**Plant Pressing Workshop**

Dr. Kathy Mathews, botany professor & director of the WCU Herbarium

**Wednesday, May 14, 2-4 pm - meet at the HBS Herbarium in the Coker Lab Building**

In this workshop, we will take a look at pressed plant specimens in the HBS herbarium and talk about the how and why of preserving plants and the importance of herbaria. Then we will go outside to collect plant samples along the roadside, making field notes and plant identifications. Feel free to bring cut plants from your garden in a plastic bag if you wish to press them. Then we will return to the Coker classroom for a lesson in pressing plants using herbarium presses. Bring your own press if you have one, or you can purchase one from HBS. We will also discuss making labels using a template and talk about post-processing of specimens (drying, freezing & mounting). Your dried, pressed plants will be available to take home the following week if you want to use the dryer at HBS, or you can take them home and dry them yourself.

Bring, if you have them:

* Your own press (see note below)
* Bifold newspaper
* Pruners
* Trowel
* Small notebook for taking field notes
* iNaturalist or Seek on your phone/iPad

*Note:* We will have plant presses you can purchase for this workshop, but if you want to bring your own press, there are many options for buying or making one. Forestry Suppliers is a good website that has several options. A press is relatively simple to make from 2 pieces of cut plywood and 2 polypropylene webbing straps (see images below). The best straps have spring buckles as in the image below, which makes them easy to tighten. The herbarium press is 12x18 inches, but you can use a smaller press if you mainly want to preserve flowers or leaves. Professional grade presses are made from wooden slats to make them more lightweight and quicker-drying, while student-grade presses are made from solid plywood and are heavier and less breathable. You will also need 5-10 corrugated cardboard ventilators as well as bifold newsprint sheets cut to the same size as the press. Cotton blotters are optional.

