

THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE
VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

March 2007



Spiderwort
(*Tradescantia virginiana*)

March Meeting

Thursday March 1, 2007 at 7:00 PM

at the Education and Library Complex of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
in Classroom 2

Our Presentation will be:

Rain Gardens

by J. Michael Foreman

Michael Foreman received his B.S. Biology from Albright College and in M.F. Forest Management from Duke University. He is currently at the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation as Deputy Director Division of Soil and Water. He is the Land Conservation and Riparian Buffer Program Manager and Team leader in Strategic Planning and Policy for the Virginia Department of Forestry, Chair of the Virginia Stream Alliance and Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Forestry Workgroup.

A rain garden is a garden designed to absorb storm water run-off from impervious surfaces such as roofs and paved surfaces. Rain gardens are often bowl-shaped or saucer-shaped and can be small, formal, home-owner style gardens, large complex bioretention gardens, or anywhere in between.

They can be designed as attractive landscaping features and planted with perennial native plants.

Chapter News

Future Speakers:

April - Vicki Shufer, Native Plants & Their Uses - a close-up look at native plants and how they were used for food, medicine and crafts by indigenous cultures.

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### *Grasses For The Bay project*

Dana Wiggins of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation needs volunteers for the *Grasses For The Bay* project. Dana was our September speaker and presented the project and its importance to us. Volunteers will be asked to grow grasses for replanting in the spring in selected tributaries to the Chesapeake Bay. Volunteers are not required to help with the planting. Initially we had at least 8 volunteers. We need them to step up and confirm their desire to participate in the project and are hoping for even more members to participate in this activity. If you would like to help but do not have the necessary space to grow the grasses, you can contribute \$30.00 to sponsor someone else growing the plants. Interested persons should contact Peggy Keefe at 804-285-0579 H or 804-675-5000 x3676 W, or Daune Poklis at 741-7838 or by e-mail at [daune@poklis.org](mailto:daune@poklis.org) for the details.

## Events

- March 3** 2007 VNPS Annual Workshop and Exhibit - DISCOVERING VIRGINIA 1607-2007: Bushwackers, Botanists and Pioneers. Saturday, March 3, 2007 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. University of Richmond, Gottwald Center for the Sciences
- March 17** Field Trip to Native Plant Nurseries, Hyla Brooks, and others near Gordonsville, VA.
- April 23** A MAYMONT SPRING GARDEN AND TREE WALK, 6 pm, Maymont Grounds & Gardens. Note Maymont has many interesting programs for more see <http://www.maymont.org/>. or contact Peggy M. Singlemann at (804) 358-7166 ext 326
- April 14** Field Trip to see wildflowers at Monticello
- April 22** Spring Fling at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden Volunteers needed in Children's Garden 1- 4 p.m.
- April 28, May 26 June 23, July 28, Aug. 25, Sept. 22, Oct. 27** LGBG program on Indian use of Native Plants. Volunteers needed at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in the Children's Garden 10 am - 2 pm
- May 3-6** VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE AT MAYMONT Thursday, May 3, 6-8pm, Robins Nature & Visitor Center 2201 Shields Lake Drive. Turn your hobby into a good deed when you sign up to volunteer at Maymont. Meet with staff and volunteers to learn more about all of the opportunities with the animals, in the gardens, at Maymont House Museum and during special events. Registration not required. For information, call 804-358-7166, ext. 327.
- May 5** Annual Picnic and Field Trip at Richard Moss's house in Chester
- Oct. 28** *Goblins and Gourds* at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden Volunteers needed in Children's Garden 1- 4 PM

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The Pocahontas Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

serves the counties of: Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, King William, New Kent, Powhatan and the cities of Ashland, Hopewell, 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.

Chapter Officers

President	Peggy Keefe
Vice President	Daune Poklis
Secretary	Judith Sheldon
Treasurer	Bucci Zeugner
Membership Chair	Pat Brodie

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VNPS Website - www.vnps.org

Minutes of the Pocahontas Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society Meeting February 1, 2007

Peggy Keefe, chapter president, introduced the speaker, Greg Plunkett, Professor of Biology at VCU and Curator of the VCU Herbarium, who gave a power point presentation entitled, What Is a Herbarium. After the presentation he led the group on a mini-field trip to the lower level of the LGBG Education Complex where the VCU Herbarium and the LGBG Herbarium are stored.

Dr. Plunkett, whose Ph.D. is in Botany, defined a herbarium as a type of natural history museum and bio diversity research center. A herbarium is a collection of dried plants that provides research and educational value to scientists, naturalists, horticulturists, students and the general public. The plants are pressed, dried and mounted on stiff sheets of acid free archival mounting paper with an identifying label. The collection is a data bank with a variety of uses.

The sheets with the dried plants are housed in cabinets in a climate-controlled room/facility. Due to the nature of the collection, insects and humidity may present challenges, which must be addressed. The collection is organized for easy retrieval. There are several classification systems used by worldwide herbaria; however, they can also be arranged alphabetically by plant name or by geographical area. The

alphabetical arrangement is good for small collections, such as the VCU Herbarium, which uses this system. The specimen label includes information such as, identification by an expert, locality, habitat, date collected, collector's name, color, height or other information.

Mounted specimens can be requested and loaned to researchers for a period of time. Examples of researchers who use herbaria are plant taxonomists and systematists. Taxonomy has risen in importance with the decrease of biodiversity. Pollen is durable and has been taken from herbarium specimens for use in studies. Plant DNA, also, is not easily destroyed. Often new ways to use specimens come about that were never imagined by the specimen collectors.

One of the ways ecologists may use herbaria is to track the introduction and subsequent spread of a weed or invasive species into native habitats. Geographers and conservation biologists may determine the extent of a plant's abundance and geographical distribution using herbarium specimen data. Horticulturists, agricultural scientists and farmers are among the many other types of users of these collections.

An important on-line resource is the Index Herbarium (also available in hardback). It lists over 3,000 herbaria in the world. The National Museum of Natural History in Paris is one of the world's largest herbaria. New York Botanical Garden is the largest in the U.S. In Virginia, Virginia Tech and William and Mary have important herbaria. VCU has about 17,000 specimen and University of Richmond has at least 18,000. There is also the digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora available online at www.biol.vt.edu/digital_atlas.

Submitted by Judy Sheldon, Secretary

Things in bloom

Virginia Heartleaf or Evergreen Wild Ginger, *Hexastylis virginica*

Virginia Heartleaf is an evergreen perennial with shiny round to heart shaped leaves an inch to 1.5 inches wide with a silvery mottling. In winter the leaves can become maroon tinted. The plant is prostrate and reaches 2-6 inches in height. The leaves and rhizome, when crushed smell like ginger, a spice from a very distantly related asian plant (*Zingiber officinale*). Virginia heartleaf blooms from February to May, producing small (about 1/2 inch) purplish jug shaped flowers at the base of the plant, thus the other common name, little brown jug.



Above: *Hexastylis virginica* in Winter



Above: *Hexastylis* flowers.

Right: *Asarum canadense* with flower.

(left & above photos from www.alabamaplants.com/Redalt/Hexastylis_virginica_page.html)

There is another Virginia native plant called Wild Ginger, *Asarum canadense*, which is not evergreen, is taller (about 12 inches), has hairy leaf stems, and brownish flowers with 3 pointed lobes. It blooms from early to late spring.



**Virginia Native Plant Society Membership Application
Pocahontas Chapter**

**Make Check payable to VNPS and Mail to:
Membership Chair, Blandy Experimental Farm, 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2, Boyce, VA 22620**

Name: _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone: _____ **E-mail** _____

___ Individual	\$30.00	___ Sustaining	\$100.00
___ Family	\$40.00	___ Life	\$500.00
___ Student	\$15.00	___ Associate Groups	\$40.00
___ Patron	\$50.00	(Garden Clubs, etc.)	

**I wish to make an additional contribution to ___ VNPS or ___ The Pocahontas Chapter,
VNPS in the amount of:**

___ \$10 ___ \$20 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 Other _____

**Pocahontas Chapter
Virginia Native Plant Society
12565 Brook Lane
Chester, VA 23831**

