



# Claytonia

Newsletter of the John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

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[www.claytonvnps.org](http://www.claytonvnps.org)

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## Our September 19 Annual Meeting: John Hayden will speak on "The Botany of Fall Color."



John Hayden is professor of biology at the University of Richmond, specializing in the anatomy, morphology, and systematics of vascular plants, especially family Euphorbiaceae, in the context of regional floristics, ethnobotany, and producing systematic monographs and revisions. He grew up on a farm in East Putnam, Connecticut, where much time was spent growing vegetables and ornamental

plants and exploring the nearby woods. He attended the University of Connecticut, where he earned a bachelor's degree in 1973 with honors in biological science. He then entered the graduate program in botany at the University of Maryland, earning first a master's degree in 1976 and then a Ph.D. in 1980. After a brief term of employment at the National Science Foundation (Division of Environmental Biology, Systematics Program), he joined the faculty of the Department of Biology, University of Richmond in August 1980. At Richmond, he has taught courses in general biology, general botany, plant anatomy, plant morphology, plant systematics, and tropical marine biology. He was chair of the Department of Biology for 5 years, held the D.A. Kuyk endowed chair for 12 years and continues to curate/manage the herbarium and greenhouse. His research since graduate school has centered on the anatomy, morphology, and systematics of plants in the family Euphorbiaceae. Other research projects pursued at Richmond include several floristic inventories, and one current research project is the compilation of an inventory of the vascular plants at the Helen Moyers Biocultural Reserve at Rancho Kiuic, Yucatan. He is also studying many species of Euphorbiaceae from the Yucatan peninsula for various ongoing floristic projects.

The meeting begins at **6:45 PM** at the James City Recreation Center at 5301 Longhill Road. **See you there!**

## President's letter

The mid-August weather was perfect, but the occasion was bittersweet as we said a somewhat premature bon voyage to Jan Newton at the home of Sara and Ray Nugent. The Nugents were thoughtful enough to plan this little party to say thank you to Jan, who is moving to Alabama later this fall. It will be a great loss to the chapter. She's given countless presentations, as well as doing publicity and running the chapter website. Without people like her who are willing to donate their time...well, I don't want to think about what might happen to the chapter.



Jan and the Prez.



Group picture: Standing, from left; Helen Hamilton, Joan Etchberger, Lucile Kossodo, Jan Newton, Phyllis Putnam, Cynthia Long, Gus Hall. Seated; Dorothy Whitfield, Sara Nugent, Louise Menges.

As many of you know, one of Jan's big projects is the Stonehouse Elementary Habitat garden. This beautiful garden that Jan has helped create has dozens of species of native plants and is also a great little wildlife refuge, constantly filled with butterflies and all sorts of other native insects. Its a great teaching resource and also a valuable source for stock for our annual native plant sale. With Jan leaving, the John Clayton Chapter has organized a committee to keep the garden up and running. We're planning on setting up some regular work days to help with maintenance and potting plants for future sales. Keep an eye out for announcements of the date and let me know if you'd like help out.

**Phillip Merritt**



Cynthia Long never misses an opportunity to pass out native plant seeds, and the party was no exception!

## “Native Plants for Butterflies and Birds” was the topic at our July meeting.

As Phillip mentioned in his President’s letter, our speaker **Jan Newton** and her family will soon be leaving us to make their home in Alabama, and our room at the Yorktown Library was packed to hear her presentation that night.



At the meeting, Helen Hamilton presented Jan with gifts of our appreciation: a copy of *With Paintbrush and Shovel* which we were all encouraged to sign, and a cup engraved “To Jan Newton for exceptional leadership and dedication—John Clayton Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society 2006–2013”.

*Photos: Shaun Reams*

Jan gave an impassioned talk about the importance of providing our native fauna with the flora they evolved with and need in order to survive and prosper, accompanied by beautiful slides of these plants and animals. She warned that development, introduction of non-native plant species, and modern pesticides combine to pose a serious threat to our natural environment, and, as expressed in one of her slides, it’s critical that we all pitch in to help with this crisis!

We’re sure going to miss you, Jan—

Among the announcements at the meeting were a couple of changes to the Chapter’s Board; **Patrick Teague** has agreed to take on Jan’s role as Publicity Chair and **Fred Blystone** will take over from Patti Gray as Membership Chair.

**Louise Menges**

## New members

Welcome to new members **Durfee Betts** of Hayes, **Stephanie Newton** of Newport News, and **Patty Riddick** of Yorktown.

## Recent JCC walks

### Freedom Park on July 6

On a warm Saturday morning, **Donna Ware** led a larger group on a second walk around Colby Swamp in Freedom Park, and our shoes definitely *did* get wet!

Here is a partial list of wild plants seen that day:

Four orchids—Small Green Wood Orchid (*Platanthera clavellata*), Lily-leaved Twayblade (*Liparis liliifolia*), Shadow Witch (*Ponthieva racemosa*), and Rattlesnake-plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*);

Dangleberry (*Gaylussacia frondosa*), Black Huckleberry

(*Gaylussacia baccata*),

Partridge-berry (*Mitchella repens*), Pawpaw

(*Asimia triloba*), Round-

leaved Hepatica (*Hepatica nobilis var. obtusa*),

Canadian Lousewort

(*Pedicularis canadensis*

L.), Climbing Hydrangea (*Decumaria barbara*);

and many fern species, including Bracken, Cinnamon, Grape, Royal, Virginia Netted Chain,

Ebony Spleenwort, Sensitive, Southern Lady, New York, Christmas, Marsh, and Broad Beech.



Louise Menges

Hugh Beard and Felice Bond search for critters in the stream (and find some)!



Felice Bond took this photo of most of the walk's participants on a footbridge. From left: Seig Kopinitz, Louise Menges, Jan Newton (seated), Carolyn Gibbs, Frances Knight, Lise Schioler, Judy Michalski, Alice Kopinitz, Bruce Glendenning (kneeling), Shirley Devan and Bob Gibbs. Leader Donna Ware stands in the stream below us.

Louise Menges



Jan Newton



Bob Gibbs



Shirley Devan

Donna and Jan consult.

And lots of fungi, too—here are a couple.

Left: *Xylaria polymorpha*, a fungus growing on decaying wood—need I explain why it's also called "Dead Man's Fingers"?

Right: Tiny red mushroom, this one also on decaying wood (unidentified).

## Gosnold's Hope Park on July 13



Melissa Webb

Pat Baldwin (at far right) points out a rare find, a Scarlet Ammannia, growing in a rain-flooded spot.



Louise Menges

Jan Newton and Bharati Lakshmi take photos of a small treasure in Pat's hand.



Louise Menges

Woody Glasswort (*Sarcocornia pacifica*) spreads across the sand.



Louise Menges

Seaside Oxeye Daisy (*Borrchia frutescens*) blooming along Back River's sandy shoreline.

Gosnold's Hope Park, on Little Back River Road in Hampton, was the site for a walk around its wooded fringes along Back River, led by **Pat Baldwin**. There were many native plants to be seen there, including a Woody Glasswort, Brook Lobelia (native to Canada and the northern U.S. but

not as far south as Virginia), which Pat explained was an escapee from cultivation; also American Germander and Scarlet Ammannia (a Hampton City record), but I think my own favorite was Seaside Oxeye Daisy!

**Louise Menges**



Louise Menges

Brook or Canadian Lobelia (*Lobelia kalmii*) found near the marshes.



Louise Menges

American Germander (*Teucrium canadense*)

### Denbigh Park on August 3

**Phillip Merritt** was the leader for this walk in Denbigh Park, which is located at the terminus of Denbigh Boulevard, right on the Warwick River. It's hard to imagine this quiet setting while driving along busy Jefferson Avenue or Warwick Boulevard, but eventually, Denbigh Boulevard becomes a shaded 2-lane road before ending at the park.



Phillip Merritt

The tall stems and flowerheads of Big Cordgrass (*Spartina cynosuroides*).



Phillip Merritt

Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*) in bloom.



Phillip Merritt

A portion of the park's boardwalk across the marsh.



Phillip Merritt

Blossoms of Saltmarsh Loosestrife (*Lythrum lineare*).

As we strolled along paths and the boardwalk, we saw many grasses, rushes and sedges growing in the shallows, but also “flowering”

plants such as Saltmarsh Loosestrife, as well as Hedge Bindweed and Spurred Butterfly Pea clambering over grasses, and Trumpet Vine climbing trees.

On the way back to our cars, we stopped to talk to a man fishing for croaker from a spot on the boardwalk.



Phillip Merritt

Black Needle Rush (*Juncus roemerianus*) inflorescence.

**Louise Menges**

## Upcoming walks—

### Longhill Swamp on September 14

**Donna Ware** will lead a plant walk around and through Longhill Swamp. Meet at **9 am** in the first parking lot of the Williamsburg Indoor Sports Complex building at 5700 Warhill Trail, off Longill Road, Williamsburg.

*Please register* by calling Donna Ware at 757-565-0657 or emailing her at [dmware@verizon.net](mailto:dmware@verizon.net).

### Little Creek Reservoir on Saturday, October 5

Join botanists **Gus Hall** and **Helen Hamilton** for a walk at Little Creek Reservoir to see woodland and aquatic plants—some familiar and some not often found. Meet at the Visitor Center parking lot at **10 am**. Contact Helen Hamilton at [helen48@cox.net](mailto:helen48@cox.net) or 757/564-4494 to register and for more information.

Directions to Little Creek Reservoir, 190 Lakeview Dr, Toano, VA (757/566-1702):

- From I-64 West toward Richmond, merge onto VA-607 S/Croaker Road via Exit 231A toward VA-30/Norge/Toano, for 1.5 miles.
- Turn right onto Richmond Road, US-60 W, travel 1.7 miles.
- Turn left onto VA-610, Forge Rd, travel 2.2 miles.
- Turn left onto Lakeview Drive, VA-776, for 0.5 miles; the park is on the right.

### Grafton Ponds Natural Area Preserve on October 19

Join **Pat Baldwin** on Saturday, October 19 at **10:00 am** to see fall-blooming plants along the road at the Grafton Ponds Natural Area Preserve. The walk will be along dry roadside, not into the wooded preserve. Meet at the Newport News Park entrance bordering Newport News Golf Course across from Richneck Road on Ft. Eustis Boulevard. Contact Pat Baldwin at 757/838-2064 to register and for more information.

## Fall Potting Parties planned for October

Two October potting parties are in the works—

The first will be on **Saturday, Oct. 5 at Stonehouse Habitat Garden at 9:0 am**. As usual, we will dig there and pot at the Etchberger's home.

The second one will be **Saturday, Oct. 19 at Jim and Joan Etchberger's garden at 9 am**.

This is our major potting effort for the 2014 Plant Sale, so please save those dates! We will send emails with details later. **Lucile Kossodo**



## Notes from left field

Last winter, while walking around the block, I ran into my neighbor Betty, out walking her dog. I worked up the nerve to ask her, “Hey, Betty, how do you like that english ivy growing up your trees?” “I HATE it!” she replied, confirming my suspicion that she was my kind of person. She gave me her permission, on the spot, to kill it. Anytime.



So, I went to her yard while it was still winter, to see the vines, and hopefully not get poison ivy in January (again). I carefully cut the vines around the base of the trees and painted the freshly-cut stumps with roundup to prevent/slow resprouting, and covered them with shrink-wrap. But a big clump of vines on one tree was so big, so thick, so dense, that I couldn't

saw through it. Not with my neighbor's cordless saws-all, either. So, my husband Mac did a chainsaw intervention (right). And that wasn't simple, either. But it's done, and Betty's trees are now happy (and so is Betty) (and so am I, every time I drive past her house).

Take that, Evil G. Shiny!

**Kathi Mestayer**



## September–October Wildflower profile: Joe Pye Weeds

Tall, majestic perennials, the Joe Pye Weeds are real bee and butterfly magnets. Throughout the summer the blossoms will be covered with several species of butterflies, bees, and various insects, all gathering nectar and providing pollinating services. Blooming from late summer until frost, they range from 3 to 10 feet tall, with dense, fluffy pinkish heads of disk flowers only (no ray flowers).

With short petioles, the leaves of Coastal Joe Pye Weed (*Eutrochium dubium*) leaves are strongly three-nerved, and the underside glistens with glandular-dots if viewed with 10x magnification. The stem is generally purple-speckled and sometimes uniformly purple.

Two other Joe Pyes common throughout Virginia have feather-veined leaves, sometimes with resin dots. Hollow Joe Pye Weed (*E. fistulosum*) has hollow stems that are purple with a whitish bloom on the surface. The stem of Purple Joe Pye Weed (*E. purpureum*) is solid and greenish, except at the nodes. Once included in the genus *Eupatorium*, these plants with leaves in whorls of 3 to 7 and pink to purple flowers are now separated into the genus *Eutrochium*.

Coastal Joe Pye Weed prefers wet forests, meadows, and clearings in acid soil, blooming July through October. In Virginia, the plant occurs only in the eastern counties; the range is near the coast from Nova Scotia to South Carolina.

The name comes from a legend about Joe Pye, a Native American who walked the streets of Boston selling an elixir of this plant to induce profuse sweating, which broke the fever of typhus.

With no serious insect or disease problems, Joe Pye Weeds provide spectacular flowers and architectural height in the home garden. Clump-forming, they will not form extensive drifts. They make an impressive background for other perennials planted in groups in the rear of borders, in cottage gardens, meadows, water margins, and wild or naturalized areas.



Helen Hamilton

Coastal Joe Pye Weed (*Eutrochium dubium*)



Helen Hamilton

Close-up of a Coastal Joe Pye Weed's purple stem.

Photographs were taken in the Williamsburg Botanical Garden, where the Joe Pyes are covered with butterflies. A nearby cultivar of Purple Joe Pye Weed, “Joe White,” usually attracts far fewer butterflies, which is expected, since breeding often removes essential chemicals that insects recognize before feeding.

**Helen Hamilton**

“Joe White”, a cultivar of Purple Joe Pye Weed growing in the Williamsburg Botanical Garden.



*Helen Hamilton*

## Calendar

- Saturday, September 14** 9 am: **Donna Ware** will lead a plant walk around and through Longhill Swamp. (See Page 7.)
- Thursday, September 19** 6:45 pm: **John Clayton Chapter Annual Meeting** at the **James City Recreation Center** at 5301 Longhill Road in Williamsburg. Speaker **John Hayden's** topic will be *"The Botany of Fall Color"*. (See Page 1.)
- Saturday, September 28** **Hampton Master Gardeners Fall Plant Sale at Bluebird Gap Farm**, 60 Pine Chapel Rd, Hampton, 9 am–2 pm. (Rain date Sunday, Sept. 29.)  
Contact Ellen Coleman at [elcec@msn.com](mailto:elcec@msn.com) or 757/817-6324 for more information.
- Saturday, October 5** 9 am: **Gus Hall and Helen Hamilton** will lead a walk at Little Creek Reservoir. (See Page 7.)
- Saturday, October 19** 10 am: **Pat Baldwin** will lead a plant walk at Grafton Ponds Natural Area Preserve. (See Page 7.)

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](http://www.claytonvnps.org) and in the local newspapers.

Below is a membership renewal form. **If your renewal date is 06/30/13 or earlier**, this is the last issue you will receive until you renew.

Please contact Membership Chair **Fred Blystone** at 757/229-4346 or at [fmb19481@verizon.net](mailto:fmb19481@verizon.net) 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		
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☐ I would like to receive my newsletters electronically at the email address above.

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☐ 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 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2  
Boyce, VA 22610

On the next page is a form you may use if you'd like to order a copy of Helen Hamilton and Gus Hall's new book, *Wildflowers and Grasses of Virginia's Coastal Plain*, from its publisher, BRIT Press. We've learned that the books have now been delivered to BRIT by their printer.

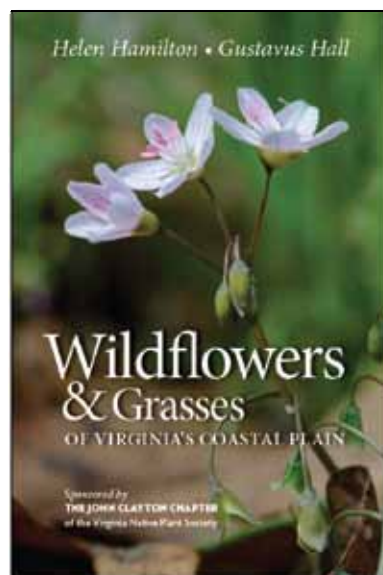
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## Here's what Virginia wildflower experts have to say about this book...

*"Having a regional guide simplifies identification by limiting the possibilities to only the plants found in the area."*

**Stephen Living**, Terrestrial Biologist/Watchable Wildlife,  
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

*"The scientific accuracy of the volume is augmented by the useful and idiosyncratic text which is woven throughout. With the inclusion of grass-like species, the book also ventures into territory often neglected by popular botanical texts."*

**Johnny Townsend**, co-author, *Flora of Virginia* and  
Botanist, Virginia Natural Heritage Program

*"The excellent and instructive photographs frequently portray the plants at both the 'big picture' and the closeup scales; this will greatly help users in recognizing the species."*

**Chris Lea**, Consulting Botanist and former Vegetation  
Ecologist, U.S. National Park Service

*"Helen Hamilton and Gustavus Hall have created a book with helpful identification clues and interesting facts specific to the species in focus, secrets of pollination, uses, and more."*

**Nicky Staunton**, VNPS Vice President, three-term  
President, *Flora of Virginia* Project Board Member,  
and Botanical Illustrator