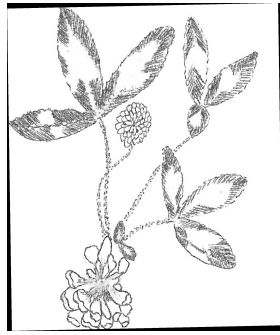


NATIVE



NOTES

Kate's Mountain Clover\*

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## WEST VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 20:2

SUMMER/FALL 2012

Judy Dumke-Editor: E-mail-dumke@live.marshall.edu Phone 740-894-6859

### FIELD TRIP AND ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, September 08, 2012

Sutton Lake, West Virginia

**Directions** Exit I-79 at the Flatwoods exit, exit # 67. Go south on Rt. 4. Turn left onto Rt. 15 E, Diana Road. Pass the turn off to the Gerald R. Freeman campground. Look for a silver tank on the right, and a brown building on the left just before a bridge. Park in the gravel/grass parking lot in front of a brown building. There is a small sign reading Holly River Left Fork. The field trip will explore this fork.

**9:30 A. M.** Meet at the parking location for the start of the field trip.

**Ca 1:30 P.M. Lunch** Please bring something to eat, brown bag, as there is no near by place(s) to eat.

**2:00 P.M.** Annual Meeting

**Ca. 4:00 P.M.** Departure

While Braxton County has been well collected in comparison to many West Virginia counties, many of the records, according to the Atlas, are earlier than 1977. Things and habitats have changed since then, for instance, Sutton Lake, so we may be able to update some of the records, and if courageous, document that poison ivy does indeed occur in the county. Collecting for the purpose of documentation will be permitted.

Although this is a truncated annual meeting, the usual events will be scheduled: election of new board member and officers after the report of the nominating committee, an annual report of activities of the society, a fiscal report and reports from all committees. In addition, it is the major opportunity for members to offer suggestions as to potential workshops, field trips or projects for next year, or even to volunteer to organize events, projects or lead trips for the society.

We hope to see you there.

For addition information contact Romie Hughart [Rch25704@yahoo.com](mailto:Rch25704@yahoo.com) ❖

\* DRAWN BY Betsy Tramell after photographs by Charles Garrett, Warm Springs, Va

# Lower Kanawha Valley Plant Tour Report

Doug Wood

Photos by Dianne Anestis

A dozen or so WV Native Plant Society members explored some of the wetlands in the vicinity of the Kanawha River on our scheduled August 12, 2012 tour. We started our tour with a short hike to see an upland species, the most recently identified blue-ash (*Fraxinus quadrangulata* Michx.) population at the Putnam County Fairgrounds at Eleanor, WV. At this location both blue-ash and white-ash grow side by side, so it is easy to compare the twig features of each species. Jim Vanderhorst pointed out numerous calciphiles e.g., chinquapin oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii* Engelm.) and red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana* L.), which, along with the blue-ash, indicate the presence of a calcium-rich soil. I explained that there are various calcareous shales and sandstones in the Kanawha Valley between Winfield and Point Pleasant and that within a few miles of Eleanor Park there is a small stream called "Limekiln Branch" where high-calcium shale was once processed to make lime. I also noted that as we moved down river toward Point Pleasant we would see even more red cedar.

After the brief hillside visit, we drove, car-pool fashion, to the Buffalo wetland at the mouth of Cross Creek. This wetland complex includes a meandering stream located in a large bottom of the Kanawha River floodplain, and an old oxbow of that stream that has been separated from all but high-water flows of Cross Creek and Kanawha River by a roadway

improvement project. At that location we saw two of our target species; cat-tail sedge (*Carex typhina* Michx.) and large marsh St. Johnswort (*Triadenum tubulosum* (Walter) Gleason), called lesser marsh St. Johnswort in the USDA plants database. We saw numerous other wetland associated species, a listing of which will be posted on the web site. Parts of the wetland are used by ATV recreationists, and Japanese stiltgrass and other alien species are encroaching into the wetland, but it still has seemingly healthy populations of several native plant species. Several cat-tail sedge plants had the



Cat Tail Sedge

characteristic seed heads that lend themselves to both the common and scientific names of this species. However, the St. Johnswort was not yet in bloom, so a revisit in a couple of weeks is in order for those of us who reside close by. The oxbow portion of the wetland has a distinctly stratified appearance with buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis* L.) dominating the deeper wet areas with direct sunlight, then a ring of vegetation dominated by lizard's tail (*Saururus cernuus* L.), another ring dominated by Virginia day-flower (*Commelina virginica* L.), another ring dominated by white grass (*Leersia virginica* Willd.), and then more upland type species like pawpaw (*Asimina triloba* (L.) Dunal). The large marsh St. Johnswort was found scattered around, but mostly under the day-flower. One "nurse log" in the buttonbush layer provided an elevated platform that was suitable for the St. Johnswort. Another interesting feature of this wetland is that it serves as a turkey vulture roosting spot. Steve Mace captured a young blue-tailed skink for closer viewing before releasing the lizard. Our magnifying lenses came in handy for viewing characteristics of several of the plants we investigated. We also noted the presence of hog peanut (*Amphicarpaea bracteata* [L.] Fern.) on the upland slopes, a plant that was known in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as the "wild pea vine" and was noted in travel journals as evidence of rich soils suitable for cultivation.



Virginia Day Flower

As we drove down river we stopped along WV Rt. 62 to view Virginia mallow (*Sida hermaphrodita* [L.] Rusby) and swamp rose mallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos* L. ssp. *moscheutos*). Virginia mallow, a small-flowered mallow, has been found within WV only in the Kanawha-New drainage, and only fairly close to the main river corridors.



Virginia Mallow

[There Is an unusual feature in the genus *Sida*, fragrance. *Ed note*] To some of our Parkersburg members on the trip, this was a species with which they were not familiar. The swamp rose mallow is a wetland species with strikingly beautiful flowers that may vary in color. Most that we saw were white with a dark red throat, but a few members noticed a patch of pink-flowered mallows near the intersection of WV Rts. 62 and 2. I explained to the group that a good viewing location is the Armour Creek backwater between Nitro and Rock Branch where an even darker pink variety can be seen.

In the original notification of this tour that was printed in Number 1 of Vol. 20 of *Native Notes*, I cautioned attendees to “Dress appropriately for the weather and wetland conditions. To see some of these plants YOU WILL LIKELY WADE IN SHALLOW WATER.” On the morning of the tour date, I accessed my e-mail server to find these precautionary notes from one of the WVDNR’s vegetation ecologists regarding our final tour destination, the Point Pleasant wetland complex: “It has nearly 100% cover of poison ivy, abundant in every stratum from the ground to the canopy. Also, depending on the rain patterns, it has the most aggressive mosquitos [sic] of any spot I have visited in WV. My mosquito-hardened intern from the north woods of Minnesota had to go screaming back to the vehicle for more insect repellent when we sampled there. We looked like we had chicken pox when we emerged, even though we were both soaked in DEET. Nevertheless, this is the largest pin oak swamp outside the Meadow River (Rupert-Dawson) that I know of in WV, and it is a treasure.” I felt that the only honorable thing to do was to provide the tour attendees with these precautionary notes before taking a vote on whether or not we should attempt to “penetrate” the swamp. What a hardy crew! Most opted to stare down Danger and enter the Heart of



Field trip participants in the wet lands

Darkness, and so we parked our cars at the local Moose Lodge picnic shelter and treaded determinedly toward the shadows of the great pin oaks. To our pleasant surprise, the portion of the swamp we visited

had dried up from lack of rain, so mosquitoes were not a problem. We also did not enter the portion of the rather large wetland that was thickest with poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans* L.). Indeed, there was plenty of poison ivy in the drier portions of the complex where we trod, but once we entered the formerly wet depressions, we no longer had that toxic species to contend with. Portions of the wetland are dominated by pin oak (*Quercus palustris* Muenchh.), others by red maple. In spots we noted cottonwoods (*Populus deltoides* Bartr. ex Marsh. ssp. *deltoides*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua* L.), shellbark hickory (*Carya laciniosa* [Michx. f.] G. Don), and swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor* Willd)

One of the more pleasing aspects of a plant search by a group of folks with varying levels of expertise is the way in which the searchers eventually find their ways into various social niches of the search party. Some with really keen observation skills see the very small plants the rest of us might overlook. Some with expertise in tree barks call attention to species that might otherwise be misidentified because nobody checked out the crown to see the leaves. Others with taxonomic keys help sort out the species that nobody is very familiar with. Still others familiar with similar-looking species, call attention to the subtle differences in physical characteristics that distinguish them. Another person in the crowd might know an interesting bit of lore regarding plant uses by certain cultures. Another might be aware of a special relationship between certain plant and animal species, e.g., a gall wasp that depends upon only one species of plant, or a mammal that uses a plant species for self-medication. Others may share personal stories about their interactions with species we happen upon. Often times the novices among us, with their “oooh, how beautiful!” or “oh, how interesting!” spontaneous responses, remind those of us with many years of plant sleuthing under our belts that it is the wide-eyed wonder of discovery that remains at the very core of our activity. I would like to thank all who participated in the Lower Kanawha Valley Plant Tour.

We welcome all to future outings hosted by the Kanawha Valley Chapter as well as those sponsored by the West Virginia Native Plant Society and the Tri-State Chapter. Look for notices of them in *Native Notes*. We may revisit the Point Pleasant wetland in the future for there were a couple of species we found in a depression dominated by towering buttonbushes. One was a plant that had a fern-like growth form, but appeared not to be a fern. The other was a smartweed that had several characteristics of water smartweed (*Polygonum amphibium* L. var. *emersum* Michx.), a species that I had never seen or recognized before. So a trip during a period when water is in the wetland and the smartweed is blooming is in order, and I’ll remember to bring my mosquito repellent and netting, and to wear long pants, long-sleeved shirt, and wading boots. Have a pleasant autumn.♣

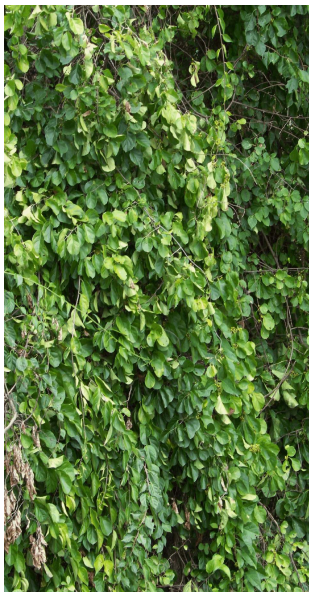
# Deceptive Decorations

As fall approaches it becomes the season to think of orange, yellow and brown. This reflects the colors found in our woodlands and landscapes. Then comes the urge to use these native beauties for table decorations, wreaths and cornucopia and sometimes as grave decorations.

The problem with this is that one of the traditional seasonal plants has been joined by a near relative that can become quite a nuisance, even an economic hazard. Bittersweet, *Celastrus scandens* L. is a traditional fall favorite showing up in many places. The current problem is with its eastern Asian relative *C. orbiculatus* Thunb., Oriental Bittersweet.

What does this bad actor do? The vines of this plant can shade native ground covers, girdle trees, and even so load the trees it climbs over with so much weight that it breaks the trunks of trees already weakened by the bittersweet shaded leaves of the trees. In addition to this, it can hold its leaves for at least a month after the first frost giving it an advantage over native plants. While it grows faster than many native grapes, the two in combination are deadly for woodlands.

Besides the damage to adjacent vegetation this vine can hybridize with the native bittersweet producing plants that are more vigorous than the native plant and produce more seeds. The prolific seed production of the oriental bittersweet gives it a competitive advantage and greater potential for spread. The seeds are shade tolerant with a high germination rate. The



Oriental Bittersweet  
overgrowing trees

seedlings can respond to light stimulation or wait for canopy openings. The plants are spread

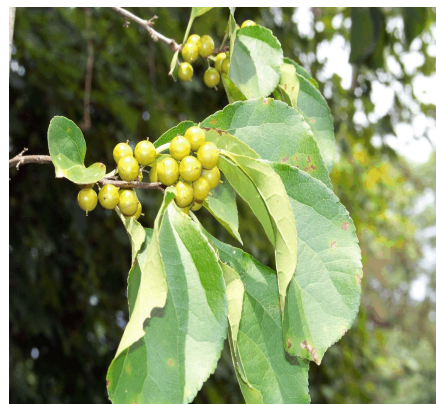
by rooting at the nodes as well as by seeds transported by birds and humans discarding decorative items with berries attached.



Flowering Oriental Bittersweet  
showing co occurrence with grapevines.

So how can you tell it from the native species? The classic separation is made by the flowering and fruiting location. In the native bittersweet the flowers and fruit are terminal; however, in the oriental bittersweet the flowers and fruits are found in the axils of the leaves. The leaves are also much larger and true to its specific epitaph, orbicular. It is also far more invasive than the native species and will be found in large populations.

It is the fruit which makes this plant desirable for decorative purposes. It starts as a small half inch green ball in May or June, tipped with a persistent pistil. By fall it will turn yellow green, followed by tan and then opening to show three scarlet sections each of which contain two seeds. These seeds will last into winter or until the birds or humans remove them.



Immature fruit with leaves in August

Where may this plant be found? Its most typical habitat is along roadsides, open places and forest edges from early successional to mature forests. Also craft shops, wreaths, on line and other locations selling seasonal decorative items.

This plant was first introduced in the US either in 1736 or 1860 (literature differs) but there is only one voucher in West Virginia prior to 1977 so it is a relatively new comer. while this plants is widespread in West Virginia and it's neighboring states, there are

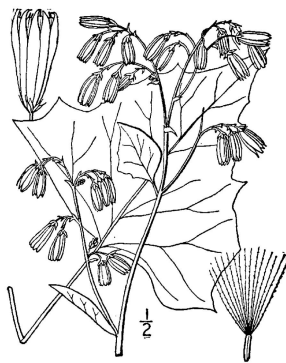
no recorded sightings yet in the Potomac Highland CWPMA boundaries (Grant, Hardy and Pendleton Counties, WV and Highland County, VA). If you believe you have found this plant in any of those counties contact the CWPMA coordinator at Rosalie.santere@tnc.org or (304) 636 – 0160 x 115. ❀

## PURSuing THE PRENANTHES

The genus *Prenanthes* seems to be somewhat under collected and under appreciated in West Virginia. There maybe several reasons for this: most species bloom in August and September when field work is some what limited, the plants can grow to over 6 ft high and parts from all of the plant are needed to document the occurrence because the leaves change as they progress up the stem. Pressing 5 sheets for one plant is not easy to remember to do, nor to do. That said, the genus has merits; all the species are natives, there are no exotic *Prenanthes*, and identification to genus is relatively easy. The genus name is from the Greek *prenes*, drooping ,and *anthos*, flower, which well describes the flowers rather like a wild lettuce (and indeed some are called “wild lettuce”) but in most species all of the flowers hang down. Please help contribute to our knowledge of this genus by collecting specimens which include heads, florets, and pappus, as well as leaves, then depositing them in herbaria within WV.

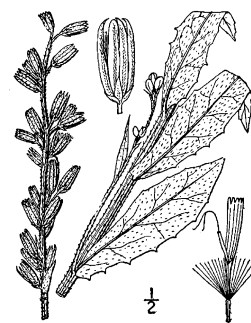
Hybrids have been reported in this genus and there are some unresolved taxonomic problems but that should not deter you from looking for these plants. Most of the keys stress the flowers characteristics, this means that a lens may be very necessary in some cases. Looking at the descriptions of the entire plant is highly recommended in making determinations as it is the combination of characters that is important.

***Prenanthes alba* L.** White lettuce, white rattlesnake root is recorded from 4 current and 11 older records, most in the mountains or the eastern part of the state. It ranges from 1.5 to slightly less than 6 ft tall. The stems are purplish, with



large coarse ,ovate or deltoid leaves, long thinly winged petioles. The leaves are variable, sometimes even 3 lobed or with hastate bases, the margins are coarsely dentate or serrate. The flower color ranges from whitish to pale pink or

lavender through red. Flowering from August to October in sandy soils in open woods, creek banks,.



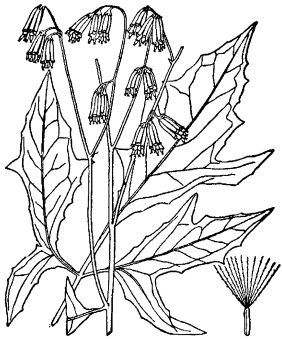
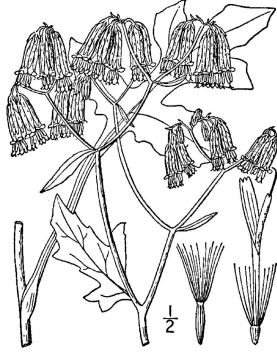
***Prenanthes altissima* L.** Tall White Lettuce. This is one of our most recorded species with 10 current and 27 historic records well distributed throughout the state. Heights range from from 16 inches to about 8.5 ft. The 5-6 flowers are pale yellow to greenish yellow. Bloom season is longer than most species occurring from August through November. Found in disturbed areas, roadsides, open woods or other places with good light.

***Prenanthes aspera* Michx.** Tall white lettuce, is only known from one old Mingo County record. At flowering the plant may be between 1.5 and 5.5 feet tall. The leaves are not lobed, and only weakly toothed. In this species the lower basal leaves are withered and/or gone by the time of flowering. This species is the only WV one in which the inflorescences do not droop, instead they are in a crowded spike at the top of the plant. The flowers are a yellowish white to cream color. Flowering in August and September. The habitat is dry, prairies, roadsides and barrens.

***Prenanthes crepidinea* Michx.** Corymbed Rattlesnake Root , is currently known from Brooke County with a historic record from Randolph County. The heritage data base considers it to be threatened but in need of additional field and taxonomic work. At flowering this plant may be between 3 and 7 feet tall, which does make an impression. The leaves are deltate or ovate, gradually reduced upward usually coarsely toothed, with only occasional plants showing lobed leaves. The inflorescences are yellowish white, nodding in an open panicle. Flowering in August and September. The habitat is usually moist, be it upland woods, thickets, or prairies.



***Prenanthes serpentaria*** Pursh  
Rattlesnake Root, Gall of the Earth, Cankerweed, Lion's Foot. Six current records and 16 older ones, scattered throughout the state, have been recorded. This species ranges from 2 to 7 feet tall and can often be distinguished by the upper leaves which are often deeply 3-5 lobed, rounded in both the sinus and the lobe. The petioles are winged, which is not common in the genus. The flowers are yellow to yellow white. It blooms from August to October. The habitat tends to be sandy, but may be oak-hickory woods, pine woods or other dryish woods.



***Prenanthes trifoliolata*** (Cassini) Fern. Lion's Foot, is recorded from 5 current and 7 older counties, mostly in the eastern and southern parts of West Virginia. The leaves are relatively large 3-5 palmately divided, with angular lobes and sinuses. The flowers are a pale yellow. Flowers may be found from August through October in moist oak hickory woods, swampy low woodlands, and sandy areas. ♣

Illustrations 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. 2: 711. Courtesy of Kentucky Native Plant Society. Scanned by Omnitek Inc.

## *This, That and More*

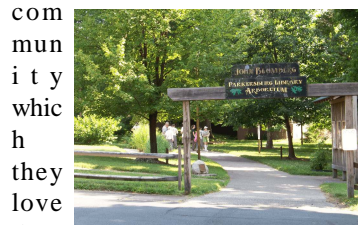
### Parkersburg Field Trip

The June 23, 2012 the field trip to the Parkersburg area was a success with many engaged participants. Judi White and Kevin Campbell put together something for everyone and the result was that the crowd (whose size waxed and waned) was able to see a formal arboretum with many species, a wetland in the shadow of a recycling center and a woodland arboretum at a local school.

Seeing the result of an engaged group of people reaching out to the

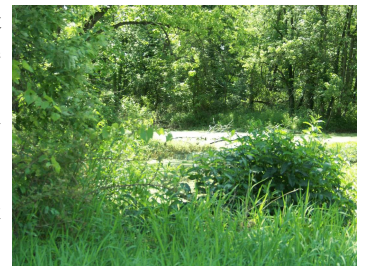


Chinquapin



Entrance to Garden

was a true testament to what can be done. The John Blomberg Native Plant Garden is adjacent to the main library in Parkersburg, providing a place to see what one reads about in gardening and botany books and to contemplate the vegetation planted there. Highlights included a chinquapin, *Castanea pumila* (L.) P. Mill. Other members of the Fagaceae were there in abundance so if you wish to see oaks this is the place. There is a grass garden showing the potential that these plants have in garden borders and islands. The wetland was a pleasant surprise, as it was hidden in plain sight along the road to the



Parkersburg Wetland

recycling center. A few species noted included: racoon grape *Ampelopsis cordata* Michx., a threatened plant in WV, The collective group of water meals/duckweeds, *Lemna*, *Wolffia*, and *Spirodela* were present, as well as an assortment of invasive plants.

The Edison School Arboretum was fun, even the Valerian featured in the last Native Notes put in an appearance.

## Thank you Judi and Kevin.

### On Face Book

Steve Mace has started a Facebook page to talk about WV native plants, contact Steve at [sdmace@frontiertet.net](mailto:sdmace@frontiertet.net) or 304-674-5523 for further information.

### Picture this

#### For fame, if not fortune

The West Virginia Departments of Environmental Protection and Transportation are again sponsoring a contest for wildflower photographs taken along WV highways. Submission may be up to three landscape oriented 8 x 12 prints. For further details go to the web site:

<http://www.wv.gov/news/Pages/StatecalendarcontestentriesduebyOct1.aspx>

### Plants of Note

Chris Gatens has been busy this summer, here is a brief list of his finds:

Daisy-leaved Grape Fern – *Botrychium matricariifolium* –(A. Braun ex Dowell) A. Braun ex Koch - located on Nature Trail near Shelter #1 and Boat Launch Area at the Upper Mud River Wildlife Management Area in Lincoln County – April 26, 2012.

River Cane – *Arundinaria gigantea* –(Walt.) Muhl. located off of Rush Creek Road (Cty Rt. 23), past contour mine entrance near Marmet, Kanawha County – March 31, 2012.

River Cane - *Arundinaria gigantea* (Walt.) Muhl.– located along the left fork of Twelvepole Creek off of Route 152 at Radnor, Wayne County – August 7, 2012.

Green Milkweed - *Asclepias hirtella* (Pennell) Woodson– located off of Arbuckle Creek Road off of Route 62 near Grimm's Landing, Mason County – August 6, 2012.

White Milkweed – *Asclepias variegata* L.– located on bottom land along 13 Mile Creek on Cunningham Property near Arbuckle, Mason County – June 10, 2012.

Chain Fern - *Woodwardia areolata* (L.) T. Moore A very large population at Quarry Road off of Chesterfield Avenue, Charleston WV, ¼ mile on the left side of road –

August 8, 2012 ❀

# News of the West Virginia Native Plant Society

## Highlights of the June Board Meeting

- ! The 23 June 2012 board meeting was held at the Ohio River Islands NWR headquarters in Williamson WV. following a series of field trips. Five board members and three members attended.
- ! The WVNPS remains fiscally sound and new members are being added to the roster.
- ! The power point on selecting native plants suitable for West Virginia was viewed, one suggestion for a change was made. There was a concern that when it is placed on the web it should be in a format that could not be altered. Matt Fox will be contacted to see if this can be done.
- ! Several changes and updates were suggested for the web site. Some items need to be dated so viewers know their age.
- ! The special publication series, *Excursions*, had errors, it will be revised and reissued to those receiving print copies. E-mail copies had not been distributed nor was it posted to the web site .
- ! Upcoming field trips will be July 28 at the Barboursville Park in Cabell County and August 12 near Buffalo WV, leader Doug Wood.
- ! The annual meeting will be held September 8 near the Sutton Dam area in Braxton County. Discussion of the Native Seed Collection Project and the report on the CWPMAS were tabled until the annual meeting. ♣

### Welcome to New Members

Chris Bradley	Mt. Storm, WV
Sarah Friend	Parkersburg, WV
Lolia Lackey	Lenore, WV
Turner Sharp	Parkersburg, WV
Dwayne Stone	Marietta, OH

### On the Web

You will find a copy of this, and other newsletters, with color pictures, on the WVNPS web site, <http://www.wvnps.org> While there look for other interesting information about plants. ♣

### *Events of Interest*

#### West Virginia Native Plant Society

##### Officers

President - Romie Hughart  
[rch25704@yahoo.com](mailto:rch25704@yahoo.com)  
(304)-52 3-1049

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Editor  
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(740)-894-6859



**Sept. 6-8** Forestry Conservation Symposium Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Cleveland Ohio. [www.cmnh.org/site/conservation/conservationsymposium.aspx](http://www.cmnh.org/site/conservation/conservationsymposium.aspx)

**Sept 12** Ailanthus research day, Chillicothe and Tar Hollow State Forest, Ohio. For details contact: [jrebbeck@fs.fed.us](mailto:jrebbeck@fs.fed.us)

**Sept. 27 -Oct 2** Crum Bryophyte Workshop, Presque Isle State Park, Erie Pa. [BBUCK@nybg.org](mailto:BBUCK@nybg.org)

**Sept 29** Field of Fire Dolly Sods Tour, Canaan Valley Resort State Park Davis WV. Call 304-866-4121 ext. 2788

**Sept 30-Oct 5** Ecosummit Columbus, Ohio <http://www.ecosummit2012.org>

**October 6-7** Ohio Moss and Lichen Monroe Co. Ohio Base of operations New Martinsville Inn, New Martinsville WV [bandreas@kent.edu](mailto:bandreas@kent.edu)

**October 12-13** 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Systematics Symposium, Missouri Botanical Garden, St. L o u i s M o . <http://www.mobot.org/MOBOT/research/symposium/welcome.shtml>

**October 13**, Kentucky Native Plant Society fall meeting. Floracliff Nature Sanctuary Fayette County details at either <http://www.knps.org> or <http://www.floracliff.org>

**October 27**, Native Plant and Sustainability Conference Phipps conservatory and Botanical Gardens Pittsburgh PA <http://www.phipps.conservatory.org/exhibits-and-events>

**November 9-10** Pennsylvania Botany Symposium Powdermill Nature Reserve in Westmoreland County PA details <http://www.botsocwpa.org> or <http://www.waterlandlife.org/261> ❀

## **2012 WVNPS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL OR INITIATION**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>CATEGORIES</b>	
Address _____	<b>Life</b>	<b>\$200</b>
_____	<b>Regular</b>	<b>12</b>
_____	<b>Student</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>Tri-State Chapter</b>	<b>6</b>

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to receive the Native Notes by mail \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

You must be a member of the statewide WVNPS in order to be a member of a local chapter.

Please make the check payable to West Virginia Native Plant Society;

Include local chapter dues, if pertinent. Dues are for one calendar year.

Dues paid after 1 September will be for the following year.

Send dues to: Mae Ellen Wilson  
WVNPS Treasurer  
1525 Hampton Road  
Charleston WV 25314