

Shenandoah Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society May 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:

- ❖ Plant surveys along Proposed Pipeline Route. Time, date, location TBA. See below.
- ❖ Friday to Sunday, May 13-15. Webster County Nature Tour. See Below

Other Upcoming Events:

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.

Friday April 29 Thompson Wildlife Management Area. The next Wildflower Wander will take place on Friday April 29 at 8:30-5:00 we will be headed to G.R. Thompson Wildlife Management Area north of Linden, VA. Meeting place at Randy's Do It Best Hardware 120 N Main St. in Bridgewater, VA. We will stop at 2 places in the WMA. This will be the peak time for the Great White Trillium this is the largest continuous expanse of trilliums on the east coast. Mixed in with the Great Whites we could find an even rarer trillium called the Nodding Trillium which would be a real treat for the day. It is only found in 4 counties in Northern VA this is our best time/place to locate some. Some other plants we could find include: Mayapple, Yellow Trout Lily, Wild Geranium, Common Blue Violet, Showy Orchis, Golden Ragwort, Confederate Violet, Squawroot, Wood betony, Star Chickweed, Jack in the Pulpit, Merrybells, Sweet Cicely, Downy Yellow Violet, Daisy Fleabane, Rue Anemone, Dogwood, Solomon's Seal. Cutleaf Toothwort, Bloodroot Leaves, Skunk Cabbage Leaves, Redbuds, Yellow Ladyslippers could be budding or at least leafing out. There may be other surprises along the way as well! We will set out for GRT at 8:30 arrive by 9:30 and leave back for Randy's at 3:30 arriving by 5:00.

Hope to see you all! - Nate Miller

Call/email me if you have any questions at 540-908-8025

Saturday April 30. Shenandoah Mountain Wildflower Walks

Shenandoah Mountain Wildflower Walks

Saturday, April 30, 2016

Walks at 9:30 am and 1 pm

[Free sign-up.](#)

The Headwaters Chapter of the Master Naturalists will host several wildflower walks on Shenandoah Mountain in the George Washington National Forest. Walkers can choose from three walks that vary in difficulty and habitat. All of the walks will be led by a Master Naturalist and accompanied by wildflower experts familiar with the trails and flowers.

This event is supported by the Virginia Native Plant Society - Shenandoah Chapter, the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at James Madison University, and Friends of Shenandoah Mountain.

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.

Monday May 9 to Thursday May 12. Advanced Flower Painting in Acrylic Wash In the Frances Plecker Education Center, Edith J. Carrier Arboretum *With Artist in Residence* Lynda Chandler B.S. Agriculture, University of Florida, Major: Horticulture/Minor: Scientific Illustration \$200 for eight sessions, 1:00-4:00 pm each day. Register at <https://www.jmu.edu/arboretum/events.shtml>

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 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.

Monday May 16 to Thursday May 19. Advanced Flower Painting in Acrylic Wash In the Frances Plecker Education Center Edith J. Carrier Arboretum *With Artist in Residence* Lynda Chandler B.S. Agriculture, University of Florida, Major: Horticulture/Minor: Scientific Illustration \$200 for eight sessions, 1:00-4:00 pm each day. This is a second session. Register at <https://www.jmu.edu/arboretum/events.shtml>

Saturday May 28. Blueberry-Oak Knob-Pond Knob-Mud Pond Loop on Shenandoah Mountain near Union Springs. 7.7 miles with shorter option. Moderate. Meet at Turner Ashby High School in Bridgewater at 9:00 a.m. Hike Leader: Ron Stoltzfus, stoltzfr@emu.edu, (540) 434-7240.

Saturday, June 4, "Art and Botany: Recording the Natural World" with Nicky Staunton

Headwater's Master Naturalist are hosting this event, and invite the Shenandoah Chapter to attend.

11:00 AM -to- 1:00 PM

North River Library, 118 Mt Crawford Ave, Bridgewater, VA 22812

Nicky Staunton, an accomplished illustrator and photographer, will inspire us with her curiosity about the natural world and show us how she records her observations.

Nicky is a Virginia conservationist and advocate for native plants and the habitats that support them. She was the State President of the Virginia Native Plant Society for three terms. Since retiring she has become a recognized artist, mainly in pen and ink illustrations. Her work has appeared in several books and many Bulletins. She studies dry brush watercolor with Lara Call Gastinger; is a member of the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators, American Society of Botanical Artists, and Southern Appalachian Botanical Society. Her botanical taxonomic skills are from studies with Marion Lobstein. Nicky is also an advisor on the Advisory Board of the Flora of Virginia Project.

This is a free event, you are welcomed to bring a "brown bag" lunch. Please notify [Elaine Smith](mailto:Elaine.Smith) if you are planning to attend.

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 VMPS plan walks and plants surveys along the proposed route. More on this in the next newsletter.

Recent Activities

Wildflower Walks

On Saturday March 26 a walk along North River Road in Mt Crawford was rewarded with the trout lilies in full bloom. They seemed abundant this year. Also seen were Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia*), bloodroot, Virginia spring beauties, speedwells and one marsh marigold blooming prematurely.

On Saturday April 2 a walk along Bald Rock Road in Verona there were many Dutchman's breeches as well as bloodroot, early meadow-rue, rue anemone, golden ragwort, sessile trilliums, common blue violets, spring beauties, round leaf hepatica, cut-leaf toothwort, golden ragwort, meadow parsnip blooming rather early. Also wild ginger, foam flower and miterwort were out but not yet blooming.

April 21 Wildflower walk at Madison Run was cancelled due to the Rocky Mount fire.

April 23 South River Falls. Seven folks participated in this wildflower hike. It was an overcast and cool day but we saw lots of wildflowers including the last blooms of the cutleaf toothwort and early meadow-rue. We also found plenty of *Trillium grandiflora* in bloom. Other wildflowers included mitterworts, wood-bettony, common, birdfoot, trilobe, marsh, Canada and smooth yellow violets; saxifrage and swamp saxifrage, small-flowered phacelia, yellow corydalis, golden ragwort, sweet cicely, wild parsnip, crowfeet, geraniums, a surprising number of jack-in-the-pulpits and a hillside with more columbines than anyone remembered seeing. We counted 28 different species of wildflowers in all.

Other activities:

Joe Sharrer reports lots of bloodroot, over 3 dozen, bleeding heart, lungwort, shooting star, sessile trillium, and lots of bluebells and a few Dutchman's britches. Giant Solomon's seal just beginning as is Queen of the prairie in his flower border.

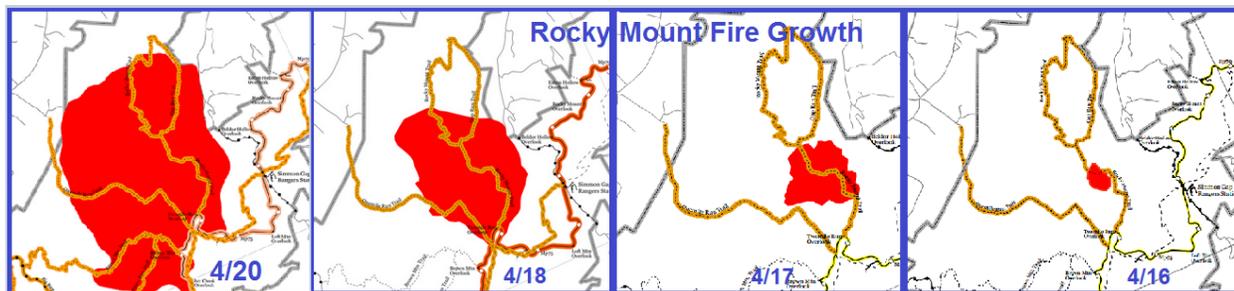
Mark and Betty Gatewood report: We've seen all the usual suspects along Madison Run - yellow corydalis, moss or creeping phlox, a saxifrage (too many for my brain to process exactly which species) and a new one, perfoliate pennycress (alas, an alien). In twenty-some years of walking up Madison Run, I have somehow missed the presence of striped wintergreen's drab relative, pipsissewa. It's all over the road bank! Lupine will probably come and go while Madison Run fire road is closed for the fire."

Mike Smith reports: I was on a butterfly foray near Covington in Allegheny county [April 23] looking for the rare grizzled skipper. No luck there, but we had several wildflowers on the shale barrens. In bloom were Kate's Mountain clover, pussy toes, vernal iris, Carolina vetch, and winter cress. The trout lily was already finished blooming. There was a nice patch of reindeer moss too.

Rocky Mount Fire

One of the favorite places for some of us to tramp around has been the site of a major wild fire. The brown smoke is visible in Harrisonburg and has drifted as far as Fairfax County. It started on April 16 as a 70 acre fire. As of April 23 the fire covered 9,600 acres and was one of the biggest fires in the history of the Park and the third largest wild fire currently burning in the U.S.

We all know that wild fires are part of the natural process and that many plants require them to germinate. So it will be interesting to hike in that area and watch nature at work after a major fire. One concern is the One Mile Run area home to one of the few healthy stands of hemlock in our area. A hike by Mike Smith and Mike Seth two years ago was like a trip back in time when streams were lined with large shady hemlocks.



Mike Seth and several friends were hiking near the area on Saturday April 16 when we spotted smoke from what may have been a small fire. A little while later on our way back we saw a fire truck go up the Madison Run Fire Road but somehow did not connect the two.



Photo by Frank Doherty. Taken on Cadet Court, east of Harrisonburg.