

THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

January 2015



**Chapter Meeting 7:00 PM,
Thursday January 15, 2015
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

**Start the New Year with Bland Crowder who will present an update on The Flora Project.
He will be followed by some interesting plant photographs from our members.**

Since the 2012 publication of the Flora of Virginia, a comprehensive manual of the plants of Virginia, there has been a focus on education and outreach, including the Flora App for portable use.

Flora Project executive director, Bland Crowder, has been with the Project since 2007. He manages development and public relations for the Flora Project and heads the Flora App committee. He copyedited and was liaison with the publisher of the Flora, and compiled taxonomic descriptions and the glossary for the volume. The app will make information from the Flora—and from six other Virginia plant-related databases—available on portable devices.

Bland was formerly coordinator of education, volunteers, and publications with the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Virginia. He is publications chair of the board of the Virginia Native Plant Society and is a member our Chapter. Tonight, Bland will give us an update on these activities, especially the mobile app.



The second part of the program will feature chapter members' photographs from field trips and yards, or of that interesting little unknown plant that someone needs help identifying.

Upcoming Events

January 18: Dennis Whigham of the North American Orchid Conservation Center will speak on Native Orchid Conservation at the Virginia Orchid Society meeting at 2:00 PM in the Robins Room of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

February 5: Chapter Meeting at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens

Property owner Marcia Mabee will discuss how the Naked Mountain Natural Area Preserve came to be and the discoveries and obligations inherent within the preserve. In 2006, the Naked Mountain property was placed under an open space easement held by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and designated by DCR as the 49th Natural Area Preserve in Virginia. There are currently 61 Natural Area Preserves across the state in a system managed by the Natural Heritage Division of DCR.



Mabee is currently retired. For twenty-five years she provided Washington, D.C. representation for non-profit public health organizations. She holds an MPH (Masters of Public Health) degree and a PhD in health policy. She currently serves as Conservation Committee Chairperson on the Virginia Native Plant Society Board of Directors. She writes a blog about living in the middle of a natural area preserve and is writing a memoir entitled, *Naked Mountain*.

The Presidents Message

Looking Forward to Spring...

Despite the cold, there are green plants in my woods. Abundant Cranefly Orchid leaves are making food to store for their flush of bloom in mid-summer. Leathery leaves of Heartleaf from last year mark locations of “little brown jugs” come March or April, depending on how fast spring arrives. Checkered leaves of five, not two, plants of Rattlesnake Orchids indicate the patch has increased. After finding these on Jan 4 when the temperature rose to nearly 70 degrees, I carefully covered them back up with their dry-leaf blanket. I knew the cold was coming back. What’s happening in your yard, woods or wild areas? Are you watching to see when the forsythia first blooms, or the maple buds ease from brown to red? Are willow stems turning yellow or orange yet? Has anyone found skunk cabbage in bloom yet?

This leads me to think of the activities our chapter is planning. New areas and leaders for field trips, a range of topics for programs, and helping with the Winter Workshop on March 7 are all in the works. Many of these have been announced but some are new. Don’t miss Bland Crowder’s presentation on the flora this week. Next month, we return to meeting on the first Thursday each month. Remember, you can always go back to previous issues of our newsletter online using <http://pocahontaschapter-vnps.org/newsletters/newsletters.html>. Watch for chapter and state announcements in newsletters and on web sites.

Speaking of web sites, check out the new state web site vnps.org. Not only is there an archive of newsletters and “Wildflower of the Year” booklets, but there’s an interesting interactive blog with stories and photographs, and much more information. Problems associated with the first appearance of this site are solved. The VNPS Facebook page also has lots of helpful and interesting information. Contributions from members are welcome. Your chapter officers will be encouraging more use of these online resources for accessing information and sharing photos and news.



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..... Catharine Tucker
(804) 938-6941..... cath.tucker@gmail.com
Vice President.....Leslie Allanson
(804) 248-1578..... leleorr4@gmail.com
Secretary.....Irene Caperton
(804) 320-6935..... idcaperton@verizon.net
Treasurer Richard Moss
(804) 748-2940..... richard@mossrd.org
Membership..... RubyJane Robertson
(804) 323-7537..... rubyjane1@aol.com

Address all other correspondence to:

Richard Moss, Editor
12565 Brook Lane
Chester, VA 23831
richard@mossrd.org

Chapter Website

pocahontaschapter-vnps.org

Member participation in planning activities is increasing and lots of new ideas are coming in. Join in by sharing your ideas and requests with any of your officers.

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Pictures from the Holiday party on December 12 at Leslie Allanson's House:

Seated around the table enjoying our refreshments.

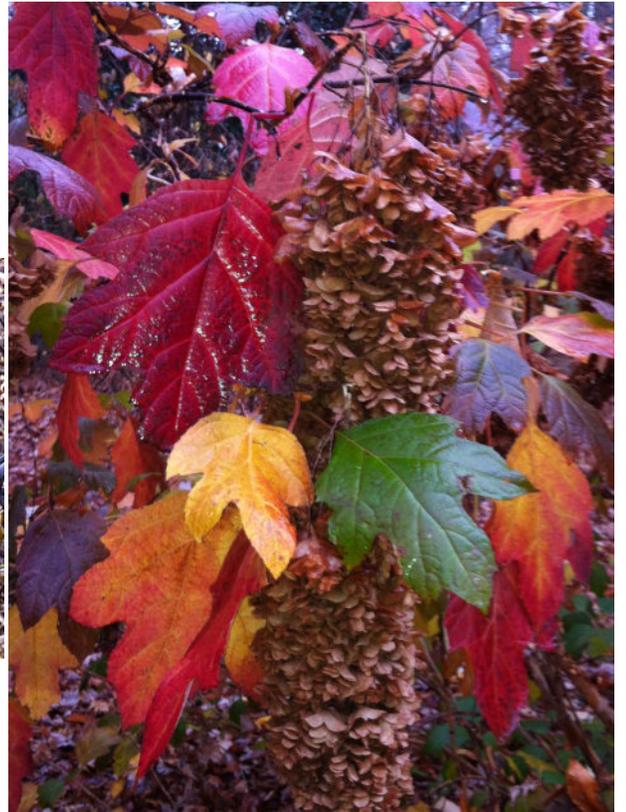


Beautyberry growing outside our host's house.

Many thanks to Leslie for hosting our party!

More Interesting Plant Photos

From Catharine Tucker: Two photos of non- Virginia natives from her yard that illustrate the crazy weather we had in mid December: Christmas red and green (!) on the maple-leaf hydrangea (right) and forsythia in bloom (Below) both on Dec 15.



Photos from Richard Moss taken in Spring Grove, Surry County, VA. The first is of Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*) in bloom on December 18, 2014, and the second, skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*) flowers just starting to come up taken on December 25, 2014.



The third picture, to the right taken near the picture to the left, shows Skunk Cabbage leaves starting to come up, but they apparently have some cold temperature damage.



Notes from the December VNPS Board Meeting

The Virginia Native Plants Society Board of Directors met December 5. Several announcements are of interest.

March 7 Workshop: Pocahontas Chapter agreed to provide continental breakfast and refreshments for the Winter Workshop on March 7 at the University of Richmond. [Rubyjane Robertson has agreed to chair the committee for our chapter.]

The topic is "Forest Floor Ecology." Speakers confirmed so far are Mary Jane Epps from NC State to talk about fungi in the forest; Henry Wilbur from UVA to talk about long term deer browse; and Ann Alerding from VMI to talk about springtails and garlic mustard.

Field Trips: Butch Kelly will offer the Great Smoky Mountains trip the week of April 12. There will be a brief note in the upcoming Bulletin. Nancy asked that people express interest to Karen York in the office so she can send more information as it's available.

Johnny Townsend will lead the Mountain Lake field trip on 7/31-8/1/2015 with a likely limit of 50 or fewer.

Annual Meeting in 2015: Upper James River and Shenandoah Chapters are partnering for the 2015 meeting to be held at the Frontier Museum in Staunton from Friday evening through Sunday afternoon during the second weekend in September - September 11 - 13.

Virginia's Biennial Budget: Cuts across the board will impact the Division of Natural Heritage. VNPS will be encouraging increasing the allocation to support the work of these folks in protecting and managing the state's Natural Areas.

Gas pipelines in VA: VNPS voted overwhelmingly to oppose the pipeline and joined the Allegheny and Blue Ridge alliance with other groups concerned about the potential habitat impacts of the proposed pipeline. VNPS will be on file as an "intervening organization" which is a legal designation. We will be commenters rather than interveners.

Our focus should be on invasives that will take over if and when areas are opened up for pipeline construction. Members wishing to comment should speak as concerned citizens, but not identifying themselves as VNPS members. VNPS will speak with one voice from the Board. On behalf of the Board, Marcia Mabee will distribute talking points with direction how to use them including not to identify commenters as VNPS members.

Deer Population: There was a lengthy discussion of a proposed resolution concerning the long-term negative effects on habitat of high deer populations and what to do about them. A response is requested from Chapter boards of directors is requested by the end of January.

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

