



Shenandoah Chapter *Virginia Native Plant Society* *October 2012*

Mission Statement:

We are a conservation organization dedicated to conserve Virginia's native plants and their ecosystems through education, advocacy and activities that promote appreciation, stewardship and appropriate use.

Next Meeting: Thursday October 11 7:30 at Blue Ridge Community College. D Building Room D100. Guest Speaker Jon Monroe JMU biology professor will give a presentation on the plants of Jardin Georges Delaselle. Jon is an accomplished teacher and researcher who, for the past 20 years, has been stimulating students to think critically about cell biology and plant physiology. He is enthusiastic in conveying his interest in plants outside of the classroom too. He has a dynamic presentation style and is a great photographer. You won't want to miss this meeting!

As Professor Monroe explains:

In June of this past summer I had the good fortune to travel to Roscoff, France, to attend a meeting on protein-protein interactions. Don't worry, I won't say another word about that! After the meeting had an afternoon off before I flew home so I took a ferry to the Ile de Batz, rented a bicycle, and made my way to a 100-year old botanical garden called Jardin Georges Delaselle. After a period of neglect, the garden was revived in the last 25 years and is now home to a spectacular display of plants from Mediterranean climates, largely from the southern hemisphere. I could only recognize some of them to family, but fortunately they had name plates. I will share some of my photographs of both the plants and the name plates.

Upcoming Events

Saturday October 20 Remarkable Trees of Virginia Field Trip with JMU Arboretum Director Jan Sievers. This will be an all-day field trip meeting at Elkton Municipal Building Parking lot at 8:30a.m. and returning to at 5p.m. The trip will include the champion chinquapin and bur oaks of Elkton, the famous Brompton Oak of Mary Washington University and the historic gnarled Catalpas of Chatham Manor Preregistration is required and including a \$20 fee. If interested contact Gail Turnbull Assistant Director of the JMU Arboretum (540) 568 3194 turnburgl@jmu.edu.

Recent Chapter Activities

September 13 Late Summer/Early Autumn Nature Walk Tilghman Road.

Although absent our leader Joe Sharrer who was called to jury duty, Bea Woody, Lib Kyger, Anita, Michael Seth and new member June Radcliffe met on this excellent day. We saw plenty of flowers in bloom including a great field of monkshood mixed with turtleheads; and we saw ladies-tresses, evening primrose, white lettuce and a good variety of asters and goldenrods.

The VNPS 2012 Annual Meeting was held September 14-16, 2012 in Richmond,

Eleanor Baker who attended reports: I went on Maymont and James River Park field trips. The horticulturalist at Maymont has both a native plant garden and a butterfly garden established. She described major challenges of keeping bamboo in check in the Japanese Gardens and eradicating English ivy which had climbed many big trees elsewhere on the property. At James River Park, the same ivy is the biggest

invasive problem, more so than stiltgrass. The James River was extremely polluted prior to 1970s when 1) the city got public sewer system and 2) two hurricanes knocked holes in the dams which had been in place.

Friday night speaker Leonard Atkins wrote a book entitled Wildflowers of the Appalachian Trail after hiking the entire AT five times. Several founding members of VNPS were present and honored at the banquet Saturday evening.

Other Recent Activities

A couple of chapter members had participated in invasive plants removal at Big Meadows for the National Public Lands Day on September 29th. The chapter board met on September 11 at Michael Seth's house to plan for future activities and conduct business. Also member Diane Holsinger did some botanizing, mushroom hunting in Alaska – we hope she took some pictures. And then there was the trip to look for remarkable trees in the Ramsey's Draft Wilderness on September 23rd.

Asters

October is a good month for asters – our most conspicuous wildflower at this time. There are many types of native asters. All belong to the tribe of Astereae which is represented by several genera in our area. It is not clear exactly how many species there in our part of the state (24 are listed in the *Flora of West Virginia*) perhaps the *Flora of Virginia* will clarify this, but at least a dozen species can commonly be seen this time of year. One of the best known is the New England Aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*). This native plant makes a good garden flower. For more on this check out the article by Nancy Arrington in the [Prince William Chapter newsletter](#).

If you have announcements, articles or reviews, please contact Elaine Smith antigone16@comcast.net

Chapter Officers

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