

THE TURK'S CAP

Volume 13, Number 2
Summer 2010

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DELAWARE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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NATURAL QUOTES

“Vernonia are among the showiest flowers of field and wet meadow. Their vibrant, rich red-purple color contrasts strongly with boneset and Joe-pye weed.”

Hal Bruce, *How to Grow Wildflowers & Wild Shrubs & Trees in Your Own Garden*, 1976

The DNPS Vision

The purpose of the Delaware Native Plant Society (DNPS) is to participate in and encourage the preservation, conservation, restoration, and propagation of Delaware's native plants and plant communities. The Society provides information to government officials, business people, educators, and the general public on the protection, management, and restoration of native plant ecosystems. The DNPS encourages the use of native plants in the landscape by homeowners, businesses, and local and state governments through an on-going distribution of information and knowledge by various means that includes periodic publications, symposia, conferences, workshops, field trips, and a growing statewide membership organized by the DNPS.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

The Delaware Native Plant Society is open to everyone ranging from the novice gardener to the professional botanist. One of the primary goals of the society is to involve as many individuals as possible.

The DNPS is working on some significant projects at this time. We have completed four reforestation projects in the Prime Hook area, at Blackbird Creek in New Castle County and Cedar Creek in Sussex County where we have installed tree tubes around newly sprouted seedlings, and are performing annual management of the sites. Help is also needed at our native plant nursery at the St. Jones Reserve with the monitoring and watering of plants along with many other nursery activities.

For more information, visit our website at www.delawarenativeplants.org. Our very informative, up-to-date website has all the contact information for the Society, along with a section on native plants, volunteering, and links to other environmental and plant related organizations.

A BEACHY WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

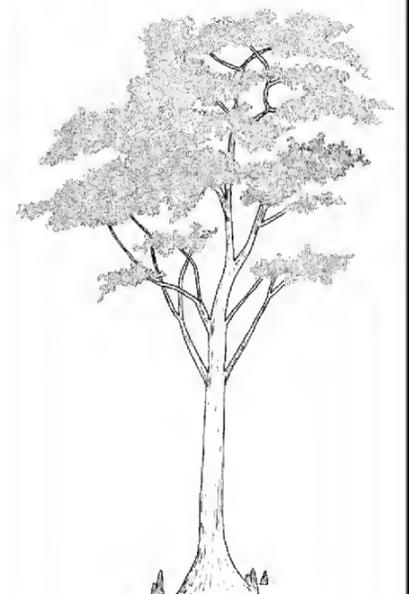
April thru June

Geri Gitlin
Robert Seabold



Photo: Cindy Albright

Vernonia noveboracensis
New York ironweed



THOUGHTS FROM THE EDGE OF THE GARDENLetter from the outgoing Editor

Hello members, non-members, and friends,

I began my tenure as Newsletter Editor with Volume 2 Number 1 on 15 April 1999. Over the years we have had some great articles and it has been very educational for me to be in this position. I always attempted to make the newsletter scientific and educational in its focus and I think we did a good job of that overall. When I first started with this, life was simpler and I had a lot of time to research, write, and correspond with contributors, but as time has passed life has gotten much busier and I'm no longer able to produce our wonderful little newsletter, so I am retiring and the torch has been passed. Please show our new Editor all the helpfulness you showed me. Doing a newsletter like this is a team effort and contributors are very important to its success, and she will be looking for people to write and submit articles, and ideas.

Over the years, I had many people thank me for doing the newsletter, and I received more great compliments on it than I can count, so for all that, I'd like to say "Thank You" and I greatly appreciate your kind words! I'd also like to thank all the people who submitted articles. Whether regularly submitted, or just occasionally, they all helped a great deal.

Eric Zuelke

Letter from the incoming Editor

I look forward to being editor of "The Turk's Cap" Newsletter. Before retiring from my web hosting business, I was a computer trainer at Del Tech and Online Consulting, where I taught Desktop Publishing. In addition, I was the "Chimes" newsletter editor for Westminster Presbyterian Church in Wilmington for many years. I have had an interest in horticulture, starting in the 1980s with classes at Longwood Gardens and volunteering at Winterthur. I was privileged to go on wildflower walks with Hal Bruce at Winterthur and Claude Phillips at Ashland. More recently, I have been interested in the native plant movement. I accept this editorship hoping to learn more about native plants while bringing my technical skills to the position.

Please send articles, snippets, items you find interesting at online websites, recipes and poems which you think are appropriate for the newsletter to: cindy@cindyalbright.com.

Cindy Albright

GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS***Vernonia noveboracensis*, New York ironweed****Natural History**

Taking a stroll around our pond one early fall day a couple of years ago, I noticed new plant growing along the bank – new plants aren't unusual for someone who doesn't like to mow, but this one was quite striking and I thought it might possibly be New York ironweed. So after a quick Google on ironweed, I quickly learned about a book written by William Kennedy and a movie of the same name starring Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep. Looking a bit further, I found the plant was indeed New York ironweed, a plant with showy purple flowers on plants of two to seven feet high and two to three feet round ranging from Massachusetts and New York south to Georgia; west to Mississippi and north to West Virginia and Ohio. The flowers, about 1/3 inch across and are born in clusters three to four inches across and are held on exceptionally sturdy stems that can persist through the winter, hence the name "ironweed". The flowers are butterfly magnets, attracting a myriad of butterfly species to their nectar rich blossoms and bee keepers value ironweed for making honey. The fruits are seed-heads that are enjoyed by finches and other seed eating birds. New York ironweed blooms from late summer through early autumn.

Where to Grow

New York ironweed is a tall plant ideally suited for the back of a butterfly garden and places where it's late season blossoms can be appreciated after other perennials have long since faded. Being a tough plant, it holds up well where others might falter. New York ironweed prefers rich, moist soil but will tolerate any average soil with moderate to wet moisture. Flowering will be best when planted in full sun. The New York ironweed has a short life span relative to most other plant species and a moderate growth rate, but under good growing conditions it will reseed freely.

Propagation

Propagation is from seed. Seeds may be collected in late fall after the seed heads have fully formed and dried. Store in a cool dark place over winter – cold stratification is not required. Start seeds in flats or individual containers in late spring and set out into the garden after several inches of growth are observed. Be sure keep the plants well watered until they are established in the landscape!

Lore

Not much can be found for human uses of the New York ironweed. Extracts from the plant were once used for treating stomach ailments. New York ironweed was named The North Carolina Wildflower of the year in 2004. Perhaps we just as well enjoy it for its natural beauty and value to nature!

**Resources & Reviews**

[Newcomb's Wildflower Guide](#) by Lawrence Newcomb, Illustrated by Gordon Morrison

An ingenious key system for quick, positive field identification of wildflowers, flowering shrubs and vines.

WEBSITE UPDATE

On 7 April 2009 we added Google Analytics to the source code of our site to track a myriad of statistics about visitation. Here are the stats through 17 July 2010.

Number of total visits: 5,801

Number that were absolute unique visitors: 4,778 (82.0%)*

New vs. returning visits: 4,767 new (82.1%), 1,034 return (17.8%)*

Average time spent browsing: 2 min. 28 sec.

Average # of pages browsed: 4.5

Pages with most clicks: Nursery, Plant Talk, Publications, Events

Places: U.S.A. (all 50 states), 63 other countries/territories

How we were located:

63% from a search engine

24% from a referring site

12% from direct traffic

*Absolute Unique Visitors counts visitors, whereas New vs. Returning counts visits.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2010—BOWMAN'S HILL WILDFLOWER PRESERVE. 2010 FALL NATIVE PLANT SALE. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESERVE MEMBERS: SATURDAY. 4 SEPTEMBER & SUNDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 10 A.M. – 4 P.M. EACH DAY. PLANTS ALSO ARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE DURING THE WEEK. MORE INFORMATION ON THE WEB AT WWW.BHWP.ORG.

11—12 SEPTEMBER 2010—[ADKINS ARBORETUM](http://WWW.ADKINSARBORETUM.ORG/) FALL NATIVE PLANT SALE IS SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 AND SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 FROM 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M. EACH DAY. MEMBERS MAY PLACE PRE-SALE PLANT ORDERS. THE MEMBERS-ONLY PLANT SALE IS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 FROM 10 A.M. TO 6 P.M. FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.ADKINSARBORETUM.ORG/

25—26 SEPTEMBER 2010—**8:30 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M.** [MARYLAND NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE](http://WWW.MDFLORA.ORG). THE ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE STARTS SATURDAY MORNING WITH A SERIES OF SPEAKERS, FOLLOWED BY FIELD TRIPS 1:30 P.M. TO 6:00 P.M. THROUGHOUT THE REGION. MORE INFORMATION ON THE WEB AT WWW.MDFLORA.ORG.

2—3 OCTOBER 2010—DELAWARE NATURE SOCIETY. [HARVEST MOON FESTIVAL](http://WWW.DELAWARENATURESOCIETY.ORG/EVENTS.HTML) AT COVERDALE FARM, GREENVILLE, DE. 10:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M. MORE INFORMATION ON THE WEB AT WWW.DELAWARENATURESOCIETY.ORG/EVENTS.HTML

SUMMER AND AUTUMN 2010—CONTINUING EDUCATION AT [MT. CUBA CENTER](http://MTCUBACENTER.ORG). THIS NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION HAS A FANTASTIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. THEY OFFER DOZENS OF CLASSES AND SYMPOSIUM THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. FOR MT. CUBA'S CALENDAR VISIT MTCUBACENTER.ORG.

DNPS BI-MONTHLY MEETINGS FOR 2010—ARE CURRENTLY SCHEDULED FOR THE FALL ARE 21 SEPTEMBER, 6 NOVEMBER (NOT A MEETING, BUT THE [ANNUAL PLANT SALE](http://WWW.DELAWARENATIVEPLANTS.ORG)) AND 16 NOVEMBER. ALL MEETINGS ARE ON THE THIRD TUESDAY OF EVERY OTHER MONTH AT 7 P.M., UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD IN 3 LOCATIONS AROUND THE STATE. THE KENT COUNTY LOCATION IS AT THE ST. JONES RESERVE, THE NEW CASTLE COUNTY LOCATION IS AT THE NEW CASTLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT OFFICE AT 2430 OLD COUNTY RD., NEWARK, DE, 19702, AND THE SUSSEX COUNTY LOCATION IS CHANGING SOON AND WE WILL BE GIVING DETAILS LATER. SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR MAPS AND DIRECTIONS TO EACH MEETING LOCATION AND FOR MORE DETAILS ON UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS.

WWW.DELAWARENATIVEPLANTS.ORG

Membership Application

DELAWARE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Member Information

Name:

Business Name or Organization:

Address:

City and Zip Code:

Telephone (home/work):

E-mail address:

" Full-time Student \$10.00

" Individual \$15.00

" Family or Household \$18.00

" Contributing \$50.00

" Business \$100.00

" Lifetime \$500.00

" Donations are also welcome \$ _____

Membership benefits include:

- * The DNPS quarterly newsletter, The Turk's Cap
- * Native plant gardening and landscaping information
- * Speakers, field trips, native plant nursery and sales

Total Amount Enclosed: \$

**Make check payable to:
 DE Native Plant Society
 P.O. Box 369, Dover, DE 19903**

**DELAWARE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
 P.O. BOX 369
 DOVER, DELAWARE 19903**

