveyed the park twice, finding heavy infestations of invasives. Robin Williams has led work sessions twice a year since then, clearing trails and removing invasives. Other Piedmont Chapter members who have joined Friends’ members working at the park include Mary Keith Ruffner, Blanca Vandervoort, Richard Stromberg, Carrie Blair, Sally Anderson and Brenda Crawford.

The Friends of the Blue Ridge Mountains was formed five years ago with the goal of: “Preserving enhancing, and celebrating the Blue Ridge Mountains”. The awards dinner was held at Bear’s Den Lodge on Nov. 11. Friends president Al Van Huyck presented a plaque and specifically recognized Robin’s work. Other recipients of the “Friend” award have been: Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, 2011; Jefferson County Planning Commission, 2010; and the Town of Purcellville, 2009. More information about the Friends can be found at their website: http://www.blueridgemountains-friends.org/a_new_initiative0.aspx.

**Editor's Corner**

The flowers are gone. All I have seen on my November hikes are the fluffy seed heads of Asters and Goldenrods. Hard to tell exactly what species because the leaves are gone though the shape of the inflorescence gives some idea.

Looking back at my pictures of the past twelve months reminds me how unusually warm it has been. Last December I saw Canada Violets (*Viola canadensis*) and Wavyleaf Aster (*Symphyotrichum undulatum*) blooming. I reported in this newsletter last spring that I saw Moss Phlox (*Phlox subulata*) blooming on January 1st and Hairy Bittercress (*Cardamine hirsuta*) blooming in my yard in January and at 2,000 feet in mid-February.

I do not expect to see wildflowers until April, but in 2012 they were abundant in March. We schedule our annual Thompson WMA Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) pull at the end of March so the “pullers” won’t see anything but Garlic Mustard to pull. In 2012 not only were lots of plants up, many were blooming. So, if anyone had come, they might have been confused. On March 25th Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), Yellow Fumewort (*Corydalis flavula*), Downy Yellow Violets (*Viola pubescens*), Star Chickweed (*Stellaria pubera*), Slender Toothwort (*Cardamine angustata*), and Rue Anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*) were already blooming in Thompson. Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) was already dropping petals, Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) umbrellas were unfurling, and Large-flowered Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*) were in bud. Their millions were in view way before the usual May 1st.

Everything was early from then on, but maybe we are back to normal now.

– Richard Stromberg

Piedmont Chapter Annual Meeting–Marjorie Prochaska

The Piedmont Chapter held its annual meeting October 21 at Sky Meadows State Park. Every time I visit this park, I am reminded what a nice facility it is. The day was invigorating, the trees beautiful, and the picnic pavilion where we met accommodated our group nicely. After a delicious potluck luncheon, we held the business meeting to elect our officers. The proposed slate passed unanimously. Brenda Crawford continues as Vice President, Blanca Vandervoort as Secretary and Carla Overbeck as Treasurer. Mary Keith Ruffner and David Roos continue as Directors, and Richard Stromberg and Kristen Zimet return following a one-year hiatus. We welcomed Chris Lewis as a new Board member. Carrie Blair, Sally Anderson and Robin Williams rotated off the Board, but they will remain active.

Acting Chair Marjorie Prochaska reminded folks that our long-awaited *Flora of Virginia* will be published in December. Three of its authors, Chris Ludwig, Johnny Townsend, and Bland Crowder, shared the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Employee of the Year award for their work on the *Flora*. Those of you who have already ordered copies should be receiving them in December.

Jocelyn Sladen introduced her long-time friend Ann Harmon, who spoke to us about her lifelong interest in bees. Ann had set up several informational tables with items of interest to share, but the wind was too brisk. As she talked, Ann sent around covered petri dishes filled with the bees she was speaking about. We could observe close up the size and coloration differences between the non-native honeybee, the bumble bee, the carpenter bee, and some of the other less well-known natives which are so important to our pollination. The honeybee is so valuable because it is a *dedicated* pollinator—it will not leave a plant or flower until it has visited all the flowers. We could see from the specimens that bees are furry. Honeybee hairs are *plumose*, that is feather-like permitting pollen to cling. Butterflies and beetles are pollinators too, but their smooth surfaces don’t collect as much pollen as bees.

Ann assured us that if we are stung, it is most likely because we invaded the bee’s space. She told us that a male carpenter bee, that may appear aggressive guarding the nest, is actually incapable of stinging us because he has no stinger. Ann stressed the importance of our numerous native bees as pollinators in our natural ecosystems, even though their value has never been scientifically quantified.



Richard Stromberg



Marion Lobstein

Since retiring from teaching at Northern Virginia Community College, Marion Lobstein has moved from Manassas to Warrenton, so she now lives in the Piedmont Chapter area. She has always been a staunch support of the Piedmont Chapter and VNPS across the state as well as her local chapter, the Prince William Wildflower Society.

Recently she has been writing articles for *Wild News*, the Prince William Wildflower Society newsletter, regarding general background as well as taxonomic changes of some of our native plants. Deanna High, editor of the newsletter has been editing these articles and adding images to the articles. *Wild News* can be seen on the Prince William section of the VNPS website (<http://vnps.org/wp/pwws/>). Marion's most recent article is on Goldenrods. The Prince William web page also has a "Botanizing with Marion" section at <http://vnps.org/wp/pwws/botanizing-with-marion/> where you can read other articles and see the color pictures and photos Deanna has added to these articles.

In the spring of 2013, Marion will offer a workshop at the State Arboretum at Blandy on using the newly published *Flora of Virginia*. It will be sponsored by VNPS (Piedmont and Prince William Chapters) and Foundation of the State Arboretum. These workshop sessions will focus on using the dichotomous keys in the new *Flora of Virginia*, how to recognize plant families in the field, and changes in plant taxonomy reflected in our new *Flora* relative to older resources used in plant identification.

The



Leaflet

**PIEDMONT CHAPTER
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Curlyheads (*Clematis ochroleuca*)



Tulip-tree
Liriodendron tulipifera

Richard Stromberg