



## Summer 2024 News

Greetings to all! I hope you have had a nice summer, filled with adventures, here and abroad. If you are like me, I am ready for fall as this “northerner” likes the crisp autumn air and cooler evenings. My pollinator garden is starting to fade, yet the cardinal flowers, asters, and goldenrods are still showing off. Last year I added ‘Little Joe’ Joe Pye Weed. I am glad I bought this cultivar as I cannot imagine the taller versions!

I am looking forward to seeing you all at our September meeting as it will be a good one! *Beth Rounds*

### Upcoming Event

**General Meeting:** Wednesday, September 18, social time with snacks at 1:30 pm, and program at 2 pm at FENCE, open to the public. *Other program information for the year can be found on page 3.*

FENCE (Foothills Equestrian Nature Center) is located at 3381 Hunting Country Rd, Tryon, NC 28782

**Native Bees and the Habitats They Require** is the title of the September kickoff program. It will feature a presentation about bees of numerous species



Brannen Basham and Jill Jacobs Photo from Spriggly website.

and all sizes, fascinating and beneficial pollinators. They are easier to attract to your garden than you might think. The program led by Spriggly’s Beescaping will offer approaches and practical advice for your everyday gardening. Spriggly’s is a nature education and habitat

restoration business with a focus on native plants and native pollinators. Brannen Basham and Jill Jacobs, owners of Spriggly’s, are popular presenters and garden advisors in Western North Carolina.

### Club Business

#### 2024/25 TGC Board:

- President, Beth Rounds
- Vice President, open
- Treasurer, John James
- Secretary, Jackie Weedon
- Pearson’s Falls, Rae Ann Wessel
- Civic Beautification, Jane Herman
- Member Engagement/Hospitality, Bob Rossier

**President’s Report:** Thank you to all who renewed their membership and signed up to volunteer. This is extremely important; everyone should be involved in one area of our club. If you have not plugged in, please connect with me and I will find a spot where you can help!

Our board has been busy over the summer preparing for our program year. Based on your positive feedback from last year’s events, you will see that we have planned a nice mix of presentations and experiences. The current plan is on page 3, Programs.

Andy, Rae Ann W, and I met and are in the planning stages for training more PF docents. Our local Polk County schools are very receptive to TGC members getting more involved with Pearson’s Falls

field trips, and we are hoping to add O.P. Earle Elementary this coming year.

Pearson's Falls and Tryon Elementary will be featured in a spring issue of *Life in the Foothills*. Two new educational posters have been created and will be hung in the kiosks at the trailhead. Thanks go to Corrie Woods for helping me to create these beautiful and informative posters.

Pearson's Falls and Glen was again voted the number one place to take a hike by readers of the Tryon Daily Bulletin 2024 contest.

Read on to get updates on Pearson's Falls, planned club activities, the Beautification Grant initiatives, and the Depot Garden. All are important to our four-fold mission.

- Preserving, protecting, and treasuring Pearson's Falls
- Contributing to the beautification of Tryon
- Educating members and the community
- Collaborating with others

*Beth Rounds*

**Financials:** John James reports that PF revenue is right at budget. Club investments continue to perform well. Early in July, the club received a much-appreciated \$1,000 grant from the Town of Tryon. The TGC board approved a \$5,000 grant, conditional upon other grant monies being received, to the Tryon Downtown Development Association (TDDA) to improve the Trade Street clock tower embankment. (See page 8 for an update on TGC grants.)

**Hospitality:** Bob Rossier reports that the Hospitality Committee met at his house on Wednesday, August 14, for a planning session. He and Jane Wilson, co-leaders, discussed all the upcoming events, and committee members volunteered to host each event. Muhammara (roasted red pepper dip), Fig and Olive Tapenade, and Rum Cake were served.

The majority of the TGC events will be held at FENCE this year because the Depot is no longer available on the third Wednesday of each month.

**Grants:** Beth Rounds reports that "Morris is going wild." The Morris the Horse Corner is getting a facelift! Our club, along with other organizations, will be planting native shrubs and plants there this fall. TGC has provided the new stonework and



labor for this area. TGC continues to support beautification in the Tryon downtown area.

**Programs:** Beth Rounds reports about the exciting upcoming program year. She, Barb O, Bob R, Rae Ann W, Eva P, and Zia T worked together to create an informative and fun 2024-25 program plan for TGC members. She reminds us that for monthly meetings, social time starts at 1:30 pm and the program follows at 2:00 pm, September through May on the third Wednesday of the month, except for December and May. Two member-only meetings will be held at Pearson's Falls in October and March.

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## 2024-25 Program Plan

- September 18 - Public event - FENCE  
Presenters: Jill Jacobs and Brannen Basham  
Topic: “Native Bees and the Habitats They Require”  
Spriggly’s Beescaping, <https://sprigglys.com/>  
For members, there will be a drawing for five mason bee houses.
- October 16 - Members-only - Pearson’s Falls Garden House  
Presenter: Jim Welch  
Topic: “Walking with Rudy: Twenty-Five Years on the NatureScene Trail”
- November 20 – Members-only - FENCE  
Presenter: Kristen Barnett/Indigo Roots Textiles  
Topic: “Rooted in Blue”  
A brief history of indigo, its importance to the Carolinas during the pre-Revolutionary War era, and how it’s making a comeback today!
- December – Holiday Event – Place to be announced
- Spring programs will include:
  - Nancy Basket, storyteller and kudzu artist
  - A panel discussion among local artists who are inspired by nature (artwork demonstrated)
  - Steve Pettis from the Henderson County Extension Office
  - Four to five talks/tours are planned for April and May.

### Pearson’s Falls: Building on the Education Legacy at Pearson’s Falls.

*Rae Ann Wessel, Pearson’s Falls Chair wants to build on two of the club’s missions—preserving, protecting, and treasuring Pearson’s Falls, and educating members and the community. She shares her thoughts here.*

As the subtle colors of late summer evolve into fall and a new school year begins, Pearson’s Falls education efforts are ramping up. In addition to continuing hosting Polk County’s first and third graders at the Falls, this year we are reaching out to invite Landrum Elementary students to join in the experience. Letters and comments from teachers and students from the past years have highlighted the unique lessons learned and values gained from the immersive experience.

The value of these programs is dependent on teaching the connections between the natural features found uniquely in the Pearson’s Falls and Glen’s cove ecosystems.

Telling this story by connecting the history, geologic formation, soils, plants, and animals has been communicated to students by our member volunteer docents, together with presentations by staff Andy and Gene. As



**A Polk Co. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class in October 2015.** TGC docent Lucy B, was stationed at Lightner’s Ledge to provide information about why it drips water and grows special plants.

Photo from the TGC archives.

TGC starts this new season of education, we want to revive the popular docent program, extending docent engagement beyond school trips to being a regular resource at the falls, to engage and share a sense of awe with visitors. I will be reaching out to members both veteran and new who expressed an interest in being a docent.

Along with this effort to deliver interpretive information to visitors, we are updating displays and adding additional interpretive signage on the history, nature of the cove ecosystem, and seasonal plants and animals that visitors can look for during their visit.

I hope you will join us this season, become a docent, or just come see the changes as they evolve.

**Membership:** Jackie Weedon reports that the club had one new member in June. Please welcome Susan B.

The club is now made up of over 70 members.

The 2024-25 TGC Board and Committee listing and the current member roster are available in the member section of the website. If you have forgotten the password, please contact Jackie. Her contact information is at the bottom of this page.

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### Civic Beautification

*Flower Petals from the Garden:* Jane Herman reports that starting in early May, the Depot Garden was an ever-changing display of blooms. June was a festival of azaleas, hydrangeas, and lilies. The daylilies were gorgeous and showy in many colors. And, of course, the old standbys, daisies and tea roses, were in their glory. New shrubs are starting to fill out. There's a new azalea by the Depot building and new rhododendrons in the garden's middle area.

Depot garden maintenance continues, thanks to the TGC volunteers.



### April in the Depot Garden

**Left:** The smallest volunteer to date. Photo by J Herman.

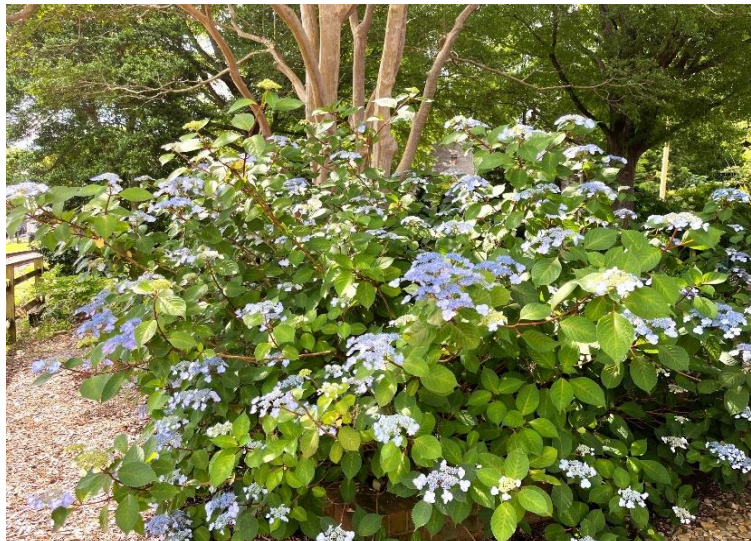
**Middle** Coreopsis and: Lacecap Hydrangea. Photos from Pearson's Falls Facebook page.

**Right:** Milkweed in the Butterfly Garden. Photos by J Herman.

### May and June in the Depot Garden

Pictures are on page 5.

**Left top to bottom:** May's Lacecap Hydrangea, oakleaf hydrangea, and June's Black-eyed Susans. **Right top to bottom:** The Pollinator Garden and two varieties of daylilies. Photos by J Herman.



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# PEARSON'S FALLS AND GLEN

restrooms required some maintenance, and repairs were needed to the water fountain at the trailhead.

**May Pearson's Falls photos:** Photos by Andy Ruff

**What's Happening?** Andy Ruff noted that May was a rainy month with 12 days of rain. Attendance continued to be on par with last year. Wildlife continued to be active with many birds, butterflies, snakes, and bears. Few wildflowers were blooming, other than the rhododendrons that were starting to put on a show.

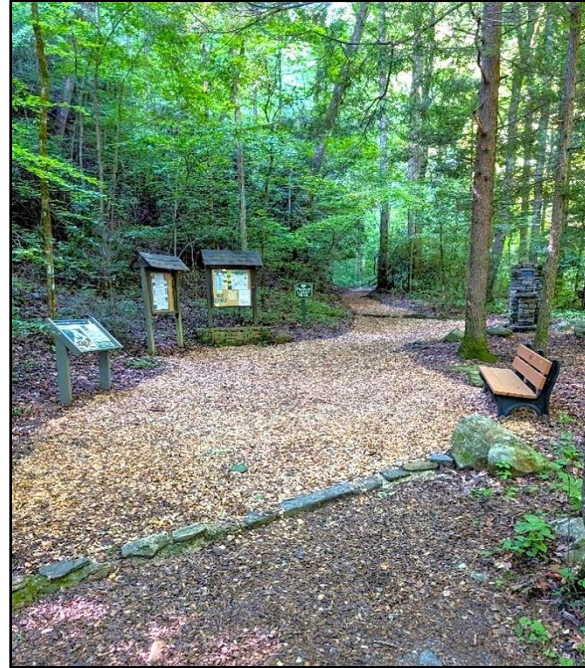
Hot and dry was June's theme. Five inches of rain were recorded for the entire month, and many days hovered around 90 degrees. There still was a good flow of water over the falls. Attendance was slightly ahead of last year as people seemed to seek the shade.

July was a tale of two halves. The hot and dry June weather continued for two more weeks, followed by two weeks of rain and thunderstorms. Overall Pearson's Falls recorded 10.5 inches of rain in July. Attendance was down slightly for the month compared to last year. Wildlife continued to appear, with bear sightings on the trail and deer in the parking lot.

| Pearson's Falls data:  | May  | June | July |
|------------------------|------|------|------|
| Number of days open    | 31   | 30   | 31   |
| Number of days closed: | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Total attendance:      | 3032 | 3648 | 4163 |
| Total Groups           | 1    | 3    | 2    |

Looking back at the groups: In May, 54 students and 6 teachers from Sunny View Elementary hiked to the falls. In June, three family reunions totaled 77 adults and two shelter rentals. In July, two Polk County Middle School Summer Program groups, totaling 38 students and 4 teachers, came to PF.

**Grounds and Trail:** In May, June, and July, Andy, Gene, and the Wednesday volunteer team worked on the trail, put down chips, repaired posts, rails, and steps, cleared the stream, and did general upkeep. The



**Above:** The entrance to the Pearson Family Trail.



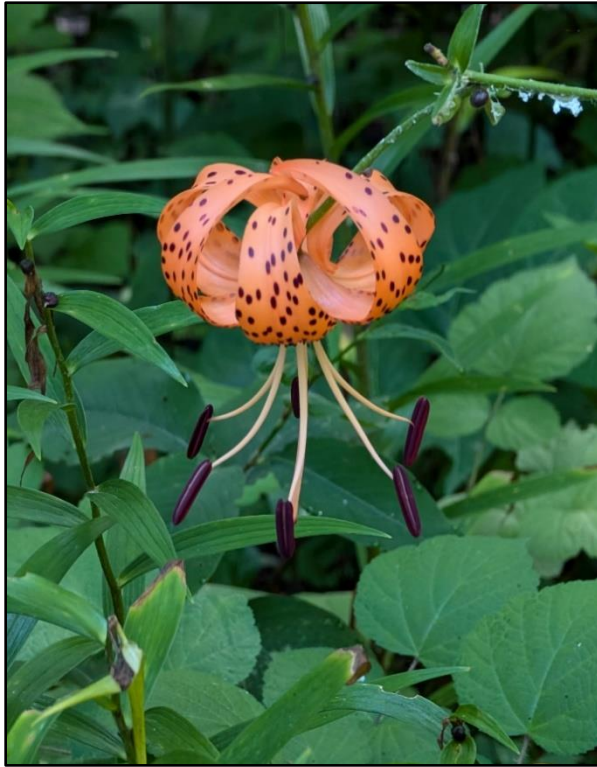
**Below:** The lush late May. *Rhododendron maximun*, Rosebay.

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**June Pearson's Falls Pictures:**

**Left:** Turk's-cap  
Lily in bloom



**Right:** Picnic areas  
with fresh chips



**July Pearson's Falls Pictures:** Two weeks of daily rain showers turned Pearson's Falls into a mushroom fairy garden

Photos by Andy Ruff



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## More Pearson's Falls July Mushrooms



**Pearson's Falls Volunteers Are Needed:** First, thank you to the Pearson's Falls volunteers who currently give their time to improve PF. For the 2024-2025 calendar year, the goal is to get more members involved at Pearson's Falls. YOU are invited to join the team.

### Current Projects:

- Removing invasives
- Painting
- Repairing posts and rails
- Building a new bulletin board
- Cleaning up fallen limbs
- Putting chips on the trail

**Volunteer Weekly or Once a Quarter:** Every Wednesday, volunteers meet at 8:45 am to help with projects around the glen. They are here for 1 ½ to 2 hours.

If you cannot volunteer weekly, you can still get involved. Quarterly workdays are being planned. **The fall workday will be September 25, 2024, from 9:00 to 11:30 am.** During this time for those who are interested, Andy will have a refresher course about gate duty. Water and snacks will be provided. Helping with a workday has personal benefits: there is exercise, bonding with other members, and a sense of accomplishment. The sore muscles are worth the rewards.

**Late-Breaking Exciting Grant News from John James, TGC Treasurer:** The TGC Executive Team members are eager to announce: "The Tryon Garden Club awarded a \$5,000 grant to the Tryon Downtown Development Association (TDDA) for improvements to the Clock Tower embankment on Trade Street in Tryon." In addition, TDDA received additional grant funding from other sources and will completely revamp the ivy hillside. Additionally, because of TGC's Kirby Grant resources, provided by Polk County Community Fund (PCCF), the club was able to assist TDDA in making improvements at the "Morris the Horse" Corner. The Tryon Garden Club wishes to thank PCCF for their generous support of one of the club's missions, which is: "Contribute to the beautification of Tryon."

The Executive Team, President Beth R, Secretary Jackie W, and Treasurer John J, invite TGC members and the community to suggest other groups who could benefit from future Tryon Garden Club grants. If you have suggestions, please contact Beth, Jackie, or John.

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### The Annual Meeting 2024

The Annual Meeting was held at FENCE on May 15 with a year-end summary, delicious food, good comradeship, and beautiful native plant door prizes. It was an excellent end-of-year celebration!



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Skip, tell us about TGC Grants.



Who is the winner?



Where does this native grow best?



Maybe next year, the weather will be better, and we can be in the picnic shelter, again.



Judy, I think this will grow well in your garden.



The party is over. Thanks for the help putting the tables and chairs away.

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# Exploring with Jim Welch

## Hemlock Woolly Adelgid at Pearson's Falls

Pearson's Falls is a special place, made even more so by the majestic eastern hemlock trees that grace the entrance, parking lot, picnic area, and trail to the falls. Sadly, some of the trees have fallen victim to the hemlock woolly adelgid, *Adelges tsugae*, a small aphid-like insect that is found on the hemlock needles and small twigs. Adult female adelgids protect themselves and their eggs with "woolly" white filaments of wax that look like cotton masses. The pest sucks the sap from needles and twigs, causing the needles to discolor and drop off.

Thanks to Andy Ruff and Gene Justice, who watch over the forest at Pearson's Falls and Glen, there are close to 400



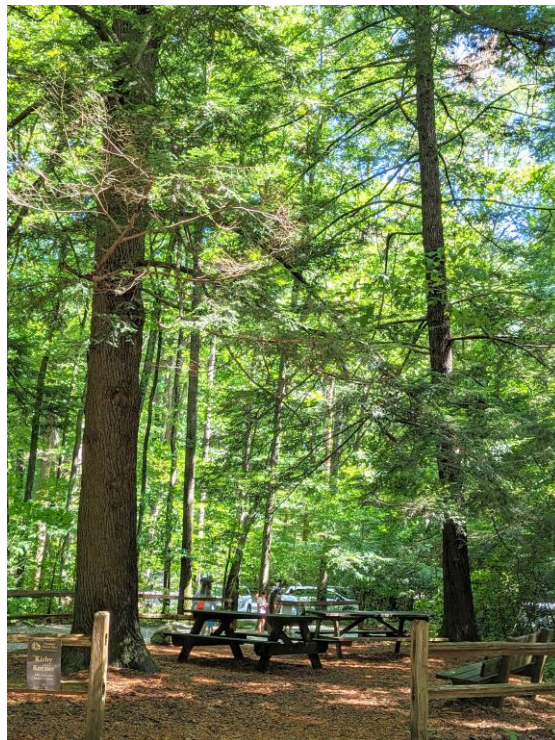
hemlocks, big and small, that are being saved under a contract with Paul O'Neil from Pinnacle Tree Service. The trees were treated on March 20, 2024, and they are doing well. They were last treated 4 years ago. Since the last treatment, there were a few of the smaller



hemlocks infested with insects. O'Neil said that the Safari Systemic Insecticide Treatment should help control them. Future recommendations call for spraying every three years.

The hemlocks can live 500 years if kept free from the woolly adelgid, but without the treatment, an infected tree will decline and die within 4 to 10

years. The trees are sprayed up to eye level. Soil injection at the base of the hemlocks can also help.



Top left: Signs of woolly adelgid. Middle: Looking up the hemlock trunk. Bottom left: Hemlocks at the PF Gatehouse. Bottom right: Hemlocks at the Kirby Corner picnic area.

Photos by J Welch

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The insect arrived in the US in 1951 when a private plant collector near Richmond, Virginia, imported an Asian hemlock for his wife's garden. The woolly adelgid was attached to the needles, seemed benign enough, and was ignored. By 2005 the infestations were established in portions of 16 states from Maine to Georgia.

Large eastern hemlock can grow to 150 feet tall on trunks measuring six feet in diameter and are often called the "redwoods of the east." A walk along Colt Creek to Pearson's Falls is always a joy, especially in the summertime when the hemlocks help keep the area pleasant and cool.

## Historical Tidbit

**Pearson's Falls Ellen Holt Caretaker's Cottage (originally called Ellen Holt Gatehouse):** In 1945, Miss Elizabeth Webster and Miss Ellen Holt moved to Tryon. They had previously come from their home in Lake Forest, IL, to their rustic cottage in Gillette Woods for winters. They soon were active in the Tryon Garden Club. In 1946, Elizabeth became president of the club. At that time the PF trail was somewhat developed, but there was no person on duty at the gate. The iron gates were kept closed and locked when no one was visiting. Elizabeth changed that after receiving a complaint from a disgruntled member. This lady arrived with an important guest, found the gates locked, climbed through the bushes and brush to circumvent the gate, and gained entrance. Starting in 1950 and finishing the following year, Ellen Holt provided finances, headed fundraising, and spearheaded the building of the first caretaker's house designed by architect Mr. Russell Walcott. Fifty-two acres of Pearson's Falls property along the Pacolet River were sold, and fundraisers were held, including lectures, flower shows, and garden tours. It was named the Ellen Holt Gatehouse. Now a caretaker could admit visitors at any time of day. George and Margaret Morgan became the first residents/gatekeepers/caretakers. Mrs. Morgan later became Mrs. Russell. She remained gatekeeper for 25 years

Today, the cottage is called the Ellen Holt Caretaker's Cottage to distinguish it from the building

where the admission fee is collected, now called the Gatehouse.

## NC Native Plant for Your Garden

**Aster, Aster:** There are 250 different types of asters growing all over the world. Asters have daisy-like flowers and a variety of colors. They are easy to grow and require very little maintenance. They typically bloom in the late summer and fall, adding color to the

garden as the seasons change. The plant is erect and mounding. Its height may range from 6 inches to 8 feet tall with a width of 1 to 3 feet.

Asters are a member of the Asteraceae family. The name *Aster* is Greek, meaning "star," and refers to the appearance of the flowers.

Asters may tolerate full sun or prefer partial shade, depending on the species. Some varieties are more drought tolerant, while others may tolerate more moisture. They may be propagated by seeds, division, root cuttings, or stem cuttings.

The plant has tuberous roots or



**Top & Middle:** *Symphyotrichum ericoides*, White Heath Aster

**Bottom:** *Aster lateriflorus*, Calico Aster

Photos: D. Mullen

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woody rhizomes. The stems may be single or multi-branched. The leaf shape varies depending on the species. The flowers have disc florets that may be white or yellow. The rays encircle the floret and may vary from white, pink, blue, or purple. The seeds have tufts of bristles that help them to be dispersed by the wind.

Any species or cultivars of this genus would be a lovely addition to any home garden, a porch or patio container, a cottage garden, and/or a border garden. Butterflies and bees will appreciate the flowers, particularly as summer is ending and the evenings are getting cooler.

The Aster species have no serious problems with insects or diseases. However, it would be wise to monitor for lace bugs, mites, aphids, and Japanese beetles. Rusts, powdery mildew, downy mildew, leaf spots, and Verticillium wilt may occur.

Here are white asters for consideration:

*Symphotrichum ericoides*, white heath aster, downy aster, or old-field aster are herbaceous perennials in the Aster family. Typically found growing in dry open areas, this plant needs about 1 to 3 feet of space in the landscape. It prefers full sun in moist to dry, well-drained sandy to loamy or rocky soil. Once established, it is more drought tolerant and low maintenance. Great for a butterfly garden. Cut back hard in the early spring to improve appearance.

*Symphotrichum lateriflorum*, the calico aster is a bushy herbaceous perennial that is typically found in moist meadows, woodlands, and near rivers, and swamps. It grows about 2-3 feet tall and has small showy white flowers that bloom in late summer and fall. It's a native North American plant, good for a shaded cottage garden or a pollinator garden.

*Aster pekinensis*, and *Aster pinnatifidus*, both also known as Japanese aster or false aster, are not native. *Information: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/aster/>*

## Invasive Plant to Eradicate

**Japanese barberry, *berberis thunbergii*:** This compact, spiny, deciduous shrub is native to Japan and was introduced to North America in the 1800s as an ornamental plant. While it invades a variety of habitats from forested communities to open fields and wetlands, it is most problematic in mature forests in North

Carolina, where it forms dense thickets, outcompeting native shrubs and herbaceous species. It has spread throughout many eastern and midwestern states.

Japanese barberry is a deciduous shrub, usually 3- to 6-feet tall. Leaves are simple, smooth-edged, oval, and alternately arranged in tight clusters along

Photos from the website [nc-ipc.weebly.com](http://nc-ipc.weebly.com)



the erect or arching stems. Its small yellow flowers bloom in May, singly or in small clusters, turning into bright red oblong fruits in mid-summer. Japanese barberry is mostly multi-stemmed, with additional stems arising from rhizomes. It is highly invasive due to high seed production, good seed viability, shade tolerance, and seed dispersal by birds and other animals.

Not recommended, but 'Crimson Pygmy' is the most popular form of *Berberis thunbergii* due to its beautiful leaves and compact mounded habit. This deciduous, flowering shrub is fairly pest-free, and easy to grow. The springtime flowers and the colorful fall leaves make this plant a popular nursery selection.

Its common use is as a hedge. It spreads slowly by creeping roots and by self-seeding (assisted by birds that eat the fruit and distribute the seeds).

*Information from the NC Invasive Plant Council: [nc-ipc.weebly.com](http://nc-ipc.weebly.com) and [plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/berberis-thunbergii-crimson-pygmy/](https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/berberis-thunbergii-crimson-pygmy/).*

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## News You Can Use

### Carrie Blair, TGC Member and Founder of Tree Lovers School, Will Present “Reading Trees” on October 8 at the Saluda Library at 2 pm.

Carrie will discuss ways to identify trees by their characteristics, habitats, branch patterns, leaves, flowers, seeds, thorns, buds, and leaf scars. She will also teach some terms attendees should know.

The speaker series is on the second Tuesday of each month. To register, visit [conservingcarolina.org/calendar](http://conservingcarolina.org/calendar).

### Little Sprouts Garden Club at Landrum Farmers Market:

Approximately 25 families with 30-40 children are involved in this garden club, growing a garden and learning along the way. They meet from 10:00-10:30 a.m. each Saturday until September 7. For the second year, JoAnn James, Co-Director of the Landrum Farmers Market, is spearheading this project. JoAnn is a retired second-grade teacher and a certified South Carolina Gardening Teacher. Helper Paula Ball is a South Carolina Master Gardener. In addition, they have had many impromptu guest speakers (farmers) from the market. Together they have learned so much about how our food is produced!

### Never Sit Beneath a Tulip Poplar

Tulip poplars look gorgeous, especially when their leaves turn orange. However, it's best to never sit under this tree. Tulip poplars tend to drop branches and twigs throughout the year. Their leaves drip sticky honeydew, which will rip off your car paint should you park your vehicle under the tree. Unlike hard-wooded trees, tulip poplars can easily fall in storms. This becomes a significant problem when the tree grows over 80 feet tall. Since these trees require a lot of caution and maintenance, they're not the best choice for a yard.



Photo from Pinterest/Emily Brown

*Information from website: Explored Planet, Trees Not to Plant in Your Yard.*

**The Gardening for Life Project (GFLP) Team Announces Their Fall 2024 Native Plant Sale:** On September 20 at Harmon Field, some of the region's finest growers will be selling everything from groundcovers to trees. Come ready to stock up on many hard-to-find varieties for your fall planting! (Some vendors require cash payment.)



Support pollinators  
and wildlife with  
native plants!

GFLP  
NATIVE  
PLANT  
SALE

SEPT. 20TH, 2024  
3-7 P.M.  
HARMON FIELD, TRYON, NC  
(AT THE OUTDOOR GYM)

Shop for ground covers to trees and  
everything in between!

Featuring many of our region's finest growers.

Brought to you thanks to our amazing  
community Partners: Congregational Church  
UCC in Tryon, New View Realty, Claussen  
Walters Real Estate, Conserving Carolina and  
many more!



[www.gardeningforlifeproject.org](http://www.gardeningforlifeproject.org)

### Quote of the month:

“When it comes to water, treat your gardens like a luxury retirement village—keep it moving as slowly as possible please, so as not to disturb the peace. To help slow down areas of rapid water movement, look to reduce the incline of any sharp slopes.”

Spriggly's Beescaping, May 2, 2024

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