

THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

December 2014



Annual Holiday Party Saturday December 13, 2014 12:30PM - 3:00PM

At the home of Leslie Allanson

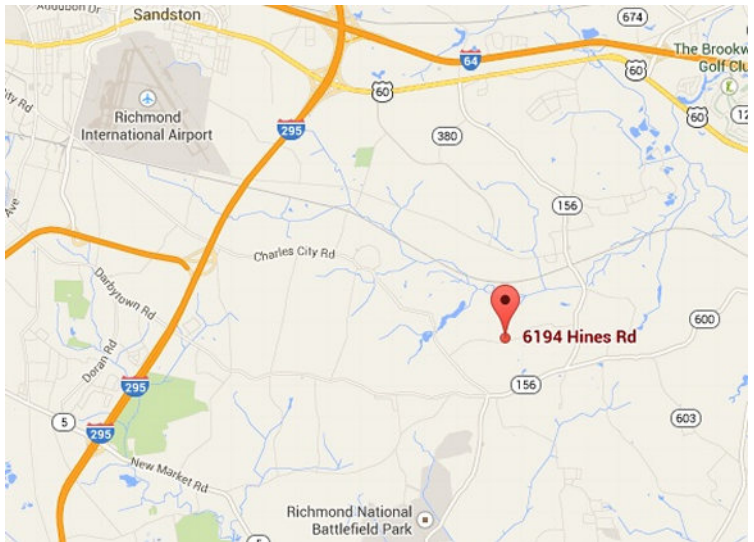
6194 Hines Rd Henrico, VA 23231 Phone 795- 7191

Note: we will not have a December meeting at Lewis Ginter

Directions: From Richmond and north, go to the airport entrance, **Airport Drive (Route 156)** then follow Airport Drive to **Charles City Road**. Turn left on Charles City Road and go about 7 miles to **Hines Road**. Turn left on Hines road and Leslie's house will be about 1 mile on the left.

If you are using the Pocahontas Parkway, take the exit to the airport, Airport Drive, then turn right on Charles City Road and follow the directions above.

Note: Even though it looks like there might be an exit to Charles City Road from I-295, there is not.



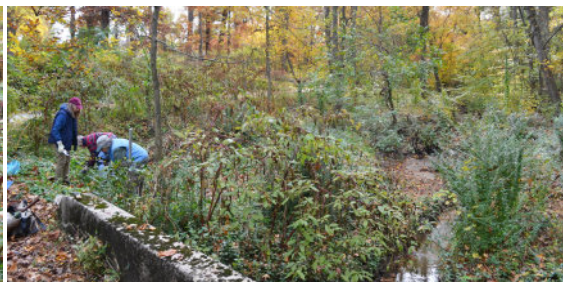
Note: the January Chapter Meeting will be January 15, the second Thursday, a week later than usual to avoid GardenFest at Lewis Ginter

The Great Privet Pull, November 9, 2014

Five hardy, energetic souls came to pull privet and many other invasives for three hours on Sunday Nov. 9th, the big and little weeds did not know what hit em! We were blessed with perfect working weather and cleared a substantial part of the vale.

Jay Austin says many thanks for all of our efforts, including the cleanup. Should we feel so inclined there is also an area behind the barn in need of ivy and wisteria removal, ready and awaiting our enthusiasm for the next time.

Well done to all and thank you.



Left: Our group at the start of the pull. **Center:** Before we started.

Right: After

Minutes of the Pocahontas Chapter, VNPS Meeting, November 6, 2014

Chapter President, Catharine Tucker, called the meeting to order. Twenty members and one guest were present. It was announced that helpful materials could be found in the back of the meeting room. In addition to information about a tree walk at Bryan Park, resources to parallel the evening's program included books from Catharine's personal library and a list of references used in the lecture.

Program: "American Women Naturalists: 1607 to Present," was presented by Catharine, who stated that it was a labor of love. Naturalists are defined as those who observe, study, and appreciate nature.

Catharine led the audience through a chronological survey of women naturalists. The 17th - 18th Centuries saw the rise of the first acknowledged women naturalists. In 1843, Asa Gray named Jane Colden the first female botanist in the U. S. *How to Know the Wild Flowers*, authored by Mrs. William Starr Dana in 1893, sold out in five days and is still in print today. Catharine's mother used a 1901 copy of the text when she was a student, and Catharine's personal copy, a beautiful edition, was enjoyed by members following the program. Moving into the 20th Century, E. Lucy Braun authored *Deciduous Forests of Eastern North America* in 1950 and was the founder of the Wildflower Preservation Society of North America, a forerunner of native plant societies such as our own. Rachel Carson inspired the environmental movement, which led to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, and penned the well-known *Silent Spring* in 1962. The 21st Century continues the legacy with best-selling women naturalist writers such as Barbara Kingsolver.

Catharine referenced outstanding women naturalists by whom she was mentored and/or whom she met, which brought an immediacy to the topic. Catharine concluded the outstanding program with a haunting question posed in connection with Martha, the last passenger pigeon, "Have you learned anything from my passing?"

Business Meeting: Margot Deck's minutes from the October meeting, included in the newsletter, were approved. Richard Moss, treasurer, reported a balance of \$4,466.76 in the treasury.

Old Business: Leslie Allanson was elected the chapter's Vice President.

New Business: In response to the State Board's opposition to the proposed gas pipelines across Virginia, members will operate as individuals to express opinions. The potential for a new marina in Back Bay NWR/False Cape State Park could lead to increased commercial development in that area. Leslie Allanson suggested that the chapter work with local governments' plans for new landscaping in order to increase native plantings. Leslie specifically mentioned the new Varina Library's landscaping. Richard Morse of Henrico County will be invited to speak to our chapter about country planning related to this topic. A variety of excellent resources and personnel were suggested

that could be shared with Mr. Morse and other government planners to encourage native plantings.

Committee Reports: Ruby Jane Robertson reported no new members.

Caroline Meehan announced that a privet pull will be held at Ginter Botanical Garden, November 9th, from noon to 3:00 p.m. Bring tools and meet in the Ginter Admissions Hall.

Andy Wichorek announced plans for the November 12th field trip to Pocahontas State Park. Details are in the November newsletter. Suggestions for future field trips were made.

A discussion about the chapter's policy for providing a fee for speakers will be taken up by the board.

Announcements: The Christmas holiday gathering will be on Saturday, December 13th, as announced in the November newsletter. Leslie Allanson invited the chapter to her home. The lunch will be a covered-dish event. Details will be included in the December newsletter.

The January meeting will be January 15th. The regular schedule for meetings, the first Thursday of the month, will resume in February.

Irene Caperton, Secretary

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.

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Chapter Website

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Notes on 2014 VNPS Annual Meeting Field Trips in Hampton Roads

I hope these photos and personal hi-lights from the recent VNPS Annual Meeting Field Trips, will encourage more Pocahontas Chapter members to attend future meetings. Each year the meeting is hosted by a different chapter. This means a different theme (perspective) and opportunities to see special habitats and plant communities you might not otherwise experience. The South Hampton Roads Chapter did an outstanding job of providing those kinds of experiences with a theme of It's The Water.

This was the first meeting that offered field trips on three days instead of two. Most were whole day instead of half day trips. My Friday trip to the Cypress Bridge Swamp Natural Area Preserve definitely emphasized the water theme. Because of recent rains, we did as much canoeing as walking (or wading), but this pristine swamp with trees over 1000 years old, including US and VA champions was a magical experience for me.

The second day I opted for the Eastern Shore. Our morning walk in Magothy Bay Natural Preserve took us through former potato fields being restored to maritime forest land, into existing maritime forest, and along a dike overlooking salt marshes facing the bays behind the barrier islands.

For the afternoon we drove across the peninsula to the bay side to explore Savage Neck Dunes, a globally rare loblolly pine maritime dune community with a mile of beach on the bay. The intertidal beach area is home to the endangered northeastern beach tiger beetle.

Unfortunately the beach is endangered by a man made breakwater in front of a private structure to the north that is eroding the preserve's beach. The construction was permitted after the fact; a reminder that not all attempts to protect nature are successful. We didn't see any beetles, but did see a doodlebug (no joke; check out: <http://buginfo.com/article.cfm?id=120>) and lots of the beetle trails and holes in the dune community.

Lake Drummond in the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge was the last day's destination. The lake is one of two natural fresh water lakes in Virginia. We car

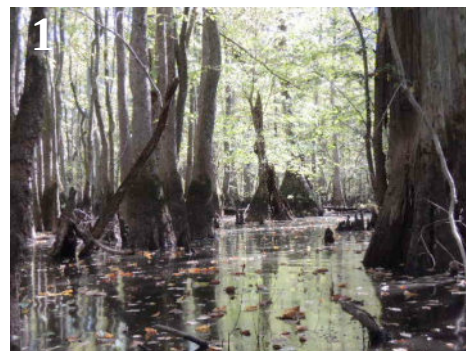
pooled in, making many stops along the way to observe plants, see the results of large fires, look for animals, and learn about the swamp's complex history including native

Americans, escaped slaves, civil war soldiers, rum runners, and George Washington's dike building.

The leaders for all of the trips were first rate with lots of local knowledge and passion for their roles in exploring and protecting the environment.

Save the dates for the 2015 meeting in Staunton, September 11 – 13.

Suzanne Jenkins



Cypress Bridge: 1. High water in the swamp.



2. Water tupelos hollow (to the extreme) as they age and often have a diverse plant community growing on the skeletal looking live tree.



3. "Big Mama," a bald cypress, was Virginia's largest tree at 123 feet before she died.



Magothy Bay:

1. Path through potato field restoration site with groundsel, goldenrod and much more.



2. Persimmons were ripe. 3. Man made dike.



4. Salt marsh.





Savage Neck Dunes:

1. Loblolly pine dune community.
2. Dune where doodlebugs hung out.
3. A doodlebug.
4. Beach erosion due to unwelcome sea wall. Sea grasses and golden rod in forefront.
5. Looking for beach tiger beetles.



Notes on 2014 VNPS Annual Meeting Field Trips in Hampton Roads

continued from page 3



Great Dismal Swamp:

1. Bog gentian (*Gentian catesbaei*)
2. Lake Drummond



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