

# THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

March, 2017



**Chapter Meeting 7:00 PM,  
Thursday March 2, 2017**

**at the Education and Library Complex of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden  
in the Lab**

**The room is available at 6:30, come early to socialize  
Our speaker, Berniece Thieblot, will present  
"How A Virginia Treasure, Quarry Gardens, Came To Be"**

It took 23 years of weekend work on their now 600 acres in Nelson County for Berniece Thieblot and her husband to create what became a designated Virginia Treasure in 2016.

Virginia Treasures are identified by the state to preserve, protect and highlight Virginia's most important ecological, cultural, scenic and recreational assets as well as its special lands. The Quarry Gardens at Schuyler incorporates the preservation and exhibition of relics from the soapstone quarrying industry with the natural process of plant and habitat restoration to showcase native plant communities for public education and enjoyment, and maintain records of plants and animals as a resource for study.

Berniece will explain how improvements were made to the Schuyler property on weekends for 23 years and how they commissioned a master plan, a survey of plants, animals, and habitat, and a garden design. She will discuss how they are implementing the garden plans for the designated 14 eco-zones and 7 conservation areas.



## **Chapter Meetings:**

**April 6, 2017** Robert Wright, our speaker, will provide a grand presentation, featuring some sleuthings, botanical finds, and a preview of our planned Foray at Camp Hanover in May.

**May 6, 2017** Picnic and walk at Camp Hanover. Details later.

## **Chapter Events:**

Lewis Ginter work days have been scheduled for Sunday 3/26 from 2 to 5pm and Sat 4-8 from 10 to 1pm.

March 11 VNPS Goshen Pass Field Trip – registration opens 1/16.

May 20th Trip to Quarry Gardens at Skyler in Nelson County.

August 12 Field trip to Echo lake.

September 9 Field trip to R. Garland Dodd Park.

September 30 VNPS Annual Meeting.

## **Can You Help on March 4**

Our Chapter serves as host for the VNPS Winter Workshop is March 4, 2017.

Two or three more people are needed to help set up the continental breakfast for the attendees and speakers. The building will be open at 8:00 AM for us to set up. If you are planning to attend, could you come between 8-8:30 to help us arrange the food? The Workshop is scheduled from 9:15 AM to 3:30 PM at University of Richmond, in Jepson Hall Auditorium on Ryland Circle ( See the Online Campus Map #17. Don't confuse our hall with Jepson Alumni Hall which is on the other side of campus.) If you can help, please contact Catharine Tucker at 804-938-6941 or cath.tucker@gmail.com.

## President's Message:

Hello one and all,

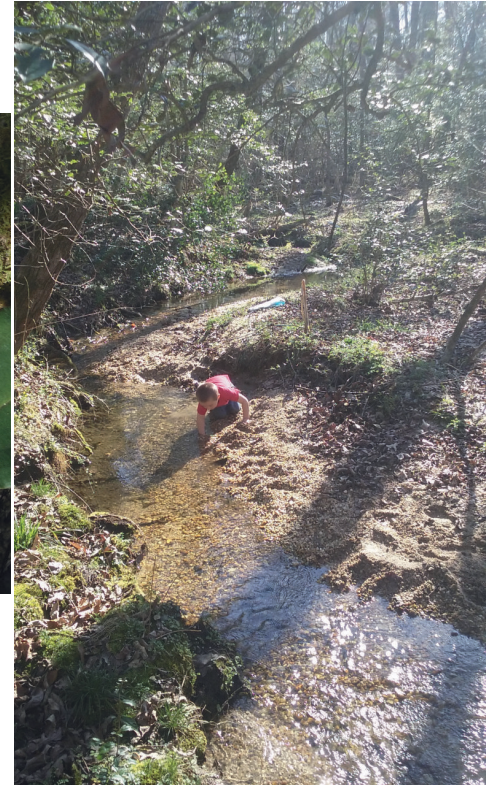
I am a last minute Nellie, in case you all had not noticed...no offense to any Nellies. Seems like I blink and the month is gone and time for me to write a quick note for the newsletter. We have had some lovely weather and I took advantage of it one day and took my grandson down to the creek that I played in as a child. I showed him the dragonfly larva “rock sticks” in the water, and the purple underside of the crane fly orchid, which we found growing on a log and could see it’s “corm”. He was more interested in the green goop and walking in

creek, but it is a start of trying to influence a future nature lover, which is what we all have in common, right? As such, I would like to make everyone aware of a fundraising effort by the Capital Region Land Conservancy, at

[www.capitalregionland.org](http://www.capitalregionland.org), to raise

\$100,000 by April 1st. They are in the midst of purchasing Malvern Hill Farm, 875 acres in Eastern Henrico and Charles City Counties. It lies adjacent to part of Richmond Battlefield Park. While much of it is open farmland, there are mature forest and native landscapes. They have the bulk of the \$6 million needed, but are a bit short. For every dollar donated, a grant give 50 cents. You can learn more and donate online at the website above.

Hope to see you all on Thursday, the Quarry Garden talk will be great, I know. Blessings,



Leslie

### 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.

#### Chapter Officers

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**Chapter Website**  
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### “In Search Of”: Botanical Adventures of a Plant Detective by Robert Wright.

#### This month’s target: *Quercus shumardii* Buckley Shumard Oak

The Richmond area is an interesting crossroads botanically speaking. For many years, researchers had believed that the James River formed a boundary of sorts between landscape-scale plant communities developing north, south, east, and west of Richmond and other Fall Line cities in VA. RVA is in the heart of the oak-hickory-pine forest so prevalent in the Piedmont. Yet, there are muddled examples of other forest types more akin to the Southern Mixed Evergreen Forest, and even some pine barren remnants in the RVA region. This “cover-typing” harkens largely back to the days of early railroad excursions by botanists, and indeed, even before that time in some postbellum writings, which described, albeit incompletely, the regional flora of RVA. Many folks do not realize the modern plant assemblages of RVA were established and have remained virtually unremarkable for the last 5,000 years. Only human activity has mostly altered it since. That means most plant species here 5,000 years ago may still be around in a few places.

Such may be the case for this month’s target plant – the Shumard Oak.

A duplicate set of herbarium specimens identified as this species was recently verified with Chapter member Joey Thompson at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and University of NC-Chapel Hill. Digital specimen images have been acquired. Collected in the western Chesterfield County southwest of Winterpock in 1971 by former VCU Professor of Botany Dr. Miles F. Johnson, its presence in the RVA area is indeed unexpected, as it is not a forest tree here. The specimens have been critically examined, and a field trip is planned for late summer/fall in 2017 to re-verify the station. The VNPS will be busy attempting to procure landowner permission to procure additional verification specimens, complete with full leaves, buds, and acorns to add this handsome species to the local flora checklist. Members may notice that the species is not reported for RVA in the Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora<sup>1</sup> This fact and information from some 1990 files from the Division of Natural Heritage<sup>2</sup> alerted me to undertake this verification process now so as to provide Pocahontas Chapter members a chance to firmly document a 'new' species in RVA through the "In Search of" concept. Stay tuned for details of the trip to wish a team Happy Hunting!



**Shumard Oak leaves and distinctive acorns.**

Source:

[<http://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=ScoHXQIJ&id=5901194C1C19847A012BB1041249A137D0960AFC&q=shumard+oak&simid=608010956360648346&selectedIndex=185&ajaxhist=0>].

## Hail!

by Richard Moss

Last Saturday I went to Surry County for a birthday party and took photo 1 of a maple tree in bloom. Shortly after taking the picture, the black cloud of death arrived with rain, and an impressive but not alarming wind. Then the sun came out. By the time I got home it was dark, but on turning on to my street I notices a lot of sticks and leaves on the road. My driveway was green with leaves. This seemed odd since there weren't any leaves out. When I got out of the car I observed the leaves were magnolia leaves mixed with holly leaves and pine needles. The yard smelled like crushed magnolia leaves. When I got in the house, there was a message on my phone saying most of



the "white stuff" had melted and was all OK. I looked out on the deck and there was 1-2 inches of the "white stuff", i.e. hail, still remaining on the deck (photo 2). Also,



one of the kitchen windows was broken (Photo 3). Fortunately, only the outer pane was broken and although cracked, the inner pane was intact. Photo 4 is a close up of the hail remaining on the deck the next morning. Note the dime in the photo for a scale.



Photo 5 shows a damaged magnolia leaf and photo 6 shows the driveway covered with leaves.

Photo 7 is of a damaged cranefly orchid leaf growing in the woods back of the house. Photo 8 is of a piece of lichen knocked off a tree. I also noticed several maple trees which were in full bloom Saturday were mostly bare on Sunday. I guess there won't be many maple seeds whirling around this fall.



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