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Shenandoah Chapter
Conserving Wild Flowers and Wild Places



Visit our website

FLOWERS and FIELDS:





Physostegia virginiana (obedient plant) and *Conoclinium fistulosum* (blue mistflower)
with skipper by Leah Laszewski.

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

Voting for New Board Members!

According to our [bylaws](#), all terms are for two years, and board members may serve up to two consecutive terms in the same position. August 2025 will mark

After the October Plant Swap and member meeting, we'll send out e-ballots to vote for our next slate of board members.

Our current board members include:

Anna Maria Johnson, President

Katy Melton Simpson, VP and Events Coordinator (ending first term; willing to continue for a second term)

Elaine Smith, Secretary, Newsletter Coordinator, and Historian (ending first term; willing to continue)

***Lora Steiner**, VP and Membership Coordinator (ending first term; declining a second term)

Marty Diecchio, Treasurer (started first term in 2025)

Last month's newsletter introduced three members interested in joining the board: Anna Finch, Volunteer Coordinator (new role); Rebecca Clark, filling roles left by Lora Steiner; and Jack Monsted, Botany Chair. We will vote to confirm them in October shortly after the Fall Plant Swap.

Additional Board Nominee

Member at Large Charlie Wilfong writes: While my childhood was spent in the "country," I didn't give much thought to plants, let alone native plants. Then in my late 20's, I found myself as a homeowner and started to dabble with foundation plantings and trees on my very blank lot - the normal stuff: boxwoods, roses and the like. I even employed the service of a lawn care company to rid my lawn of weeds. This was followed by a foray into permaculture and dropping the lawn care service, thankfully.

As fate would have it, around 2015, Cheerios ran a campaign to save the bees. I thought "this sounds like a great idea; you gotta have bees." I went online and tried to find the best way to help the bees. This is when I found out there was

the pollinators we should be helping.

In the interest of keeping this short, let's just say I've spent the better part of a decade in search of all the knowledge I can find on our native plants, as well as countless hours on my property putting different practices to the test - and of course sharing all I've learned with anyone willing to listen. To date, I have over 70 native plant species and have converted at least half of my 1/3 acre lot to native habitat. Every season is a new adventure and learning opportunity with natives.



Chapter Events

- **2025 VNPS Annual Meeting**, September 19-21, 2025. Skelton 4-H Educational and Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake. Registration

- **Guided Walk** with Annette Naber and Martha Teeter, Highland County, Sunday, September 21st at 1:00 pm. Join us in this first joint event with Shenandoah Valley Conservancy on a walk around parts of a 400-acre property in Highland County. This property, located just south of Monterey, boasts a high-elevation wetlands complex, rare plants, and native gardens surrounding the home. Free registration will be through SVC on their [events page here](#). *Registration is limited!*
- **Fall Native Plant Tour, September 27th**, 10am - 1pm. This open-house style native plant tour features properties all over the region. Check out our [Native Plant Tour website](#) for addresses and information about each location! Send questions to [Katy](#).
- ~~Postponed: **Plant tour at Carol and George Taylor's 31-acres in Swoope, Virginia, October 4th**~~. Look for a rescheduled event in the spring!
- **Fall Native Plant & Seed Swap & Sale Saturday**, October 11th, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm. Oakdale Park (Bridgewater, VA), shelter #3. It's never too early to start potting up cuttings and divisions! More info [here](#).
- **Second Sundays Native Plant Social**, October 12th, 1:30-3 pm. This monthly gathering (the second Sunday of every month) provides a chance to socialize with other native plant enthusiasts. Co-hosted by the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum (providing the location) and the Shenandoah Chapter (providing refreshments)
- **VNPS Virtual Book Club**, contact [Eunice Sill](#) for more information. October 21st, 7pm via Zoom. [Crossings: How Road Ecology Is Shaping the Future of Our Planet](#), by Ben Goldfarb.
- **Guided walks?** We would love to offer more guided walks this fall. If you would like to lead a walk, please [contact Katy](#).

Events By Our Partner Organizations

- **Guided walk** with Annette Naber and Martha Teeter, Highland County, Sunday, September 21st at 1:00 pm. Join us in this first joint event with Shenandoah Valley Conservancy on a walk around parts of a 400-acre property in Highland County. This property, located just south of Monterey, boasts a high-elevation wetlands complex, rare plants, and native gardens surrounding the home. Free registration will be through SVC on their [events page here](#). *Registration is limited!*
- Invasive plant **Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR)** training. September 25, 12 - 1pm. Free webinar by [Blue Ridge PRISM](#). Learn how easy it is to report your observations from the trail using free citizen scientist tools. Become an EDRR Strike Force Scout and **save nature while you hike** – no experience required! [Register here](#).
- **Wilderness Initiative in Virginia's National Forests**. Free webinar by [Wild Virginia](#). Lynn Cameron and Ellen Stuart-Haentjens will tell the story of how the Shenandoah Mountain Act and the Virginia Wilderness Additions Act have been introduced, report on the Virginia Wilderness Committee's efforts to move the bills through Congress, and invite participants to help. [Register here](#).
- **Invasive Plant Identification Walk** by Blue Ridge PRISM at Edith J. Carrier Arboretum, October 1st from 10-11:30am. Join Jacob Edel, Invasive Management Specialist at Blue Ridge PRISM and the [Edith J. Carrier Arboretum](#) in Harrisonburg for this **FREE field training** where you'll learn how to identify invasive plants in the spring. This session includes a short hike along trails, some with uneven surfaces. **Space is limited to 20 participants**. More information and registration on the [BR PRISM website here](#).
- **Invasive Plant Identification Walk** by Blue Ridge PRISM at the State Arboretum of Virginia in Blandy, October 3rd from 10-10:45am. Join Natali Walker, Invasive Management Specialist at **Blue Ridge PRISM**, and the [State Arboretum of Virginia](#) in Boyce for this **FREE field training** where you'll learn how to identify invasive plants in the spring. This session includes a short hike along trails, some with uneven surfaces. More information and registration on the [BR PRISM website here](#).

[Blue Ridge PRISM](#). Whether you're a beginner or an expert, this session will provide valuable insights. Don't miss out on this opportunity to enhance your knowledge and skills in plant identification. The audience will have the opportunity to ask questions at the end. [Register here](#).

- **Fall/Winter Invasive Plant Control.** October 9th, 1-2pm. Free webinar by [Blue Ridge PRISM](#). Learn how to manage and control invasive plants in the autumn and winter seasons. Techniques will include manual and mechanical methods, as well as careful, strategic use of herbicides where necessary. Come ready to learn practical management skills that you can apply on your own property to help curb the spread of invasives. [Register here](#).
- **Managing Invasive Plants with Controlled Burns.** October 15, 11:30am - 1pm. Free webinar by [Blue Ridge PRISM](#). Join Jean Lorber of [The Nature Conservancy](#), Adam Coates of [Virginia Tech's Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation](#), and Paula Whyman, author of [Bad Naturalist](#), for a panel-style webinar about the history and reintroduction of controlled burns as a tool for managing invasive plants. Hear them share the pros and cons, discuss the obstacles, and give tips on whether prescribed fire is right for the land you steward. [Register here](#).
- **Next Steps for Nature** webinar with Doug Tallamy. October 16, 7pm ET. Free event by [Wild Ones](#). Even after reading books and attending talks, many still have pressing questions about ecological landscaping. In this talk, Tallamy addresses common concerns on biodiversity, invasive species, native plants, and conservation strategies, providing practical guidance and motivation to restore nature in everyday spaces. [Register here](#).
- **Invasive Plant Removal Workday** by Blue Ridge Prism, October 17th, 10am-12pm. Join in to tackle invasive plants at the [Edith J. Carrier Arboretum](#) in Harrisonburg. Learn to identify and remove invasive plants that threaten the health & enjoyment of this beautiful natural area. **Space is limited to 10 participants.** More information and registration on the [BR PRISM website here](#).
- Shenandoah Valley Conservancy's 2025 Annual **Conservation Celebration**, October 19th, 5:30-7:30pm at Brix & Columns Vineyard, \$60 per person. More information and registration on the [SVC website here](#).

11:30am. Join in to tackle invasive plants at the [State Arboretum of Virginia](#) in Boyce. Learn to identify and remove invasive plants that threaten the health & enjoyment of this beautiful natural area. **Space is limited to 10 participants.** More information on the [BR PRISM website here.](#)

- Wild Virginia November **Book Club.** November 10 at 7pm. Book: **Bad Naturalist**, by Paula Whyman. Free event by [Wild Virginia](#). [Register here.](#)

At JMD Garden Center and Market 27 Niswander Rd, Staunton, VA 24401

Native Plant Festival

Saturday, October 4th

In celebration of the official launch of our Native Plant Program, JMD Farm Market & Garden Center will be offering a modest selection of plants native to the Ridge & Valley region.

This small event is designed to serve as a community introduction to the value of native plant gardening.

Retail store will be open all day, but the real fun begins at 4:30 when our grilled lamb plates are ready to serve!

Please come out and join us for an autumn evening of native plants, quiet music, good company, and savory food!



Volunteer Opportunity: Shenandoah National Park

Shenandoah National Park is looking for Volunteer Gardeners to maintain healthy and vibrant gardens near historic buildings, including [Massanutten Lodge](#). Maintaining the gardens will help visitors better understand the lives of people who were instrumental in the park's early years.

Volunteer Gardeners will work with Rangers in the Natural and Cultural Resources Division. Volunteers will work together and divide labor throughout the year. Volunteers should have gardening experience with minimal supervision required. Tasks include:

- Working with the Museum Curator to craft an annual garden plan
- Removing weeds and woody vegetation
- Trimming vegetation near walkways
- Removing invasive species
- Making minor fence repairs
- Sowing seeds, transplant cuttings, and planting established plants
- Establishing and maintaining trellises when needed
- Watering as needed

Volunteer Gardeners may work alone or in a group. Volunteers should expect to work 8-24 hours per week shared with a team. Volunteers need to be 18 or older, with the ability to travel to garden sites. Personal protective equipment and tools may be provided; volunteers can also use their own equipment if they are able and comfortable. Volunteers should be prepared for a variety of weather conditions and gardening on slopes with the presence of biting/stinging insects and snakes.

Interested individuals should visit this [link](#).



Massanutten Lodge

Volunteer Opportunities: Bridgewater and Natural Chimneys

- Member Katie Rhodes, inspired to look for opportunities to add more native plantings in our communities, has obtained permission to turn an area at the Bridgewater 7/11 into a **native garden**! Not only will this improve the aesthetic appeal of the lot, but it's an excellent opportunity for a high visibility native planting in the community. If you are interested in learning more or helping out, please contact [Marty](#).
- Seeking enthusiastic volunteers to assist with revitalizing the pollinator garden at **Natural Chimneys Park**. Plans include **expanding the garden**, **dividing existing plants**, and **planting new native species** to enhance this vital habitat.

Work Dates:

- **Friday, October 3rd** | 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM
- **Friday, October 10th** | 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM
- **Saturday, October 11th** | 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

cut back invasive plants and shrubs along the Wildlife Trail.

Date: Saturday, October 4th

Time: 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting Point: Trailhead off Howdyshell Drive

What to Bring:

- Pruning shears, saws, and hedge trimmers
- Water to stay hydrated
- Wear a long-sleeved shirt and sturdy shoes for protection

Questions about either Natural Chimneys events? Contact [Cheryl Shull](#).

Blue Ridge PRISM Weed Alert:

Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*)

Blue Ridge PRISM Recommendations

Now is the time to identify this highly invasive plant. It is currently flowering.

Use our guide to identify Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) in the landscape.

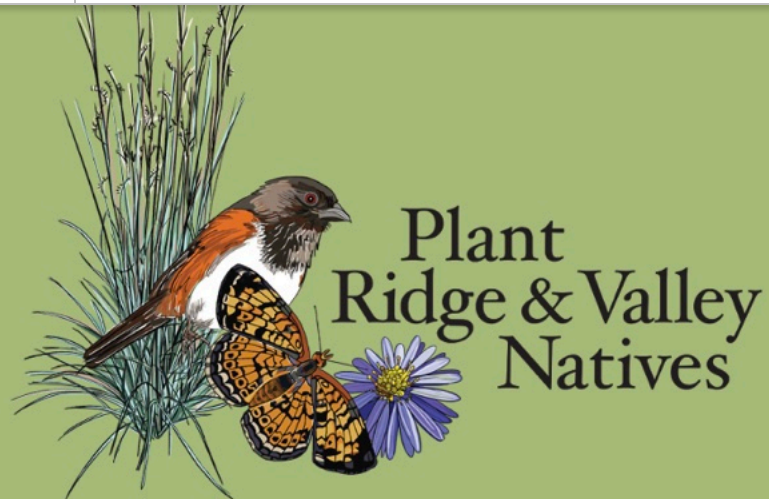
- Apply foliar spray: *After the flowers wilt and at least two weeks before the first frost. This is a two to six week window depending on where you find knotweed. Timing is crucial.*
- **X** Do not cut Japanese Knotweed. This can trigger exponential growth. (A whole new plant can grow from a segment smaller than a fingernail.)
- **X** Do not dig.
- **X** Do not mow.
- **X** Do not cover with tarp.
- **X** Do not burn.

For more information go [here](#).



Image: Emma Erlen, University of New Hampshire, Bugwood.org

Ridge & Valley Native Plant Campaign!



Plant Ridge & Valley Natives



A Gardener's Guide to Virginia's Ridge & Valley Native Plants

The Ridge & Valley Native Plant campaign encourages our members to support local plant nurseries that stock our native plants.

Until Next Time!



Donate!

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



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