



# Newsletter

February, 2024



*Reminder: Managing Invasives Zoom Talk with Rod Walker on February 8*

## WOAH at Work in January

WOAH has been involved in several events since our last newsletter. Our Events Committee hosted the first of Ben Casteel's plant propagation workshops at the VHCC greenhouse. For National Seed Swap Day, we made new friends and shared spotted bee balm and swamp milkweed seeds at Sustain Abingdon's Randy Smith Seed Swap. Dick Olson worked with WOAHP members to begin developing a list of native plants for use by local nurseries and gardeners in our area to promote natives in our home landscapes.

It's a wonderful thing to be a part of a community that works together in supporting each other's efforts to make our yards and farms—our neighborhoods and towns—more natural and hospitable to native life.

Mark Merz, 2024 WOAHP President

## Calendar at-a-Glance

**February 8: Managing Invasive Plants**, Zoom

**March 14: Propagating Appalachian Natives II**, In Person and Zoom

**April 13: Members' Spring Plant & Seed Share** at Steele Creek Park

**April 20: Abingdon Earth Day Celebration**

**May: Members Only Private Garden Tour**

**October: Members' Fall Plant & Seed Share** at Steele Creek Park

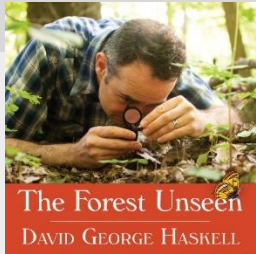
## Instead of a February Member Profile ...

... I'll use this space to ask for help.

First, the WOAHP webmaster, Macey Brown, is leaving our chapter to join the Smoky Mountain chapter of Wild Ones. It's closer to her home, so she'll be able to join in more in-person events. We thank her for her important work in getting the Appalachian Highlands chapter off the ground with, along with her talent in visual arts and graphic design, her skill in digital technology. The Smoky Mountain chapter's gain is our loss, though, and we'll need someone to replace her in keeping our website up to date.

Second, each month we would like to publish a new member profile as well as a new book review in this newsletter. It's my hope that such member contributions can be ways for us to get to know each other. Would you please consider providing one or both? If I get flooded with more submissions than there's room for in a single newsletter, I'll include them in the order I receive them. I would love to hear a conversation at a plant swap begin with, "Aren't you the one who wrote about *The Comfort of Crows*?" or "Don't you work as a librarian in Smyth County?"

Send your submission to the WOAHP email: [wildonesappalachianhighlands@gmail.com](mailto:wildonesappalachianhighlands@gmail.com)



## Bookshelf: Review by Mellie Smith

*The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature*

By David George Haskell

We plant natives because we know the importance of preserving the interconnectedness of life. We understand that co-evolution of flora and fauna is the process that creates the diversity that is so important to our planet's (and our!) survival. From microbes in the soil to the stately oak that harbors so much life, each living thing matters to the other. *The Forest Unseen: A Year's Watch in Nature* by David George Haskell will transport you to a deeper understanding of how intricate, and fascinating, these connections really are. Haskell visited a one-square-meter patch of old growth southeastern Tennessee forest several times per week for an entire year. His observations are written with a sensitive, thoughtful and scientific eye, describing what he finds, week by week, month by month, season by season. The information he imparts is both powerful and eye-opening. I never knew I could care about the questing of ticks or be amazed at a horsehair worm turning a cricket into a zombie or cheer on the ants that plant our spring ephemerals as they feed their colonies. Haskell's prose will draw you in with intimate details of this web of life. Yet, all this science is presented by Haskell in what has been described as "poetic" and "lyrical." The information is well researched and detailed, but it reads like a well-written novel. Originally published in 2012 by Penguin Books, *The Forest Unseen* is still available through online purchase or check your local library.

## Show and Tell

Share a picture and tell us what you're doing with your native plantings.



Beth and I started our landscaping with natives when we moved to Smyth County a little more than 25 years ago when we started planting native trees and shrubs in our side yard. Along with our dog, Penny (who highly approves of native plants), you see yellow-poplar, a red maple, a bigleaf magnolia, sweetgum, a sourwood, river birch, Carolina silverbell, oaks, hazel-alder, alternate-leaf dogwood, a small basswood, and a small blackgum. Since this land was originally Eastern Deciduous Forest, we think this is our first, best attempt at rewilding!

## Event Details

**February 8**

### **Managing Invasive Plants**

Rod Walker presents this educational ZOOM talk for WOAHA on the topic of invasive plants—what they are and why and how we control them. Rod is on the Board of Directors for Blue Ridge PRISM, Inc. (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management, <https://blueridgeprism.org>), an organization dedicated to reducing the negative impact of invasive plants in the northern Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

**Time: 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm** (Eastern Time)

ZOOM Link: <https://wildones-org.zoom.us/j/86985016622?pwd=bkp3WHIHMEJuWlllNEJVM1RlZGZZdz09>