



Shenandoah Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society August 2015

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.

Call for Volunteers at the State Meeting Co-Hosted By Shenandoah Chapter September 11-13

Shenandoah Chapter is co-hosting the VNPS annual meeting this year with the Upper James River Chapter. Frontier Culture Museum (FCM) in Staunton is the location; September 11-13 are the dates. Schedule of events and trips are on the website VNPS.org.

We really need your help to make this event go smoothly. Here are the positions we need you to help with:

1. There are 17 field trips between Saturday and Sunday. They all have leaders but we need co-leaders for every trip. Co-leaders are responsible for getting the trip participants assembled at the FCM, working out the carpooling for the trip, meeting the leader at the designated time and place. Keeping the group together during the trip and handling any situations that come up during the trip. If you want to help with this, let me know and we can go over the trips.
2. Saturday from 11-1:30 we need a person to be at FCM to be in charge of the half day trips. You would oversee lunch (box lunches will be handed out in the morning), answer questions and make sure people move outside to meet up with their afternoon trip co-leaders.
3. Photographer. Take some photos of the speakers, the gathering Saturday night and whatever trips you sign up for.
4. Faith Vosburgh from the Upper James River Chapter is doing some flower arrangements for the meeting. She could use help with that and some native flowers. She has a good amount of NY Ironweed and goldenrod and can use some other natives. She will be doing this in Lexington.

Please contact [Chris Bowlen](#) if you can help. 540-289-6801

Upcoming Events:

Saturday August 1 Birds of the Burg Saturday, August 1, 2015 Time: 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM Presented by: Shenandoah Group Leader: Ralph Grove - 540-478-3677 ralph.grove@gmail.com Location: Hillandale Park, 801 Hillandale Avenue, Harrisonburg

Wednesday Aug. 5: Edith J Carrier Arboretum Summer Brown-Bag Lunch Lecture Series, noon-1 p.m., Pavilion, Edith J. Carrier Arboretum: Dr. Katrina Gobetz, associate professor of biology at JMU, presents "Bats, Our Night Visitors." For information, check <http://www.jmu.edu/arboretum> or call (540) 568-3194.

Saturday August 8 Buffalo Mountain Natural Area 9:00-3:00 Blue Ridge Chapter contact

Ryan Klopff, the Mountain Region Steward of the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, has generously offered to lead the group on a field trip to Buffalo Mountain. [Buffalo Mountain](#) is one of the most significant natural areas in Virginia. It boasts an amazing 13 rare plant occurrences, 3 rare animal occurrences, and 6 significant natural communities. Please join us for this rare opportunity, the public is welcome and there is no charge. Contact: Michael Belcher 540 989-6384

Tuesday Aug. 11: Edith J Carrier Arboretum Storytime in the Understory, 11 a.m.-noon, Edith J. Carrier Arboretum: The monthly program helps children develop an understanding of the importance of nature from children's literature selections. Bring a picnic blanket or lawn chairs and a brown-bag picnic lunch for after storytime. For more information, check <http://www.jmu.edu/arboretum>.

Saturday August 22 Hike/Nature Walk Second Mountain Massanutten. A five mile out and back from Cub Run Road to Kaylor Knob, along an invasive free native community with a swimming hole.

Contact Mike Seth sethmj@jmu.edu

Thursday, August 27, Conservation Talk Lucy F Simms School Continuous Education Center, Harrisonburg, Wild Virginia 6-7 PM. Contact wildvirginia.org

Recent Activities

May2 Plant Sale at Riverfest went well. Annali Taettersall, Barbara McSweeny, Bea Woody and Chris Bowlen helped with the sales, in addition to the woodland phlox, celandine poppy, various sunflowers, asters and violets in the April plant sale they had green and gold, spiderworts and goldenrods.

Friday, May 15, 10 am. Outing to Cowbane Prairie, Stuart's Draft, Augusta County

Leader: Adam Christie, Shenandoah Region Steward for Division of Natural Heritage. Chris Bowlen reports: A walk through Cowbane Natural Area Preserve with Steward Adam Christie on May 15, 2015 was a real treat. Although we had missed the *Iris versicolor* bloom and were too early for the queen-of-the-prairie, *Filipendula rubra*, bloom, there was much to see at this small preserve. Tucked away in Stuart's Draft between the South River, agricultural fields and manufacturing plants, Cowbane is a wetland prairie, once a common natural community in the Valley that has slowly faded to and is now only found in isolated pockets. Christie has been restoring this natural community through a series of strategic burns. Though the area has been farmed, obscured by invasive species and heavily over-seeded with a biofuel cultivar, the natives are making a comeback. Plants waist high in May will be towering overhead by fall. This is place to return to, for sure.

Saturday June 27 Cranberry Glades, W.Va. No reports about this outing.

State Meeting Planning. Our chapter members have been meeting with the Headwaters chapter planning this big even in September.

Dear Friends,

If you've ever thought of yourself as being royal in any way, I'd like to deflate that notion in this recent (very short) column:

Our Million+ Acre Backyard Commons: Triumphs and Tragedies

By Chris Bolgiano www.chrisbolgiano.com

Free for Distribution if Bay Journal News Service is Credited

There's no grill in my big back yard, no swing set, and no swimming pool, unless you count the rock-bottomed bowls along Reedy Run as it cascades to the Shenandoah River. They're mainly trees here in the George Washington National Forest (GWNF) along the Virginia-West Virginia line. Just trees, creeks and 100,000 species of wildlife.

My home borders the forest, so my back yard grows to 1.1 million acres of forested mountainsides. It is mine, but also yours. It belongs to the people in a way that no other property does.

Elinor Ostrom, who in 2009 became the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in Economics, analyzed the global heritage of commonly owned resources to identify the forms of governance that have sustained those resources over

centuries. Her work refuted the prevailing market ideology that only privatization could prevent the tragedy of resource overuse, as every individual sought maximum personal gain.

Land for the GWNF, like all Eastern national forests, was purchased by the federal government in the early 1900s, largely from hundreds of private timber companies that had destructively logged and burned the land. In this way, national forests reversed the usual historical succession for commons that Ostrom described in which well-regulated pasture, forest or water sources used by many individuals over long periods of time became enclosed, privatized and unsustainably exploited resources.

The Age of Enlightenment, which coincided with the enclosure of many of Europe's commons, should be renamed the Age of Enclosure to reflect the real tragedy of the commons — privatization by aristocrats of ancient common holdings that drove suddenly landless peasants into factories in newly industrialized cities.

National forests have several characteristics that Ostrom identified for a sustainably managed commons. The Forest Service is required to solicit public opinion before making management decisions, creating the opportunity for community engagement. Local adaptations can be crafted, and procedures exist for enforcement and conflict resolution.

The success of the GWNF governed as a commons was demonstrated in 2014, as more than 50,000 comments persuaded the Forest Service to stop gas leasing and avoid fracking.

Reedy Run is loudly splashing now, thanks to recent rains. It joins hundreds of other streams from the forest that form the Potomac and James rivers and supply water to millions of people. Fracking would also have jeopardized that common resource while privatizing the profits.

These rivers flow into the watery commons of the Chesapeake Bay. Six states plus the District of Columbia make a cumbersome community in terms of management, as witnessed by the repeated failures to meet nitrogen, phosphorous and nutrient reduction goals.

Part of the problem is a lack of accurate baseline data. Using the knowledge commons of the Internet, <http://www.ChesapeakeCommons.org> compiles data collected in various jurisdictions into a centralized pool of information.

“We believe that by providing access to open source software to all Bay restoration stakeholders, like nonprofit organizations, foundations and local governments, we can unite hundreds of volunteer monitoring programs and catalyze citizen-driven restoration,” said John Dawes, Project Strategy and Co-Founder of ChesapeakeCommons.org. “For example, we recently worked with Blue Water Baltimore to make thousands of water quality readings on Baltimore’s Inner Harbor and the Non Tidal Patapsco available to the public,” he said. “And we plan to centralize decades of baseline monitoring efforts by multiple Virginia-based programs.”

As complex as the Bay is to manage as a commons, it at least has distinct boundaries and governance structures. The global commons of oceans and atmosphere are bounded only by the deepest and highest limits of the planet, and lack comprehensive management mechanisms. The biodiversity commons — the 100,000 species in my back yard and the hundred million others around the world that produce oxygen, filter water, pollinate crops, sequester carbon and otherwise make the planet habitable — is perhaps the most difficult of all to manage sustainably. Yet human society cannot exist without their services. Commons surround us. We all drink from the waters of Reedy Run, because we are all commoners.

BIO: Chris Bolgiano recently won several awards for her columns distributed by the Bay Journal News Service. She takes pride in being a commoner. Distributed by **Bay Journal News Service**.

Please send any articles or announcements to [Elaine Smith](#)