

THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

October 2013



Spiderwort
(*Tradescantia virginiana*)

Chapter Meeting

Thursday October 3, 2013 at 7:00 PM

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

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

Our Speaker will be John Hayden, PhD who will present “The Botany of Fall Color.”

“Along with the bright gold, purple and blue wildflowers each Fall, we look forward to the changing leaves. Instead of background green we have glorious colors in woods, gardens and yards well into November. What causes the change? What gives fall leaves their different colors? Why are some maples red and others yellow? Why are some trees beautiful this year and drab in other years? John Hayden will answer our questions and perhaps raise some we hadn't thought to ask.”

Pocahontas Chapter Programs - Fall 2013

- Nov 7 Barbara Wiedekehr on wildflowers
- Dec 5 (Thurs) or Dec 7 (party) (need location)
- Jan 9 (2nd Thurs) - Beth Farmer, chapter member, on growing native plants
- Feb 6 Daune Poklis on her trip to Smokies
- Mar 6 Emily Gianfortoni, chapter member, on identifying invasive plants and dealing with them
- Apr 3 OPEN

Pocahontas Chapter Field Trips - Fall 2013

- Oct. 20 **John Hummer's Wetlands.** Tour will begin at 11:30 a.m. It's free. John asks, as in the past, each person bring a dish, preferably a cold plate of some kind or desert, warm dishes will be acceptable since this time of year the weather's more agreeable for that. Important: In the event of rain (something beyond just 'sprinkles') the tour would be held Nov. 3rd 2013. Two weeks later. As always, footwear should be moisture tolerant, and light. Meet at North Park library, 8508 Franconia Road at 10:30AM, near the intersection of Parham Rd. and I95.

President's Message

I don't know about you, but I'm not having fun dealing with invasive plants at my place. Comments I read in emails from the Mid-Atlantic Invasive Plant Council indicate land managers in parks and natural areas of PA, MD, and NC are having the same difficulty eradicating stilt grass and beefsteak plant as the rest of us with invaded gardens and yards. I guess that should make us feel less guilty about being frustrated at the meager results of our efforts. Arguments continue about using chemicals or not. Smothering stilt grass with leaves in the fall works for small areas, it seems. Everything else smothers, too, of course....

As of this writing, I'm still working to find a slate of officers for the coming year. The chapter by-laws were distributed last week, and at the end of the Bylaws were descriptions of duties that need to be covered by the various officers. The current officers remain active chapter members, and we'll be glad to help orient and assist new officers. Contact me if you are interested in serving the chapter in one of these leadership roles. That's our first priority.

We also need more ideas for programs, field trips and botanical explorations. Please contact me if you have suggestions or requests for speakers, field trips, or other program ideas.

The project to remove invasive plants along the creek at the Garden continues as part of our contribution to the Garden. Already, this has opened up the area for existing native trees and spring ephemeral to flourish. There are also more plantings to do in the Meadow. We'll announce another work day at the October meeting.

Since nearly a third of our chapter are new or newly renewed members, we need to spend some time getting acquainted and learning about talents and interests these new members bring to the chapter. Please make a special point to greet and welcome new folks and visitors at our meetings.

Catharine Tucker, President

Green Swamp Preserve, Brunswick County, NC

Catherine Tucker

On a short walk, less than a mile from the car, we found an amazing variety of specialized and insectivorous plants last week. Green Swamp Preserve encompasses both low pocosin and wet longleaf pine savanna. Only a few inches difference in the water table makes the difference between pocosin and open longleaf-wire-grass savannah. The pocosin is home to clouds of mosquitoes and shrubs too thick to traverse without the convenient walkway. In the open savannah, a breeze discouraged mosquitoes



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

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and made us welcome the warm sun on our backs. This is where we found Venus' fly-traps with seed capsules and counted over 60 rosettes of them in an area about ten feet square. We also identified leaves of three of the four species of pitcher plants found there.



Two plants in bloom I'd never seen in the wild. Pleea, (*Pleea tenuifolia*) is infrequent in the SE Coastal Plain of NC and associated with Venus' fly-trap. Trilisa, (*Trilisa paniculata*) reaches its northern limit in the southern corner of the NC Coastal Plain. Many other plants I recognized, but more I couldn't identify. Because we planned to travel across NC from Myrtle Beach to Yadkinville that day, I couldn't take time to key them out. I want to go back!



Note the white, nutrient poor sandy soil at the preserve.



Announcement

John Townsend announced at the September Board meeting the new Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer is available at <https://vanhde.org> and it provides public access to maps and data about protected lands, ecologically significant areas, wetlands and more. With a few more clicks, users can create customized maps. Natural Heritage Data Explorer merges three previously used web tools into a single powerful tool. It was developed for DCR by the nonprofit conservation organization NatureServe. The tool provides access to 20 map layers showing the status of all protected lands, conservation priority lands, boundaries and reference information such as streams and roads. Layers can be viewed on one of eight base maps, such as a street map or topographic map. Users can search back end data with text queries or by clicking a point on the map; details are displayed instantaneously. Users even have the capability to share and print customized maps.

Field trip to R. Garland Dodd Park



1. Ants herding insects on a beech tree.
2. Yellow garden spider (*Argiope aurantia*)
3. Solomons seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*) with fruit.
4. Blue Mistflower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*) found in the meadow.
5. Pink Wild Bean (*Strophostyles umbellata*) along the boardwalk.
6. Fruit of Strawberry bush (*Euonymus americanus*).

New York Iron-weed (*Vernonia noveboracensis*) in the meadow at R. Garland Dodd Park.



This Virginia meadow beauty (*Rhexia virginica*) was growing in Surry County near Spring Grove, VA. This one was a particularly dark color, but was on a plant which earlier had bloomed with a significantly lighter color. Perhaps blooms later in the year with cooler temperatures and less intense sunlight are darker?



Request From New VNPS Education Chair Emily Ford

Emily writes: "One idea I have for increasing the reach of Virginia native plant education is to develop an index of educative materials that VNPS members have developed over the years that would be accessible to all other members and to teachers. In addition, I would like to review any activities and add Virginia education standards that apply. As you may know, incorporating standards into activities is a great way to get into classrooms. Then, having these activities accessible to the public on our web page could be the next step I hope.

Any resources can be sent to me at emilyford@virginia.edu or via mail to Blandy Experimental Farm."

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