

Enjoy the season of fall at the State Arboretum of Virginia



Celebrate the Glorious Golden Ginkgoes

This time of year brings thousands of new visitors to Blandly all hoping to capture the peak transformation of our beautiful Ginkgo Grove, when more than 300 trees transition from green to a canopy of glorious gold. While we can never be sure of the exact timing of this magical transition, the past few years have shown the best time to see the golden ginkgoes at Blandly is usually late October - early November.

This year, the Foundation of the State Arboretum will be celebrating Ginkgo Gold with **special visitor services the weekends of October 26th and 27th and November 2nd and 3rd**. Several snack and/or coffee trucks and extra bathrooms will welcome visitors near the parking entrance, before you begin a 10-minute walk to the grove. We will also host a ginkgo and State Arboretum of Virginia souvenir stand and a special Sponsor A Ginkgo Tree booth across from the Ginkgo Grove. **Visit our website** to keep up to date on the glorious golden ginkgoes, and learn more about our Sponsor a Ginkgo Tree program below!

Sponsor a Ginkgo Tree

Show your love of the Ginkgo Tree and support Blandly with a special **Ginkgo Tree Sponsorship for just \$100**. You can select a tree that is special to you, and it will be tagged with your name and marked on Blandly's website. Your sponsorship spans five years and supports Arboretum collection care and other environmental programs at Blandly Experimental



Sponsor a Ginkgo Tree

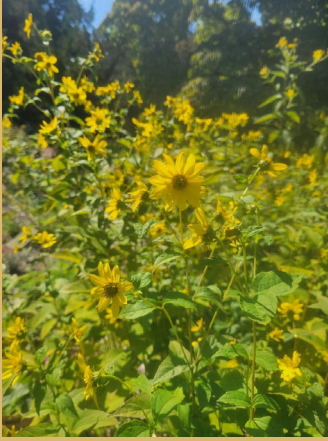
Meet the new FOSA Director Anne Marie Chirieleison (*Kee-Ree a-LAY-sen*)



Before joining the Foundation of the State Arboretum, Anne Marie Chirieleison served as Executive Director of the Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum in Sterling, Virginia. She has also worked at the Virginia Piedmont Heritage Area and the National Sporting Library and Museum. During her 10 years working in nonprofits in the Northern Virginia piedmont, Anne Marie has nurtured a passion for cultural history, the natural environment, and service through leadership. Through her work as a member of the Board of Directors for the Middleburg Business & Professional Association and Visit Loudoun, Anne Marie champions small organizations that have a big impact. Originally a military brat, she grew up in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and spent many a family vacation visiting national parks and Civil War battlefields. She holds a degree in History from James Madison University and a Certificate in Museum Management from the Virginia Association of Museums. Anne Marie, her husband Mike, and their daughter currently reside in Sterling. Later this fall the Chirieleisons will relocate to Winchester and welcome the arrival of a second child. In her spare time Anne Marie enjoys mixed media art, gardening, and exploring the great outdoors with her family.

"Blandy and the Arboretum are among the brightest stars in the constellation of Virginia's educational and cultural resources, to say nothing of its inherent natural beauty," said Anne Maire. "As Director of FOSA I am honored and thrilled to help it shine. The centennial anniversary of this important landmark is coming up in 2026, and many exciting initiatives are in store!"

What's in Bloom at the Arboretum?



Oxeye Sunflower

You can find the Oxeye sunflower, with the scientific name, *Heliopsis helianthoides*, in our Zoo garden.



Autumn Goldenrod

You can find the autumn goldenrod, with the scientific name, *Solidago sphacelata* 'Golden Fleece', in our Pollination Garden.



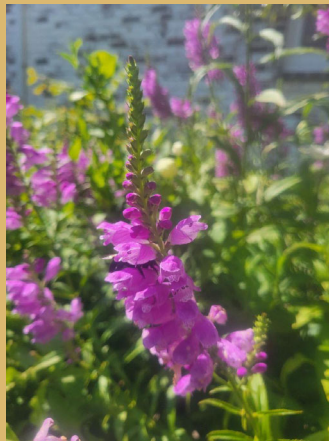
Hyssop-leaved Boneset

You can find the hyssop-leaved boneset, with the scientific name, *Eupatorium hyssopifolium*, in our Pollination Garden. Check out the golden digger wasp



Native Honeysuckle Vine

You can find the native honeysuckle vine, *Lonicera sempervirens*, in our Pollination Garden.



Obedient Plant

You can find the obedient plant, *Physostegia virginiana*, in our courtyard. Can you find the bumblebee?



Obedient Plant

More obedient plant, *Physostegia virginiana*, in our courtyard. This one has a visiting skipper.

Could You Be A Ginkgo Guide?



They're glorious, they're golden, and we're looking for ginkgo geeks to be Ginkgo Guides!

Blandy's Ginkgo Grove attracts thousands of visitors each fall – many of whom are visiting Blandy for the first time. We are actively recruiting volunteers (“Ginkgo Guides”) to help introduce visitors to the Ginkgo Grove and to Blandy's grounds this fall.

Ginkgo Guides should expect to attend a **two-hour orientation session Sunday, October 13th from 3:00-5:00**, and to work one or more three-hour shifts during weekends in late October and early November.

The training session will cover:

- The ginkgo's unique evolutionary history and biology
- The history of Blandy's Ginkgo Grove
- Tips to help visitors enjoy the Grove safely

To learn more and sign up, please contact Ariel Firebaugh, Director of Scientific Engagement at alf7f@virginia.edu.

An update: Still Wanted Alive: Butternut Trees

By T'ai Roulston, Curator, State Arboretum of Virginia

The butternut tree is having a hard time. A year ago I described the plight of the butternut, a tree with oblong, edible nuts instead of the round ones that mark its more common relative, the black walnut. Butternut trees are attacked by a fungal disease (butternut canker) that creates dark furrows in the bark and eventually kills the tree. The fungus has spread across the tree's whole range from eastern Canada to the southern Appalachians, turning an uncommon tree into a rare one. In addition to canker, the spotted lanternfly has singled it out for extensive late season feeding and egg-laying, piling woe on woe.

Last year many people wrote to tell me about the locations of butternut trees on their land, and I



visited many of you to collect nuts for propagation and distribution to other botanical gardens and to collect leaves for genetic analysis. I wanted to follow up here with some information about the genetic analysis.

Purdue University is the lead institution tracking the survival of butternut and exploring ways to conserve it, whether through the discovery of natural resistance or through crossing it with species that have resistance already, such as Japanese walnut. As part of their research, they analyze butternut leaves from across the species range to understand where the greatest pockets of genetic diversity are. Interestingly, one of the areas they know the least about is Virginia, as they have not had any collaborators here until now. West Virginia has Virginia beat by a mile on this one. The genetic analysis also accomplishes something else: determining if our wild butternuts are pure species or if they are already hybrids with Japanese walnut. Japanese walnut was widely introduced in the United States in the 19th century for orchard nut production and it readily hybridizes with American butternut. Because hybrids have more resistance to butternut canker than pure butternut, hybrids have an advantage over pure butternut in the wild. Across much of the eastern U.S., hybrids are regularly encountered and sometimes predominate in the forest. They are difficult to recognize morphologically but it is straight-forward to distinguish them genetically. Last year I was able to get genetic information on 15 Virginia trees from the northern Shenandoah Valley to Charlottesville, representing both private and public lands. The good news is that Virginia's butternuts are widespread, hanging on especially along rivers, and are mostly pure species (only 2 of the 15 were hybrids). The bad news, as expected, is that most large ones have extensive canker and are probably not long for this world. Still, there was a lot of fruit production last year and I found many young trees that had little evidence of canker.

Butternut canker on trunk

This project is ongoing. I'll be sending more leaf samples to Purdue from across Virginia and would love to hear about any locations you know of to get more samples. This year we drove as far south as Floyd looking. We are interested in wild trees (not ones planted as ornamentals or nut trees) and primarily focused on the Piedmont, Shenandoah Valley, and mountain region of Virginia, from the northeast to the southwest corners of the state. So if you know where to find them, please email me (with a photo of the tree, especially the nut, if possible).

tai.roulston@virginia.edu



Comparison of butternut (left) and black walnut (right) fruits



State Arboretum of Virginia | 400 Blandy Farm Lane | Boyce, VA 22620 US

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