

Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

NN Native Plant News

Spring 2011, Volume 8, No. 2

NN Native Plant News is transitioning to deliver electronically to all members who are willing and have email accounts. Should you wish to continue to receive the print edition, please send an email to jlang@riposi.net. Members lacking email addresses will continue to receive the printed version.

Old Courthouse Demonstration Garden is Revamped

Advance planning and energetic "work crews" accomplish wonders!

Preparing the beds for another growing season.



Installing two rain barrels!



Posing for the camera.



Creating a holder for Carol Hammer's brochure!



Making new plant label signs!



Photos: Carol Hammer and Kathey Brodtman

Message from the President

One service we offer our members and the public is locating speakers for our six indoor meetings each year. We hope that interesting personalities will help draw you to our meetings and that you will leave feeling enriched with new information and insight about nature and native plant life. For those who had to miss a recent presentation, here's a synopsis of each.

January: Helen Hamilton, *Why Grow Native Plants*

Helen, the current President of the John Clayton Chapter of the VNPS, is an enthusiastic proponent of Douglas Tallamy's *Bringing Nature Home* concept of gardening. She used local examples, many of which were illustrated by photos of her attractive Williamsburg garden, to demonstrate how native plants are hosts for many of the insects and other small critters that, in turn, are eaten by larger animals like frogs and birds, and why biodiversity is important. Helen's lovely garden well exemplifies how private homeowners who plant natives can help preserve wildlife and reduce the risk of extinction of species that were once abundant in the U.S.



February: Denise Greene, *Creating a Butterfly Garden with Native Plants*

Denise, a horticulturist who owns *Sassafras Farm* in Hayes on the Middle Peninsula, further expanded upon the interdependence theme as she explained how establishing a butterfly garden requires certain nectar-producing and caterpillar-host plants, as well as certain trees in which some species breed. We also learned that healthy native plants recover after being fed upon by caterpillars—gardeners need not worry! Her beautiful slides showing the native plants that work well in our area to attract butterflies was accompanied by a six-page *Butterfly Species Host List* handout. If you wish a copy of Denise's list, feel free to email me for the digital version.

March, Bobbie Burton, *Living Shorelines*

Bobbie is the Executive Director of Longwood University's Hull Springs Farm in Westmoreland County. The farm, which serves as a model for advancing stewardship of rural working lands, has the largest, living shoreline demonstration site in Virginia. She explained, with before and after slides, how a naturally eroding cliff is being stabilized with a shallow sill and a revetment (see below) that are flanking a new sand beach planted with *Spartina*. Especially interesting was the contrast between extensive damage from tropical storm Ernesto in 2006, before the living shoreline had been constructed, and the lack of impacts during the 2009 Veteran's Day Nor'aster.

We hope you are enjoying our offerings. As we work on the fall program, if you can suggest any topics that would be of general interest, or can recommend a potential speaker, please contact me via email (CarolJHammer@aol.com) or telephone (453-5500).

And please mark your calendars now for our September plant sale on Saturday, September 10th!

Carol Hammer

NEEDED FOR THE PLANT SALE: Anyone with "extra" native plants that can be potted up for our September sale! If you need assistance with your thinning regimen, contact Ted Munns at tedmunns@kaballero.com, or call (804) 453-3621.

Living Shorelines Walk at Hull Springs Farm

On a cool and overcast morning in early April, Bobbie Burton (middle of right photo) warmly treated chapter members and a visitor to coffee, a synopsis of the Hull Springs shoreline project, and a tour of the constructed beach at low tide. Along with the sill, revetment, marsh grasses, a cobble pavement that facilitates animal migrations at high tide, and two pairs of geese fighting over the privilege of keeping house in an osprey nest, we examined a stand of non-native *Phragmites australis* invading from the south for which eradication efforts will begin this year.

text and photos: Judy Lang





Coreopsis auriculata drawing from Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions*. 3 vols. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Vol. 3: 491. Courtesy of Kentucky Native Plant Society.

Spring Planting Fever

As milder, sunnier weather appears, Spring planting fever will grip you. It may have already flared up as a result of the arrival of lush, colorful, glossy flower catalogs. You must discipline yourself...harden yourself off...do not give in to temptation to fill your garden from these catalogs! Beware visits to the "big box stores," especially as the garden centers fill up with nursery grown plants in lush bloom. Bright colorful azaleas will beckon from roadside nurseries with the message: "Buy Me and Your Garden will Be Beautiful!"

Remind yourself that you are committed to native plants, the contribution they make to the beauty of your landscape and their value to wildlife and the environment. (A few pansies, marigolds, zinnias or impatiens in your garden really won't offend your peers, many of whom can't live without some *Narcissus*). Remember that a native plant garden is developed over time, and shop for native species and cultivars from reliable native plant sales or other sources.

At some distance away, the John Clayton NPS has a native plant sale in Williamsburg on April 30, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News sells native plants on April 16, 17 and 23, also from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Or take a list of plants you want to buy to Greenpoint Nursery in Lively: if not in stock, they will attempt to locate them for you. As does the Earth Store in Kilmarnock.

Paula Boundy, Horticulture Chair

In the event you do get drawn into a 'Garden Center,' here are some native plant cultivars you might find that have proven worthy for a native plant garden and will cool off your **Spring planting fever**:

<i>Coreopsis auriculata</i>	Eared coreopsis	Cultivar: 'Pierre' or 'Nana'
<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i>	Threadleaf coreopsis	Cultivar: 'Zagreb'
<i>Dicentra eximia</i>	Wild bleeding heart	Caution, many are hybrids!
<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>	Coral honeysuckle	Cultivar: 'Major Wheeler' or 'John Clayton'
<i>Phlox subulata</i>	Moss pink	Cultivars available in various colors
<i>Sisyrinchium angustifolium</i> or <i>S. atlanticum</i>	Blue-eyed grass Eastern Blue-eyed grass	Cultivar: any as long as it's blue
<i>Stokesia laevis</i>	Stokes aster	Cultivar: any as long as it's blue
<i>Tradescantia virginiana</i> or <i>T. ohioensis</i>	Spiderwort	Caution, many are hybrids!
<i>Verbena canadensis</i>	Creeping vervain	Cultivar: 'Homestead Purple'
<i>Ilex glabra</i>	Inkberry	Cultivar: 'Shamrock' (male) 'Compacta' (female) 'Nigra' (seed grown, either)
<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	Yaupon holly (weeping) Dwarf yaupon	Cultivar: 'Pendula' (female) 'Schillings Dwarf' (male) and 'Nana' (female)
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	Arrowwood viburnum	Cultivar: Blue Muffin

Be sure to check your references for each species' best growing conditions, soil, light, etc.

Paula Boundy

A Very Warm Welcome to Our New Members!

Phllis Davis and William Doyle, Jr., Richard LeBaron, Roz Messing, Ellen Van Horn

Late April Field Outings

Spring Ephemerals Walk in Hickory Hollow
Saturday, April 24, 10:00 a.m.

Public Welcome! Come and Bring Friends!

Pink Lady Slippers in Gary Chafin's Woodlot
April 28, 2011

VNPS Members only

May Field Outings

Invasives Removal Day
Saturday, May 7

Belle Isle State Park, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Chilton Woods State Forest, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Kentucky Yellow Lady Slipper in Hickory Hollow
Saturday May 21, 10:00 a.m.

Public Welcome at All! Come and Bring Friends!

Signs of



Arisaema triphyllum
Jack-in-the-pulpit
Earline Walker



Claytonia virginica, spring beauty
Carol Hammer



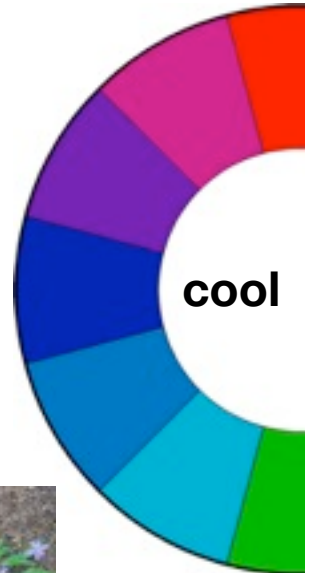
Kalmia latifolia, mountain laurel
Janet Pawlukiewicz



Mertensia virginica, Virginia bluebell
Carol Hammer



Phlox divaricata, wild blue (woodland) phlox
Charlie Wilson



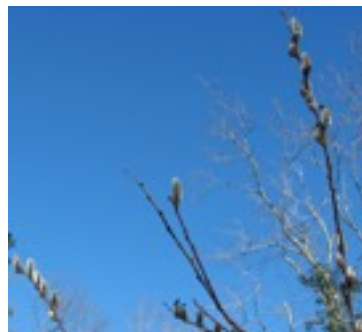
Mertensia virginica, Virginia bluebell, Charlie Wilson



Galearis spectabilis
showy orchis, Earline Walker



Iris cristata
crested iris, Judy Lang



Salix discolor
pussywillow, Nick Ferriter



Podophyllum peltatum, mayapple
Carol Hammer

Spring



Aquilegia canadensis, red columbine
Judy Lang



Lonicera sempervirens
trumpet (coral) honeysuckle
Carol Hammer



Chionanthus virginicus, white fringetree, Judy Ripley



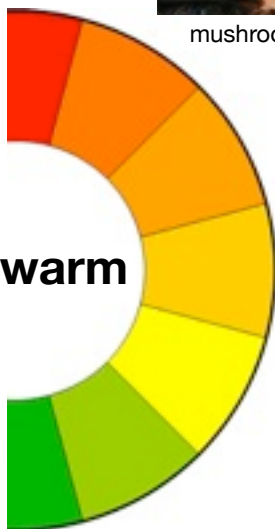
mushroom, Reta Stover



Kalmia latifolia, mountain laurel
Janet Pawlukiewicz



Liriodendron tulipifera, tulip poplar, Carol Hammer



Ranunculus, buttercup, Judy Ripley



Caltha palustris, marsh marigold
Carol Hammer



Sanguinaria canadensis
bloodroot
Charlie Wilson



Veratrum viride, false hellebore
Carol Hammer



Symplocarpus foetidus, skunk cabbage
Nick Ferriter



Hexastylis virginica
Virginia heartleaf
Carol Hammer



Oxalis violacea
violet woodsorrel
Carol Hammer

Did you know that Sir Isaac Newton designed the first circular color diagram in 1666?
Or that virtually any colors you pick from it will look good together? For more, see
http://www.tigercolor.com/color-lab/color-theory/color-theory-intro.htm#Color_Wheel

Family Orchidaceae, *Cypripedium* species: Lady Slippers

In 2006 I moved to the Northern Neck of Virginia and began planting a native plant garden. In September, I noticed an advertisement for the Northern Neck Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society's annual plant sale, so went to it to add to the plants I had purchased or ordered from catalogs during the spring and summer. A discount on purchases was offered if one joined the Society and I gladly 'signed up.' Since then I have been active in the activities, and serve on the Board, of the chapter. Its logo is the large Kentucky lady slipper, *Cypripedium kentuckiense*. I was unfamiliar with this yellow lady slipper orchid, but recognized it as similar to the pink lady slipper aka Moccasin flower, *Cypripedium acaule*, that occurred around the woodland edge where I grew up in Maryland. (Unfortunately there are no more growing there now since the woods have filled in and presumably they have been shaded out.) Naturally I was thrilled to discover that both of these lady slippers grow on the Northern Neck and eagerly awaited the time to make (Kentucky) and renew (pink) my acquaintance with them!

During 2007, I attended the chapter's Spring Ephemerals walk at Hickory Hollow Natural Area Preserve ending up on the Cabin Swamp Trail that ends in, well, a swamp. This is a unique ecological site for the Northern Neck because it is a basic seep; *i.e.*, the pH of the swamp is alkaline, caused by dissolution of the underlying limestone, and provides the habitat for the Kentucky lady slipper. However, most of the surrounding soils are highly acidic as evidenced in part by the occurrence of mountain laurel, *Kalmia latifolia*. So here at a steep ravine are plants requiring neutral to sweet and acidic soils, respectively. Both the Kentucky lady slipper, considered a rare plant that is otherwise unknown in Virginia, and mountain laurel are disjunct species on the Northern Neck. They "shouldn't" be here. In fact, the presence of the Kentucky lady slipper is one reason that Hickory Hollow is a natural area preserve. Because they do



Cypripedium acaule (above)
C. kentuckiense (right)
Carol Hammer

not bloom at the same time, another trip to a different trail at Hickory Hollow was necessary to view the pink lady slipper as it prefers upland acidic soil. Fortunately, the latter has been discovered in a number of places on the Neck, including our state forest, Chilton Woods, where it appears to be flourishing even after a clear cut. I was enchanted by the large yellow lady slippers and my memories refreshed by the pink lady slippers. They are wonderful examples of native orchids occurring in natural places.

Visit www.hillsidenursery.biz for nursery propagated specimens and related information, or google the species for more technical details. Our chapter sponsors local field trips to see these orchids and other native plants as they come into bloom throughout the year. You can also visit our Facebook page (at Northern Neck Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society) for on-line information in addition to the schedules given in our newsletters. *Paula Boundy, Horticulture Chair*



Claytonia virginica with pollinating bee.

What Pollinates Spring Beauties?

Special Programs Cochairs, Earline Walker and Nick Ferriter, plus Ellis Squires and Tom Teeple have done it again and volunteered for **more field work!**

Spring Beauty and the Bees is a project to document changing pollinator populations. By monitoring the insects that visit the spring beauty, *Claytonia virginica* (left), researchers can better understand the biology of native pollinators and their value for native plant production. Our team was asked by a graduate student from the University of Toronto to visit a chosen patch of study plants and observe them for 2 hours over a course of 3 weeks, all during sunny weather.

We began our observations near Cabin Swamp in Hickory Hollow but soon relocated to Chilton Woods because it was a shorter distance from the parking area to our patch of study plants and, as Ellis observed, there were better logs to sit on! At first we found the weather and the pollinators to be uncooperative. It was overcast and stormy, and the insects refused to pose for pictures or wear name tags. The weather and our expertise soon improved and we were able to gather and submit the requested data. What better reason to spend time in Chilton Woods during a glorious Northern Neck spring?
text: *Earline Walker*; photo: *Nick Ferriter*

2011 VNPS Workshop Report

The VNPS workshop this year was held at the University of Richmond on March 5. The topic this year was "Down Under – Geology, Soil, and Native Plants." So here is the dirt on dirt. There were four speakers who respectively addressed:

the geology of Virginia (it is varied);

the soil/plant interface (plants grow in the top layer of soil and the layers vary somewhat based on location in Virginia);

soil nematodes (there are millions, you can't see them without a microscope, and don't order beneficial nematodes because they may arrive dead); and

the botany of shale barrens (it is sparse).

The workshop was, as always seems to be, sold out. The topics were interesting because they dealt with things about which we are mostly ignorant. They did not, however, have much vegetation interface. The seminar covered some of the mineral/animal (nematodes) realms, leaving the vegetable kingdom mostly untouched.

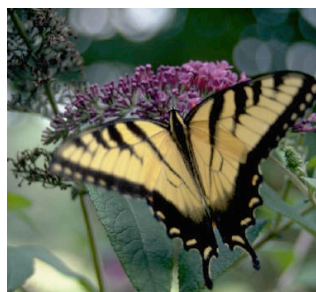
All in all it was quite interesting if a bit low on laughs.

Jackie Ferriter

The Continuing Saga of the Elusive Skunk Cabbage

March has arrived. It is late for viewing skunk cabbage, but not too late. Nick and I decided to go to Hickory Hollow on March 4 to see how the skunk cabbage have evolved since last seen in January. For those of you who remain fascinated by this exotic plant, I can report the following: in early March, this year at least, there are patches of green foliage accompanied by no remaining flowers, there are patches of flowers with green foliage, and, just off the end of the boardwalk, there is a new patch with, as yet, no green. We got one good photo which is shown on page 5. Jackie Ferriter

Visit Sassafras Farm in May



At our Feb 17 meeting, when Denise Green gave her inspiring presentation of creating a butterfly garden with native plants, a buzz was heard. *Let's visit her farm and see what and how she accomplished this feat.* So an outing was arranged. On May 12, at 10 a.m., Denise will welcome us to her farm and show us the native plants she uses.

Denise will be offering plants for sale. Directions will be emailed to interested members as the date approaches. Carol Hammer

Heartfelt condolences to Horticulture Chair, Paula Boundy, whose husband died as this newsletter was going to press.

Officers

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 Treasurer.....Paula Boundy 435-368 paula.boundy@va.metrocast.net

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 Education.....Tanya Bohlke 435-8824 tmbohlke@yahoo.com,
Nancy Garvey 436-8401 nangarvey@hotmail.com
 Horticulture.....Paula Boundy
 Hospitality.....Pam Collins, Jane Peterson
 Membership.....John Krainock 472-3051 jkrainock@usa.net
 Newsletter.....Judy Lang jlang@riposi.net 453-6605
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 Outings.....Joan Hattersley 529-5467 hattersley4@gmail.com
 Special.....Earline Walker 529-9362 Earlinedickinson@aol.com
 Nick Ferriter 462-6242 Ferriter@aol.com
 Publicity.....Kari Garell 493-1316 garellk@aol.com,
Susan Christopher (also Boy Scout and Church liasons)
 Ways & Means....Judy Lang

Other Board Members

Ex-President.....Marie Minor
 Members at Large.Bette Gruben bettegruben@gmail.com
Jeff Wainscot

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.

See address label for renewal date.

Please advise us if our records are incorrect.

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.

Friend Us on Facebook!

Northern Neck Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society

NN Chapter of the VNPS Late Spring Outings Calendar
All Saturday Field Outings are open to the public.

Apr. 23, Sat.	10:00 a.m. <i>Spring Ephemerals Walk</i> . Hickory Hollow Natural Area Preserve. Ellis Squires and Tom Teeples (leaders).
Apr.28, Thur.	10:00 a.m. <i>Pink Lady Slippers and Other Spring Delights</i> . Twin Oaks Woodlot. Gary Chafin (leader).
May 7, Sat.	<i>Virginia Master Naturalists and Virginia Native Plant Society Invasives Removal Day</i> 9:30-11:30 a.m. Belle Isle State Park. Paul Billings and Earline Walker (leaders) 1:30-3:30 p.m. Chilton Woods State Forest. Rich Steensma and Mike Aharron (leaders). Bring pruners, gloves, water, insect repellent (if you need it).
May 12, Thur.	8:45 a.m. <i>Sassafras Farm Visit</i> , Hayes. Denise Greene (leader). Carol Hammer (local contact). Carpool from Grace Episcopal Church in Kilmarnock.
May 21, Sat.	10:00 a.m. <i>Kentucky Yellow Lady Slipper Walk</i> . Hickory Hollow Natural Area Preserve. Tom Teeples and Ellis Squires (leaders).

Marie Minor's Botanical Surveys in Chilton Woods

All VNPS members are welcome to walk with Marie as she botanizes the Doghouse Trail at Chilton Woods State Forest.

Bring water, bug spray when needed; if you wish, binoculars and camera.

Dates: **April 6, 20**
 May 4, 18
 June 1, 15
 July 6, 20
 August 3, 17
Time: 10:00 a.m.

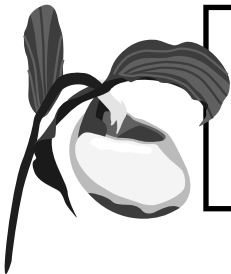
All rain dates will be on the following Wednesdays.

For information on where to meet, contact Marie at:

(804) 925-5950 or
mfminor@verizon.net

Expect more! Additional outings will be announced to our members via email. Driving directions will be emailed to members in the week before each outing.
For more information, contact:
 Joan Hattersley at hattersley4@gmail.com or (804) 529-5467

Newsletter: three issues annually.
Send ideas, articles, photos, etc.
by July 1st to klang@riposi.net



Northern Neck Chapter
 Virginia Native Plant Society
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Note expiration date.
 Please renew as needed if record is correct, or contact us if incorrect.