



*Shenandoah Chapter*  
*Shenandoah Chapter*  
*Virginia Native Plant Society*  
*May, 2008*

**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.

**Next Meeting: Annual May Social At Picnic Shelter in Hone Quarry May 8 – 5:30-??**

Bring a dish to share and join us for some great food and company at Hone Quarry Picnic area. The Chapter will provide drinks, (lemonade, iced tea and water) and paper plates, utensils, cups and napkins. We will eat at 6pm which will give us time to see what is growing in the area. There will be a very limited plant sale.

**Directions to Hone Quarry:**

From Northbound I-81:

Take exit 240 for VA-682/VA 257 (0.2 mi). Turn left onto VA-257 West (3.4 mi) to Bridgewater. Turn right at North Main Street/VA-257/VA-42 (0.4 mi). Turn left at North River Rd. (0.2 mi). Turn right at West Dry River Rd. (1.6 mi). Turn left at Ottobine Rd/VA-257 proceed 4.2 mi to stop sign. See below.

South from Harrisonburg:

Take U.S. 42 South from Harrisonburg for approximately three miles to the intersection with State Route (S.R.) 257 in Dayton. Turn right off U.S. 42 onto S.R. 257 (west) and proceed until you reach a stop sign. See below.

From North and South to Hone Quarry:

At the stop sign, Turn left at Briery Branch Rd/VA-257 (2.8 mi). Turn right to stay on Briery Branch Rd./VA-257 (2.2 mi). Turn right at Hone Quarry Rd. FR62 travel about 1.7 mi to the picnic area.

**2008 Shenandoah Chapter and Events Calendar:**

- ❖ May 16 Wintergreen Resort 7 AM over 50 programs and hikes available at Wildflower Symposium [www.twnf.org](http://www.twnf.org)
- ❖ May 17 11-3 Trillium of Reddish Knob. State VNPS Trip. Leader Lib Kyger. Help Help Help! Assistant Leaders desperately needed. Contact Lib Kyger 540-828-6252 See write-up in the state VNPS spring newsletter.
- ❖ June 7 Blister Swamp and Sinks of Gandi Leader Jay Shaner Contact Jay 540-886-5763 Or Chris Bowlen. Details in this newsletter

**Calendar for JMU Edith J. Carrier Arboretum**

May 24 Annual Herb and Garden Fest 9-3

For additional programs and info go to: [www.jmu.edu/arboretum/](http://www.jmu.edu/arboretum/)

## Chapter Officers

<b>President</b>	vacant		
<b>Vice President</b>	Michael Seth	540-438-1301	sethmj@jmu.edu
<b>Treasurer</b>	Chuck Auckerman	540- 828-2065	ChuckAuckerman@aol.com
<b>Hospitality</b>	Lib Kyger	540-828-6252	kyger@Bridgewater.edu
<b>Newsletter/ Website</b>	Elaine Smith	540-298-0773	smithes6@juno.com
<b>Membership</b>	Bea Woody	540-289-6106	beawoody@hotmail.com
<b>Conservation / Education</b>	Chris Bowlen	540-289-6801	bowlenchris@comcast.net

### **Shenandoah Chapter Annual Plant sale**

A huge thank you to all who contributed plants for our annual fundraiser. There was a great selection of many wonderful native plants, especially our featured wildflower of 2008, Spiderwort. Apparently, our customers thought there was a great selection too, because for the first time ever, **we sold every single plant by 1PM** on Saturday during Riverfest. We will not be at the Farmers Market in Staunton May 3.

A special thank you goes to Anneli Tattersall for a lot of gathering, helping people dig plants in their yards and keeping everything in shape to be sold, and to Barbara McSweeny for starting turks cap lilies well in advance of the sale date so they looked great in addition her other plant contributions and willingness to help sort sell and price. Also, Bill Tattersall gets a special thank you for transporting all those plants to Waynesboro in first rate shape.

Before Saturday, we decided to take a year off from doing the plant sale in 2009. It is a huge amount of work performed faithfully by the same people over the past years. Despite the impressive interest shown by the public this year, we plan to keep with our decision, so there will not be a plant sale in 2009. We will re-evaluate in 2010 based on finances and volunteers.

### **Shenandoah Chapter Outings for May and June**

Sunday May 4: Shale Barrens west of Hightown, Highland County. Meet at Ramsey's Draft Picnic Area Rt 250 West of Staunton at 9:30AM to carpool. Bring lunch and binoculars. Shale Barrens will be viewed from the road because climbing the steep hillside will ruin the plants. There are several stops on the way in McDowell and Monterey to view other interesting plant areas. Stops will depend on the group; there is no designated leader. Contact Chris Bowlen

Saturday June 7: Blister Swamp and Sinks of Gandi (WVa). Leader Jay Shaner. This area is the headwaters of the E. Greenbrier River. Water or purple avens, *Geum triflorum*, might be in bloom then. This is a three mile hike; bring your lunch, water and sturdy shoes(boots are not necessary). To make this a one way hike, we need one or 2 drivers to meet us at the other end of the trail.

(Spruce Knob Lake is a nearby destination for the drivers). Meet 9 AM SHARP in Ernie's Market parking lot, Monterey(Rt 250, Highland County). To sign up, contact Jay Shaner 540- 886-5763 or Chris Bowlen.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

**Paul State Forest** is looking for some help with invasive plants. Located outside of Otobine west of Bridgewater, Paul State Forest has a notable stand of trees and a serious invasive problem. The Forest has some funds to start dealing with the problem and could use help with identification and control strategies. Contact Joe Scharrer joes41@comcast.net or 540-434-8494

### **Invasive Plant Removal at Big Meadows, Shenandoah National Park**

Why: The Big Meadows area contains the highest concentration of rare plants in Shenandoah National Park and is home to a plant community found nowhere else on earth. Invasive non-native plants like garlic mustard and stiltgrass are threatening this unique place. Spend a few hours helping us remove these plants and then enjoy the rest of the day in the park free of charge.

Where: Along the Story of the Forest Trail, between Big Meadows Campground and the Byrd Visitor Center. Detailed information on locations will be provided to those who RSVP.

When: The following Saturdays from 10 am to 2 pm: June 21, July 12, July 26, August 16 and August 30.

What to Bring: Lunch, water, sunscreen, hat, clothes you don't mind getting dirty. We'll provide snacks, extra water, gloves and trashbags.

Contact: RSVP please by contacting Jake Hughes at 540-999-3492 or Jake\_Hughes@nps.gov or Sara Hall at Sara\_Hall@nps.gov

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I'd also be interested in talking to anyone from the Society who'd be interested in helping with other volunteer tasks, including:

- Conducting surveys for invasive exotic plants in high-priority areas
- 'Adopting' an area of the park for regular invasive plant control
- Seed collecting for restoration projects
- Assisting with plant propagation or care in our tiny new greenhouse

No experience is necessary for any of these tasks and all training and equipment will be provided. Contact Jake Hughes at 540-999-3492 or Jake\_Hughes@nps.gov for more information.

### **Swedish researchers find world's oldest living tree**

STOCKHOLM (AFP) - The world's oldest living tree on record is a nearly 10,000 year-old spruce that has been discovered in central Sweden, Umeaa University said on Thursday(April 17, 2008).

Researchers had discovered a spruce with genetic material dating back 9,550 years in the Fulu mountain in Dalarna, according to Leif Kullmann, a professor of Physical Geography at the university in northwestern Sweden.

That would mean it had taken root in roughly the year 7,542 BC.

"It was a big surprise because we thought until (now) that this kind of spruce grew much later in those regions," he said.

Scientists had previously believed the world's oldest trees were 4,000 to 5,000 year-old pine trees found in North America.

The new record-breaking tree was discovered in Dalarna in 2004 when Swedish researchers were carrying out a census of tree species in the region, Kullman said.

The tree's genetic material age had been calculated using carbon dating at a laboratory in Miami, Florida. Spruces, which according to Kullmann offer rich insight into climate change, had long been regarded as relatively newcomers in the Swedish mountain region.

The discovery of the ancient tree had therefore led to "a big change in our way of thinking," he said.

### **Letters from Eden: A Year at Home in the Woods, reviewed by Mark Gatewood**

It's an old formula, but a good one: nature-lover buys a worn-out old farm, uses a blend of benign neglect and directed action to turn it into a personal wildlife haven, then writes a book about it.



Julie Zickefoose – NPR listeners may recognize the name – has done this, with *Letters from Eden: A Year at Home, in the Woods*. She and husband Bill Thompson – son of the publishers of *Bird Watchers' Digest* - buy eighty used-up acres of southeast Ohio hill farm and set to work. This is my home terrain – Washington County, Ohio. It's the western edge of Appalachia and as rural as it gets. Little creeks with names like Mile Run, Coal Run and Newell's Run flow through the wooded hills into the Muskingum and Ohio rivers. There's no Starbucks; the nearest mall is in Parkersburg. But it's fertile ground for a naturalist.

The book is a collection of essays – some of which she's read on NPR – interspersed with her watercolors and sketches. Yeah, OK, it's mostly about birds, but there's much else beside. She writes about box turtles, a bird-eating bullfrog and the joys and frustrations of family life in the woods.

Betty picked this book up for me at that little bookstore in Bridgewater. I read it through the ups and downs of our Appalachian spring – better known as March – and it pulled me through. Buy it, borrow it, read it.

*Letters from Eden: A Year at Home, In the Woods* by Julie Zickefoose; Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006; \$26.0

**Next Newsletter: September 2008**