

August 2021  
HALIFAX NEWS  
NATURAL GOODNESS IN OUR BACKYARDS

*Story and photos by Pam Baker, Halifax, Vermont*

**Sumac-ade**

July 9, 2021

What is a plant that flowers and gives us a refreshing source of lemonade-like drink, grows all over New England...and we think is a pest plant? Yup...Sumac. Before you get all excited about potentially confusing it with Poison Sumac, let me just say that it would be mighty hard to confuse the two flowers. Our sumac, Staghorn Sumac has a flower, a drupe, that is dark maroon and stands upright. Poison Sumac has a white drupe, which sometimes is up and sometimes is down. See picture.

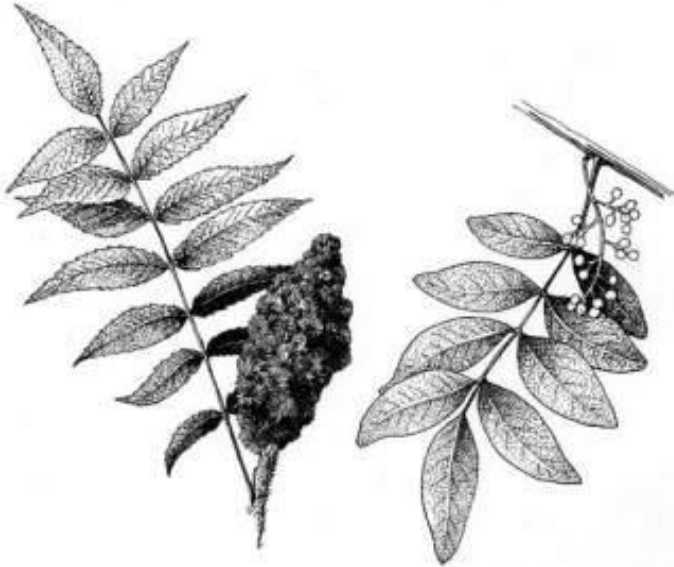


Illustration by Adelaide Tyrol [adelaidetyrol.com](http://adelaidetyrol.com)

There...easy to spot the difference. Now comes my disclaimer. If you are not 110% sure of what you are gathering, then don't gather. I am not a certified herbalist or botanist, nor am I attempting to provide medical advice. But you can learn a lot about sumac varieties by going to the Michigan State University extension site: [https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/making\\_sumac\\_tea](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/making_sumac_tea). Sadly, I could find no mention of sumac on Vermont's Extension site. Oh, and keep in mind as you search for this plant: don't trespass....always ask before stepping on someone else's property.

Also, it's a good idea *not* to gather sumac immediately after a rainstorm—as rain likely has washed away a lot of the taste and nutrients—nor from the side of a paved road, due to potential pollutants.

The delightful and vitamin-C-packed sumac drink is easy to make. Collect your drupes, give them a light shake, wrap them in cheesecloth and drop into a container of water. It's recommended not to use hot water, as that destroys the vitamin C. Wait 24 hours, remove the bundle, and squeeze the drupe while it's still in the cheesecloth (to get all of the goodness out into your container while retaining the fruit and other things...), compost the drupe, then add your favorite sweetener to taste: voilà! You've made a light berry-lemon flavored drink. Sumac infusion is a delicately thirst-quenching summertime beverage that is also good for you...how often can you say that?

Would be a good base for your own version of Switchel. Can't you see it now? At a local town event, we could have a Sumac drink contest to determine the best concoction. Sounds like a fun time.



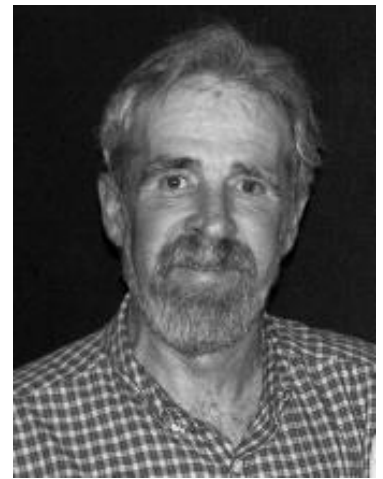
Sumac grows everywhere! Most folks think of it as a weed, but you shouldn't. There is a gentleman named Toby Fulwiler of Fairfield, VT, who makes lovely small bowls of Sumac wood (pictured at left). And there are a number of websites with useful suggestions on how to use dry sumac branches for things such as collecting maple sap! So get hunting...both on the 'net and outside! S'good for ya! Cheers!

Pam Baker, <https://healthstartsinthekitchen.com/sumac-ade-a-natural-alternative-to-kool-aid/>

## TOWN NEWS

### REMEMBERING NORM FAJANS – AUGUST 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2021

Next month a celebration of the life of **Norman Douglas Fajans** will be held on **Sunday, August 8, 2021, at 1:30 PM** at the Halifax Community Hall, 20 Brook Road, West Halifax, VT 05358. Norm was born September 28, 1951, and died on February 25, 2021, after a brief battle with cancer. He was born in Amityville, NY, graduated from Wilmington High School in 1969, and studied animal science at SUNY-Cobleskill and University of Vermont. Norm then studied equine massage therapy which became his vocation. Norman and his wife Deborah and daughter Erin moved back to Halifax in 1993. He loved working on his farm, walking his woods, riding a tractor, gardening, watching the seasons change, sharing a memory or story with a dear friend, cheering his daughter in school sports, watching football on TV, and helping others to care for their animals. Donations in his memory may be made to Forever Morgans Horse Rescue & Adoption at [forevermorgans.org](http://forevermorgans.org) or in care of Covey Allen & Shea Funeral Home, P.O. Box 215, Wilmington, VT 05363. Please join us as we celebrate this extraordinary person. All are welcome.



### HALIFAX FIRE CO. CLAM BAKE, SATURDAY, AUGUST 7

Get your tickets NOW! The Halifax Fire Company will hold their annual **Firemen's Clam Bake** this year. The date is **Saturday, August 7 serving 1 PM to 3 PM** at the old Cody Farm. Seafood dinner: lobster, clams, half a BBQ chicken, corn on the cob, cole slaw, potato salad, watermelon (\$45). Chicken dinner: half a BBQ chicken, corn on the cob, cole slaw, potato salad, watermelon (\$20). Kids 6-12 years old (\$10). Call **802-368-7733** or **802-368-2824** or ask any Fire Co member to buy tickets.

### HALIFAX CELEBRATION DAY IS SATURDAY, AUGUST 28, 2021!

Breakfast, events all day, and music in the evening. A great time to come together and celebrate our town. All events take place in the Village of West Halifax. Join us!!

**SENIOR MEAL** As usual...there will be NO senior meal in Halifax in August. Joan's month off! Joan hopes to be sitting on the beach at the Jersey Shore!!! See you September 17 when we will be dining in the hall with option for take-out. – *Joan Courser*



**SUMMER COMPOSTING TIPS WORKSHOP IN HALIFAX, THURSDAY, JULY 29, 6-7:00 PM**

The Halifax Conservation Commission and Windham Solid Waste Management District invite you to a **Summer Composting Tips Workshop** at the Halifax Community Hall, 20 Brook Road, Halifax, VT 05358, on Thursday evening, July 29<sup>th</sup>. The workshop starts at 6:00 pm and lasts about an hour.



Topics covered include ☀ Successful composting in hot dry weather, ☀ Food scraps nutrients & moisture, ☀ Best ways to avoid attracting wildlife, ☀ Pros and cons of different tumblers and bins, ☀ Where to put your compost area, and ☀ How to tell when compost is ready. Bring your questions!

**COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINIC AND FREE ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

On Friday July 23, Rescue Inc. came to West Halifax for four hours with their mobile vaccination clinic. More than a dozen persons received their first dose of Pfizer (good for ages 12 and up) or the single-dose Johnson & Johnson/Janssen (for ages 18 and up). The Halifax Community Club provided free ice cream for the attendees.



**EVENT:** On August 13th, Rescue Inc. and the Halifax Community Club will come together again at the Hall for a 2<sup>nd</sup> clinic.

Where: Halifax Community Hall, 20 Brook Road, West Halifax

When: **Friday, 13 August from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.** Rain or shine.

Who can get vaccinated: Anyone who qualifies, regardless of where you live. People at least 12 years old can receive the Pfizer vaccine which requires 2 doses given 3 weeks apart. People who are at least 18 years old can receive the 1-dose Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccine.

Why: For your health and life and for the health and lives of your family and your community. The vaccines, which are safe and effective, greatly reduce the risk of sickness and death due to COVID-19.

\*\* The vaccinations AND the ice cream will be free to all. In addition, **Kelso the Therapy Dog** (pictured working at the library) will be there for anyone who wants the comfort of a loving dog while getting vaccinated. \*\*



**SENIOR SOLUTIONS HELPS VERMONTERS WITH FOOD & FUEL BENEFITS**

While we may be seeing the light at the end of the pandemic tunnel, economic challenges that have faced us all are ongoing. For many older Vermonters, the challenges of paying for food, fuel, and medical bills are very real. *And yet, 60% of older Vermonters who are eligible for assistance such as 3SquaresVT do not participate!* Let us help you get help.

**Getting this newsletter by US mail? Check address label for your subscription expiration date.**

**Send \$7 check made out to "Newsletter" to P O Box 27, West Halifax VT 05358.**

**Fuel Assistance** helps with winter home heating bills and may be used for fuel oil, propane, electricity, and even wood heating. **3SquaresVT** and **Fuel Assistance** can both be applied for in a single application. Simply call the **Senior Helpline at 802-885-2669** to start the process for either or both programs.

**Senior Solutions** can help you find other programs you may be eligible for, such as Medicare Savings Programs, Prescription Drug Assistance, and Meals on Wheels. There is no charge for helping area residents.

**More info:** <https://www.seniorsolutionsvt.org/>

### **HALIFAX FIRE COMPANY FUNDRAISER**

The Firemen's Auction on July 3rd was a great success, garnering the Fire Company its highest take ever from the annual fundraiser! It was also shorter, winding up about 1 o'clock instead of after 2 pm. And the Ice Cream Wagon saw a steady stream of customers undeterred by the wet weather. Thank you, Halifax!



Halifax Fire Company auction on Saturday, July 3, 2021, was a rainy-day success

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLS**

On July 4 four men responded to a medical call for a person who had passed out. Deerfield Valley Rescue responded but did not transport.

On July 16 eighteen men responded to a motor vehicle accident on Reed Hill Road. One fire truck responded to the site of the crash, and one responded to the Halifax school to set up a landing zone for a LifeFlight helicopter. Both occupants of the car were ejected from the vehicle. The 18-year-old driver from Halifax did not survive. The passenger had multiple broken bones and was flown to Dartmouth-Hitchcock. A very sad day.

On July 25, three men responded to a bicycle accident on Hanson Road. It was the day of a bike race that usually comes through Halifax each year. A woman was treated for 'road rash' on knees and elbow. Wounds were cleaned and bandaged. The person was taken to Guilford by Halifax Constable Andy Rice.

**TOWN HISTORY....**Contributed by Edie Fenton in a 1985 newsletter....Halifax received its charter from New Hampshire on May 11, 1750. Hubbard Eastman wrote in The Vermont Historical Gazetteer published in 1891: "before any division of the said land be made to and among the grantees, a tract of land as near the centre of the said township as the land will admit of, shall be reserved and marked out for town lots, one of which shall be allotted to each grantee of the Contents of one acre.' This reserved land at the geographical centre of the town, was designed to serve the purposes of a garrison in case there should be wa[r] with the Indians. Here each grantee might erect his block-house to which he might retire with his family on short notice, in case of danger while the country was new, having an acre of ground which he could cultivate as a garden. But the Indians gave no trouble to the early settlers of Halifax and the land reserved for purposes of defence has long since been otherwise disposed of." The taxes as provided by the charter were: "One ear of Indian corn...on the 25th of December (Christmas), if lawfully demanded" as a tax for the 10 years between 1750 and 1760. In 1761 the

taxes were raised to one shilling per 100 acres. -- [http://sites.rootsweb.com/~vtwindha/vhg5/vt\\_gazetteer-halifax.htm](http://sites.rootsweb.com/~vtwindha/vhg5/vt_gazetteer-halifax.htm)

### ENERGY USE ANALYZER

Efficiency Vermont offers an online estimator of your home energy use. Visit their page, zero out the sample values shown, and enter your own numbers to see the total for your house. Link:

<https://www.encyvermont.com/blog/how-to/how-much-electricity-does-your-home-use?>

### JOAN'S SIGHTINGS.

Our Orioles have left for their fall and winter homes. I miss them, but we had four males and females, and they sort of dominated the hummingbird feeders. I loved having them and hope they return next summer BUT now I am seeing the Hummers more! I like that very much. They are so tiny. I just am amazed at how far they fly to where they winter. I read an article about where they go.....and now I worry about them!!

I saw a Momma bunny and one partly grown baby of hers cross Moss Hollow Road in front of me; don't often see bunnies around here. Love it when I do. I also saw one hen turkey in a hay field in Halifax; hay was high enough that if she had young I could not see them. I had a coon one night near the chicken coop; he set the motion light off—that is how I discovered he was there; have not seen him again. I saw a fawn on the side of a dirt road. I think Mama was already out of sight, and the fawn was not far behind her.

Send your sightings to Joan at [jwcinvt@gmail.com](mailto:jwcinvt@gmail.com)

- Joan Courser

On Hanson Road we are still hearing chestnut-sided warblers, song sparrows, winter wrens, and hermit thrushes. We see our barred owl and broad-wing hawk. Recently we spotted a garter snake sunning itself, a grey fox in the driveway, the persistent deer who enjoy our hostas, a rabbit, red efts, bumblebees, and many butterflies. The most exciting visitor was a fisher who went bounding across the back of the yard the other afternoon! A moment later the rabbit slipped out from under the deck and departed in another direction. I think I see where this is going, but it was still a thrill to see my first live fisher, Vermont's second-largest weasel after the river otter. Two days later, a pair of fishers bounded across the driveway!

- Laurel Copeland

### WILDLIFE CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

#### HAVE YOU SEEN ANY OF THESE 5 ANIMALS CROSSING A ROAD?

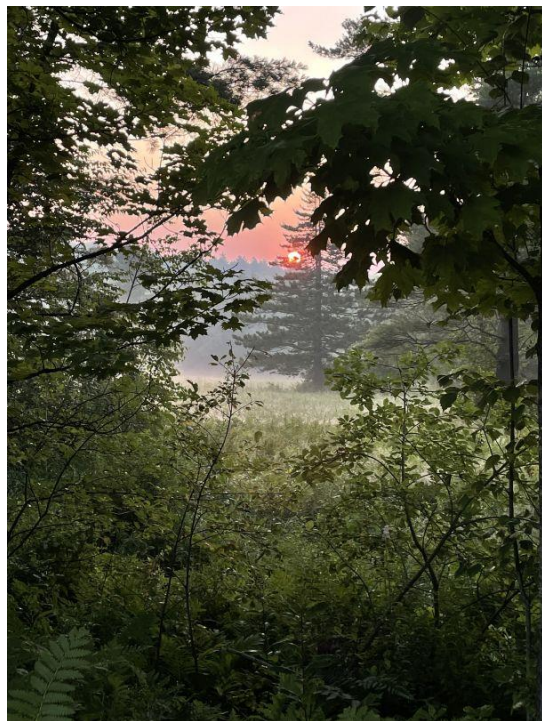
As part of a wildlife connectivity project, I am interested in where five wide-ranging mammals cross the road. If you see one on or crossing a road, or if you see tracks that suggest one crossed the road, let me know ([LaurelACopeland@gmail.com](mailto:LaurelACopeland@gmail.com), 802-368-2439). Include **date, time, & location**. The 5 animals are Moose (tracks #9), River Otter (tracks #23), Bobcat (tracks #7), Fisher, and Black Bear (tracks #35).



Newsletter  
P O Box 27  
West Halifax VT 05358



Wood Nymph Butterfly



Sunrise on a hazy July morning showing the effect of wildfires in the west on air out east

# Halifax News

AUGUST 2021

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Editing: [LaurelACopeland@gmail.com](mailto:LaurelACopeland@gmail.com). Free color e-version by email / online.