

BotSoc News



Georgia Botanical Society

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BotSoc Honors New CNP Graduates

By Maureen Donohue

Nine people earned a Certificate in Native Plants (CNP) from the State Botanical Garden in Athens which they received on Wednesday, January 18 at the Native Plant Symposium on Trees. Two of the graduates are BotSoc members: Steve Cook from Thomaston (not our Treasurer) and Anne Hughes from Blue Ridge.

All nine of the students were awarded a one year BotSoc electronic membership in honor of their achievement. The CNP program offers students an opportunity to learn about various aspects of the plant world, do field work in conjunction with their classwork, and obtain volunteer assignments to support their learning.

We look forward to seeing these new grads on BotSoc field trips this year. Congratulations to all of you.

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Most of the 2017 CNP graduates plus a few members of faculty and SBG staff

President's Perspective



BotSoc News

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Your BotSoc Board just held a planning meeting in Macon and we discussed who we are, where we are, and where we want to go.

We are all looking forward to the Pilgrimage in Chattanooga. Everything is in place thanks to first-rate planning by Mitchell Kent, your Vice President. We have a couple of pleas from the people who process your membership and pilgrimage registration. They are challenged by incomplete and confusing information provided. It makes their jobs much easier if you fill out all parts of the form clearly and check your totals. It also makes their jobs easier if you handle membership renewal separately from pilgrimage registration or at least be clear on which money goes to which items.

We started by reviewing the purposes of BotSoc, which basically define who we are as an organization. They are included in the By-Laws. The purposes of the Society are to:

1. Promote the understanding and appreciation of plants and their relationship to the environment, as well as the study of botanical sciences.
2. Undertake or support the setting apart of appropriate areas in Georgia for the preservation of native and cultivated flora for enjoyment by the public.
3. Encourage the protection of rare and endangered plant species and significant botanical habitats.
4. Encourage nurserymen and horticulturists to propagate and use native Georgia species in landscaping and other cultivated areas.
5. Encourage youth to study and practice botany.
6. Promote the conservation of botanical resources and encourage the practice of a conservation ethic.

These purposes describe clearly what we value and intend to do. As individuals, our members actively fulfill all of these purposes. However, we thought that BotSoc, as an organization, could take a stronger leadership role in community service activities and projects other than field trips, workshops, and pilgrimage. A big part of this leadership is communication and publicity – to let everyone know what we are doing so they can contribute and feel the fulfillment of shared accomplishments. To use a couple of clichés, I think BotSoc hides its light under a bushel and we would be more effective in recruiting new and younger members if we tooted our own flute more.

As part of updating our communications, we will be working on several fronts – updating and improving our website, reviewing use of Facebook, and archiving photographs, resources, and “institutional memory.” We are also reviewing items sold through the BotSoc Boutique.

We would like to add a Publicity Chairperson to the board to coordinate the changes needed, but we hope that you, our members, will help us implement the changes. We would like your help with several things:

- Send advance information about opportunities to participate in projects related to conservation and restoration of botanical habitats to joannromfh@aol.com. She will include the information in the regular emails about field trips.
- Write project reports and field trip reports, with photos if possible, and send them to ehoneycutt@bellsouth.net. She will include them in the newsletter. We also plan to include these reports on the revamped website. You do not need to be a botanical expert to write a report; you can write about the general experience or describe the natural communities. Linda Chafin will provide some guidelines for first-time field trip reporters.

Of course, we will be very glad to receive your comments and suggestions related to any of these planned changes.

Heather Brasell

Protecting Rare Plants on Private Lands

This is a summary of a workshop, "Protecting Rare Plants on Private Lands," held at Panola Mountain State Park on February 4, 2017. The presenters were:

- Lisa Kruse, Botanist, Georgia DNR Nongame Conservation Section
- Carla Francis, Outreach and Development Coordinator, Oconee River Land Trust
- Steve Raper, Private Lands Conservation Coordinator, Georgia DNR

Since 90% of land in Georgia is privately owned, conservation easements are an essential component of protecting rare plants. Old data, landowner contracts, satellite imagery, and helicopter surveys are some of the methods for locating rare plant populations. Power line right-of-ways have been important for many rare plant populations because a full sun habitat has been maintained. The goal for an easement should be for conservation and not financial purposes.

Topics covered included:

- Importance of cultivating landowner relationships
- Mechanisms for protecting rare plant sites
- Pitcher plant protection project
- Conservation options for private landowners

Lisa gave us insight about the process of approaching landowners and maintaining relationships. Strategies for maintaining relationships include:

- Stay in touch
- Show appreciation
- Provide targeted information and resources where possible
- Foster pride in the uniqueness of the property
- Demonstrate importance to conservation
- Involve others

Lisa shared details of successful conservation projects such as Little Hammock, Black Pond, and Canoochee Bog. Martha Joiner is a BotSoc member and Botanical Guardian who shares information with landowners on a regular basis.

Carla reminded us that conservation easements protect air and water quality as well as plants and animals. Fee simple purchases are rare for the Oconee River Land Trust. Conservation easements are the main focus for ORLT. Easements are voluntary but permanent. Easements are also binding for all future owners and ORLT must monitor for compliance. Most non-compliance is unintentional and some violations can be avoided by staying in touch with landowners.

Potential benefits of an easement include:

- Permanent protection
- Ownership is retained
- Tax benefits

Protecting Rare Plants on Private Lands (cont'd)

Possible tax benefits include:

- Federal charitable tax deduction
- Georgia State tax credit
- Estate tax benefits
- Reduced property taxes—caution, this varies locally and local tax assessors are not bound to lower your tax

Up-front costs to obtain an easement include project fee, title report fee, stewardship donation, appraisal, survey, legal advice, tax advice.

Steve has a unique background in forestry and real estate which allows him to be an advocate for landowners and helps them know what questions to ask. Steve suggests talking to more than one trust organization and to use many resources. Possible additional costs may include signage and conservation maintenance costs such as prescribed burns. He cautioned landowners to use reputable appraisers and conservation consultants. Conservation easements should be partnerships and not antagonistic relationships. The value of the land is reduced once it is placed under the easement due to restrictions on development and other uses.

We received a booklet containing information about conservation incentives in Georgia and noted that many government conservation projects are poorly funded.



It was beneficial to have three presenters with different backgrounds and their perspectives, and we thank them for their time. Following a question and answer period, we enjoyed a hike to the granite outcrop.

We noted a die-off of small pines and were made aware that there are five species of pine beetles indigenous to Georgia which can be attracted to stressed trees.

Lisa Kruse talks to the group about the conservation work at Black Pond.

Finding a Niche in the Field of Research Grants

By Linda Chafin

All across the world and right here at home in Georgia, fewer and fewer students are majoring in botany.¹ Fewer professors are studying plants and their relationships to the environment or to other plants. At a time when biodiversity worldwide faces “the sixth extinction,”² less attention than ever is being paid to its basic components: the organisms themselves. As fewer students graduate with degrees in botany, the need for a knowledgeable and well trained contingent of field botanists has never been greater. As Alan Weakley puts it:

Globalization has meant that plants are regularly introduced far away from their regions of nativity, and [they] can be either benign or cause economic and conservation damages. Increasing human utilization of land resources has fueled a biodiversity crisis, with many species now considered imperiled. In the United States and elsewhere, this has resulted in considerable governmental and nongovernmental activity focused on biodiversity inventory and conservation, ‘recovery’ of endangered and threatened species, ecological studies and ecological restoration, and assessment and suppression of invasive exotics. All these activities require an accurate and sophisticated understanding of the flora of an area.³

Almost exclusively, grants from the big funding agencies such as the National Science Foundation are going to botanists who study plants at the molecular or cellular level. As important as that kind of research is, it means that field botany – even with its minimal research costs – goes unfunded. Without grant support, students and professors both gravitate away from doing botanical field research.

What do we lose when field botanists stay home or find other work inside at the lab bench? In the last 50 years, botanists in the Southeast have discovered or recognized 500 new species,⁴ many of which occur in Georgia. Without the hard work of field botanists, our understanding of the southeastern flora would be much poorer.

Recognizing the importance of field research to the understanding and conservation of Georgia’s native plants, the Georgia Botanical Society created the Marie Mellinger Field Botany Grant Program in 2003. Marie Mellinger, president of the Society from 1970 – 1971 and member until her death in 2006, devoted much of her life to exploring Georgia’s botanical wonders and educating Georgians about the beauty and value of the natural world. We are proud to carry on her legacy by providing financial support to students and other researchers who are investigating Georgia’s native plants and their habitats.

Every year, the Society’s Marie Mellinger Grant committee selects several field research projects and awards a student, teacher, or field researcher a grant, usually less than \$1000. Though this sounds like a small figure, it can provide funds for gassing up a field vehicle, buying a pH meter or plant press, acquiring propagation materials, and other small but critical components of a field botany research project.

Continued on next page

Finding a Niche in the Field of Research Grants (cont'd)

Here are examples of projects that the Marie Mellinger Field Botany Grant Program has supported over the last decade:

- Propagating rare plants and returning them to their native habitats
- Conducting field surveys for federally listed species
- Surveying the rare habitats found in and around Georgia's blackland prairies
- Investigating the impact of invasive pest plant species on Georgia's granite outcrops
- Creating a distribution atlas of all lichen species in Georgia
- Funding for field trips for Georgia Southern University students

Where does the MM Field Botany Grant Program stand now? Last year, I volunteered as the chair of the grant committee, replacing Elaine Nash who steered the program through its first and very successful decade. The committee has three members besides myself: Ed McDowell, Elaine Nash, and Richard Ware. We are now gearing up to accomplish two goals: first, to reach more students, professors, and field workers throughout the state to let them know about the program, and second, to increase the size of the fund from which grants are made.

How can you help us reach those goals? Well, you can **write a check**, of course! Make it out to the Georgia Botanical Society, and write "MM Field Botany Grant Program" on the memo line. Send the check to our Treasurers, Steve and Rona Cook, at P.O. Box 1257, Holly Springs, GA 30142-1257 — OR, this being the 21st century, you can make your donation online on the Bot Soc website by clicking on <http://www.gabotsoc.org/> and going to the contact us/donate tab.

Just as importantly, **help us spread the word** about the program. If you know a botany or plant ecology student, or a natural resources biologist with a state agency, or a scientist with a conservation organization, let them know about the program. It's just possible that they have a great idea for a field project that is waiting for a bit of cash to get off the ground. Give them my email address (lchafin@uga.edu) and suggest that they write for more information about the grant program.

References

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- (2) Kolbert, Elizabeth. 2014. The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History. Henry Holt & Company.
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- (4) Weakley, Alan S. Personal communication.

Upcoming Field Trips


<p>March 18 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Japanese Paper Plants</p> <p>A visit to see Japanese Paper Plants located in the National Forest of Rabun Co. They were introduced into Georgia in the early 1900's and planted at an old home site. They have naturalized along Wolf Creek for 4 miles. They bloom the first 3 weeks of March. This site is near the Wolf Creek Baptist Church which was built in 1851. The largest patch of plants are one half mile from the church.</p>	<p>Directions: From Tallulah Falls, GA., proceed N on 441 approx. 4 miles to the Lakemont sign, turn R on Wolf Creek Rd., go 3.6 miles to Wolf Creek Baptist Church sign, turn onto the church road and go 1 mile to the church parking lot.</p> <p>Facilities: No</p> <p>Difficulty: Easy</p> <p>Bring: Lunch, water, camera.</p>	<p>Louis Schweizer louis30576@gmail.com</p>
<p>Mar 26 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Mushroom Walk</p> <p>Although fungi are now considered botanically illegitimate and hence excluded from the plant kingdom, we will survey an area for examples of various mushrooms, conks and allied types of fungi to review. Scull Shoals Experimental Forest is in the Oconee Nat'l Forest between Greensboro and Athens. There is a variety of drier upland (mostly pine) and wetter bottomland (mixed) habitats with different forest cover types. Prescribed fire is used in some areas of the forest which may also increase diversity, although the burns are mostly in the pine areas. We hope this combination will better our chances of finding areas with enough moisture to have several types of fungi fruiting.</p> <p>Oconee Forest is pretty far south for morels, but we did schedule this trip early in the growing season just in case we get lucky. Morels are fond of ash so we will at least scan the riverbanks and low ground as well as any low areas that were burned.</p>	<p>Directions: Starting at Greensboro GA, Exit 130 on I-20, Take GA 44 towards Greensboro for 2.6 mi. At the corner of Broad and Main, turn left on GA 15 North for 0.3 mi. At Holcomb's BBQ turn right (still on GA 15), Continue on GA 15 for 11 mi Right on Macedonia Rd for 2.5 mi, Left on FS (forest service Rd) 1234 for 0.1 mi (stop and see Dr Durham's herb walk). Continue on FS 1234 for 2.9 mi to Scull Shoals historical site (33.733155, -83.289843 approx location)</p> <p>Facilities: Yes</p> <p>Bring: Lunch/snacks, water, hand lens.</p>	<p>Elliott Horner elliott.horner@encee.org</p>
<p>April 1 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Cochran Shoals</p> <p>We'll take a short walk across the bridge and use the busy riverside trail to reach the Wildlife Viewing Boardwalk over the wetlands. Here we'll enter another world occupied by hundreds of southern nodding trilliums (<i>Trillium rugelii</i>) in various stages of bloom.</p> <p>We will continue walking in the Gunby Creek area of Cochran Shoals to find other spring delights including Atamasco lilies (<i>Zephyranthes atamasco</i>), showy orchis (<i>Orchis spectabilis</i>) and foamflower (<i>Tiarella cordifolia</i>). We will probably find Hepatica leaves, but the flowers will have bloomed a month ago. We'll lunch in the woods along the way or and enjoy our time in this beautiful forest. If we cannot find suitable logs and rocks to sit on, we may lunch at the picnic tables along the river.</p> <p>If Spring is early, we may head over to Paces Mill (a 10 minute drive) to look for horse sugar trees (<i>Symplocos tinctoria</i>) in flower along the river and flame azaleas (<i>Rhododendron flammeum</i>) on top of the ridge. Both normally bloom the first week of April.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the Powers Island Unit in Fulton County where parking is plentiful. We will walk over the river to the Cochran Shoals Unit. The GPS coordinates for Powers Island are: 33° 54' 10.42" N, 84° 26' 28.3" W. If you need specific directions, please contact trip leader.</p> <p>Facilities: Yes</p> <p>Difficulty: Mostly flat terrain with a few short hills, ~ 3 miles at Cochran Shoals and 2 miles at Paces Mill where there is one large hill to see the azaleas, but they are worth it. At Cochran Shoals we may have to walk/climb over fallen trees on the trail.</p> <p>Bring: Bring camera, hand lens, field guide, \$3.00 parking fee or annual /senior pass, water and a pack lunch or snacks.</p>	<p>Maureen Donohue marinadono67@gmail.com 770-990-7756</p>

Upcoming Field Trips

<p>Apr 2 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Violet Workshop and Hike</p> <p>Cloudland Canyon is a place of great scenic beauty and interesting wildflowers. We'll start the day with a Violet workshop, led by Dr. Harvey Ballard of Ohio University. Dr. Ballard is a world expert in the Violet family. The workshop should last about an hour. Afterwards, we'll practice what we've learned as we hike through Cloudland Canyon. We'll pass two waterfalls, then hike 2.5 miles along the Sitton's Gulch Trail. We should see several species of violets, as well as many other spring delights, including Southern Red Trillium, <i>Trillium sulcatum</i>, Dwarf Larkspur, <i>Delphinium tricorne</i>, several mandarin, <i>Prosartes lanuginosa</i> and <i>P. maculata</i>, among many others. A few cars will be located at the end of the trail so that we don't have to climb back up to the top. The hike, including the side trips to the waterfalls is 4 miles.</p> <p>Cloudland Canyon State Park 122 Cloudland Canyon Park Road Rising Fawn, GA 30738</p>	<p>Directions: From Atlanta take I-75 to exit 320. Go west on GA 136 through Villanow and Naomi (slight jog to left and then right). At Lafayette, take US 27 bypass to the north and follow the signs for about 18 miles, staying on GA 136 to the Park's main entrance. Meet at the Overlook parking area. GPS Coordinates: N 34.8402630 W -85.4828810</p> <p>Facilities: At meet area.</p> <p>Difficulty: Moderate due to 600 stairs.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch (we may picnic along the trail), plenty of water, comfortable walking shoes, binoculars, plus \$5 parking or pass.</p> <p>Registration is required so as to help in planning the shuttle. If you are able to help shuttle a few people in your car, please contact Aliya, the trip leader.</p>	<p>Aliya Davenport aad@reinhardt.edu 336-209-9789</p>
<p>Apr 2 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Arabia Mountain</p> <p>This will be a leisurely paced hike up and around the mountain to view the solution pool gardens, the amazing mosaic of lichens, and small, but interesting, patches of trees and shrubs. Sculpted over geologic time by wind, rain, cold, and heat; these extraordinary gardens are beautiful to behold. After lunch we will take the forest loop to the lake and then on to the salamander pools. This DeKalb County park is both a geological and botanical treasure.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet in the Park Visitor Center</p> <p>Facilities: Yes</p> <p>Difficulty: Moderate with some fairly steep, but short, ascents and descents.</p> <p>Bring: A lunch and water to carry along and we will picnic on the mountain. You may wish to bring binoculars, hand lens, and camera.</p>	<p>Jerry Hightower jerryhightower@hotmail.com 770-206-0338</p>
<p>April 7-9</p>	<p>Annual Spring Pilgrimage</p> <p>The 48th Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage of the Georgia Botanical Society offers participants the opportunity to explore the unique terrain and ecosystems of the Tennessee River Valley, Cumberland Plateau, and surrounding areas. The host city is Chattanooga, Tennessee, located just north of the Georgia state line and on the banks of the Tennessee River. The terrain around the city is known as the Ridge and Valley physiographic region of the Appalachian Mountains. The city is bordered to the west by Walden Ridge with its deep gorges to which a number of field trips are planned. To the south is historic Lookout Mountain, also the location of a number of field trips. To the east is Missionary Ridge. In addition, field trips to several well known sites in North Georgia are included such as Cloudland Canyon and Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail.</p>	<p>Hotels for the 2017 Pilgrimage are located in scenic Lookout Valley, southwest of city center just off I-24 exit 174.</p> <p>We hope to see you there!</p> <p>Registration open through March 4th. Download the registration materials from our dedicated webpage: http://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=23</p>	

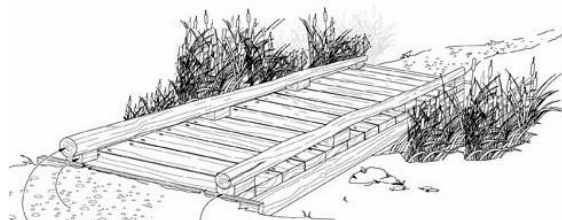
If you haven't been on a BotSoc field trip recently, please join us in 2017. We always have a lot of fun and everyone learns something - even the leaders! Email or call the trip leader in advance if you have any questions about what it might be like. Hope to see you soon!

Upcoming Field Trips

<p>April 15 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Kearns Property (Floyd County)</p> <p>After two winters of invasive plant removal, the owners are seeing more botanical wonders: Jacks in the Pulpit, comfrey, lance leaf trillium, buckeye, delphinium, wood sorrel, geranium, green dragon plus shooting star and Jacob's Ladder.</p>	<p>Directions: I-75, Exit 306, left on Highway 140, going west on Highway 140 - 7 miles, left on Rush Chapel Road, go 1.5 miles, house on the right, 670 Rush Chapel Road, Adairsville, GA.</p> <p>Facilities: Yes</p> <p>Difficulty: Easy walk through woods, fields, approximately 2 miles</p> <p>Bring: Long pants, walking shoes/boots, water, hat, lunch, rain wear if necessary.</p>	<p>Jennifer Kearns davjen @bellsouth.net 706-409-0946</p>
<p>April 15-16 10:00 AM 8:00 AM (second day)</p>	<p>Okefenokee Weekend</p> <p>We will drive GA 177 north of Okefenokee Swamp Park, stop at a wet ditch by a power substation on US 1 just north of Folkston, stop at the HWY 23 bridge at Spanish Creek south of Folkston, and then drive the Swamp Island Drive in the Okefenokee NWR.</p> <p>Wildflowers we should encounter on one or both days incl <i>Sarracenia psitticina</i>, <i>S. flava</i>, <i>S. minor</i>, <i>Pinguicula caerulea</i>, <i>P. lutea</i>, <i>Pogonia ophioglossoides</i>, <i>Zephyranthes atamasca</i>, <i>Baptisia perfoliata</i>, <i>Polygala lutea</i> and <i>Polygala nana</i>, <i>Drosera brevifolia</i>, <i>D. intermedia</i>, and <i>Asimina reticulata</i>.</p> <p>Day 2: Our first stop will be on GA 301 where we see <i>Ruellia noctiflora</i> in mid-summer. This will be an exploratory stop, as I have not been at this site in spring – however, I do expect interesting spring plants. Then we will make a couple of stops on the route back to Waycross on HWY 82 and finish off the day at a <i>Sarracenia flava</i> bog west of Waycross.</p>	<p>Directions: Take I-75 south to US 82. Take US 82 east to Waycross and US 1 south to the Walmart parking lot for April 15. Waycross Hampton Inn for second day.</p> <p>Facilities: Gas stations</p> <p>Difficulty: Short excursions along the roadside, never out of sight of the vehicles – can be muddy or wet.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch to eat on the road (purchase along the way will be difficult to impossible due to extremely sparse pickings), water, bug spray.</p> <p>Carpooling is encouraged to make pulling off the road easier.</p>	<p>Rich Reaves rich.reaves @att.net 770-827-5186</p>
<p>April 22 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Trilliums</p> <p>This hike has two options. Number 1 – We will hike from 3,323 foot Patterson Gap to Till Ridge Cove to see the spectacular display of <i>Trillium grandiflorum</i> in this rich cove. We should also see nearly two dozen other spring ephemerals in bloom, including showy orchis, mayapple, star chickweed, bluets, foamflower, wild geranium, and Solomon's seal. Those who return to Patterson Gap will have a little less than two mile round trip.</p> <p>Number 2 – Those who would like to continue on up to 4,169 foot Nichols Gap to eat lunch will enjoy great views down into the Betty's Creek Valley and across and up to Pickens Nose, 5,007 foot Ridgepole Mountain, and 5,280 foot tall Albert Mountain. These hikers will have covered a little over five miles.</p> <p>You will have to decide which option you want to choose at our meeting point for carpool assignments.</p> <p>Pre-registration is required with the trip leader.</p>	<p>Directions: Ingles Parking Lot, 176 US 441, Clayton, GA. Ingles is on the right as you head north on US 441, just after passing the turn offs for US 76 east and west, and passing Wendy's and Burger King. We will carpool to Patterson Gap off of Betty's Creek Road due to limited parking at the trailhead.</p> <p>Facilities: At meeting place.</p> <p>Difficulty: Option one is easy. Option two is moderate. Trail is not regularly maintained.</p> <p>Bring: Water, lunch, bug spray, and rain gear.</p> 	<p>Clayton Webster webs4740 @bellsouth.net 404-633-8955 Home 678-925-1091 Cell</p>

Upcoming Field Trips

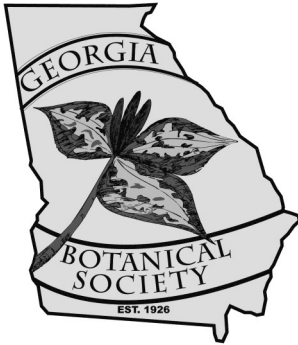
<p>April 23 10:00 AM until 3:30 PM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Spring Wildflowers</p> <p>Come for a look at this beautiful area in spring's glory and the view from Overlook Ridge where you will enjoy the grand view above Devil's Race Course Shoals of this very scenic section of river. We will take Cabin Creek Trail through a beautiful forest and along Cabin Creek, hiking up the ridge past Civil War gun emplacements. We will travel above rock cliffs, through mature oak-hickory forest, mesic ravine forest, and floodplain forest. Our hike will take us over and past extraordinary rock outcrops and formations influenced by the Brevard Fault, which runs through the Unit. We will see spring wildflowers, ferns, and perhaps a salamander or two.</p> <p>Limit: 30 people</p>	<p>Directions: Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, East Palisades Unit; meet at 10:00 am in the Indian Trail parking area and trail head; 1425 Indian Trail NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30327 at the bulletin board. Go south on Northside Drive and Indian Trail is the fourth street on the right. Indian Trail goes directly into the park.</p> <p>Facilities: None</p> <p>Difficulty: Moderately strenuous. There are several steep ascents and descents.</p> <p>Bring: Remember to bring a lunch to eat in the forest. Dress for the weather and wear very comfortable hiking shoes. Dress in layers so that you can adjust to changes in the temperature and your activity level. Carry water. You may wish to bring binoculars, hand lens, notebook, and camera. Note: A \$3. daily entrance fee or annual pass is required.</p>	<p>Jerry Hightower</p> <p>jerryhightower @hotmail.com</p> <p>770-206-0338</p>
<p>April 29 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Hemlock Falls Trail/Moccasin Creek State Park</p> <p>This trip will visit a somewhat remote state park on the shores of Lake Burton. From the trailhead parking area, we will wander up a beautiful Rhododendron lined trail to an excellent waterfall. The trail is an easy wide hill that follows along Moccasin Creek for just over a mile.</p> <p>On the way, we will see several small waterfalls and many spring wildflowers, especially mountain or cliff saxifrage, <i>Hydactia petiolaris</i> (<i>Saxifraga michauxii</i>).</p>	<p>Directions: The park is located at 3655 Highway 197, Clarkesville GA, 30523. Meet at the Hemlock Falls Trail head parking area. Once you cross into the park look for the small signpost that states "Hemlock Falls Trailhead." It is on a post to the left. GPS Coordinates: N 34.844916 W -83.588087</p> <p>Facilities: In the park</p> <p>Bring: Water, lunch, camera, field guide, hiking poles, \$5 parking fee or annual GA parks pass.</p>	<p>Maureen Donohue</p> <p>marinadono67 @gmail.com</p> <p>770-990-7756</p>
<p>April 29 9:00 AM</p> <p>Note: Early start time.</p>	<p>Cay Creek Wetland</p> <p>Cay Creek Wetland Park in Midway provides a unique opportunity to explore a wide range of the ecosystems found on the Georgia coast. There are examples of a maritime forest and pine flatwoods. A boardwalk including a canopy tower allows easy observation of the shift in vegetation in the transition from freshwater wetland through tidal swamp, marsh hammock and shrubby upland edge ending on a tidal creek. Beaver, otters, water snakes, freshwater turtles, and various wetland birds often call this area home. Cypress, live oak, blackgum, arrowwood viburnum, ground nut, climbing aster, climbing hydrangea, blue flag iris, seashore mallow, various ferns, giant plume grass, and marsh grasses will be in view.</p> <p>A wetland demonstration garden installed in 2016 greets you at the entrance to the boardwalk. There is sure to be something to see for everyone.</p>	<p>Directions: Cay Creek Wetland Park 189 Charlie Butler Rd, Midway GA 31320 ;Take I-95 to exit 76 (Midway/ Sunbury). Turn west at the top of the ramp onto Oglethorpe Highway/ GA-38/ US-84. Take your first left onto Charlie Butler/Paul Ripley Road in about 1 mile (marked by a large white sign for Cay Creek Wetlands Park). Take your first right into the Cay Creek Park driveway.</p> <p>Facilities: Bathroom facility not on property but gas station is close by.</p> <p>Difficulty: Easy on level boardwalk. Boardwalk is handicap accessible. Length of walk is 7/10ths of a mile one way.</p> <p>Bring: Bring comfortable shoes for walking, sun and bug protection, water, snacks and lunch.</p>	<p>Eamonn Leonard</p> <p>Eamonn.leonard @dnr.ga.gov</p> <p>912-506-1920</p>



Upcoming Field Trips

<p>April 30 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Georgia Mountain Bog</p> <p>We will tour a restored bog that protects multiple rare plant species, as well as bog turtles, that have been successfully established in a cooperatively managed site on the Chattahoochee National Forest near Suches and Blairsville. Swamp pink should be in bloom, and we can see the many seedling recruits that have been taking hold as the site has been opened to enhance habitat for the sun-loving bog denizens. Visitors will be required to sign and honor a secrecy agreement that protects the location of sensitive species and habitat (per Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance guidelines).</p> <p>Contact the trip leader if you plan to attend.</p>	<p>Meet: at the Suches general store/gas station at the intersection of Hwy 180 & Hwy 60.</p> <p>Facilities: At meeting place.</p> <p>Difficulty: Medium. Curvy roads, limited parking, wetland habitat. We will carpool and/ or caravan to the site (~5 miles), travel a very short short distance on foot along flat ground, but rubber boots are recommended for the bog itself.</p> <p>Bring: Rubber boots, hat, water, bug spray, etc. If you bring lunch, we can picnic in the shade by the bog.</p>	<p>Carrie Radcliffe cradcliffe @atlantabg.org</p>
<p>May 6 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Turkeybeard</p> <p>This will be the first Botanical Society field trip to a newly purchased portion of Sprewell Bluff WMA. Included in the new area is a bluff overlooking Pigeon Creek that may have the largest population of turkeybeard, <i>Xerophyllum asphodeloides</i>, in the state. The slopes are a heath bluff with mountain laurel and Piedmont rhododendron, <i>Rhododendron minus</i>, both of which should be in flower. Montane longleaf pines are the dominant tree on much of the bluff. We should also see showy skullcap, <i>Scutellaria pseudoserrata</i>, which has the largest flowers of all Georgia's skullcaps species.</p> <p>After the Turkeybeard Bluff, we will drive toward the confluence of Pigeon Creek and the Flint River. Along the way, we should encounter a good variety of wildflowers, including squareheads, <i>Tetragonotheca helianthoides</i>. If the group is willing, we may wade across Pigeon Creek to see a rare Piedmont glade with some interesting plants.</p>	<p>Directions: I-85 south to Exit 41, US 27 Alt, and head south. Stay on US 27 Alt through Warm Springs, and 3 more miles to the crest of Pine Mountain. Turn left onto GA 190 to GA 41, just outside of Manchester. Turn right on GA 41, heading south. In about 5 miles, turn left onto Pleasant Valley Road. Take Pleasant Valley Rd. to where it dead ends at Chalybeate Springs Rd. Turn left and go to where it crests Pine Mountain at Mitchell Gap. There is a sign for Sprewell Bluff WMA at the gap. Turn right on to the dirt road and park along the road at the bottom of the hill. Or use Google and search for Mitchell Gap.</p> <p>Facilities: None.</p> <p>Difficulty: Mostly easy on rocky slopes. There are no trails yet, so walking will be cross-country, or along roads.</p> <p>Bring: Water, lunch, bug spray, hand lens, dress for the weather. Bring a camera for some spectacular views. We will stop at some point just inside the WMA and carpool the rest of the way. The road in is rough and high clearance vehicles are recommended.</p>	<p>Hal Massie 478-957-6095</p>
<p>May 7 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Spring Wildflowers (Freeman Trail/Blood Mtn)</p> <p>The Freeman Trail winds around the south side of Blood Mountain, over a rugged and rocky terrain, crossing several small rocky streams and rock outcrops. At this elevation, the woods should be awake with spring wildflowers, such as lady's-slippers (<i>Cypripedium</i> spp.), wood-lilies (<i>Clintonia</i> spp.), possibly some early trilliums (<i>T. erectum</i>, <i>T. grandiflora</i>, <i>T. undulatum</i>) and some remaining toothworts (<i>Cardamine</i> spp.). There is a sizeable relic American chestnut tree on the south edge of the trail just before Bird Gap.</p> <p>We can turn around at Bird Gap (total roundtrip of 5 miles) or continue further.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at Byron Herbert Reese parking area on the west side of U.S. Hwy 129 north, about 0.5 mile north of the Mountain Crossing Appalachian Trail Store at Neel's Gap. Neel's Gap is 18 (slow and curvy) miles north of Cleveland. There may be a \$5.00 parking fee to park at the BHR lot; parking is not allowed at the Trail Store.</p> <p>Facilities: At meeting place.</p> <p>Difficulty: The BHR trail is moderately steep. The Freeman Trail is relatively flat but there are some very large, tricky boulders to scramble over and several rocky streams to cross. Ankle-protecting boots strongly advised; hiking stick may be useful.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch, snacks, and water. Dress for spring weather with possible thunderstorms.</p>	<p>John French frenchjrfr @att.net 678-575-1655</p>

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