An introduction to about 9 genera and 50 species of sedges and rushes, stressing ecological patterns, character groups, and field identification. We focus on coastal and near-coastal habitats, and on Carex, the principal early-summer genus. Other genera will be taken as they come, and, when possible, identified vegetatively or by flowers. The course is designed as a series of field problems of increasing difficulty, starting with the common dominants, and ending with two-day field surveys and presentations by teams of students. Our plan is to visit five main habitats, make species lists and ecological maps for each of them, and then combine these to outline the ecology and taxonomy of the coastal flora as a whole. We prepare for the field trips by studying moss maps, photographs, and a collection of live plants, the mobile sedge meadow. In the field we stress inventory and diagnosis and try to identify all but the most difficult species in the field. After field trip we discuss ecology and taxonomy and make drawings and maps. The plan is to simulate, within the course, the things students will need to do on their own after. Preparation, exploration, and presentation are great teachers; we use them to the hilt.

Jerry Jenkins & Matt Peters
July 5th – July 11th, 2020

Jerry Jenkins (jerrycreejenkins@gmail.com), trained in philosophy and mathematics, and has done botanical work and teaching for 54 years. He has free-lanced in botany and ecology and worked as a researcher for the Wildlife Conservation Society. Currently he produces books and imagery for the Northern Forest Atlas Project. He has written books on acid rain, climate change, conservation easements, Adirondack geography, and three photographic guides (Woody Plants, Sedges, Mosses) and accompanying digital atlases for the Atlas Project. He is currently working on a photographic guide to grasses, a full-length field guide to woody plants, and a book on ecological patterns.

Matt Peters is a field botanist and Northern Forest Atlas collaborator from Vermont, with extensive experience in New England and in the alpine zones of Eastern Canada. He is a hunter, woodsman, climber, and homesteader, studies vascular plants, fungi, and mosses, and is the Atlas projects go-to person for finding things the rest of us can’t.