



Shenandoah Chapter
Virginia Native Plant Society
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October 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: Our October 9 meeting will be at BRCC Plecker 124

Speaker: Robert Strasser of the American Chestnut Foundation will speak on the research being done to restore this tree to our forests.

Calendar 2008

Oct 4-5 JMU Edith J. Carrier Arboretum Fall Plant and Bulb Sale 9AM-3PM Saturday and Sunday. Sale will feature wide assortment of bulbs plus some native plants and shrubs.

Oct 11 VNPS State Field Trip Cypress Bridge Forest (Saturday, time tbd). Visit a fairly recently discovered site of many state and national champion cypress and swamp tupelo trees. Difficulty depends on water level. For more information, contact the VNPS office at 540-837-1600 or vnpsocf@shentel.net.

Oct 12 [Ramsey's Draft Wilderness Trail Work Day](#)

Join Wild Virginia, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and Virginia Wilderness Committee to clean a section of Jerry's Run Trail in the beautiful Ramsey's Draft Wilderness. Adults and teenagers are all invited. Bring work gloves, water, lunch and sturdy boots. Please bring crosscut saws, loppers, axes and other hand tools if you have them (not required, other tools will be available). Meet us at Mountain House Picnic Area (trailhead for Ramsey's Draft trail) on Rte 250 at 9:00 am. Contact the work leader, Mark Gatewood of PATC, (540) 248- 0442, before Oct 12 for instructions and background info.

Chapter Board Positions

November is election time for our Chapter Board. Positions open are: President, Secretary, Newsletter and Field Trip Coordinators. Terms last only two years. If you value what you get out of being a VNPS member, please consider giving some time to keep our Chapter alive and well. You do not need to be knowledgeable about native plants for any of these openings. Ideas and enthusiasm go a long way in helping the Chapter and you can learn as you go. Only you can help keep our Chapter from becoming an Endangered Species. Please contact Chris Bowlen for more info.

The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF)

Our speaker for October, Robert Strasser, comes to us from Fredrick, Maryland to speak about the Foundation's work to restore the American Chestnut to it's former range and hopefully, eventually, some of it's former status. The story of the Asian fungus which devastated the King of the eastern US forests is well known to anyone who spends any time at all learning about eastern US plants or ecosystems. Our forests

have become a very different place since the Chestnut's demise which took only 50 years to accomplish once the fungus was introduced to NYC in 1904. In 1983, TACF started a breeding program to introduce resistance to the Asian fungus into the American Chestnut. Successful backcross breeding with the Chinese Chestnut has produced resistant American Chestnut strains which have already been introduced to seed orchards across the eastern US. Through volunteers and partnerships, the slow, methodical work of increasing the number of trees has begun. Please join us Oct 9 to learn the details of this interesting work.

Fall Invasives control

Fall can be a very good time to work on invasive alien plants in your area to minimize the impact and spread of some species, especially Tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). Tree of heaven will produce hundreds of small sucker trees and can create a larger problem than you started with if you simply cut the tree and do not treat it with herbicide **immediately**. Full strength Roundup applied to the stump usually (but not always) is effective. Garlon is the recommended herbicide but it is expensive. For larger trees, girdling can be effective as long as you are careful to scrape the circumference down to the xylem layers. If possible return to the area in the spring to pull up young seedling starts and check for regrowth from the stumps.

An excellent time to control Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) is after the native plants have died back from frost kill. Japanese honeysuckle remains green and viable into December and occasionally January. Cutting the long runners first and applying herbicide (again Roundup is effective for this) to the base provides good control and reduces the amount of herbicide required.

Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) can also be removed at this time of year. Cutting the canes and digging out the roots works well for smaller clumps. For larger areas, herbicide is more effective since new plants are established where canes touch the ground. Multiflora rose will quickly re-establish itself from these small starts. With vigilance from repeated visits to an area, these starts are easily controlled by hand. However, if repeated visits are not practical, a systemic herbicide, such as Roundup, is beneficial.

The thousands of small garlic mustard seedlings that sprout this time of year will be killed by the frost. Garlic mustard is a biennial and only the well established florets will produce seeds next spring. By timing your invasive plant control, you can reduce your labor and herbicide use. For more information, consult the web sites listed below.

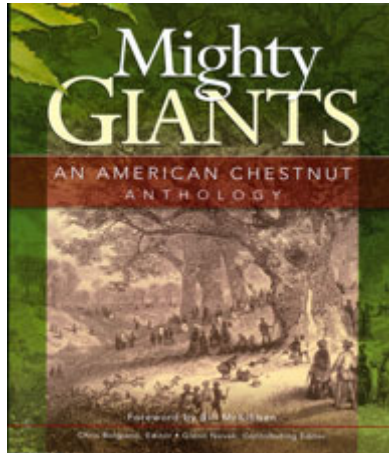
Web Sites to Check out

www.tncweeds.ucdavis.edu The Nature Conservancy Wildland Invasive Species Program. Excellent resource for identifying and controlling invasive plant species.

www.nps.gov/plants/alien/pubs/midatlantic/ - National Park Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service info on invasive plant id and control.

www.wildvirginia.org . Wild Virginia is a non-profit organization dedicated to preservation of our National Forests in particular, the George Washington National Forest right in our back yard. Website has information on political issues affecting the GWNF. Currently, the Forest Service is updating the Forest Revision plan for the GWNF. This is a long process to determine how these public lands will be used with very long term consequences for the National Forest. This website has information concerning the status of the plan and public opportunities for input into the Plan.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/> Celebrating Wildflowers sponsored by USDA Forest Service and the Center for Biological Diversity. This new web site is the gateway to an enormous amount of botanical information. Every Region, Forest, Grassland and Prairie contributed to the content of this new site.



AN AMERICAN CHESTNUT ANTHOLOGY

Chris Bolgiano, Editor • Glenn Novak, Contributing Editor

Foreword by Bill McKibben

Mighty Giants: An American Chestnut Anthology includes Chestnut scenes from artists such as Winslow Homer, Seneca Ernie Smith, Andrew Wyeth, Charles Burchfield, and a generous selection of seldom-seen photographs of American chestnut throughout its history. Also with its pages is the real life account of “Chestnuts in my Life” by former President Jimmy Carter; Poems by Wendell Berry and Robert Frost; Chestnut folklore and anecdotes, including reminiscences from southern Appalachia to New England, along with historical newspaper chronicles of the tree before, during, and after the blight.; Chestnut reflections by plant geneticist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Norman Borlaug, father of the “Green Revolution.” Colorful accounts of railroads and locomotives that logged mammoth chestnut trees in Appalachia, by Les Line, longtime editor of Audubon magazine. Along with Chestnut recollections and inspirations from Bill Owens, Dolly Parton’s uncle—a Tennessee mountain man, musician, and champion of the tree; excerpts from NY Times best-selling author Barbara Kingsolver’s novel, *Prodigal Summer*, about a curmudgeonly chestnut breeder and his cantankerous rural Virginia neighbor. *Mighty Giants: An American Chestnut Anthology* tells, in images and words, the story of the once mighty monarch of the eastern forests and the scientists who engaged in the struggle against “one of the greatest natural disasters in the history of forest biology”—perhaps the deadliest plant blight ever encountered. It is the story of the dedicated few who refused to give up like: the fearless plant explorer who tracked down the blight in war-torn China, the plant pathologists and geneticists who labored long and valiantly to understand the blight and find a way to thwart it. Finally, this is story of hope, of small but vital triumphs, as the secrets of the American chestnut and its deadly nemesis are gradually revealed. Assembled by and co-published with The American Chestnut Foundation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the re-establishment of the American chestnut tree to its natural range. *Mighty Giants: An American Chestnut Anthology* is a chronicle of an American icon and the struggle to bring it back to its place of honor in our forests and landscape. Four billion trees. And only an isolated few survived.

Shenandoah Chapter member, Chris Bolgiano, has offered autographed copies of her book *An American Chestnut Anthology* to Chapter members. Contact Chris at 540-896-4407 or www.chrisbolgiano.com Paperback \$24.95, Hardback \$49.50

What a great Christmas present this would make!!!