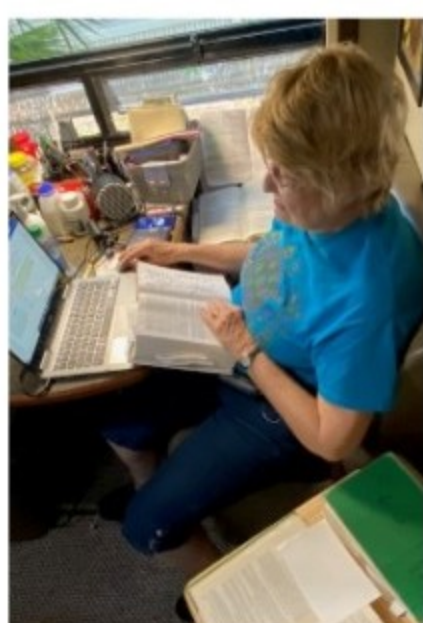


FLORASCOPE

Occasional News from the Flora of Virginia Project

eCOLLAB

Though separate, the Flora crew's working together—
despite a perturbing invasive species

Like nearly anyone fortunate enough to be able to do so, the team pulling together the 2020 update to the Flora of Virginia are working away from their offices, coping with the social distancing via e-mail, file sharing, and the phone. This has not been terribly different for the nuts and bolts, but it does put a damper on the ability to get heads together in person. Still, communication and work proceed, and everything's on schedule.

As you probably know, this large update will go live at the end of the year in the [Flora Mobile App](#). Just shy of 300 taxa are being added, including some genera and even families that weren't in the print

Flora of Virginia. Many of these were listed in the back of the book as waifs, but they're being described fully now.

Other species have been recently documented for Virginia or are new to science. Habitat and status data are being updated or included. Still other changes come from new concepts of plants' taxonomic relationships and are accompanied by name changes. The dichotomous keys and the Graphic Key are getting a revamp to accommodate these changes.

If you have the App or the book, then you know the extent of work entailed. It's a busy time!

Above, Flora Project Vice President Marion Lobstein writing descriptions for incoming species, distancing in her RV office in March. Photo by George Lobstein.

PICK NATIVES

The Flora App's front and center at a Lexington
program on the backyard as habitat

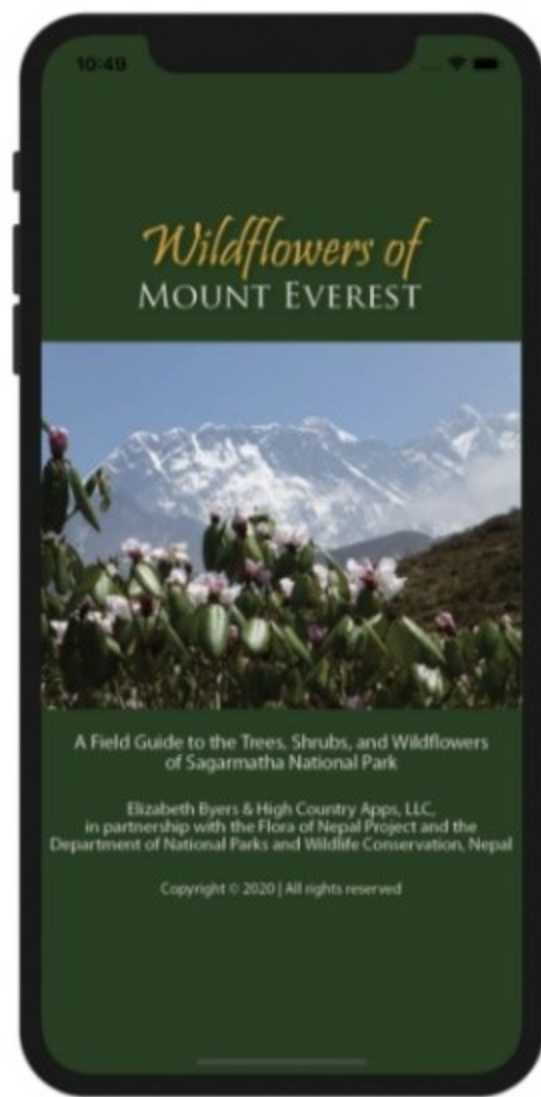
Using the Flora App's Graphic Key to select natives was the topic of a "10-minute rallying cry" Lucia (Cinder) Stanton gave in early March to 12 members of the Upper James River chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society. Some attendees took to the field that afternoon to practice using the App.



If you have the App, you'll find the article "Use the App to Pick Natives for Your Yard" in the Reference Library.

Cinder Stanton explains the Flora App. The participant at left has the App open on her tablet; at right, another holds Doug Tallamy's book, Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard. Does Dr. Tallamy have the Flora App? Photo by Phyllis Fevrier.

सगरमाथा

A new app takes you away, to Mount Everest—
or at least to its flora!

Talk about distancing! A new app is going to take you to Mount Everest. Our developer, High Country Apps, has released *Wildflowers of Mount Everest*, a field guide to the trees, shrubs, and wildflowers of Nepal's Sagarmatha National Park. If you have the Flora of Virginia App and are jonesing to explore this storied peak, you'll be off and running immediately, getting to know more than 550 species with 2,500-plus beautifully detailed photographs.

High Country partnered with vegetation ecologist Elizabeth Byers, the Flora of Nepal Project, and Nepal's Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation in producing this app. Like ours for Virginia—which is useful in much of the East—this one will help "students, educators, scientists, guides, and visitors interested in the beautiful wildflowers of Nepal's Mount Everest region," says Gopal Prakash Bhattarai, director

general of the department. It will also be a "useful tool for park rangers and scouts as they work to conserve the park's floral diversity," he says.

"Two things make this field guide special," says Byers, "the Sherpa elders, who have graciously shared plant lore and stories to give us a glimpse of the cultural importance of each species, and the botanical experts from all over the world who have volunteered their knowledge of the unique and specially adapted plants of Mount Everest." Byers has spent much of the past 40 years identifying, photographing, and cataloging specimens of eastern Nepal's subalpine and alpine flora.

Of further interest to the Flora of Virginia family is that it was ultimately through Byers that we learned of High Country Apps. Botanizing in West Virginia a few years back, she ran into Cliff and Shirley Gay, stalwarts in the Virginia Native Plant Society, and told them of High Country. Cliff, a former systems architect and software engineer, approached us at a VNPS meeting to say he wanted to help on our App. He has been instrumental in its success, in both the graphic and dichotomous keys—and in getting us together with High Country. (And he's working right now on updates to the dichotomous keys in our App!)

Thus the plant path joins Nepal with West Virginia and Virginia. One world.

STEER CLEAR

Enjoy Virginia's spring flora, but follow the rules.
Don't go viral.

Now's the time to be using your Flora—whether App or book—to ring in the spring. Sadly, this is a spring like no other, so be safe. Get up close and personal with that plant, but move back when others take their look.

This is a time of year in which the Flora Project goes to you for help, and the chances are very good that if you receive *Florascope*, you are a Flora supporter. We won't be doing a mailing this spring, but if you want to help the Flora Project, click the green circle just below.

Most important: Hang in there. We wish you well!



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Flora of Virginia Project · P.O. Box 512 · Richmond, VA 23218 · USA

