



THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

April 2016



**Chapter Meeting 7:00 PM,
Thursday April 7, 2016**

**at the Education and Library Complex of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
in the Lab**

The room is available at 6:30, come early and Socialize

This month's topic will be

Plants do the Strangest Things: Pollination in an Underground Flower

by

University of Richmond Professor of Biology John Hayden, PhD.

Dr. Hayden's botanical interests include the morphology, anatomy, and systematics of plants. His research concerns plants of the family Euphorbiaceae, Virginia flora, and, Yucatan ethnobotany and floristics. He also curates the University Herbarium and is primary care provider for the plants in the Department of Biology greenhouses. In addition, he is an avid home gardener.

Chapter Meetings:

May 1 - Annual Picnic at Three Lakes Park, Shelter 2, 400 Sausiluta Dr Henrico VA 23227, Bring a dish to share. Gather at 1, Dine at 1:30, Stroll at 2:30, Plant Swap at 4:30. There will not be a meeting at Lewis Ginter.

Chapter Events:

"Privet Pulls" Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden April to June 2016

There is now hardwood mulch available to spread on the Japanese Stiltgrass infested areas; I am hoping we can distribute it in the next couple of word days.

Sun. Apr 17. 10 am - 12:30 pm

Tue. May 3 9 am - 11:30 am

Sun. May 15 10 am - 12:30 pm

Tue. June 7 9 am - 11:30 am

Sun. June 12 10 am - 12:30 pm

Meet at the Admission Hall and bring your favorite small tools, dress for the weather outside, hat, gloves etc. Please notify leader so we can notify you in the event of cancellation for bad weather. Many thanks in advance for your assistance, see you in the Garden! Any questions please contact Beth Farmer at beth16085@hotmail.com or Caroline Meehan at cjrtmeehan@juno.com

Chapter Facebook Page

After the positive feedback we received at our last chapter meeting, we have moved forward with launching a chapter Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/PocahontasVNPS/>. The first thing you may notice is the somewhat awkward name, "Chapter of Pocahontas, Virginia Native Plant Society". I'll be the first to admit it's convoluted, but after consulting with Sue Dingwell, our state Facebook page administrator, it was the best working title that Facebook would permit with their latest stringent page-naming policies; all of our better choices, even though consistent with other chapter's page names, were rejected—go figure! Please visit the page and let me know what you think! Also, feel free to email me to share photos or web-links to content you find interesting and we may include them on the page. And of course, "like" and "share" the page with your Facebook friends!

Dabney Robinson, Db.robinson@comcast.net

Other Events of interest

April 7 Environmental Sustainability Talk

Ira Wallace from Southern Exposure Seed Exchange will be speaking on "Biodiversity: Saving Stories, Saving Seeds" at VSU's campus in the first-floor auditorium of the Engineering building at 3:30 PM.

Questions may be directed to Dr. Merry Byrd, mbyrd@vsu.edu or 804.524.6463, or Dr. Maxine Sample, msample@vsu.edu.

Sun. April 17 Bluebell Festival at Merrimac Farm, from 10:00am to 4:00pm, Tours last about 90 minutes on an easy one-mile walk through the floodplain. Each tour has a special focus, although leaders also cover other interesting sights along the way. For more information and a schedule of tours go their website at:

<http://www.pwconserve.org/merrimacfarm/bluebellfestival/> .

April 20 7PM Learn about the Zika Virus during a Special Presentation by Wes Robertson, Environmental Inspector and Entomologist with the County of Henrico at Henrico County's North Park Library 7:00pm.

President's Message

Happy April. I hope this finds you all well and you have been able to go out and about looking for spring treasure. I have been out on a few forays and am happy to say I made a few "discoveries". The first was a lovely gnarled Kalmia bush in Dorey Park in eastern Henrico. I know mountain laurel is fairly common, I have seen it in Pocahontas State Park and all along Route 249 in New Kent County, but never in the wild here in Henrico. The second was a red horse chestnut in Point of Rocks Park in Chester, at the trailhead near the playground. There is a large stately tree, with lots of "babies" all around it. It is known to some of our members and is thought to be planted years ago. Lastly was pennywort, *oboliaria_virginica*, that Richard found as he and I lead a walk for Pocahontas Park last weekend. I had never heard of the plant, much less seen it and he circled back with me to show me. It is one of those sweet little woodland plants that you have to get on your hands and knees to admire. Our chapter has been busy this month as well. We did an outstanding job of hosting the Winter Workshop at University of Richmond, providing morning refreshments with finesse. While it took a small army, special thanks to Catharine Tucker and John Hayden for taking point. We launched our Facebook page, see the article, special thanks to Dabney Robinson for getting that done. Hope to see lots of folks using it, to share our photos of our "treasures". Last but not least, the newly formed "Outreach/Education" committee, Peg Mohar, Christie Bondurant, Lynne Evans and myself, had a kick off meeting. We vetted some good ideas that we look forward to sharing with members and the board, stay tuned. Hope to see you all on the 7th and at some of our upcoming walks.

Leslie Allanson

The Pocahontas Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

serves the counties of: Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, King William, New Kent, Powhatan and the cities of Ashland, Hopewell, Petersburg, and Richmond. It meets the first Thursday of September through April at 7:00 PM in the Education and Library Complex of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, unless otherwise stated.

Chapter Officers

President.....Leslie Allanson

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Chapter Website

pocahontaschapter-vnps.org

Minutes of the Pocahontas Chapter, VNPS Meeting, March 3, 2016

Welcome: Leslie Allanson called the meeting to order with 33 persons present.

Program: Catharine Tucker introduced Emily Gianfortoni, Pocahontas chapter member and Certified Master Naturalist and Habitat Trainer. The program's topic was "Urban/Suburban Habitat Systems."

Emily presented an overview of the challenges to land management today. These challenges include the destruction and fragmentation of habitat; pollution from storm water runoff; disturbed and compacted soils; invasive species; decreased species diversity; and the degradation of the ecosystem and its services.

Conservation landscaping provides an active management plan, which is designed to turn around the challenges listed above. Eight principles of conservation landscaping are the following:

1. Practices that benefit the environment and human well being
2. Use of native plants appropriate for the conditions
3. Deal with invasive plants
4. Provide habitat for wildlife
5. Contribute to air quality
6. Conserve and clean water
7. Conserve and improve soil
8. Manage landscape to conserve energy, reduce waste, and

minimize fertilizer and pesticide use

Emily included specifics to apply each principle. She also included an additional principle, to reduce light pollution. The program concluded with questions and comments from the audience. For additional information, a helpful resource for guidance in conservation landscaping can be found at www.chesapeakelandscape.org

Business Meeting: There were no corrections to the minutes of the February meeting.

Richard Moss, treasurer, reported a balance of \$4,708. Expenses during 2015 included: \$500 - speaker's fee; \$184.15 - books provided for the Ginter Library; \$250 - fee to Ginter for meeting space; \$150 - fee for use of May picnic space.

Dabney Robinson, membership chair, reported that the chapter has 110 members with a new member added this month. An updated membership roster has been emailed to members. The roster will be updated annually. If a member does not have a computer, please contact Dabney for a print copy.

Upcoming Field Trips: Robert Wright, field trip chair, requested feedback regarding preference for a March 26 trip to Huguenot Park or an April 2 trip to Larus Park. A vote was taken and will be provided to Robert.

Sunday strolls at Dorey Park will take place on March 13, 2 p.m., and on March 20, 2 p.m. A different trail will be used for the second stroll.

Project Reports: Catharine provided an update on the James River Park Invasives Removal project. She is in charge of providing a list of native plants and their sources for future use with the project. A website will be set up to inform when volunteers are needed to assist with the project. The goal is that invasive plants be kept below 20%. A work day for the Ginter Botanical Garden privet pull project will be held on March 13, 12:45 p.m.

New Business: A discussion took place about the chapter's future use of Facebook. If Facebook is used, there will be no change in current website and newsletter use. Also, the chapter's Facebook page would be linked to the state's Facebook page. All comments were positive. James Shelton volunteered to work with Leslie and Dabney on this project.

Leslie announced that the chapter needs an Outreach/Education Committee to guide the chapter's goals. Lynne Evans, Christie Bondurant, Peg Mohar, and James Shelton volunteered to be on the committee.

The Winter Workshop will be held on March 12. Pat Brodie volunteered to provide signage to reserve seats for volunteers working with refreshments. Larry Bartenstein volunteered to assist with clean-up activities.

A Walk in the Forest will be held on March 12, Providence Forge, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The annual picnic will be held at Three Lakes Park on May 1, 1 p.m.

Next meeting: Our next meeting will be April 7, 2016, 6:30 p.m., at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden.

Respectfully submitted, Irene Caperton, Secretary

“In Search Of”: Botanical Adventures of a Plant Detective

This month's target: *Asplenium rhizophyllum* L. walking fern

I grew up in the shadow of the Boulevard “Nickel” Bridge, and spent many days in childhood exploring the James River south bank and north-facing slopes and ravines. Over the years, I expanded my searches to all floodplain areas, islands, ravines, backyards, alleyways, utility corridors and hillsides. I have found many interesting plants in these places. Among them is an isolated station for the walking fern, which is very localized at or east of the Fall Line. To my knowledge, there is but one spot with the City of Richmond where this plant grows spontaneously.

In 1989, I located this curious fern growing on the moss and lichen-covered rockface of an old springhead in a broad draw in the 5200 block of Riverside Drive. A specimen was secured and was placed in the VCU herbarium collection. As this fern has a usual association with limy substrates, it was not too surprising the old crumbling mortar joints of the granite-rock structure provided leached lime that the fern root relishes. A scour of most Petersburg granite outcrops turned up no other walking fern colonies along the Richmond James. The penchant for walking fern to establish on old masonry walls is well documented on herbarium specimens collected in Virginia and elsewhere, and is reported in the literature. This particular station adds to the number of such records.

If you have seen or know anything about this interesting fern, please send info via email. Happy Hunting.



This wild ginger or Virginia heartleaf or little brown jug, (*Hexastylis virginica*) was blooming in my yard in Chester, VA on March 8th.

Richard Moss



Field Trip to Pocahontas State Park on March 26, 2016.

We explored the trail from the Nature Center to the lake and found several interesting plants.

1. Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*) in bloom.
2. Putty-Root Orchid (*Aplectrum hyemale*)
3. Spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*).
4. Virginia pennywort (*Obolaria virginica*)



5. This, the other bluet (*Houstonia pusilla*), was found on our walk at Pocahontas Park, and I also found them in large numbers on the grounds of Sunset Cemetery in Chester. It is distinguished by having a darker purple flower with a red center. **Photo 6** is the Yellow eyed *Houstonia caerulea*.

Richard Moss



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