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NATIVE



NOTES

Kate's Mountain Clover

Bill Grafton – Editor

Daniel Grafton –Assistant Editor

West Virginia Native Plant Society Newsletter

Volume 13:2

August 2005

Website: www.wvnps.org

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING-Sept. 16-18

All members and guests are welcome. We will be meeting in Greenbrier County. The county is blessed with beautiful scenery, great accommodations for lodging and food, and (in the editor's opinion) the greatest diversity of plant life in West Virginia. There are large expanses of limestone in the valleys, shale barrens on the lower hillsides, high mountain forests along the Virginia border and northern county line and swamps on the headwaters of Meadow River. There is the Greenbrier River Rail Trail with easy walking, or a driving tour through Greenbrier State Forest and along the botanically rich Kate's Mountain shale barrens. Sherwood Lake on the Monongahela NF is another neat place to visit as are, the wetlands of Meadow River at Meadow Bluff or Dawson. There will be far more places than we will have time to visit.

There are several motels at the Lewisburg Interchange off of I-64 (Brier Inn, Hampton, Super 8, [Fort Savannah Inn-downtown]). For campers there are 16 campsites in Greenbrier Forest and several cabins. And if you really want to splurge, try the Greenbrier Resort, @ \$700 per night.

We will meet at 8 pm at Cabin #4 in Greenbrier State Forest on Friday evening for refreshments and sharing of information on botany. The next meetings will be at Cabin #4 at 9 am on Saturday morning and at 2 pm on Saturday afternoon to start field trips to local attractions.

The annual business meeting will start at 7:30 pm Saturday evening.

We should also be able to have a field trip on Sunday morning for those who don't need to head homeward immediately.

Kate's Mountain is one of the more famous botanical areas in the US. It is where our symbol (Kate's mountain clover) was first found. Many well known doctors spent vacations at The Greenbrier Resort in the early to mid-1800s and walked the trails, road and shale barrens on Kate's Mountain. They could actually walk from the resort to the mountain within 10 minutes. It is always an enjoyable drive along Kate's Mountain Road looking for the rare flora of the shale barrens.

The Greenbrier River Trail provides easy walking and access to a wide variety of habitats and plants along the bluffs and river. For September, many of the warm season grasses, asters, goldenrods, and sunflowers will be in their prime. This should be a most enjoyable field trip.

Come one and all. I know you will have a great time!! The officers would love to meet many of our members and enjoy botanizing together.

Invasive Control Contest

Would you like to collect a crisp \$10 bill. Remember the contest described in the April 2005 issue of Native Notes.

We will select a winner of a person /group that did the best job of eradicating or controlling invasive plants. Bring your project details to our Saturday meeting so the judges can select the best project. If you can't personally attend, send your information to President Emily Grafton, @ 456 West Virginia Ave., Morgantown, WV 26501.

Judges will base the selection on:

- Largest area of eradication or control
- Eradication/control of our worst invasives
- Replacement of invasive landscape plants with native plants
- Eradication/control adjacent to valuable botanical areas
- Early detection & rapid response to new WV invasive plants

Personal Notes : Bill Grafton

While on a recent trip to Nicholas County with Cleve Smith, Scott Shriver (aka The Orchid Nuts) Doug Jolley and two friends from Cleveland, Ohio we stopped to see longtime members Bob and Wilma Richardson. They live on a **most** picturesque farm that borders Carnifex Ferry State Park. In addition to a visit we wanted to see if Bob & Wilma still had *Spiranthes vernalis* and *gracilis* growing in their hay fields. A plant of *gracilis* was found but no *vernalis* (we were probably 2-3 weeks early. By the way Bob is 90 years old and still mows the hay on his fields and he and Wilma had just returned from a trip to tear down a couple of dilapidated outbuildings on a former homestead in the Ripley area.

It was great to visits good friends whom we hadn't seen in several years and to find them so active and healthy. And thanks for the superb watermelon.

As we left the Richardsons, we drove into Carnifex Ferry SP to check out a future visit to look for Goodyers repens that has been reported from the Park. As we left, Scott saw several *Spiranthes gracilis* growing in small grassy field across the road from

Richardson's property. A closer investigation revealed at least 50 Slender Ladies' Tresses (most were still in bud).

By the way our goal was to find Yellow Fringed Orchids in Nicholas County. Next we drove south on US 19 into Fayette County to look at Yellow Fringed on the roadsides between Meadow River and US 60. We also found several small patches of *Malaxis unifolia* and *Platanthera clavellata*. But, to our dismay, we could not find any yellow fringed orchids within a mile to the north in Nicholas County.

So we headed off to drive from Drunkards Roost (a barn) through Runa, Snow Hill, Hominy Falls, to Levisay. Late in the day Scott finally spotted 1 small Yellow Fringed Orchid in some roadsides weeds. We were happy, but near Snow Hill we saw more Yellow fringed Orchids. They were the biggest and best of the day. About 100 plants in flower immediately beside someone's garden. A talk with the owner (Mrs. Amick) revealed that she was glad we stopped and that her daughter was married to Kevin Pittsnogle (WVU basketball star). She took one of the flowers home to show to family and friends and we left as "happy explorers" who had reached our goals for the day.

By the way, this space is reserved for your stories and personals.

Send info to: Bill Grafton Email: wgrafton@wvu.edu
456 West Virginia University
Morgantown, WV 26501

Ginseng: A Mountaineer's Green Gold

The West Virginia legislature passed a law that would provide a way for landowners to grow and sell ginseng and protect our native populations of wild ginseng. Many landowners have been growing ginseng from seed sources in Wisconsin and elsewhere. There are concerns that these ecotypes will change the genetics of our West Virginia ginseng.

The new law specifies that you can grow seeds collected outside the state if:

- The area to be planted is surveyed and the boundaries are marked,
- A surrounding buffer strip is certified to be free of native wild ginseng,

The new starting date for the harvesting season was changed from August 15 to September 1.

Regulations are being drafted by the Division of Forestry, after public input, and will need approval by the State Legislature. These final regulations will then be enforced by the WV Division of Forestry.

All was going well, until, the US Fish & Wildlife Service suddenly intervened with a non-negotiable ruling that no wild ginseng can be harvested in 2005 and beyond unless it is 10 years or older and has 4 prongs. Since it is difficult and probably impossible to prove any difference between wild ginseng and wild simulated ginseng, a huge controversy has been created. Stay tuned for more!!

