



Shenandoah Chapter
Virginia Native Plant Society
November 2011

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 November 10

Place: Blue Ridge Community College Plecker 126B. Time: 7:30

Program: Chris Bolgiano will give a presentation on her new book [*Southern Appalachian Celebration: In Praise of Ancient Mountains, Old-Growth Forests, & Wilderness*](#)

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Upcoming Events

December is a quiet month but in 2012 we have a number of activities planned.

- ❖ **January 8 Winter Botany Trip:** Mark Gatewood will lead this walk at Braley Pond contact Mark at mwgatewood@gmail.com or Mike Seth at sethmj@jmu.edu if you would like to join us.
- ❖ **January 12 Meeting: Dr. Conley McMullen will give a presentation on the JMU Herbarium and on herbariums in general.** Time: 7:30. Place: BRCC Plecker 125c
- ❖ **February 9 Meeting: Chris Bowlen will give a talk on xeriscaping.** Time: 7:30. Place: BRCC Plecker 125c
- ❖ **March 9 Meeting:** Program and Place TBA
- ❖ **March 27 Deep Run Ponds Walk and Clean-Up:** Details TBA
- ❖ **April 12 Wildflower Walk to Hone Quarry:** We will do our annual April spring wildflower walk at Hone Quarry this year.
- ❖ As spring and summer come we will be busy with invasive plant removal, roadside plant monitoring, plant sales, field trips and other possible activities.

Other Announcements:

Up to Doing a Short Hike?

The Southern Shenandoah Valley Chapter of the PATC is measuring the trails in the Shenandoah Mountain area for an upcoming guidebook to be published by the PATC. This will be the first comprehensive guide to the trails of Shenandoah Mountain. Many of the hikes are short: 3-5 miles, and slow. Good hikes for less than gung-ho hikers. We would like to add descriptions of the flora as well. If interested check the website ssvc.org or contact Mike Seth sethmj@jmu.edu or Karen Waterman watermanmk@hotmail.com. The next hike is Saturday November 5 five miles off Union Springs Road Mud Pond-Blueberry Trail.

Is James Madison really “the forgotten father of American environmentalism”? If you are intrigued by that question, you're invited to attend a lecture by Andrea Wulf, design historian and award-winning author of *The Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature, and the Shaping of the American Nation* on Wednesday, November 2, at 7PM in JMU's Heath and Human Services building, Room 1302. Her beautifully illustrated talk will look at the lives of the founding fathers and how their attitude towards plants, gardens, nature, and agriculture shaped the American nation. Regarding James Madison, Ms. Wulf will

highlight his 1818 Address to the Agricultural Society of Albemarle as evidence of Madison's understanding of the balance of nature and the practical challenges facing sustainable agriculture.

This lecture is sponsored by the Department of Integrated Science & Technology, the Institute for Stewardship of the Natural World, and The Augusta Garden Club. For more information about the speaker, visit www.andreawulf.com.

2011 JMU Arboretum Collaborative Fellows present their sustainability course redesigns, an initiative generated by the Office of the President, the Center for Faculty Innovation, and the Institute for Stewardship of the Natural World. From general education to graduate seminars, the Arboretum Collaborative fellows redesigned courses integrating teaching strategies and learning outcomes that further JMU's commitment to stewardship while preparing students for a lifetime of sustainable thinking, valuing, and behaving in their own communities and lives. This event will give you the opportunity to talk with the Fellows about their experiences and inspire you to apply to the Arboretum Collaborative program.

When & Where: Thursday, November 10, 4 - 5pm. JMU East Campus Library 3rd Floor Flex Space

Recent Activities:

October 13 Meeting at BRCC

The October Program featured a virtual visit to three gardens in New York City. They were The New York Botanical Garden, The Cloisters gardens and the recently developed High Line garden in the meatpacking district of Manhattan.

An interesting presentation explored the connection between native plants of Europe and their use to make dyes that colored the yarns forming tapestries in the 15th and 16th centuries. The Cloisters has several world notable tapestries including a series on the Hunting of the Unicorn that contains many botanicals as background. In the garden there are three plants used in yarn making that retain their color and luster after five centuries and have outlasted "repairs" done to other tapestries about 100 years ago that have turned brown due to the chemical dyes in use then. There were only three dyes used to create the many colors woven into the tapestries. Red was from the root of the madder plant *rubia tinctorum* introduced into the US and found in only seven states. Blue was from the root of woad, also known for use by the Picts to color their bodies in time of battle *Isatis tinctoria* L. Dyer's woad was used by the ancient Egyptians.



Woad
Photo from US Forest Service

Weld or *Reseda luteola* was used to make yellow.

All these introduced plants are found in the US but only dyer's woad is found in Virginia.

For further information go to these sites:

<http://www.nybg.org/>

<http://www.metmuseum.org/visit/visit-the-cloisters>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Line_%28New_York_City%29

Field Trips

Some folks hiked up Powell Mountain on October 2. The wild flowers were past their peak and other than the bright red blackgums it was too early for fall colors. We did see silverrods, southern hairbells, goldenrods and a variety of asters.

On October 15 Mike Seth went for a short hike along the AT in Bland County where there were many closed gentians in bloom all along the trail. He also saw a lot of healthy shining club moss.

Our two field trips in September 10 to Augusta Spring and on September 20 to Tilghman Road were great fun and we will do a winter botany trip in January (weather permitting) and more in the spring.