



CF Sundrops (Oenothera fruticosa)

Claytonia



John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant

Sundrops

(Oenothera fruticosa)

This perennial has much to offer! Supports pollinators such as native bees, sphinx moths, and skipper butterflies. The nectar attracts humming-birds, and the seeds are a favorite of goldfinches and mourning doves. It has few problems with diseases or pests but needs at least six hours of sunlight.

January-February

Think Spring!

vnps.org/johnclayton



Please join us! Thursday, February 19th 7pm

An Ecologist's Guide to Gardening In the Coastal Plain Part 2 of Climate Resilient Gardening 101

Luísa Black Ellis Founding Director
Elizabeth River Project's
Ryan Resilience Lab

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2274484759?omn=89767962909>

Meeting ID: 227 448 4759

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Marie Roberston
"At Large"

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Bio

Luísa Black Ellis is a Brazilian-American poet, third-generation educator, and life-long lover of plants listening devotionally to the land and waters in traditional Nansemond territory. She is the founding director of the Elizabeth River Project's Ryan Resilience Lab, a global model for coastal resilience, where she uses interdisciplinary art, science, and play to spark hope and action on behalf of the river's future. Luísa has the great privilege of being married to renowned artist JJJJerome Ellis. They live together on a creek in Norfolk, VA, where they see at least one heron almost every day.

About the Presentation:

Native plants awareness is everywhere these days – but are we really gardening ecologically, or are we just swapping out species based on arbitrary borders? This talk moves beyond "native plant tunnel vision 101" to dig into the big picture of native plants from a restoration practitioner's perspective. Learn how an ecological mindset – rooted in restoration outcomes and guided by the plant palettes of our natural communities – can transform our gardens into vibrant, resilient habitats. Join us to reimagine gardening in the Coastal Plain, where every plant choice can help heal the landscape.

Coming March 5th "The Claudius Project: Poisonous Mushrooms in VA page 4

Inspiring and Supporting Students at William & Mary

Martha A. Case, Associate Professor of Biology, Director of the William & Mary Herbarium, College Conservator of Botanical Collections

We are deeply grateful to the John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society for their generous support of student research focused on the conservation and documentation of Virginia's native flora. This award of \$2,500, in honor of Lucile Kossodo, directly strengthens our shared mission: to increase knowledge of the Commonwealth's plant diversity and to support the scientific foundation needed for effective conservation.

The selected student will work closely with the William & Mary Herbarium (WILLI), contributing to ongoing field botany initiatives and research using our 83,000+ specimen collection – one of the most significant botanical resources in the region.

Through this grant, the John Clayton Chapter is not merely supporting a single student; it is inspiring and investing in the next generation of botanists and conservation leaders. Their work will enrich the herbarium's collections, yield data that benefit land managers and conservation partners, and strengthen the scientific infrastructure upon which plant conservation in Virginia depends.

Last year was a strong one for us. We have witnessed rising interest in our native flora on campus, with the College's new 100year comprehensive landscape plan prioritizing the preservation and display of native plants. We launched two new internships – one based in the herbarium and one in our living woody plant collections – to train students in botanical curation and expose them to the work of research botanists. And our botany courses continue to experience remarkable growth in student interest.

I am continually inspired by the curiosity and commitment our students bring to studying Virginia's flora. Your gift is timely and will help us capture their interest and channel it into a lifelong commitment to understanding and protecting the Commonwealth's native plants. We look forward to sharing updates on the projects your support will make possible.

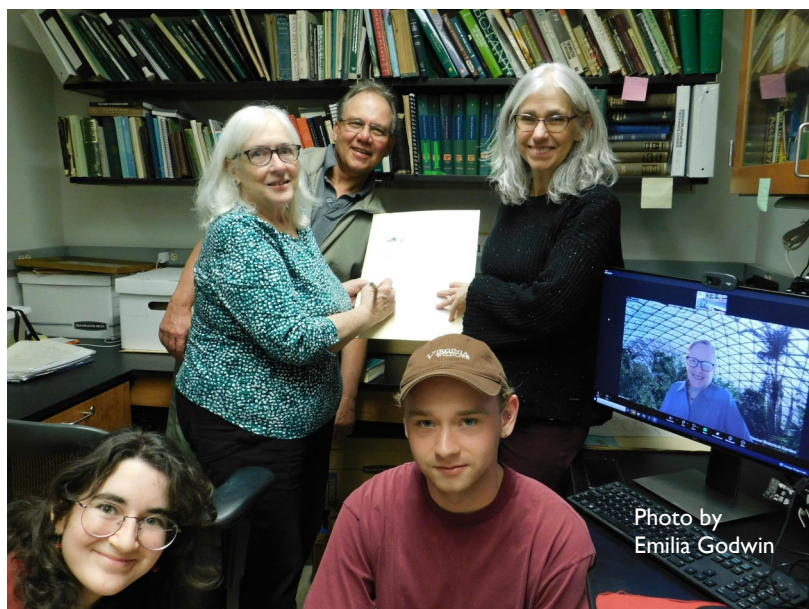


Photo by
Emilia Godwin

Pictured (from left to right): **Elena Ottens**, undergraduate student, William & Mary; **Cathy Flanagan**, President, John Clayton Chapter/VNPS; **Dr. Matthias Leu**, Professor and Chair, Biology Department, William & Mary; **Alex Rawlings**, undergraduate student, William & Mary; **Beth Chambers**, Herbarium Curator, Department of Biology, William & Mary; **Dr. Martha Case**, Associate Professor of Biology and Director of the William & Mary Herbarium (via computer screen)



Greetings everyone! No matter what the groundhog said, John Clayton Chapter is springing into action to prepare for its 41st Annual Native Plant Sale. For this message, however, I would like to recap for everyone just how much of an impact our chapter was able to make because of the village of enthusiastic chapter members, experts, volunteers, scouts, nature camp students, parents, and members of the public. It was a great turnout and a show of a rising level of interest and understanding about the importance of native plants. We brought in **\$14,974**.

Since one of our major roles is education, the plant sale is held at the Williamsburg Community Building where we have plenty of space out of the rain and for an informational area with displays, literature and experts on hand to advise shoppers. While interest in native plants is growing, there are still not enough local native plant nurseries where the public can buy them. In support of education we were happy to be able to contribute \$1500 to the Flora of Virginia Project.

Other Projects supported in 2025 :

Stonehouse Elementary School Garden

This has been a Chapter project for many years beginning with Jan Newton who had the garden certified as a Wildlife Habitat in 2004. Over the years the garden has earned a number of awards and a few scouts have earned their Eagle Scout badge for working on this project. John Clayton Chapter Board Member Jennifer Myers is the current Garden Steward, native plant expert, and landscape designer. She has labeled all the native plants in the garden with durable signs. In the fall and spring she teaches gardening through the after school SHIP program. John Clayton Chapter supports this project and contributed **\$2150** to maintenance and repairs .

Nature Camp

The chapter has regularly supported three nature camp scholarships. The students often come to the plant sale to help and observe. This year 3 scholarships totaled **\$3150**

Speakers//Field Trips

The chapter contributed **\$650** to invite experts in their field to speak to the chapter via zoom. or conduct a walk or field trip.

Southeast VA Native Guide Books !

These recently updated guidebooks are an outstanding resource as well as an affordable one at \$5 each. Our cost was \$4 ea. and will be an important part of our plant sale this May.

\$2000

Collaborations/Small grants

This past fall the chapter contributed \$300 to a new event, organized by the Friends of the Williamsburg Library and HRC Master Naturalists "Fall Plant Share" The experiment was successful and we plan to hold it again.

John Clayton Chapter is always interested in providing small grants for native plant worthy projects. Please contact Emilia Godwin Jccvnps2@gmail.com

Please Join us on Thursday, March 5th, 7pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2274484759?omn=84034799527>

With a recent increase in mushroom poisonings, UVA Health and Virginia Master Naturalists formed a team to research, write, and produce a guide to poisonous mushrooms in Virginia.

The two-year project, called the “Claudius Project” recently completed its 127-page guide which contains descriptions and color photographs of the most significant poisonous mushrooms found in Virginia.

Kevin Howe, one of the authors, will discuss the project and introduce the new publication.. A demonstration walk will take place later in the year.

The publication is available online and may be downloaded at no cost::

<https://med.virginia.edu/brpc/the-learning-center/the-claudius-project/>.

Kevin grew up in California and did his undergraduate work at University of California, Berkeley, followed by graduate schools at California State Sonoma (M.S.) and Oregon State University (Ph.D.) focusing on Ichthyology (the study of fish) and Aquatic Ecology.

Thereafter, he taught at Willamette University, University of Southern Mississippi, Oregon State University and University of Washington. Teaching included ichthyology, conservation biology, vertebrate zoology, field biology, aquatic ecology. At various times, he also worked for The Nature Conservancy, US EPA, and the Smithsonian Institution. **He retired in 2015.**



Kevin Howe, *Retired*
Ecologist and Marine Biologist
Master Naturalist
Vice President, Virginia Native Plant Society
(VNPS)
Vice President, Northern Neck Chapter,





2026 Native Plant Sale!

*May 2, 9:30 am - 2:00 pm, Community Building
401 N. Boundary St., Williamsburg*

The annual plant sale is our most anticipated event, educating the community about the benefits of native plants, as well as raising funds for Nature Camp and other chapter programs. An event of this magnitude is impossible to organize without the support of members and community volunteers. Here's how you can help.

Potting Party Participation

Help pot up native plants, get to know other members, learn about native plants. The potting parties are a good opportunity to bring any empty pots you have. Contact Janet at jeclundin@gmail.com for dates and other details.

Additional ways to volunteer before and during the chapter Native Plant Sale.

Native Plant Donations

Virginia native plants, especially those well-suited to the habitat of Southeastern Virginia, are appreciated and essential for our flora and fauna. Empty one-gallon pots for transplanting them are also needed.

Plant Sale Day (May 2)

There are plenty of opportunities on the day of the event: set-up and clean-up, cashiers, plant experts, plant table monitors, and information table.

Plant Transportation

We need people with a van, truck, or SUV to help transport plants to the plant sale site, Williamsburg Community Building, early in the morning of Saturday, May 2.

For any questions about the Native Plant Sale, contact Adrienne Frank adriennefrankgarydriscole@gmail.com

Visit www.vnps.org/johnclayton for updates. Thank you to all members and volunteers who join us in support of the 2026 Native Plant sale!



Join Us on Zoom!

Zoom lectures allow for a greater choice of speakers and more convenience. The presentations are always recorded and the videos can be viewed at the link below

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



Ghost Pipes (*Monotropa uniflora*)



VIRGINIA NATIVE
PLANT SOCIETY

**John Clayton Chapter
VNPS
PO Box 1128
Williamsburg VA
23187**

Ghost Pipes 2026 Wildflower of the Year

Each year, we select a native plant to be celebrated and learned about as we spread knowledge about native plants and their habitats to the wider community. In 2026, a less well-known plant will carry an important message: some native plants are better observed and appreciated in their natural habitats. Ghost Pipes/*Monotropa uniflora* is one of those native plants that don't belong in our gardens where they are difficult, if not impossible, to cultivate, but in the wild where they thrive – often-times unnoticed - and appear year after year.

An herbaceous perennial that lacks chlorophyll which makes it mostly white and, rarely, pink or red, Ghost Pipes receives nutrients through fungi growing at its roots. The plant is native to all Virginia counties but is an elusive denizen of “mesic to dry upland forests” sharing space with conifers, as well as chestnut, beach and oak trees. You can read all about Ghost Pipes at Wildflower of the Year 2026: [Wildflower of the Year 2026: Ghost Pipes \(*Monotropa uniflora*\) - Virginia Native Plant Society](#) and help protect its habitats.

The T-Shirt Design Contest featuring Ghost Pipes is open for entries until March 15. If you know an artist who might want to participate, send them this link :

[2026 Wildflower of the Year T-Shirt Design Contest - Virginia Native Plant Society](#)

Extra—Read All About It!

[Plant SEVA Natives — Plant Virginia Natives](#)

The New Southeast Native Plant Guide Books are in and selling for \$5 each. John Clayton Chapter bought a large supply and you will likely find Adrienne Frank various club meetings and events with a stack of books. The cover has not changed but the content has been updated and much improved.

