

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

To help on the
BLACK COHOSH SUSTAINABLE HARVEST STUDY
Near
MOUNT ROGERS, VIRGINIA

14-17 JULY 2011

The USDA Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Garden Club of America invite you to participate in monitoring an important native medicinal plant, black cohosh (*Actaea* (= *Cimicifuga*) *racemosa*). Black cohosh root is wild-harvested for use in combating menopausal symptoms. These organizations have been working together as part of the Medicinal Plant Working Group (MPWG; <http://www.nps.gov/plants/medicinal/index.htm>) for more than 7 years to establish long-term sustainable harvest research sites for black cohosh in the eastern United States. The sustainable harvest studies are designed to allow volunteer citizen scientists to participate in activities that contribute to the sustainable use and conservation of important medicinal plants on public lands. Greater understanding of the impact that harvesting has on plant populations is needed. For more information on the project, visit <http://www.nps.gov/plants/medicinal/projects/2005virginia.htm>

Black cohosh is an erect forest perennial that grows to about 3 feet tall with a two foot spread. White flowers are racemes on stalks 4 or 5 feet tall. The common name comes from the Algonquian Indian word meaning 'rough,' which describes the hard and gnarly rhizome. The plant tolerates a variety of soils, but prefers rich cove habitats – cool, well-drained, moist, semi-shaded woodlands. Vegetative reproduction is by growth of buds from underground rhizomes.

The hard work, dedication and feedback from volunteers have helped make this program a success. Research on light requirements began in 2009. A Certificate Training Program for Volunteer Citizen Scientists was initiated in 2010 for participants attending the entire workshop and another set of replicate plots were established at Mount Rogers strengthening statistical support of the data. The continued support of concerned citizens and these agencies is creating a database of information which will be used to determine best management practices for black cohosh and its responsible sustainable harvest for future generations.

General Plan: We have changed the format this year. Please read over the tentative agenda to determine which days/times best fit your schedule. Participants who complete all four days of training will receive a certificate as a Trained Volunteer Citizen Scientist. Note: All times are approximate.

Day 1: Thursday, 14 July, 8 a.m. [approx., maybe changed, check with Jim Chamberlain]: Leave from Brooks Center office on VT Campus Blacksburg, VA

Day 1: Thursday, 10:30-11:30 p.m. [approx.] Arrive at



research site (near Comers Rock on Forest Service Road (FS) #57.) Lunch at site.

Day 1: Thursday, 12:30-5:00p.m.: Training reconnaissance and set up of study plots. See *Location* below.

Day 1: Thursday evening: Dinner and fellowship at base camp at Stony Fork Camp ground.

Day 2: Friday, July 15th approx. 8:00 a.m.-5p.m.: Caravan/carpool from base camp to the study site near Comers Rock. Begin data collection. Eat lunch at the study site. Plan on working late and through inclement weather. Safety first, though!

Day 2: Friday evening: Dinner and fellowship at base camp.

Day 3: Saturday, July 16th approx. 8:00 a.m. -5p.m.: Caravan/carpool from base camp to the study site. Lunch at study site. We will continue to work on the site until all plots have been sampled. Please plan on working until all plots are done or as late as possible, as all plots must get done.

Day 4: Sunday, July 17th approx. 8:00 a.m. -5pm.: Finish study plots. Lunch is at the study site [bring your own food]. Group will then return to break camp, pack, and return home Sunday.

Location: The study site is located in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, south of Wytheville, Virginia. It is near Comers Rock, on Forest Service Road #57, off Virginia route #21. The site is adjacent to the road, easily accessible and fairly flat.

Accommodations: There are many hotels nearby in Wytheville, VA. We will establish base camp at Stony Fork Campground. For other hotels and more information about Stony Fork see: <http://www.hikercentral.com/campgrounds/118309.html>

Participants staying at local hotels can meet us at worksite each morning on FS # 57 (near Comers Rock)

What you need: Work boots, long pants, sunscreen, hat, insect repellent, water bottle, lunch, snacks, rain gear [a must]; a sense of adventure and civic duty. No restrooms are available so prepare appropriately.

Questions: Jim Chamberlain, USDA Forest Service, Blacksburg, VA; 540-231-3611 or jachambe@vt.edu

PLEASE RESERVE YOUR SPOT SO THAT WE CAN PLAN

