

# Checklists of the Flora of Northern Virginia:

## *Spring Wildflowers of Northern Virginia: A Checklist*

## *Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines of Northern Virginia: A Checklist*

## *Summer and Fall Wildflowers of Northern Virginia: A Checklist*

Compiled by Marion Blois Lobstein, Professor Emeritus, NVCC

(Revised from a 1990 Wild News Article)

This is the story of why and how three helpful booklets that contained checklists for Northern Virginia wildflowers were compiled and published.

In 1974 when I moved to the Northern Virginia area from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, I quickly discovered the Georgetown Audubon Naturalist Society's bookstore in Washington D.C. During one of my early visits there, I found and purchased a checklist for birds of the Washington, D.C. area. When I asked if there were similar checklists for wildflowers in our area, the salesperson told me plant checklists were not available but suggested that I might work on such checklists!

As I learned more about the native plants of Northern Virginia, I was increasingly disappointed that there was no way to know what species of plants had been documented for the area. In the early 1980s, I discovered the first edition of the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora (Atlas.)* It contained maps of Virginia counties and lists of all species of vascular plants that were collected and documented by herbarium specimens in each county.

I then began making my own lists of plants for the Northern Virginia area using the *Atlas* as a reference. In the spring of 1985, my first checklist was published in a booklet called *Spring Wildflowers of Northern Virginia: A Checklist*. In 1986 the second edition of the *Atlas* was published and based on that, I revised the spring wildflower checklist and, also developed *Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines of Northern Virginia: A Checklist*. Both the revised spring checklist and the new woody plant checklist were published in 1988.

After the publication of the three previous checklists, I began working on a rough draft of a summer and fall wildflower checklist which led, in the spring of 1990, to the publishing of *Summer and Fall Wildflowers of Northern Virginia: A Checklist*.

Each checklist is divided by monocots and dicots with the plant families, genera, and species arranged in alphabetical order along with their common names. The spring list has 8 monocot families with 66 species and 63 dicot families with 484 species. The summer and fall list has 17 monocot families with 115 species and 85 dicot families with 980 species. The woody list contains 50 families with 164 species.

How can these checklists be used? When you use a wildflower or woody plant guide such as the Peterson's Newcomb's, or Audubon's and arrive at a tentative identification of an unknown plant, the checklists can confirm whether that species has been documented for the Northern Virginia area. Also, if you can identify the family or genus of that unknown plant, you can check the checklists to see what species have been found in our area under that family or genus. These checklists can also be used to keep a "life list" of plants you have seen in our area as well as keeping notes on when and where you found the plant.

Many people helped in the development of these checklists into booklets: Marie Davis, Elaine Haug, Nicky Staunton, Gary Fleming, Cris Fleming, the NVCC summer wildflower class of 1989, and many others. The publishing of all the checklists in booklet form was supported by the Prince William Wildflower Society, also known as the Prince William Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society (NVPS).

Unfortunately, the booklets are no longer available, but with the generous help of the VNPS Webmaster, Mark Murphy, and Linda Wilcox, all three of the plant check lists, can now be found on the website of the Virginia Native Plant Society under the section called "Botanizing with Marion". Other checklists for the flora-rich areas of Northern Virginia, and other areas of Virginia can be found there as well.

Please be aware the scientific names and classifications are those used before the publishing of the *Flora of Virginia* in 2012, and the 2017 digital Flora of Virginia App, which had major updates in 2020 and is continually being updated.

If you have not downloaded the Flora of Virginia App, you are encouraged to visit <https://floraofvirginia.org/flora-app/> and download either the iOS (iPhones and iPads) or Android version of this app. The initial cost is \$19.99 but once you download it, you are eligible for future updates. This app resides on your device and can be used off-line.

A Flora of Virginia Education Module on how to use the App is available at <https://vimeo.com/539902806>. Other helpful Flora of Virginia Education Modules are available at <https://floraofvirginia.org/> or <https://vnps.org/my-journey-with-the-flora-of-virginia/>.

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