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Shenandoah Chapter VNPS

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Green-headed coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*)
on the edge of Madison Run, late August.
Photo by Mark Gatewood.



Northern Metalmark photographed by Mike Smith at Braley Pond in July.

*Send your native plant photos for possible inclusion in future newsletters to shenandoahchapter@gmail.com



Hotchkiss Prairie Walk

Lora Steiner

In mid-August, a small group visited Hotchkiss Prairie in Bath County, a prairie remnant that features many rare plants once common throughout our region. We observed two varieties of mountain mint, *Verbena hastata* (American vervain), *Heterotheca villosa* (hairy goldenaster), *Veronicastrum virginicum* (Culver's root), and lots of ironweed. There were also several varieties of native grasses, including *Tripsacum dactyloides* (Eastern Gamagrass). A few things were past bloom, including a large patch of irises and *liatris* (blazing star).

One of the delights and challenges of observing plants in their natural environment is trekking around in often hip-high grasses and flowers; the reward was well worth the adventure!

More photos [here](#).

Upcoming Events

[Chapter Events Page!](#)

Next up is a nature journaling and botanical art workshop with Betty Gatewood. This workshop will be held at the Edith J Carrier Arboretum Pavilion on September 23rd. Due to limited capacity, registration for this event will be required. \$5 registration fee covers the facility rental. [Register Here.](#)

Our fall webinar series is off to a great start! This series of informative webinars by Dr. Iara Lacher will be offered the first Wednesday of September, October, and November at 5:30pm. Each of Iara's 45-minute talks will be followed by a Q&A session. The monthly topics are:

- October: Invasive Plants and Native Alternatives- The typical neighborhood garden store stocks non-native invasive plants that customers unknowingly buy. This talk provides native alternatives for some of the most popular and disruptive non-native plants.
- November: Designing Landscapes with Native Plants- An overview of some of the considerations when planning out your own native plant garden, and when to ask for expert help.

[Register Here](#) for the fall webinar series. Please register at least 6 hours before the webinar to allow us ample time to get the link out to all attendees. Only register once! One \$10 registration fee gives you access to all three webinars.

Also in October is a guided walk at Maple Flat Ponds with John Holden. This walk will take place October 4th at 10am. Check out the [event page here](#) for more information. This event is free but [registration is required](#) due to limited capacity.

And finally, October 22nd will be our second annual Fall plant swap and sale. This [free event will take place on October 22nd from 2-4pm at Oakdale Park](#) (shelter #3) in Bridgewater, VA. After the swap, we will hold a short chapter meeting to update on pertinent information, vote on bylaws, and officially vote on the board for the upcoming year.

You do not have to bring plants to swap in order to come! The chapter will have a selection of plants for sale, there are often leftovers from the swap, and Little Bluestem Nursery will be at the swap/sale again this year!

Chapter Board

We need to officially elect a board! The full chapter needs to vote on approving the bylaws as well. This process will start at our October plant swap/sale and meeting and official voting will be conducted online, so no trip to the polls is required. Barbara Brothers and Ivy Makia have agreed to serve on the nominating committee (thank you!) along with Katy Melton Simpson. If you would like to make a nomination, please [contact Katy](#).

Everyone on the current interim board who served for the first year is willing to continue serving.

As we've worked together this past year, our underlying goals have always been collaboration, transparency, and fun—we're grateful to everyone who has contributed time, energy, and knowledge to this work, and we appreciate your input as we continue to forge ahead.

From the interim board: Great big thanks to our 157 dues-paying members! We literally would not have this chapter without you. In fact, just a little over a year ago, we didn't. In summer 2022, a handful of folks set a goal to find a critical mass of 35 people to get the chapter going again after several years of dormancy, and now, here we are!

Opportunities to Volunteer

Outreach to Garden Centers

As part of the Plant Ridge & Valley Natives Initiative (see bottom of letter for details), Barbara Brothers has been busy working this year with several garden centers to encourage them to stock more native plants and to gently educate them about invasive species. Thanks to Eunice, Kelly, Susan, and others who have reached out individually to local garden centers also. If you would be willing to help Barbara with the work of partnering with more garden centers to encourage them to carry more natives, and to affirm them when they do, she would be glad

include regionally native species and want to have volunteers check periodically for accuracy in displays. Contact Barbara by email at barbarabroth@gmail.com or by phone at 540-255-4032.

The Plant Guide, 2nd edition

In just a few months since publication of the plant guide Plant Ridge & Valley Natives: A Guide for Gardeners, we have sold most of the 2,000 copies we printed. Before our next printing, we'd like to make some small edits. If you have found any errors or if you have suggestions, please share them with Anna Maria at shenandoahchapter@gmail.com. Anna Maria will manage the revision process in InDesign, and Barbara will organize the volunteers and distribution. We plan to use Mid-Valley Press again for the printing since they did a great job with our first edition. Isaac has volunteered to manage the photos as he did on the first printing.

Monarch Waystations

Linda Matkins is interested in organizing volunteers to support monarch butterflies and waystations. If you have ideas and time you would like to contribute to that effort, please contact Linda Matkins directly: linda.matkins@gmail.com

Leading a Walk, Talk, or Workshop

If you are willing to lead a native plant identification walk or other type of activity sometime in the next several months, please reach out to Katy Melton Simpson who coordinates our chapter events: katymeltonsimpson@gmail.com

Thank you to our volunteers!

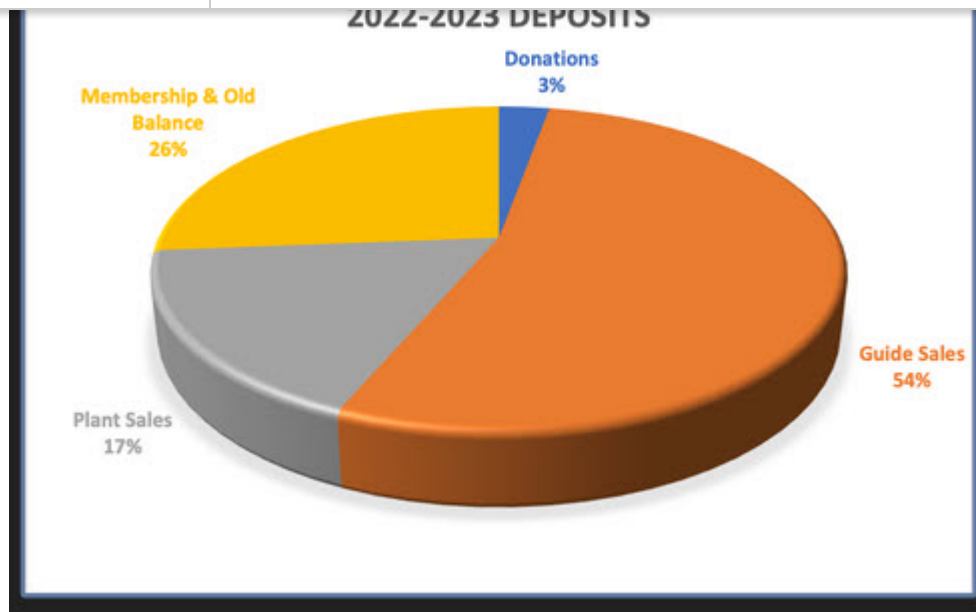


Jun, John Holden, Ron Stoltfus and Mike Smith (who took the photo) removed about 5 garbage bags of garlic mustard at the least trillium site near Bother Knob.

Let's give a shout-out to Mike Smith for his ongoing monitoring of several native plant sites and raising awareness for how Shenandoah Chapter can advocate for them.

Stats Spot

A spot for a quick look at the chapter. This month is a visual from our treasurer Isaac Matlock.



Fall Webinar Series

Our first webinar (this past Wednesday, September 6th) was a fantastic introduction to the ‘why’ of native plants. If you are new to native plants or are a little shaky on understanding the reason that natives are so important, Dr. Iara Lacher’s presentation will help clear things up for you. Webinars are recorded, so register now and before the next webinar, you will get both a link to the previous recording(s) as well as the link for the next webinar.

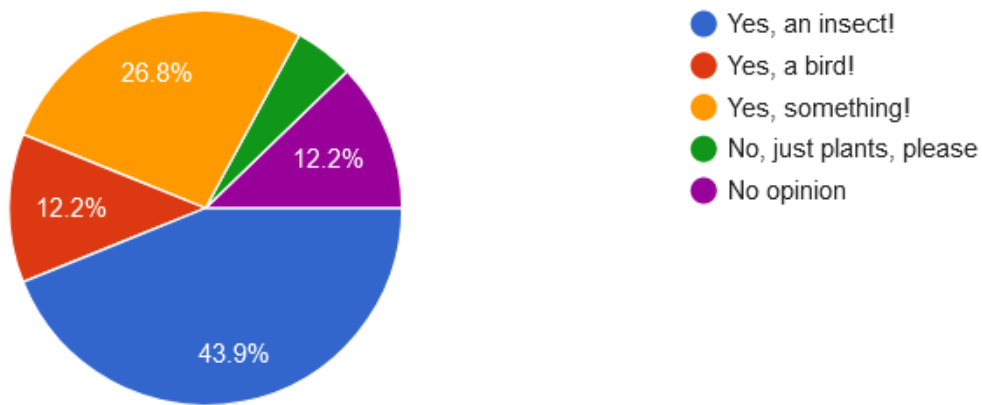
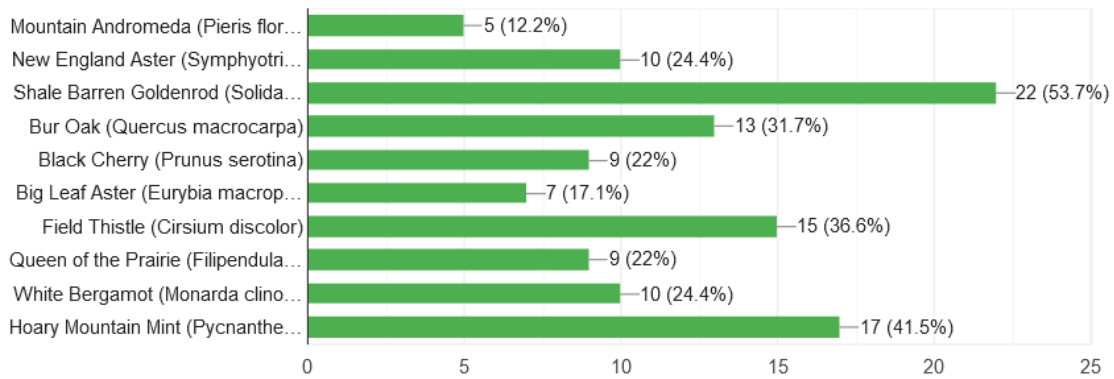
New Chapter Logo in the Works

We had 41 members cast their votes for the Shenandoah Chapter logo. This logo will help to visually distinguish Shenandoah Chapter projects from the Plant Ridge & Valley Natives work (explained below) that the chapter also coordinates. What’s the distinction? **In short, Shenandoah Chapter advocates for wild plants and wild places, while the Plant Ridge & Valley Natives marketing initiative promotes the use of native plants in human-centered private and public spaces.**

We believe both kinds of efforts are vital for the survival and health of our

are engaged in both kinds of work, and we support them all we can.

Chapter member and graphic designer Patty Sechi and artist/garden designer Anne Elise Lintelman (who drew the Plant Ridge & Valley Natives logo) have volunteered to team up to create our new Shenandoah Chapter logo. Anna Maria met with them both over tea to discuss trying to integrate the top three plants plus one insect.





Plant Ridge and Valley Native Plants!

The *Plant Ridge & Valley Natives* guide has received wonderful from individuals and our partner organizations. We are planning now to revise this winter and release a second edition in spring 2024. We raised \$15,000 to support the first printing and will need about that much again to pay for the next printing. Sales have allowed us to raise some seed money for the second edition, but we will need to do some additional fundraising and another round of pre-orders, too.

During fall 2023, the state-wide native plants campaigns will focus on encouraging folks to plant more native trees and shrubs.

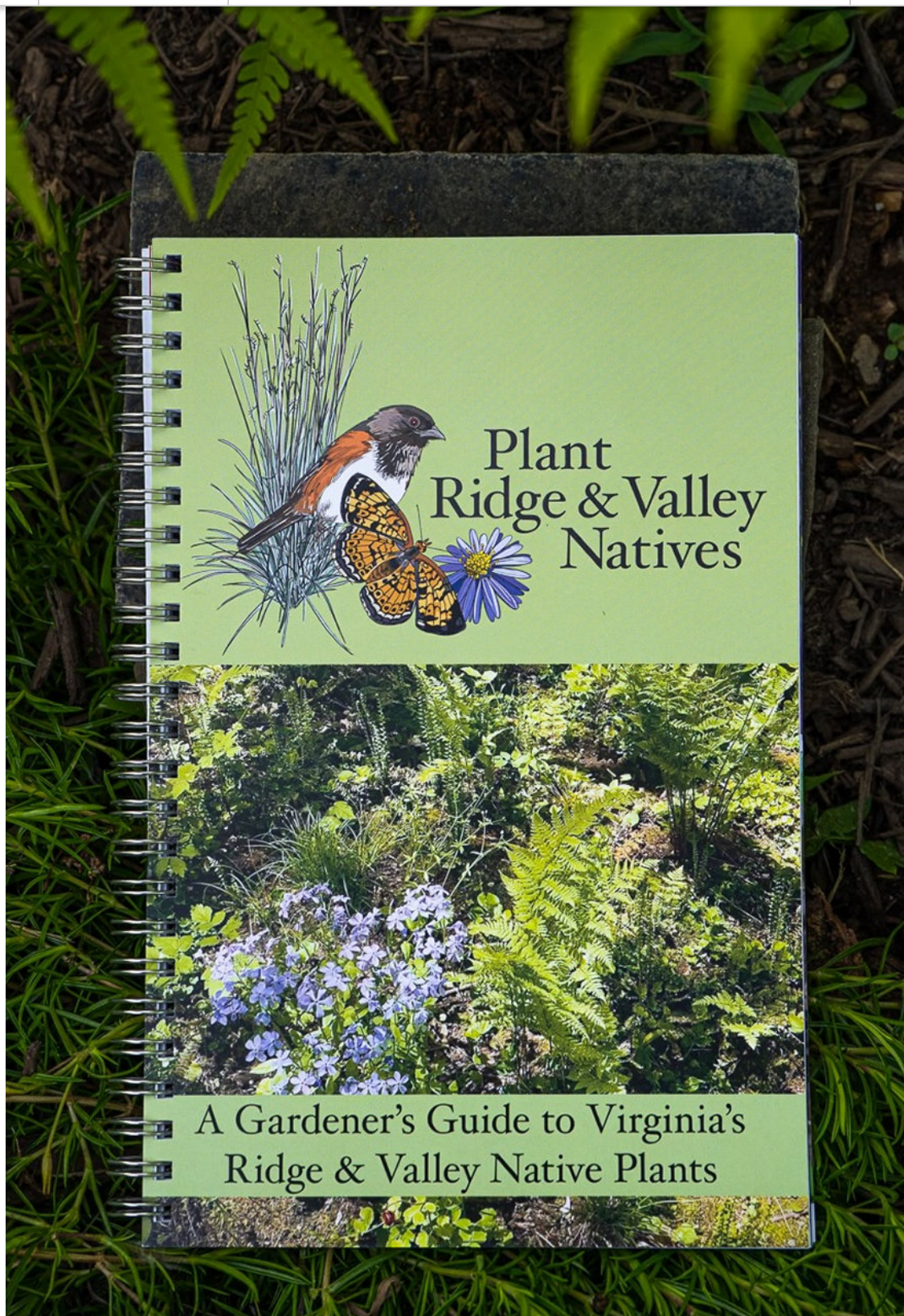
counties included in the Shenandoah Chapter but also six more: The Virginia Ridge & Valley (also called the “Mountain” region in state publications): Frederick, Clarke, Shenandoah, Warren, Page, Rockingham, Highland, Augusta, Bath, Rockbridge, and Alleghany.

It is part of a state-wide effort to market native plants for home gardening and landscapes. This effort originated under the leadership of Virginia Witmer from the Department of Environmental Quality in the Coastal Zone as part of the Chesapeake Bay clean-up efforts, and has spread state-wide due to its usefulness and popularity. Learn more at www.plantvirginianatives.org

The plant guide is available for [order online for \\$15/copy](#) (including sales tax and shipping).

Follow this effort on the associated Facebook group and [page](#) – Plant Ridge and Valley Native Plants.

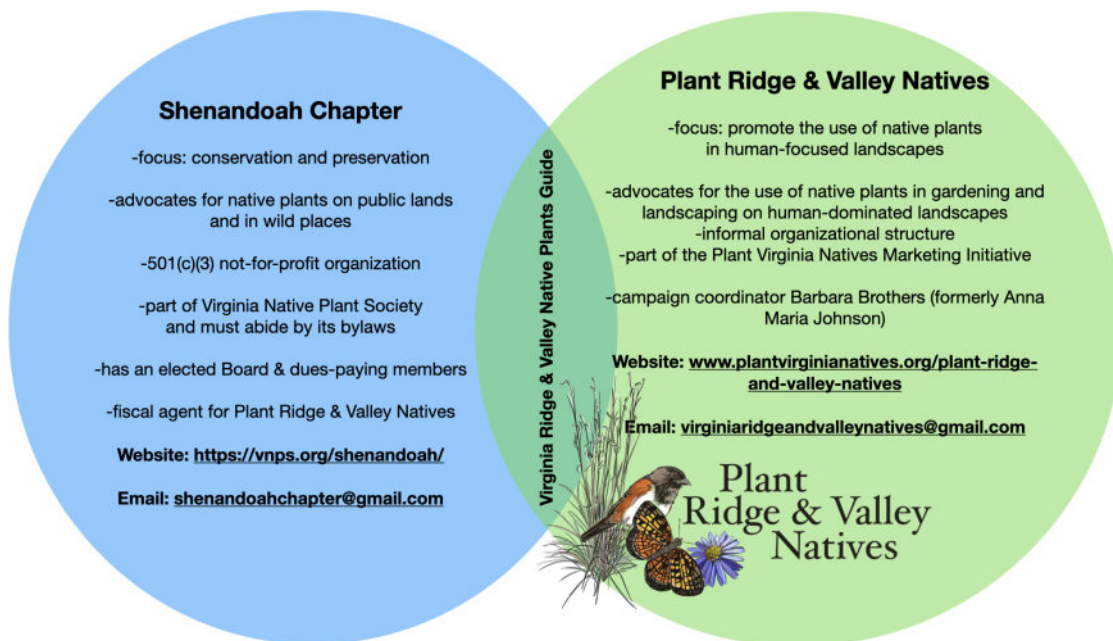
DONATE



Our Partners (whose pre-order contributions supported the cost of our first printing)

- Blue Ridge PRISM
- Blue Ridge Wildlife Center
- Central Valley Master Gardeners
- Edith J. Carrier Arboretum
- Friends of the Middle River
- Foundation of the State Arboretum of Virginia (State Farm at Blandy)
- Headwaters Master Naturalists
- John C. Myers Elementary School
- Plains Elementary School
- Rockbridge Area Master Gardeners
- Valley Conservation Council
- Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources
- Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation
- Virginia Native Plant Society (VNPS)
- Piedmont Chapter, VNPS
- Shenandoah Chapter, VNPS

In case you are wondering, “what’s the relationship between Shenandoah Chapter and Plant Ridge & Valley Natives?” — here is a visual aid.



Shenandoah Chapter is part of the Virginia Native Plant Society and is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization with an elected board and a set of bylaws. VNPS works on

shenandoahchapter@gmail.com. The current president is Anna Maria Johnson.

Shenandoah Chapter serves as the fiscal agent for the **Plant Ridge & Valley Natives Marketing Initiative**. The Plant Ridge & Valley Natives marketing initiative is an informal partnership between public, private, and government agencies all working to promote native plants in gardens, public spaces, landscapes, garden centers, and elsewhere. Learn more about Virginia's regional native plants marketing initiative at <https://www.plantvirginiannatives.org/virginia-regional-native-plant-campaigns-guides>. During the past two years, Anna Maria has served as the coordinator for the Plant Ridge & Valley Natives marketing initiative, but now Barbara Brothers is taking on that role. Anna Maria will continue to help Barbara with the plant guide and other activities, but Barbara will be the lead contact person for garden-related activities. You can reach her at barbarabroth@gmail.com.

Please send [Elaine Smith](#) any items for the next newsletter!



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