

Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

NN Native Plant News

Winter 2009, Volume 6, No. 1

Tom Teeples Discovers Four More Plants New to Northumberland!

Sometimes it does not seem like work, walking in the woods or strolling along the beach above the high water mark. The work in this case is performing required volunteer hours for the Master Naturalist program. I chose for my primary volunteer project to survey plants at Hughlett Point Natural Area Preserve. Dorothy Tompkins of Rivanna MN Chapter volunteered to assist. Living on Dividing Creek across from Hughlett Point, Dorothy is a certified Master Naturalist with a special interest in plants.

We began our survey over the winter of 2007-2008. Since nothing was in bloom, plants identified then were trees and ferns. The real work began in April 2008, as plants stirred and bloomed. On one of our early forays we worked our way south from the parking lot, moving parallel to the hard topped road when we spotted a plant with two fresh leaves. Then more were spotted with a spike of flowers coming up from the twin leaves. The plant was a southern twayblade orchid, *Listera australis*. Paul Servis and Carol Hammer documented the find with their cameras. I brought Ann Messick, our chapter's founder, to see the twayblade and she concurred with the identification. I checked the Virginia Digital Flora for Northumberland County and found that this was a first sighting for southern twayblade in the county. Exciting stuff! The Virginia Digital Flora may be accessed on the internet at www.biol.vt.edu/digital_atlas. Click on "County" at the top of the page and the list of plants for each county in VA appears.

August brought to light a small (4 ft.) shrubby plant with compound leaves that looked like a black locust. However, it had no thorns. There were panicles of purple flowers at the tips of the branches. The panicles were made up of individual leguminous flowers with bright yellow/orange pistils and stamens, a pretty combination. We identified it as a False Indigo, *Amorpha fruticosa*. Fruticosa means shrubby. Again, this is a new plant discovery for Northumberland County. Carol Hammer and Earline Walker documented this find with photos. The flower panicles already were past their prime. Early August will be a better time to view the blooms.



We explored a nearby area and noticed a small pinkish, clover-like blossom that Carol photographed. The picture, shared via email was identified by our new President, Marie Minor, as Curtis' milkwort, *Polygala curtisii*, another new record for Northumberland County!



Dorothy and I walked HP in November 2008, finding two new (for us) specimens. One, a Crane-fly orchid, *Tipularia discolor*, is another new plant for Northumberland. The other, a Sea Beach Knotweed, *Polygonum glaucum* is a rare plant which was already known to exist at Hughlett Point. In less than a year, we discovered four new plants growing at Hughlett Point, two of which were orchids; surely there are more!

Our list of HP plants approaches 90. We can use help with identifying grasses which will boost our total. Should you know of a species at HP that is not on our list, please call me. I will share our list with those interested. Excel is needed to read the file. I can print a paper copy if you do not have Excel. My contact information is: tandpteepls@verizon.net or 804-435-0636.

~Tom Teeples



Tom Teeples (text), Carol Hammer (plant photos), Earline Walker (Tom photo)

Message from the New President

Marie Minor

Dear members,

Here I sit a little more than a week before Christmas contemplating the New Year and summing up my goals as the newly elected president for our chapter. Accepting this position leaves me daunted as I regard myself more of a manager than a leader, yet I will do my best to lead. For those of you who don't know me, I retired from Philip Morris as a biologist a little more than sixteen years ago. Because King and Queen County was not in favor of rampant development, I chose to settle there, bought land, built a brick rancher, and moved in almost 14 years ago to live out my retirement years. At that time I was still a member of the Pocahontas Chapter, as member chair and editor of the newsletter. Ours was one of the first chapters to send the newsletter by email*. Eventually, I became state board president from 1997 through 2000. Realizing the strengths and weaknesses of VNPS at the state level, I knew that I was most satisfied working at the chapter level where the real action is.



Carol Hammer (photo)

When I heard that Ann Messick and others had started a new chapter in the Northern Neck, I decided that my habitat and conservation concerns were more in keeping with those of a rural chapter and transferred my membership here. As one of your members, I have enjoyed conducting botanical surveys of places like Hickory Hollow, Chilton Woods, and Bush Mill Stream. Planting public areas with native material has also been an enjoyable endeavor.

I see the future of the Northern Neck Chapter as a continuation of public services such as planting native plants in public facilities, or encouraging the planting of natives. I would like to see our chapter take advantage of any offers from public schools to educate students about respecting our natural heritage. Then, too, I would like to see more cooperative involvement of our chapter with other conservation groups such as Audubon, Master Naturalists (*see below*), Master Gardeners, as well as state and federal departments. Many times we can accomplish more when working together than by ourselves. Last but not least, I want to encourage our chapter to continue our own education about native plants by providing informative walks and programs.

My hope is for our chapter to reach out to educate others as well as ourselves about the value and wonder of native plants.

~Marie F. Minor, December 2008

* Editor's note: With this issue, the Northern Neck Chapter is offering an email option to its members, too.

Making Trails at Chilton Woods



Our chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, along with the Northern Neck Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalist program, has entered into a partnership agreement to help Rich Steensma of the Virginia Department of Forestry develop 2-3 public-access trails at Chilton Woods State Forest. Earline Walker and Jane Henley, who belong to both chapters, are leading the volunteer recruitment efforts. Jane's family are foresters and related to the Chiltons who donated this 397 acre pine plantation, which is located near Alfonso on Rt.602 (Field Trial Rd.) in Lancaster County. For more information, see: www.dof.virginia.gov/index.shtml



Our work on Thursday mornings with loppers, shears, and rakes augments the foresters' chainsaws and bush hog. The first trail is complete—and with the loss of only a few plants.

Future trails will provide access to plants like *Platanthera ciliaris*, the yellow fringed orchid, that we know grow here. It is not yet known what else we may find and that is the thrill and challenge! If you are interested in this project, please contact Carol Hammer at 804-453-5500 or caroljhammer@aol.com to be included in the notices of work dates. We will start back in January after the holidays.

Paula Boundy (text), Carol Hammer (photos)



Ann Messick (flowers and butterflies), Carol Hammer, Earline Walker (photos of Ann); Carol Hammer (collage)

Remembering Ann Messick via the *Flora of Virginia* Project

Ann Messick's characteristically spirited battle against what proved to be a terminal illness came to an end on Labor Day this past September. An amateur naturalist and photographer, her cheery enthusiasm for virtually every kind of living creature most anywhere in the world endeared her to many who attended her numerous slide show presentations or the "uncountable" number of nature, birding, and native plant walks that she led in the Northern Neck and surrounding areas of Virginia.

Ann was a strong presence in many local organizations. When, in the late 1990s, development threatened a tract of mixed pine-hardwood forest, ravines, and the botanically unique Cabin Swamp, she mobilized a *Friends of Hickory Hollow* (HH) citizen's campaign that resulted in the acquisition of HH by the Northern Neck Audubon Society; it was subsequently incorporated within the Virginia Natural Area Preserves System.

Ann then focused her energies on founding the Northern Neck (NN) Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society and serving as our first President from 2002 to 2004. As Ex-President, and then Second VP for Life, she had since helped to guide the continued growth of our membership and mission. For example, it was Ann who encouraged us to be more pro-active about eradicating invasive alien plants and to support a project that she enthusiastically endorsed—the *Flora of Virginia* project (see http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/vaflora.shtml).

Fellow Hickory Hollow activist Tom Teeple has noted that, "She leaves a huge gap in the Northern Neck defense of nature," and we miss her dearly.

In remembrance of Ann, the NN Chapter has decided to complete her "subscription" to the *Flora of Virginia* Project. The names of subscribers who donate at least \$1,000 will be printed in the first edition of the Manual—which is scheduled for publication by the University of Virginia Press in 2011. Along with the color photographs and additional information in an accompanying website, the *Flora* will form the key reference to our plants in private homes, classrooms, libraries, government agencies, conservation groups, etc., across Virginia and much of the world for many years to come.

Those that wish to join our chapter in this effort to honor Ann Messick may send checks made out to "**The Foundation of the *Flora of Virginia* Project, Inc.**" Write "**Ann Messick fund**" on the Memo line in the lower left corner, and send to our Treasurer: Paula Boundy
68 Genevieve
Irvington, VA 22480.

We bundle the received contributions and pass them along to the project. The *Flora of Virginia* is a 501(C)3 organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent of the law and will be acknowledged by letter from the project's headquarters.

Judy Lang

Out my Front Door

With 1.68 acres of yard, half trees and the rest lawn and weeds, I decided this year that it was time to beautify our front area without being tied down doing yard work. The *Just Gardens* tour provided me with lots of ideas.

I started with the area immediately outside our front door where a lovely dogwood grows. Due to the small area, I had been having difficulty cutting grass or weeding. Utilizing suggestions from Denise Greene* of Sassafras Farms near Gloucester, after digging up the lawn around the tree, I have added native ground covers purchased from Denise, the John Clayton Chapter's native plant sales and our own plant sale at Wicomico Church. All except one are taking well, I think, and will spread over time with little effort on my part.

As for the remainder of the front yard—with Denise's advice after inspecting our lot, we are bringing the wooded area closer to the house with trees and plants that will attract birds and butterflies while flowering at different times. We have added a serviceberry, a redbud, a pecan, a willow oak and a witch hazel. Mulching this area eliminated some of our grasscutting chores! In between the trees I plan to add shrubs that will also attract wildlife.

Even though I may not be around to see these trees mature, I am still excited at the prospect of watching them grow and look forward to the butterflies and birds that will be at my front door.

Next year I will tackle the back yard!.

Pam Collins

Our Members Travel

In early October, my sister, daughter and I spent five days exploring and hiking at Acadia National Park in Maine. The fall colors were glorious. Near the end of our stay we went to the *Wild Gardens of Acadia*. As their website says, the garden is made up of native plants divided into various habitat areas. Although not much was in bloom at that time, we still enjoyed viewing a lovely fall garden. Wild geraniums and a few other blooming plants dotted the landscape. We look forward to seeing it again in the spring and highly recommend it as a must see if you are traveling in that area of Maine. *Tanya Bohlke*

Web link: www.nps.gov/acad/planyourvisit/wildgardens.htm

View the slideshow for winter amusement and inspiration. The photos are beautiful. Many of our Virginia natives also grow this far north. Shared native species include: *Fagus grandifolia* (American beech), *Acer rubrum* (red maple) *Amelanchier* spp. (shadbush or serviceberry), *Maianthemum* (formerly *Smilacina*) *racemosum* (false Solomon's seal), *Symphyotrichum novi-belgii* (New York aster) *Solidago rugosa* (rough-stemmed goldenrod), *Asclepias syriaca* (common milkweed), *Rosa virginiana* (Virginia or field rose), *Fragaria virginiana* (wild strawberry), *Iris versicolor* (blueflag iris), *Ilex verticillata* (winterberry), *Mitchella repens* (partridgeberry), *Danthonia spicata* (poverty oatgrass), *Polystichum acrostichoides* (Christmas fern) *Rosa virginiana* (Virginia or field rose), *Fragaria virginiana* (wild strawberry), *Iris versicolor* (blueflag iris), *Ilex verticillata* (winterberry), *Mitchella repens* (partridgeberry), *Danthonia spicata* (poverty oatgrass), *Polystichum acrostichoides* (Christmas fern).

Paula Boundy

Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

New Budget for 2009

Judy Burgess

	2008	2009	
	Proposed	Actual	Proposed
Income			
Dues	1200.00	1330.00	1300.00
Ways & Means	2800.00	3303.85	3300.00
Total	4000.00	4633.85	4600.00
Expenses			
Church	250.00	250.00	250.00
Newsletter	600.00	422.10	600.00
Postage	150.00	167.74	200.00
Hospitality	0.00	20.00	20.00
Honorarium	300.00	100.00	300.00
Office Supplies	50.00	0.00	50.00
Garden Maintenance	200.00	86.02	200.00
Library & Education	300.00	416.00	400.00
Flora of Va	200.00	250.00	250.00
Printing	150.00	0.00	0.00
Gift Membership	0.00	60.00	60.00
Plant Sale	500.00	686.65	700.00
Special Projects	1300.00	0.00	1570.00
Total	4000.00	2458.51	4600.00

Welcome to Our New Members!

Laurie Atkins, Kilmarnock and Richmond
Hap and Kayleen Hadd, Lancaster
John Lundsford, Heathsville
Cornelia (Lolly) Riley, Reedville

Other Events

Belle Isle State Park Winter Warmers

January 15, 29; February 5, 19; March 5, 19
1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Belle Isle State Park Visitor Center

Winter Warmers features local experts speaking about nature and the environment. Topics this winter will include the Hull Spring Farm in Westmoreland's award-winning *Living Shoreline*, attracting wildlife to backyard habitats, how to help the health of the Rappahannock River, how farmers are minimizing agriculture's impacts on Chesapeake Bay water quality, and what to do with "orphaned" animals.

To view a current list of dates, speakers and subjects, click on "Events" at the www.virginiastateparks.gov website, or call the park at 804-462-5030.

A \$2 per car parking fee is the only charge.

Charlene Talcott

NN Audubon Society

Look for programs at Grace Episcopal Church on the first Monday, and bird walks on the second Monday, of each month. Specifics will appear in the local media.

Virginia Master Gardener Association, Inc.

Saturday, March 14, 2009

8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Prince George High School

Prince George (near Petersburg), VA

7th Annual "Good Gardening" Symposium "Enrich Our Environment-Go 'Native' "

Speakers from the Virginia Native Plant Society, Virginia Master Naturalist Program and the Virginia Butterfly Society will discuss Virginia's wonderful 'natives,' how to identify invasive plants and select native alternatives, and how to 'grow' butterflies in the home landscape.

Registration forms will be available in late January at local Cooperative Extension offices, at www.vmganet/index.html, or by mail at Good Gardening Symposium, 4801 Tatum Rd., Disputanta, VA 22842. Cost is \$70; attendance limited to 70.

New Officers

President..... Marie Minor (804) 925-5950 mfminor@toast.net
Vice President..... Carol Hammer
Secretaries:
Recording..... Judy Burgess
Corresponding Patsy Lockman
Treasurer..... Paula Boundy

Some New Committee Chairs

Conservation..... Paula Boundy
Education..... Judy Lang (804) 453-6605 jlange@riposi.net
Horticulture..... Paula Boundy
Hospitality..... Pam Collins, Jane Peterson
Membership..... Sandra Ehler, (804) 453-3519 jehlert@haloisip.net
Newsletter..... Carol Hammer (804) 453-5500 caroljhammer@aol.com
..... Judy Lang
Nominating..... Jane Peterson, Nick Ferriter, Tanya Bohlke
Programs..... Earline Walker (speakers)
..... Sally Caskie (trips) (804) 472-5128 caskie@rivnet.net
Publicity..... Judy Lang (temporary), Susan Christopher
Ways & Means.... OPEN (Plant Sale Nick Ferriter)

New Other

Ex-President..... Nick Ferriter
Member at Large OPEN

Same Membership Fees

Individual: \$30
Family: \$40
Secondary: \$5 (goes to other chapters)

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 upper right hand corner of address label for renewal date. Please advise us if our records are incorrect.

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

Help us keep in touch with you!

Whenever your email address, phone number or postal address changes, please contact Sandra Ehler.

Email Carol Hammer if you would prefer to conserve resources and receive this newsletter as a pdf file.

Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

NN Calendar

Jan. 15, Thur.	Noon. Wicomico Parish Church—Author Nancy Ross Hugo on her book, <i>Remarkable Trees of Virginia</i> . Bring lunch.
Jan. 17, Sat.	10:00 a.m. Hickory Hollow Nature Preserve— <i>Annual skunk cabbage walk</i> .
Feb. 19, Thur.	Noon. Wicomico Parish Church—Nursery owner Marion Packett on <i>Ornamental Grasses (Includes Natives)</i> . Bring lunch.
Mar. 19, Thur.	Noon. Wicomico Parish Church—Foresters Rich Steensma and Mike Aherron on <i>Chilton Woods State Forest</i> . Bring lunch.
Mar. 26, Thur.	10:00 a.m. Reggie Follin's Garden— <i>Bloodroot walk</i> .
Apr. 2, Thur.	10:00 a.m. Hilda Wilson's Garden— <i>Virginia bluebells and spring natives walk</i> .
expect more!	Additional outings will be announced to members via email

Driving directions for all field outings will be emailed to members in the week before each outing.

For more information, or driving directions if you lack email, contact Sally Caskie at:
caskie@rivnet.net or (804) 472-5128

VNPS Annual Workshop

Saturday, March 7, 2009

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Gottwald Center for the Sciences
University of Richmond, Richmond, VA

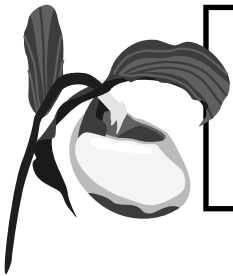
Mountains

Topics include: protecting for biodiversity, and against mountain top removal; Virginia's western frontier; new Appalachian species.

Marie Minor will lead her famous Botanical Walks at the **Hutchinson** Tract of the Rappahannock River Valley NWR on:

Wednesday, March 4, 18 and 25 @ 10:00 a.m.

Members are always welcome!



Northern Neck Chapter
Virginia Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 158
Millers Tavern, VA 23115

Note expiration date; please renew as needed if record is correct.