

Virginia Native Plant Society 2009 Annual Meeting

September 25-27, Salem, VA

“Explore the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountain Flora & Discover How to bring Native Plants into Your Yard”

The 2009 VNPS Annual Meeting will focus on the late summer and early autumn flora of the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains in Southwest Virginia. The Blue Ridge Wildflower Society and New River Chapters will host the event at the Salem Civic Center in Salem. This area is rich in geologic and plant diversity and field trips feature the Blue Ridge Parkway, Jefferson National Forest and several Nature Conservancy Preserves to see wetlands, meadows, waterfalls and forested areas. Friday evening starts with a reception and is followed by a slide presentation by Peter Heus on native plant propagation for our home landscapes. Saturday features a variety of field trips, a silent auction for the “Flora of Virginia” project, and then culminates with the annual meeting, a buffet dinner and our keynote speaker, Dr. Douglas Tallamy, author of Bringing Nature Home. Please come and enjoy a weekend meeting new and old friends and witnessing some outdoor splendor.

Accommodations: There is a block of 40 rooms being held until **Tuesday, August 25** at the La Quinta Inn 140 Sheraton Drive Salem, VA 24153: \$89 + tax. Call (540) 562-2717 and mention the VNPS Annual Meeting. The La Quinta e-mail is lq6269gm@laquinta.com. All rooms include a full breakfast, pool, microwave, refrigerator and laundry. Other local hotels include the Hampton Inn 540-776-0743 and Comfort Suites 540-375 4800. *** **Note: There is a VA Tech football game in Blacksburg on 9/26 so make your reservations early.**

Directions to the La Quinta Inn: Traveling on I-81 take exit 141 to Rt. 419 south and turn right onto Sheraton Drive next to the Burger King.

Directions to the Salem Civic Center: Traveling I-81 take exit 141 to Rt. 419 south. Follow Rt. 419 to Roanoke Boulevard. It is about 3.5 miles to Roanoke Boulevard. (There is a Hess Station on the left). Turn right onto Roanoke Boulevard. Drive about 1/2 mile. The Salem Civic Center is at 1001 Roanoke Boulevard on the right. Enter the civic center through the door on the extreme left end of the building.

Friday schedule

Registration & Friday evening events at the **Salem Civic Center:**

3-7 p.m. Registration (credit cards accepted)

7-8 p.m. Reception and social hour

8-9 p.m. **Friday Evening Program: "Native Plant Propagation Techniques"** by Peter Heus of Enchanter's Garden in Hinton, WV. Peter is a native of Nissequoque, NY who moved to a farm in Summers County, WV in 1974. Here he developed a strong interest in the diverse flora of the region and that developed into a native plant nursery called Enchanter's Garden located near Hinton, WV. He spends most of his time running the nursery, attending conferences and other events that promote the use of native plants and exploring native species that deserve wider use in horticulture.

Program Description: A Ph.D. in horticulture is not necessary to grow most native wildflowers, trees, shrubs, grasses etc. utilizing common and homemade equipment. Peter will show how you can grow many of the plants you covet for your home landscape by seed, cuttings and division. He will also talk about sources of propagative material.



Saturday Field Trips

Registration for the field trips will begin at 8 a.m. Morning/full day trips will begin at 8:30 a.m. from parking lot at the north end of the Salem Civic Center. The civic center is at 1001 Boulevard, Salem. Turn left at the front door of the civic center. The staging area is located by the side door. *Lunches will be handed out at this time for all day field trips.*

Morning Half Day (Depart 8:30 a.m., return noon)

1. **Falls Ridge, The Nature Conservancy Preserve.** Limit 20 Easy 1.5 miles. Falls Ridge is a very special place for endangered plants such as Addison's leather flower, Allegheny plum and golden-seal. This area covers over 600 acres of upland forest featuring a travertine waterfall. This walk will feature plant and insect interactions. Autumn features a wide variety of insects laying eggs and preparing for the winter. Join Professor Roger Sheppard for a curious look at plants and insects up close and personal. Roger is Professor of Biology Emeritus at Concord University in West Virginia. He is presently teaching several classes at Virginia Tech and Radford University.

2. **Woodpecker Ridge.** Limit 20 Easy, 1-2 miles. Woodpecker Ridge is a private preserve with a very diverse offering of habitats and activities. It is on the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail. Many species of flora and fauna can be found in the hardwood stands, butterfly garden, meadows, ponds and cedar stands. Join Mike Donahue for a close up look at butterflies, wildflowers and insects. Mike is a well known local naturalist and birder. His real love is butterflies. He is a technician for Jefferson National Forest. You won't be disappointed.

*******Registration for afternoon only field trips will begin at Noon at the staging area in the parking lot of the civic center.***

Afternoon Half Day (Depart 1 p.m., return 4:30 p.m.)

3. **Fenwick Mines.** Limit 20 Easy 1-2 miles. Fenwick Mines is a relatively new area developed in the Jefferson National Forest. There is a handicapped accessible boardwalk and several trails. The area offers good wetland habitats as well as a mixture of open and forested habitat. Join Bill Hunley for an outdoor experience. Bill is a local science teacher and adjunct professor of environmental science at Mary Baldwin College.

4. **Virginia Western Community College Arboretum.** Limit 15 Easy. The arboretum is a 2-acre education garden consisting of 10 separate gardens. Included are the conifer, rock, children's, herb, and sensory gardens. There is also a wildflower garden. Join Rich Crites on a leisurely stroll through one of the Roanoke Valley treasures. Rich is a retired biology professor at the college. He is also president of the Blue Ridge Chapter and has a wide knowledge of local flora.

Saturday All Day Field Trips (Depart 8:30 a.m., return 4:30 p.m.)

5. **Bent Mt.-Bottom Creek Gorge Nature Conservancy Preserve.** Limit 20 Moderate, 4 miles. This trip will include a wetland area with lots of lobelia, sedges etc. The gorge area is a protected area that has a mixture of habitats: old fields, mountain streams, hemlock forests, and mixed hardwood forest. The Nature Conservancy has preserved these 1,657 acres for the 200 foot waterfall (second highest in Va.) and spectacular scenery. The area features a large stand of Carolina hemlock, the rare chestnut lip fern and several rare fish species. This a stunning place to visit. Join Jim Bush, Master Gardener and resident of the Bent Mountain area, on this trip.

6. **Blue Ridge Parkway South.** Limit 20 Little walking. This will be an auto tour of the Blue Ridge Parkway from Milepost 121 to 180 and back featuring spectacular views and a mixture of forest and meadows. Many of the bays along the road host asters and goldenrods. There will be short walks from the vehicles to view the many sites of one of Virginia's most visited natural areas. Smart View and Rocky Knob areas will be highlighted as well as the parkway's history. Join Butch Kelly for a trip down one of the National Park Service's treasures. Butch spent 13 seasons as a parkway natural history interpreter.

7. **Pandapas Pond-Poverty Creek.** Limit 20 Easy walking, about 2 miles. This area, in the Jefferson National Forest near Blacksburg, is the site of an old hard scrabble farm, thus the name Poverty Creek. It offers lots of biking, horse, and hiking trails as well as a large pond featuring a variety of plants and fishing. Several volunteer groups have helped establish a butterfly garden that includes 95 percent native plants. Co-leaders Vicky Barden and Ruth Douglas will provide an interesting trip through forest, field and wetlands. Vicky is a member of the New River Chapter and a long time wildflower enthusiast. Ruth is a Member at Large on the VNPS board and retired biology professor from Northern Virginia Community College.

8. Heritage-Gateway Parks. Limit 20 Easy walking. Approximately 1-2 miles. This area is an old farm with old fields and an array of fall flora including lots of composites. It is rich in a variety of asters and goldenrods. This rolling area is a beautiful treasure within the town of Blacksburg. David Darnell will lead this trip. David has a botany degree from San Diego State. He has vast experience working in environmental protection throughout the U.S. He did wetland work in Gateway Park in San Francisco, CA. Be ready to learn a lot.

9. Peaks of Otter. Limit 20 Moderate to easy walking. Approximately 3 miles. This trip is scenic, with superb views of the Great Valley and Goose Creek Valley. The trip will include a 2-mile round trip walk to the Johnson Farm. It features the site of an old still and a farm, built in the 1850s and restored to the 1920s. There are deep woods of oak, poplar and hickory as well as meadows and old fields. If time permits a 1-mile walk around Abbott Lake will be included. The trail is below a looming Sharp Top Mountain and circles the lake. It offers some wetland plants. Look for lobelia and cattail to name just a few plants. Rudy Albert will lead this trip along with a National Park Service Ranger.

Sunday Field Trips (Depart 9:30 a.m.)

10. Poor Mountain Natural Heritage Preserve. Limit 20 Easy, 1-2 miles. This preserve is located in a rugged mountain region close to Salem/Roanoke. This newly completed trail features easy walking. Expect to see pirate bush (*Buckleya*). Although the area earns its name due to its infertility, it is vegetated with pine-oak forests underlain with lots of heath plants. Besides huckleberry, mountain laurel, and fetterbush look for lots of oaks and table mountain pine. Join Bryan Wender, Natural Heritage steward, who knows the area like the back of his hand and has worked for the NPS at Big South Fork in Tenn.

11. Remarkable Trees of Virginia. Limit 15 Little walking. If you have seen the book *Remarkable Trees of Virginia* and its wonderful photos, this is your chance to see some of the trees up close and personal. Featured will be two huge and remarkable honey locusts and an absolutely fabulous American elm. Jeff Kirwan, one of the co-authors of the book will lead you on this unique field trip. Jeff is a professor of forestry at Virginia Tech. His vast knowledge of trees and love of his field will provide one and all a delightful morning.

12. Virginia Western Community College Arboretum – Trip leader Cindy Burks is the former president of the Blue Ridge Wildflower Society. She is a veteran walk leader and knows the flora of the area well. *See description number 4.*

Saturday Schedule

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Field Trips

5 p.m.-6:30 p.m. Social hour and cash bar;

7 p.m.- Silent Auction for the “Flora of Virginia Project”

6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Buffet dinner

7:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Annual business meeting & announcement of silent auction winners.

8:30 p.m.-Featured Program

“Bringing Nature Home” by Doug Tallamy

Doug is a professor and chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware. He has written more than 65 research articles. Among the classes he has taught are insect taxonomy and behavioral ecology. He is the author of the book *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens*. Doug will share with us how native plants and native wildlife interact and how exotic plants interfere with the natural scheme of things. He will provide practical recommendations for us to enhance our gardens for native wildlife through the use of native plants.

Registration Form

“Explore the Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountain Flora & Discover How to bring Native Plants into Your Yard”

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Registration Fee: \$75 for VNPS participants. Registration opens August 1, 2009.
(Credit cards accepted) \$105 for non-VNPS members. Registration opens August 15, 2009.
Banquet and speaker only fee for VNPS members is \$25.
Banquet and speaker only fee for non-VNPS members & non-participating companions is \$30.

Note: Full registration includes all field trips, Friday and Saturday speakers, box lunch for Saturday and the Saturday banquet. (Vegetarian choices at all meals!)

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Second person in your party _____

Street _____ City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Signature ** _____ **(required)**

****Signatures required on all registrations.** By signing this form the above registrant shall hold harmless the Virginia Native Plant Society, including its staff and volunteers and those designated to serve as their provider.

Registration closes on Sept. 15 Please register early, as space is limited

Number attending: _____ **VNPS Members** _____ **General Public**
_____ **Banquet/speaker only for non-participants**
_____ **Total**

Registration fees _____ **\$75 VNPS members beginning August 1 (includes everything)**
_____ **\$105 General Public beginning August 15 (includes everything)**
_____ **\$25 banquet/speaker only fee VNPS members**
_____ **\$30 banquet/speaker only fee for non-participants & companions**

Please note: All field trips are limited as to number of participants. Please see each walk for details. You may do a Saturday a.m. walk and a p.m. walk. If your party has more than one person put the number of people under each choice.

Saturday a.m. Field Trips: **Saturday p.m. Field Trips:**

1st choice _____ 1st choice _____
2nd choice _____ 2nd choice _____

Saturday All Day Field Trips: **Sunday Field Trips:**

1st choice _____ 1st choice _____
2nd choice _____ 2nd choice _____

Saturday box lunches: Choose one: Ham/cheese _____ Turkey/swiss _____ Veggie Pita _____.

Want to pay by credit card? Circle one Discover, Mastercard, Visa

Card number _____ Exp. date _____ Security Code _____

Printed name _____

Signature _____

*For more information
Contact VNPS office manager Karen York at
540-837-1600 or vnpsoc@shentel.net*

**Mail this form (with check payable to VNPS or credit card information) to:
VNPS Annual Meeting, 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2, Boyce, VA 22620**