



Claytonia

John Clayton Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society

Spring Beauty
Claytonia virginica
by Chapter members
Seig & Alice Kopinitz

March-April 2025 **40th Anniversary & Plant Sale!** vnps.org/johnclayton

Catherine Flanagan
President &
Treasurer
[757-879-1997](tel:757-879-1997)

Emilia Godwin
Vice President
Programs &
Communications

Cortney Will,
Secretary &
Plant Rescue

Adrienne Frank
Plant Sale Chair

Jennifer Myers
Stonehouse
Garden Steward

Libbey Oliver
Nature Camp



John Clayton Chapter
PO Box 1128
Williamsburg, VA
23187

The Impact of Non-native Invasive Plants on Native Biotic Communities in Eastern Virginia

Thursday, March 20, 2025, 7:00 PM

Please Join us on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2274484759>



Jim Perry is a Professor Emeritus of Marine Science at the College of William & Mary's Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS). His primary research interests involved monitoring stress and documenting long-term ecological changes in vascular plant communities of tidal and non-tidal wetlands, and the relationship of those changes to changes in environmental parameters within watersheds. His research projects included 1) establishing methods for determining the status of watersheds and the success of created and restored habitats; 2) vegetation community dynamics in restored and created wetlands and watersheds, and 3) life history, distribution and abundance, and threats to rare and/or endangered vascular plants.

Professor Perry has taught undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education classes for over 35 years. He has taught classes in Asian Environmental Issues, Coastal Botany, Coastal Ecosystem Restoration, Ecology of Coastal Habitats, Plant Identification, and Wetlands Ecology. He is donating his honorarium to our chapter in honor of his good friend Teta Kain, who has retired and moved to Alabama. A tribute is below:



Teta Kain is widely recognized for her extraordinary knowledge and volunteer service for all things nature. She is loved for her humor and adventurous spirit. Teta was a self-made naturalist and kept records of numerous species sightings. For many years, she was the editor for the Raven, which contained bird count data for the Virginia Ornithological Society. For decades, Teta was a key leader in Friends of Dragon Run; she was a former President and

renowned as the paddle guide on tours of the Dragon Run watershed. She led bird counts, butterfly counts, moth nights, and nature walks.

Across Virginia, she presented on many subjects including the Dragon Run, fungi, spiders, and more. After her long volunteer career, she retired to Alabama. I served on the Friends of Dragon Run Board with Teta for 20 years, and we did lots of butterfly forays together. We all miss her tremendously.

Adrienne Frank

From The President: The History of John Clayton Chapter Part III

Welcome to another installment of the early days of the Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society (VWPS) and ultimately of the Virginia Native Plant Society and John Clayton Chapter.

The first two installments were about the capabilities and dedication of the VWPS volunteers which likely catapulted their start and the impact they made. The organization was chartered in June of 1982 and had an Annual Meeting and plant sale in October of the same year. It was a vibrant and effective organization led by Mary Painter and then Mary Pockman (see Parts I and II) who were driven to mitigate the loss of native plants that the rapid and expansive development in Northern Virginia was causing. They stood up to powerful developers, most notably Disney, and their successful efforts inspired surrounding areas to form chapters.

In fact, in late August of 1983, Donna Ware, botanist and first curator of the William & Mary herbarium, led a field trip for a group of VWPS members to the Williamsburg area.

Their exploration began at the tidal flats along the Chickahominy, where a number of plants hadn't been seen since 1940. One plant in particular, *Nuttall's micranthemum*, also known as mudflower, had been famous for many years for being occasionally spotted in the area. I checked the Flora and its status is listed as SH, "Possibly Extirpated but still some hope of rediscovery." But the group was not in luck. They did happen upon *Bacopa stragula* which hadn't been seen anywhere since 1941. I checked on this, and in Virginia, the rank is S2 Imperiled. At high risk of extirpation from the state due to very restricted range, very few populations (only 20 or fewer), steep declines or other factors." And still there were more interesting plants to be found. In the steep ravines by the York river, *Malaxis*, Adders-mouth orchid was found. The name alone is intriguing so this time I stumbled on an article in *Semprevirens* by Zach Bradford (Virginia Natural Heritage

DCR). It is an interesting story of Harvard botanist Merrit Lyndon Fernald and his collecting companion, Bayard Long, who spent countless hours, decades actually, searching for rare plants to include in *Grays Manual of Botany* which was edited by Fernald.

One day, in 1938, Bayard Long looked under some brush in a short-leaf pine and oak forest and pulled out a specimen of *Malaxis* but it was not the more common *Malaxis* known as Green Adder's-mouth orchid. They had found a new species! Fernald named it *Malaxis bayardii* after his assistant. Interestingly a couple years later the team found another specimen near Emporia, VA, but after that they never saw one again. However, more recently, old herbarium specimens are being reviewed and more field explorations have turned up specimens for the first time in 10 different states. Zach said "purportedly" so perhaps confirmation needed.

Back to the VWPS field trip. *Decumaria barbara*, also known as wood vamp or climbing hydrangea was mentioned. I checked into its characteristics and found it is a tame climber that can grow on the north side of a wall. It has glossy leaves and fragrant white flowers, and is not endangered.

Along the banks of the James river, Donna Ware discussed the various *Spartina* species and how they are usually found in the order they progress from brackish water to fresh, to swamp. On their way back, they took a chartered canoe ride from brackish marsh, to fresh marsh, to swamp, until the boat couldn't go any further. They had to wade through the mud, but at least it was in the midst of mallow flowers covered with butterflies. Incredibly, right after the canoe trip, Tom Weiboldt spotted the rare *Aeschynomene virginica* or Sensitive Joint Vetch. There were only five sites known for it. It was first discovered in the 1730's along the Rappahannock by... John Clayton!

Next issue: More on John Clayton





Nature Camp Scholarship Students

John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society has awarded scholarships to four students for the summer of 2025



Isabelle Champion, a 6th grader, will attend camp for the first time. She seeks opportunities to learn and grow while looking for adventures. Conserving the environment for native animals is one of her goals.



Madeleine Wells, a 7th grader, received the Carolyn Will Memorial Scholarship which is provided by longtime JCC member Ralph Will. Madeleine has attended camp before. She likes sharing her knowledge and wants to “teach my own generation about wildlife and how to protect it.” In school she is learning about sustainable building materials found in nature, such as mycelium.



Ayla Dahnke, an 8th grader, will attend camp for the first time. She has attended VIMS labs and spends time with her family on rivers and lakes as well as hiking in the mountains. Her time outdoors has increased her desire to study ecosystems.



Haley Elton, a 6th grader, can't wait to attend camp for the first time! She has earned many Girl Scout badges that showcase her love for the outdoors. Hiking and kayaking have taken her on many outdoor adventures. She knows that camp will add to her appreciation of the world. She is so grateful to the John Clayton Society for this unique opportunity.

The scholarship application process requires an essay from the student as well as a recommendation from a teacher. A committee which represents five Williamsburg area organizations reviews the applications and selects the Nature Camp scholarship recipients.

John Clayton Chapter members will have a chance to meet these students when they participate in our 40th Annual Native Plant Sale on May 3, 2025.

We look forward to meeting them and hope they have a great experience this summer.



Join us on Zoom!

Meetings consist of a live video presentation followed by an interactive Q&A. Presenters are experts from a wide variety of relevant fields.

The Zoom format allows for greater participation and convenience.

The presentations are recorded and the videos can be viewed at the link below:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/8054025>



If you have native plants that are outgrowing their space,

we may be able to help you dig them to donate to our school garden, or sell at our plant sale.

Our Annual Native Plant Sale is actually a year-round project that anyone can contribute to in some way. Great team work has made this event successful. It is how we fund Nature Camp scholarships, school gardens, local parks, and donations to VNPS initiatives such as the Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora.

<https://vaplantatlas.org/>

You Are Invited:

VNPS 2025 Annual Workshop via Zoom

Advancements of Our Understanding of Virginia Flora
March 19 and March 26, 7-9 pm both sessions (4)

Read and register for free at this link:

<https://vnps.org/events/vnps-annual-winter-workshop-2025-via-zoom/>



Welcome New Members!

Susan Armentrout	Saluda
Erica Chigos-White	Yorktown
Michelle Davis	Williamsburg
Mary White	Williamsburg
Rod White	Williamsburg
Stephen Mankowski	Williamsburg



If a friend shared this newsletter with you, and you'd like to join as a member, go to <https://vnps.org/johnclayton/membership> to find out more. Gift membership is also available. Help us spread the love for native plants and wild spaces. *Thank You!*