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UPSTATE *happenings*

JUNE 2013

Standing Up Mountains *See story at right.*

Tuesday, July 16, 7:00 pm
South Carolina's Haws

The hawthorns (*Crataegus*) of the eastern United States are usually regarded as a formidable group of plants that either challenge or completely impede attempts to separate them into recognizable species. The problems and solutions of their familiarity, at least in South Carolina, will be discussed and offered up for the participants in this presentation.

We will see photos and specimens, and hopefully all attendees will leave with sufficient tools in hand and in head so that hawthorn identification in SC is not the same thorny problem it may have seemed before!

Ron Lance is the author of *Woody Plants of the Southeastern United States*, *a Winter Guide*, and a book on southeastern hawthorns is nearing completion.

Founders Hall in Dining Commons, Southern Wesleyan University, Central.

Standing Up Mountains: Conservation and stewardship practices for a better tomorrow

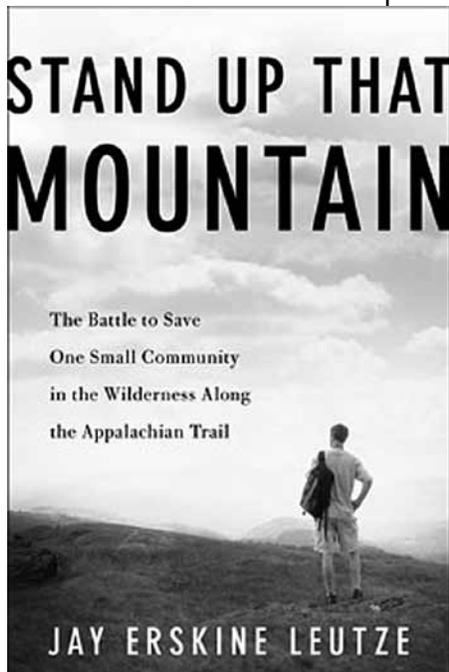
How far would you go to save a mountain in your own backyard from imminent destruction? For one group of conservationists there was no limit, and after years of fighting, they finally won.

The mountain in danger was Belview Mountain, a wild and scenic location just 1.5 miles from the famed Appalachian Trail, near the North Carolina and Tennessee border. When local residents discovered that a mining operation had already begun construction on the mountain, they felt a need to put a stop to the permanent defacement that was taking place right before their eyes. To help them in their fight, they enlisted the help of Jay Erskine Leutze, a local outdoorsman and non-practicing lawyer, who was currently living deep in the mountains not far from the site of the proposed mining expansion. Their road was not easy, but Jay's dedication to protecting such a meaningful piece of land was unwavering, and over time he had the support and the legal team he needed to actually win this thing.

Jay recounts this fascinating and inspiring story in his book, *Stand Up That Mountain*, which he will share with us at our up-coming meeting in June. He is a widely respected conservationist for the work he did saving the incredibly beautiful Roan Highlands area of the Appalachian Trail, and a celebrated author for his wonderfully written account of the arduous journey. He simply would not give up in his fight to protect the integrity of the mountains that he loves so much, and his resounding success in conserving our land will be appreciated by many generations to come.

Jay Leutze is truly a modern day hero, proving that you can make a difference in the face of great opposition. This message is especially important in these times, as it can seem overly daunting to go up against large industries who have such deep pockets, and a staggering amount of political pull. At our June meeting, Jay will also discuss the challenges involved with

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Jay Leutze

outdoorsman and non-practicing attorney

Tuesday, June 18, 7:00 pm

University Center: Greenville Tec, 225 South Pleasantburg Dr, Greenville

For a map and more information, visit <http://www.scnps.org>

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Standing Up Mountains: Conservation and stewardship practices for a better tomorrow

ongoing land protection efforts, as well as strategies and practices that are useful for the long term stewardship of land that is already protected. He brings a clear and strong voice to the conservation movement, and paired with his wealth of experience, he will no doubt inspire all of us to better understand our role in preserving our remaining wild places.

— *Mary Holcombe*

Wild Indigo! A Plant of Beauty & Utility

Baptisia is a genus containing about twenty species of plants, commonly referred to as false or wild indigo; all are native to eastern or midwestern United States and a favorite long-lived garden perennial. The incredible springtime 1-2' tall flowers, cute rounded foliage, and rattling dried seedpods also make it of interest to the youngest of gardeners!

The epithet *Baptisia* comes from the word “bapto” which in Greek means “to dye.” Both the yellow wild indigo (*B. tinctoria*) and blue false indigo (*B. australis*) were utilized in the production of a bluish dye by early American settlers and Native Americans. Later, a “better” indigo was found (*Indigofera tinctoria*) and broadly used for dye making.

Lucky for us, all known species of *Baptisias* can be grown throughout South Carolina (and many are native to the state as well!). These adaptable plants are resistant to deer and are drought tolerant once they are established in a garden. The dimensions of the plant vary with species, however, the two most common false indigos, *B. alba* and *B. australis*, grow into a nice rounded shrub of 4' high by 4' wide in ideal conditions. However, some species are dwarves and won't get bigger than one or two feet tall. Being a long-lived plant, *Baptisias* can actually grow and re-flower for ten or twenty years!

Besides their obvious landscape value as colorful seasonal specimens in cottage- or native-themed gardens, they play host to the larvae of many southeastern butterflies, like the clouded sulfur, hoary edge, wild indigo dusky wing, and eastern tailed blue. *Baptisias* do contain compounds called alkaloids, which are toxic to many insects and protect the plant from pest damage, however this does not seem to affect the larval guests!

Grow your *Baptisia* in a spot with rich, well-drained soil in full sun (they can grow in a partially shaded spot, however the overall appearance of the plant may be more straggly and less floriferous). There are several gorgeous cultivars and species to choose from, such as the white-flowered, grey-stemmed *B. alba*, early March blooming *B. bracteata*, or short yellow-flowered *B. tinctoria*. — *Katie Dickson*



Narrow-pod White Wild Indigo, *Baptisia alba*. Photo by JK Marlow.