



THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

February, 2023



**Pocahontas Chapter meeting, Wednesday March 8, 2023 at 7:00 PM
at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in the Robbins Auditorium**

**You may also attend the meeting via Zoom by pre-registering at
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcrce-trjsiG9VsDDgwWwdZxPv18bR7VA tq>
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining
the meeting.**

**A meet and greet will start at 6:30 both via Zoom and at Lewis Ginter A short business meeting will follow
the speaker.**

Greetings Pocahontas chapter!

This March we are moving the meeting date to accommodate a very talented traveling guest, Mr. Alonso Abugattas! Our March meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 8th, at 7 pm at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in the Robbins Auditorium. Mr. Abugattas will be presenting "Ethnobotany, Floral Folklore and Gardening for Wildlife." Ethnobotany is the study of how people relate to and use plants in their lives, be it food, medicine, tools, and so many other ways. Learn about plant folklore and how people used locally native and commonly available plants in their lives and historically. The natural history of various plants will be discussed, along with some additional references to find out more about the various native plants that will be the focus of this presentation. How these and many other plants can be used in our gardens and landscapes, and how they relate to wildlife will be discussed, with time for questions.

Alonso Abugattas (The Capital Naturalist) is a well-known local naturalist, environmental educator, and storyteller in the Washington, DC, area. He is the Natural Resources Manager for Arlington County Parks, VA, and the long-time Co-Chair for the Beltway Chapter of Region 2 of the National Association for Interpretation, the professional association for naturalists, historians, and docents. He was awarded their Regional Outstanding Interpretive Manager Award in 2018 and the national Master Interpretive Manager in 2018. He has been



trained as a Master Gardener, was made an honorary Virginia Master Naturalist for his role in starting two chapters, and serves as an instructor for various chapters in both organizations for at least six chapters. Alonso Abugattas received a Regional Environmental Champion award at the 2020 Naturally Latinos Conference through the Audubon Naturalist Society. He was a co-founder of the Washington Area Butterfly Club and has held several offices (including President) for the Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society. He was inducted in the Washington Biologists' Field Club in 2022, one of the oldest and most exclusive biology clubs in the nation, with only 65 local members and founded in 1900. With numerous mentions and appearances on television, radio, podcasts, and the press, he invites you to check out his NAI Interpretive Section Thomas Say Media Award winning FaceBook Group "Capital Naturalist" with over 22,000 members, his Capital Naturalist Blog, @CapNaturalist on Twitter, and the Capital Naturalist YouTube Channel.

Matt Brooks

The Pocahontas Chapter March Plant of The Month

Silene caroliniana also called Wild Pink, Carolina Campion or Sticky Catchfly

This showy, semi-evergreen perennial is native to much of the central and eastern United States however the subspecies most commonly found in Virginia is *Silene caroliniana* var. *pennsylvanica*. It prefers dry, sandy and well draining soil and full sun to part shade conditions. Although it will tolerate moist conditions, this plant does not like heavy soils or wet feet or it can easily succumb to root rot. *Silene* grows up to 10-12” tall and wide and has a compact and mounding habit. In its natural habitat, it can be found in wooded clearings and rocky outcrops. In the home garden, its habit lends itself well as a ground cover or border plant, especially in pollinator, cottage and rock gardens. It makes an excellent alternative to the non-native *Dianthus*. *Silene* blooms in mid to late spring and produces clusters of rosy pink flowers which form on sticky green stems. This is where the common name Sticky Catchfly comes from. The flowers are attractive to butterflies, native bees, hummingbirds and nocturnal moths and it is not uncommon for *Silene* to produce 50-100 flowers on one plant. After flowering, small seed capsules around



Silene caroliniana Flowers

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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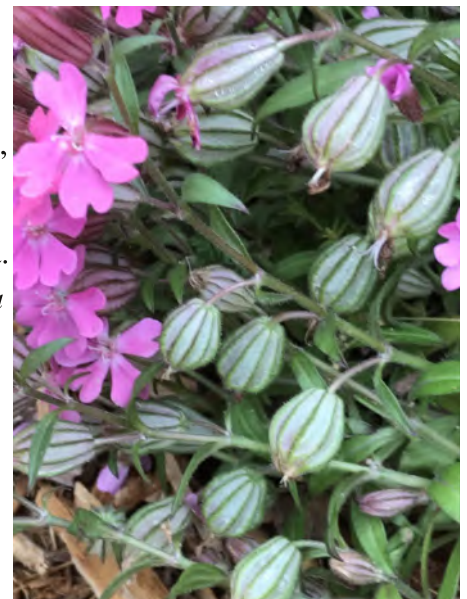
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1/2” or less form and will contain kidney shaped, dark brown seeds. The leaves are mostly basal and are made up of blade-shaped lower leaves and smaller, sessile stem leaves that are arranged in pairs. Both range from 1-4” in length and have rounded tips. *Silene caroliniana* is listed as “critically imperiled” in Florida, Delaware and Tennessee, “imperiled” in Georgia and North Carolina, “vulnerable” in New York however it is listed as “secure” in Virginia. Generally *Silene caroliniana* is a pest and disease free plant, it’s unfortunately humans that have fueled its demise in certain states due encroaching on and destroying its native habitat.



Silene caroliniana with fruit

Photos from: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/silene-caroliniana/> and flowers originally taken by Dr Thomas G Barnes of the US Fish & Wildlife Service, and fruit by K. Andre.

Virginia Native Plant Society, Pocahontas Chapter February Meeting Minutes

02 February 2023 at 7:00 PM

Presentation

Ben Kessler with Little Bluestem Collective discussed the loss of ecosystems and genetic diversity with regard to native plants. He also talked about how to protect local ecotypes and how he got started on his journey.

Chapter Business Meeting

Members Present: Matt Brooks, Jason Aldrich, Richard Moss, Catharine Tucker and Lydia Nichols.

Members Absent: Lisa Hamilton, Becky Kyle, Joann Grayson and Alli Baird.

Agenda Items

- March Plant of The Month: Lydia volunteered to do the write up and will send it to Richard.
- February and March Plant Walks: Dorey Park had been suggested for the February walk by Matt. Catharine volunteered to discuss the location of the skunk cabbage and Lynn Marie offered to check on it. Catharine suggested Rockwood, Pocahontas State Park, Dutch Gap and Richard suggested John J. Radcliffe Conservation Area as potential locations for March.
- Modification of Chapter Bylaws: Regarding the modification that was discussed during the Jan 05 2023 meeting, the proposal was sent out to the chapter and no comments were received via email. Matt opened comments to the board. Richard motioned to move to adopt the proposed change. Catharine seconded. The proposal moved to vote; all members in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

Amendment as follows:

"The chapter shall have a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and other officers which the membership may decide are needed. Officer terms are for three years.

At the end of an officer's three-year term, three members of the chapter shall be selected by the president to serve on the nominating committee that will prepare a slate of candidates for the election of officers. If an officer resigns before the end of the three year term, the board may appoint an interim to finish the term."

New Business

- Richard brought up a correction in the January minutes regarding his attendance for the Jan 05 2023 meeting. Lydia will amend the file in Drive.
- Jason asked for a budget of \$200 or less in order to commission an artist to create a chapter logo to be used for merch. Catharine motioned to move to adopt the \$200 budget. Lydia seconded. The proposal moved to vote; all members in favor, none opposed. Motion passed. Catharine suggested that we have the logo available by the next newsletter. Jason will try to get the design within the next two weeks so the board can review and decide on approval.
- Richard discussed naming the newsletter. Matt proposed "The Moss" and said Richard should come up with suggestions to present at the next meeting for board approval. He also stated that members should email Richard with ideas.

Action Items

- Matt will email the chapter for suggestions regarding future plant walks and look into scheduling for February's walk.
- Matt will send chapter bylaw changes to the state VNPS and CC the board. Then the changes will be updated in the Google Drive.

Adjournment

- Matt adjourned the meeting at 8:36 PM.

The date has been set for the Second Annual Native Plant Garden Open House! It will be Saturday, May 13th from 9am to 1pm. Locations will tentatively be southside, west end, Ashland, and maybe others. You will receive an email with all the garden locations in early April.

The event flyer is attached. Please feel free to share the flyer or this email with anyone who may be interested. Tickets and reservations not needed. Easy and free!

There is also a sister event happening for people in the Hampton Roads area. Same day, same time. If interested, contact growingnative757@gmail.com.

Note: I merged my email lists, combining people who are interested in the spring open house and the fall native plant swap. Most people wanted to be on both lists, and it makes my life much easier. If you ever want to be removed from this list, please reply and let me know. Your email address will never be shared or used for any other reason.

I hope to see many of you on May 13th!

Sheryl Smith, goingnativerichmond@gmail.com

Second Annual
**Native Plant Garden
Open House**

*See how people have created
habitat for birds, bees, and
butterflies in their own yards!*

Free! No tickets required.

Saturday, May 13th, 2023

9am to 1pm

Rain or Shine

No pets, please



Leatherflower
(*Clematis viorna*)

For more information: goingnativerichmond@gmail.com