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Shenandoah Chapter VNPS

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Spring!



Mertensia virginica, by Elaine Smith.

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



Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU, 35th Anniversary!

This year marks the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum's 35th anniversary! For the past 35 years, the Arboretum at JMU has served as a public greenspace and promotes knowledge of the natural world through institutional research and educational opportunities geared towards visitors of all ages and backgrounds.

The Arboretum's theme this year is Seeding the Next 35 Years. To honor this, the Arboretum staff is embarking on a mission to usher in a future defined by Restoration, Resilience, and Reciprocity.

Ongoing Projects & Goals:

- Enhance existing planting around the main pond and pond patio areas by adding more layered planting.
- Reduce lawn and erosion by establishing a wildflower garden and a native meadowscape. These spaces will serve as a haven for pollinators and birds and be a flowerful array of perennials on the hillside above the pond and near the Sinclair Garden.

and replanted. In addition to the Labyrinth, this native shade garden will add a new layer to the forest for the benefit of wildlife and visitors coming and going from the Labyrinth.

- In the further upper reaches of the Arboretum, one can discover the beginnings of a stumpery garden. Wonderful stumps & root plates will be featured along the upper trail where an abundance of ferns and woodland perennials will be planted to grace the trail edge and surround the stumpery that serve as natural sculptures that will provide interest for years as they slowly decompose back into the soil beneath them.

The Great Garden Giveback is a campaign to encourage lovers of this woodland sanctuary to support in any way possible. Any action to support the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum will have a positive impact on their pursuit to make for a more diverse and resilient woodland.

Ways You Can Support:

- Become a member (www.jmu.edu/arboretum/support/membership.shtml)
 - Become a volunteer (www.jmu.edu/arboretum/support/volunteer.shtml)
 - Donate to the General Arboretum Fund (www.jmu.edu/arboretum/support/index.shtml)
 - Make a special plant purchase during our seasonal plant sales (<https://www.jmu.edu/arboretum/plant-sales.shtml>)
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Erythronium umbilicatum ssp. *umbilicatum* (Dimpled Trout Lily) with mining bee, above, and Anna Maria Johnson exploring the trout lily patch at Heron Cove, below.

Photos by member Steven David Johnson



Trout Lilies at Heron Cove, by Anna Maria Johnson

When our daughters left the nest, my husband (photographer Steven David Johnson) and I wanted to continue having a shared project, so we bought some soggy acres at the spot in Broadway where Linville Creek flows into the Shenandoah North Fork. We enjoy watching the land to see what plants, animals, fungi, and detritus appear each season. His cameras have captured songbirds, beavers, mink, muskrats, foxes, raccoons, and even river otters! As for me, I prefer to watch the plants.

In winter, the putty root leaves add bold geometry to an otherwise bleary corner of landscape (be sure to read last month's article by Mark Gatewood for more about putty root). By March, spice bush flowers bloom and spring ephemerals—including bloodroot, bluebells, spring beauties, and trout lilies—emerge. The earliest of these are the trout lilies and spring beauties, attracting various bees including specialist and generalist, native and introduced. At first, I assumed the trout lilies were *Erythronium americanum* ssp. *americanum* (Yellow Trout Lily), but after keying it out carefully using the Flora of Virginia app, I discovered we instead have *Erythronium umbilicatum* ssp. *umbilicatum* (Dimpled Trout Lily), which is subtly different. It is possible we have both species at Heron Cove, but the Yellow Trout Lily usually blooms 1-2 weeks later on sites shared by both species, so I will have to keep watching and see!

From the Flora of Virginia app, I learned there is also such a thing as *Erythronium umbilicatum* var. *monostylum*, but it is endemic to high elevations of the Southern

BTW, if you use Facebook, you might enjoy following [Steven David Johnson](#) for more photos of the natural world at Heron Cove, the Shenandoah River, and beyond.

RESOURCES:

If you would like to learn more about using the Flora of Virginia app to more accurately identify plants in the field, I highly recommend the one-hour webinar created by the Flora of Virginia Project. It introduces the audience to additional features of the app such as creating special plant lists, identifying native versus introduced species in Virginia, indicating which counties each plant has been documented in, learning about natural communities, and the history of botany in Virginia. There is a one-time fee to download the app to use for life. Few apps have changed my life as much as this one!

Link to the app: <https://floraofvirginia.org/flora-app/>

Link to [webinar about how to use the app](#)

NATIVE PLANT SALE AT GYPSY HILL PARK, STAUNTON EARTH DAY, APRIL 20

Our chapter will have a table of locally grown native plants at the Shenandoah Green “Staunton Earth Day”, 11:30-3. If you are able to donate plants for the sale, please email Barbara Brothers (barbarabroth@gmail.com) for more information, or with questions. Our table was very popular last year, so we need and welcome your contributions! Also, please let us know if you are interested in helping at the sales table, both with sales and answering questions about growing native plants.

News and Action Items

- Chapter membership is up to 130, according to the state membership report. This is up from 68 last year. We appreciate our dues-paying members since they help the Chapter fund our activities. If any of our readers aren't members yet, please visit the state [website](#) and join! Be sure to choose the Shenandoah Chapter.
- Art Exhibition: Riverine by Steven David and Anna Maria Johnson. Bridgewater College. More info [here](#).
- Callery Pear Exchange Program: the Virginia Department of Forestry is launching the Callery Pear Exchange program to promote the

their ability to spread within our natural areas. This program encourages the removal of invasive Callery pear trees by providing Virginia landowners with a replacement native tree to plant. For more information go [here](#).

Events

We have a number of events coming up for you! Plant sales, tours, walks, webinars and more! Be sure to keep an eye on our [Chapter Events Page](#)!

Pollinators in Your Yard Saturday, March 23, 2024, 1-4 pm, Ice House Building, downtown Harrisonburg. Several chapter members will be presenting and/or attending. This free event includes updates on Harrisonburg's Pollinator Program, as well as informative talks on creating pollinator-friendly spaces and protecting pollinators from invasive species and pesticides; education tables/interactive displays to learn the best types of plants to attract pollinators, ways to get involved with local community science projects, potential funding sources for pollinator habitat and more. There will also be children's activities, a pollinator bingo card, and a chance to win prizes.

Guided walk near Maple Flats with John Holden to see special wildflowers and maybe even some swamp pinks in bloom on Saturday, April 13th. This free walk is limited to 6 participants due to the sensitive nature of the area. [More information and a registration link here](#). *Walk full, waitlist available*

Garlic Mustard Pull, Hone Quarry, April 13. Join with the Headwaters Master Naturalists. More information and sign up [here](#)!

Plant Sale at Earth Day Staunton on April 20th. See above for more details and how to participate.

Guided walk at Maple Flats with John Holden to see azaleas in bloom and other spring flora on Sunday, April 21st. This free walk is limited to 12 participants. [More information and a registration link here](#). *Walk full, waitlist available*

Guided walk at Madison Run fire road with Mark and Betty Gatewood to (hopefully) see lupines in bloom among other spring botanical beauties on Saturday, April 27th

A **Spring Native Plant Tour** is in the works! HOSTS NEEDED! The tentative date for this year's tour is Sunday, April 28th to highlight spring ephemerals. If you would like to be a host site for the tour, please fill out [this Google Form](#). We may plan a late summer tour as well. Be on the lookout for more information about plant tours as we head into the spring.

Summer Equinox guided walk at Madison Run fire road with the Gatewoods to see early summer flora on Thursday, June 20th (rain date Thursday, June 27th). This free walk is limited to 12 participants. [More information and a registration link here](#).

Native Gardening 101 Webinar Series: Are you new to native plants? New to gardening? Or just having trouble figuring out what to do when? Join us for a three-part webinar series to get you started or help you along in your native plant journey. Ivy will walk us through the basics of what to be thinking about, planning, and doing in each season. Whether you are an experienced gardener or totally new to native plants, join us to learn tips and tidbits for everyone. *One [registration](#) (\$10) gains you access to all three webinars and their recordings.*

Jump Start Your Growing Season – February 17, 2024 @ 10am

Summer Maintenance Dos and Don'ts – June 8, 2024 @ 10 am

Fall Maintenance & Planning Ahead – September 7, 2024 @ 10 am

Registration links will be emailed the Friday afternoon before each webinar. Please be sure to [register at least 24 hours in advance](#) to ensure you get the link on time!

Virginia Native Plant Society, Annual Meeting: We are excited to announce that this year's VNPS Annual Meeting will be in our service area at the Massanetta Springs Conference Center in Rockingham County from September 20th - 22nd 2024. More information will be available later in the year. If you have any splendid ideas for walks in the vicinity (or stellar people to lead them!), send your suggestions to [Lora](#).

Other events in the works:

- Fall plant swap/sale in Bridgewater, VA.
- Fall webinar series with Dr. Iara Lacher.

We would love to schedule more guided walks and need people to lead them! If you are willing to lead a walk (Cowbane, anyone?), please [email Katy](#) to get something scheduled. All you have to do is let us know when, where, and if we need a sign-up



Ridge and Valley Region News

Barbara Brothers

All 32 libraries and library branches in our 11 county region now have a copy of the “Plant Ridge & Valley Natives” guide book for their bookshelves. One of our partners, The VA Department of Wildlife Resources, generously donated the books for this project. At least one of the library branches has a native plant garden project underway, and another is planning a native plant talk program for this summer.

Native plants and/or guide books are available for sale at the following garden centers and/or retail stores: JMD Garden Center, Staunton; Waynesboro

Station, Earth Center for Forestland Stew, Harrisonburg, Woodstock Gardens, Massanutten Country Corner, Luray; Seven Bends Nursery, Winchester; Stone Soup Bookstore, Waynesboro.

Remember that this guide—and the other regional guides like it—can be downloaded for [free as a PDF](#). Just click on the correct region and choose “Download PDF.”

The “Plant Virginia Natives” [campaign](#) is a project of the VA Dept of Environmental Resources. The focus this year of that campaign is “Throwing Shade – Plant Virginia Trees and Shrubs” through the VA Dept of Forestry. 10 nurseries/garden centers throughout the Commonwealth were chosen to represent that campaign. And three of them are in our region: Waynesboro Landscape and Garden Center, Woodstock Gardens, and Seven Bends Nursery.

Thank you to our volunteers!

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



*Shenandoah Chapter
Conserving Wild Flowers and Wild Places*

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