

# Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

## President's June Native Notes

Betsy Washington

Happy National Pollinator Week, June 18 - 25! In celebration of National Pollinator Week we are planning a **Special Event** – the unveiling of a New Sign about the importance of Native Plants at the **Kilmarnock Town Centre Park Garden at 10am, Friday June 23<sup>rd</sup>** along with a tour of this cutting edge Sustainable Town Park.



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail on Joe-Pye-weed in the gardens



One of five Stormwater Swales planted with Native Plants

The Kilmarnock Town Centre Park is a regional asset in so many ways - the Dog Park, the Half Shell Stage, the Splash Pad, the River Play kids water feature and all the events it hosts but one that is often overlooked is the sustainability merged in the park's construction. It incorporates impervious parking to reduce stormwater runoff, onsite stormwater management, energy-efficient building systems, and landscaping that includes extensive native plantings of bay friendly plants. Hats off to all the city employees with the long-term vision and commitment to make the park an example for all long into the future. And hats off to the Kilmarnock Town Council members who in 2014 voted to carry the park forward, and forward it came three years later.

Our Chapter Board discussed a few years ago with Kilmarnock, the need for a sign about Native plants because of the native plantings incorporated into the park. Finally, earlier this year we proceeded to create an appropriate sign and on Friday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10 am, the Board and others will be dedicating a new sign about the importance of the native plants incorporated in the Town Centre Park.

This new sign is a collaborative effort between the Native Plant Society and the Friends of the Rappahannock River in celebrating our native Flora and all the biodiversity and ecological services they provide. It will complement the existing Friends of the Rappahannock River sign that explains the importance of managing Stormwater Runoff in protecting our rivers and the Bay and the innovative techniques used at the Kilmarnock Town Center Park.

The Town Centre Park, one of the demonstration gardens on the Northern Neck Chapter of Virginia's Native Garden Trail is a wonderful place to observe a diversity of native plants and how they can shine in the landscape. Besides the Park is one of the butterfly hot spots on our two Lancaster-Northumberland Butterfly Counts each year.

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Plan to join us next Friday to see the new sign and enjoy a tour of the Park with Kilmarnock Director of Planning, Marshall Sebra to learn about the beautiful and diverse plantings of native trees, shrubs and perennials and the five stormwater management swales filled with native plantings that capture and filter out most, if not all, of the stormwater and pollutants from the parking lot and buildings and allow them to soak in and recharge our underground reservoirs while protecting our streams, rivers and ultimately the Bay.

### Strawberry Festival a Big Success!

**Nancy Garvey**, Queen of our Outreach Booth, wrote in to report that **“the Strawberry Festival on Saturday, May 27<sup>th</sup> was about as perfect a day as anyone could ask for!** The booth looked great and fellow volunteers Paula Boundy, Judy Lang, Andy Bailey, and Gary Chafin were wonderful to work with and she couldn't have done it without them! Our booth gave away more than 50 of our Native Plant Guides and many of the other complimentary handouts on the table. We received \$48 in strawberry plant donations which we turned over to the church and almost all the native plants we donated to the church's plant sale were sold. And an amazing first, we ran out of membership applications. There were people at our booth asking for information from the time the festival opened until at least 2 when the crowds started clearing out. The only thing Nancy forgot to do was take pictures, so we all have to use our imagination to picture the enthusiastic crowd visiting our booth and fantastic volunteers!

We hope more members will volunteer to join some of our Outreach Events and enjoy the fun and fantastic energy at our events next time!

### June Plant of the Month, Royal Fern, *Osmunda spectabilis*

Everyone should have received the June Plant of the Month article featuring our spectacular Royal Fern, a denizen of swamps, wetlands, seeps and damp streambanks. If you missed it, you can find it on our website and on our Facebook site. Our May POM, Virginia Sweetspire, will be shared on the VNPS State Blog any day now.



A large colony of Royal Ferns in Cabin Swamp, Hickory Hollow



Distinctive fertile fronds with reproductive parts at the tip

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### Potting Party and Plant Sale Meeting

Eight of us met at my house on a beautiful morning on June 15<sup>th</sup> to pot up the last 50 of the Landscape Plugs from Mid-Atlantic Nursery. We followed this with our first summer planning meeting to develop guidelines, dates, and information for the Fall Plant Sale. This is our Chapter's only Fundraiser and proceeds support our Educational Outreach efforts, our Programs, and the publication of our Guide and brochures that we offer free to members and to the public. We want everyone to know how beautiful and ecologically important our Northern Neck Native Plants are and to help provide native plants to every garden!

Lists of plants that members are growing for the sale is also INCREASING and it looks like we will have nearly 100 species of plants once again. If you are growing or babysitting plants for the Fall Plant Sale please send a list to Andy Bailey at [lowermachodod@gmail.com](mailto:lowermachodod@gmail.com), and Judy Lang at [jlang@riposi.net](mailto:jlang@riposi.net). Look for the Plant Sale Dates on the Attached Calendar and please mark your calendars and plan to volunteer for this very fun and rewarding annual event! And definitely plan on joining us for the Members Only Presale on Friday, Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> at Dug In Farms from 2 – 5 pm to catch up with friends and fellow members, enjoy refreshments, and get first choice on Sale Plants. Have a friend that is not a member but would like to be? Please tell them to join now to enjoy this Member Perk. You can find membership forms and lots of other information and suggestions for plants for various landscape uses that will be sold at our Fall Sale on our website at [Northern Neck Native Plant Society \(nnvnps.org\)](http://NorthernNeckNativePlantSociety.org) *(See separate member email for more details on how to volunteer.)*

Sales Meetings are open to all interested members and they will continue on the third Thursday of July and August. It takes a village so please volunteer to help at the sale and join us at one of the Plant Sale Meetings.

### Another Successful Old Courthouse Garden Workday

**Bonita Russell, Chair of the Heathsville Garden Team**, held another successful workday in the garden in late May and many of the perennials were divided and renewed; some will be shared at our Fall Plant Sale. We can always use more volunteers because as you know many hands make light and pleasant work and this is our Flagship Demonstration Garden on our Native Plant Trail. **Thank you Bonita and volunteers** for keeping this garden so beautifully maintained!

### Fourth Annual Spring Butterfly Count Once Again is Sponsored by our Northern Neck Chapter

The Fourth Annual Northumberland-Lancaster County Spring Butterfly Count took place on Thursday, June 1. Count Coordinator, Jeffrey Wright reports, "Each year the Counts have documented several species never before reported for Northern Neck, greatly expanding our knowledge of butterflies and their distribution in the Northern Neck and adds so much to our knowledge of butterflies and the plants they rely on."

This Spring Count is sponsored by the Northern Neck Native Plant Society. You may ask what the connection is between native plants and butterflies? The answer is that many butterflies as well as bees and other pollinators require very specific native host plants for their young caterpillars. Female butterflies search for these specific native plants to lay their eggs on and may only have a few days or weeks to find them. Without these native plants the young of many butterflies (and many native bees) are not able to survive. These Counts have shown that public and private gardens, schools, and other venues filled with Northern Neck native plants

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such as Shiloh School or Town Centre Park in Kilmarnock support a bounty of butterflies and are favored sites for both butterflies and Count volunteers to explore.

Participating in the Butterfly Counts is loads of fun and a wonderful way to contribute to citizen science. It's also a great chance to get outside and enjoy beautiful gardens, parks, and natural areas with nature enthusiasts. **The next Northumberland-Lancaster Summer Count will be held July 26. A 'George Washington Birthplace Butterfly Count' will be held in Essex, Richmond, and Westmoreland Counties on June 21.**



Butterfly Count Team Members Ellen Clarke, Edie Bradbury, Bob Dunstan, and Sector Lead Betsy Washington & Spicebush Swallowtail Caterpillar on Host Spicebush and adult Black Swallowtail

## Workshop on Identifying Butterflies and Their Caterpillars and the Native Host Plants They Love and Need

Jeff Wright and I presented a workshop to the public on Identifying Butterflies and their Native Host Plants on June 13<sup>th</sup>. An astonishing 88 folks registered for this zoom presentation to learn more about our regionally native butterflies. We provided handouts on Butterfly Identification Resources as well as on **Native Host Plants for Butterflies and Tips on Gardening with native plants to Attract Butterflies and their Caterpillars** to your Garden. If you would like an electronic copy of the latter two handouts, please email me at [bwash99@verizon.net](mailto:bwash99@verizon.net).

## Welcome New Board Member at Large, Linda Gayle



Please welcome new Board Member at Large, Linda Gayle, who will be filling a vacated position on the Board. We look forward to Linda's enthusiasm and energy in many of our Outreach activities and Programs and help in guiding our chapter. Thank you, Linda for stepping up!

Sales Committee Meeting from front clockwise: Betsy, Linda Gayle, Jeff Wainscott, Andy Bailey, Judy Lang, Edie Bradbury, Ellen Clarke & Nancy Garvey. Denise Greene not shown. Photo by Paula Boundy.

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### 2023 Calendar of Events

While subject to change, meeting reminders will be emailed in advance  
All members are welcome to all Board & Committee meetings

**General Meetings begin at Noon for a social lunch & talk of native plants and gardens so bring a brown bag lunch.  
Programs begin around 12:30**

#### JUNE - No General Meeting

- Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>** **How to Garden for Pollinators** Workshop at Dug In Farms, NNVNPS Member Denise Greene
- Sunday 11<sup>th</sup>** Zoom Butterfly Identification and Native Host Plant Workshop with Jeff Wright and Betsy Washington to celebrate National Pollinator Month
- Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>** Potting Party and Plant Sale Meeting 10am, open to anyone
- Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>** Unveiling of new Native Plant Sign at the Kilmarnock Town Centre Park at 10am. Tour this sustainable garden with Director of Planning, Marshall Sebra and Betsy Washington
- Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup>** Save the Date: Washington Birthplace Butterfly Count (Westmoreland, Richmond, Essex)

#### JULY - No General Meeting

- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>** Plant Sale Meeting/workshop 10 am, location TBD
- Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>** Save the Date: Lancaster-Northumberland Summer Butterfly Count

- AUG. Thursday 17<sup>th</sup>** **Plant Sale meeting/workshop** 10am & Call for Volunteers  
TBD Possible Field Trip or Native Garden Tour in the planning

#### SEPT. Fall Plant Sale at Dug In Farms, White Stone!

- Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>** Set-up for Plant Sale
- Friday 15<sup>th</sup>** **Members only Pre-Sale Friday afternoon, Sept. 15, 2:00 – 5:00 pm**
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>** Sale open to the Public at 9:00 – noon
- Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup>** Sale open to the Public at 9:00 – noon
- Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup>** Save the Date, Washington Birthplace Fall Butterfly Count

#### OCT.

- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup>** **General Annual Meeting, Election of Officers, Budget**  
At Belle Isle State Park to include a **Shoreline Field Trip**

#### NOV.

- Thurs 16<sup>th</sup>** **General Meeting: The Amazing Pollinators Attracted to a Native Plant Garden by Maeve Coker**

- DEC.** No meeting