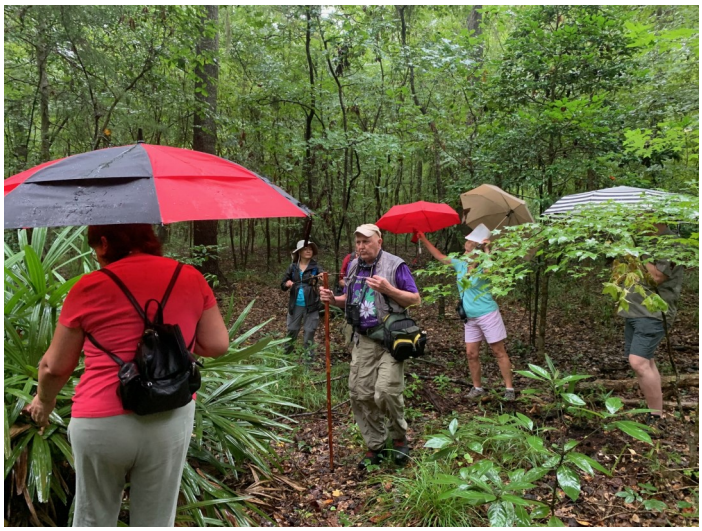
BotSoc News

Volume 95
Number 6
November
2020

Trip Report: Savannah National Wildlife Refuge

By Diane Ochala & Bobby Hattaway

Mist, Rain and 6 Principles of Plant Identification at Kingfisher Pond



Mist and rain have umbrellas up as field trip leader and BotSoc President Bobby Hattaway (center in vest) approaches a needle palm for discussion with Kingfisher Pond trip participants.

Three couples and trip leader Bobby Hattaway, president of the Georgia Botanical Society, made the field trip to Kingfisher Pond Recreation Area in South Carolina's Savannah National Wildlife Refuge on August 23rd.

Kingfisher Pond is a lovely area that is named for an old borrow pit, now a large lily "pond" with a very (too?) friendly two- to three-year old alligator, but Bobby told us our primary destination nnhe more lowland Tupelo was the more lowland Tupelo Trail which peeled off Kingfisher Loop Trail.

En route to our destination, we initially visited a drier upland hardwood forest and then descended into a more mesic-to-wetter coastal bottomland forest. These plant communities are natural resources often overlooked on the Savannah NWR as most folks "do" birding on the better known four-mile Laurel Hill Wildlife Drive. Where we visited, the uplands along the edge of the floodplain approximate a Southern coastal plain mesic slope forest. Within the floodplain itself is a majestic version of a South Atlantic swamp island.

We started our hike in a damp mist, but unfortunately, after a couple of hours the mist turned into sustained rain. But we did accomplish a good bit in that timeframe. As partially noted above, we started in an oak-dominated mesic deciduous forest on Kingfisher Loop Trail near the "pond" with the same name and worked our way to a more hydric plant community. This community was in what Bobby called secondary succession, having been disturbed years ago when Kingfisher Pond was dug. The whole trip was shaded, but it was so cloudy, that really did not concern us except that botanizing in poor light is sort of like birding in poor light–i.e., it is harder to do.

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IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Perspective

BotSoc News
is published seven times a year (Jan, March, May, July, September, Nov and for the Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage).

Submission deadline
Is December 1 for the January 2021 issue.

Subscriptions
Are included with membership.

Website:
www.gabotsoc.org

Editorial Office
Kevin Doyle

In my first "President's Perspective" in the September newsletter, I mentioned that the Board had decided to have the 2021 Pilgrimage in the same place as we planned for the 2020 one. That one has been labeled the Ghost Pilgrimage. I also mentioned that Timothy Estep is the new vice president and thus the new pilgrimage planner. All that is still true. More on that momentarily, but first you need to hear about the Ghost Holiday Party and our 2021 field trip program which is fortunately not in the ghost category.

The board has unanimously voted to cancel the annual holiday party usually held the first Saturday in December. They have also agreed to "meet" by electronic means on that same day at 10:00 a.m. If not resolved sooner, one of the topics on the agenda will undoubtedly be the degree to which we will need to modify Pilgrimage 2021, but much of the plan, at this point, is introduced below.

Field Trips Field trips for next year are in the works. We have had success in the last part of this year's cycle with the fewer trips we have done. I do not have the numbers yet, but our new field trip chairs, Susan and Todd Morrell, tell me we do have prospective field trip leaders who are already planning trips for next year. The chairs are in the process of preparing a 2021 schedule. And, of course, these trips have the 10-person limit and employ other COVID-19 safety rules listed on our website. These rules will continue until we have enough confidence and medical guidance to drop them.

Pilgrimage 2021 Timothy Estep, our vice president, and I had a big powwow the last week in September, and we agreed that I should share with the membership some of what we discussed. The biggest unknown, at this point, is to what degree COVID-19 is going to affect our 2021 Pilgrimage. As the rest of the Board, and probably you, have already surmised, we may have to have somewhat of an atypical pilgrimage if the current COVID-19 situation continues into the spring of 2021. And there's no reason to doubt that it will. We hope it won't, but as I am fond of saying, "Hope is not a plan." We still need to do that (i.e. plan), and we are sharing some of that with you now, including the dates in that plan.

Field trips are not only the "lifeblood" of our organization, but they also have historically been the focal point of our pilgrimages. Obviously, this far out there's a lot of uncertainty with COVID-19. However, one national public health premise is that, even with a safe vaccine program, it is likely that we will still be strongly advised to wear masks and "do" social distancing for a while. Doing that on our regular field trips lately is not hard as we have seen.

And as one would expect, to have a successful and safe Pilgrimage, we will likely have to modify our plans a bit. We may have to do one or more of the following:

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President's Perspective: Cont'd

1) Have a spatially modified type of registration and shirt pickup late Friday afternoon and early evening with no food there.
2) On Saturday evening, have a speaker using spatial seating but without a banquet.
3) Have the usual Friday, Saturday and Sunday distribution of field trips, all with 10-person limits and other COVID-19 rules.

Speaking of field trips, the number of trips to be offered has a lot to do with total Pilgrimage attendance, which we are predicting will be significantly lower than in normal years. That should be no surprise as a high percentage of our society is in the high-risk category. To reduce some of the uncertainty regarding attendance, we will be soon be conducting a brief questionnaire in the form of a Mail Chimp message requiring responses to the following questions (or similarly worded ones) *in light of the anticipated modifications* noted at the top of this page:

- If you plan to attend and how many people would be in your party.
- If not having Friday field trips would affect your (or your group's) decision to attend.
- If, regardless of Friday field trips, you plan to arrive Saturday morning (that is, a late arrival).

Zoom Mini-Programs Lastly, I was going to start my campaign against Plant Blindness and the Decline in Botany and Botany Programs in the U.S. and the world, something I mentioned in my September message. But I am now thinking that instead of talking about topics that are potentially depressing to an already depressed body of people (COVID-19, etc.), I wonder what folks would think about presenting mini botany programs online instead. Another reason not to talk about Plant Blindness at least is that I might be preaching to the choir, so to speak.

I have recently done a couple of Zoom mini-programs online where I showed a small audience how to use SERNEC (Southeast Regional Network of Expertise and Collections; Google it if you're not familiar with it!) and another site on plant phytography. (I would tell you to Google "plant phytography," but, if not careful, it would steer you to Plant Photography instead because nobody knows these days that I am talking about descriptive botany.) And many of the terms within that subject are used for plant identification. That includes such difficult concepts as superior vs. inferior ovaries and what the heck stipules are. If there is enough interest in doing this, I would still keep the class size small – say 10-12 folks at a time. If the classes turn out to be popular enough, I'd repeat a given segment. Let me know if you would be interested in being a participant in such classes by emailing me at botanikman@g-net.net . By the way, being a part of a Zoom audience is not hard, and you do not even have to have a camera in your computer. (You can also use a phone, but I don't recommend it.) The rest of the small audience does not even have to see you, but you will be able to see my screen and maybe my face, too. (Since I am bald, I have more face than most folks – LOL.) Virtual programs give us the ability to reach even more of you than we could through in-person workshops, which is definitely a good thing!

Bobby Hattaway

Notice to our members: It's not too early to renew for next year!

Memberships in the Georgia Botanical Society run from January through December, so it's not too early to renew your membership for 2021. And it's easy to do. You can renew online by going to the BotSoc website. There you'll find a link to the page where you can renew online. Or, if you prefer, print a PDF form for mailing to our membership chair, Jo Anne Romfh. You'll find her mailing address on the form itself.

Kingfisher Pond Trip Report: *Continued from Page 1*

The overstory in the drier parts was dominated by hickories like pignut hickory (*Carya glabra)*, mockernut, or white, hickory (*C. tomentosa*), and several oaks, including southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*) and sand laurel oak (*Q. hemisphaerica*). As we headed downslope and towards the Tupelo Trail (which we did not completely reach due to rain), we got into the more mesic slope forest with an overstory of American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), swamp laurel oak (*Q. laurifolia*), and live oak (*Q. virginiana*) with swamp chestnut oak (*Q. michauxii*) in wetter sites. Bobby showed us many shrubby witch-hazel plants (*Hamamelis virginiana*) in the drier parts of the upland. The large, scalloped-margin leaves with lopsided bases made it stand out.

Five "problem plants"—plus one

Besides the witch-hazel, other abundant understory plants in the drier parts were horse sugar or sweetleaf (*Symplocos tinctoria*), and American holly (*Ilex opaca*) while more mesic areas had a lot of hop hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*) with some spruce pine (*Pinus glabra*) scattered about. Before we knew its identity, we keyed out horse sugar or sweet leaf (*Symplocos tinctoria*) and smelled the malodorous foliage of the small-flowered pawpaw (*Asimina parviflora*). Bobby reminded us that horse sugar was included in the "Five-Plus-One" list Bobby had mentioned the day before in the workshop. It is the "plus-one" that Hal Massie had previously suggested should be added to Bobby's list of five alternate-leaved problem plants. The shrub or small tree is difficult to identify or key out because it has tardily deciduous leaves (practically evergreen) and leaf margins that are obscurely toothed to nearly entire.

The trail eventually led to the edge of the wetter bottomland forest covered below with dwarf or blue palmetto (*Sabal minor*) and the less common and scattered needle palm (*Rhapidophyllum hystrix*). Bobby led us to a wonderful example of a mature needle palm, and he broke off a three-inch portion of a typically six-to-eight-inch needle from the base of the palm where the flowers hide. This is Georgia's rarest native palm, and in South Carolina, where we were, this palm is near its northernmost distribution. The plant is considered rare in South Carolina and is not even in Radford's manual (*Vascular Flora of the Carolinas*, Albert E Radford *et al*, 1968).

Applying the workshop's HIPDAD principles

On this trip we tried to apply some of the principles we learned in a workshop the previous day, August 22nd, using the *Native Trees of the Southeast* identification guide by Kirkman, Brown, and Leopold.

After "doing" the horse sugar (noted above), we tried to key out a small deciduous tree. Since the leaves were deciduous, simple and alternate, it was easy to get started. Next, the leaf buds were not clustered at the ends of twigs,

The needle palm pictured here is likely near the northernmost limit of its range in the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge.

Continued on Pages 5 & 6

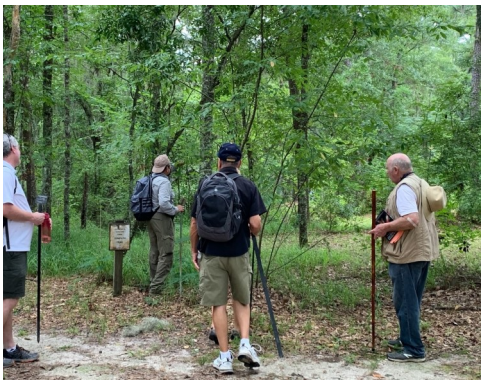
Kingfisher Pont Trip Report: *Continued from Page 4*

and we didn't see any associated acorns; so we knew it was not an oak. Continuing with the key, the twigs did not have thorns, the leaves were not lobed, and the petioles were not swollen at both ends like the easy to tell redbud (*Cercis canadensis*). For the next step, it was easier to use the HIPDAD formula or "tool" from the workshop on Saturday because we didn't have fruits or flowers. [HIPDAD (*Tipularia*, 2016) is an acronym and mnemonic to help confirm a plant's identification. The letters stand for habitat, illustration, phenology (including flowering time), distribution, abundance, and description.]

We learned the HIPDAD concept can be used both at the end of the identification process to confirm the identity when an "expert" is not present and in the keying process when dealing with difficult character traits or if a feature--say the fruit--is absent. For example, in this case, if the tree's buds had been divergent, that trait would have led to basswood (*Tilia americana*). But the first "D" in HIPDAD is distribution, and Kirkman *et al's* map did not show basswood near our coastal locale. That meant that it probably wasn't our plant. Plus Bobby had told us in advance that the plant we were identifying was a small tree and the description—the second "D" in HIPDAD—told us that basswood is normally larger.

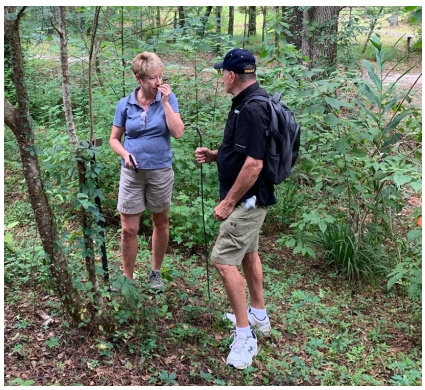
Next, the leaves were not deltoid (triangular in outline); so then, we needed to look at the stipule scars. This step was harder since we had to decide if the stipule scars formed a line around the twig, and with a little help, we decided they did not. (The low light in the clouded sky did not help.) The foliage was definitely not fetid-aromatic. In fact the foliage would qualify as inodorous (without odor). The buds were not stalked. The next step was one we had encountered earlier when identifying horse sugar (*Symplocos tinctoria*), and that had to do with whether or not the pith of a twig was solid or chambered/partitioned when cut diagonally with a knife. It was easy to determine that the pith on our second plant was not partitioned but solid. And Bobby told us that was the norm for woody plants in our southeastern flora. The leaves were toothed (easy), and the twigs were brown or gray. We had three or more bundle scars within the leaf scars instead of one. The leaves were two-ranked, giving a flattened or planar appearance, and the teeth were bristle-tipped. *Voila!* We had the genus *Castanea* and finished up with Allegheny chinquapin (*C. pumila*).

At this point the rain was beginning to dampen our books. So we put them away. Though we did not get all the way to the Tupelo Trail before the rain caused us to turn back, we did get to the edge of the bottomland forest and stood next to some massive trees, including a prominent cherrybark oak (*Quercus pagoda*). The last plant of interest (not a woody one) that we saw was the uncommon Mellichamp's skullcap (*Scutellaria mellichampii*). It was past flowering, but still had the prominent skullcap or "tractor-seat" calyx that gives it the name. Bobby said that if the Coronavirus allows the Society to have a 2021 Spring Pilgrimage, this trip would be on the itinerary.



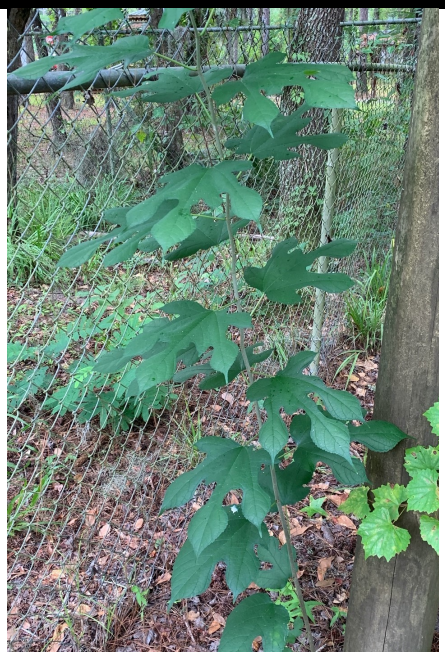
photograph of *Prunus serotina* – wild cherry – showing flowers in an inflorescence called a raceme.

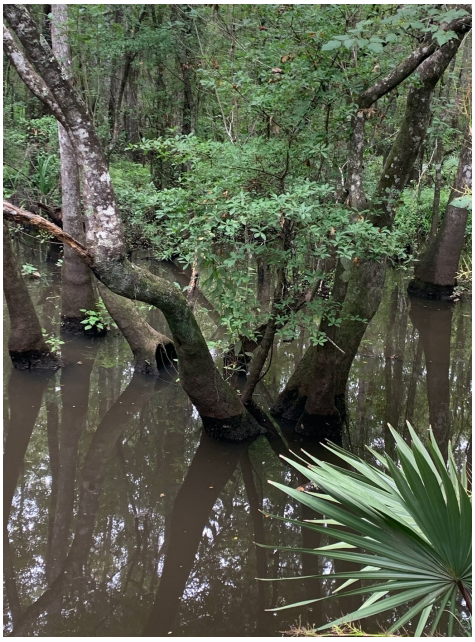
photograph of *Prunus serotina* – wild cherry – showing stipular pair typical of rose family (Rosaceae)

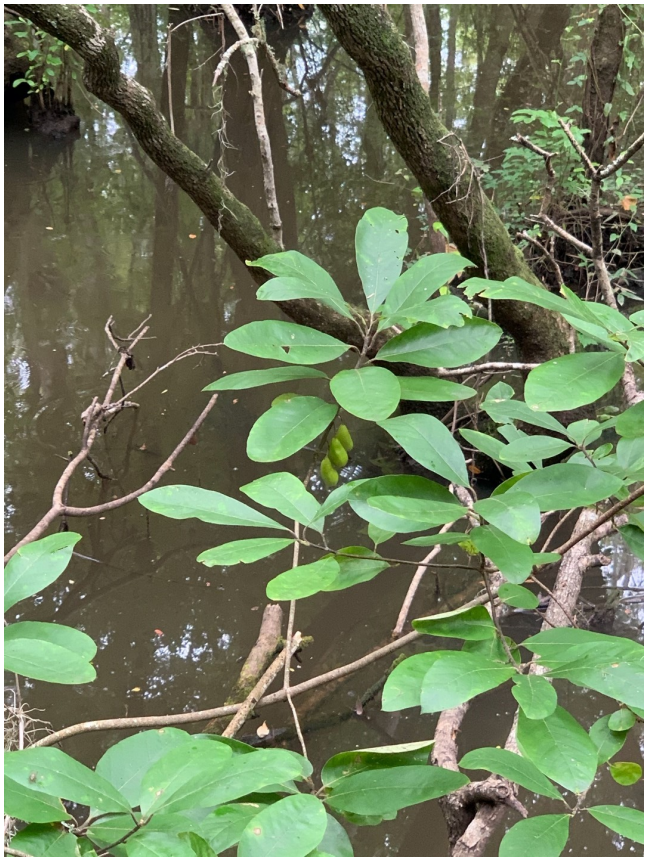


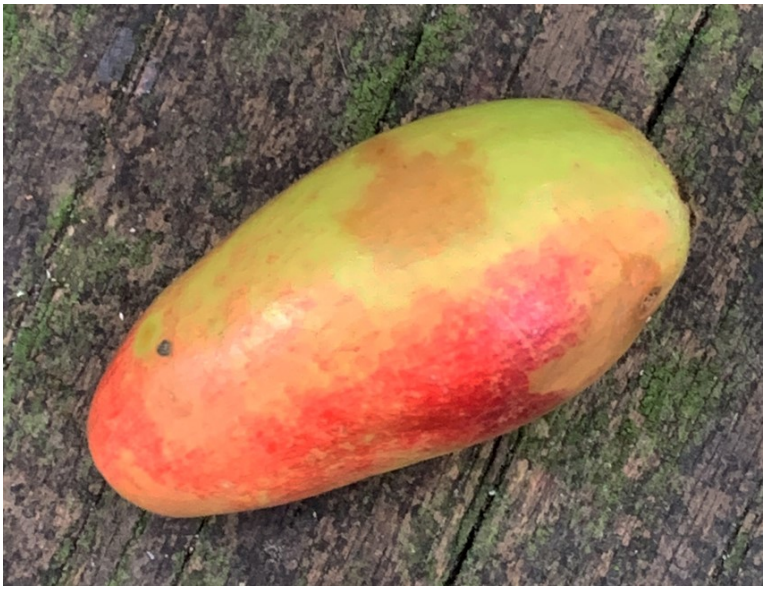
Above left: Field trip participants observe social distancing. ***Center*:** Wild cherry (*Prunus serotina*) racemes and stipules. **Right:** Diane Ochoa , co-author of this trip report, checks a plant's odor as part of the process of plant identification.

Kingfisher Pond Photos: *Continued from Page 5*









Upper left: Mature red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) foliage, and ***upper center:*** juvenile red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) foliage. Note the striking differences. ***Upper right***: Ogeechee lime (*Nyssa ogeche*), also sometimes called Ogeechee-lime (hyphenated) and Ogeechee tupelo, occurs on wet sites in swamps and along black-water bodies of water.

Lower left: A close-up of *N. ogeche* foliage; note the pendulous green fruits (drupes). ***Lower right***: The mature fruit, shown here much enlarged, is red/reddish and usually between 1 and 1-and-one-half inches long.

Spotlight on Species: *Passiflora* Genus

Text and Photos By Jim Drake

I recently read an excellent and beautifully illustrated article in the Journal *Palmetto* by renowned author and botanist Roger L. Hammer wherein he described the six species of Passionflower (*Passiflora*) that are native to Florida. Reading the article reminded me of the two species, *Passiflora incarnata* and *Passiflora lutea*, which naturally occur in Georgia.

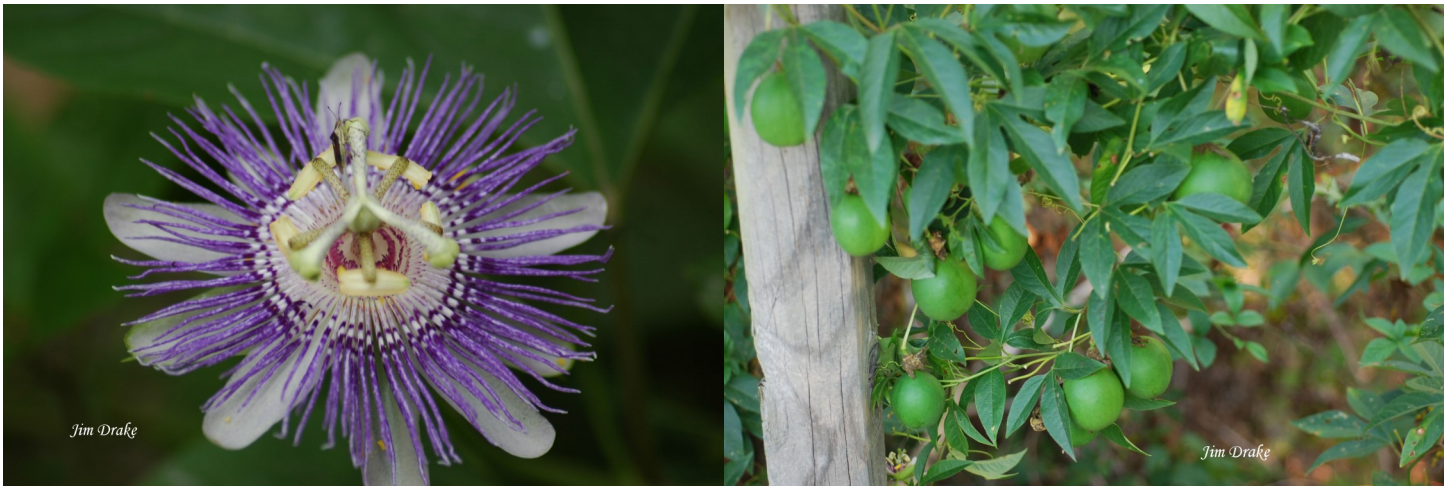
A few plants of both these species have, for several years, emerged each spring in an area of our back yard in Suwanee, Georgia. Thankfully, again this year, enough plants had returned to entice butterflies.

Passiflora incarnata is a host plant for Gulf fritillary and variegated fritillary butterflies. From about late spring into early fall, Gulf Fritillary (*Agraulis vanillae*) butterflies can be seen darting around our plants in search of a place to lay their eggs. Upon hatching, the grisly-looking larvae with their voracious appetites begin devouring the *Passiflora* leaves and other plant parts. Toxins within *Passiflora* plants are incorporated into the larvae and provide a poisonous chemical protection. The orange and black coloration and threatening spines signal “danger” to would-be predators.

Passiflora incarnata (common names May-Pop, Purple-Passionflower and Apricot Vine), the state wildflower of Tennessee, can be found growing in fields, woodlands, roadsides, fencerows and disturbed areas throughout much of the eastern US. Flowers are 2 - 3 inches wide and lavender to purple in color.

The less frequent *P. lutea* (common name Yellow Passionflower) can be found growing in forests, woodland edges and thickets within eastern, southeastern and southwestern areas. This species is sometimes subdivided into a western and eastern variety. Flowers are about ½ - 1 inch wide and yellow to greenish-yellow in color.

Fruits of both species are ovoid to round and approximately ½ inch long for *P. lutea* and about 1½ - 3 inches long for *P. incarnata*. Leaves of *P. lutea* are heart-shaped at the base and shallowly three-lobed. Leaves of *P. incarnata* are deeply three-lobed. Because the genus is generally cyanogenic, do not consume any part of these plants.



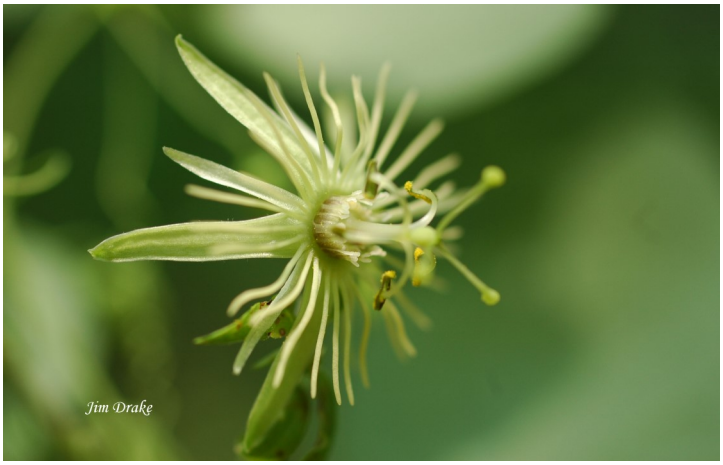
Left above: *Passiflora incarnata* bloom. Right above: *Passiflora incarnata* fruit and foliage.

Continued on page 8

Spotlight on Species: Genus *Passiflora* cont'd

Both *P. incarnata* and *P. lutea* are 12 - 15 foot-long trailing or climbing vines which use tightly-coiled tendrils for stability. Obviously, they each require either enough open space to spread out or a structure upon which to climb. The very complex, strikingly beautiful flowers of both species generally have five sepals and five petals.

Passionflowers have a long and storied history. Scholarly priests accompanying early conquistadors, upon seeing the flowers, were reminded of the Passion or suffering of Christ and gave the genus its common name. The flower's three styles and stigmas represented nails, five stamens represented Christ's wounds, the fringe (filaments) represented the crown of thorns, the tendrils represented whips, and the ten petals and sepals stood for the Apostles without Judas and Peter.



Above left, *Passiflora lutea* bloom; Above right, *Passiflora lutea* leaf

References for *Spotlight on Species:* Genus *Passiflora* include:

1. Chafin, L. G. 2016. H. and C. Nourse, Chief Photographers. Field Guide to the Wildflowers of Georgia and Surrounding States. State Botanical Garden of Georgia and University of Georgia Press, Athens.
2. Flora of North America. Available from: http://www.efloras.org/florataxon.aspx?flora_id=1&taxon_id=124132
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4. Horn, D., T. Cathcart, T. E. Hemmerly, and D. Duhl. 2005. Wildflowers of Tennessee, the Ohio Valley, and the Southern Appalachians. Loan Pine Publishing, Auburn, WA.
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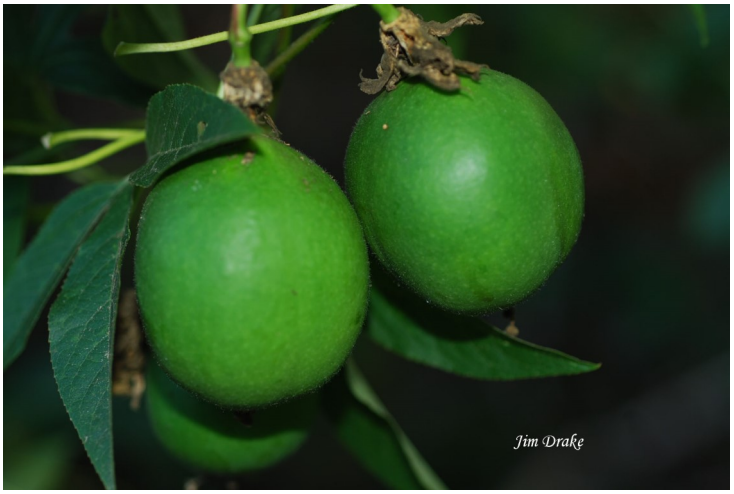
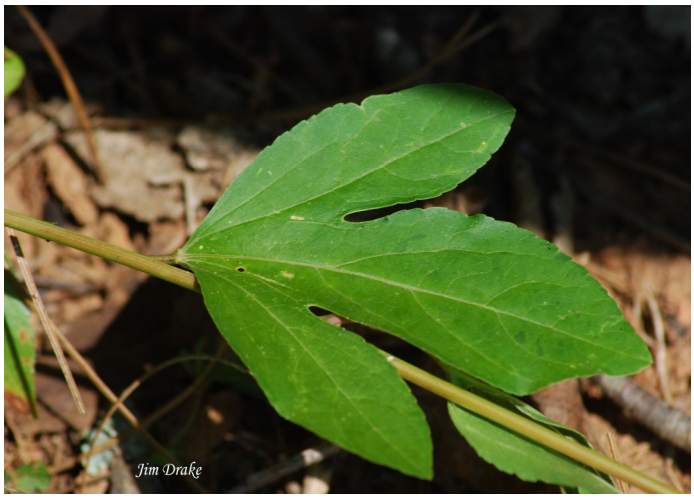
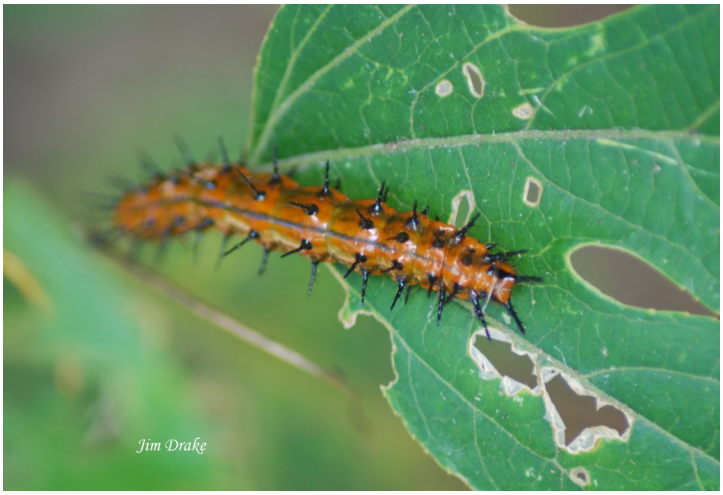
6. Weakley, A. S. 2015. Flora of the Southern and Mid-Atlantic States; Working Draft. University of North Carolina Herbarium, Chapel Hill.

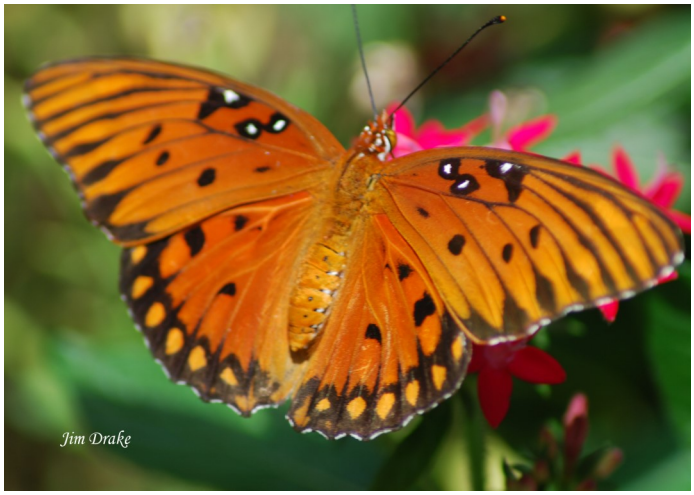
(Additional photos on page 9)

Spotlight on Species: Genus *Passiflora* continued









Upper left, *Passiflora incarnata* fruit; upper right, *Passiflora incarnata* leaf;
Bottom left, Gulf Fritillary larva; and bottom right, Gulf Fritillary butterfly.

Society News

To Our Newest Members: Welcome!

Georgia Botanical Society—"BotSoc" to its longtime members and friends—extends thanks and warmest wishes to the following new members, all of whom have joined in the past year. We look forward to seeing you on our field trips!

Name	***Hometown***	***State***
Beth Wray	Athens	GA
Jennifer Mercer	Atlanta	GA
Steve Bowling	Avondale Estates	GA
Stephen Sanchez	Avondale Estates	GA
Rachel Hawthorn	Bishop	GA
Jesse Trapani	Canton	GA
Cathy & Paul Nix	Darien	GA
Debby Frederes	Lexington	GA
Margaret & Joe Molyson	Lilburn	GA
Noah Yawn	Maylene	AL
Conor Flynn	Prescott	AZ

In Memoriam: Mary Bailey Izard

Longtime Georgia Botanical Society member Mary Bailey Izard died peacefully at her home on Sept. 10, 2020, surrounded by family and caregivers.

A self-taught botanist, Mary leveraged her learning through avocations, advocacy and sharing. She was a passionate gardener, in her backyard and in the many noteworthy gardens and natural environments she sought to enhance and protect. An early conservationist, in the 1960s she joined with like-minded citizens to create the Georgia Conservancy, Georgia's first dedicated environmental nonprofit and was a stalwart supporter until her death. In the early 1970s, she joined the Georgia Botanical Society and continued as a member until 2017. Mary was a tireless crusader for bringing a botanical garden to Atlanta, efforts which, along with others, led to the creation of the Atlanta Botanical Garden, for which she became a lifetime trustee.

In 1972, then Governor Jimmy Carter appointed Mary to serve on the Board of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the first woman to serve in such capacity. She served there for seven years.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial gifts to the organizations whose work Mary held most dearly, including All Saints Episcopal Church, The Atlanta Botanical Garden, Fernbank Natural History Museum, and the Georgia Conservancy.

Adapted from an obituary published in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution on Sept. 14, 2020.

Upcoming Field Trips

Nov 11 10:00 AM Note: This is a weekday.	**Pine Mountain Trail, F.D. Roosevelt State Park, Harris and Meriwether Counties** The focus of this trip to FDR State Park will be to see a spectacular display of kidney-leaf grass-of-Parnassus, *Parnassia asarifolia.* In past years, this display has been at its best on or about Veteran's Day. The site is a boggy springhead on the south side of Pine Mountain. *Gentiana saponaria*, soapwort gentian is another possibility for this wet area. We'll walk part of the Pine Mountain Trail, hopefully with colorful fall foliage and late wildflowers like southern harebell, *Campanula divaricata* and clasping aster, *Symphyotrichum patens*. In the afternoon, we'll take a short hike to see a stand of old-growth longleaf pine, *Pinus palustris.* **Note that this trip is limited to 10 participants. Social distancing and the wearing of masks are required.** ***Contact the trip leader to register.***	**Directions**: Meet at 10:00 a.m. at Rocky Point Trailhead Parking Lot, FDR State Park. From the Atlanta area, Take I-85 south to Exit 41 (I-185), and head south on US 27Alt. Stay on US 27Alt all the way through the town of Warm Springs, then up the side of Pine Mountain. Just as you top the crest of Pine Mountain, you will see GA 190 and the eastern entrance to FDR State Park. Turn right onto 190 (heading west) and go just under 2 miles to the Rocky Point Trailhead parking lot on the left. From the south, take US 27A north from Columbus until you crest Pine Mountain. Turn left onto GA 190 and go to the Rocky Point Trailhead parking lot. **Walking**: Moderate. The trail is rocky, but well-used and well maintained. We will walk one mile down the Pine Mountain Trail to see the grass-of-Parnassus, then walk out the way we came in. We'll then drive about 5 miles to the Fox Den Cove parking lot and walk about a half-mile to a stand of old-growth longleaf pine. **Facilities**: None **Bring**: Comfortable walking shoes, **$5.00 parking fee or annual pass**, water, camera, binoculars to see features high in the trees, and a lunch. Dress for the weather.	Hal Massie 478-550-1062 massiefarm@aol.com.
Nov 27 10:00 AM Note: This is a weekday.	**East End Loop Trail, FDR State Park, Meriwether County** **Description:** This trip will give you a chance to work off some of your guilt for over-indulging at Thanksgiving dinner. The hike will start at the eastern terminus of the 23 mile-long Pine Mountain Trail in FDR State Park. We will walk a short distance on the PMT, then turn east onto the Beaver Pond Trail, then, after a short distance, south onto the White Candle Trail. The combination of the Beaver Pond Trail and White Candle Trail is known as the 'East End Loop' and is 3.4 miles long. Early on we will walk through a stand of old longleaf pine, *Pinus palustris*, which was planted by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt when the land was part of his personal property. We'll get a nice look at Pine Mountain Valley to the south and Dowdell Knob to the southwest from Odie Overlook, about .4 miles in. This section of trail has many Georgia oaks, *Quercus georgiana,* a rather common tree on Pine Mountain, but rare in the rest of the world. We will also see Alabama cherry, *Prunus alabamensis* and possibly a very late flowering wildflower or two. The trail crosses several open areas, scars from the tornado in 2011 that plowed through several areas of Pine Mountain. One scar has several thousand longleaf pines that were planted in the aftermath of the tornado. **Note that this trip is limited to 10 participants. Social distancing and the wearing of masks are required.**	**Directions:** Meet at the WJSP-TV Tower Parking Lot just north of the intersection of US 27 ALT and GA 190. From Atlanta, take I-85 south to Exit 41. Take US 27 ALT south through Moreland, Luthersville, Greenville, and Warm Springs. The parking area is about 3.4 miles south of Warm Springs on the right side just before cresting Pine Mountain. Look for a huge TV tower. From the south, take US 27 north from Columbus. At the top of Pine Mountain (at the Callaway Country Store), turn right on GA 190 and drive approximately 12 miles across FDR State Park to US 27 ALT. Turn left on to US 27 ALT and almost immediately turn into the parking area on the left. **Facilities:** None. **Walking:** This loop is considered to be moderate in difficulty. This is a longer than usual hike for a Botanical Society field trip (3.4 miles). The trail is rocky and will have deep leaves and chestnut oak acorns on it, but it is well maintained and has no steep ascents. **Bring:** Hand lens, water, lunch, curiosity. Dress for the weather. **You must have a state park pass or pay a $5 parking fee at the trailhead.** ***Contact the trip leader to register.***	Hal Massie (cell) 478-550-1062 massiefarm@aol.com.

For all field trips: **Attendance may be limited, and pre-registration with the trip leader is required. Please see guidelines:** https://www.gabotsoc.org/?p=10204

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