

*Trees Virginia Newsletter  
First Edition  
July 20, 2022*



*Our Mission: To enhance the quality of life through the Stewardship of our Commonwealth's urban and community trees.*

Greetings!

I am very excited to be able to share with you our new and improved newsletter! Our Trees Virginia board members and volunteers have contributed to this effort to provide you a snapshot of what is going on with the community forests of our beautiful commonwealth. I hope the passion that we share in cultivating an awareness of and an appreciation for our community forests comes through in our articles and tree steward spotlights. Our hope is to expand the reach of our shared passion for the community forests that we all interact with and in turn leave a welcoming path open for community members to join us on this journey. With much enthusiasm and a deep appreciation for the contributions made to this newsletter, I hope you enjoy the first of many newsletters to come.

Ashley Appling  
Trees Virginia President

## Featured Virginia Native

*Photo (right): Clemson Cooperative Extension*

Each of our newsletters will feature a native Virginia tree or shrub. This issue's tree is the Pawpaw tree (*Asimina triloba*), which is the largest edible fruit tree in the U.S. Pawpaw grows best in rich and moist soils and needs 3-4 years of growth before it is mature enough to produce its sweet fruit. The tree is often found in forest understory, where its prolific root suckering may result in growing in thickets; however, it can also grow well in sunnier areas. Pawpaw is a smaller, deciduous tree that may grow 15-30 feet in height. Its bark is a grayish color, with bumps and cracks along the trunk. Pawpaw leaves are dark green and shiny with a long oval shape. Its flowers are maroonish brown with six petals. This is a hardy, beautiful, V tree that is popular with pollinators and humans alike!

[Read more about the Paw Paw Tree](#)



# Featured Invasive Plant

*Photo (right): Meg Turner*

Invasive plant species threaten to overtake native plant communities, altering a region's natural ecosystems. An emerging threat to Virginia's native tree population is Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica* syn. *Polygonum cuspidatum*), an herbaceous perennial that grows three to ten feet, forming rhizomes that can reach up to sixty feet in length. Found primarily along riverbanks, roadways, hillsides, and disturbed areas, its vigorous growth inhibits the establishment of native trees. Japanese Knotweed is not yet a serious threat in Virginia, but it has been identified throughout the state.



It is crucial to take action to eliminate the rhizome system when the plant is identified. Successful intervention can prevent widespread damage to our native habitat and mid-to-late summer is an ideal time to treat it.

For more information about Japanese Knotweed see the following resources: [Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation](#), [James River Invasive Plant Task Force](#), and [Penn State Extension](#).



## Featured Article: Keeping the Lights On

Severe summer thunderstorms pose a unique challenge to trees located near power lines. Power companies throughout Virginia make a collective effort to properly prune trees in transmission right-of-ways while maintaining a strict focus on public safety.

The hope is that pruning trees proactively will reduce the likelihood of power outages when the severe weather hits. Learn more on how one electric co-op balances safety and proper tree care in one of our past blog posts.

[Doing it Right- "Customers, Contractors and Communication"](#)



## Virginia Tree Stewards Corner

Tree Stewards have been very active in 2022. Usually summer heat, poison ivy, and the prevalence of ticks, slows down the removal of invasive species, but that means there's time to plan projects and training classes for the fall.

Richmond and Charlottesville have opened their registrations for upcoming classes. Richmond had a hugely successful Arbor Day, giving away 1,000 trees last year. They decided to double their efforts for 2022 and have purchased 2,000 trees for the next giveaway. Like several other Tree Steward groups, Richmond is working to help serve neighborhoods which have less green space. Also, together with other contributors, Richmond Tree Stewards funded the purchase of an injection system for treating Emerald Ash Borer. Our tree steward organizations are thriving and new groups are being formed.

[Discover more about local Virginia Tree Steward groups](#)

## Urban Wood Column

Trees Virginia is excited to announce an urban wood column for the newsletter! The Virginia Department of Forestry launched the Urban Wood Program in the fall of 2016 in an effort to improve the utilization of our local and urban trees. The planning for the use of the tree beyond the end of its biological life has become part of the full-circle management of our urban forestry resources.

Visit the Virginia Urban Wood page for more information about the program and to view the most recent Urban Wood Newsletter.

[Virginia Urban Wood Page](#)



*Photos: Joe Lehn*

**For more upcoming events, workshops and articles, visit our website!**

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