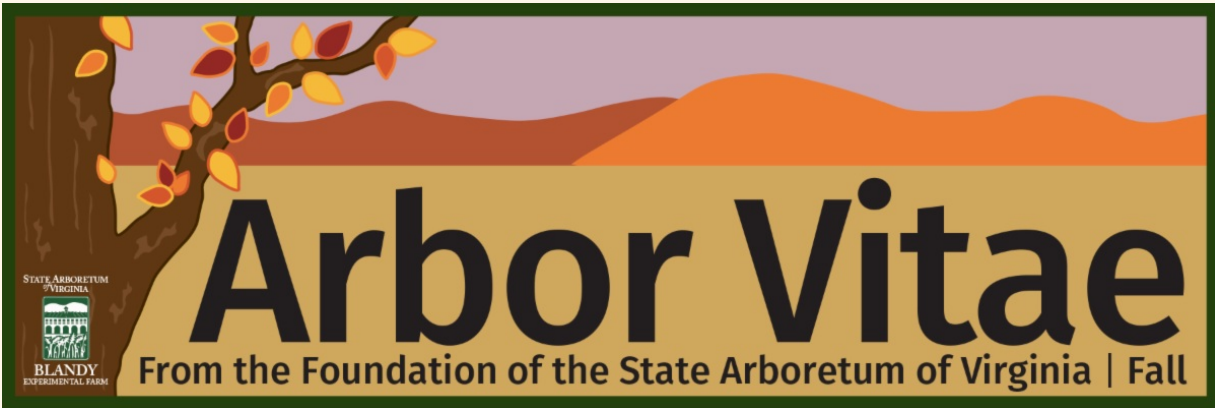




Fall into Wonder at the State Arboretum of Virginia September 2025

Ginkgo Gold Weekends

October 25th - 26th and November 1st-2nd

10:00 am - 4 :00 pm



Ginkgo Gold Lineup

October 25, 2025

FOSA – Sponsor a Ginkgo Tree

Station Café

Susan Lefler Studios

Shade Metals

Clarke County Tourism

October 26, 2025

FOSA – Sponsor a Ginkgo Tree

Donut Dive

Shade Metals

Clarke County Tourism

November 1, 2025

FOSA – Sponsor a Ginkgo Tree

3 Fires Oven

Donut Dive

Cupcake Mafia

Susan Lefler Studios

Shade Metals

Clarke County Tourism

November 2, 2025

Celebrate the Glorious Golden Ginkgoes

This time of year brings thousands of new visitors to Blandy 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. In anticipation of this magical transformation, the Foundation of the State Arboretum will be celebrating Ginkgo Gold with **special visitor services the weekends of October 25th and 26th and November 1st and 2nd**. Several snack and/or coffee trucks, ginkgo inspired craft vendors, 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!

We are looking for dozens of volunteers to help support visitors services during this busy time at the State Arboretum of Virginia.

VOLUNTEER Sign-Up NOW Ginkgo

FOSA– Sponsor a Ginkgo Tree
3 Fires Oven
Donut Dive
Cupcake Mafia
Shade Metals
Clarke County Tourism

Gold Weekends

Ginkgo Gold Weekends are sponsored in part by Bank of Clarke Foundation.

Sponsor a Ginkgo Tree

Show your love of the Ginkgo Tree and support Blandy 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 Blandy's website. Your sponsorship spans five years and supports Arboretum collection care and other environmental programs at Blandy Experimental Farm. We will have volunteers out in the Ginkgo Grove during Ginkgo Gold Weekends to help you with your sponsorship. With only 150 trees left to sponsor, Ginkgo Tree Sponsorship opportunities are now limited to September 15th - November 15th ONLY. [Learn More](#)



Back on the Butternut Trail

by T'ai Roulston, Curator & Research Associate Professor

The arboretum's search for butternut trees in Virginia took a southern turn this summer. Butternuts (also called white walnut) are declining rapidly due in large part to butternut canker disease, an introduced fungal pathogen that causes black fissures to erupt over the tree's trunk, eventually killing it. Here at the arboretum, we are trying to document the health of existing trees over diverse areas in Virginia and propagate ones from a geographically wide range. My trip this summer with newest Blandy graduate student Mia Murray spanned 4 days and a thousand miles, brushed the borders of North Carolina and Tennessee, and led us to many a riverbank where forlorn butternuts stretched horizontal over the water. That kind of tree yoga is great for reaching sunlight at the edge of a forest, but it also leads to dropping nuts to the fish below rather than to soil and squirrels for planting, and we took turns wading barefoot over the rocks for leaf and seed samples. Butternut trees need lots of light and are usually found on riverbanks, ridgetops, young forests, and roadsides, the same places you'd see black walnut trees. Riverbanks have been the best place for us to find them. For this trip, we relied on tips from professionals who are familiar with the flora of southern Virginia, dumb luck while



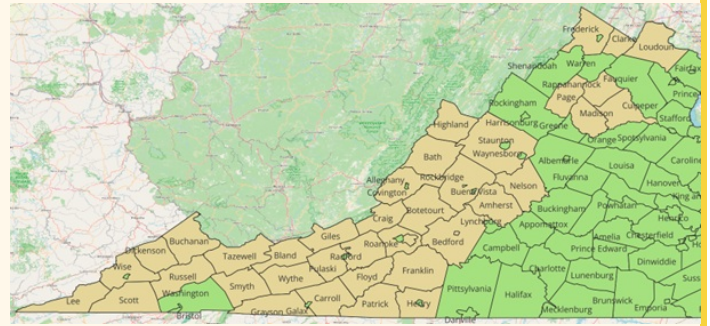
Butternuts from a tree at Blandy.

The brown colored counties on the map below are our targets, and they include some of the closest counties to Blandy. So if you know of locations in any of those counties, please let me know. If you see the nuts, please take a picture and email me

driving down the road, and iNaturalist, an app where anyone can post pictures of plants and animals they've seen. iNaturalist was great for some of our roadside finds, but also led us to No Trespassing signs in other places and we moved on, less productive than we'd hoped to be.

For the next trip, we hope to have more help from landowners who alert us to their trees, or to anyone who notices butternuts on public land and tells us where they are. That has been the best way for us the past two years in central and northwestern Virginia. Our collecting scope next year is from the Appalachian Mountains in Virginia west to the border, in any area where we haven't already made a lot of collections.

tai.roulston@virginia.edu to confirm identification. It is challenging to identify the tree from photos without nuts. Our grand hope is to find some butternuts resistant to the blight somewhere out there, and maybe you can point us to one.



Virginia County Map: Counties in brown are target counties for butternut collecting.

What's in Bloom this Fall at the Arboretum?



Sneezeweed

Sneezeweed, *Helenium autumnale*, an erect perennial known for its elongated leaves and numerous flower heads is blooming now in our Pollination Garden.



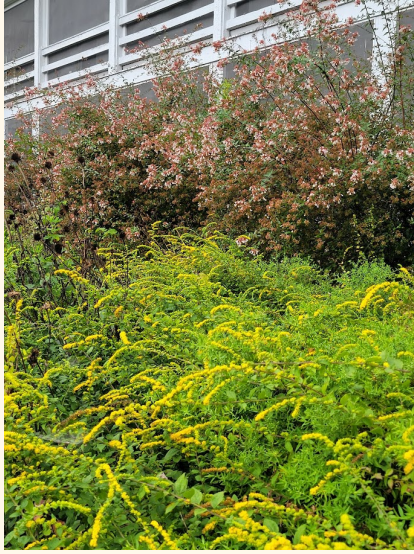
Aromatic Aster

Aromatic Aster, *Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*, is one of the last Aster species to bloom in the fall and can enjoy blooms well into October. See them now in our Pollination Garden.



Hyssop-leaved Thoroughwort

You can find the hyssop-leaved thoroughwort, with the scientific name, *Eupatorium hyssopifolium*, in our Pollination Garden. Check out the blue-winged wasp in this photo.



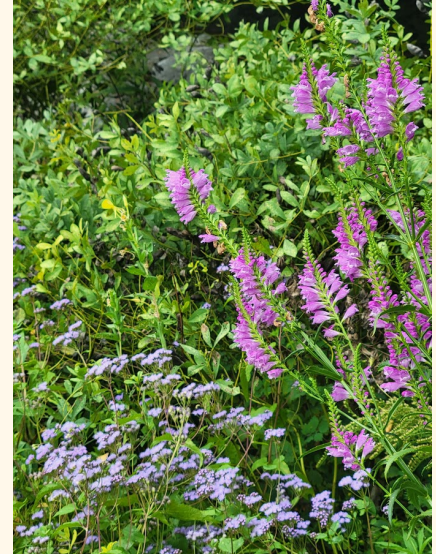
Goldenrod

You can find the goldenrod, *Solidago sphacelata* 'Golden Fleece', and abelia, *Abelia x grandiflora*, in our Pollination Garden.



Spotted Joe Pye

Look for this trio of Spotted Joe Pye weed, *Eutrochium maculatum*, sneezeweed *Helenium autumnale*, and ironweed, *Vernonia glauca*, in our Pollination Garden.



Obedient Plant

This dainty duo of obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana*, and bluemist flower, *Conoclinium clestinum*, are sure to attract your eye in the Pollination Garden.

Summer Research Spotlight Undergraduate Research at Blandy

In summer 2025, Blandy's undergraduate research program welcomed a talented cohort of undergraduates who tackled a diverse set of ecological research projects. Under the mentorship of faculty, six undergraduate students designed experiments, collected and analyzed data, and presented findings in the summer Research Forum—growing both as scientists and community members.

While exploring the impacts of human-induced disturbance on the flowering timing of spiny plumeless thistle, Declan discovered that “mediated through changes in soil temperature, nutrient addition led to significantly later peak flowering in thistle and disturbance led to significantly earlier peak flowering of thistle.”



Kalea investigated the effects of an aquatic fern, *Azolla*, which shares a mutualism with nitrogen-fixing cyanobacteria, on other wetland plants: “I found that, despite its effectiveness as a biofertilizer, *Azolla* seems to keep nitrogen and other nutrients to itself, acting predominantly as a competitor while alive.”



Rachel observed bumblebee behavior at high temperatures, demonstrating that adult fanning behavior within the nest to keep the brood cool is associated with a “negative trade-off that could affect the number of foragers, foraging trips, and overall net energy within the colony during times of elevated nest temperature.

Read the abstracts of all of the 2025 Undergraduate Research projects and browse past projects from earlier years: https://blandy.uvcreate.virginia.edu/reu_past_projects

The Blandy Community

HONORARY ADVISORY BOARD

The Foundation of the State Arboretum (FOSA) welcomed its Honorary Advisory Board to Blandy this September. Primarily composed of past Board Presidents, this Board plays a crucial role in shaping the future of FOSA's mission. This esteemed committee is being revitalized to provide invaluable guidance as FOSA navigates the challenges and opportunities

ahead, particularly with Blandy's centennial celebration on the horizon. The dedicated Blandy supporters on this committee have overseen some of the Foundation's most significant initiatives at the Arboretum, including building the Wilkins Loop Drive, Bridle Trail, and increasing Arboretum funding from the Virginia General Assembly. The Honorary Advisory Board works alongside the current Board President to expand FOSA's statewide connections and provide an eagle-eye view of what makes the Arboretum a cherished resource for past and future generations.



*Honorary Board members pictured above: Back row, left to right: Anne Marie Chirieleison (Foundation Director), Bob Wever, Nancy Takahashi (current Board President), Bob Lee, Elaine Burden, Greg Ellison
Front row, seated: Steve Bauserman, Sally Anderson, Jolly deGive, Sylvia Wilson, Kathy Clark*

REMEMBERING ORPHEE ROSS WITH SERVICE

Orphee Ross, a dedicated landscape technician at Blandy passed away in May of 2025. But his memory continues to be honored here at Blandy and in the community. In September, 13 volunteers comprised of present and past Blandy employees, Blandy volunteers, friends of Blandy and members of the White Post community came together to split and stack a winter's worth of firewood for Orphee's family. The team was full of smiles and positive energy according to Chris Youngs, Blandy's Grounds Coordinator. After just a few hours of work, the team had split more wood than what could be used in a winter by Orphee's family. "It is amazing how even a small group of people can accomplish so much in such a short amount of time. After the engines were turned off, the grass was raked and the last piece of wood was placed on a stack, it was discussed that this should be an annual event to help Orphee's wife get ready for the winter and to continue to honor the friendship and dedication Orphee brought to the Blandy family over the years," said Youngs. The extra wood split, a whole truckload, will be donated to a Clarke County family in need, in memory of Orphee Ross.



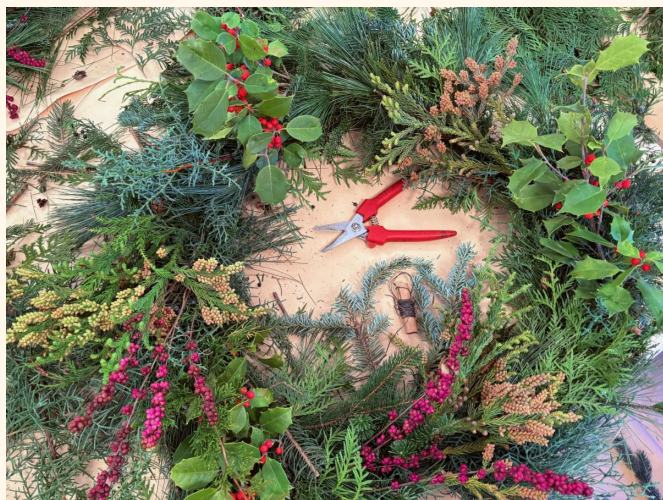
SAVE THE DATE HOLIDAY WREATH WORKSHOPS DECEMBER 6-8, 2025

**MEMBER'S ONLY REGISTRATION
OCTOBER 31st - NOVEMBER 5th**

**GENERAL PUBLIC REGISTRATION
OPENS NOVEMBER 6th**

Visit our website to become a member, or renew your membership before October 31st to receive your registration link on October 31st.

Two 20-seat classes will be held each day, Saturday, Sunday and Monday at 9:30 am and 1:30 pm. Workshops sell out quickly. Wreath prices this year will remain the same at \$60 for a 12" wreath, or \$75 for a 20" wreath. All proceeds benefit Blandy Experimental Farm and the State Arboretum of Virginia.



[More info on Holiday Wreath Workshops](#)



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

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