



Shenandoah Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society May 2014

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.

Upcoming Chapter Events:

Thursday May 15 Swift Run Gap SNP Wavy leaf basket grass removal 9:00 to 12:00 noon

Sunday June 8 Annual Picnic at Grottoes Grand Caverns. We will meet at the picnic site near the river at 1:00. Potluck at 2. For more information contact Chris Bowlen chris.bowlen@gmail.com

Other Events

Saturday May 10 Wildflower Tournament.

The 2014 Shenandoah Wildflower Walks and Tournament will be held May 10th and includes four hikes on trails in the George Washington National Forest. Join us for a day of exploring the amazing diversity of life found on Shenandoah Mountain, identified as an "outstanding ecological core" area by the Virginia Natural Heritage Program and a "biodiversity hotspot" by The Nature Conservancy. These light hikes lead by Virginia Master Naturalists and other knowledgeable wildflower resource people provide an opportunity to see and photograph some beautiful wildflowers and learn more about this special place. Free registration is required by May 8 at the Wildflower Tournament link at headwatersmn.org

Saturday May 10 Plant Walk at Milam Gap. Join Tom Dierauf, retired director of research for the Virginia Department of Forestry, for a wildflower and forest ecology walk along the Millprong Trail off the Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park. This is a moderately difficult 3-4 mile round-trip walk (The trail is steep and rocky in places. Length depends on how far we want to go.) This time of year is usually the peak of the spring wildflower season in the Park. With luck we will see lots of large-flowered trillium, both pink and yellow lady slippers, and a number of quite uncommon species including purple twisted stalk, and the rare herb robert. In addition, Tom is an expert at reading the forest and also a wonderful teacher. This is an opportunity not to be missed!

Meet at 9:00 at Food Lion at Forest Lakes Shopping Center or meet at the Milam Gap parking area between milepost 52 and 53 at 10:30. (Note that there is a \$15 entry fee per car unless you have a pass, so carpooling makes sense.)

Saturday May 17 Ivy Creek Natural Area Walk. 9:00 am. Join VNPS member Mary Lee Epps for a walk to see the later spring blooms that include jack-in-the-pulpit, heartleaf ginger and violet wood sorrel. Free and open to the public. Meet by the kiosk near the parking lot of Ivy Creek Natural Area.

Thursday June 5- Saturday June 7 The 2014 Native Plants in the Landscape Conference at Millersville University, in Millersville, PA. Speakers for the conference include Eric Toensmeier, Marcus de la Fleur, Benjamin Vogt, Candy DeBerry, Sabrena Schwyer and many others.

Inspirational fieldtrips, educational workshops, engaging topics of concern, native plants and book sale, and native plant merchandise – this is a conference you don't want to miss. Continuing education credits are available for LACES, APLD, Delaware Certified Horticulturist, Pennsylvania Certified Horticulturist, New York CNLP, and Maryland CPH.

Plant and Book Sale will be open to the public on Friday, June 6, 2014 from 4:30-8:30pm and on Saturday, June 7, 2014 from 8:30am until 1:00pm.

To view the conference brochure or to register, visit www.MillersvilleNativePlants.org. For more information call (717) 871-2189 or email nativeplantsatMU@gmail.com.

Saturday June 28 Wildflower-Nature Walk in the SNP. This will be a join activity between our chapter and the Sierra Club. Details TBA, contact Michael Seth sethmj@jmu.edu

Annual State Meeting

- VNPS 2014 Annual Meeting – Virginia Beach Oceanfront
Date(s) - October 17, 2014 until October 19, 2014 12:00 AM - 12:00 AM

Get this on your calendar now so you don't miss a fantastic meeting with field trips you will remember all your life! The meeting is being held in October this year because of the coastal location for it – hurricanes will not stop the show!

Hosted by the South Hampton Roads Chapter, the tentative line of trips includes: First Landing State Park, False Cape State Park, Great Dismal Swamp, Zuni Pine Barrens, with a Big Trees expert, The Hermitage, Norfolk Botanical Garden, Northwest River Park...and more! Come early and stay late for a fun filled fall vacation.

Details to follow. Contact: Steve Stasulis (757) 486-5485

Recent Activities

April 12 Staunton Earth Day Plant Sale

Our chapter had a very successful plant sale all proceeds go to the *Flora of Virginia*.

April 15 Wildflower Walk at Bald Rock Road.

This annual walk was originally scheduled for April 10 was postponed due to the late spring. On April 15 the walk got rained out. However, Lib Kyger and Anne Nielson did go out and look the next day. Blue Bells (across river), Cutleaf Toothwort, Bishop's Cap, Dutchman's Breeches (a lot of these), Rue anemone, Meadow-rue. They also saw many toad trilliums.

April 26 Arboretum Walk

Chip Brown led a small group of visits on this annual spring walk of the wildflowers of the JMU Arboretum. It was a warm, sunny spring day. Three species of trillium (sessile, grandiflorum, erectum) were in full bloom. Other highlights include tons of Virginia Bluebells, *Mertensia virginica*,

April 26 Wildflower Hike. Twenty folks came for the wildflower hike in the Jefferson National Forest off the Blue Ridge. The weather was near perfect with great visibility. We started at Apple Orchard Falls and Hiked to Petites Gap. Our route was seven miles but by taking side trails some folks ended up walking twelve miles, eventually catching up with the slower flower lovers. Because of the late spring few flowers were in bloom at the higher elevations other than bloodroot but at the lower elevations we found vast quantities of sessile and grandiflora trilliums, more Dutchman's breeches than anyone could recall seeing, plus fire-pinks, cutleaf toothwort, wood-betony, blue, yellow and white violets, bluets, early meadow rue, saxifrage among others. We didn't see the yellow lady slippers we encountered last time, and there were plenty of gallax and lilies not yet in bloom. Finishing around seven, we ate at Don Tequila's Mexican restaurant in Buena Vista.

May 3 Riverfest Plant Sale. Another successful plant sale at the Riverfest in Waynesboro. More about this and the Staunton Earth Day in the next newsletter.