



Shenandoah Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society April 2016

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:

- ❖ **Tuesday March 29 Early Spring Wildflower Walk.** For time and place contact Michael Seth sethmj@jmu.edu
- ❖ **Saturday April 9, 2016, Wildflower Walk with The Virginia Native Plant Society, Edith J. Carrier** Arboretum at JMU 10:00 am. Led by Betty Rosson-Forrest, Master Gardener and Master Naturalist, VNPS Member. Learn about the many Virginia native wildflowers in bloom that are found at the arboretum. Starts at the Pavilion.
- ❖ **Friday-Saturday April 15-16** If you are interested in the plants that are an integral part of Virginia's ecosystems but have been intimidated by identifying and remembering those plants, this workshop is for you. Two days and eight hours with Marion and Sally will get you started on a wonderful journey into a deeper appreciation for the plants you see around you every day.

Workshop Plant Identification and Introduction to the Flora of Virginia, Harrisonburg VA

Time: Two day class 4 hours

*****3 openings left*****

Instructor: Marion Lobstein, Botanist and Professor Emeritus NVCC

Contact information: <mailto:mblobstein@earthlink.net>; 703 622-0676)

Assistant: Sally Anderson, Botanist and former VNPS president

Location: Music Room, Lucy F. Sims Center, 620 Simms Ave, Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Major areas of focus:

- Overview of Flora of Virginia and its use in plant identification
- Characteristics of major plant families that will be encountered during plant surveys such as field "weeds," wildflowers, and grasses.
- Proper plant collecting and record keeping in your survey fieldwork
- Use of the Flora of Virginia in identifying specimens collected

Class size is limited to 15.

Contact Chris Bowlen 540-289-6801 <mailto:bowlenchris@comcast.net> to register.

- ❖ **Thursday April 21 Spring Wildflower Walk.** For time and place contact Michael Seth sethmj@jmu.edu.
- ❖ **Plant Surveys along Proposed Pipeline Route. Time, date, location TBA.** See below.
- ❖ **Friday to Sunday, May 13-15. Webster County Nature Tour.** See below.

Upcoming Events:

Wednesday March 30 7:00 pm The Wild and Scenic Film Festival Harrisonburg brings together a selection of films that tell stories about our planet, our beautiful and precious wildlands, and the people of the communities who love them, play in them and defend them. They open our eyes and hearts to fantastic experiences

in remarkable places. They inspire a sense of wonder, beckon us towards action, highlight issues, and provide solutions.

Location: Court Square Theater
41 Court Square
Harrisonburg, VA
For tickets contact: info@wildvirginia.org

Friday April 1 Starry Nights Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU 7:00-9:00

Partnering with the John C. Wells Planetarium at JMU, the Shenandoah Valley Stargazers, Virginia Master Naturalists and JMU students, the arboretum offers a free dark sky program. Come to enjoy educational activities like telescope viewing, stories and poetry reading, guided night walks, education stations and a light pollution discussion. The event will begin at the Frances Plecker Education Center. For event-related questions, phone (540) 568-3194.

Saturday April 2 Bird Walk in Hillendale Park. Sierra Club contact: Ralph Grove - 540-478-3677
ralph.grove@gmail.com

Wednesdays April 6 and 13, 2016, *Wildflower Walks*, Wednesdays, 10:00 am, an arboretum exploration series tour with the Arboretum Director. Enjoy viewing dozens of bulb varieties and wildflowers on exhibit at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU.

Saturday April 9, 2016, *Wildflower Walk with The Virginia Native Plant Society*, Saturday, 10:00 am. Led by Betty Rosson-Forrest, Master Gardener and Master Naturalist, VNPS Member. Learn about the many Virginia native wildflowers in bloom that are found at the arboretum. Starts at the Pavilion, Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU.

Sunday April 10 7:00pm Wild and Scenic Film Festival Staunton

See description for Wild and Scenic Film Festival Harrisonburg
Visulite Cinema, 12 N Augusta Street, Staunton, VA

Sunday April 17. Maple Flats Evening Hike 7:00 PM Wild Virginia

Maple Flats is part of a Special Biological Area in George Washington National Forest and contains a complex of sinkhole depressions that are a unique and important natural resource in the East. While the larger depressions may contain water year-round, most of them hold water for only a portion of the year. These seasonal, freshwater wetlands support an impressive array of plants and wildlife, including many species that are specially adapted to these rare types of habitats.

Join two local naturalists, Michelle Prysby and John Holden, as they lead us on an early evening aural adventure, listening to what the frogs and other residents have to say. The hike will begin at 7:30 pm, a half hour before sunset, and end by about 9:30 pm. Showers or mild rain will not cancel the outing, but thunderstorms or other unsafe conditions could. The walking will not be strenuous. Bring a flashlight, and come prepared for the weather.

For questions contact David Sellers at: BetteDaveYstone@gmail.com. If you register but your plans change please let us know. Other details such as directions, and car pool arrangements will be provided.

Sunday April 24 Wildflower Hike on MauHar Trail. Moderate 7.5 mile hike in Three Ridges Wilderness. Enjoy trilliums, waterfalls and rugged beauty, from Love Gap to Tye River. Long shuttle. Meet at the Waynesboro Park and Ride at the intersection of Rt. 340 and I-64 at 8:30. Contact our VNPS chapter member Mike Smith, foresmiths@comcast.net, (540) 298-1913.

Saturday April 30. Shenandoah Mountain Wildflower Tournament. Sponsored by Headwaters Master Naturalists and VNPS – Shenandoah Valley. Four short hikes, two in the morning and two in the afternoon. See <http://headwatersmn.org/> for more details.

Saturday May 7 Bird Walk in Hillandale Park. Sierra Club contact: Ralph Grove - 540-478-3677
ralph.grove@gmail.com

Sunday May 8. Apple Orchard Falls and Apple Orchard Mountain. Hike climbs the Apple Orchard Falls National Recreation Trail past Apple Orchard Falls, continuing on the Appalachian Trail to the summit of Apple Orchard Mountain. Return on the Cornelius Creek National Recreation Trail. This is a 10.5 mile hike with an elevation gain of 2700 feet. Contact leader for meeting details: Greg Fife, greg@frozenfog.com, (540) 447-4038.

Friday to Sunday, May 13-15. Webster County Nature Tour Best wildflower event in our region. \$125 for 2 nights and 5 meals. Stay at Camp Caesar near Webster Springs, WV. Many tours to choose from and night entertainment. For more info and to register, see www.facebook.com/TheWebsterCountyNatureTour/ or call Linda Carpenter--(304) 847-2467 SSVc members who attend are invited to caravan over to WV with Jay Shaner (local wildflower expert and Shenandoah Chapter VNPS member), stopping at prime wildflower sites along the way. Contact Lynn Cameron at slynncameron@gmail.com, (540) 234-6273, to participate in the caravan. We will leave early Friday morning.

March 12 VNPS Workshop.

Chris Bowlen reporting

The March 2016 VNPS Workshop organized by Sally Anderson was another in a long line of excellent presentations about all things related to plants. This year's topic was 'Plants and Their Friends' and all four presentations were very well done. I am only going to cover one presentation in this article. Speaker Dr. Gary Krupnick from the Museum of Natural History in Washington DC spoke about their efforts to build a working list of all known pollinators in the US since 90% of flowering plants depend on animal pollinators, it is important to know who pollinates what. They have, so far, identified 3728 species of bees, 803 species of butterflies, 899 species of beetles, 16 species of hummingbirds, 2 species of bats who are active plant pollinators. The total numbers of species for flies, moths and wasps still need to be determined. For orchids, 61% of their pollinators have been identified and as much as the carnivorous Venus fly trap has been studied, the pollinator has not been identified yet. The Museum of Natural History is in the process of digitizing their plant and insect collections. With 35 million specimens in their insect collection and 5 million specimens in their Herbarium, the task is enormous. The goal is make all of this information available to all in an on line Encyclopedia of Life. The third week of June is designated as National Pollinator Week and the website www.pollinator.org is a wealth of information and resources about plants and their pollinators.

Plant Surveys along Proposed Pipeline Route

The new Atlantic Coast Pipeline route bypasses Cheat Mountain and goes around the south end of the 72-mile-long Shenandoah Mountain through Fort Lewis in northern Bath County and then goes northeast through the scenic Deerfield Valley in Augusta County. It rejoins Dominion's preferred route at West Augusta near Braley Pond and continues east over Hankey Mountain from there. For our chapter a major concern is that the route passes through sensitive plant communities such as the shale barrens at South Sister in southern Shenandoah Mountain.

In the coming months some of us in the Shenandoah Chapter of the VNPS plan walks and plants surveys along the proposed route. More on this in the next newsletter.

Recent Walk in Early March

Chapter members Malcolm and Lynn Cameron on March 10 walked along the proposed pipeline route as it crosses southern Shenandoah Mt. Lynn reports:



The new ACP route through the George Washington National Forest circumvents the south end of Shenandoah Mountain by going through Fort Lewis and then goes up the Deerfield Valley to reconnect with Dominion's original preferred route at West Augusta. When Malcolm and I learned the new route goes through Browns Pond Special Biological Area, only 2 miles from Fort Lewis Lodge, We decided to check it out. From West Augusta we followed the pipeline route down the Deerfield Valley and then took Scotchtown Draft Road to SR 678 and turned left. After about 1/4 mile, we passed several dumpsters on the left. Just past the dumpsters we found the gated Forest Road 281 we were looking for. We walked up the road about a mile and turned right at the first intersection. Only 200 yards ahead we bushwacked to the left and found not only Browns Pond, but a whole complex of sinkholes, some larger than houses. One had a small cave opening. We were standing on limestone bedrock for sure. Browns Pond was the only sinkhole that held water. We observed high bush blueberries, buttress-rooted white oaks and red maples, sedges, and other plants growing in the water, along with salamander and frog eggs. The pond merits a closer look by botanists, geomorphologists, and herpetologists for sure.

Browns Pond along the New Proposed route of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. Lynn and Malcolm Cameron



*Three-way sedge (*Dulichium arundinaceum* var. *arundinaceum*) and buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) in Browns Pond, on Tower Hill Mountain, Bath County (George Washington and Jefferson National Forests). Photo: Gary P. Fleming / © DCR Natural Heritage.*