



THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

November 2021



NOTE:

Pocahontas Chapter VNPS programs will be shared via Zoom until further notice. We will not be meeting at Lewis Ginter. Our next meeting will be on Thursday November 4, 2021 starting at 6:45 PM. Information on how to connect to Zoom is on the bottom of this page

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Our November speaker will be **Brianne Fischer**

Brianne will cover a general overview of RVAgreen 2050 and relevant draft strategies for the environmental working group related to natives and other natural environment related items for addressing climate change, including the RVAH2O Green Infrastructure Master Plan.

Brianne Fisher is the Sustainability Coordinator for the City of Richmond, Virginia. Brianne supports efforts related to RVAgreen 2050, the City's equity-centered climate action and resilience planning initiative to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and help the community adapt to the impacts of climate change. In previous roles, she has worked for Yale University, the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, and the Partnership for Smarter Growth. Brianne has a Juris Doctor from the University of Richmond School of Law and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University.



This free Zoom meeting is open to the public. The meet and greet starts at 6:45 pm followed by the presentation at 7 p.m. A short business meeting will follow the presentation.

The November meeting will be via Zoom on November 4 at 6:45 PM.

To join the meeting go to [zoom.com](https://zoom.us) and join the meeting by clicking on "JOIN A MEETING" then entering the Meeting ID then following the directions.

The November Meeting Zoom ID is 898 3317 1491 and the Passcode: 431135

Register for the meeting at: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0ldOqpqTouE9Xlch3Ko01MteRj39uq8Fj_

If you need to download the zoom app, go to [zoom.com](https://zoom.us) and click on "RESOURCES", then "Download Zoom Client". If you have problems or questions concerning the Zoom connection, please contact Matt Brooks at mattebrooks@protonmail.com.

NOTE: The October presentation by John Hayden and Mikayla Quinn is now posted on Vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/628330876>.

Presidents Message

Hello plant people. As we approach dormant season, I'd like to talk about twigs. If you're like me, you do most of your plant identification with leaves, flowers, and fruits. One thing I like about woody plants is many are

identifiable without reproductive parts, the leaves alone being adequate. But what do we do in the dormant season? We look at twigs (and bark). While this is more challenging and takes closer inspection than growing season botanizing, lucky for us, we have some great resources.

Let me recommend several books. The first is, as far as I know, the only comprehensive woody plant book for the Southeast—and it's a winter guide! *Woody Plants of the Southeastern United States: A Winter Guide*, by Ron Lance (2004), is an excellent book. It has dichotomous keys and great line drawings. It covers trees, shrubs, and woody vines. Of course, not every shrub genus is identifiable to species in winter, and this book won't pretend so. There is a good introduction on the vocabulary and features one must know for twig ID—terminal buds, false terminal buds, lateral buds, leaf scars, bundle scars, stipule scars, piths. . .

Next is *Bark: A Field Guide to Trees of the Northeast*, by Michael Wojtech (2011). This book taught me how to look at bark and recognize patterns. It has a good background on how bark works, keys, and great pictures of tree bark at different ages. It's not for our region but has many of the common tree species we encounter in the Southeast or Mid-Atlantic.

Last is *Winter Botany Field Guide and Key: Deciduous Woody Plants of the Northeastern and North Central United States and Southern and Southcentral Canada (40th to 50th parallels)*, by William E. Kuriger (2019). Now, I haven't used this book yet, but it has a great introduction, good descriptions, and decent pictures. I'm headed to the Catskills this week, and this book will be in my pocket. Ask me later how it worked.

If you're new to twig ID, I recommend a good hand lens, pocket knife, and binoculars. I use binoculars to look up at big trees to search for old reproductive parts, buds, and branching patterns. Many woody plants have distinctive

The Pocahontas Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society	
serves the counties of Amelia, Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, King William, New Kent, Powhatan, Prince George and the cities of Ashland, Hopewell, Colonial Heights, Petersburg, and Richmond. It meets the first Thursday of September through April at 7:00 PM in the Education and Library Complex of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, unless otherwise stated.	
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branching patterns, but the most important thing is whether they have opposite or alternate branching. If you're already hip to this, you can stop reading now. If not, something I learned long ago is MAD Cap BEV. This mnemonic device covers some common opposite branchers. It stands for MAD: Maples, Ashes, and Dogwoods; Cap: Caprifoliaceae, the honeysuckle family; and BEV: buckeyes, Euonymus (hearts o' bustin'), and Viburnums. With this, if a woody plant is alternately branching, you at least know what it's not (okay, except alternate-leaved dogwood). And, yes, there are other opposite woody plant groups; for example, the olive family (privet), coffee family (button bush), catalpa family (trumpet creeper), and other odd balls (yellow jessamine, Clematis).
In the meantime, I hope to see folks at our upcoming meeting, and get ready for months of twigging. Matt

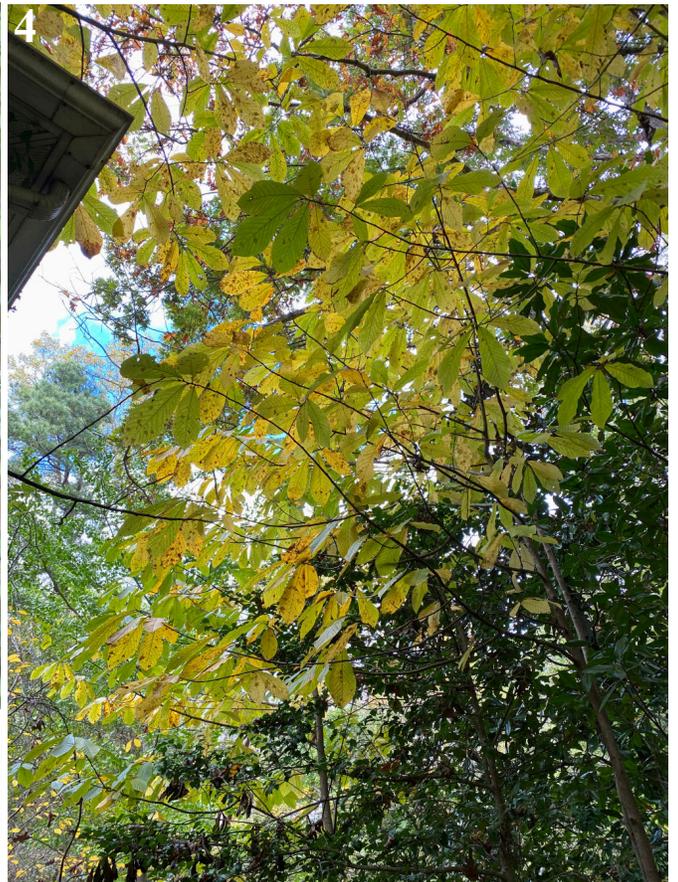
Assorted Fall Plant Photos **Richard Moss**

We had no field trips last month so I looked around to see what I could find.

Photo 1 was taken in an otherwise barren strip of grass next to a fast food restaurant parking lot in Chester, VA. The rest of the plants were in my yard. **Photo 2** of dog fennel - The name refers to its fennel-like odor, which some people and dogs appear to enjoy. Extracts of Dog-fennel have shown activity as a insecticidal and antifungal agents, and the leaves have been used to repel mosquitoes and fleas. However, the plant is toxic to the liver and has poisoned some dogs.



1. Common evening-primrose (*Oenothera biennis*) growing on an otherwise rather barren patch of land next to a fast food restaurant parking lot in Chester, VA. 2. Caterpillar possibly *Haploa contigua* (see <https://bugguide.net/node/view/84463>) on Dog Fennel (*Eupatorium capillifolium*). This caterpillar is the first insect I've seen eating dog fennel.



3. Strawberry bush (*Euonymus americanus*) with remnants of seeds.

4. PawPaw (*Asimina triloba*) trees with yellow leaves.

5. Spice bush (*Lindera benzoin*) leaves.

6. Cut Leaf Grape fern (*Botrychium dissectum*). This appears in late summer with green leaves, with colder weather the leaves turn a bronze color and overwinter, dying in the spring. 7. Close up of Paw Paw leaves (*Asimina triloba*).



8. Sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*) with seeds. 9. Bluets (*Houstonia caerulea*). These bloomed last Spring, the rosettes overwinter.



10. Pokeberry Bush (*Phytolacca americana*) with red stems in fall.



11. Strawberry bush (*Euonymus americanus*), showing white leaves.



12. Devil's walkingstick (*Aralia spinosa*) leaf.