



NORTHERN NECK CHAPTER
Virginia Native Plant Society

Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

"Conserving Wild Flowers and Wild Places"

NN Native Plant News

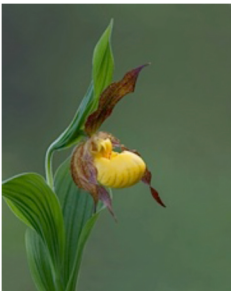
Spring 2013, Volume 10, No. 2

Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

Viewing Native Blooming Wildflowers in Winter

Understory

Jackie Bailey Labovitz's Collection



Cypripedium calceolus
Yellow Lady's Slipper

On a cold sunny day in February, Hilda, Charlie Wilson and I drove to Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens in Richmond to not only hear Jackie Bailey Labovitz, an artist photographer give a talk on her artistic background and how she photographed the plants in her collection titled, *Understory*, but also to view her stunning work.

The premise of her body of work was to photograph a number of spring ephemerals which Thomas Jefferson mentioned in his writings, all natives to Virginia. Over a period of many years she photographed blooming wildflowers along with their leaves. Her photos include the trout lily, trillium, spring beauty, yellow lady's slipper, pink lady's slipper, bluebells, and many more. Her prints are all on canvas which one can appreciate if seen in person. Her viewpoint is from the ground level rather than from above and she manages with her 300 mm lens to get a sharp view of most of the plant with a nice background of green in most instances. Her photos look like paintings to many.

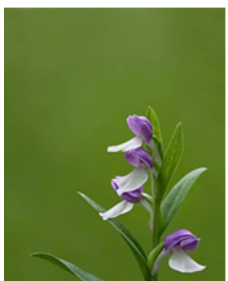
As we entered the building where the lecture was to be, her large colorful canvases greeted us along the walls. I previously viewed her photos online and was impressed immediately; however, seeing them printed on large canvases made me appreciate her photographic skill even more.

Jackie's lecture explained about her interest as a child in insects and collecting them. She became an artist and curator as an adult and it wasn't until 2003 that she took up photography with her first digital camera. She started out photographing in her own backyard and only ventured an hour from her house to get her Understory collection.



Cypripedium acaule,
Pink Lady's Slipper

Her talk was very informative from several standpoints. She showed us what equipment she took into the field to do her photography; a make up brush to dust off dirt from the plants she wanted to photograph, clips to hold back plant material that would normally interfere with focusing on the particular flower she wanted to capture, and protective clothing allowing her to lay in the ground for a long time waiting for the sun to hit the plant at just the right spot. She had a full bag of tricks, most of which she improvised and were not costly.



Galearis spectabilis,
showy orchis

She uses a 300 mm Tamron lens and a Cannon digital SLR camera, but no tripod. As most of her photos are from ground level, she is able to stabilize the camera on the ground. Jackie is a dynamic speaker and held our attention to the end. She shared so much information and made us feel like one of her family.

If you get the chance, please visit her exhibit (information below), or her studio sometime. You won't regret it if you love plants and looking at perfect photos of them. Her exhibit of Understory photographs will be at the U.S. Botanical Garden through October 14, 2013.

Additional References: www.understory.us www.understory.us/pix;
<http://www.usbg.gov/exhibits>;
http://www.tamron-usa.com/enews/archives/apr211_labovitz.asp

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Photos: Jackie Bailey Labovitz Labovitz