



Newsletter

July 2024



June-Early July:

The highlight of the past month for WOAHA was both Jeremy Stout's presentation for us at the Steele Creek Nature Center and the hour or so before that that we had for exploring the park's native plant garden. Jeremy's title for his talk was something of a teaser: "Ghosts in the Forest." But the content lived up to the title in interest and information. We learned something about how geology and climate have influenced the flora and fauna of the Steele Creek ecosystem as well as how many plants evolved in response to now extinct megafauna. The event was extremely well attended and provoked many thoughtful questions from the audience. If you haven't come before, please consider attending one of the many lectures or tours planned by the WOAHA Events Committee.

Mark Merz, 2024 WOAHA President

Calendar at-a-Glance

August 3: Members Tour of Josh Banks's Garden and Nursery, Johnson City

September TBD: Monical Hoel Tour of Emory & Henry Meadow, Meadowview

October 26: Members' Fall Plant & Seed Share at Steele Creek Park



Connecting people and native plants for a healthy planet



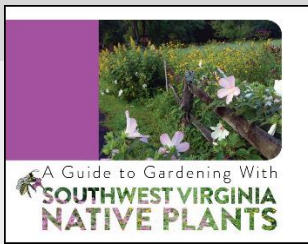
WOAHA T-Shirts Are Available for Order!

Selling the t-shirts is a fundraising project for our chapter, which currently has modest expenses (brochures and other promotional materials, honoraria for speakers) but huge ambitions (collaborating with other like-minded organizations to host speakers with national reputations).

It's a nice shirt with a great message. There are so many style and color combinations that you may never see two exactly alike, though they do all have the small chapter logo in the front left pocket area and the large Get Wild design on the back.

Prices range from \$26.99 to \$41.99, and it takes 10-14 days for delivery. Sizing is called unisex, so think "Men's". I ordered XL, and it is sized as expected. My wife's L was a little larger than expected.

Visit the Bonfire website using this link: www.bonfire.com/get-wild-6/, or scan the QR code on the left with your phone's camera.



Bookshelf: Review by Mark Merz

A Guide to Gardening with Southwest Virginia Native Plants

Design and Publication Management by Nicole Hersch and Bethany Peters

It isn't often that we are able to offer a free digital version of the book we review, but this one is available here: [A Guide to Gardening with Southwest Virginia Native Plants](#)

Whether you are new to the native plant movement or if you've been involved for decades, it's difficult to imagine a more valuable resource for a WOAHS native plant gardener than this one! You gain a crash course in basic ecology. You get extensive rationale for using native plants in your landscape. There's a geographical overview of our region within the state. And there are sections in the guide that help you identify and accomplish different objectives for your plantings. Do you want to accomplish traditional landscaping goals? Do you want to garden for pollinators, bees, and butterflies? Are birds your primary interest? Do you want to establish a deer resistant garden? Are you looking for ways to combat invasive plants? This FREE book is a resource for supporting your work toward achieving all these goals using native plants. There is attention to seasonality, moisture and light requirements, canopy position, and soil characteristics in each case, with specific plant recommendations. The editors don't stop there; they provide you with practical how-to advice and the reasons doing what they advise.

The heart of the book is its 75 pages of plant profiles, which are divided into 6 categories: forbs, ferns, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees. Each profile includes a verbal description, a beautiful color photograph, scientific and common names, soil requirements, and graphics that provide at-a-glance information on bloom period, light and moisture needs, size, and ecosystem benefits. My wife, who is no novice gardener, has found enough usefulness in this book to justify hours of study. She's used it for planning, browsing, and for improving her familiarity with what's native in our region.

The design of this guidebook deserves praise, too. It uses color, headings, and graphics to facilitate use; the Table of Contents in the front and the Index in the back will save you time when you're looking for specific information; and the bits of text selected for featuring are thoughtfully chosen and effectively spotlighted.

While there was a limited printing of this publication, it was always the intention that the primary form of access be digital, so click on the link above, and welcome to gardening with southwestern Virginia native plants!



Member Profile: Ken Moore

Davidson College, English major, 1962

English Masters, UNC-CH, 1964.

Following two years in Army Intelligence (oxymoron?), I “followed my heart” and returned to study Botany at UNC-CH. I returned to UNC with an MA in English, to pursue a professional degree in a plant related subject. As a kid, I recall always exploring the swamplands around the old Byrd Airport in my hometown, Sandston, a tiny suburb of Richmond, Va. During the summers, I explored the forests and fields surrounding a poor subsistence tobacco farm near Warrenton, N.C. In 1971, after two years graduate study in Botany, I actually “walked” into a position as the first staff member of the N.C. Botanical Garden (NCBG.) From its beginning in 1966, the focus of NCBG has been display and education related to N.C. native plants. My Graduate School Botany professor was C. Ritchie Bell, first director of the NCBG and co-author, with wildflower photographer, Dr. William Justice, of *Wildflowers of North Carolinas*. In the early summer of 1968, Ritchie Bell stepped out of his office doorway and asked: “What are you doing this summer?” My response of “Don’t know!” was met with “Good, you’re supervising work-study students at the Garden this summer!” The rest is history. Decades of plant rescues, classes and field trips for the general public, natural area restoration projects, ongoing propagation research and sales of native plants resulted in the NCBG being recognized as a national resource for native plant conservation and information.

A memorable recollection: during the very first year, I was halted in my tracks by a brilliant red wildflower, Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*. I returned to collect seed in early fall, sowed them and was amazed at high% germination! That dispelled the common thinking that native plants were difficult to propagate and best obtained by “digging from the wild.” Thus began the NCBG “Conservation Through Propagation” program which was spread through speaking engagements and publications, far and wide. Over time ‘digging from the wild’ was replaced by native plant propagation nurseries popping up throughout the nation. In 1982, Cardinal Flower became NCBG’s first Wildflower of the Year!

Retired as Assistant Director in 2003, I continued leading field trips and teaching plant identification classes at NCBG and neighboring Duke Gardens for several years. Subsequently, I was a part-time nature school leader for West Point on the Eno River, Durham, NC (two years) and Earth Guide (two years) at Timberlake Farm, Whitsett, NC.

Most enjoyed accomplishment: author of “The Annotated FLORA, Take a Closer Look” column for *The Carrboro CITIZEN*, 2007 – 2012. The citizen is perhaps the only news publication in the world to feature native plant stories with color photographs on front and last page of each issue. (<http://www.carrborocitizen.com/flora>.)

Member Profile: Ken Moore (continued)

Still alive at 84, residing in a cohousing community in Abingdon, Va., wife Kathy Buck and I are engaged in efforts to replace the existing landscape of excessive lawn and planted exotic invasives with native plants and pollinator gardens. Leaving leaves in place where they fall beneath trees has been an uphill battle. As in any dreaded “neighborhood association” emphasis is on lawns and plants controlled for neat appearances. Doug Tallamy’s Nature’s Last Hope remains a dream.

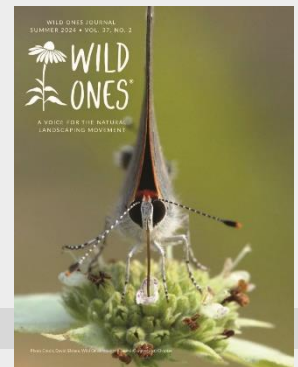
And coming up soon, I return to Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, N.C., to reunite with other native plant champions to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of “Landscaping with Native Plant,” (The Cullowhee Conference!)

Ken Moore, kensolidago@gmail.com June 25, 2024

Wild Ones

While exploring the national Wild Ones website, I noticed this upcoming event: [Webinar: “Combating the Biodiversity Crisis with Native Plants” with Sarah Gray & Coralie Palmer on August 22nd at 6 PM \(CT\)](#). It looks useful! You can click on the link for more information. You’ll also see links to a number of recorded webinars by speakers such as Benjamin Vogt, Heather McCargo, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and Lorraine Johnson.

There’s a photo contest running through the end of August (<https://wildones.org/photo-contest-info/>), and you can always see the latest journal at <https://members.wildones.org/journals/>.



There Are Many Ways to Contribute to the WOAHA Newsletter!

- Send in your own member profile. As you’ve seen over the last several months, your profile can take many forms. Ken Moore’s career involved native plants, so he described his significant work accomplishments. He sent in a photo, too. Yours can follow his model, or it can be as simple as telling a little about yourself and how you got involved with native plants.
- Write about your garden. What are you hoping to accomplish, what resources did you use, what strategies did you employ? Do you have before and after pictures that show what you’ve done?
- Have you read a good nature book that you’d like to review?

Your fellow WOAHA members would love to hear from you! Send your text and photos to markmers243@gmail.com.

Event Details

August 3rd **Members Only Garden and Nursery Tour at the Home of Josh Banks**

Josh and his wife moved to Johnson City from Montgomery, AL in late 2021. Since the spring of 2022, he has been slowly removing the turf from their sloping 1/3-acre plot, and replacing it with mostly native perennials, shrubs, and trees. He works as an architect, and regional design is something he thinks is very important, both in architecture and landscape design. He likes to grow native plants because they give a "sense of place" to a landscape - and he thinks Appalachian Highlands residents are with some amazing plants to choose from! He also recently started a small backyard nursery and landscaping design business called Paragraph Designs. His main frustration was the lack of access to affordable plug/small potted plants available to the home gardener, since he believes that is the most cost effective and environmentally friendly way to get more plants into the landscape. His hope is to make more plug plants available while growing as many as possible from local seed.

When: 10:00 am to 12:00 noon (Eastern Time)

Location: Josh Banks' Johnson City Home

Registration: Gail Olson and the Events Committee will send an email to interested members with specific information for Josh's address.