

THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



Spiderwort
(*Tradescantia virginiana*)



April 2009

April Meeting

Thursday April 2, 2009 at 7:00 PM

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

The room is available at 6:30, come early and Socialize

This Month's Presentation will be:

Joseph Pines: Preserving and Restoring a Longleaf Pine/Pitcher Plant Ecosystem
by Phil Sheridan

Phil Sheridan, Director and President of the non-profit 501(c)(3) Meadowview Biological Research Station, will discuss how his organization is restoring the imperiled longleaf pine/pitcher plant ecosystem at the Joseph Pines Preserve in Sussex County, Virginia. The longleaf pine/pitcher plant ecosystem originally covered almost 1.5 million acres in Virginia but now less than 400 acres of native Virginia longleaf pine remain in the state while an even more dismal situation exists for natural pitcher plant populations. Ongoing restoration work at the Joseph Pines Preserve has resulted in planting of over 50 acres in native Virginia longleaf pine and successful capture of a significant portion of Virginia longleaf pine germplasm. Eighteen indigenous rare plant associates are being reintroduced to the preserve as part of an integrated ecosystem restoration within the framework of mechanical clearing, chemical hardwood control, and prescribed fire. Several state rare plant taxa have been discovered on the preserve during the course of habitat restoration. Novel research will be presented highlighting our latest discoveries in habitat restoration and a strong case will be made for both the need and validity of our restoration approach and rationale.

Phil Sheridan has both a B.S. and M.S. from Virginia Commonwealth University in Biology and is completing his Ph.D. in Ecological Sciences at Old Dominion University. He is a native son of Virginia from Arlington County but has spent most of his professional career in rural Caroline County developing the non-profit Meadowview Biological Research Station. He has numerous published articles in botany, genetics, biochemistry, and field ecology dealing with southeastern flora. He lives in Bowling Green, Virginia with his wife Margie.

Calendar of Events

April

2-May 7 VCU/Maymont presents: *Wrapped up in Raptors*. This year's five-part lecture series, held at the Robins Nature & Visitor Center at Maymont, the VCU Discovery Institute will focus on raptors, their communities, migration patterns and more. Reception at 6:00 PM, Lecture at 7:00 PM. For more information contact Maymont at (804) 358-7166 Ex325.

4 Saturday - **High Spring Field Trip to See Wildflowers in James River Park**- At this time most of the spring ephemerals will be in peak bloom. In a week's time they'll be gone. See the accompanying

Welcome New Members

Kate Short, Petersburg, VA

photographs to see what you will find there. Bring hiking boots and if you have one a walking stick as we have to cross a railroad embankment to get to the flowers. There is lots of loose gravel on the embankment and a steep angle of ascent and descent. We will meet at 10AM at Pump House Park. To get there from the north side of the river make a right turn off the Boulevard onto the side road which branches off just before the toll plaza for the Boulevard bridge. From south of river, make a left turn onto this same road just after passing through the toll plaza. There is a sign for Pump House Park at the entrance to the side road.

- 7 Tuesday **Butterfly Garden Work Day**. We will finish weeding the beds and will plant some flowers. Bring gloves and a hoe and/or rake and drinking water. We will meet at 10AM at the garden near the Reedy Creek entrance to James River Park off Riverside Drive on the south bank of river
- 14 Tuesday, **Invasive Removal in James River Park**- Meet at 10AM near the 42nd Street parking lot off Riverside Drive on south bank of river. Park near the entrance to parking lot along south side of Riverside Drive. The parking lot will be closed on Tuesday. Bring garden gloves and drinking water. We will be removing English Ivy on 42nd St. Island.
- 21 Tuesday, **Butterfly Garden Work Day**- See April 7 for details.
- 22 Wednesday- **Field Trip and Lunch to View Wildflowers in Parks in Petersburg Area**- Meet at 9:30 AM in the Ukrop's parking lot in Chester. This is in a shopping center near the intersection of Route 10 and 1/301. It is adjacent to the VA 10 exit on I-95. We will take a short walk in Lee Park, have lunch at an Italian restaurant in downtown Petersburg and have a short walk in Ferndale Park in Matoaca. The following plants should be in bloom at Lee Park: Birdsfoot Violet, Arrowleaf Violet, Primrose-leaved Violet, Wild Azalea, Deerberry, Leopard's Bane, Gray-leaved Golden Ragwort, Pussy Willow, Dwarf Iris

May

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 **Daune Poklis**
(804) 741-7838 daune@poklis.org
Vice President **Ernest Wilson**
(804) 502-6346 ernest_3@msn.com
Secretary **Judith Sheldon**
(804) 266-0856 jshel7602@aol.com
Treasurer **Richard Moss**
(804) 748-2940 mossrd@mindspring.com
Membership **Pat Brodie**
(804) 266-3070 owpa03v@aol.com

Address all correspondence to
Richard Moss, Editor
12565 Brook Lane
Chester, VA 23831
mossrd@mindspring.com

Chapter Website - pocahontaschapter-vnps.org

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May Picnic: Huguenot Hundred Community Association property on the James River. There are 8 acres with some wooded and some open. There is a fireplace, picnic table, benches scattered about, portable potty, boat ramp, dock, and trails through the woods. Directions in the May Newsletter.

Minutes of the Pocahontas Chapter Meeting on March 5, 2009

In the absence of the chapter president, Daune Poklis, Pat Brodie called the meeting to order and welcomed new members and visitors. She passed around a check list of plants that may be nominated as the VNPS wildflower of the year. Members checked off their preferences providing input that Daune can take to the VNPS Board meeting where a vote of the Board will determine the final choice. The Board meeting will take place after the annual workshop on March 7 at the University of Richmond. Also, Pat asked members to monitor the web site for work days in James River Park. Butterfly garden work days in March will be on the 10th and 24th at 10 a.m. Invasive removal day will be March 17 at 10 a.m. On March 25 we will have a field trip to the Virginia Living Museum, and will meet at 10 a.m. in the parking lot of the North Park Library.

Dr. Ernest Wilson, vice-president of the Pocahontas Chapter, gave a talk entitled, Wild Plants to Eat. He began by showing slides and discussing plants currently in bloom. A few of the many examples he discussed were dead nettle, chickweed, bitter cress, violets, and quince. He then showed a film on edible wild plants produced by Outdoor Eduquip which divided plants into those found in the yard and those that grow in the wayside, meadow, woodland edges, and swamp. Dr. Wilson does not recommend eating fiddle heads, especially the bracken ferns. Also, he advises eating only the young leaves of the pokeberry. He passed around handouts, including a list of books for further study of this topic and a sheet with several recipes using wild plants. He ended the program by giving us the opportunity to try a tasty treat fresh from the field. The treats included samples of chickweed, henbit, wild garlic, and a yellow jelly fungus (witch's butter).

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Sheldon, Secretary

Of Note:

Catharine Tucker gave the keynote address at the Good Gardening Symposium presented by the Prince George Master Gardeners on March 14th. Her topic was "Virginia's Native Plants from the Mountains to the Sea". The chapter also had a display and a table with brochures and handouts. Catherine's excellent address and our display were well received by those in attendance.

Field trip to the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News, VA

We arrived in Newport News shortly before noon and went to a nearby Italian restaurant for an excellent lunch, then visited the Museum. It was early in the season so most plants were not out, except the redbuds which were just starting. The museum's indoor exhibits were well designed and included plants and animals from a cypress swamp, an Appalachian cove, the coastal plain, and piedmont and mountains. there was a boardwalk which led to several outdoor habitat areas including a coastal plain aviary, and areas for red wolves, bald eagles, vultures, deer, raccoon, turkeys, foxes, and Daune's favorite a bobcat. The animals on exhibit could not survive in the wild either because they were injured, orphaned or born in captivity. This was an interesting trip, the Living Museum is well worth the visit.



1. One of the indoor habitats at the living Museum. Fish are in the tank at lower left.
2. Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) blooming in the indoor coastal plain habitat.
3. Eagles in an outdoor habitat area.
4. Birds in the outdoor aviary.

What we expect to see on the field trip to the James River Park on April 4



1. May Apple (*Podophyllum peltatum*), 2. Toothwort (*Dentaria laciniata*)
3. Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), 4. Virginia Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*),
5. Yellow Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*), 6. Spice Bush (*Lindera benzoin*).
We should see these and lots of other plants on this walk.

Photos by Ernest Wilson, taken in the James River Park, late March 2009.

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

