

BotSoc News



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Photos from the 48th Annual Pilgrimage

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From Shakerag Hollow (#2): Dutchman's britches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) on left, and, on right: *Trillium grandiflorum* with large-flowered bellwort (*Uvularia grandiflora*;) photos by Charles Seabrook.



Above: the group at Big Soddy Creek Gulf #16 (Photo: Mitchell Kent);
Below: the group at Shirley Miller Wildflower Trail #17 (Photo: Jim Drake)



Above: Shooting star (*Dodecatheon meadia*) on trip #23
(Photo: E. Honeycutt)

President's Perspective



BotSoc News

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Editorial Office

Ellen Honeycutt
Jacqueline Miller

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We have just had another fantastic pilgrimage at our first out-of-state location—Chattanooga. Our program was enriched with sites, field trip leaders, and participants from Tennessee. The weather was gorgeous and the wildflowers on time. Facilities for the social and banquet were excellent—I loved the towing museum and train station venues.

This year we had three students receiving scholarships to attend the pilgrimage: Ashley DeSensi from Columbus State, Bridget Piatt from Gordon State, and Loy Xingwen from Emory. If you see any of these students on future field trips, be sure to welcome them. They were joined by Brandi Griffin from Valdosta State University, who was a scholarship recipient in 2015 and who has attended every pilgrimage and several field trips since. It is encouraging to see students continuing to participate. These scholarships are a great way to recruit young professionals into BotSoc. If you know students taking botany-type courses, please encourage them to apply for scholarships to attend the pilgrimage. BotSoc also provides grants for field research in botany—Marie Mellinger Field Research Grant—which are funded by profits from t-shirt sales at the pilgrimage.

After the banquet, Larry Pounds talked about the special plants found while botanizing on the Cumberland Plateau, describing rare and endangered species, their distribution, and their habitats. Larry specializes in endangered species and works for Oak Ridge National Lab and Tennessee Valley Authority. He recruited BotSocers as scouts and challenged them to look for these plants on field trips. The very next day, Mike Christison, on the field trip to Zahnd Natural Area, found two of the species included in the presentation. They were the granite gooseberry (*Ribes curvatum*) and diamorpha (*Diamorpha smallii*), both found on sandstone rock outcrop habitats. Larry grouped the plants into four habitats: riparian bottoms, slopes, rock faces, and plateau tops. This made a great preface to my next day field trip to Zahnd Natural Area, led by Bill Witherspoon and Leslie Edwards. This field trip focused on the interaction of geology and natural communities with very different communities depending on moisture (dry to mesic) and rock type (sandstone and limestone). It was very interesting to see plants in the Ericaceae restricted to acidic calcareous habitats and to see the amazing variation in the same family with trees (sourwood), shrubs (blueberries), and herbs (pipsissewa).

Throughout the pilgrimage, we could see a few places impacted by last November's wildfires. In most places that I visited or passed on the way, the understory was rejuvenated by the fire. At the ridge top at Zahnd, I saw a few Virginia pines where the duff layer had smoldered and the trees had died, but the dead trees were scattered and most had survived. Hal Massie, on the trip to Sitton's Gulch, said he had been stationed at Cloudland Canyon State Park when he was fighting the wildfires. He commented on how few home owners had followed FireWise practices and how many homes in the woods were not defensible. The drought preceding the wildfire had been so severe that the Upper Falls (Cherokee Falls) of Daniel Creek had been dry. However, there had been plenty of rain before the pilgrimage and the falls were spectacular. Coming from the Coastal Plain, I can never get enough of the mountains and, in particular, the waterfalls and creeks.

The next pilgrimage will be in Thomaston (between Macon and Columbus) and will probably be held in the first weekend in May, 2018. This will be a good opportunity to celebrate the varied communities along the fall line. I hope to see you all there.

Heather Brasell

Pilgrimage Field Trip #21 Sitton's Gulch

By Meredith Finley-Simonds

This Sunday field trip was led by Halle Henderson and started in the Sitton's Gulch parking lot at Cloudland Canyon State Park. There were good things to find right off the parking lot which was the group's first stop:

Plants observed: walking fern, hearts a bustin' (*Euonymus americanus*), sweetshrub (*Calycanthus floridus*), stonecrop (*Sedum ternatum*), Carolina spring beauty, trout lily, maple, *Trillium decumbens*, mayapple, resurrection fern, chestnut oak, yellow mandarin, Solomon's seal, Canada violet, *Tipularia*, honey locust pod on ground (tree not identified), fernleaf phacelia (*Phacelia bipinnatifida*), woodland phlox, bulblet fern (a favorite of Alice's!), American bladdernut, early meadow rue, alumroot, doll's eyes, cutleaf toothwort, and shagbark hickory.

Comments: Rocks found with crinoid fossils (cheerio shapes) indicating that the area was once underwater (we had a geologist among us!). We approached the cave entrance & discussed presence of white-nose fungus in local bat population. Lengthy discussion of foamflower vs. alumroot, finally determined to be alumroot based on foamflower found later in the hike. Strange rubbery yellow petals on ground, discussion of tulip poplar vs. cucumber magnolia (tree not identified, no resolution on petals).



Foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*)



Exploring the cave

Continued on next page

Field Trip #21 (cont'd)

From here, the group of 10 folks hiked further along the trail, identifying plants as we went. Poison ivy and stinging nettle were observed through the hike. Halle was a superb guide with her handout of species she's seen before, encouragement of discussion, and quick to reference the guidebook and answer questions. Here is an account of the area along the first lengthy leg of the trail.

Plants observed: star chickweed, dwarf crested iris, smilax, Cumberland spurge, white mulberry, baby blue eyes, violet wood sorrel, *Polymnia*, jack-in-the-pulpit, longspur violet, slender toothwort, partridgeberry, *Trillium cuneatum*, oakleaf hydrangea, birdsfoot violet, rue anemone, perfoliate bellwort, eastern redbud, white/purple/AND variegated larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*!), *Geranium maculatum*, harbinger-of-spring, honey locust (the actual tree!), *Hepatica acutiloba*, *Viola pubescens*, and skullcap.

Comments: A stand of trifoliate orange was found, cut right down to the ground but resprouting. I am impressed with the park manager's swift response to this invasive!

The hike continued along the second spur for the remainder of the trail (which runs alongside the river).

Plants observed: Large-seed forget-me-not (*Myosotis macrosperma*), fragile fern, blue cohosh, non-native *Rosa multiflora* (blech!), waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum virginianum*) (with younger mottled and older solid-colored leaves), rattlesnake fern, large fallen buckeye, bellwort (*Uvularia grandiflora*), false Solomon's seal, an unidentified brown cup fungus, sweetgum, maple leaf viburnum, white squawroot, hickory, hemlock, maidenhair fern, red osier dogwood, basswood, Huger's carrion flower, shuttleworth ginger (*Hexastylis shuttleworthii*), foamflower, *Trillium sulcatum*, and wild yam.



Dwarf larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*)



Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*)

Comments: We stopped and ate lunch along the river. Half the group braved the small water crossing and went to see the final waterfall and half stayed behind to play it safe :)

Best or funniest thing that happened on the trip: One participant collected a used diaper and used tampon applicator from our riverside lunch site and brought them back (double-bagged!) to trailhead for disposal. Leave no trace!

Pilgrimage Field Trip #23 Hidden Pond Trail

By Ellen Honeycutt

The 2017 Wildflower Pilgrimage was a wonderful event with perfect weather, great company, and fantastic locations for field trips. I decided to sign up for the Hidden Pond Trail at Carter's Lake in Murray County, GA after reading about it in the Nurses' Favorite Wildflower Walks in Georgia. Also, Richard Ware was the trip leader for #23 and I can't pass up the opportunity to learn from Richard and Teresa Ware!

After passing one of the reddest red buckeyes (*Aesculus pavia*) that I'd ever seen, we walked up a mild slope to find a good sized tree on the ground, still flush with fresh spring leaves. A group of BotSoccers pitched in to get the tree upright again, looking for all the world like the soldiers raising the flag at Iwo Jima. Richard said it was buckthorn bully (*Sideroxylon lycioides*) and we saw numerous smaller ones later with tiny thorns.



Left: BotSoccers upright a fallen tree.

Right: Red buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*).

In the same area we found bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*) in bloom and winged elm (*Ulmus alata*) as well as both blackhaw viburnums: southern blackhaw (*Viburnum prunifolium*) and rusty blackhaw (*Viburnum rufidulum*). It was interesting to compare the two viburnums side by side as they look very similar in size, flower and leaf shape.

Continued on next page

Field Trip #23 (cont'd)

Soon we came to an area full of American columbo (*Frasera caroliniensis*), a tall member of the Gentianaceae family. Only a few of them were putting up bloom stalks this year. Other perennials that we passed along the way were red columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), yellow trillium (*Trillium luteum*), black cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*), fire pink (*Silene virginica*), dwarf larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*), and bluestar (*Amsonia tabernaemontana*). Richard pointed out a favorite of his: yellow-fruited horse-gentian (*Triosteum angustifolium*). It was flowering but we had to get way down to see the flowers that hide inside the foliage.



Left: The emerging flower stalk of American columbo (*Frasera caroliniensis*). Right: Yellow trillium (*Trillium luteum*).



After passing across the observation deck (where I spotted a blooming American plum (*Prunus americana*) with attendant tiger swallowtail butterfly), we entered an area with loads of shooting stars (*Dodecatheon meadia*) in bloom under a grove of buckeye hybrids (*Aesculus* spp.). (See shooting star picture on page 1.)

Dotted around were tiny rue anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*) and even tinier harbinger of spring (*Erigenia bulbosa*). From there we looped back towards the parking lot, passing some of the largest clumps of yellow trillium while watching swallows swoop over the rocks on the dam. This trail is also a popular birding area.

Left: A pale form of dwarf larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*).

Upcoming Field Trips

<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 massiefarm@aol.com 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>
<p>May 13 9:00 AM</p> <p>Note early time</p>	<p>Woody Gap, Spring Ephemerals</p> <p>The hike is on a beautiful part of the Appalachian Trail. View lush deciduous forests, ferns and spring wildflowers. We will start hiking east on an easy part of the trail. We will venture up the steeper portion to Preacher's Rock if agreed upon by the group. The view from Preacher's Rock is one of the prettiest in the Blood Mountain Wilderness Area.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the trailhead at Woody Gap, near the paved parking lot and bathroom. Take GA 60 north from Dahlenega. Where US 19 and GA 60 split at Rockpile Gap, take GA 60 to the left. The parking lot at Woody Gap is on the right, about 17 miles from Dahlenega. Go slow—this is a winding 2-lane mountain road with motorcycles on weekends.</p> <p>Facilities: Yes</p> <p>Difficulty: 2.3 miles of walking. The first 2/3 is easy and the last 1/3 is moderate to difficult.</p> <p>Bring: Water, light snack, sturdy shoes, camera.</p>	<p>Rachel Perez 678-232-9291 rachel.ann.perez@gmail.com</p>

Upcoming Field Trips

<p>May 20 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Pitcherplants and Dewthreads, Dixie Bog</p> <p>This is an opportunity to visit one of Georgia's largest displays of pitcherplants and by far the greatest show of dewthreads (<i>Drosera tracyi</i>). In mid-May several orchids will be blooming, especially spreading pogonia, ladies-tresses and grass pinks in profusion. This 2,000-acre private tract is expertly managed, continuing the use of prescribed fire to promote habitat for quail. Historically, it was known as the Easter Plantation. Many other plants of uplands and bogs will be seen. Birding is also fantastic around a large cypress pond, where bald eagles nest and water birds abound.</p> <p>Trip limited to 25 persons. Call or email trip leader to confirm reservation.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at Liberty Gas Station, on the north side of Barwick along GA Hwy 33. Dixie Bog is located on Plantation (Drew) Rd., about 5 miles southeast of Barwick. We will caravan from the meeting site.</p> <p>Facilities: We will have access to a fully furnished cottage as a starting place and lunch site.</p> <p>Difficulty: Short, easy walks from vehicles with limited off-trail excursions.</p> <p>Bring: Rubber boots, old sneakers or hiking boots recommended due to some brushy habitats and moist bogs. Also binoculars, tick and insect repellent, lunch and snacks.</p>	<p>Tom Patrick tom.patrick@dnr.ga.gov 706-476-4541</p>
<p>May 20 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Canoe Trip on Flint River, Shoals Spider Lilies</p> <p>The purpose of this upstream paddle on the Flint River will be to get up close and personal with the shoals spiderlily, or Cahaba lily (<i>Hymenocallis coronaria</i>). At normal water levels the lilies are difficult to reach by wading into the river, so we are going to paddle right into the heart of a very large population of this lovely wildflower. We should also see American water-willow (<i>Justicia americana</i>) flowering among the hundreds of shoals lilies. Southern catalpa (<i>Catalpa bignonioides</i>), which has remarkably showy flowers, may also be in flower along the banks of the river. Because we are only paddling less than a mile upstream, we'll have plenty of time to spend mingling with the lilies. This trip will be an excellent opportunity to photograph the shoals lilies.</p> <p>You must bring your own boat, or make arrangements with someone who has space in a boat.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at Big Lazer Creek WMA Check Station. From Thomaston, take US 19 south for about 3.5 miles. Turn right onto Indian Trail Rd. At the first stop sign, stay to the right. Follow Indian Trail Rd. to Pobiddy Rd. and turn left. Stay on Pobiddy Rd. for several miles. You will cross the Flint River on a new bridge and head uphill. After about 3 miles, turn right onto Bunkham Rd. (there is a sign for Big Lazer Creek WMA at the intersection). Drive until you see the DNR Check Station on the left.</p> <p>Facilities: None</p> <p>Difficulty: Because we will be paddling upstream, participants must be in fair physical condition. We'll paddle less than a mile on the way to the lilies, but it will seem like 2 or 3 miles.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch, water, camera, sense of adventure. Expect to get your feet wet and probably muddy. And bring a boat.</p>	<p>Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com 478-957-6095</p>
<p>May 21 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Cypress Ponds and River Bluffs, Alapaha River WMA</p> <p>A newly established 7,000-acre Wildlife Management Area with rare plant habitats and perhaps one of the state's largest concentrations of gopher tortoises! Although much of the tract is in planted pine, there is great botanical diversity.</p> <p>Natural sand ridges, cypress ponds, bogs and river bluffs provide opportunities to see silky camellia (<i>Stewartia malacodendron</i>), willow-leaved meadowbeauty (<i>Rhexia salicifolia</i>), pondspice (<i>Litsea aestivalis</i>), various bog plants, and the "whiplash habit" of Pickering's morning-glory (<i>Stylisma pickeringii</i>).</p> <p>The site is also known for such wildlife as fox squirrels, indigo snakes, pine snakes, and mole skinks.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the kiosk entrance way, Alapaha River WMA, US Hwy 319, one mile north of the bridge over the Alapaha River. The WMA is along the east side of the Alapaha River just as you enter Irwin County from Tift County on the right side of US Hwy 319 between Tifton and Ocilla. The WMA roads are generally excellent except for being high in the middle with coarse gravel. Best to carpool or drive a good field car with high carriage and good treads. We will drive slowly but may do several miles—fill your tanks!</p> <p>Facilities: No facilities on site.</p> <p>Difficulty: Short, easy walks from vehicles with limited off-trail excursions.</p> <p>Bring: Rubber boots or good hiking boots recommended due to some brushy habitats; tick and insect repellent; no really wet areas will be attempted.</p>	<p>Tom Patrick tom.patrick@dnr.ga.gov 706-476-4541</p>

Upcoming Field Trips

<p>May 21 10:00 AM-3:00 PM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Palisades Canoe Float & Spring Flora, Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area</p> <p>Bring your own canoe or kayak for a leisurely float on the Chattahoochee River. We will float a 3-mile section of the river from Powers Island to Paces Mill at US Hwy 41, exploring plants, geology, and wildlife, including an extraordinary array of late spring wildflowers. The Palisades have narrow floodplains and steep ridges rising to over 1,000 feet. The area offers great diversity of habitats and includes oak-hickory forest, steep north-facing slopes, mesic ravine forest, and floodplain forest. Created by the geologic action of the Brevard Fault, the river, and the effects of weather, this is a rugged and beautiful section of the river. We will stop at Devil's Stair Step Beach (Diving Rock) for lunch and a short loop walk.</p> <p>This trip is limited to 30 people. Contact Jerry Hightower for reservations.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at Powers Island, 5862 Interstate North Pkwy., Sandy Springs GA at 10:00 AM to unload equipment. (For directions, see www.nps.gov/chat or call 678-538-1200.) We will then take the majority of the vehicles to Paces Mill and shuttle the drivers back to Powers Island. Please let Jerry know if you have a multi-passenger vehicle and could help with the shuttle.</p> <p>Facilities: At Powers Island, our lunch stop, and at Paces Mill.</p> <p>Difficulty: There are 3 mild Class 1.5 rapids suitable for beginners along this part of the river.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch, sunscreen, hat, rain gear, and water. Camera, binoculars, and hand lens are recommended. Bring a day pack or other bag to secure items inside your boat. \$3.00 daily parking pass or annual parking pass needed.</p>	<p>Jerry Hightower jerryhightower@hotmail.com 770-206-0338</p>
<p>May 27 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Arkaquah Trail, Brasstown Bald</p> <p>The Arkaquah Trail starts below the summit of the highest peak in Georgia. We will hike through a range of plant communities down to a rock outcrop that should have flowering rock harlequin (<i>Capnoides sempervirens</i>). Along the way we should see plenty of Vasey's trillium (<i>Trillium vaseyi</i>) and a few pink lady's slipper (<i>Cypripedium acaule</i>), as well as mountain (<i>Acer spicatum</i>) and striped maple (<i>Acer pensylvanicum</i>). In previous years we've had as many as 6 different species of trilliums on this trail. We should also see Canada mayflower (<i>Maianthemum canadense</i>), teaberry (<i>Gaultheria procumbens</i>) and perhaps minnie-bush (<i>Menziesia pilosa</i>). After lunch we will walk back to the parking lot. If there is interest we will then drive down to Track Rock Gap to explore the bottom of the Arkaquah Trail. The ultramafic soils at the base of Brasstown Bald should yield the tall flowering stalks of American columbo (<i>Frasera carolinensis</i>) as well as hound's tongue (<i>Cynoglossum virginianum</i>).</p>	<p>Directions: Meet in the parking lot on top of Brasstown Bald. Take US 19 south from Blairsville for 8 miles, then turn left onto GA 180 for another 8 miles. At the sign for Brasstown Bald, turn left onto GA 180 Spur and follow it up to the parking area. From the south, take GA 60/US 19 north from Dahlonega. Eventually US19 veers to the right at Stonepile Gap, stay on US 19 headed north. You'll turn left at Turner's Corner as you cross the Chestatee River, and eventually cross Neel's Gap. After passing Vogel State Park, start looking for GA 180 to the right. The road to Brasstown Bald, GA 180 Spur, will be 8 miles on the left.</p> <p>Facilities: Only at the Brasstown Bald parking lot.</p> <p>Difficulty: The Arkaquah Trail is strenuous. Total distance about 4 miles.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch, parking fee for Brasstown Bald. No fee for Track Rock, but parking is limited.</p>	<p>Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com 478-957-6095</p> <p>Rich Reaves rich.reaves@att.net 770-827-5186</p>
<p>May 28 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Wagon Train Trail, Brasstown Bald</p> <p>Description: The Wagon Train Trail is a much easier trail than the Arkaquah Trail, following the bed of an old wagon road. The trail winds down the north side of Brasstown Bald starting in a cloud forest habitat. As we descend, we'll pass rock cuts literally dripping moss, saxifrage, and lichens. We should see three or four species of trillium, particularly Vasey's trillium (<i>Trillium vaseyi</i>). Pink lady's slippers (<i>Cypripedium acaule</i>) are possible, as well as Cumberland rhododendron (<i>Rhododendron bakeri</i>), Canada mayflower (<i>Maianthemum canadense</i>) and Appalachian bluet (<i>Houstonia serpyllifolia</i>). As always, we will search rock outcrops for rock harlequin (<i>Capnoides sempervirens</i>).</p>	<p>Directions: Same directions as above trip.</p> <p>Facilities: At meeting place only.</p> <p>Difficulty: The Wagon Train Trail is fairly easy on the way down. Coming back up is only moderately strenuous. This trail was originally graded for wagons, so it is much easier than the Arkaquah Trail. Still, this is a high mountain trail with a rocky tread and hikers should be reasonably fit. We'll walk about 5 miles, half of it uphill.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch, parking fee. The weather can be considerably cooler on top of Brasstown, dress appropriately.</p>	<p>Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com 478-957-6095</p> <p>Rich Reaves rich.reaves@att.net 770-827-5186</p>

Upcoming Field Trips

<p>May 29 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Monday (Memorial Day)</p>	<p>Mountain Wetlands in the Shadow of Brasstown Bald</p> <p>This will be a relaxed visit to 3 different wetland sites. At the Eller Seep, just barely across the NC line, we'll see the Federally Endangered green pitcher plant (<i>Sarracenia oreophila</i>), as well as other mountain bog plants. It probably won't be in flower, but we'll see an odd member of the rose family, Canada burnet (<i>Sanguisorba canadensis</i>) that is only known from one county back in Georgia. The second site, Reed Branch Wet Meadow Preserve, is back across the state line. Both the Ellis Seep and Reed Branch are owned and managed by the Nature Conservancy. Reed Branch has a much larger population of green pitcher plants, along with a good number of wildflowers that prefer wet meadows. Our last stop, after lunch, will be a small stream near the town of Young Harris and adjoining the Brasstown Valley Resort. This will be an exploratory trip where we have seen interesting plants on scouting trips in the past. Roads near the wetland are consistent sites for American Columbo (<i>Frasera caroliniensis</i>).</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the Ingles at 94 N Main St., Hiawassee. It is on the north side of the highway just east of the Hwy 76 and Hwy 75 split. From there we will head north to the Eller Seep, then back into Georgia to Reed Branch, then back to Hiawassee for a leisurely lunch. After lunch we will travel west on Hwy 76 to the Young Harris site.</p> <p>Facilities: In Hiawassee, none at the wetlands.</p> <p>Difficulty: Easy. Short walks from the vehicles to the wetlands, no more than 200 yards.</p> <p>Bring: Snacks and water. For those who are interested, we will eat at a Mexican restaurant in Hiawassee. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable hiking shoes. We may get our feet a little wet or muddy. You may wish to bring a hand lens, notebook, and camera.</p>	<p>Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com</p> <p>478-957-6095</p> <p>Rich Reaves rich.reaves@att.net</p> <p>770-827-5186</p>
<p>June 3 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Coosa Prairies</p> <p>We will visit the Coosa Prairies, a Nature Conservancy conservation easement of 929 acres. These remnant prairie sites in extreme western Floyd County are listed as the rarest habitat in Georgia by the Nature Conservancy.</p> <p>Some of the many wildflowers we hope to see include: Prairie milkweed (<i>Asclepias hirtella</i>), climbing milkvine (<i>Matelea obliqua</i>), scaly blazing star (<i>Liatrix squarrosa</i>), Mohr's Barbara's buttons (<i>Marshallia mohrii</i>), prairie coneflower (<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>), wavyleaf purple coneflower (<i>Echinacea simulata</i>), and many, many more.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the parking area for the cave in Rolator Park in Cave Spring. Take I-75 north to the second Cartersville exit (exit 290, GA 20). The sign says Rome/Canton. Turn left (west) on GA 20. Follow GA 20 and then US 411 to Rome, around 20 miles. In Rome, GA 20 and US 411 will split. Follow US 411 (left fork) toward Cave Spring. At 2nd traffic light turn right (stay on US 411) and follow all the way to Cave Spring. At traffic light in Cave Spring, go straight, cross the bridge, and immediately turn left into Rolator Park.</p> <p>Facilities: Meeting site only.</p> <p>Difficulty: Easy, mostly flat terrain, 1-2 miles depending on road conditions.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch to eat near cars, not carried on walk; plenty of water; bug spray; camera.</p>	<p>Richard Ware gabotany@comcast.net 706-766-5143</p> <p>Malcolm Hodges mhodges@tnc.org 404-473-0441</p>
<p>June 17 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Big Hammock & Canoochee Bogs</p> <p>We will visit a blooming Georgia Plume, a beautiful tree in the Heath family that is only known from Georgia. The trip will also include a visit to the pitcher plant bogs that Bot Soc is working with GA DNR to restore and protect.</p>	<p>Field trip details not available at press time. Please check the website or contact the trip leader at the email address shown above.</p>	<p>Lisa Kruse</p> <p>Lisa.Kruse@dnr.ga.gov</p>

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<p>June 18 10:00 AM- 4:00 PM</p> <p>Note: This is a Sunday</p>	<p>Chestatee River Canoe & Kayak Float (Adult-Oriented)</p> <p>The beautiful Chestatee River flows out of the mountains north of Dahlonega into the Chattahoochee and is an easy 6.3 mile float punctuated with several very mild rapids. Paddle past banks covered with rhododendron and mountain laurel, ferns, and wildflowers. River birch, oaks, and sycamores tower overhead, draped with muscadine, Virginia creeper, and cross vine. Sheer cliffs slip into currents that flow around the remains of old gold mining operations. We will stop at Big Bend Beach for a picnic lunch and perhaps a swim.</p> <p>Limit 30 persons. Please contact Jerry Hightower if you are planning on joining this trip.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the Appalachian Outfitters Outpost on Hwy 60 near Dahlonega at 10:00 AM. There is a small shuttle fee. Bring your own boat or rent canoes and kayaks from the outfitters. For rental information and reservations, call Appalachian Outfitters at 800-426-7117. Please no rafts.</p> <p>Facilities: Yes.</p> <p>Difficulty: Suitable for beginners with some experience on rivers, Class 1.5.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch, snacks, sunscreen, hat, rain gear, and water. Camera, binoculars, and hand lens recommended. Bring a day pack or other bag and also a waterproof container or bag.</p>	<p>Jerry Hightower jerryhightower@ hotmail.com 770-206-0338</p>
<p>June 24-25</p>	<p>Roan Mountain, Tennessee THIS TRIP IS CLOSED.</p>		<p>Jim Drake Jamey McDonald</p>
<p>June 25</p>	<p>Blue Ridge Parkway THIS TRIP IS CLOSED.</p>		<p>Jim Drake</p>
<p>July 8 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Roadside Botanizing: Waycross to Folkston</p> <p>After meeting in Waycross we will travel along US 1 south toward Folkston. We will make several roadside stops along GA 177 where we will see non-blooming pitcher plants (<i>Sarracenia minor</i> and <i>Sarracenia psitticina</i>), snowy orchid (<i>Platanthera nivea</i>), Bartram's rose gentian (<i>Sabatia bartramii</i>), spoonflower (<i>Peltandra sagittifolia</i>), narrow-leaf Barbara's buttons (<i>Marshallia tenuifolia</i>), loblolly bay (<i>Gordonia lasianthus</i>) and others. Then continue down US 1 to a wonderful wet ditch just north of Folkston. We will then take GA 23 south from Folkston to a stop at Spanish Indian Creek and then continue into the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge (ENTRY FEE REQUIRED) for the Swamp Island Drive. Other flowers we may encounter include Pickering's daffodil (<i>Stylisma pickeringii</i>) and maybe large-flowered rose gentian (<i>Sabatia grandiflora</i>). We will be a little flexible in what we do, as the flowers will dictate where we ultimately go.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the Hampton Inn in Waycross.</p> <p>Facilities: Possible at stores/stops along route but unlikely after leaving hotel.</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 due to extremely sparse pickings), water, bug spray, and ENTRY FEE FOR WILDLIFE REFUGE.</p> <p>Carpooling is encouraged to make pulling off easier for our roadside botanizing.</p>	<p>Rich Reaves rich.reaves @att.net 770-827-5186</p>
<p>July 9 7:00 AM</p> <p>Note early start time for this Sunday trip!</p>	<p>Eastern Okefenokee Swamp and Night-Flowering Wild Petunia</p> <p>After meeting in Waycross we will start the day heading to GA 301 south to look for night-flowering wild petunia (<i>Ruellia noctiflora</i>) in the early morning before its flowers drop off. We likely will see Michaux's milkweed (<i>Asclepias michauxii</i>) at this location as well. After that we will return to US 82 in search of <i>Sabatia foliosa</i> and then continue with other roadside stops along 82 until lunchtime. Plants we should see on this day include yellow meadow beauty (<i>Rhexia lutea</i>), snowy orchid, Bartram's rose gentian, few-flowered milkweed (<i>Asclepias lanceolata</i>), and others.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the Hampton Inn in Waycross.</p> <p>Facilities: Possible at stores/stops along route but unlikely after leaving hotel.</p> <p>Difficulty: Short excursions along the roadside. Usually within sight of the vehicles, but it can be muddy/wet.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch to eat on the road, water, bug spray.</p> <p>Carpooling is encouraged to make pulling off easier for our roadside botanizing. We will pass by the hotel at lunchtime so cars can be picked up easily.</p>	<p>Rich Reaves rich.reaves @att.net 770-827-5186</p>

Society Contacts



115 Farm Dale
Roswell, GA 30075
www.gabotsoc.org

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U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ATHENS, GA
PERMIT NO. 1

OFFICERS and BOARD MEMBERS

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Vice-President - Mitchell Kent mkent423@gmail.com
Treasurer - Steve and Rona Cook stcook55@hotmail.com
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 Membership - Jo Anne Romfh joannromfh@aol.com
 BotSoc Boutique - Jenneke Somerville jenneke1@hotmail.com
 Marie Mellinger Grant Fund - Linda Chafin chafin@uga.edu
 Ed McDowell ed.mcdowell@cox.net
 Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com
 Jerry Hightower jerry_hightower@nps.gov
 Rich Reaves rich.reaves@att.net