



Field Trip to Apalachicola National Forest, Florida Panhandle, South Georgia

August 17-18, 2013

Text by Virginia Craig and Jim Drake

The 6:00 A.M. Saturday downpour seemed to validate the forecasted weekend torrents. The day's plan was to roadside botanize in the Apalachicola National Forest (ANF) at several stops along Florida Highway 65 and adjacent roads. Our intrepid group departed the Quincy, Florida Hampton Inn at around 9:15 A.M. for an approximately 150 mile foray into the ANF in Liberty and Franklin Counties – so far, so good, very cloudy, rain holding off. At Hosford, Florida, we turned onto Hwy 65 going southwest. At the first stop, we found a few stems of yellow crested orchid (*Platanthera cristata*) – past prime. These plants were almost finished blooming as they are the first of the *Platanthera* in this area to bloom. Near the next stop we began looking for Catesby's lily (*Lilium catesbaei*). After spotting a few blooms, we pulled off and found several more flowers a little further down the road.

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Lilium catesbaei (above) by Virginia Craig.

Platanthera ciliaris (right) by Ed McDowell



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The Botanical Plight in Georgia



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Have you ever bemoaned the fact that you could not find good or useful plant pictures on the internet or that you did not have an “expert” to help you identify a plant? Read on – I may have an answer for you. If not, you could at least be a part of the solution to this problem in Georgia.

It is difficult to be a good environmental steward of your environment if you do not know what it is you are protecting. What is out there? For many years scientists have complained about not having any baseline data or records of existing species. And we still do not have that data in Georgia for its plants. In the upcoming fall newsletter in Discover Life, I will elaborate on the nature of the problem in Georgia and present steps to address it. I will describe them briefly here. Go to <http://www.discoverlife.org/news/> and click on the link to the newest (fall) newsletter to learn more.

I am heading up a Georgia Plant Photography Team for Discover Life. The goal is to develop a virtual on-line herbarium for Georgia’s flora using diagnostic photographs of plants. A diagnostic photo is one useful to discern a plant from its closest relatives, most often in the same genus (i.e. congener). A diagnostic photo is not necessarily esthetically pleasing to the eye but is useful for ID purposes. Some of you may already have such pictures and don’t even know it.

Georgia does not yet have a flora or manual for the state. At best a flora emulates a plant manual, but the most basic floral treatment is a list of plants in a region and that list is usually compiled by surveying areas of a state. Counties have historically formed the usual boundaries for the compilation of plant lists or floras. To “do” a flora, ideally a record of a plant in a locality, e.g. a county, is documented as a voucher or herbarium specimen which is pressed, dried and mounted on a sheet of paper. Such voucher specimens form the basis for county, and ultimately, state floral lists.

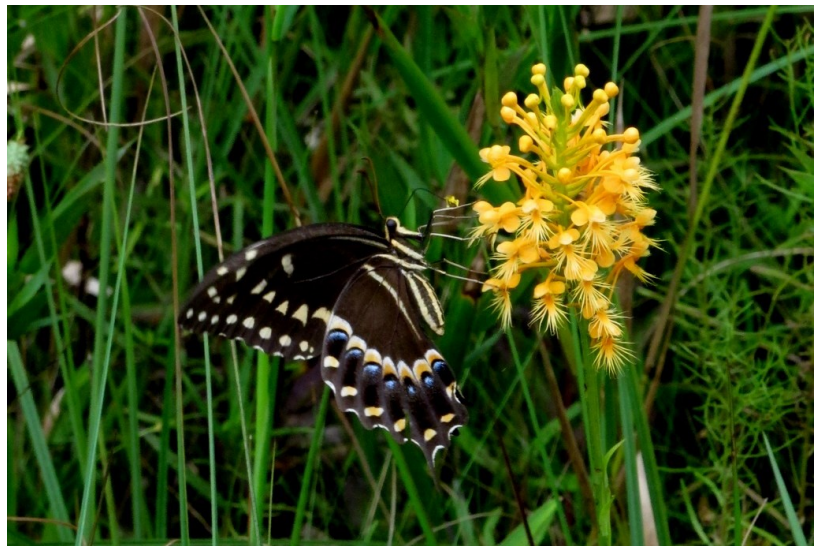
Another way to document plant species along with their location and – in some cases – flowering time, is by maintaining a pictorial record by means of a virtual on-line herbarium. Some critics of virtual herbaria argue that it is difficult if not impossible to adequately and accurately photograph the diagnostic plant parts needed for accurate identification. Before the advent of modern digital photography, that might have been a valid argument. Today the technology behind the cameras and lenses has made it possible to take unbelievably sharper images showing diagnostic features.

Ideally the Georgia Plant Photography Team would have one person for each county. We will start by regionalizing the effort by soliciting for one or two interested people in a 3-5 county area of a given physiographic province such as the Piedmont. The larger Coastal Plain province would, out of necessity, have more subdivisions. I would help the regional/subregional leaders develop “shopping” lists for the counties in their regions. Members of the team, including school children, get the photos on their Discover Life album automatically copyrighted.

So, please contact me – Bobby Hattaway (“Dr. Bob”) at botanikman@g-net.net as soon as possible to join this important initiative. If you are not comfortable initially being a county or regional/subregional leader, at least consider being a participant or help me find some interested folks. I can educate you about the Discover Life photo protocol and provide you with lists of what is diagnostic for the plants on the “shopping” or priority list we develop for your county or region.

Apalachicola National Forest Field Trip cont'd from Page 1

Our next stop, number three, was our Chapman's fringed orchid (*Platanthera chapmanii*) site. Chapman's fringed orchid is one of the rarest orchids and among the most unusual within the *Platanthera* genus. We walked down the west side of Hwy 65 and saw at least 50 plants, most of which were in prime condition. We also saw dense blazing star (*Liatris spicata*), largeflower milkweed (*Asclepias connivens*), plus other flowering plants. Walking back to the vehicles we saw more Chapman's fringed orchid (*Platanthera chapmanii*) on the opposite side of the highway. We even found a Palamedes swallowtail nectaring on the orchid.



Left: *Liatris spicata* (Jim Drake); above: *Platanthera chapmanii* (Virginia Craig)

After arriving back at the vehicles, we walked down the adjacent forest service road for a short distance, stop number four, to a small pond containing a nice bloom of purple bladderwort (*Utricularia purpurea*). Back in the vehicles we traveled a few more miles south – still on Hwy 65, rain holding off, sun coming out!

Near the town of Sumatra, at stop number five, there was a very lovely stand of Stokes' aster (*Stokesia laevis*) on the side of the road. After travelling a few more miles we took a side trip to the Wright Lake Recreation Area for a restroom break and ate lunch at a picnic table overlooking the lake. After lunch we made our way to Hickory Landing. Near a culvert and while walking into a savannah, we saw thistleleaf aster (*Eurybia eryngiifolia*), Florida beargrass (*Nolina atopocarpa*) in fruit, and coastal bog asphodel (*Tofieldia racemosa*).



Stokesia laevis (Virginia Craig)

Apalachicola National Forest Field Trip cont'd

While travelling along this same road we also saw kidneyleaf rosinweed (*Silphium compositum*). We then drove back to Sumatra and took Hwy 379 to search for the yellow pineland false sunflower (*Phoebanthus tenuifolius*) in a recently burned area. Next we drove farther along and took another forest service road and found just one yellow fringeless orchid (*Platanthera integra*) in a nice savanna. By that time, about 2:30 P.M., our BotSoc good fortune had expired as it was raining cats and dogs. Undaunted, we continued to drive along and turned onto the road to Cotton Landing where we stopped, stop number 11, in the rain to look at the low growing beautiful rare mint known as false pennyroyal (*Hedeoma graveolens*).



Platanthera integra (Jim Drake)



Hedeoma graveolens (Virginia Craig)

After turning around and heading back we saw some very tall Chapman's fringed orchids (*Platanthera chapmanii*) at stop number 12. Here we also spotted hummingbird flower (*Macranthera flammea*), mostly in bud. After returning to Hwy 379 we proceeded NW for several miles and turned right onto Hwy 12 where we stopped almost immediately, final stop number 13, to see red milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*). We then turned around and headed north on Hwy 65 to Hosford, over to Hwy 267 via Hwy 20, and back to the Hampton Inn. We had experienced dry weather for most of the trip and managed to not get too wet when the rain did begin.

Apalachicola National Forest Field Trip cont'd

The forecast for Sunday was more favorable for botanizing. A much larger group departed the Thomasville, GA Hampton Inn for the short ride to the Greenwood Plantation. At the site, we met with manager Phil Spivey who led the group via caravan into the heart of the amazing old growth longleaf pine forest. From our cars we walked a short distance to a savannah where numerous stems of both yellow fringeless orchid (*Platanthera integra*) and yellow fringed orchid (*P. ciliaris*) were at peak bloom. Wilson Baker soon located a few stems of white fringed orchid (*Platanthera conspicua*) that were just beginning to bloom in a nearby area. Along the way someone spotted whorled milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*) and pineland milkweed (*Asclepias obovata*). Several other plants were noted including the abundant pineland hibiscus (*Hibiscus aculeatus*).

After returning to the vehicles we drove to a higher location. There we disembarked and carefully trekked beneath the centuries-old longleaf pine trees (*Pinus palustris*). Hidden within the vegetation in the understory were several patches of peak-blooming Michaux's orchid (*Habenaria quinqueseta*). Also seen were caterpillars of a couple of moth species including those of flannel moth. Reaching above the forest-floor flora atop long robust stems were occasional flowering racemes of giant orchid (*Pteroglossaspis ecristata*). We also saw slimleaf pawpaw (*Asimina angustifolia*) and running oak (*Quercus pumila*). Periodically, calls of the red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*) were heard, but unfortunately, none of the birds were spotted. Following lunch back at the office, participants were offered a couple of options for the rest of the afternoon. One was to go to another location at the Greenwood site for a look at the yellow crested orchid (*Platanthera cristata*) – past peak bloom – plus a chance to explore for other plants. Beth Grant offered a second option, which was accepted by some participants, for a visit to nearby Lost Creek preservation area.



Michaux's orchid (*Habenaria quinqueseta*) and the group at Greenwood (Photos by Jim Drake).

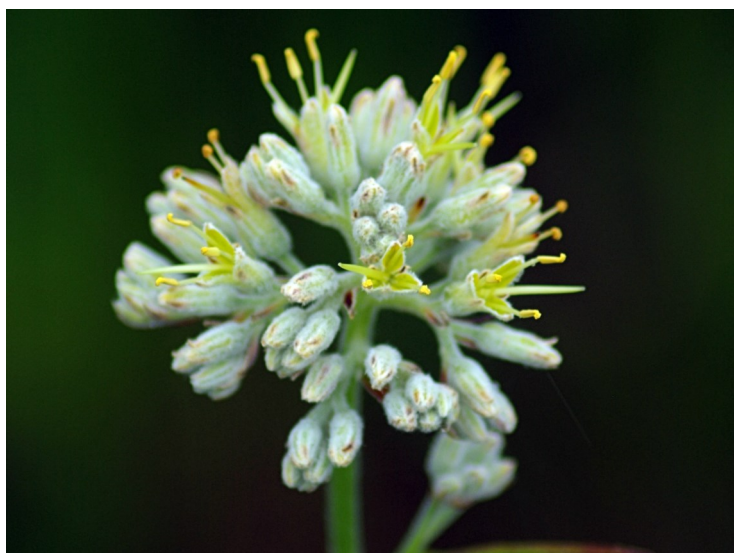
Thanks to Virginia Craig and Wilson Baker for sharing their superior knowledge of the Apalachicola National Forest/Florida Panhandle/South Georgia areas to plan and lead these excellent wildflower trips. Thanks also to Phil Spivey, manager at the Greenwood Plantation.

Roadside Botanizing in Waycross

Thanks to Max Medley for providing his plant list as a memory aid for me prior to this trip. In spite of the gloomy weekend forecast (high chance of substantial rain both days), 13 folks showed up for the Saturday loop drive (including two who joined mid-day) and 10 hung around for the shorter, but much earlier, Sunday excursion. The overcast skies resulted in very high humidity but below normal temperatures (in the 80s) that were almost pleasant for July, and the frequent roadside stops involved minimal walking, which helped avoid bugs and kept us in proximity to vehicle AC. Folks who know me will not be surprised to learn that wet roadside ditches were a focal point of our roadside stops. Due to the recent heavy rains and quite extensive flooding, Anita and I scouted the routes on Friday to identify spots where we could safely park and exit our vehicles without causing a traffic hazard or getting stuck.

The 3-legged loop on Saturday began in Waycross and went east along US 82, south on GA 301, and then back to Waycross along US23/1. The day started well, with sunny to partly overcast skies and offered the hope of not getting rained out.

Our first stop was an upland loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*) plantation. This area was harvested and replanted a couple of years before the first Waycross Roadside trip in 2007, and has been revisited each time. Now the pines have grown large enough that many of the flowers



Lachnanthes caroliniana

we found on the earlier trips have been shaded out and suppressed. However, some upland flowers continue to grow along the roadside.

Highlights of this stop included Florida bluehearts (*Buchnera floridana*), redroot (*Lachnanthes caroliniana*), golden colic root (*Aletris aurea*), white meadow beauty (*Rhexia mariana* var. *exalbida*), and low pine barren milkwort (*Polygala ramosa*). There also was a wet ditch along the road that had common bogbuttons (*Lachnocaulon anceps*) and feathery mermaid-weed (*Proserpinaca pectinata*). White meadow beauty and redroot would be fairly constant companions on this day.

Continued on next page

Field trip July 13-14, 2013

by Rich Reaves

The first roadside trip found *Sabatia foliosa*, a coastal plain species of rose-gentian, and we found it elsewhere throughout the trip. Friday afternoon, I noticed a patch of *Sabatia foliosa* along the US 82 too far east of Waycross to include in the Saturday trip, but it raised my hopes. Our second stop Saturday morning rewarded the group with a fairly extensive patch of *Sabatia foliosa* that was nicely flowering where first spotted in 2007. *Sabatia foliosa*, was fairly recently split out as a separate species from *Sabatia dodecandra*, a taxonomic change that necessitated I re-label all my old 35-mm slides. It is a beautiful flower, as is the case for virtually all members of the genus, and this one may be Anita's favorite of the genus. Finding *Sabatia foliosa* definitely was a crowd pleaser. In addition to the rose gentian, other flowers at this stop were bog cheetos (*Polygala lutea*), coastal sweet-pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*), common axil-flower (*Mecardonia acuminata* var. *acuminata*), hairy wicky (*Kalmia hirsuta*), and tall meadow beauty (*Rhexia alifanus*). Shortly down the road, we had our first unplanned stop to look at water lilies (*Nymphaea odorata*) in a flooded ditch.



Sabatia foliosa

Stop 4 was for several wet ditch species, highlighted by snowy orchid (*Platanthera nivea*), another crowd pleaser. The other abundant flower here was blue water-hyssop (*Bacopa caroliniana*). After finishing at this site, we headed for Nahunta for a biobreak followed by another unplanned stop to examine a very nice patch of pineland hibiscus (*Hibiscus aculeatus*) that I had failed to notice on Friday. This stop also rewarded us with our third meadow beauty of the day, Virginia meadow beauty (*Rhexia virginica*).



Platanthera nivea



Hibiscus aculeatus

Stop 5 was, for lunch at the site where Eugene Zelinski spotted night-flowering wild petunia (*Ruellia noctiflora*) in 2011. Sadly, none present this year. However, other flowers were more forthcoming, including lance-leaved milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*) and Bartram's rose-gentian (*Sabatia bartramii*). We also were treated to nice displays of hatpins (*Eriocaulon decangulare*) and drumheads (*Polygala cruciata*).

Continued on next page

Waycross Field Trip cont'd

We had a rain delay on the way to Stop 6, a roadside ditch that provided a wildflower extravaganza. Bartram's rose-gentian and snowy orchid were in much greater abundance than at earlier stops. Other flowers included narrow-leaf Barbara's buttons (*Marshallia tenuifolia*), southern bog asphodel (*Tofieldia racemosa*), marsh fleabane (*Pluchea baccharis* [learned this species as *P. rosea*, and many books will have it under that name.]) and many species we had encountered at earlier stops. We had to curtail our botanizing after this as the heavy rains returned and appeared to set in for "quite a spell", as my grandmother would say. We omitted a couple of planned stops farther to the south that seemed ill advised with the rain. There's always the next excursion.

The Sunday trip started at 7:30 AM to optimize the chance to locate night-flowering wild petunia before the flowers dropped after sunrise. I had hurried out extra early Saturday to search for the plant. If *Ruellia noctiflora* was not blooming, I was going to have grumpy BotSocers Sunday morning. I noted about 18 flowers among five locations and I took the group straight for a spot where I had noticed the most flowers, hoping we would catch a few blooms. We were well-rewarded, as we found 75-100 plants in the field with about half in flower. Even at that early time, several plants had already dropped flowers, so going early is imperative to see this plant in bloom. And, yes, I got pictures. We also had another nice find while enjoying the night-flowering wild petunia. Someone, and I must apologize as I do not recall who, spotted longleaf milkweed (*Asclepias longifolia*), with a few nicely in flower.



Ruellia noctiflora



Asclepias longifolia

Because of the long drive and the very early start, the grand finale was to be multiple stops along Highway 177, which has a nice contingent of pitcher plants, primarily hooded pitcher plant (*Sarracenia minor*) but also parrot pitcher plant (*Sarracenia psittacina*) and hybrids of these two. We got an extra treat here, as one of the hooded pitcher plants chose to have a mid-summer re-bloom, perhaps a result of having been mowed and the extra rainfall. Seeing pitcher plant flowers in July in southern Georgia is not normal.



Sarracenia minor

Waycross Field Trip cont'd

A roadside canal was carpeted with lovely blooms of purple bladderwort (*Utricularia purpurea*), a species not seen on previous roadside excursions, and so was another treat. We also added a fourth species of meadow beauty, short-stemmed meadow beauty (*Rhexia petiolata*). Unlike many of the more common species of meadow beauty, this one does not have prominent protruding stamens. Another nice and generally seldom seen flower along this stretch was spoonflower (*Peltandra sagittifolia*), an aquatic relative of Jack-in-the pulpit. Loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*) was in prolific bloom and we were able to get fairly close to several.



Rhexia petiolata

Teresa Ware made a very nice find. She had asked Richard about a picture she had taken and he informed me that we needed to get back out of the cars rather than move on. Teresa took us to a lovely specimen of a pale grass-pink orchid (*Calopogon pallidus*). I had failed to notice this flower from about 3 feet away while photographing white lobelia (*Lobelia paludosa*). We also found two species of obedient plant: savanna obedient plant (*Physostegia purpurea*) and

southern obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana* ssp. *praemorsa*), although we did not realize it at the time. Richard Ware noticed the differences when examining his pictures after the trip. We also saw more Bartram's rose-gentian, snowy orchid, and thin-leaved Barbara's buttons among the other flowers along the roadside.



Gordonia lasianthus



Calopogon pallidus

All pictures courtesy of Rich and Anita Reaves.

2014 Pilgrimage—Waycross, GA

Next year's pilgrimage will be headquartered in Waycross, GA, because we will be going to the Okefenokee Swamp. We have a block of 40 rooms at the Quality Inn and 20 rooms at the Hampton Inn. Both hotels offer a free breakfast buffet. The hotels are next door to each other in Waycross. The evening social hours and the Saturday evening banquet and program will be held at the Quality Inn which is the only hotel in Waycross with a large enough meeting room for our group.

The field trips and evening program schedules are in the planning stages now, so save the dates for a truly unique experience. If you'd like to read about the Okefenokee Swamp, a good place to start is our website at <http://www.gabotsoc.org/articleOkefenokee2003.htm>. If you're reading the paper copy, go to www.gabotsoc.org and click on "Resources", then "Articles", then "Okefenokee Swamp". Member Leslie Edwards has written an wonderful, easy to read account describing how the swamp was formed and the plants and wildlife that live in this special environment. At the end of the article is a list of books for further reading.

We will be handling the Pilgrimage newsletter distribution somewhat differently due to the holiday mail season. In previous years our group mailings were often lost when we sent them between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. We would have to re-send them at additional expense. This year we will post Pilgrimage information on the web site in early to mid-December. Just access www.gabotsoc.org and click on 'Field Trips' then "Pilgrimage 2014."

If you do not have access to a computer, you can probably find one at a local library and get help in getting to the web page. If you have a problem getting computer access, please send an email to Maureen Donohue at marinadono67@gmail.com. Note: This is a new email address for me.

Once the information is available on the web site, you may book the hotels and register for your field trips. Members who receive the newsletter electronically will receive it in mid-December. The newsletter will be sent via U.S. mail to members who receive it that way in early January. Regardless of how you receive the newsletter, you will be able to reserve your hotel rooms and register for the Pilgrimage as soon as the brochure is available on the web site in December.

Membership Renewals for 2014 are now due

Please remember to renew your membership in the Georgia Botanical Society. We appreciate your support and look forward to seeing you on a field trip in the future.

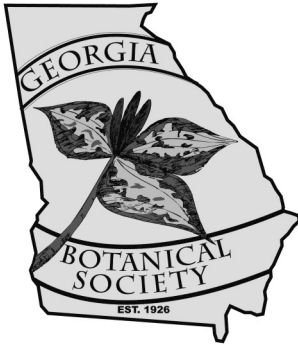
The membership form is available on the website:

http://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=2

Upcoming Field Trips

Date	Description	Directions	Leader
Nov 9 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM	<p>Stephens County Mafic Prairies</p> <p>This is a ramble around a remnant Piedmont prairie under a powerline right-of-way. We will explore the flora of this unique community that is associated with magnesium- and calcium-rich soils. Interesting plants that we may see include Georgia aster, stiff-leaved aster, colic root, American aloe, smooth coneflower, butterfly weed, and many goldenrods.</p> <p>Easy walking on gravel road. Wear hunter orange clothing and sturdy shoes.</p>	<p>Directions: From Atlanta, take I-85N to I-985 N/Lanier Pkwy (signs for Gainesville). After 23.7 miles continue onto GA-365N/US-23. After 28.9 miles, take a slight right onto GA-365N/US123N (signs for GA-17S/Toccoa). Go 6.3 miles to the intersection of Georgia 184. Meet on left corner at only gas station at that intersection.</p> <p>Facilities: None.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch, snacks, trekking poles, rain gear (you never know!), and extra water.</p>	Heather Alley alley@uga.edu 770-853-3343
Nov 11 10:00 AM Note: this is a Monday	<p>Montane Longleaf Pine and Grass-of-Parnassus, Roosevelt State Park, Meriwether and Harris Counties</p> <p>This trip will begin with a half-mile walk on the Pine Mountain Trail to see a nice stand of montane longleaf pine, <i>Pinus palustris</i>. Afterward, we will drive to another part of the park and, for those interested, walk one mile down another portion of the PMT see a spectacular display of kidney-leaf grass-of-Parnassus, <i>Parnassia asarifolia</i>. In past years, this display has been at its best on or about Veteran's Day. The site is a boggy springhead on the south side of Pine Mountain. Soapwort gentian, <i>Gentiana saponaria</i>, is another possibility for this wet area.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the FDR State Park office. See BotSoc website for detailed directions.</p> <p>Facilities: Last facilities will be at the park headquarters. However, we have managed to place trees, rocks and tangles of vegetation at regular intervals for your privacy and convenience.</p> <p>Walking: Easy to moderate, up to 3 miles.</p> <p>Bring: Comfortable walking shoes, \$5.00 parking fee or annual pass, water, camera, binoculars to see features high in the trees, and a lunch to eat somewhere along the trail.</p>	Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com 478-957-6095
Nov 16 9:00 AM Note early start time	<p>Fall Wildflowers of the Apalachicola National Forest and Florida Panhandle</p> <p>We will focus on fall-flowering wildflowers and rare species in some of the finest natural communities in the southeast. Our target species will be two ladies-tresses, <i>Spiranthes cernua</i> and <i>Spiranthes longilabris</i>, two rare species of Grass-of-Parnassus, <i>Parnassia grandifolia</i> and <i>Parnassia caroliniana</i>, wiregrass gentian, <i>Gentiana pennelliana</i>, maybe <i>Gentiana saponaria</i>, and who knows what else.</p> <p>Registration is required, limited to 20 participants. Reply to Jim Drake at email. Make your own lodging arrangements.</p>	<p>Meeting place: 9:00 AM in the parking lot of the Hampton Inn, 165 Spooner Road, Quincy, Florida 32351 (phone: 850-627-7555).</p> <p>Walking: Roadside stops and easy walking short trips.</p> <p>Facilities: At the meeting place and infrequently at convenience stores during the trip.</p> <p>Lunch: Bring to eat at convenient stops.</p> <p>Bring: Weather-appropriate clothing, sunblock, insect repellent, expect lots of mosquitos, ticks, etc.</p>	Jim Drake and Virginia Craig drake3800@charter.net 678-792-2127 (Jim cell) 850-445-2226 (Virginia cell)

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