

Saturday, May 2, 2015: *Virginia Beach Master Gardeners Plant Sale* from 9-3 p.m. and **Sunday, May 3, 2015** from 10-2 p.m. at the Farmer's Market at Princess Anne and Dam Neck Roads. Craft show too. Rain or shine. Cash or check only please. ATM is on site. Find them on Facebook or at www.vbmg.org

Saturday, May 2, 2015: Hampton VCE Master Gardeners Spring Plant Sale at 9AM-2PM (Rain Date: May 3rd, 9AM-2PM at the Bluebird Gap Farm, 60 Pine Chapel Road, Hampton, VA 23666. Cash or checks only please. They are a non-profit volunteer organization. Find them on Facebook at Hampton Master Gardeners or email your name to hmptmgplantsale@yahoo.com to be added to their e-mail notification list for next year.

Friday & Saturday, May 8-9, 2015: *Native Plant Sale* at the Norfolk Botanical Garden. Plant sale hours: 10 AM-3PM. Happy Mother's Day weekend! Show your mother how special she is with a native plant. You will always be thought of warmly by your Mother when she sees the plant you chose for her because she is such a special lady. We still need volunteers to assist for a couple of hours' shift, please! If you can help, contact Pat Quinn at paquinn726@gmail.com.

Thursday, May 21, 2015: This is our last meeting before we break for summer; it has been moved up a week so as not to interfere with the Memorial Day holiday weekend. *Meg French* and *Nancy Dickerson*, VNPS members, will speak on ***Companion Plantings***. Companion planting is when one uses certain vegetables and flowers to support or inhibit the growth of other plants and/or pests they deter. For example, Plant sunflowers near cucumbers, but keep away from potatoes. Please join us in the Camellia Room at the Norfolk Botanical Garden at 7PM to learn which plants will work well together in your garden.

Saturday, June 13th: Tree Walk and Picnic at Northwest River Park with Mike Aherron, Area Forester, Virginia Department of Forestry. Trout were stocked on March 20, 2015 by the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for those who like freshwater fish. For those who love the plants, please join us on a walk in the park to see some of the native trees and shrubs found on site. Bring a lunch and enjoy the fresh air. Our walk begins at 9AM so we can beat the heat! We will meet in Parking lot 4. Please e-mail Brenda Radford at southhamptonroads.vnps@verizon.net to RSVP if you will be joining us for the picnic. See <http://www.cityofchesapeake.net/page2123.aspx> for more information and directions.

Also of note: VNPS Mountain Lake Area and Cypress Bridge Field Trips, July 31-August 1 and October 10, respectively. See <http://vnps.org/vnps-spring-field-trips/> for details and to register.

President's Message: Late in March, Lynnhaven River Now and the Back Bay Restoration Foundation co-hosted the *Watersheds Forum: Envisioning our Future* at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. Participants discussed the use of public parks and how they meet the needs of our society. Maintenance and care of parks and how the future of parks will change to meet our needs were also discussed. We had a great lunch afterwards with fellow environmentalists.

Rain fell prior to the *Native Plant Sale* at the Francis Land House during the *Gathering of the Guilds Celebration*. The Butterfly Society, the Beekeepers Association and the Beekeepers of Tidewater, the Blacksmith, the Wood Turners and many more groups were on site for a great family outing. We sold most of our plants and the tents stayed up through the winds. We may have lost one to a bent support leg, though. It turned out to be a most delightful day. Check it out at: www.musemsvb.org/museums/francis-land-house. Hope your Easter was as wonderful as spring has to offer.

The April Field Trip of the Canoe/ Kayak Trip on Blackwater River was in conjunction with Clean America Day. The group put in at RT 617 at Walls Bridge, Surry County. Although this part of the Blackwater River can be difficult to paddle because it frequently transitions from defined channel to braided character several times, it did not hold back a group of enthusiasts. The first one third of the trip was the most challenging, but it did improve. This section of river featured many old growth bald cypress and tupelos, some trees with weird shapes and breath-taking views. A brief memorial was held for the passing of our friend and fellow paddler, Sharon Cross, who died on March 14th. Sharon was a regular participant in our paddling group for many years. She had been in declining health for some time. Her husband Preston was touched by the love and compassion of his team paddlers. After the trip we had dinner at the Virginia Diner in Wakefield; we relaxed and rehashed our adventure. Byron & Jean thank the members who attended very much for a nice time.

The topic of our presentation at our April meeting was Native Plants of First Landing Park (formerly Seashore State Park) for this Local by Beth Richardson, who is a native plant lover. Membership and guests met at 7 PM in the Magnolia Room at the Norfolk Botanical Garden. And the yummy refreshments were hosted by Amy Jones, our Hospitality Chairperson.

Happy spring and see you at the next native plant sale on May 8th & 9th! Wild about native plants, Beth Richardson