



Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society
"Conserving Wild Flowers and Wild Places"

NN Native Plant News

Winter, Volume 13, No. 1

NORTHERN NECK CHAPTER
Virginia Native Plant Society

2015 Northern Neck's Annual Native Plant Sale

This year's plant sale had more than the usual excitement. Things seemed to be going along smoothly. We had set up the day before and all went well with minimal glitches and lots of volunteers, making the work light for all involved.



The day of the sale started out strong at 9 am sharp. The weather seemed to be holding and predictions were for rain later in the afternoon. We expected to be long gone before the rain and we started out with a great crowd of folks obviously saving up their fall plantings for our annual (second Saturday in September) event. We gave away small plants to the first 3 people to pay more than \$100 and those free gifts were gone in the first 10 minutes.

All of the turtle heads (*Chelone obliqua*) and half of the beauty berry (*Callicarpa americana*) were gone in the first 20 minutes. Some other favorites were native honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), sweet bay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), and passion vine (*Passiflora incarnata*)—all Northern Neck natives. It started to cloud over, but we were not afraid of a few sprinkles. It wasn't supposed to rain until after 1 pm so we were safe, right?

Then, at about 10:15, the clouds suddenly got dark and weather alert apps were buzzing phones here and there. A tornado watch had been issued for areas south of us, but still the sun was trying to poke through. At 10:45, more buzzing. The Watch had turned to a Warning as a funnel had been seen in White Stone and was headed towards Kilmarnock. If it continued in that path, Wicomico would soon follow!



Judy Lang & Pam D'Angelo

Sure enough, now the tornado weather alert was including our location. It started to rain. Hard!!



Thunder was rumbling and the Boys & Girls Club helper kids were getting scared. We hurried the helpers into the basement of the church and started to collect the paper flyers, native plant guides, and anything that could be a projectile, into the vans. The Educational Table was packed up to save our free pamphlets and native plant identification books from the pounding rain.

The radio was now telling us to seek shelter immediately. Those of us who remained outside huddled under the red cashier canopy as though that would protect us from a tornado!

It did help protect us somewhat from the driving rain and, thankfully, it had been secured well enough so that it survived the passing storm. Then, we looked at our phones and saw that another wave of wind and rain was to pass over before the coast was completely clear. Once it was, the sun broke and we reduced all the remaining plants to half price for the remaining hour of the sale.

In spite of the weather, we took in a little more money than last year and sold over 50% of nearly 1,000 plants that day. And that was after losing at least an hour of the 3-hour sale time, and having fewer buyers for the day because of the weather.



Many of the remaining plants sold at later events including Market Day at Wicomico Parish Church, Sunday church services, and at the September and October NNNPS meetings. Several new members signed up to take advantage of the \$10 discount on their purchase for joining the day of the sale.

All in all, we consider this year's sale a success in spite of the weather!

Message from the President



Princess Pine

Photo: Carol Hammer

The winter season of 2015-16 has been interesting to say the least. I have seen flowering quince in full bloom at Christmas and/or just after. So far, except for the reliable skunk cabbage in bloom, the natives look like they should in winter - dormant. As I was driving around the Northern Neck I enjoyed the lushness of roadsides' moss and lichen growth. When most all else is looking rather dreary, the bright green or bright grey-greens catch my eye. Some of you may know from accompanying me on field trips how mosses always stop me in my tracks inspiring me to take a closer look and even to 'pet' them. One of my favorite books is *Native Ferns, Moss and Grasses* by William Cullina and one of my favorite mosses is *Polytrichum juniperinum*, juniper haircap moss [or at least that's what I think it is!] The moss looks like little evergreen trees. Then there is the clubmoss, *Dendrolycopodium (Lycopodium) obscurum*, common-ground pine or princess pine - actually a fern - that also looks like little evergreen trees.



Unfortunately, while this winter has encouraged mosses and lichens that are lovely, it has also encouraged the algae & moss that wants to grow on my deck and brick stoops! Of course, it is the environmental purpose of moss and lichens to 'eat' rock and decompose wood. They just cannot do that to my house! Besides it makes the brick slippery. So maintenance prevents me from walking in the woods to look at the desirable mosses...

A lengthy look at the Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora reveals that there are not many documented nor photographed mosses on the Northern Neck AND that juniper haircap moss is not here! Well, we'll see about that! Anyone up for a challenge? See what we have coming up in our 2016 programs and field trips. Bring your camera and close-up photo lenses.

Paula Boundy

2016 Landscape For Life Train the Trainer

The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and the United States Botanic Garden will be holding a 2016 Landscape For Life Train the Trainer free webinar series! If you, or someone you know, are interested, please continue reading.

The Landscape For Life Train the Trainer program teaches you the principles of sustainable gardening, provides you with numerous resources, and gives you access to experts so you can tailor the program to fit your own region or municipality and teach others how to plan, design, install, and maintain beautiful, healthy, and sustainable gardens and landscapes. This training is ideal for horticulture and environmental educators, master gardeners, master naturalists, garden club members, landscape architects/designers, cooperative extension agents, and others interested in teaching sustainable gardening practices.

The free training consists of five; two-hour webinars that offer helpful teaching tips and tools that show you how to effectively utilize the LFL instructor's manual to deliver this valuable information to your target audience. The manual and resources provided make up a complete teaching toolbox that comes with ready-to-go presentations that make the Landscape for Life classes convenient to offer in your area and on your own time. Student Manuals are also available for download so your students can follow along with you and complete "homework" assignments on their own! All the answers are included in this free training. To apply to be a Landscape For Life Trainer, please go to the website at <http://landscapeforlife.org> to download and fill out an application. Questions can be directed to Jonathan Garner at jgarner@wildflower.org.

Submitted by Paula Boundy

Virginia Native Plant Marketing News

In October, at the Captain Sinclair's Recreational Area on the Severn River in Gloucester County, the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission installed the first phase of an approximately 3 acre native plant landscape with funding from the Virginia CZM Program. The completed landscape will incorporate water conservation and stormwater management methods such as rain gardens, rain chains, and rain barrels. Contact Beth Johnson, MMPDC, for more information.



A new regional native plant guide is available! Partners in the Plant Piedmont Natives initiative have produced a new guide - *Piedmont Native Plants - A Guide for Landscapes and Gardens* (covers the counties of Fauquier, Rappahannock, Culpeper, Madison, Orange, Greene, Louisa, Albermarle, Fluvanna, Nelson and Buckingham). The guide is

not yet on-line, but will be in future. Contact Repp Glaetti about obtaining copies (minimal charge being collected to offset reprint.)

Submitted by Paula Boundy

NNVNPS Past Events

Chesapeake Bay Garden Club



Our September 17th meeting was not only informative, but also lots of fun! We were treated by several members of the Chesapeake Bay Garden Club who displayed their artistic and inventive ways to arrange native plants in various containers. In addition to demonstrating floral presentation rules they designed arrangements of

various sizes and shapes. Container examples included a simple coffee cup, a petite multi stem milk glass vase, a basket and a simple vase. The results were amazingly beautiful. The plant materials were supplied by our members and arranged by the experts. Several members opted to make their own arrangements with the help of the garden club members. Members from both clubs not only enjoyed the outcome, but each learned from each other.



Text/Photos: Carol Hammer

Native Plant Society Book Donation

Jim Kurdziel of the Northern Neck Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society (VNPS) donated a copy of "Isabella's Peppermint Flowers" to the Richmond County Public Library (RCPL) at its board meeting on November 10th.

The story by Susan Leopold, with illustrations by Nicky Staunton, is set in Virginia. Although written with children in mind, adults will appreciate its historical and botanical information.

VNPS chapters are presenting "Isabella's Peppermint Flowers" to libraries across the commonwealth. They hope this book will inspire and catalyze field trips by schools and families to see "spring ephemerals" which are the lovely, but transitory, flowers that quickly appear and disappear from the forest floor between late March and May.



Shown in the photo (left to right) are library staff member Linda Taylor, board members Ed Ramsey and Margaret Kurtz, library staff member Ruth Lynn, library board member Janice Dockins, Mr. Kurdziel, board members Courtney Sisson and Mercer O'Hara, board chair Dayle Collins, and board members Walter Ball and Gwynne Tayloe.

Text/Photo: Jim Kurdziel

Welcome to Our Newest Members

*Mark Adrian
Carla Bangs
Elena Ellis
Leo Ford-Barber
Peny Gallogy
Val Grindrod
Peg & Don Mohar
Christine Moran
Henry Riely
Gary Silverman
Sue Ann Thomas*

Save the Date!

**23rd Annual Gardening in the Northern Neck
"Nurturing Nature: Sustainable Gardening"**

**April 2, 2016
8:00 am - 3:00 pm
Church of the Nazarene
57 Wisk Drive, White Stone, VA**

Registration forms are available at www.nnmng.org or calling Northumberland Cooperative Extension Office at 804-580-5694
Registration fee: \$25

Phylum Bryophyta - A Winter's Intrigue



Fern moss with Christmas fern

As I was driving from here to there this earlier this winter, my attention was grabbed by grey-greens and bright greens along the road. As some of you who have walked various trails with me know, I love mosses, often stopping in my tracks to crouch down to pet and peer at them. Lichens also intrigue me, some being on trees and some on the ground. Thus, when our group gathered to plan the 2016 programs and outings, my request was to start off with mosses. A search for a speaker by a couple of us finally resulted in a 'Yes' by Pat Reilly [linked to me by Nancy Vehrs of VNPS].

In preparation for her presentation, I offer the following information from a snowy day's research on the web that may interest you too:

From <http://www.ucmp.berkeley.edu/plants/bryophyta/bryophyta.html>): "Mosses play important roles in reducing erosion along streams, water and nutrient cycling in tropical forests, and insulating the arctic permafrost". I see them along roadside banks, with lichens, perhaps on the north side in shady conditions possibly doing just this as well as...

From "Good-bye, Grass" in The Woodland Garden issue Summer 2003, page 6, Tips from Norie Burnett of Eden Woods in Richmond, Va: "Moss collects dust particles from the air which aids in building soil" AND "Moss absorbs pollutants and helps purify the air."

From 'The New York Times' In the Garden article by Jancee Dunn May 1, 2008 excerpts: "Solebury, Pa [Bucks Co.]...Mr. David Benner, 78, a retired professor of ornamental horticulture, is also a longtime practitioner and advocate of what he calls "the moss approach" to lawn maintenance." "Every time I give a lecture, I go into this spiel: get rid of your grass, and grow moss," he said. "And now it's finally gaining momentum."

For more than a century, moss has been anathema to homeowners and gardeners. Type "moss" and "lawn" on an internet search engine and you'll find more ways to kill it than create it.

Tim Currier, the owner of Sticks and Stones Farm in Newtown, Connecticut, which has specialized in selling moss for 10 years, estimated that his sales are up 30 percent just in the last year. And Celeste Kennedy, who owns Rolling Hill Farm in Green Bay, Virginia, reported a 40 percent sales increase, with growing interest in moss from both homeowners and businesses.

"Although moss requires moisture," said Christine Cook, who owns Mossaics, a moss gardening business in Easton, Connecticut, and who lectures at the New York Botanical Garden, a moss lawn needs "a fraction, one percent or less" of the 10,000 gallons (beyond rainwater) that the E.P.A. estimates a suburban grass lawn drinks annually.



Reindeer moss - actually a lichen

He (Benner) did know that moss, unlike grass, thrives in acidic soil. So he covered his lawn in an acidic combination of sulfur powder and aluminum sulfate. Three months later, he raked up the dead grass, leaving a vast expanse of exposed soil. Then he waited through the winter, hovering over his grand experiment. The following spring, moss began sprouting all over the property. "It was like magic," he said. "I can still hardly believe it. Moss produces spores, and they just blew in from the air. Now I have 25 kinds, none of which I planted."

This year, for the first time, Mr. Benner will be selling moss starter kits containing four of the easiest-to-grow moss plants — fern, hair cap, rock cap and cushion — through Moss Acres, a 54-acre moss nursery in the Poconos, started by his son, Al Benner, in 2002. [www.mossacres.com will provide you with an hour's entertainment - look for the Moss Hog!]

Aside from moss' durability and environmental benefits, he attributes its popularity to nostalgia. "Everyone always says, 'Oh, I remember when I was a kid, walking through the woods and seeing moss.' It was probably wherever they grew up, because moss is everywhere. Moss takes people back to being a kid again."



Hair-cap moss with fungi

The elder Mr. Benner sometimes walks barefoot on it after a rain — "some sort of magical invigorating energy goes through you when you stand on a thick patch of wet moss," he said — and both he and his wife say they enjoy lying down in a particularly inviting stretch of (dry) moss.

Sallie Baldwin, a graphic designer who lives in Greenwich, Connecticut, [also a moss gardener] says "There is one slight hitch. You have to go out and pull the grass. When my neighbors walk by and I'm there pulling out the grass so the moss will grow, they think I'm a little crazy." "

2016 Tentative Education and Outreach Calendar

February thru November	Ongoing planning for the collaboration between the Native Plant Society and the Boys & Girls Club to assist the club members with learning about and planting native plants. Farmers' Markets (tentative)
Spring thru Summer (TBD)	10:00 am - 2:00 pm. Information tables at Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond and Westmoreland libraries.
April 2 Saturday	8:00am - 3:00pm. <i>Northern Neck Master Gardeners' Seminar.</i> Church of the Nazarine, White Stone, VA
April 16 Saturday	8:00am - 3:00pm. <i>Earth Day.</i> Heathsville, VA
May 15 Sunday	11:00 am - 4:00 pm. <i>Go Wild Event.</i> Rappahanock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Hutchinson Tract, Tappahanock, VA
May 28, Saturday	9:00am - 3:00pm. <i>St. Stephens Strawberry Festival.</i> St. Stephens's Episcopal Church Grounds, Heathsville, VA
Sept. 10 Saturday	9:00 am - 1:00 pm. <i>NNVNPS Plant Sale.</i> Wicomico Parish (Episcopal) Church, Wicomico, VA. Member setup will be on Friday, Sept. 9, beginning at 9:00 am until finished.
Sept. (TBD)	1:00 pm - 4:00 pm. <i>Boots, Bids and BQ.</i> Location TBD.
Oct. (TBD)	9:30 am - 5:00 pm. <i>Go Native-Grow Native Festival.</i> Stratford Hall, Montross, VA

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Bette Gruben bettegruben@gmail.com

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 VNPS Outings and Meetings Calendar:
Chapter Meetings & Saturday Outings are open to the public (unless noted)**

Feb. 18, Thursday	Noon - 1:30 pm. <i>Mosses and Lichens.</i> Speaker: Pat Reilly. Wicomico Parish (Episcopal) Church Hall. Bring bag lunch. (Board meeting starts at 10:00).
March 17, Thursday	Noon - 1:30 pm. <i>Orchids of the Northern Neck.</i> Speaker: Ellis Squires. Wicomico Parish (Episcopal) Church Hall. Bring bag lunch. (Board meeting starts at 10:00).
Early April	TBD. <i>Hilda Wilson's Wooded Ravine Garden.</i> Hilda's shady garden is a study of what leaf mold can do.
April 16, Saturday Field Trip	10:00 am - Noon. <i>Spring Ephemerals at Hickory Hollow.</i> Leader: TBD. Annual visit to the natural area preserve outside Lancaster Courthouse to see what is popping up! Will explore various trails for botanizing.
April 21, Thursday	Noon - 1:30 pm. <i>A Woodland Edge Meadow.</i> Speaker: Bryna Brennan. Wicomico Parish (Episcopal) Church Hall. Bring bag lunch. (Board meeting starts at 10:00).
April 23, Saturday Field Trip	9:00 am - 1:00 pm. <i>John Clayton Native Plant Sale. Members Only</i> - Carpool to buy plans for spring planting at sale in Williamsburg. Contact Paula Boundy, 804-436-4944, to reserve a seat by April 20.
April 28 Thursday Field Trip	1:30 pm - 3:00 pm. <i>Wooded Wetlands' Flora. Members Only</i> - Enjoy Gary Chaffin's landscape in a wooded wetland setting with a lovely pond too! A transitional experience of our prior year's wetlands focus to this year's woodland/forest focus.
May 7 Saturday Field Trip	10:00 am - Noon. <i>Driving Tour at Chilton Woods State Forest.</i> Leaders: Jim Kurdziel/Nick Ferriter will show us what is naturally growing roadside - flowers, ferns, azaleas and orchids, all from your vehicle or possibly a golf cart.
May 14 Saturday Field Trip	10:00 am - Noon. <i>Hickory Hollow's Cabin Swamp Plants.</i> Leaders: Katharina Bergdoll & Paula Boundy. This trail is steep; wear appropriate footwear & bring your walking stick.
May 19, Thursday	Noon - 1:30 pm. <i>Timbering Impacts on the Northern Neck.</i> Speaker: Rich Steensma, VA Department of Forestry. Wicomico Parish (Episcopal) Church Hall. Bring bag lunch. (Board meeting starts at 10:00). Possible Chilton Woods walk afterwards to see various forest successional stages, including VNPS' POY and Jan. 2016 POM.

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

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>

Newsletter: three issues annually.

Send ideas, articles, photos, etc., by April 1st to bayfishers3@aol.com

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Note expiration date if received by mail.
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