

BotSoc News



Volume 86
Number 6
November
2011

Notes from the BotSoc Annual Meeting *IN THIS ISSUE:*

On October 1, 2011, the Georgia Botanical Society Board of Directors Meeting and the Annual Meeting convened at the Gwinnett (County) Environmental and Cultural Center. Many of the agenda items were follow-up discussions from an April 2011 meeting and online discussions of Society business by the Board. The following is a summary of items of interest to members:

Complimentary memberships: Individuals who successfully complete the Certificate in Native Plants Program administered by the State Botanical Garden of Georgia will receive a one-year membership in the Georgia Botanical Society and access to the online edition of the newsletter. *Tipularia*, the society's botanical journal, is not included with the free membership, but may be purchased for \$10 by contacting Richard Ware. **Continuing Education Units (CEU):** In response to a request from Nathan Klaus, GA DNR Senior Wildlife Biologist, the Board established a policy for granting CEU for attendance of a Georgia Botanical Society field trip or workshop.

The Georgia Botanical Society conducts events such as field trips, workshops, and pilgrimages. Professional organizations, such as those for teachers or foresters, may determine that certain Georgia Botanical Society events are suitable for continuing education or professional licensing credits. Those organizations will make known to their members which events qualify for obtaining credits and how many credits participation in a given event would accrue. Persons seeking professional or continuing education credit from Georgia Botanical Society events should obtain a "participation form" from their organization that specifies the event to be attended. Upon completion of the event, the Georgia Botanical Society leader/instructor will verify the identification of the attendee and sign the form only to confirm participation in the event. The attendee is then responsible for returning the form to their organization for recording of the credits.

Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage: Ed McDowell and Jerry Hightower are planning the 2012 pilgrimage for May 4-6 in Clayton GA with the Rabun County Civic Center as headquarters.

Financial Report: The Society's financial position for 2011 is essentially break-even with a small reserve - a desirable outcome for a not-for-profit organization.

Membership: As of October 2011, the Society has 380 members (down from the 395 members in 2010).

Fieldtrips: Eddi Minche reported that the 2012 field trip schedule is coming together and should be complete by Thanksgiving.

LISTSERVE and other mailing list options: Responding to a request from Parrie Pinyan for a timely way to report interesting botanical finds, Ellen Honeycutt & Jerry Hightower will review and report to the Board on the way other groups with interests similar to BotSoc create, manage, and control electronic mailing lists. A major concern of the Board was protection of any information on rare plants that might facilitate poaching.

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On our way to the Mill Creek Nature Center after the annual meeting, Jim Drake photographed a perplexing flower that Tom Patrick later called "a very interesting introduction to the *Heterotheca subaxillaris* complex". For some of us, the plant was also a lesson in DYC botany. Known as camphorweed for the camphor-like smell of its crushed leaves and recognized as *Heterotheca* because the achenes of its ray and disc florets are shaped differently, our Gwinnett plant differed considerably from what Tom and others in the group had expected to see in the Piedmont. BUT, Tom's search of the literature on this plant found that camphorweed is capable of a great deal of variation when grown in a greenhouse setting (e.g., the procumbent forms of the plant may become more erect or a plant may develop pilose hairs). The huge overlaps in these and other characteristics - even among the flower heads of a single plant - suggest that rather than 3 distinct *Heterotheca* in Georgia (a piedmont, an inner coastal plain, and a midwestern entity more recently moving into our area), we may have just one species with up to 6 varieties. **Jean Smith**

**BotSoc News**

is published seven times a year (Jan, Mar, May, July, Sept, Nov and for the Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage).

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are included with membership.

Website:

www.gabotsoc.org

Editorial Office

Jean Smith
1135 Barwick Hill Rd
Comer, GA 30629
ph 706.783.2308
email:
jss2holly@
windstream.net

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The passion flower (*Passiflora incarnata*), found during the Mill Creek Preserve walk, provides a colorfully intricate design for late fall. This flower is also rich in lore.
Photograph by Jim Drake.



Society News

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

As I sit on my deck admiring the lovely sunset, I am serenaded by a chorus of frogs. An occasional American robin, freed from the responsibility of parenthood, passes overhead. Despite the worsening drought, life goes on - nature will survive. Those NYCs (darn yellow composites) in the backyard seem undaunted by the dry conditions. Suddenly, I am overwhelmed by a feeling of thanksgiving - what a wonderful world, country, state.

One of my goals this autumn was to learn more about the composite family. I acquired good tools for addressing taxonomic tasks by attending the Freeman Trail hike led by Vicki Williams and Hal Massie and the composite workshop taught by Richard and Teresa Ware; however, practice makes perfect and I still have work to do on this ageing brain.

Much appreciation is extended to the Gwinnett Environmental and Cultural Center for hosting our meetings. The building and its surrounds are truly exemplary of "green" technology. One meeting agenda item generated special interest: Linda Chafin and Cora Keber, representatives of the Certificate in Native Plants Program sponsored by the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, expressed their appreciation for the free one-year memberships to their graduates.

Special thanks to Hank Ohme, Program Manager, Mill Creek Nature Center, Georgia Wildlife Federation for leading a trip to his facility after the general meeting. This remarkable preserve next to the Mall of Georgia in Buford conserves a number of native plants. Unfortunately, funds are scarce and much assistance is needed to ensure future progress of the center and protection of the area for our continued enjoyment.

Saturday's walk proceeded along the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center's Greenway Spur trail to the Ivy Creek Greenway to the Mill Creek Nature Center. During this easy walk numerous autumn species were found. Thankfully, we had a wealth of knowledge, present company excluded, to address the identification of those NYCs and other wildflowers such as: gray goldenrod (*Solidago nemoralis*),

Canada tall goldenrod (*S. altissima*), showy goldenrod (*S. erecta*), Maryland golden aster (*Chrysopsis mariana*), grass-leaf golden aster (*Pityopsis graminifolia*), hairy white oldfield aster (*Symphyotrichum pilosum*), late-flowering thoroughwort (*Eupatorium serotinum*), small-headed sunflower (*Helianthus microcephalus*), poison sumac (*Toxicodendron vernix*), tickseeds (*Bidens spp.*), New York ironweed (*Vernonia noveboracensis*), winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), beechdrops (*Epifagus virginiana*), turtle head (*Chelone glabra*), downy lobelia (*Lobelia puberula*), purple passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*).

The center is also home to a multitude of fauna. Not seen on this trip, but previously documented are wood ducks, white tail deer, nesting pileated woodpeckers, salamanders, turtles, red-shouldered hawks, and the Georgia state amphibian, the green tree frog (*Hyla cinerea*).

As a reminder, the holiday party will be held on Saturday, December 3 at the Drake house again this year. A new feature, door prize drawings, will be included. Items to be won are those useful in the field as well as a few newly-published wildflower books, a flower print, and the grand prize, a one-year membership to the Georgia Botanical Society.

Also, don't forget, gift memberships in the Georgia Botanical Society make wonderful holiday presents. They can be a good way of introducing new members to the Society and the recipient will thank you throughout the year. Just print the form off the web, complete it with the recipient's information and send it along with a check to Rich Reaves at the address provided. Then print a copy of the Society's home page as a token to give to the lucky recipient.

Have a wonderful holiday season

Jim Drake



This green tree frog (*Hyla cinerea*), warming itself in the sunshine at the Mill Creek Preserve, seems to realize its lofty status as official Georgia amphibian.
Photograph by Hank Ohme.

Book Review

WILDFLOWERS & PLANT COMMUNITIES OF THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS & PIEDMONT

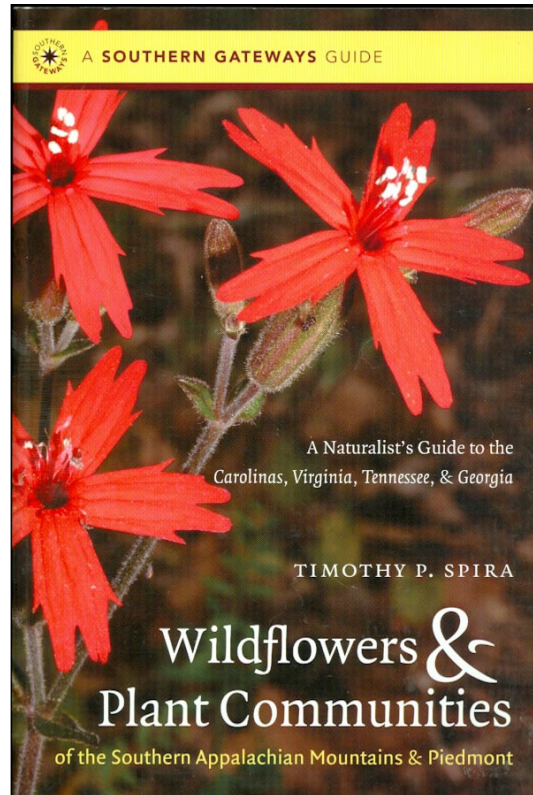
If you watch for wildflowers as you drive through the mountains or countryside, then you are probably aware that at certain altitudes or in particular environments, the plants that you see vary. In the spring when I drive the back way between Rome and Calhoun, I know where I'm likely to see toad shade trillium (*Trillium cuneatum*) and where I'm not. The spotted geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) grows in the woods and roadcuts along the creek on Thomas Bluff Road, but not in the ditches and fields where the road turns off Highway 140. I have long been aware of these plant environments without any real understanding of them. Timothy Spira's book "Wildflowers & Plant Communities of the Southern Appalachian Mountains & Piedmont" allows me to begin to understand.

Spira's book is a wildflower guide with a distinct difference. Rather than arranging flowers by color or blooming season, this book presents twenty-one different environments as "plant communities." These communities are defined by a number of variables, one of which is the wildflowers that tend to grow in them.

The book begins with a fairly long introductory section that explains the characteristics that form a plant community and the factors, major and minor, that can change it. Even within a small area, there can be several plant communities. The introduction is followed by a photo section illustrating the representative flowers for each of the twenty-one communities. This part of the book is most like a typical guide. The plant communities themselves are described and discussed in the third section of the book. These communities range from the Roadside and Field of the Piedmont to the Spruce-Fir Forest on the highest peaks in the Southern Appalachians.

Finally, the last section is made up of plant profiles, detailed discussions of around three hundred trees, shrubs, vines and herbaceous plants. These are detailed discussions with much more information and many fewer photographs than the typical guide.

Using these sections and by cross-referencing, one can use the book to identify plants.



Spira, Timothy R.
"Wildflowers & Plant Communities of the Southern Appalachian Mountains & Piedmont".
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.
521 pp.

However, the real value and utility of the book is to understand the different plant communities and not only to recognize wildflowers, but to understand the environment within which particular plants grow.

Already, I see myself using this book next spring. On the Pocket Trail between Horn and Johns Mountains, there are two areas with dozens of pink lady's slippers (*Cypripedium acaule*). For several years I have walked this trail to see these flowers in bloom. Now, with Spira's book, I can start to understand the plant community where the lady's slippers bloom and how that area differs from adjoining woodlands where there are no orchids. Also of interest are the differences in the Rich Cove Forest community in the Pigeon Mountain Pocket and the quite different environment that goes up from the cove to the top of the falls. For me, "Wildflowers & Plant Communities" provides a new way of observing plants. It is a fascinating book.

reviewed by Bob Linn

Discoveries

ROADSIDE DISCOVERIES -

A WEEKEND OF BOTANIZING NEAR WAYCROSS

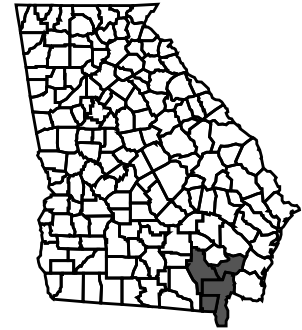
by Richard Ware, Rome

Editor's note: For those of you who wonder why BotSoc would schedule a mid-summer trip to what is arguably the hottest, buggiest area of Georgia, read on. This year's roadside botanizing near the Okefenokee Swamp yielded a bonanza of rare, interesting and unusual plants - so much so that this section of BotSoc News, normally reserved for a feature article, was given up for expanded coverage of the trip and its remarkable botanical discoveries.

Friday, July 15, 2011: I wasn't going to mention any Friday activities since the field trip didn't officially begin until Saturday morning, but those of us who arrived early saw something that some people would probably be interested in hearing about, although, believe it or not, it was fauna, not flora! We got there early enough on Friday to drive out US 82 east for one stop with Rich & Anita Reaves before a torrential rain began. There were plants there, such as: Florida bluehearts (*Buchnera floridana*), Coastal sweet-pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), white meadow-beauty (*Rhexia mariana* var. *exalbida*) and creeping frogfruit (*Phyla nodiflora*), but the largest attraction for some of my cohorts was a reptile! If any of you have been in the field with Teresa Ware, you know that if there is a snake nearby, she will find it! According to Max Medley, the snake in question was the dusky sub-species of the pigmy rattlesnake (*Sistrurus miliarius barbouri*).

Saturday, July 16, 2011: Ten adventurous BotSocers joined leader Rich Reaves for the first day of two days of roadside botany near Waycross. Those who made the drive were treated to one of the best field trips of the entire year. We were rewarded with lower than normal temperatures, some rain, and a wind direction change that, while not completely dousing the nearby Okefenokee wildfires, had eliminated the smoke. The plans for the weekend still had to be changed due to the fact that the roads into the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge were still closed. So, for Saturday Rich decided to head down US 1 from Waycross to Folkston and then down GA 121, GA 94 and GA 185, thus making the loop around the tip of Charlton County, which by following the St. Mary's River, extends into the same latitudes as northern Florida.

I probably won't remember every stop, since I took no notes, but I was taking pictures, so I don't believe I missed any of the wildflowers! The first stop, along US 1, was probably the most spectacular, with the greatest number of different flowers of any stop during the field trip. The showiest of these was



Ware, Brantley and Charlton Counties



BotSocers who made the drive to Waycross for roadside botanizing were treated to one of the best field trips of the entire year.



The beautiful Bartram's rose-gentian (*Sabatia bartramii*) was abundant along US 301 south from Nahunta.

the Bartram's rose-gentian (*Sabatia bartramii*), with its most sumptuous shade of pink, followed by the very abundant slim-leaf Barbara's-buttons (*Marshallia tenuifolia*). Other showy, or perhaps not so showy, flowers in bloom at this stop were: blue waterhyssop (*Bacopa caroliniana*), Coastal sweet-pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), common ten-angled pipewort (*Eriocaulon decangulare*), loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), thickleaf water-willow (*Justicia crassifolia*), redroot (*Lachnanthes caroliniana*), marsh-fleabane (*Pluchea rosea*), snowy orchid (*Platanthera nivea*),

orange milkwort (*Polygala lutea*), short pinebarren milkwort (*Polygala ramosa*), broadleaf whitetop sedge (*Rhynchospora latifolia*), yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris* sp.) and southern bog asphodel (*Tofieldia racemosa*). In addition, there were several species of St. John's Wort (*Hypericum* spp.), seedbox (*Ludwigia* sp.), and several *Rhexia* species including white meadow-beauty (*Rhexia mariana* var.

Discoveries

exalbida), smooth meadow-beauty (*R. alifanus*), and yellow meadow-beauty (*R. lutea*).

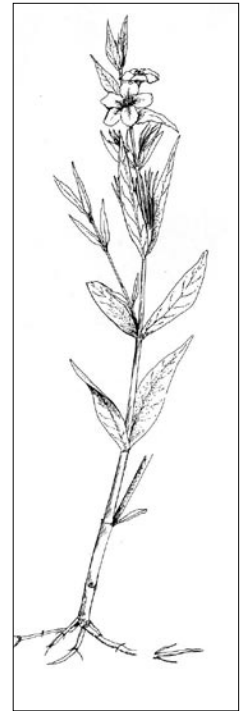
We had a wonderful lunch at Traders Hill Park on the banks of the St. Mary's River and afterward enjoyed a little botanizing in the park. Near the picnic tables Max Medley found a lovely high-climbing southern leatherflower (*Clematis crispa*). Near the river, Teresa Ware discovered one of the main plants she came to see - powderpuff mimosa (*Mimosa strigillosa*). Also, on the banks of the river, we found a tree I'd never seen before, Ogeechee lime (*Nyssa ogeche*).

At the next stop we came to a screeching halt when someone spotted a couple of pitcher plants on the side of the road! They turned out to be hooded pitcherplant (*Sarracenia minor*), parrot pitcherplant (*S. psittacina*), and hybrids between the two. Here we found a rare grass, Florida toothache grass (*Ctenium floridanum*) along with golden colic-root (*Aletris aurea*), wild-petunia (*Ruellia* sp.), and pitted stripeeed (*Piriqueta caroliniana*).

The next stop held a real surprise for everyone! Long have I desired to see this plant in the wild, especially since Richard Carter's wonderful picture of it appeared on the front cover of the 2008 edition of *Tipularia*. The exciting find was a recently logged field with many nice plants of tarflower (*Bejaria* [*Befaria*] *racemosa*) in really nice bloom. For us, this was one of the best finds of the field trip. I talked everyone into back-tracking a mile or so, where I had spotted several patches of striking orange flowers on the side of the road. The plant turned out to be grassnut (*Arachis prostrata*). It is from South America like another member of the genus, the cultivated peanut (*Arachis hypogaea*). Then it was time for some good Mexican food at the same restaurant where we ate at the previous Waycross trip a few years ago. The food was fine, but I was a little disappointed that the excellent Mariachi band was not playing there anymore.

Sunday, July 17, 2011: The day dawned beautifully and the remaining five participants were eager to join Rich on the second day of the trip. Today's route took us east on US 82 to Nahunta, then south on US 301 to Folkston. Unbeknownst to those attending, Sunday was the day we would find the rarest plant of the whole field trip, but more on that later. We made several stops along US 82 to explore several recently logged fields for wildflowers. These areas displayed plants like: tread-softly (*Cnidocolus stimulosus*), milkpea (*Galactia* sp.), flag pawpaw (*Asimina incana*), maritime pokeweed (*Phytolacca rigida*) and southern dawnflower (*Stylisma humistrata*).

We then headed down US 301 south from Nahunta, which, it seems to me, is a very special highway, at least as far as wildflowers are concerned. We stopped at a very wet spot with lots of the beautiful Bartram's rose-gentian (*Sabatia bartramii*). Near this spot was another plant I was unfamiliar with - white lobelia (*Lobelia paludosa*). This was



The night-blooming wild petunia (*Ruellia noctiflora*, Acanthaceae) blooms from May to August. Its glistening white flowers open at night; by mid-morning the bloom has withered and fallen off. In an article for *Chinquapin*, Linda Chafin described the night-blooming wild petunia as a "sphingophile," or hawk-moth lover, for the way in which its flowers have evolved to attract hawkmoths (family Sphingidae).

"Its flowers are white and open at night to release a strong, sweet perfume. They

have a long, nectar-containing floral tube but no "landing platform." And they produce abundant nectar (from a ring of nectaries that encircle the base of the ovary) that has less concentrated sugars than the nectar produced by bee-pollinated flowers; this thin liquid is easily drawn up the long, slender proboscis of the hawkmoth. As the hawkmoth retracts its proboscis and retreats from the flower, both its body and proboscis are dusted with pollen, which it then (hopefully) carries to the flowers of another plant in this species." Although vulnerable to the loss of its specific pollinator, night-blooming wild petunia's rarity is due largely to destruction of its wetland habitat. And until Gene Zielinski spotted it in July, the night-blooming wild petunia had been last seen in Georgia in 1963!

References:

Chinquapin Volume 17 Number 2, Summer 2009
Chafin, Linda G., "Field Guide to the Rare Plants of Georgia", 2007, State Botanical Garden of Georgia.

Photo by Gil Nelson

Drawing by Jean Hancock in "Field Guide to the Rare Plants of Georgia"

the spot for swamp coreopsis (*Coreopsis nudata*), but since we didn't want to wade in deep water, we didn't get a close-up picture. Also here was fringed meadow-beauty (*Rhexia petiolata*) and pineland hibiscus (*Hibiscus aculeatus*). Just a short walk down the road revealed one of the other very showy plants in this area: few-flowered milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*) with its beautiful orange flowers. As we were walking back to the cars thinking we had milked the site for everything that it was worth, we got the biggest surprise of the weekend. Gene Zielinski spotted a plant and asked, "What is this night-flowering plant?" Turned out, it was night-flowering wild-petunia (*Ruellia noctiflora*) and, according to Linda Chafin's "Field Guide to the Rare Plants

continued on page 8

Upcoming Field Trips

November 11 Friday 10:00 AM Appalachian Trail (AT) Walk, Unicoi Gap Loop, White County

Description: A chance for a walk along the AT in early fall. This outing is mostly hike but also part scavenger hunt. That last bit about scavenging refers to seeking out plants of interest -- blooms, seeds, fruit or color. Although I'm familiar with the route, I'm not as familiar with what plant life may lurk among the mature hardwood forests we'll travel through. Late to the party asters? Maybe. But what else? Come along and we'll see. If nothing else we can enjoy each others company and have a nice hike. The route begins at the Unicoi Gap trailhead. From there we'll head north on the AT to join the Rocky Trail. At that junction we'll travel around and up and down on this pleasant forest trail to emerge at a gravel road that we'll travel briefly on to Indian Grave Gap. At this point we'll rejoin the AT and climb steeply up to Rocky Mountain where weather permitting we can have lunch with a jaw dropping view. Following this stop, we'll return to our starting point via the AT, a distance of ~5.5 mi total, with the out portion and return portion almost equal (+/- 2.7 mi each way). I predict that at the least we'll still have lingering color in the treetops, cooler temperatures and that the spectacular view from the top of Rocky will be worth the climb. This hike has some steep portions, both up and down, especially the return portion along the AT. Our pace will be leisurely and we'll take breaks as needed.

Directions: From the Chattahoochee River bridge in Helen, travel ~9.5 mi north on GA 75 to Unicoi Gap, a large gravelled parking lot on the right (east) side of the highway. This gap is marked with a rectangular green hiker sign as well as a sign "Unicoi Gap". **Meet in parking lot.**

Bring: Raingear, water, lunch.

Facilities: None beyond Helen, GA.

Leader: Eddi Minche 678-313-2582 (C), reception iffy day of hike eddmin@gmail.com

November 19 Saturday 10:00 AM Winter Tree ID Workshop/Walk, Fulton County

Description: The morning session at the library will be a workshop teaching participants how to identify the major genera of trees in the winter condition, mostly using twig characteristics. Following lunch we will drive to the Big Trees Forest Preserve in Sandy Springs for a walk and to apply the knowledge gained at the workshop in the field, where we can see, not only twigs, but bark, and possibly fruit and leaves.

Directions: From the West, take I-285E exit 29. Turn left onto Ashford-Dunwoody Rd. Bear right onto Mt. Vernon Rd. Turn right on Chamblee-Dunwoody Rd. The Library is on the left. From the East, take I-285 North or West exit 29. Turn right onto Ashford-Dunwoody Rd. Continue right on Mt. Vernon Rd. Follow as above. Library address: 5339 Chamblee-Dunwoody Road, Dunwoody, GA 30338. **Meet at the Dunwoody library in the Williams Room.**

Bring: If you have these items, please bring: hand lens, measuring tool, sharp knife and either "Native Trees of the Southeast" by Kirkman, Brown & Leopold or "Trees of Georgia and Adjacent States" by Brown & Kirkman.

Lunch: Optional at local Mexican Restaurant.

Facilities: At library.

Leaders: Richard & Teresa Ware 706-232-3435 (C) 706-766-5143 gabotany@comcast.net

Directions to Big Trees Forest Preserve will be available at Workshop.

John Ripley Forbes Big Trees Forest Preserve (<http://www.bigtreesforest.com/>)
7645 Roswell Road, Sandy Springs, GA 30350

Upcoming Field Trips



American holly *Ilex opaca*
Pierre Joseph Redoute

Georgia Botanical Society Annual Holiday Party

SATURDAY DECEMBER 3, 2011

10:00 AM

Candee and Jim Drake's House
3800 Hickory Branch Trail Suwanee, GA 30024

Bring: Your favorite dish with enough to feed several people; drinks will be provided. This very informal gathering will have no walk and no formal presentations but will have botanical themed door prizes!

Directions: From I 85, take Suwanee exit 111, Lawrenceville Suwanee Rd, to go northwest toward Suwanee for ~0.7 mi. Turn right onto Satellite Blvd and travel 0.9 mi to turn left onto Smithtown Rd. Travel 0.8 mi to turn right across from tree farm onto Westbrook Rd. Travel 0.7 mi to turn right onto Ridge Rd. Travel 0.6 mi to turn left onto Hickory Branch Trail Olde Branch sub division. After 100 ft, turn left onto Hickory Branch Trail again. 3800 Hickory Branch Trail is down the hill. From Peachtree Industrial Blvd, travel southeast on Suwanee Dam Rd GA Hwy 317 for 1.6 mi. Turn left onto Smithtown Rd and travel 0.9 mi to turn left across from tree farm onto Westbrook Rd and follow directions above.

Contact Information: 678.482.2127_{home} 678.793.2127_{cell} drake3800@charter.net

Potential Everglades Field Excursion - February 13-17, 2012 (Register by January 3, 2011)

I would like to troll the membership regarding interest in a trip down to the Everglades National Park in February 2012. In addition to the Everglades, we also will likely try to include a trip through Big Cypress Preserve as well as consider a trip down into the Keys. Tentatively, I am looking at sometime during the week of February 13-17 plus or minus the bracketing weekends. I have selected mid February for the trip for the following reasons:

- I have been there around this time in the past (for work and pleasure) and nice flowers are available for the viewing.
- Mid February is the dry season and winter birds (and gators!) concentrate around water areas - the birding will be spectacular.
- I remain a member of the workforce and this time fits into my projected work load after the first of the year.
- Low bug irritation quotient.

Camping is available in the park in the Long Pine Key Campground on a first-come, first-serve basis only. The Flamingo Campground allows sites reservation after November 20th, either online (<http://www.recreation.gov/>) or by calling 1-877-444-6777. Hotels/motels are available in nearby Homestead. It can get chilly down there at this time of year - I have encountered frost on previous visits.

If you might be interested, please get in touch with me via email (rich.reaves@att.net). I would like to make the Go - NoGo call by early January, so let me hear from you if you are interested.

Thanks,
Rich Reaves
rich.reaves@att.net

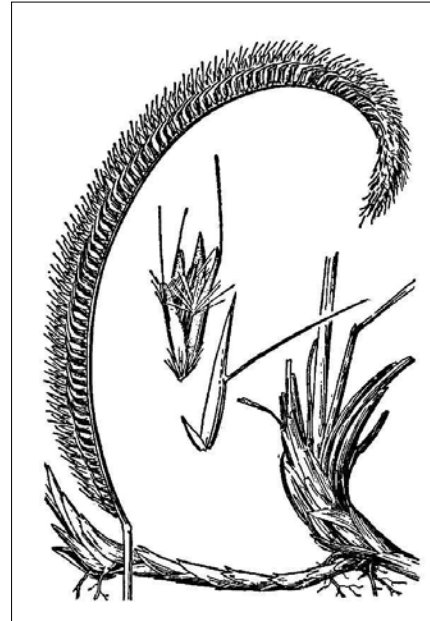
Discoveries (cont.)

ROADSIDE DISCOVERIES (CONT.)

of Georgia”, not seen in Georgia since 1963. Kudos to Gene for his keen observation. Gene, who was a visitor that day, has since joined BotSoc! The discovery has generated great interest in botanical circles. Wilson Baker of Tallahassee, FL called for directions and he and Richard Carter (Valdosta) visited the area on July 25 and filed the following report: " Yes, we found it - quite a lot of it - in several spots along Hwy 301, including one site in Brantley County. We also picked up corkwood (*Leitneria floridana*) in Camden County and powdery thalia (*Thalia dealbata*) in Ware County, both county records and good finds. It was an excellent day of field work, albeit very warm. We wouldn't have made the

field trip without the impetus from you and GA BotSoc. Thanks for the directions to the site!"

The last stop was also along US 301, where Rich had found Florida rain-lily (*Zephyranthes simpsonii*). After much photography we drove on to Folkston for lunch. After lunch, as they say, the party was over and we made the long drive home. The mini-pilgrimage was a great success, with many rare and beautiful wildflowers having been seen and photographed. Since the area seems to be ripe with un-discovered rare species, it has been suggested that we solicit applications to the Marie Mellinger Grant Program for someone to do a comprehensive study of the area.



Ctenium is a genus of 17-20 species, native to tropical areas of Africa and the Americas. The two native North American species, toothache grass (*Ctenium aromaticum*) and the much less common Florida orange grass or Florida toothache grass (*C. floridanum*) are both found in Georgia. The two species are immediately recognizable by their solitary curved one-sided flowering spike which resembles a toothbrush and are the only grass species in Georgia with that type of flowering stem. The flowering stalks may reach 5 feet tall. In the fall, the panicle branches of both species form curves, loops, and corkscrews, which are attractive in floral arrangements. The aroma of the leaves has been variously described as being like turpentine or citrus. The stem, when erect, has an enlarged base and contains a substance that deadens the tongue and gums when chewed. Chewing parts of the grass is reported to alleviate toothache. Both species are highly fire-adapted, flourishing in sandhills and pinelands that regularly burn on a 1-5 year basis. Only 5 populations of *C. floridanum* are known for Georgia and only one population is in a conservation area. Its habitat is being destroyed by residential and industrial developments and by mechanical site preparation for pine plantations. The two species can be distinguished by their leaf color: the leaves of *C. floridanum* are bright green on both surfaces; the leaves of *C. aromaticum* are bright green above and pale blue-green below.

References:

Linda Chafin, *Field Guide to the Rare Plants of Georgia*

USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database Plant Fact Sheet

Southern Wetland Flora <http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/plants/floraso/species/2/ctenarom.htm>

Photo by Richard & Teresa Ware.

Drawing from USDA-NRCS PLANTS Hitchcock, A.S. Manual of the grasses of the United States. 1950.

Discoveries (cont.)



Richard & Teresa Ware

The beautiful few-flowered milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*) is found in wet pine or cypress savannas and bogs in the Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plains (GA Plant Watch List - G5 S3?)



Richard & Teresa Ware

A recently logged field was full of tarflower (*Befaria* [*Bejaria*] *racemosa*), a plant found only in pine flatwoods and pine-oak scrub habitats in GA, FL, AL, and reported for SC by Weakley (GA Plant Watch List - G3G4 S3)



Richard & Teresa Ware

Powder-puff mimosa (*Mimosa strigillosa*), a Southeastern Coastal Plain endemic, is found in floodplain forests and wet, grassy openings. (GA Plant Watch List - G4G5 S3?)

Ruellia Noctiflora

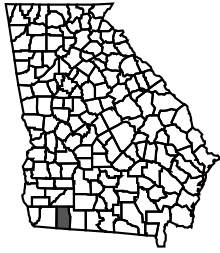
*A colored man come running at me out of the woods
 one Sunday morning about twenty years past.
 The Junior Choir was going to be singing
 at Primitive Baptist over in Notasulga,
 and we were meeting early, to practice.
 I remember wishing I was barefoot
 in the heavy, cool-looking dew.
 And suddenly this tall, rawbone wild man
 come puffing out of the woods, shouting
 Come see! Come see!
 Seemed like my mary-janes just stuck
 to the gravel. Girl, my heart
 like to abandon ship!*

*Then I saw by the long tin cylinder
 slung over his shoulder on a leather strap,
 and his hoboish tweed jacket
 and the flower in his lapel
 that it was the Professor.
 He said, gesturing,
 his tan eyes a blazing,
 that last night,
 walking in the full moon light,
 he'd stumbled on
 a very rare specimen:
 Ruellia Noctiflora,
 the Night-blooming Wild Petunia.
 Said he suddenly sensed a fragrance
 and a small white glistening.
 It was clearly a petunia:
 The yellow future beckoned
 from the lip of each tubular flower,
 a blaring star of frilly, tongue-like petals.
 He'd never seen this species before.
 As he tried to place it,
 its flowers gaped wider,
 catching the moonlight.
 suffusing the night with its scent.
 All night he watched it
 promise silent ecstasy to moths.*

*If we hurried, I could see it
 before it closed to contemplate
 becoming seed.
 Hand in hand, we entered
 the light-spattered morning-dark woods.
 Where he pointed was only a white flower
 until I saw him seeing it.*

Reprinted by permission from "Carver: A Life in Poems", Marilyn Nelson's tribute to George Washington Carver. Marilyn Nelson is professor emeritus, University of Connecticut, Storrs and was Connecticut's poet laureate from 2001 to 2006. Three of her poetry collections have been finalists for the National Book Award.

Field Trip Report



Grady County

WOLF CREEK PRESERVE

FEBRUARY 20, 2011

Like those who have been thrilled by the autumn “aspenglow” of the Rockies, our eyes were drawn to the glow of the forest floor at Wolf Creek. Walking away from the parking area, 40 Bot Soc attendees split into two groups to tread lightly and circle the preserve in opposite directions. Only a few yards from the cars, we saw first off not one or two plants, but a clump of trout lily (*Erythronium umbilicatum*). Looking further, there was another clump and then three more. Cameras stared to click. Noting that we were still in sight of the cars, we moved on - the better views must be further on - and the clumps coalesced into ball field sized patches that were covered in nodding yellow blooms. Think groundcover-thick carpets of gold (yes, that thick). As the camera shutters tired, we made our way further along the trail to where we gained a view of the entire slope. Then finally we could take in the full extent: acres, really, truly acres of glowing yellow forest floor densely covered with trout lilies.

The site appears to be an ordinary beech-magnolia forest, not that unusual in this part of the south, but why such an extraordinary mass of trout lilies? There is probably a research thesis - or two - in the answer to that question. Are multiple soil factors all optimal at this spot? Is the balance of soil, water table and sunlight like no other spot? At senescence, do these plants produce multiple stolons to start new plants rather than single stolons? Are pathogens or competitors completely absent for some reason? Does this population produce some protective factor? Regardless of the question or the answer, the trout lilies sing loudly that they like it here.

Palmettos (*Sabal palmetto*) are expected here in south Georgia, but trout lilies and palmettos don't overlap in the Georgia botanical mind. At Wolf Creek though, the wee nodding yellow blooms seem comfortable peeking between the plicate slits of green palm fronds. Farther up the slope from the palmettos, trout lilies are in more open masses against the brown of last year's leaves. Here, the sepal backs and the pendant stamens are purple accents against the butter of the petals and the green mottle of foliage. Regardless of home latitude or inclination to birds, flowers or butterflies, this display rates a notch on your life list, your bucket list or just a damned fine photo op.

But the best part of the day though was certainly the human part of the story. Far too common are the stories of natural wonders remaining unknown or only discovered in time for a plant rescue, or tragically too late for one. Wolf Creek was recognized as special and a cooperative effort successfully preserved it. Regional botanists called out about this wonder. Local officials listened and appreciated that their community had something special. The owners postponed development plans to allow options to be presented. Enthusiasts statewide and beyond raised awareness and funds for Wolf Creek's preservation. And the last big donor to push the effort into financial success was anonymous, apparently preferring any glory be reserved for the trout lilies. This success story is a poster child for preservation efforts.

All told, the BotSoc crew was dazzled and awed. There is only a two-week window (give or take) to see this display in force. We were hit by this natural wonder at its peak, bombarded by images, and some of us were left breathing heavily - from the splendor rather than the walking. All told - a very rewarding day and fully worth the drive.

Elliott Horner, Atlanta



Elliott Horner



Ed McDowell

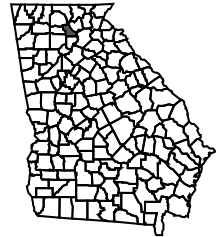
Wolf Creek appears to be an ordinary beech-magnolia forest, not that unusual in this part of south Georgia. Why does this area have such an extraordinary mass of dimpled trout lily (*Erythronium umbilicatum*)? There is probably a research thesis - or two - in the answer to that question.

Field Trip Report

CHESTATEE CANOE TRIP

MAY 28, 2011

Jerry Hightower's Chestatee Canoe Trip on May 28, 2011 had a huge turnout - over 30 Botsocers and other friends of Jerry. The weather was great and the water level about perfect. At the lunch stop, Jerry captured a hapless midland water snake that he took around to all the paddlers trying to eat their lunch! We resisted the temptation to throw both of them in the river.



Dawson County



*Reported by Mike Christison,
Marietta
Photos by Sue McConnell,
Decatur*



Jerry Hightower's balancing act on the Chestatee.

IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN THE GEORGIA BOTANICAL SOCIETY.

Memberships are effective for one calendar year, January 1st to December 31st. A renewal form is inserted in the print version of the November newsletter. If the form is missing, please call or email Jean Smith at 706 783 2308 or jss2holly@windstream.net. Members receiving the electronic version of the newsletter can download a renewal form from our website gabotsoc.org with their November newsletter.

Society Contacts

OFFICERS and BOARD MEMBERS

President - Jim Drake (678.482.2127) drake3800@charter.net
Vice-President - Jerry Hightower (678.538.1245) jerry_hightower@nps.gov
Treasurer - Rich Reaves (770.827.5186) rich.reaves@att.net
Secretary - Linda Chafin (706.548.1697) lchafin@uga.edu
Past President - Ed McDowell (478.929.1267) ed.mcdowell@cox.net
 Richard Ware (706-232-3435) gabotany@comcast.net
 Teresa Ware (706.232.3435) teresaaware@comcast.net
 Bobby Hattaway (912.653.2228) botanikman@g-net.net
 Gil Nelson (229.377.1857) gnelson@bio.fsu.edu
 Eddi Minche (678.313.2582) eddmin@gmail.com

For all Membership inquiries please contact:
 Rich or Anita Reaves
 (770.827.5186)
 rich.reaves@att.net

Chair Representatives

Field Trip - Eddi Minche (678.313.2582) eddmin@gmail.com
 Membership - Anita Reaves (770.827.5186) rich.reaves@att.net
 Member Recruitment Committee - Linda Chafin (Chair), Amy Delaplaine, Hal Massie, Anita Reaves, Vicki Williams
 BotSoc Boutique - Jenneke Somerville (706.354.7837) jenneke1@hotmail.com
 Marie Mellinger Grant Fund - Elaine Nash (770.922.7292) einash33@bellsouth.net
 Historian - Nancy Shofner (404.881.6346) nshof@mindspring.com
 Publications
 Tipularia Chairman - Richard Ware (706.232.3435) gabotany@comcast.net
 Tipularia Art Director - Brad Sanders (706.548.6446) bsandersga@fevertreepress.com
 Newsletter Managing Editor - Jean Smith (706.783.2308) jss2holly@windstream.net
 Newsletter Trip Report Editor - Carol Howel Gomez (706.624.9262) chowel_gomez@comcast.net
 Webmaster Merrill Morris (706.354.4139) merrill.morris@gmail.com
 Electronic Publications Committee - Gil Nelson (Chair), Ed McDowell, Linda Chafin, Jim Drake, Hugh Nourse
 Chapter Representative
 Martha Joiner (912.764.6329) joiners@frontiernet.net
 Bobby Hattaway (912.653.2228) botanikman@g-net.net

2718 Stillwater Lake Lane
 Marietta, GA 30066-7906
 www.gabotsoc.org



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