

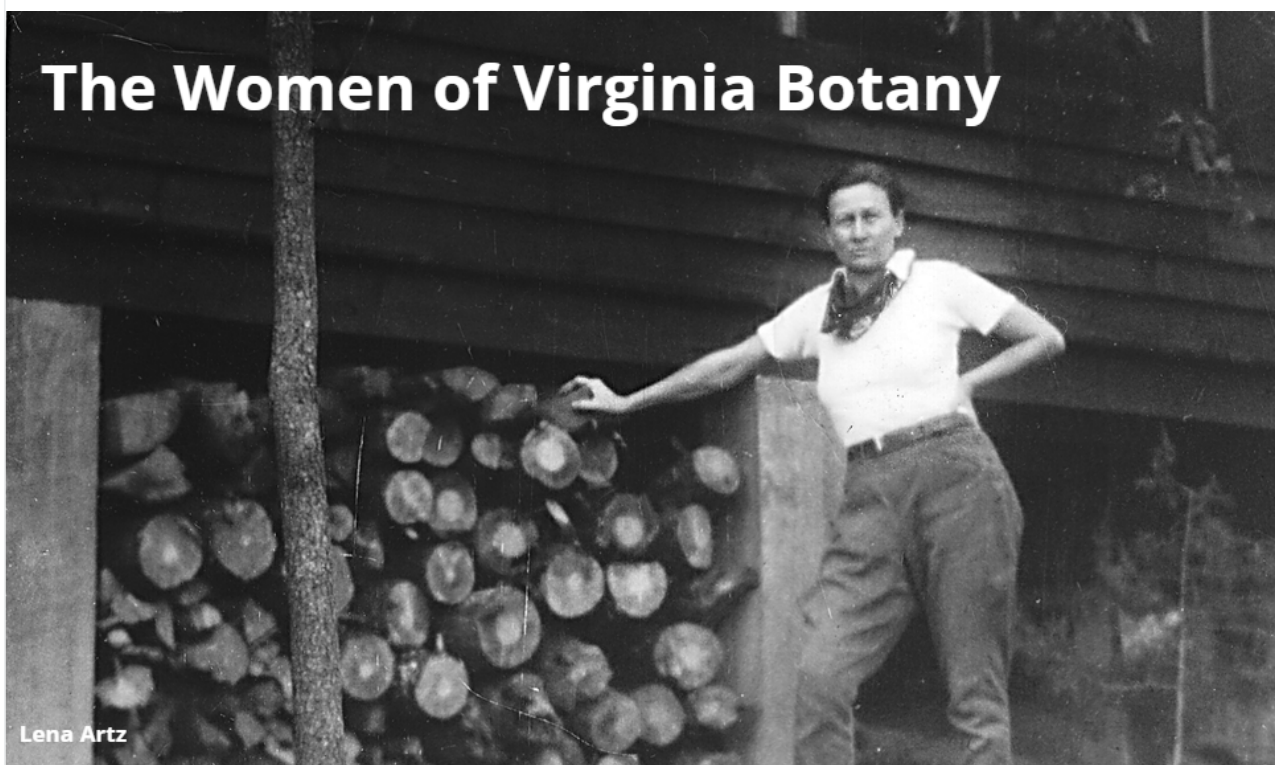


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FLORASCOPE

Occasional News from the Flora of Virginia Project

The Women of Virginia Botany



Lena Artz

Virginia has a rich botanical tradition, dating to the seminal collections gathered by John Clayton in the 18th century. He shared his collections for identification with Dutch botanist John Frederick Gronovius, contributing to the publication of *Flora Virginica* in 1739, using the Linnaean system of plant classification that is still used today. In fact, Carolus Linnaeus named the genus *Claytonia* in Clayton's honor.

A number of women in the Commonwealth have also made significant contributions to botanical literature -- just as important but less known. Their work has had a profound impact on our understanding of Virginia's flora and natural communities and has inspired generations of botanists.

Lena Artz



By Pterygote - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=127715918>

Lena Artz (1891-197) was not a typical botanist. She was a career schoolteacher who developed and pursued her interest in botany in the classroom and on her own time, exploring the Massanutten area where she was born and lived much of her life. Evidence suggests she may have taught herself botany in addition to pursuing degrees from William & Mary and George Washington University in mid-life, while continuing her career as a schoolteacher.

In total, she contributed at least 2,253 specimens that can be viewed [online](#) and 42 publications that document the vascular plants in the Ridge & Valley physiographic province of northwestern Virginia, a traditionally under-reported region that has been greatly impacted by 20th century disturbances. Some of her specimens are the only evidence of species ever occurring in the

area. Many of her specimens are held by the Virginia Military Institute Herbarium and the Massey Herbarium at Virginia Tech.

Dr. Andrea Weeks, Flora of Virginia board member and George Mason University associate professor of botany, [recently published a paper exploring Lena Artz's considerable work.](#)

Dr. Weeks is presenting her paper in the following areas:

- Saturday, August 17 at 1:00PM: [Fort Valley Museum in Fort Valley, VA](#)
- Tuesday, September 17 at 7:00PM: [Shenandoah County Historical Society in Edinburg, VA](#)
- Friday, September 20 at 7:00PM: [Virginia Native Plant Society \(VNPS\) Annual Meeting in Harrisonburg, VA](#)

Edith Stevens



Chatelain, B. 2020. Longwood University - Historic Buildings, Historic Women. Greenwood Library, Longwood University.

Edith Stevens (1897-1945) grew up and taught public school in West Virginia, leaving to pursue her Ph.D. in biology from the University of Chicago where she investigated the life cycle of the cedar apple rust fungus. She taught biology at the State Teachers College, now Longwood University, in Farmville from 1928 to 1945. She died tragically of injuries from a laboratory explosion.

A selection of her herbarium specimens from Virginia and West Virginia can be viewed [online](#).

Her other work, consisting of manuscripts and a number of botanical illustrations, is archived at the Longwood University Janet D. Greenwood Library. According to a 2015 article in Longwood Magazine,

"...the origin of "Stevens" in the name Harvill-Stevens Herbarium is less clear. Buckalew said the title comes from Charles Stevens, a research colleague of Harvill's who joined him in publishing the first edition of the Atlas of Virginia Flora (an index of each species and its location). But Fink said he had always assumed it refers to Edith Stevens, a Longwood professor in the 1920s and '30s who contributed some of the original specimens to the collection."

Lena Bondurant Henderson

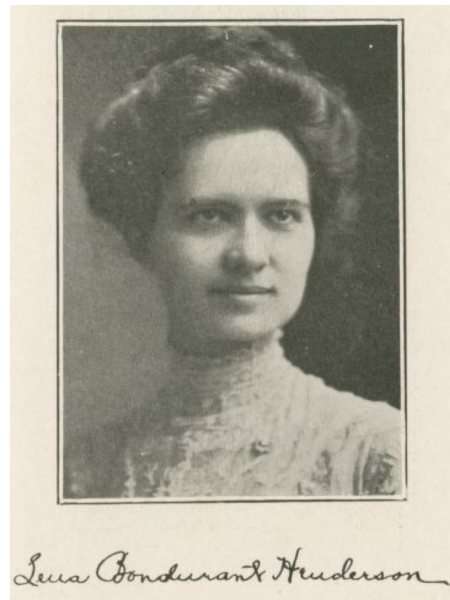
Lena Bondurant Henderson was a botanist who taught at Randolph Macon College in Ashland, Virginia from 1923 to 1949. Born and raised in Louisiana, she earned a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Tennessee and a Master's degree from Cornell University.

An active researcher, Henderson collected over 40,000 herbarium specimens that can be viewed [online](#). Her expertise centered on the reproductive biology of the flowering plant genus *Plantago*.

Over the course of her career, she did work at Cold Springs Harbor, Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, and Rockford College, Illinois.

Evidence indicates she was also beloved by her

students, who stated in their yearbook, "We shall always remember Miss Henderson on field trips, far ahead of the fastest student, and in the lab, shaming the art majors with her fine delineation. It is with sincere appreciation for the instruction she has given us and with deep gratitude for her undying patience and guidance that we dedicate to her the 1949 Helianthus."



The Volunteer (1908). Student-produced yearbook of the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. University of Tennessee.

The Women of the *Flora of Virginia*

In her paper "Some Notable Women Botanists in the Virginia Academy of Science (VAS): Their Roles in Supporting the Development of the Modern Flora of Virginia," to be published in *Virginia Journal of Science*, [Flora of Virginia Project founding board member and Northern Virginia Community College Professor Emeritus Marion Lobstein](#) explores the significant contributions of six women to the *Flora of Virginia*, and to Virginia botany. In addition to the substantial collections of Lena Artz noted above, Marion documents the work of Dr. Martha K. Roane, Dr. Dorothy C. Bliss, Dr. M.E. Ware, and Dr. Andrea Weeks. And, with some prodding, Professor Lobstein has included her own considerable contributions to the Flora of Virginia as well. [The Journal](#) is scheduled for publication in late August.



Marion enjoying a fabulous lunch at Oak Spring Gardens in honor of her contributions to the Flora of Virginia Project.

Time to update your Flora App



© Gary P. Fleming.

We continue to make improvements to the Flora App. This release has a number of functional updates, including:

- Flexible search -- no need to get hyphens right anymore;
- Back functionality, so you don't have to start searches over when you don't get the= right result; and,
- Up-to-date range maps.

GIVE HAPPY

Federal government employees, retirees and other members of the Federal community go beyond their call to public service by contributing to the thousands of approved charities that participate annual in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). Shenandoah National Park and [George Washington & Jefferson National Forests](#) employees rely on the Flora App for their important work protecting these spectacular places.

GIVE HAPPY to The Foundation of the Flora of Virginia Project through the CFC using charity code **85168**.

Support the Flora of Virginia Project

The Flora of Virginia is evergreen, requiring ongoing attention to keep data up-to-date, add new features and functionality to the App and present new programs. We rely on the generosity of our users and donors to get our work done.



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