



NN Native Plant News

Fall 2017, Volume 14, No. 3

NORTHERN NECK CHAPTER
Virginia Native Plant Society

ANNUAL NATIVE PLANT SALE September 9

More Native Beauties for the September Sale



Scarlet Mallow is a statuesque show-stopper that attracts hummingbirds!

The Northern Neck Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society (NNCVNPS) will host its annual sale of native plants on Saturday, September 9, 2017, from 9 AM until Noon at Wicomico Parish Church, on Highway 200 in Wicomico Church. The sale will feature at least sixty varieties of flowers, ferns, grasses, trees, vines and shrubs native to the Virginia Coastal Plain. Featured plants will include: American Beautyberry, Butterfly Weed (host plant for the Monarch Butterfly), Coastal Azalea, Cardinal Flower, and Eastern Red Columbine, all native specifically to the Northern Neck, as well as several adaptable but often hard to find native trees and shrubs that will be available this year.

This year we have a number of White Oak saplings that are rarely available in nurseries. White Oaks are one of our most magnificent native trees growing to 100' or more in height and width with massive trunks and gnarled branches, shaggy warm gray bark, and stunning wine red to scarlet fall color. Often considered the quintessential wildlife tree, its sweet acorns provide food for a wide variety of wildlife species including wild turkeys, deer, raccoons, squirrels, chipmunks and other small mammals, and even black bear and wood ducks. In addition, it provides nesting habitat and cavities for owls, woodpeckers, bluebirds, wrens and chickadees and a variety of intriguing and bizarre insect species. As if this were not enough, these beautiful trees support over 540 species of moth and butterfly larvae, which themselves provide over 95% of the diet of young songbirds. Noted ecologist Doug Tallamy states that if you can plant only one thing to help the environment and promote biodiversity, plant a White Oak!!



Pinxterbloom Azalea has fragrant flowers that attracts butterflies & hummingbirds



American Beautyberry has eye-stopping magenta berries in the fall

Allegheny Chinquapin is an undervalued small tree or large multi-stemmed shrub that often grows only 6 – 12' high and wide. It is not only attractive, but also has exceedingly high wildlife value, developing prolific crops of edible, sweet nuts at only 2 – 3 years of age. Allegheny chinquapins have attractive fuzzy yellow flowers held in long catkins in spring, followed by clusters of nuts held tightly in small spiny burs in fall. The lustrous serrate leaves develop appealing yellow fall color. Chinquapins are easy to grow and adapted to a wide variety of soils. They are a favorite food of game birds such as wild turkeys, grouse, and bobwhite, as well as squirrels, rabbits, chipmunks and others. Trees can be cut back close to the ground to encourage them to form dense thickets that provide outstanding habitat and cover for turkeys and bobwhite. One renowned horticulturist said, “To hear about the attributes of the Allegheny Chinquapin makes your mouth water, but to see it makes your eyes water”. If your available yard space is on the small side, don't miss the opportunity to buy one or more of these remarkable plants for your garden!



Swamp Rose's fragrant summer flowers attract all types of pollinators and is a great plant for wet soils



Buttonbush's fragrant flowers are butterfly magnets and is perfect for a butterfly or shoreline garden

Pinxterbloom and Coast Azalea are deciduous azaleas with fragrant spring flowers with flaring petals and long stamens that are reminiscent of “wild honeysuckle”, another common name. In fall, their foliage takes on russet to red fall color. Both are easy to grow in acidic soils along woodland edges, and attract butterflies and hummingbirds to their fragrant blooms. Pinxter azaleas are upright and taller, reaching 6 – 8' in height with soft to rich pink blooms in late April and May. The smaller Coast Azalea is typically less than 4' in height and spreads in moist, sandy soils into lovely low colonies making a perfect low ground cover shrub for the woodland garden. It blooms slightly later with white, or pink-blushed white, fragrant flowers displayed against soft blue green foliage. We are offering both of these hard to find species, grown from local seed collected in nearby Chilton Woods. Don't miss this rare opportunity to buy some of these beautiful azaleas for your own garden! There will also be a limited supply of the beautiful Flame Azalea, native to the mountains of southern Virginia, with fiery orange to red flowers that will light up any garden.

Don't miss this opportunity to buy a variety of beautiful plants native to the Northern Neck. According to Plant Sale Chairman Nick Ferriter, “Native plants are much better adapted to local conditions than many of the plants introduced here from other parts of the world.” He also noted that “they generally require less watering, fertilizing and pest control, as well as offer numerous beneficial relationships to native pollinators and other wildlife. Plus they can be quite beautiful.”

The sale begins promptly at 9 AM rain or shine with no early sales. The Boys and Girls Club of the Northern Neck will provide assistance moving and loading plants. There will be a ten per cent discount on plants for any new members joining the Virginia Native Plant Society that day. Wicomico Parish Church is located at 5191 Jesse Ball DuPont Highway, Wicomico Church, Virginia. For further information contact Nick Ferriter at 804-462-6242.

Message from the President



I want to thank all members for supporting this Chapter - paying the dues, attending meetings and field trips and, of course, volunteering with the Chapter – leading trips, growing plants, maintaining public gardens, helping with the plant sale, working on the newsletter and serving on the Board – this all helps this Chapter be what it is. Our purpose is to promote the conservation and preservation of the native plants of Virginia – that goal should be on everyone’s shoulders. It can be done privately on your own property or publicly by volunteering with the Chapter, chatting up native plants or a myriad of other ways. In my 50+ years of conservation work, I have never seen a more urgent and critical time to support what the Chapter does. Education is a important focus of the Chapter with the field trips, monthly meetings and programs and the wonderful free publications that have been produced over the years. Membership is key to the viability of the Chapter – thank you all. I hope that all will attend our Fall programs as listed on the schedule in this newsletter. We are planning some field trips and native plant garden workshops as well and we will announce those separately as plans take shape.

The Chapter’s most important event is our annual plant sale that is coming up on Saturday, September 9th. Others have more to say about it in this newsletter but I want everyone to try and attend. It is our only fundraiser other than dues and it is a great way for the Chapter to introduce natives to the public. Knowledgeable members will be available to answer questions – please support your native plants and all the critters that so much need those native plants. Please note that several dedicated members have raised most of these real local native plants from seed or on their property and spent many loving hours to prepare them for sale.

Kevin Howe

A Short Native Shrub!



How many times have you wished for a short native shrub for a sidewalk or other feature hedge or for the layer in front of taller plants? This one is for you even though it is not evergreen.

New Jersey Tea is a Northern Neck native plant that is virtually unknown to most of us. I discovered it during research for my first Northern Neck garden at Hills Quarter and planted it as part of the front hedge. I have included it in my present garden in Irvington. Currently twenty eight potted specimens are being tended in my back yard for sale this fall. Everyone will want one, three or more, so if they sell out, future sale availability will be promised!

According to the Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora [vaplantatlas.org] **New Jersey Tea** is found in almost all counties of Virginia; however, on the Northern Neck, only Lancaster County has a dot. Hummmm, interesting. I wonder where it was found; it is not on the plant list for Hickory Hollow. From the website: “The species is frequent in dry forests, woodlands, barrens, and clearings throughout the state. Two vars. have been recognized: var. *americanus* apparently occurs over most of the state, but is replaced in sandy habitats of se. Virginia by a narrower-leaved extreme that corresponds to var. *intermedius*. These vars. need further evaluation; they may or may not be worthy of recognition.”

Checking the USDA Plants Database [plants.usda.gov] for **New Jersey Tea** to get the botanical line drawing and a photo shown here, I see that it is widely distributed across the eastern US.



According to Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center site [wildflower.org] **New Jersey Tea** “is a low, upright, deciduous shrub that grows to only 3 ft. tall. Pubescent leaves give the entire plant a grayish cast. Small white flowers occur in 2 in., branch-tip clusters, rising from the leaf axils on the new shoots. The base is woody, while the upper portion of the plant is made up of herbaceous, spreading branches. Fall color is insignificant. The dried leaves of this nitrogen-fixing shrub make an excellent tea that was very popular during the Revolutionary War period.”

Photographer: Makin, Julie, unrestricted-from wildflower.org showing fruit forming

As is typical of most native plants, New Jersey Tea is a host plant for several species, in our area, the Spring and Summer Azure butterfly. Many small pollinators are attracted to the blossoms. When planted in your part to full sun garden, as usual, water **New Jersey Tea** to get it established during its first year; afterwards it will be drought tolerant. It will prefer well drained soil and be happy with similar flora such as *Asclepias tuberosa*, Butterfly-weed, *Baptisia tinctoria*, Yellow Wild Indigo, *Phlox paniculata*, Garden phlox, *Rudbeckia* and *Solidago species*. It could be planted in front of a taller shrub such as *Viburnum dentatum*, Arrow-wood.



Photo of Azure butterfly from the web

New Jersey Tea is food to deer and probably rabbits too. Plan to protect it until well established or protected by other plants not as palatable. Then the occasional ‘trimming’ will be welcome to keep it a compact, floriferous addition to your garden.

2017 Tentative Education and Outreach Calendar

February thru November	Ongoing collaboration between the Virginia Native Plant Society and the Boys & Girls Club and Wild Bunch Wildlife Rehabilitation on the maintenance of the demonstration gardens.
Sept. 24 Sunday	12:30 - 4:00 pm. Boots & BBQ. The Northern Neck Land Conservancy will hold its annual fundraiser at the historic Grove Mount Farm in Richmond County with BBQ, raffles, decoy carvings and other things, including a Chapter booth. Attend and stop by to say "hi" and support a worthy cause. Find info and tickets on the web at nnconserv.org .
Sept. 29-Oct. 1 Fri-Sun.	VNPS Annual Meeting 2017 - Tri-State Native Plant Conference. Shepherdstown, WV. Please visit VNPS website: http://vnps.org/events/vnps-annual-meeting/ for details.
Oct. 7 Saturday	Market Day. Wicomico Episcopal Church hosts this event every year and always sells our native plants left over from the sale. This year we are partnering with the wonderful native plant grower, Sassafras Farms of Hayes, VA, who will be offering a wide variety of native plants. Please attend to help the Church and our native plants.

CafePress!

Be sure to tell your friends to check out our special shop that supports the Northern Neck Native Plant Society. Visit cafepress.com/nnnps to purchase items that feature our lovely native plants. A portion of the proceeds goes to the Northern Neck Chapter of the Native Plant Society.



July Plant of the Month

Groundsel Tree, also known as High-tide Bush, (*Baccharis halimifolia*) is a common shrub found throughout our area, mainly along shorelines and in wet areas. A tall robust plant with gray-green foliage, it may grow up to 10 feet or more in height. It has two types of leaves: small, thin upper leaves which lack teeth and lower leaves that are longer and have teeth.

In late August or September, inconspicuous white to green flower heads develop in dense clusters at the ends of the branches followed by fruit with showy white bristles that glisten in the fall sun like silvery tassels. Groundsel Tree loses its leaves in the winter but the stems remain green.

This is a salt tolerant plant which is useful for erosion control and shoreline plantings. It is adaptable to a range of soil conditions from wet to dry. The plants are easily pruned and can be cut back after flowering in fall or in early summer to control size. Its flowers provide nectar for butterflies including monarchs. Marsh wrens and other small birds often nest in Groundsel Trees.

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Membership Fees

Individual: \$30
Family: \$40
Secondary: \$5 (goes to another chapter)

Send your check to:

VNPS Membership Chair
 Blandy Experimental Farm
 400 Blandy Lane, Unit 2
 Boyce, VA 22602

In the lower left hand corner of your check add:

"Membership, Northern Neck Chapter"

All memberships are good for one year from the month you join. The state office of VNPS will send you a renewal reminder.

All but \$5.00 of any membership is tax deductible.

Please Help Us Keep in Touch with You!

Whenever your email address, phone number or postal address changes, please contact:

John Krainock at jkrainock@usa.net or
 (804) 472-3051

Whenever you can, please carpool to our meetings, field outings and other activities.

NN Chapter of the VNP Meetings & Outings Calendar
Chapter Meetings & Saturday Outings are open to the public (unless noted)

Sept. 8 Friday	9:00 am. <i>NNCVNPS Plant Pre-Sale Setup.</i> Wicomico Parish (Episcopal) Church. Set-up by members beginning at 9:00 am until finished. Volunteers needed; please just show up for 30 minutes or all day. Jobs for all ages.
Sept. 9 Saturday	9:00 am - Noon. <i>NNCVNPS Plant Sale.</i> Our annual Native Plant Sale!!! Members need to be present on Saturday by 8:00 am for sale to public at 9:00 am. Volunteers needed with knowledge or otherwise. Help the Chapter; call Kevin for info at 571-232-4592.
Sept. 12 Tuesday	2:00 pm – 3 pm. <i>NN Master Naturalist Meeting.</i> Helen Hamilton, author of two books of mosses and wildflowers of Virginia's Coastal Plain will present a program to NN Master Naturalists. Open to all and will take place at the Lancaster Community Library in Kilmarnock.
Sept. 21 Thursday	Noon - 1:30 pm. <i>"Wings at Work."</i> Speaker: Dominion Energy on initiative that, among other things, encourages native plants growing along their 43,000 acres of transmission line lands. Wicomico Parish (Episcopal) Church Hall. Bring bag lunch. (Board meeting starts at 10:00). After meeting plants may be available for purchase.
Oct. 19 Thursday	Noon - 1:30 pm. <i>Chestnut Ecology, Common Milkweed & Monarch Butterflies.</i> Speaker: Dr. Harmony Dagleish, Forest Ecologist from William and Mary will talk about her research. Wicomico Parish (Episcopal) Church Hall. Bring bag lunch. (Board meeting starts at 10:00).
Nov. 16 Thursday	Noon - 1:30 pm. <i>Native Plant Role in Preserving Pollinators.</i> Speaker: Jane Henley. Wicomico Parish (Episcopal) Church Hall. Bring bag lunch. (Board meeting starts at 10:00).
January TBD	TBD. <i>Skunk Cabbage Walk</i> at Hickory Hollow Natural Preserve. Skunk Cabbage is our earliest blooming plant and it's only natural fitting that our first walk of the year should be in search of that plant's bloom. Yes, it may be cold but you will learn something and have fun!
April-May 2018	TBD. <i>Chapter Kayak Trip.</i> Sometime in the Spring we will have a trip (or two) down Dragon Run in Middlesex County focusing on plants in this awesome swamp (led by Friends of the Dragon Run). A unique and remote pristine swamp area and if you have never been there, you must. Space is limited so keep your eyes and ears open for an announcement and sign up!

Welcome to Our Newest Members

*Edith Bradbury, Ethan Brent,
and Laurie Page*

Newsletter: three issues annually.
Send ideas, articles, photos, etc.,
by December 1st to
bayfishers3@aol.com

Friend Us on Facebook!
Northern Neck Chapter Virginia
Native Plant Society

Expect More!

Additional outings will be announced to our members via email. All walks are weather permitting. Driving directions will be emailed to members in the week before each outing and are included in publicity releases.

For more information contact Paula Boundy at 804-436-4944 or e-mail at
paula.boundy@va.metrocast.net

Visit Our Chapter Website at:

<http://www.nnnps.org>

Be Sure to Check Your Local Paper for More Details on NNCVNPS Meetings and Events



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Note expiration date if received by mail.
Please renew as needed if record is correct, or contact us if incorrect.