



# Claytonia

Newsletter of the John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

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## From the President

John Clayton Chapter is funded by VNPS memberships, but more importantly from the proceeds of the plant sale, our major fund-raiser. Our daily operations include expenses for outreach such as printing brochures and constructing displays, postage and printing of the newsletter. Scholarships, awards and donations are funded by the plant sale. This year we made significant donations to the Flora of Virginia project, awarded four scholarships to Nature Camp, and donated books to the William and Mary Herbarium and to the York County Library, which hosts our meetings.

While our chapter members all have an interest in native plants, it is important to talk to gardeners who are not aware of the threat of invasive alien plants, loss of habitat from development fragmentation, and the crucial bond between native plants and indigenous wildlife. Birds, bees, and butterflies obtain more nutrients from familiar plants than from horticultural varieties imported from other localities. Chapter members who lead field trips, present talks to local groups, and talk with friends and neighbors are performing important outreach.

The Flora of Virginia is a ten-year project to describe all of Virginia's native flora, with line drawings for further identification. The state of Virginia has not had a flora until this initiative; botanists have depended upon flora catalogued in North Carolina, West Virginia, and Maryland for technical information. Publication is scheduled for 2010; project lead is Chris Ludwig, Division of Natural Heritage, Department of Conservation and Recreation in Richmond. John Clayton Chapter member Bland Crowder is responsible for creating the index. Bland lives in Richmond, and has another membership with the Pocahontas Chapter. We are grateful that we can support the Flora of Virginia with a significant contribution each year, thanks to funds generated by the plant sale.

Young people with an interest in nature and the out-of-doors have been stimulated by experiences at Nature Camp to pursue careers in botany, ecology, and related fields. We presented scholarships to four worthy candidates this year, and suggested they attend a botany class at Nature Camp. The recipients all showed potential for a botanical career.

Board members and the Awards Committee members are all aware of the work of members who helped with the plant sale, and are careful to spend the funds wisely. Native plant societies should educate, inform and train gardeners and the general public about the proper use of native plant material. Our expenditures follow these guidelines

**Helen Hamilton**

## Our next meeting on July 17: Tales from the Tall Grass Prairie!

Helen Hamilton, Carolyn and Ralph Will, Edith Bradbury and Dorothy Geyer will describe their visit to the Tallgrass Prairie Preserves in Kansas, and we can expect to see beautiful photos of prairie wildflowers and grasses, and hear tales of their experiences in the tallgrasses and in the historic sites in the area.

**Where and when:** York County Library at the intersection of Battle Rd. and Route 17 in Yorktown, 7 pm.

**Donna Ware**

## March 16 Tripetala Walk

Due to an overcast sky and unusual spring weather, the walk on March 16 to Mary Berg's Tripetala site proved to be slightly early to see bloodroot and hepatica carpeting the woodland. We did see a few opened bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) blossoms and a few liverworts (*Hepatica americana*) were showing their beautiful little faces. We also saw many toothworts (*Cardamine concatenata*) and moneyworts (*Obolaria virginica*) in bloom. A box turtle was found by Callie, daughter of Jan and Jim Newton. Two fledgling American woodcocks were almost stepped on as their mother tried to act as a decoy, flying off in the opposite direction. The group was impressed with the numerous umbrella magnolia trees (*Magnolia tripetala*), the tree for which the site was named. Mary reports that the tripetala are blooming as I am writing this article on May 6th. After the walk my family and I went to Mary's home to see her goats and were delighted to see Carolina Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*) in full bloom.



Photo: Phillip Merritt

Our leader poses reluctantly, leaning against a *Magnolia tripetala*.

Jan Newton

### Photos of some of the flora (and fauna) seen on the Tripetala walk



Photo: Jan Newton

*Cardamine concatenata*



Photo: Jan Newton

*Hepatica americana*



Photo: Phillip Merritt

*Obolaria virginica*



Photo: Phillip Merritt

*Scolopax minor*

(This little fella must have been hard to spot!)

## April 19 Summerfield Walk

On April 19 Mary Hyde Berg led a walk at her home site, Summerfield, in Gloucester County. The walk began in Mary's naturalized front yard where red chokeberry (*Aronia arbutifolia*), Carolina Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), blackhaw (*Viburnum prunifolium*), black cherry, wild columbines and common blue violets were blooming. In the wooded area of the property dogwood, heartleaf ginger and pink lady slippers were in bloom. Marsh violet, lady smocks (*Cardamine bulbosa*), and blisterwort (*Ranunculus recurvatus*) were flowering near a brook. Blooming along the roadside were pinxter flower, red chokeberry, dogwood and an impressive stand of wild lupines (*Lupinus spp.*). Bracken fern, rattlesnake (*Botrychium virginianum*) and adder's tongue were among the eight fern species spotted.

Jan Newton

### ...and on the Summerfield walk



Photo: Jan Newton

From the left are Mark Chittenden, Gloria Heizler, Susan Chittenden, Mary Berg (trip leader) and Kathleen Kamper.



Photo: Jan Newton

*Gelsemium sempervirens*



Photo: Louise Menges

*Viburnum prunifolium*



Photo: Jan Newton

Beautiful blue lupines!



## Kyaking on Dragon Run April 15

Seated on the floor of the back of Teta Kain's pick-up, as we bounced down gravel lanes tightly bordered by tall young trees, we could feel our spirit of adventure rising. The day was chill and windy, but gratefully also blue and sunny. The truck stopped in a clearing dotted with colorful kayaks—red and yellow and blue and green—and we stumbled out to meet Bob and Garden, the men who with Teta would guide us down the Dragon.



Photo: Ronnie Cohen

Ready to go are, from left, Lucile Kossodo, Libby Oliver, Martha and Gary Smith.

We chose our kayaks, and a lifevest in matching or contrasting color, then brought the kayak to the 2×4 and canvas “slide” set on the bank. We were given radios sealed in plastic bags and fasteners for our glasses, then settled into our boat. One good shove and “swoosh!”—we were in the tea-brown but very clear water of Dragon Run. On both shores in the shallower water we could see bright young green duckweed, and towering above us the cypress were still in their winter brown. Rarely is the river more than 7 feet deep, and often much shallower.

Teta pointed out the feather-foil, with its tight little “broccoli sprouts” rising from underwater feathery fans. It is endangered everywhere in Virginia except this tiny unpopulated river. Dragon Run is often ¼ to ½ mile wide, but the

“path” of clear water is usually no more than twice as wide as your kayak or canoe. You can paddle through the knotweed growing everywhere, but the clear water is easier. Wild celery frequently streams beneath you like the long green tresses of some unseen naiad. The big lotus-y leaves of spatterdock were starting to send up the buds that would make small golden dots later in the summer.



Photo: Louise Menges

**spatterdock**  
(*Nuphar lutea*)

Once we paddled out of sight of the clearing, we would see almost no signs of human activity. There were occasional duck boxes about head high hoping to encourage the wood duck, and at one point a pair of rusty cables from a winch in the top of an old cypress, a reminder of logging days decades gone.

Once there was a bench on a grassy stretch of river's edge, but more usually the edge of the river's path is marked by a palisade of cypress knees marching down either side, too closely spaced to allow any side excursions into tempting coves or inlets.



Photo: Patsy Wells

*Cypress knee guardians*

At one opening, we paddled into the river weeds and juvenile cypress to stabilize and “park” our kayaks while we broke out our various lunches and ate sitting in our stiff-backed seats. A new take on drive-in fast food.



Photo: Patsy Wells

*An al fresco lunch (“paddle-in” fast food?)*

Spring as yet had produced few flowers, but zebra swallowtail, dragonfly and damselfly flitted over the green, and frog eggs were very thick on top of any still water. We passed an apparently abandoned eagle's nest atop a dead cypress that one of our travelers claimed could have held a cow. It was huge. Later, the river widened into a rippling stillness with trees, clouds and sky reflected in a clarity of color Monet would have envied—until a sudden breeze erased the picture with a swift brush.

As we progressed toward our pullout point, several beaver-dams impeded progress. Some had still a small channel flowing over them, toward which we took careful aim and tried to shoot across too rapidly to get hung up on the dam. In other places, our guides had to get out and stand on the dam, pulling away enough sticks to make a narrow way for us. In most of these places, they had done the same thing the day before! Beavers *are* busy.



Photo: Patsy Wells

The place and the quiet folded us up like prayer as we sank deeper into a slower, once-upon-a-time world. By the time our 3 ½ hours on the river were over (with about 3 miles traveled), we were stilled and refreshed to resume our days. And all of that less than 30 miles from home!

**Eunice Hyer**

### The 2008 plant sale

A very successful event! Patti Gray, Plant Sale Chairman, reported a net profit of \$4238.25. We earned \$334 more this year with 98 fewer sales—apparently fewer people bought more plants.

Many thanks to the Plant Sale committee who donated many hours of planning and coordinating and organizing—Lucile Kossodo, Jan Newton, Ada Lou Turner, and Joan Etchberger. And to our fantastic chairman, Patti Gray, who has superior organizational skills, lots of patience, and the ability to remain calm while the sky is falling around her! (Well, there was a lot of scrambling when seven of the promised tables had disappeared, and tables had to be found elsewhere.)



Photo: Jan Newton

*Patti Gray, Plant Sale Chairman, hands out orders for the day to Pat Gibbs, left, and Becky Sutton, center.*

Potting parties were held at the homes of Cynthia Long, Jan Newton (*twice!*), Ada Lou Turner, and Sylvia and Sid Sterling. Many hands made light work—well, it was



Photo: Jan Newton

*Bring 'em on—Ada Lou Turner, Patrick Richardson, and Phillip Merritt are ready!*

cold and rainy a few days and some sessions were several hours long. Thanks to Lucile Kossodo who gets a gold star for attending all the potting parties, along with Cynthia Long, Laurie Houghland, Patti Gray, Jan Newton, Dorothy Whitfield, Leslie Herman, Helen Hamilton, Ada Lou Turner, Sylvia and Sid Sterling, Edie Bradbury, Lorna Wass and Gloria Diggs.



Photo: Art Gustafson

*Helen Hamilton and Sue Voigt (wearing two hats—Master Gardener **and** VNPS member) at the education tent.*

Plants were donated by: Sid and Sylvia Sterling, Cynthia and Bob Long, Jan Newton, Lucile Kossodo, Patti Gray, Lorna Wass, Donna Ware, Mary Berg, Hayes and Joyce Williams, Edie Bradbury, Ada Lou Turner, Helen Hamilton, Bland Blackford, Phillip Merritt and Sue Voigt.

Cashiers on sale day were Lucile, Sid, and Patti's friend Felicia Purdey. At the education tent were Helen Hamilton, Phillip Merritt, Lorna Wass.

And many members performed multi-tasks such as delivering plants, unloading plants, moving tables, arranging plants, advising customers, preparing tallies, cleaning up, and finding homes for orphan plants: Jim Etchberger, Sylvia and Sid Sterling, Cynthia and Bob Long, Pat



Baldwin, Patrick Richardson, Phillip Merritt, Jan Newton and family, Bland Blackford, Edith Bradbury, Lee Bristow, Jeff Lane, Pat Gibbs, Rita Christianson, Sue Voight, Tanya Wilson, Ada Lou Turner and Laurie Houghland.

John Clayton Chapter members have been working steadily since early in the year on this event. Everyone listed above made important contributions to the success of the sale. Many thanks to all for a job very well done!

**Helen Hamilton**



Photo: Jan Newton

Some of the hundreds of plants raised and potted for the sale.

### Work at New Quarter Park is underway

Two groups were working with plants Thursday, April 10 at New Quarter Park. Laurie Houghland, Historic River Chapter Master Naturalist, and friends were installing plants along Loop 1, a project to create an learning walkway. Shirley Devan and other Historic Rivers Chapter Master Naturalists were pulling invasive plants from the edge of the bobwhite quail restoration area on Friday, April 11.

Both projects were also approved by the John Clayton Chapter, VNPS Board and the Historic River Chapter Board of the Master Naturalists, with the bobwhite restoration also partnered with the Williamsburg Bird Club and York County Parks and Recreation.

**Helen Hamilton**



Photo: Helen Hamilton

Friday's work crew, who planted donated blue stem grass from Cynthia Long and some broom sedge brought by the Wills. Left to right: Patty Riddick, Larry Riddick (Historic Rivers Chapter, VA Master Naturalists), Carolyn Will, Ralph Will (John Clayton Chapter, VNPS), and Alice Kopinitz and Seig Kopinitz (Williamsburg Bird Club and Historic Rivers Chapter, VA Master Naturalists).

### Earth Day Display

Our chapter manned a display booth at the Earth Day celebration on April 19 on the terrace of the University Center at the College of William and Mary. Thanks to Sara and Ray Nugent who erected the tent and talked with visitors, Patti Gray who brought plants for display and sale (donation!) and Beth Chambers who added her expertise to the discussions. Patti Gray took this picture of chapter president Helen Hamilton with the College's Interim President W. Taylor Reveley III.



Photo: Patti Gray

### School Environmental Award

At an Earth Day Ceremony in Williamsburg on April 22nd, the Stonehouse Elementary School won the 2008 School Environmental Award for James City County for their efforts in recycling, conservation and environmental education. The Stonehouse Student Council, along with teachers, staff, students and parent volunteers, began collecting plastic bottles and plastic grocery bags near the beginning of the school year. Second grade teacher, Julie Martin says, "We save literally hundreds of water,

juice and milk containers from the landfill each week." This effort grew into the recycling of paper and cardboard as well. The school's Habitat was also acknowledged by the award. The Stonehouse Elementary School's Habitat serves as an outdoor classroom for learning about conservation, erosion, soil, native plants, wildlife, and habitats. Native plants and other elements in the habitat were carefully chosen to provide food, water, shelter, and nesting areas for wildlife. Led by parent volunteer and John Clayton chapter member Jan Newton, Habitat Helpers are a group of students that give up their recess time once a week to maintain the habitat during the school year.

Jan Newton is leading a series of walks in the Stonehouse Elementary Habitat that focus on native plants in the landscape. Check the website, [www.claytonvnps.org](http://www.claytonvnps.org) (Fieldtrips and Events) or call her at (757)566-3646, for upcoming Habitat walks. Jan would also like to report that the school is very thankful for the plant labels that our chapter provides to the Habitat. The labels list the common and scientific names for the plants and, it was reported that they were very helpful during a walk at the school led by Sue Voigt during the state VNPS annual meeting and conference this past September. Our chapter also benefits from the extra and/or 'baby' plants that the Habitat donates to our plant sale each year.

**Jan Newton**



Photo: Jan Newton

Golden ragwort thrives in the Stonehouse Elementary Habitat.

### In appreciation of lacewings



Also known as “aphid lions”, lacewing larvae are voracious predators. Commonly found in grass, weeds, and on the foliage of trees and shrubs, most adult lacewings are greenish in

color and have beautiful golden-colored eyes. The eggs are unusual in that each egg is laid on the end of a tiny stalk.

Because young larvae are susceptible to desiccation, they may need a source of moisture. Adult lacewings need nectar or honeydew as food before egg laying and they also feed on pollen. Therefore, plantings should include flowering plants, and a low level of aphids should be tolerated.

Several species of aphids, spider mites (especially red mites), thrips, whiteflies, eggs of leafhoppers, moths, and leafminers, small caterpillars, beetle larvae, and the tobacco budworm are reported prey for the lacewing larvae.

Recently, USDA Agricultural Research Service scientists have identified a compound in catnip that mimics the pheromone emitted from the male lacewing to attract females. Lacewing lures, produced from catnip oil, should be available this year.

Other studies have demonstrated that carrot family plants like angelica, dill, and cilantro attract lacewings and provide for their needs. Add a little catnip to your flower and vegetable beds and you may see more lacewings—as well as pollinators and butterflies—on pest patrol in your garden.

**Helen Hamilton**

### Spring beauties



Photo: Jan Newton

Jan Newton reports that spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) was in full bloom and blanketing an area at Grafton Ponds Natural Area Preserve on

April 19 this year. She recommends scheduling a walk there next year around the same time.

Louise Menges was excited to see a number of Jamestown lilies (*Zephyranthes atamasco*) in bloom on Mother's Day, near Black's Point on Jamestown Island.



Photo: Louise Menges

### From Mary Hyde...

#### About Harriet Frye

Our member Harriet Frye, author of *The Great Forest, John Clayton and Flora\**, incorporated her extensive research in an engaging little book, which some of you have read (and all should). She published it in 1990 at her expense, and donated several hundred copies to our chapter. We have only 2 or 3 copies left, but both Gloucester County libraries have this little treat. She continued her study of Clayton, and placed her notes and documentation at the Library of Virginia.

Today Harriet resides in Lebanon, New Hampshire, near her daughter Ellen. Harriet and her writer husband, John Frye, would have celebrated 74 years of marriage this May. Sadly, John died in late February after a short illness. A memorial service is planned in Hampton this spring for John. There is a lot more to tell about Harriet and her researches and I hope to share more later.

\*ISBN 0-9628446-0-8 Dragon Run Books, Hampton, VA, 1990

## Gloria's Goodies

### Pinwheels

2 cups	chopped cooked chicken, ham or tuna (Gloria's favorite)
1 cup	chopped broccoli (if desired)
½ cup	chopped peppers
1	garlic clove, minced
2	green onions, chopped
¼ cup	celery, chopped
	green peas (can be frozen)
	corn
	asparagus (frozen if fresh is not available)

(or any combination of vegetables from the garden or freezer)

Steam the raw vegetables in a little olive oil for 10 minutes, add any frozen vegetables, and turn off the heat. When cool, place in a bowl and add meat, plus

½ cup	mayonnaise
1 heaping tsp	mustard
2 tsp	dill, basil or other herbs from the garden
½ tsp	salt
4 oz	sharp cheddar cheese
2 tubes	crescent rolls

Unroll one package of rolls, but do not separate, and lay out on sheet of floured wax paper. Roll thin with a rolling pin and join all seams. Cover with the vegetable/meat mixture and roll into a long roll with the help of the wax paper. Seal the edge and chill for 1 hour. Slice into rounds and bake in a 350° to 375° oven until golden brown.

Cool on a wire rack. These freeze well; warm before serving.

## Membership Form for VNPS (Place checks in the boxes below next to your selections.)

Yes, I want to  **join**  **renew my membership in** the John Clayton Chapter.

Name		
Address		
City	State	Zip
email	Phone	

### Membership dues

Individual (\$30)  Family (\$40)  Patron (\$50)  Sustaining (\$100)  Life (\$500)

Student (\$15)  Associate (\$40) —for groups who designate one person as delegate

I wish to make an additional contribution in the amount of \$

to VPNS  to John Clayton Chapter

This is a gift membership; please include a card with my name as donor.

I have  time  a little time  no time to help with activities.

I do not wish to be listed in a chapter directory.

*Please Note:* John Clayton Chapter does not distribute any of our membership information to other organizations. It is used only by the officers and chairpersons of our chapter.

Make your check payable to VNPS and mail to: VNPS Membership Chair  
400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2  
Boyce, VA 22610



## Calendar

Thurs, June 12	<b>7 pm: John Clayton Chapter Board meeting</b> in Room B, Williamsburg Regional Library; members are encouraged to bring your concerns, comments or suggestions before the board.
Wed, June 25	<b>10 am: Native Plants in the Landscape</b> Jan Newton will lead a walk through the Habitat garden at Stonehouse Elementary School located at 3651 Rochambeau Drive in Williamsburg. The Habitat contains over 70 species of native small trees, shrubs, perennials and ferns. The habitat features plants that attract birds and butterflies. Expect to see sweet goldenrod, bee balm, meadow beauty, green-headed coneflower, lance-leaf coreopsis, blanket flower, brown-eyed Susans, and more. Wheelchair accessible. Free and open to the public. Please call 757/566-3646 to register.
Sat, June 28	<b>10 am: VNPS Fieldtrip - Blackwater Ecological Preserve</b> This is the second of the Virginia Native Plant Society series of field trips for 2008 to some of the most botanically interesting preserves the state has to offer. Blackwater Ecological Preserve in Isle of Wight County, with an area of 318 acres, is situated on dry to mesic sand ridges and has two of Virginia's rarest plant communities—longleaf pine-turkey oak flatwoods and longleaf pine savannas. Preserve Steward Darren Loomis will lead this trip. Limited to 20 participants. Easy to moderate. Only heavy rain will cancel trip.  For more info and to register visit the VNPS state site at <a href="http://www.vnps.org">www.vnps.org</a> . Time: 10 am to about 1 pm. Fee: \$10 per hike. Registration is required at least 10 days before the hike.
Sat, July 12	Byron Carmean will lead a <b>Big Tree Drive-Around</b> through western Gloucester Co. Please call Mary Hyde Berg (804/693-3568) for details, or check your newspaper for details on this and other trips.
Thurs, Aug. 21	<b>10 am: Native Plants in the Landscape</b> Jan Newton will lead a second walk through the Habitat garden at the Stonehouse Elementary School located at 3651 Rochambeau Drive in Williamsburg. The Habitat contains over 70 species of native small trees, shrubs, perennials and ferns. The habitat features plants that attract birds and butterflies. Expect to see New York ironweed, Joe-pye weed, cardinal flower, cup plant, sweet goldenrod, obedient plant, blue vervain, and more. Wheelchair accessible. Free and open to the public. Please call 757/566-3646 to register.

## Welcome to some new members

We welcome new members Laura and Richard Barhydt, Adrienne McKinney (all from Williamsburg) and Gail Mann (from Yorktown) to the John Clayton Chapter, VNPS.

### Let's go green!

We will continue to post a pdf of our newsletter on our website, [www.claytonvnps.org](http://www.claytonvnps.org), and mail the newsletter to our members who prefer a paper copy. We have decided to return to bimonthly newsletters beginning with this issue, as it has proved difficult to get news to you about upcoming events in a timely way with quarterly issues. *I am also emailing a pdf of this issue to everyone for whom we have a current email address*, in hopes that you'll enjoy receiving it this way, and that more of you will elect to get your newsletter electronically.

**Louise Menges**