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*Shenandoah Chapter*  
*Conserving Wild Flowers and Wild Places*



Visit our website



The leaves and lower buds are Mountain Laurel, *Kalmia latifolia*. The bud with a bit of pink showing is Pinxter Azalea, *Rhododendron catawbiense*. Barbara Brothers.

\*Send your native plant photos for possible inclusion in future newsletters to [shenandoahchapter@gmail.com](mailto:shenandoahchapter@gmail.com)

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## Chapter Board

**Anna Maria Johnson:** President

**Katy Melton Simpson:** VP and Events Coordinator

**Elaine Smith:** Secretary, Newsletter Coordinator, and Historian

**Marty Diecchio:** Treasurer

**Anna Finch:** Membership and Volunteer Coordinator

**Rebecca Clark:** Technology & Education Chair

**Jack Monsted:** Botany Chair

**Charlie Wilfong:** Member at Large

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## Chapter Events

- **Second Sundays Native Plant Social**, February 8th, 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. Next meeting will be February 17th, 7pm via Zoom. [How to Love a Forest: The Bittersweet Work of Tending a Changing World](#), by Ethan Tapper.
- **Guided walks?** We would love to offer more guided walks. If you would like to lead a walk, please [contact Katy](#).

## Winter Webinar Series with Jack Monsted, Starting February 5th

Join us for a three-part winter webinar series starting on February 5th. Jack Monsted will present three webinars, one each on the first Thursday of February,

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the day of the program. Webinars will be recorded and links to the recordings emailed to all *registered* participants within a couple of days after each event.

One-time \$10 registration covers all three webinars. For more information and to register go [here](#).



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## Plant Sale April 25th

Our annual Plant Sale will be on April 25th at Earth Day Staunton. Please think about sharing plants with us! Contact [Katy](#) if you'd like to contribute plants or assist on the day of the event.

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## Plant Tours, Spring and Fall:

Plans are in the works for Native Plant Tours in May and August. Tentative dates are May 30th and 31st, and August 8th and 9th. Times will be Saturday 10am - 4pm and Sunday 1 - 4pm. Please reach out to [Katy](#) if you are interested in hosting!



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## From Blue Ridge PRISM

Legislative Alert:

Four important invasive plant bills are making their way through the Virginia Legislature. Blue Ridge PRISM supports these bills. More information [here](#).

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## The Allure of the Dormant Season

January 4, 2024

It's easy to love a garden in spring. The emerging growth and bursting buds are like walking into a fully stocked pastry shop—the treats are everywhere. It takes a different approach to appreciate a place's charms in dormancy.



*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium* (narrowleaf mountainmint)

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## Volunteer Opportunity: Veterans Garden of Augusta, Staunton

My name is Jordan Foster, and I'm a member of the Virginia Native Plant Society (and proud owner of a new native plant hat!). I'm also coordinating the Veterans Garden of Augusta, a small nonprofit project focused on horticulture therapy, veterans growing vegetables, learning together, and donating our harvests back to the community.

Next to the garden, there's about a quarter acre of steep hillside that isn't usable for raised beds, but I'd love to turn it into a native meadow with grasses and wildflowers to pull in pollinators and make the space both beautiful and functional.

I've already spoken with the City's Public Works Director, they mow a strip along the road now, they are letting me take over that area if I can make it look nice and reduce the mowing for them. I'd love to partner with the Native Plant Society to plan and plant this space. I've already partnered with Kadrin Anderson the biology and botany professor at Mary Baldwin, the Master Naturalist program as well as Staunton Tree Stewards with a background as a professional landscape architect to help create a solid plan for this project. I'm looking for any guidance, plugs, seeds, or local seed collection help anyone might be willing to share.

I've started the process with VCAP pollinator meadow restoration cost sharing program to make this happen. We don't have a budget yet (the garden is under a nonprofit), so any donations, extra plants, or advice would go a long way. My goal is to make this hillside something special a place that supports pollinators, educates visitors, and connects veterans with Virginia's native plants.

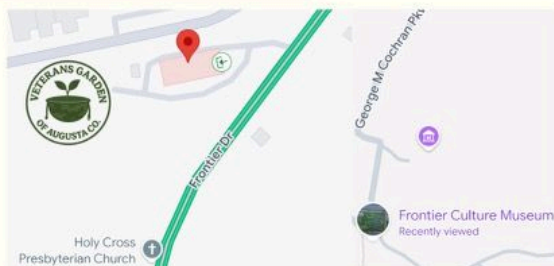


### Learn some, grow some, give some.

The Veterans Garden of Augusta is a community-based, not-for-profit project created by and for veterans, and it's still a work in progress. Our goal is to build a space where veterans can grow food, connect, and find healing, but we need help to get there. Whether you can share advice, volunteer your time, lend equipment, or simply want to join the garden. Every contribution matters.

**Interested?** Let's connect! Let me show you the garden and join our community!

#### Directions



212 Frontier Dr, Staunton, VA



Website

Jordan Foster: (540) 280-5454 · VeteransGardenofAugusta@gmail.com  
www.VeteransGardenofAugusta.org

If you are interested in helping/volunteering please contact Anna Finch, at [annafinch85@aol.com](mailto:annafinch85@aol.com)

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## Events through Other Organizations

- **Yardenalities: A Design Shortcut for a Backyard Makeover**, February 3rd, 12-1:30pm. Free event through [Homegrown National Park](#). Some yards just

you've ever struggled to make your yard reflect you, this workshop will help. Yardenalities: A Design Shortcut for a Backyard Makeover is all about recognizing your personal style and learning how to apply it in a way that feels cohesive, exciting, and alive. More information and [registration here](#).

- **Invasive Plant Identification Walk**, February 4th, 10-11am. Free event through [Blue Ridge PRISM](#). 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 fall. This session includes a short hike along trails, some with uneven surfaces. More information and [registration here](#).
- **Winter Webinar: Pesticide - Free Landscapes for Pollinators and People: How We Can Help**, February 5th, 6:30pm. Free webinar through [Pollinator Pathway](#). Emily May, Agricultural Conservation Lead with the Xerces Society's pesticide reduction program, will provide a broad overview of pesticide toxicity to pollinators and how that has been increasing since the 1990s. She will discuss some of the most harmful common lawn and garden pesticides, including neonicotinoids and diamides, and the science linking them to dramatic declines in pollinators and birds worldwide. For more information and to register, [click here](#).
- **Invasive Plant Training Workday**, February 6th, 11am-1pm. Free event through [Blue Ridge PRISM](#). Join Blue Ridge PRISM and **The Nature Conservancy** to learn about invasive plants and how to treat them. We are partnering to offer a FREE invasive plant training workday at [Fernbrook Preserve](#). PRISM staff will go over how to identify and treat invasives, particularly vines like English ivy and bittersweet. Following the training, we will put this knowledge to use by treating invasives within the preserve. Questions? Please contact Brynna Strand at [brynna.strand@tnc.org](mailto:brynna.strand@tnc.org). More information and event [registration here](#).
- **Keep it Fresh: The Salt Watch Community Science Initiative**. February 10th, 7pm. Free webinar through [Wild Virginia](#). Learn about **Salt Watch**, an established, nationwide community science program led by the **Izaak Walton League of America**. Salt Watch works to raise awareness and promote advocacy around the impacts of road salt runoff, while equipping volunteers with free test kits to measure chloride levels in local waterways.

occasionally how road salt affects the waters we all depend on. More information and [registration here](#).

- **Landscaping with Native Plants**, February 14th, 10:30am. Free event through [Central Shenandoah Valley Master Gardeners](#). Hosted at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU. Create a backyard bounty to provide food and habitat for pollinators and wildlife. Discover a diverse array of native plants providing year-round beauty for you and benefits for all critters. More information and [registration here](#).
- **Conservation Stewards Workday**, February 27th, 10am - 12pm. Free event through [Blue Ridge PRISM](#). Join Blue Ridge PRISM as we 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 here](#).

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## 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.

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## Until Next Time!

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Donate!

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



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