



Claytonia

Newsletter of the John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

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vnps.org/johnclayton

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Our November 19 speaker is Gary Fleming, whose topic will be "The Ecological Regions and Natural Communities of Virginia."

From the Atlantic coast to the spruce-fir forests at more than 5,700 feet elevation on Mount Rogers, the landscape of Virginia encompasses an extraordinary range of landforms, topography, and biological habitats. This presentation will explore the large-scale environmental and biotic gradients that influence Virginia, and present an overview of the natural features and communities in each of five physiographic provinces that intersect the state. The status of natural area protection in these regions, as well as some of the management issues that natural area land managers deal with regularly, will also be addressed.



Gary Fleming next to an old friend

Gary Fleming is a senior vegetation ecologist at the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage Program with more than 35 years of experience in botanical and ecological inventory of natural areas in the mid-Atlantic region. Since joining the Natural Heritage Program in 1992, Mr. Fleming and his colleagues have been responsible for field inventory of natural communities in all regions of Virginia and the development of a state-wide vegetation classification based on quantitative data from more than 4700 plot samples.

Mr. Fleming was a contributing writer for the recently published *Flora of Virginia*, producing two introductory chapters and all the habitat information in the species accounts. He is also a long-time member and current President of the Virginia Botanical Associates, and a co-author of that group's *Atlas of the Virginia Flora III* (1992) and current on-line *Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora*.

In 2011, he and two collaborators described a new species of hedgenettle (*Stachys*, Lamiaceae) endemic to southern Virginia and North Carolina, which was published in the *Journal of Botanical Research Institute Texas* (5:9–18). Additional studies by Mr. Fleming and his colleagues has been published in *Castanea*, *Banisteria*, the *Virginia Journal of Science*, and other scientific journals.

The meeting begins at 6:45 at the **James City County Rec Center at 5301 Longhill Road, Williamsburg**. See you there!

From the President

Here it is a year since I became president. A lot has happened. We donated to the VNPS Fundraiser to expand the Natural Cedars Area and helped VNPS successfully raise the funds needed to purchase this section! It was exciting. The Cedars Natural Area Preserve supports an exceptional natural community of rocky, dry, limestone glades and woodlands located in southwest Virginia. The preserve lies within a significant karst region known as The Cedars, which covers 30 to 40 square miles in Lee County near the Powell River. The characteristic feature of the landscape here is “karst”, where thin soils develop over easily-dissolved limestone bedrock, creating terrain that tends to be rolling, rocky, rugged, and full of sink-holes, caves, and sinking streams. The preserve is a haven for rare plants which are adapted to the mostly thin, nutrient-poor soils.

An initiative to produce a Regional Native Plant Guide for Hampton Roads is being developed now. This native plant guide would be similar to those in print for Eastern Shore, Northern Neck, Northern Virginia, and the Central Piedmont. These guides are beautiful. They include good pictures and descriptions of the plants, how to grow them, and where they would be suitable in the home landscape. A link to the guides online can be found at www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/CoastalZoneManagement/CZMIssuesInitiatives/NativePlants.aspx. The guides that have already been produced are beautiful. They are a wonderful resource for a gardener interested in adding natives. They will also help growers, landscapers, and garden centers to know which natives to market to the public in our area.

I read an interesting article about birds and native vs. non-native plants by Johnny Randall, Director of Conservation Programs at the NC Botanical Garden. He states that invasive and foreign shrubs that have fruits are high in carbohydrates, whereas native shrubs have fruit that are higher in protein and lipids/fats. Birds exposed to those invasive plants are choosing candies over cheeseburgers, which affects bird nutrition during fall migration. And to make matters worse, these invasive



fruits linger longer in availability, and our male cardinals that ingest the red fruit of Amur honeysuckle become very red and sickly. Unfortunately females will choose them rather than healthier male birds...it's always about too many carbs, isn't it?

Since I am still the plant chair for our sale, I would like to report that we have put into Winter Storage all the plants from our few generous donors who gave from their gardens, although this year we did not receive many plants. Due to work done at Stonehouse, we could not find many plants we usually get there, so we will have to spend more money to acquire plants for the sale. I grew many natives and dug into my expanding native plant garden and was able to donate about 300 pots for the sale. I would like to thank those that came to help us pot, although this year we did not have as many helpers come to our potting parties. Let me know if you have ideas to help us increase attendance at potting parties—I would be happy to hear them. Remember that this is our only fundraiser. This money helps us send students to Nature Camp, pay for all of our interesting speakers, and allows us to give donations to important causes. Please be more generous of your time in the Spring. Make the commitment to help us—we need you!

Lucile Kossodo

Cortney's Notes

As I write, the leaves on the trees are just beginning to turn their vibrant, fiery colors, and I enjoy a nice, warm fire. I hope the rest of you native plant lovers are enjoying this autumn's mild onset as much as I am.

The Board met Sept. 3, though only five members were present. We discussed whether we had enough bodies in the room to constitute a quorum and decided that, even if we technically did, we didn't feel right taking official action without more input from the other members. So, if you've been on the cusp, considering whether to volunteer for a board position, we hope that you'll make the leap. And with meetings only six times a year, you'd be in for a pretty laid-back experience.

We did discuss recent events at Stonehouse Habitat Garden. Increased security concerns at schools require increased sightlines around buildings, entrances, and exits. Because of a misunderstanding with the school, an unaffiliated group was invited to Stonehouse to make sure that the garden met these requirements. Since then, members of the native plant society have partnered with the school to ensure that the garden continues while security concerns are addressed. What the garden needs most are volunteers. Most Saturday mornings find Phillip Merritt working in the

garden. Join him and others on one of the planned workdays, or contact Phillip to help at other times. “Many hands make light work!”

Though the Board did not take any action at the meeting, they did later agree via email to a few initiatives. One was to donate \$500 to the state-wide VNPS annual campaign to purchase additional land in the Cedars Natural Preserve. Another was to take a position as a chapter against the proposed Legacy development in Poquoson that would reportedly destroy acres of forest and wetlands.

Rescue Report

The Williamsburg Native Plant Rescue Team recently had the opportunity to help a student-led project at the College of William & Mary.

Since last spring, the Student Environmental Action Coalition has been removing bamboo, honeysuckle and other invasives from the northern side of the iconic Crim Dell. Donna Ware and Phillip Merritt both visited the site to advise the students on plants and shrubs that would be appropriate for the sloped and in parts, soggy, site.

In mid-October SEAC scheduled a workday to remove bamboo by the roots and to revegetate with natives. The rescue team donated more than 65 herbaceous plants and shrubs to the project, including soft rush, columbine, goldenrod, high- and low-bush blueberry, viburnum, golden ragwort, mountain laurel, various ferns, and spicebush, among others.

Cortney Langley, Secretary

New members

We welcome new member **John Dorson** of Williamsburg to the John Clayton Chapter.

Recent walks (one official and one not so)

Noland Trail walk September 5

Virginia Horticulturist and Peninsula Master Gardener **Susie Yager** led 22 folks on a walk along the Noland Trail in Newport News that Saturday. Below is Suzi’s list of plants trekkers saw that day (no description or photos of this walk from any participants, though):

Shrubs

Smooth Alder (*Alnus serrulata*)

Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

Swamp Rose (*Rosa palustris*)

Rose Mallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*)



Cortney Langley

More than 60 plants were donated to a project removing invasives from W&M’s Crim Dell and re-vegetating with natives.

Wax Myrtle (*Morella cerifera*)
 Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*)
 Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*)
 Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)
 Devil's Walkingstick (*Aralia spinosa*)
 Winged Sumac (*Rhus copallinum*)
 2 or 3 *Vaccinums* (one perhaps *Gaylussacia*)
 Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*)
 Strawberry Bush (*Euonymus americanus*)

Vines

Groundnut Vine (*Apios americana*)
 Fox Grape (*Vitis labrusca*)
 Muscadine Grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*)
 Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)
 Poison Ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*)

Ferns

Sensitive Fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*)
 Netted Chain Fern (*Woodwardia areolata*)
 New York Fern (*Parathelypteris noveboracensis*)
 Silvery Glade Fern (*Deparia acrostichoides*)
 Bracken? Grape Fern?

Forbs

Hairy Leafcup (*Smallanthus uvedalius*)
 Jack in the Pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*)
 Elephant's Foot (*Elephantopus tomentosus*)
 Galax (*Galax urceolata*) Striped Wintergreen (*Chimaphila maculata*)
 Partridge Berry (*Mitchella repens*)

Socketed in at Skyland

In late September Ricky and I headed west to spend a couple of days at Skyland. The weather driving out to the mountains was sunny and pleasant and the weather driving back home was nice, too. Unfortunately, during our visit the vistas along Skyline Drive were obscured by rain, mist, or a combination of both—disappointing for Ricky, who had looked forward to getting lots of scenic photos, but less of a problem for my shots of vegetation spotted when we stopped at overlooks. While there, we ventured cautiously up or down Skyline Drive whenever the mist appeared to have lifted a little, but wound up spending a lot of time during our stay watching TV in our room!



A typical “vista” from an overlook

Here are some of the plants I spied along Skyline Drive (at least those I was able to identify, some with the help of Helen and Gus). The roadside was definitely dominated by members of the Aster Family.

- ▶ Plenty of *Centaurea* (maybe Spotted Knapweed, *Centaurea maculosa*)
- two euphorbias, one of which was *Euphorbia corollata*
- ▶ Crown vetch (*Securigera varia*)
- Wild Basil (*Clinopodium vulgare*) seedheads
- Rue Anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*) in seed
- ▶ Spotted Lady's Thumb (*Persicaria maculosa*)
- white, yellow and purple asters (lots of them!)
- many Field Thistles (*Cirsium discolor*)
- ▶ Common Chicory (*Cichorium intybus*)
- a variety of Goldenrods
- Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus typhina*)
- ▶ Soapwort (*Saponaria officinalis*)
- Paniced Tick-trefoil (*Desmodium paniculatum*)
- Yellow Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis stricta* or *O. dillenii*)
- ▶ Bladder Campion (*Silene vulgaris*)
- ▶ Common Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*)
- Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis*)
- Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*)
- Spotted Jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*)
- what appeared to be a Raspberry (*Rubus*) in fruit
- Virgin's Bower (*Clematis virginiana*) seedheads
- Fragrant Everlasting (*Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium*)
- milkweed seedpods (many)

I guess it shouldn't be surprising that nearly a third of the flowering plants in my list (those marked ▶) are introduced.

Louise Menges



Evening Primrose



Spotted Jewelweed



Seedheads of Virgin's Bower



Milkweed seedpods, complete with milkweed bugs (*Oncopeltus fasciatus*)



Field Thistles



White-flowered Asters

Plant Profile: Salt-tolerant Shrubs

In our area three salt-tolerant shrubs (or small trees) grow on pond shores and marsh edges. The most striking is *Baccharis halimifolia* or Groundsel Tree, covered with white fuzz. This is the female plant, the fruits covered with tufts of white silk that carry them to new destinations. It is known by many common names—Sea-myrtle, High-tide Bush, and Silverling, among others. The companion male trees are nearby, their small golden globular flowers bearing short yellow stamens that deliver pollen to visiting insects. This is a valuable source of food for late-season insects—syrphid flies, wasps, bees, and even grasshoppers have been seen feeding on the rich nectar and pollen. When the female fruits are fully developed, the male tree is inconspicuous, the flowers withered and indistinct. Research has shown the plant may be wind-pollinated also, the percentage of success being about equal for both methods. This tall shrub can grow to 12 feet, with many branches. The wedge-shaped leaves can persist through early winter, long after flowers have faded. Thriving in full sun, the plant can be somewhat weedy, but its roots hold the soil, preventing erosion in wetlands. It grows in fresh water and waters that are brackish, and can colonize roadsides, ditches, old fields and other disturbed areas.

Closer to the water's edge will be Marsh-elder or Sumpweed, *Iva frutescens*. Before the flowers appear, Marsh-elder and Groundsel Tree can be distinguished by their leaves. The lance-shaped leaves of Marsh-elder are opposite on the stem whereas those of Groundsel Tree are alternate and wedge-shaped. Marsh-elder is much-branched, growing to 8 feet, and can be somewhat leggy. Tiny nodding, greenish-white flower heads appear along the ends of stems, each accompanied by a small leaf-like bract. Blooming from August through November, the flowers are followed by dark, rounded fruits.

Both plants are members of the Aster Family, related to sunflowers and goldenrods. They usual-



A Painted Lady butterfly visits a female Groundsel Tree...



and a male Groundsel Tree's blooms also get a visit from a Painted Lady.



Marsh-elder

ly grow on upland borders of salt marshes where continuous flooding does not occur, but there are exceptions where they grow in ditches and canals. Marsh-elder is often nearer the water's edge, providing nesting habitat for birds such as the red-winged blackbird and the marsh wren.

Bayberries (*Morella* spp.) are a third group of shrubs or small trees often growing at the water's edge. Pocosin Bayberry (*M. caroliniensis* [*Myrica heterophylla*]) and Wax Myrtle (*M. cerifera*) are more tolerant of wet soils than Northern Bayberry (*M. pensylvanica*). With proper identification of these species, botanists and ecologists know the nature of the underlying soils.

Wax Myrtle, or Southern Bayberry, can be a shrub or even a tall gangly tree, growing vigorously and spreading by rhizomes. With regular pruning, this dependable native can be an excellent screening hedge. This species is common everywhere in the Coastal Plain. The evergreen leaves, mostly 4–6 times as long as wide, furnish winter habitat for small mammals and birds. The copious fruits with waxy coverings provide fuel for migrants and fat for over-wintering birds.



The waxy fruits of a Southern Bayberry

Northern Bayberry is a shrub, growing to 6 feet in drier habitats such as dunes and open inland sandy forests. It is a maritime species, common in the outer Coastal Plain on the Eastern Shore and in Virginia Beach city. Its larger leaves are about 3 times as long as wide; they are deciduous, but hold their leaves into winter. The twigs are more or less smooth and the fruits are somewhat larger than those of Wax Myrtle.

Pocosin Bayberry likes the wetter soils in bogs and peaty swamps. It occurs south of the James River, but is rare in the northern Coastal Plain. Its leaves are about 3 times as long as wide, more or less evergreen, but unlike the other two species, not fragrant, and the twigs are densely hairy. Early settlers used the fruits of bayberry species as a source of wax for candles and soap.

Myrtle (Yellow-rumped) Warblers are so named because they are often seen in these shrubs. They are winter residents in our area, able to survive on the fruits of juniper, poison ivy, and these bayberries. This has given them a large long-term advantage over most of our other warblers and many other birds which make increasingly perilous journeys to winter in the tropics, where there is massive habitat destruction.

Helen Hamilton and Gus Hall

Photos: Helen Hamilton

Three-month “Botanical Virginia” exhibit opens Dec. 5 at Jamestown Settlement

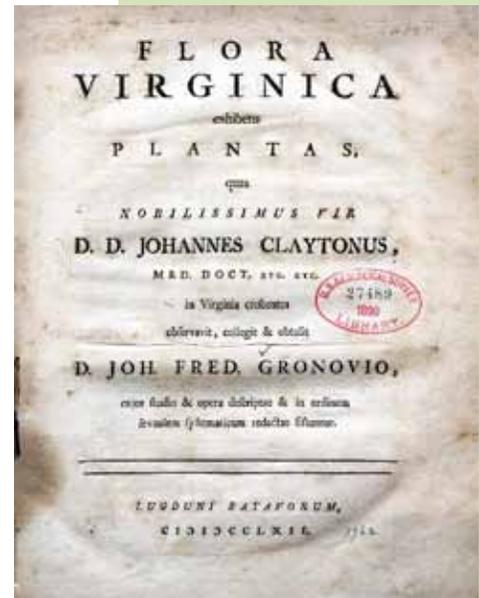
The beauty and variety of Virginia plant life is showcased in a three-month exhibit opening December 5 at Jamestown Settlement. **“Clayton & Catesby: Botanical Virginia”** explores documentation of native plants by naturalist Mark Catesby and botanist John Clayton in the 18th century and the Flora of Virginia Project in the 21st century.

On loan from the Garden Club of Virginia, 17 period hand-colored engravings created from Catesby’s watercolor paintings of American flora and fauna will be exhibited alongside a 1762 edition of *Flora Virginica*, based on Clayton’s work. The exhibit, which is curated by the Flora of Virginia Project, also will include tools used for studying and collecting plants, biographies of Catesby and Clayton, and a short film on the Flora of Virginia Project.

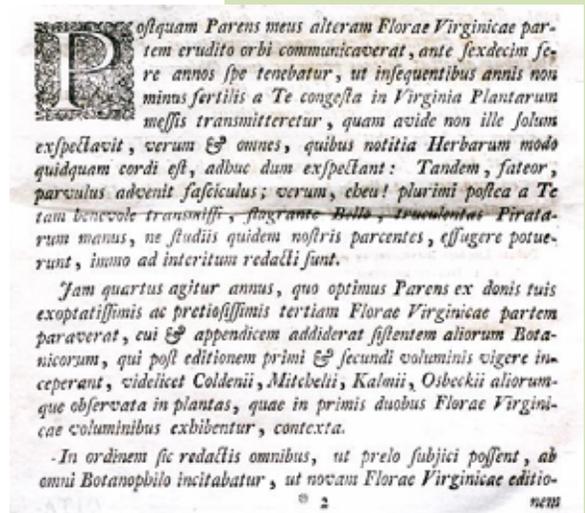
Seven public programs related to the “Botanical Virginia” theme will be presented during the period of the exhibit, December 5, 2015, to February 28, 2016: lectures at 4:30 p.m. December 10, January 5 and 19, and February 2; and morning workshops on January 14 and 28 and February 25.

During seven years in Virginia, from 1712 to 1719, Englishman Mark Catesby collected plants from the region of the lower James River to the river’s headwaters in the Appalachian Mountains. He returned to America in 1722 and continued his work for four more years, collecting and drawing plants and animals from the more southeastern reaches of North America and the Bahamas. Back in England in 1726, he began producing engravings of his watercolors, later published in *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands*.

A contemporary of Catesby, John Clayton was born in England and by 1720 was serving as the clerk of Gloucester County, Virginia. Clayton, a student of botany, provided Catesby and John Frederick Gronovius with dried plant specimens and compiled a catalog of plants native to Virginia. Gronovius, of the Netherlands, published Clayton’s work in *Flora Virginica* in two volumes, in 1739 and 1743. This and a second 1762 edition were the first and, for more than two centuries, the only published compilations of Virginia’s native plants.



Title page of the 1762 edition of *Flora Virginica*, downloaded from the Biodiversity Heritage Library website at www.biodiversitylibrary.org



Here’s a portion of the first page of text. (How’s your Latin?)

The Flora of Virginia Project, begun in 2001, resulted in the publication of *Flora of Virginia* in 2012, describing 3,164 plant species and containing 1,400 original illustrations. The project continues with a focus on education and outreach, including a partnership with the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation in presenting “Clayton & Catesby: Botanical Virginia” at Jamestown Settlement. The exhibit is supported with private gifts to the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, Inc.

“Clayton & Catesby: Botanical Virginia”— Public Programs Lectures

Thursday, December 10: “Fantastic Voyages: Plants of the Virginia Colony,” presented by Marion Blois Lobstein, contributor to *Flora of Virginia*

Tuesday, January 5: “Illustrating the *Flora of Virginia*,” presented by Lara Call Gastinger, lead illustrator of *Flora of Virginia*

Tuesday, January 19: “From Clayton’s *Flora Virginica* to the Late 20th Century,” presented by **Dr. Donna M.E. Ware**, College of William and Mary research associate professor of biology emerita

Tuesday, February 2: “Wildflowers and Grasses on Virginia’s Coastal Plain,” presented by **Helen Hamilton**, John Clayton Chapter of Virginia Native Plant Society past president

Lectures are at 4:30 p.m. in Jamestown Settlement’s Robins Foundation Theater and are free with museum admission.

Note: Admission to the museum is free to residents of Williamsburg, James City County, and York County with proof of residency.

Workshops

Thursday, January 14: “Learning to Use Pen to Illustrate the *Flora of Virginia*,” instructed by Lara Call Gastinger

Thursday, January 28: “Nature Journaling,” instructed by Betty Gatewood, Shenandoah National Park education and interpretive ranger

Thursday, February 25: “Naked Tree Walk,” presented by **Dr. Stewart Ware**, College of William and Mary professor of biology emeritus

Advance reservations are required for the morning workshops. Cost is \$45 per workshop and includes lunch. Members of Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, Inc., Annual Fund gift clubs (donors of \$100 or more) receive a discount and can call (757) 253-4139 or email giving@jyf.virginia.gov for a code to use in online registration.

We're looking for a few good kids!

Do you have kids, grandkids, friends, neighbors who yearn to be off in the semi-wilderness with a bunch of other kids looking for strange plants, exploring streams, hiking hills or gazing through microscopes or telescopes? Urge them to apply for Nature Camp for 2016.

Each summer Nature Camp offers four two-week sessions by age group for students from 5th grade through high school. It is for kids with a genuine interest in conservation, the out-of-doors and the natural world.

Our John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society will be offering several full scholarships for selected applicants to attend Nature Camp 2016. For more information, see the Nature Camp website at: www.naturecamp.net.

Contact **Patti Gray** for application information

at patriciagray67@gmail.com or 757-871-8418.



We're roughing it here at
NATURE CAMP! No wifi.

John Clayton Chapter Calendar

Thursday, Nov. 19 6:45 pm: John Clayton Chapter meeting at the **James City County Rec Center at 5301 Longhill Road, Williamsburg 23188**. Our speaker is **Gary Fleming**, whose topic will be **"The Ecological Regions and Natural Communities of Virginia."**
(See Page 1.)

There are no John Clayton Chapter walks currently scheduled for November and December (but see below).

There may be walks in the works which did not make this issue, so keep a lookout for announcements about additional walks and other events on our website at www.claytonvnps.org and in the local newspapers.

Another event which might be of interest to members

Dec. 5, 2015–Feb. 28, 2016 Exhibit at **Jamestown Settlement** featuring the work of **John Catesby** and **John Clayton**
(See Page 9.)

Below is a membership renewal form. Please contact Membership Chair **Fred Blystone** at 757/229-4346 or at fredblystone@gmail.com with questions about your membership.

Membership Form for John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

(Place checks in the boxes below next to your selections.)

I am a **new member** of the John Clayton Chapter **renewing member** of the John Clayton Chapter

Name		
Address		
City	State	Zip
Email*	Phone*	

I would like to receive my newsletters electronically at the email address above.

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 John Clayton Chapter to VNPS

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 Blandly Farm Lane, Unit 2
Boyce, VA 22610