
BotSoc News



Volume 89
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And the award goes to ... Gil Nelson!

*IN THIS
ISSUE:*

The Tom Dodd, Jr. Award of Excellence award is presented annually at the Cullowhee Conference on Native Plants in the Landscape. Initiated in 1987, it is awarded by committee selection to individuals and organizations that have excelled in one or more of these categories: conservation of native flora in situ, studying and promoting the understanding of our native flora, building expertise in the propagation/cultivation of native plants, and the use of native plants in a diversity of natural and designed landscapes.

In July 2014, Gil Nelson was honored with this award. Those of us that know Gil from BotSoc and other efforts realize that he is an ideal candidate for this award. Robert Wyatt presented the award to Gil and the following paraphrases his summary of Gil's notable accomplishments.

Gil has spent decades advancing the cause of native plants as a naturalist, writer, educator, and researcher. After earning 3 degrees from Florida State University, he has used his talents to write, speak, and consult on a wide range of topics. He has authored or coauthored 13 books on subjects such as wildflowers, ferns, trees, shrubs, woody vines, and landscape plants. His book *Best Native Plants for Southern Gardens*, published in 2010, promotes ecologically sustainable gardening and landscaping with native plants.

His photographs not only grace his own work, but are used in such works as Linda Chafin's *Field Guide to the Rare Plants of Florida*. In addition to his books, Gil has also authored many scientific and technical papers about the flora of the Southeast, including such groups as hollies, magnolias, and viburnums, some of which are published in mainstream gardening publications.

Gil served two years each as program director and director of the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference. During his term he successfully recruited a number of new, younger members to the Steering Committee, infusing new ideas and viewpoints. Most recently he has begun work on a team dedicated to the design and maintenance of botanical/biological database management systems. With support from the National Science Foundation, this project will build an online database at the Florida State University Herbarium and at Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy.

In addition to all those stellar accomplishments, we know him as a longtime BotSoc member, field trip leader and board member. The award is well-deserved and our heartiest congratulations go out to Gil!

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President's Perspective



BotSoc News

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I want to thank all of you for entrusting the role of president to me for the next two years. We have many opportunities and challenges in the near future, and I will do my best to ensure that we meet them. I know that I will need and can count on support from you.

We have an exciting group of people on the relatively new Education Committee led by Vice President Heather Brasell. They are working to increase learning opportunities for members. Next, Susan Caster and Todd Morrell are developing a plan to reach young post-college professionals to encourage them to get to know and join us. This is our first Community Outreach project. If you would like to participate in either of these initiatives, please contact Heather or Susan.

In 2016, the Georgia Botanical Society will be 90 years old. It is amazing that our small volunteer organization has managed to survive for all that time. Through all these decades, it has been the dedication of its members that has allowed BotSoc to flourish. I hope we all continue that tradition.

Lastly, do you know that BotSoc has a Facebook page? If you haven't seen it, check it out. In addition to great photos from recent field trips and some recent field trip write ups, it has links to other web pages of interest - for example the UBC page. Check it out and while you are there, be sure to click "Like."

Maureen Donohue



Save the date for our Spring Pilgrimage 2015

Return to the mountains with Georgia Botanical Society May 8-10, 2015 in Dahlonega, GA. More details in the January newsletter and the special Pilgrimage issue in February.

2014 Annual Meeting Summary

The annual meeting was held on Sept. 13 at the DNR office in Forsyth after an excellent field trip to the Fall Lines Wildlife Management Area led by John Jensen and Nathan Klaus of DNR and BotSoccer Hal Massie.

At the meeting a proposal to change the bylaws so that we may hold the annual meeting at any time in the third quarter (July, August, September) was unanimously approved by the membership present. The 2015 annual meeting will be held sometime in July with the exact date to be included on the 2015 Field Trip schedule.

New officers for the next two years were elected as follows: Maureen Donohue - President, Heather Brasell - Vice President, Rich Reaves - Treasurer and Linda Chafin - Secretary.

The officers approved three new board members:

Debbie Cosgrove - Oglethorpe County
Joel Hitt - Rabun County
Ellen Corrie - Tift County

All other board members will continue in their positions, except Gil Nelson who declined to return due to his very heavy schedule in the coming months. Jerry Hightower will serve on the board as past president.

We thank Gil for his many years of service to the Botanical Society.

Winter Presentations January 31, 2015

We will return to an old BotSoc tradition of holding an indoor midwinter meeting that offers presentations of trips taken outside our state during the previous year.

- Rich Reaves will take us along on a southwestern journey that Anita, he and several other BotSoccers took in March.
- Susan Caster will walk us through her 2600-mile Pacific Crest Trail hiking adventure without any of us getting blisters. She began her long walk in April and finished in July. Both presentations feature the flora and fauna of these very different natural communities.

Jim Drake will host this meeting in his recliner chair theatre at Jim and Candee's home in Suwanee, GA. It will also include a pot luck lunch. More information will be in the January newsletter.

Newsome Gap Road

Text by Richard Ware

Photos by Richard and Teresa Ware

One of the best places to view wildflowers is along a dirt (or gravel) road. Some of our favorite BotSoc field trips are what we call "roadside botanizing," such as Rich Reeves's spring trips to the Cohutta Wilderness. Unfortunately, the number of unpaved roads is dwindling daily. But, for now at least, the road that is the focus of this article remains gravel. My wife Teresa and I were first introduced to the wonders of Newsome Gap Road by our botany friend from Dalton, Max Medley. Max belongs to a group of botanical explorers / photographers that includes Alan Cressler, Steve Bowling and various others from time to time, including myself.

This group seems to be on a quest to see and photograph every plant in Georgia, particularly the rare ones. Therefore, their knowledge of habitats and the locations of plants, rare and otherwise, is great, perhaps only rivaled by Tom Patrick with GA DNR. So, when Max told us about some of the plants found there and gave us directions, we planned a trip at the first opportunity.

Newsome Gap Road begins at the top of Lookout Mountain, just a short drive south of Cloudland Canyon State Park, and descends in the usual switchback fashion down the west side of the mountain and eventually ends at US 11 in Rising Fawn, GA. The mountain section of the road is gravel and in most places very narrow and one-lane. You don't see pavement again until you get to the bottom.

Folks who like geology, like Scott Ranger, would probably find this road interesting. The upper 50-60% of the road is sandstone and the bottom section is all limestone. Now, I'm not talking about pebbles - in the sandstone section there are room-size boulders and in the limestone area there are, what I would call, full-blown solid rock outcrops.

And, while there are a few plant species that can be found in both sections, as a general rule, a species of plant seems to favor growing in one or the other habitat. These rocks and associated soils are responsible for the varied habitats encountered along this road and the vast array of different wildflowers, both common and rare.

Lysimachia tonsa (Southern loosestrife)



Continued on next page

Newsome Gap Road (cont'd)

As you begin your drive down the mountain, you first come to huge sandstone boulders, at first on both sides of the road, and then on the left with a good variety of wildflowers at different times of the year, such as *Clitoria mariana* (butterfly pea), *Lysimachia tonsa* (Southern loosestrife), a plant that seems mostly confined to extreme northwest Georgia, *Cicuta maculata* (water-hemlock). Also there is *Tradescantia subaspera* (wide-leaved spiderwort), *Silene stellata* (starry campion), *Coreopsis major* (woodland Coreopsis), and, where there is a seep of water, *Eutrochium fistulosum* (hollow-stem Joe-pye-weed) with *Woodwardia areolata* (netted chain fern).

Just past this first outcrop, if you're lucky, you'll find the rare plant *Phlox amplifolia* (broadleaf Phlox), and then *Heliopsis helianthoides* (Eastern oxeye). Then, after negotiating the first sharp right-hand curve, if you are watchful, you might see *Stachys eplingii* (Epling's hedge-nettle) and *Taenidia integerrima* (yellow pimpernel). The yellow pimpernel, when the leaves are crushed, smells exactly like celery.

The sandstone banks in this area are heavily decorated by a very vigorous colony of black-eyed Susan, which has not been keyed but is assumed to be *Rudbeckia hirta*.

A little further along, but still in the sandstone, you will first see the large leaves and hairy stems of one the rarities on this road, *Silphium mohrii* (shaggy rosinweed). This plant is found in both the sandstone and limestone sections.



Silphium mohrii (shaggy rosinweed)

Also in this area, on a recent trip there, we saw a pink flowered wild petunia (usual color is purple), that none of us had ever seen before. Although it would still key to *Ruellia caroliniensis* (Carolina wild-petunia), we thought it very beautiful and unusual!

A little further down the mountain, after a sharp left-hand curve and then a sharp right-hand curve, you will finally enter the limestone area.

Newsome Gap Road (cont'd)

The first, and one of the rarest, plants you should see is *Astragalus canadensis* (Canada milkvetch) growing in the ditch on the right and scattered through the limestone area, followed closely by the huge deeply pinnatifid basal leaves of another rare plant, *Silphium pinnatifidum* (tansy rosinweed), also distributed throughout the limestone section.



Silphium pinnatifidum (tansy rosinweed)



Astragalus canadensis (Canada milkvetch)

Next you see huge boulders on the right with a nice fern that is mostly restricted to limestone, *Pellaea atropurpurea* (purple cliff-brake). Then you come to what I call a series of solid rock (limestone) walls interspersed with extreme sloping forest with boulders. Growing on the ledges atop these giant boulders, in very sparse soils, you find the largest population that we've seen of *Manfreda virginica* (agave), growing with *Allium stellatum* (glade onion), and *Gaura filipes* (slenderstalk beeblossom). Also growing on or in shallow soils between these giant rocks you'll find *Fleischmannia incarnata* (pink thoroughwort) and two species of blazing star, *Liatris aspera* (rough blazing-star) and an unidentified species.

Growing at the base of these boulders you should see *Monarda fistulosa* (wild bergamot), *Ruellia caroliniensis* (Carolina wild-petunia), with the normal purple-flowered color, and *Lobelia spicata* (palespike Lobelia). Near these boulders be on the lookout for the large heart-shaped leaves of the native vine, *Matelea carolinensis* (Carolina spinypod) and if you are extremely lucky you might see another rare vine, *Phaseolus polystachios* (wild kidney bean), which we only saw (and photographed) one time.

Of course, you will not see all of these species blooming at one time, but anytime during the summer months should yield a good display. If you decide to go, word of warning! Please be careful, this road is fairly steep, narrow and there are very few places to pull over to look at flowers. Make sure your vehicle is in good condition, especially the brakes!

Fall Line Sandhills WMA

Text and photos by Ellen Honeycutt

I enjoy taking field trips to new areas of the state to explore the plant communities found there. Having experienced trip leaders to identify the plants and explain some of the unique features of the area is part of what makes BotSoc field trips so special. This trip in September had no less than four DNR leaders that were intimately familiar with the tract and its restoration history. They explained in detail the state of the land before it became a WMA and their efforts to restore it back to its natural plant communities.

John Jensen directed our gaze out to the remnants of ancient sand dunes and spoke of an ancient sea lapping the shores in the distance. We looked down to see the sand all around us, a major component of the soil in which a dozen plants flourished at our feet.

Several of the plants at our first stop were elegant blazingstar (*Liatris elegans*) and a relative of the morning glory, the Coast Plain dawnflower (*Stylisma patens*). We were pleased to find in bloom the sandhill goldenaster (*Pityopsis pinifolia*) and Carolina pineland cress (*Warea cuneifolia*).



Liatris elegans



Pityopsis pinifolia



Stylisma patens



Warea cuneifolia

Someone urged us to crush the foliage of the aromatic orangegrass (*Hypericum gentianoides*) to get the experience of exploring plants from several senses. It did smell like orange! The goldenaster's foliage was pine-like when crushed.

Continued on next page

Fall Line Sandhills WMA (cont'd)

We walked a bit to get to a naturally low area that is supporting moisture loving plants like inkberry (*Ilex glabra*) and purple foxglove (*Agalinis fasciculata*). Our guides talked about the bird species that they have observed returning to the area thanks to their work restoring the natural communities - birds such as Bachman's sparrow.

Next we drove to another wet area that supports a recovering population of pondberry (*Lindera melissifolia*). Most of us are more familiar with the related spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*). The more colonial (growing by stems) pondberry has suffered from habitat loss. A crushed leaf has a faint spicy scent like *L. benzoin* but the pondberry fruit seems larger and it was in perfect form that day.



Agalinis fasciculata



Left: *Lindera melissifolia*



Right: *Helianthus longifolius* with its own foliage, and below with adjacent shrub foliage.



Nearby Black Creek WMA was our next stop. Especially abundant here was longleaf sunflower (*Helianthus longifolius*), one of leader Hal Massie's favorites. He pointed out that one distinguishing characteristic for this species is the presence of basal leaves (at ground level).

Fall Line Sandhills WMA (cont'd)

On the other side of the road several plants called out to us with pink-tinged creamy blossoms; it was sandhill wild-buckwheat (*Eriogonum tomentosum*). We also found *Yucca filamentosa* festooned with curling filaments, purple ironweed (*Vernonia angustifolia*), more sandhill jointweed (*Polygonella fimbriata*), Eastern greeneyes (*Berlandiera pumila*) and the semi-parasitic southern oak leach or false foxglove (*Aureolaria pectinata*). They all appeared to be growing in pure sand so clearly these plants have adapted to these conditions.



Eriogonum tomentosum



Polygonella fimbriata



Rhexia petiolata

Left: *Aureolaria pectinata*



Right: *Polygala lutea*

We followed a path through scrub, past more sunflowers and the occasional blazing star (*Liatris tenuifolia*), enjoying the day with the sound of cows mooing very loudly just over the band of trees that separated us from a pasture. We came to a low wet spot with special plants. Sundews (*Drosera capillaris*) were sprinkled among fringed meadowbeauty (*Rhexia petiolata*) and bog cheetos (*Polygala lutea*).

As we made our way to the next area, a light drizzle turned into rain and thunder. We grabbed a quick glimpse of a gopher tortoise burrow and then headed back to the meeting place. What a wonderful trip with friends both old and new and a unique plant community to explore.

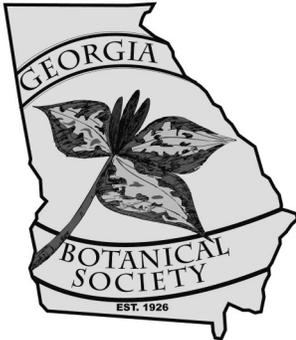
Upcoming Field Trips

Date	Description	Directions	Leader
Nov 1 10:00 AM	<p>Fall Color/Tree Id</p> <p>We hope to see some actual fall color and ID trees along the way on this trip, timed for the same date when color peaked last year.</p> <p>The plan right now is to walk around Victory Lake at Berry College for the brilliant red / orange leaves of the chalk maple (<i>Acer leucoderme</i>) and a bunch of other trees and around the campus for the brilliant reds of the red maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>), the vibrant yellows of American yellowwood (<i>Cladrastis kentukea</i>), and hickory (<i>Carya sp.</i>).</p> <p>We may see the national champion southern sugar maple (<i>Acer floridanum</i>), the state champion northern catalpa (<i>Catalpa speciosa</i>) and other Berry College unique sites.</p>	<p>Directions: Take I-75 to exit 290 (GA 20). Follow GA 20 and US 411 to Rome. At first traffic light (GA Loop 1) turn right, go to US 27, turn right. At next traffic light, turn left into the main entrance to Berry College. Turn left just before the guard house. Turn right into the first parking lot, which is behind Krannert Center. If this road is closed, go past guard house and $\frac{3}{4}$ around circle and turn right and immediately take the first left to access parking lot behind Krannert.</p> <p>Facilities: Meeting site only.</p> <p>Walking: This hike is on flat terrain ~ 1 to 1 ½ mi.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch (to eat at picnic tables) & water. Remember to dress for the weather and wear comfortable hiking shoes. Dress in layers so that you can adjust to changes in the temperature and your activity level. You may wish to bring binoculars, hand lens, notebook, and camera.</p>	Richard & Teresa Ware gabotany@comcast.net 706-766-5143 (Cell phone for day of trip).
Nov 8 10:00 AM	<p>Mimsie Lanier Center for Native Plant Studies</p> <p>Heather Alley, Conservation Horticulturist, will give us a "behind the scenes" look at the propagation facilities that are the foundation for the Botanical Garden's habitat restoration efforts. She will talk about the propagation methods that work with native plants and the role that plant propagation can play in native plant conservation.</p> <p>We will tour the Middle Oconee River floodplain privet eradication areas and the Piedmont Prairie restoration site at the Garden and talk about the challenges and successes of these efforts.</p> <p>(Note: this is not a propagation workshop.)</p> 	<p>Meet At: Mimsie Lanier Center for Native Plant Studies, State Botanical Garden of Georgia, 2450 South Milledge Avenue, Athens 30605.</p> <p>Directions: Turn right into the Garden entrance, and drive about ½ mile to the speed bump. Continue downhill, bearing right at each of two forks, continue under the powerline onto a graveled surface, and through the gates to the Center. (If at any point, you find yourself in a paved parking area, retrace your route to the speed bump and start over, remembering to bear right and go downhill).</p> <p>Facilities: Outdoor port-a-let.</p> <p>Walking: This hike is easy and close to the parking area. People who want to stay after and hike, on their own, the beautiful forest trails (0.5 to 5 miles) at the Garden should plan for a moderate hike of typical up-and-downhill Piedmont terrain.</p> <p>Bring: Admission is free. Bring lunch, snacks, & water. We will eat lunch at the Center. Remember to dress for the weather and wear comfortable hiking shoes. Dress in layers so that you can adjust to changes in the temperature and your activity level.</p>	Heather Alley alley@uga.edu Linda Chafin lchafin@uga.edu 706-548-1697 (day of trip only)

Upcoming Field Trips

<p>Dec 6 11:00 AM</p>	<p>Holiday Party</p> <p>Gather with friends; old and new for good food, good conversation and good companionship. This will be a fun and informal event.</p> <p>Please bring an appetizer or lunch dish to share. There will be coffee, tea, hot apple cider, and lemonade provided with a large pot of soup on the stove. Wonderful warm breads will be on the serving table. Adult beverages are permitted.</p> <p>The Lodge is a comfortable and spacious former residence. The upper meeting room and the lower classroom both have large fireplaces and wonderful solid pine paneled walls. Tables will be placed on the upper deck and throughout the lodge. A campfire will be blazing and picnic tables and benches placed nearby. The huge covered upper deck overlooks River Glen Pond, the Choestoe Meadows, and the forest along the river. Easy trails wind through the woods and along the river.</p> <p>A show and tell area with seed/plant exchange will be downstairs. Everyone is invited to bring rare and unusual botany books, the specimen that you've yet to identify to see if you might befuddle everyone else, and anything else you might like to share.</p> <p>An optional walk on the Lutra Loop Trail will be offered from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm.</p>	<p>Location: Chattahoochee River Environmental Education Center (CREEC), in Fulton County. The address is 8615 Barnwell Rd, Johns Creek, GA 30022</p> <p>Directions: via GA Hwy 400 - take exit 7 Holcomb Bridge Rd, Hwy 140. Turn right (east) and travel ~ 4 miles. Turn left onto Barnwell Rd. (CVS on right / Kroger on left). Travel .7 mi to the entrance on the right where you will see the large brown national park service sign.</p> <p>Via I-85: Take exit 99 - Jimmy Carter Blvd. and travel west. The road becomes Holcomb Bridge Rd as you continue west and cross the Chattahoochee River. Turn right onto Barnwell Rd. Travel .7 mile. The entrance is located on the right.</p> <p>Disregard posted "Do Not Enter" signs.</p> <p>Board of Directors Meeting: 10:00 am to 11:00 am and is open to all members.</p>	<p>Jerry Hightower 770-206-0338 (cell)</p>
<p>Jan 17 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Winter Woody Walk</p> <p>A casual stroll among deciduous hardwood trees and shrubs will give us plenty of opportunity to practice our woody plant identification using bark, old leaves and bare twigs.</p> <p>Big Trees Forest Preserve in Sandy Springs.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet in the parking lot at 7645 Roswell Rd, Sandy Springs, GA 30350</p> <p>Facilities: No.</p> <p>Walking: Easy, wear sturdy shoes.</p> <p>Bring: Water, snacks, camera, notebook.</p>	<p>Ellen Honeycutt ehoneycutt @bellsouth.net 678-576-5667</p>
<p>Jan 31</p>	<p>Winter Presentations</p> <p>We will return to an old BotSoc tradition of holding an indoor midwinter meeting that offers presentations of trips taken outside our state during the previous year.</p> <p>Rich Reaves will take us along on a southwestern journey that Anita, he and several other BotSoccers took in March.</p> <p>Susan Caster will walk us through her 2600-mile Pacific Crest Trail hiking adventure without any of us getting blisters. She began her long walk in April and finished in July. Both presentations feature the flora and fauna of these very different natural communities.</p>	<p>Location: Jim and Candee Drake will host this meeting in their recliner chair theatre at their home in Suwanee, GA.</p> <p>The event will also include a pot luck lunch; plan to bring a dish to share if you come. More information will be in the January newsletter.</p>	

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