



Shenandoah Chapter
Virginia Native Plant Society
October 2009

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 8 meeting will be at BRCC Plecker P126A, 7:30pm

Program: Bring pictures of plants you need to identify or just share with others.

Joe Sharrer will give a lesson in the use of the GPS.

There will also be a report on the VNPS Annual Meeting.

Calendar 2009

October 10-12 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.

October 22, 2-3:30 p.m. Roger Tory Peterson Memories, Stories and Field Guides

Who hasn't used a Peterson Field Guide? Hear about the man, his work, and his influence from son and author, Lee Peterson. State Arboretum at Blandy www.virginia.edu/blandy/PP_Fall09FINAL.pdf

Plant Sale April/May 2010

We are planning to have a native plant sale in the spring. Fall is a good time to make divisions or pot up some plants that might not be easy to find in early April. The 2010 Wildflower of the Year is Wild Ginger *Asarum canadense*. If you have a colony of mature plants (at least 1-2 feet across), the plants can be divided in the fall when dormancy begins. Lift the rhizome mat with a spade or trowel and cut the rhizome at 6-8 inch intervals. Or, you can leave most of the mat intact and section off pieces from the edges of the clump. Replant or pot up new divisions immediately. To keep plants over the winter, heel pots into loose soil and mulch well. Uncover when danger of heavy frost is past or significant growth has started in the spring.

Contact Anneli Tatersall or Barbara McSweeney for additional information, or if you need assistance with plants.

In Memory Of Chuck

It is with great sadness we move into fall this year without Chuck Auckerman. Chuck passed away at home July 28, 2009. Chuck served as our Chapter treasurer for the past 5 years as well as helping with plant sales, outings and work days. He was a respected birder and organized the Christmas Bird count. Chuck was a passionate environmentalist and motorcyclist.

About 9 years ago, he retired from the Department of Environmental Quality after more than 25 years of service. We were fortunate to have him on our board, and his quiet sense of humor will be missed. To honor his service on our Board, we have made a donation in his name to the Flora of Virginia Project.

Flora of Virginia Project

Members of VNPS have been supporting the Flora of Virginia Project and have been prime donors that will get The Flora of Virginia published in 2012. Everyone of you is thanked for your donations. I am privileged to represent VNPS on the Board of the Foundation for the Flora of Virginia Project along with other members of VNPS: Author, Chris Ludwig and co-author, Johnny Townsend, Marion Lobstein, Donna Ware, Nancy Hugo, Chip Morgan, Joslin Galatin. Our new Publications Chair for VNPS, Bland Crowder, is working with Chris Ludwig on behalf of the FOVP.

Gifts to the Flora are through generous individual gifts of any amount.

Subscription (\$1,000 and receive a copy of the 1st printing containing their name as a sponsor of the project);

Plant family sponsors (\$4,000 with name in 1st printing and a copy of the 1st edition).

Now, there is another category of gift: Leadership Premium gift that offer a giclee print of one or more of the ten water color originals created by Lara Gastinger for the FOVP. Donation levels and description of the prints and images of the ten watercolors are on line at www.floraofvirginia.org

We have every expectation of the Flora being published by 2012. (Message sent from Nicky Staunton)

Budget cuts have affected the Flora of Virginia Project which is why the additional plea for donations has been circulated. Shenandoah Chapter is helping with the effort by becoming a plant sponsor for the Ericaceae family. Our Chapter symbol, the Mountain Fetterbush, *Pieris floribunda*, is in the Ericaceae family. So far, we have donated \$1150 to our \$4000 goal. Our future annual Chapter donations and plant sale proceeds will be used to support the Flora. With some extra effort on our part, hopefully the publication date of 2012 will not slip. We need this Flora and the sooner the better!

Invasive Plant Control

Just a reminder that fall is a good time to remove some invasives from fields and hedgerows. Tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) 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. 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.

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.

100 Native Forage Grasses in 11 Southern States Handbook

In February, 1971, USDA-NRCS issued *_Handbook No. 389_*, *_100 Native Forage Grasses in 11 Southern States_*, a definitive guide to identification, adaptation and use of 100 Southern native grass species. This work was the effort of Horace Leithead, Lewis Yarlett and Thomas Shiflett, Service range

conservationists. This handbook has been out of print for many years.

On the occasion of the 6th Eastern Native Grass Symposium (Oct. 7 - 10, 2008), the South Carolina Native Plant Society (co-host of the Symposium) re-printed this handbook, (and updated the taxonomy listings). It contains excellent line-drawn illustrations, including enlargements of key ID characteristics, along with distribution maps. The re-issued Handbook has a sturdy color cover (varnished for wear) with oversized spiral binding for ease of use in the field.

This handbook is available from the SC Native Plant Society. The price is \$15, which includes shipping costs.

This handbook provides an excellent description of some of the native grasses in our area. Order forms will be available at the October meeting. If you can not attend, please contact Chris Bowlen for an order form.

Chapter Board Positions

November is election time for our Chapter Board. Positions open are: President, Treasurer and Secretary. 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 Michael Seth for more info. Board meetings are open for any member to attend, just notify any board officeholder of your interest

Taking Care of Business

If you have had a change of address, phone, or email address, please help us update our records. Send your new information to Bea Woody.

If you would like to help us save postage costs sign up to receive the Newsletter by email Please notify Elaine Smith.