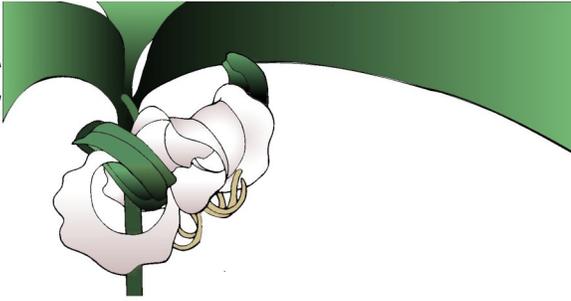


BotSoc News



Volume 96
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Where roadside mowing is restricted, roadside ditches hold botanical riches

Field Trip: Roadside Botanizing in Southeast Georgia

Dates: July 10-11, 2021

Trip Leader: Rich Reaves

Trip Report: Bobby Hattaway and Rich Reaves

On the morning of Saturday, July 10, at 11 a.m., seven intrepid BotSocers met leader Rich Reaves in Waycross to start our two-day Roadside Botanizing 2021 weekend outing.

We headed southeast on U.S. Highways 1/23 until we reached Georgia State Route 177 and turned south. Route 177 leads to Okefenokee Swamp Park about 5 miles from its junction with the U.S. highways. As Rich put it in a previous field trip report, “approximately 4.5 miles of this section of road was designated as an ecologically sensitive area by [the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)], and it is managed to avoid mowing during the



Top, redroot (*Lachnanthes caroliniana*). Immediately above, hairy wicky (*Kalmia hirsuta*). Photos by Rich Reaves.

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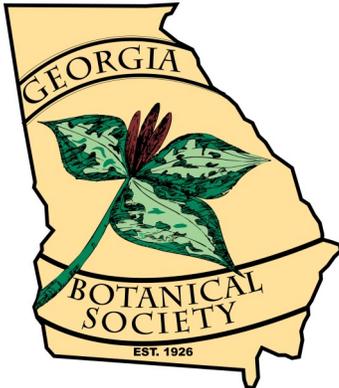
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President's Perspective

**BotSoc News**

is published seven times a year in the months of January, March, May, July, September, and November, with a special seventh issue annually for the Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage.

Note, however, that with the cancellation of this year's Pilgrimage, there will be only six issues in 2021.

Submission deadline:

Is December 1st for the January 2022 issue.

Subscriptions:

Are included with membership.

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Despite the ravages of the COVID-19 virus, we have had successful field trips in the last few months with no ill effects as far as I know. I think this has a lot to do with our employment of the common sense measures posted on our website. Another favorable factor is that since so many of us are seniors, we may be more likely to have gotten vaccinated than the general population. Our track record is especially notable since the now prevalent Delta variant is at least twice as contagious and has a viral load roughly 1,000 times higher than the original coronavirus strain.

In mid-August, I finished up the Basic Botany class I offered beginning in January. We met via Zoom internet video conferencing on some Sundays and had about 18 sessions. With the diligent help of Steve Cook, who was in the class, I made and have kept copies of the videos of these classes. Society members who want to view any of the classes are welcome to do so.

The sessions/classes are individually available upon request on my YouTube channel. Perhaps the best way to decide if you are interested is to review a two-page outline of topics for the class, which I am happy to send you on request.

Each video session comes with a PDF-format slide set, usually with two slides per page. Sometimes there are additional handouts and an occasional exercise such as a matching "game" to enable folks to get familiar with botanical terms before they hear me discuss them. There were no tests and no grades given. I am proud to say that the same eight people that started the class completed it. There were no dropouts. The pace was nice because, since there were no tests, we did not have to cover set amounts of material in order to meet test deadlines.

In other news, I regret to say that our initiative to document plant presence in the 18 most poorly collected counties of Georgia, an initiative originally described in the January 2021 newsletter (p. 10), hasn't made much progress because we have not had much interest. Exceptions to that have been Sarah Kelsey, who has done some work on her own, and Linda Chafin, who has tried to get a project going in A.H. Stephens State Park in Taliaferro County.

Please note that you don't have to be a plant expert to help with this initiative. The goal is to document the presence of plants in poorly collected counties. Many of the target plants can be found in adjoining counties, and participants will be provided with a "shopping list" of BOLO (Be-On-the-Look-Out-for) plants.

After we create a list of target plants from an initial visit or two, we'll match up the plants with their bloom times and return later to collect for each what is known as a voucher specimen. The goal is for the specimen to be deposited in an herbarium, preferably the UGA herbarium, with the

Continued on Page 3

President's Perspective—Continued from Page 2

collectors' names noted on the herbarium sheet. This is kind of where art meets science, so before we execute the collection phase, a few of us will lead classes on how to properly collect, press and protect specimens. It is noteworthy that the names of collectors and their new county records will be permanently documented on the label of the herbarium sheet.

Meanwhile, I am proud to report progress on another important project. We have put together a four-person committee to implement our Maureen Donohue Habitat Conservation Fund initiative. Committee members are Sarah Kelsey (chair), Kandy Duke, Michael Eagan, and Wendy Zomlefer. Their main thrust will be the recognition and prioritized selection of rare plant habitats in Georgia that need to be protected and managed. This includes conservation easements like those which turned out to be so important in the Canoochee Bogs in South Georgia. The committee will be assisted by an ex-officio committee member, Tom Govus, who has a wealth of knowledge about Georgia's rare plant habitats. Tom is — far and away — the most qualified person for that job.

Finally, I was asked to give testimony about the potential negative impacts of drilling in the coastal plain of Alaska to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Department of the Interior, at a virtual meeting last month. Speaking in my dual capacities as retired botanist and president of the Georgia Botanical Society, I addressed BLM via Zoom in mid-September. I was given three minutes, and I used every bit of it. I won't repeat everything here, but I will share my conclusion:

"In conclusion, I need to leave you with two important points:

"Even if there are not oil spill-type accidents, the very kinds of activities associated with human occupation [are] detrimental to this land; case in point, the spiderweb oilfield infrastructure at Prudhoe Bay is already evidence of that; and

"Last and most important: This Refuge was originally preserved for its unique plant and animal ecological matrix, and this combination of species does not exist on any other U.S. soil. It is my scientific opinion that drilling activities, even without any accidents, will jeopardize the ecological health of the region."

In closing, I will say that we still have two field trips left this year, both this month and both led by a veteran in more ways than one, Hal Massie.

Bobby Hattaway

Society News—Membership Renewal Reminder

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. You can renew online by going to the BotSoc website (www.gabotsoc.org). There you'll find a link to the [page](https://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=2) (https://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=2) where you can renew online. Or, if you prefer, print a PDF form from the same page, fill it out, and mail it to our membership chair, Jo Anne Romfh. You'll find her mailing address on the form.

Roadside Botanizing — Continued from Page 1



long growing season except for a single mower width along the road and clearing around signs by hand. The wildflowers along this road are exceptional during spring, summer, and fall.”

We made several stops along the way dictated by the plants that Rich had scouted the day before. On our first stop, we saw the stunning Gulf Coast Barbara’s buttons (*Marshallia angustifolia*), and we would see it later at other stops. (Also later, we were surprised to find that *Weakley’s Flora 2020* had changed the botanical name of Barbara’s buttons from what most of us knew it as: *Marshallia tenuifolia*.)



We saw the low pine barren milkwort (*Polygala ramosa*) which is – appropriately – shorter than its relative, the tall pine barren milkwort (*Polygala cymosa*). They both have small yellow flowers and, as the common names suggest, are of distinctly different heights. We were to see the tall one later that morning near the park entrance. We also saw lots of southern bog asphodel [*Triantha (Tofieldia) racemosa*] there. This monocot and another one, redroot (*Lachnanthes caroliniana*), would prove to be quite common along the roadside the entire weekend. The latter has a distinctively densely woolly flower cluster and, when not in flower, is easy to recognize by its iris-like leaf base and bright red roots. Unfortunately, it is a favorite of feral hogs.

At top, snowy orchid (*Plantanthera nivea*). Above, night-flowering wild petunia (*Ruellia noctiflora*). Photos by Rich Reaves.

We were treated to hooded pitcher plant (*Sarracenia minor*), parrot pitcher plant (*Sarracenia psittacina*), hairy wicky (*Kalmia hirsuta*), fringed meadow beauty (*Rhexia petiolata*), and loblolly bay (*Gordonia lasianthus*), among others. By the way, loblolly bay ecologically grows with other bays, often in bayheads, but has toothed leaf margins which are atypical of bays like swamp bay and sweet bay.

Rather than single out any more individual stops, we will now mostly address the many wet roadside ditches (with standing water) that were present at most of our stops. Rich was knowledgeable in species identification, answering many questions and entertaining the plant

Roadside Botanizing—Continued from Page 4

enthusiasts. All stops were at ditches with varied degrees of substrate saturation. Some folks had rubber boots; others just waded as needed (Rich had warned us in advance) with their sneakers. These ditches provided many aquatic and emergent plants, including quillwort arrowhead (*Sagittaria isoetiformis*), pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), white water lily (*Nymphaea odorata*), the pleasantly aromatic blue waterhyssop (*Bacopa caroliniana*), and two sundews, (*Drosera capillaris* and the less common *D. intermedia*). We encountered quite a few sedges (*Cyperaceae*), and some yellow-eyed “grasses” (*Xyris* spp.). These wet



Above, hairy rattleweed (*Baptisia arachnifera*), a federally endangered Georgia endemic. Photo by Rich Reaves. At left, feather-stem club-moss (*Lycopodiella prostrata*). Photo by Bobby Hattaway.

ditches also featured the most spectacular flowers we encountered: Bartram’s rose gentian (*Sabatia decandra*, formerly *Sabatia bartramii*) and snowy orchid (*Plantanthera nivea*).

In addition to the yellow-flowered herbs mentioned above, we saw a number of other yellow-flowered herbs, including savanna sandbox (*Ludwigia virgata*), the spectacular yellow rhexia (*Rhexia lutea*), and several species of St. John’s Wort (*Hypericum*) and flax (*Linum*) which were identified to species later and put on a plant list. Bog Cheetos or orange milkwort (*Polygala lutea*), which is orange when fresh but dries more yellow, also fits here.

We also saw the yellow Carolina stripeseed or Carolina piriquetqa (*Piriqueta caroliniana*), but that was the next morning. Over the two days, we saw several species of ferns and four different lycopsids, or club-mosses. These were foxtail (*Lycopodiella aplopecuroides*), southern bog club-moss (*Lycopodiella*



Roadside Botanizing—Continued from Page 5

appressa), featherstem club-moss (*Lycopodiella prostrata*) and slender club-moss (*Pseudolycopodiella caroliniana*).

Blackroot or wingstem (*Pterocaulon pycnostachum*) and Carolina sandhill ironweed (*Vernonia angustifolia*) were in drier sites adjacent to the ditches.

On our way back north up U.S. Highway 301, Rich showed us a population of few-flowered milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*). It was also good to see Maid Marian (*Rhexia nashii*) and Handsome Harry (*Rhexia virginica*) and be able to tell them apart.

Second Day: Sunday, July 11, 2021

Rich had already reconnoitered the site for night-flowering wild petunia (*Ruellia noctiflora*) and told us we should shoot for a 7:00 a.m. start time to ensure it would still be blooming. So, we got an earlier-than-usual start, and it was pleasant weather that early, too. At that *Ruellia* site, which also is a GDOT ecologically sensitive area with restricted mowing that undoubtedly is helping the plant, Rich noted that the number of blooming plants was up substantially from before the mowing restrictions were put in place. At that same site we also saw Nuttall's milkwort (*Polygala nuttallii*), Florida bluehearts (*Buchnera floridana*), plus some examples of plants seen at stops the day before.

Next, we concentrated on some sites where the southeast Georgia endemic and federally endangered hairy rattleweed (*Baptisia arachnifera*) occurs, sites for which Timothy Estep – who did his master's degree thesis on the plant — had provided location information.

In sum, we had a fine two days of roadside botanizing for all. If anyone reading this report wants a copy of the more than 90 taxa we saw, including common and family names and notes, please email Bobby Hattaway at botanikman@g-net.net.

Right top, savanna meadow beauty (*Rhexia alifanus*); middle, hairy wicky (*Kalmia hirsuta*); bottom, titi (*Cyrilla racemosa*).



Field Trip Report: Fall Line Sandhills

A trip to the Fall Line Sandhills proves that springtime isn't the only time to see color



© Hal Massie

Sandhills scrub-mint (*Dicerandra linearifolia*). Photo by Hal Massie.

Field Trip: Fall Line Sandhills
Wildlife Management Area (WMA)
West Tract

Date: Oct. 2, 2021

Trip Leader: Hal Massie

Trip Report: Bobby Hattaway

provinces, the Coastal Plain and the Piedmont, and it has a flora all its own.

Our trip that day took us to the Sandhills Wildlife Management Area (WMA) West Tract, formerly the Black Creek Natural Area, in west central Georgia. The trip was organized and led by Hal Massie, and there were eight attendees.

As I pulled into the parking and kiosk area, where I saw a profusion of mostly yellow, then white and some lavender colors, I thought to myself, "Springtime in the mountains is not the only time to see a flush of colorful flowers." For the first hour or so, we never had to leave the kiosk area because there was so much to see there. Nearly every square yard was full of something in bloom.

Hal said that last year the same area was covered with slender liatris (*Liatris tenuifolia*), which had a lot to do with a follow-on bloom associated with both a recent prescribed fire and abundant rain that spring. This year it was blooming, but it was relatively sparse. The dominants at the kiosk area this year were the sandhill golden-aster (*Pityopsis pinifolia*) and cottony golden-aster (*Chrysopsis gossypina*), both in the Aster family. The former plant's range is limited to the Fall Line Sandhills. It is probably the easiest member of the genus *Pityopsis* to identify because it is the only one in our

Saturday, Oct. 2, was shaping up to be a nice pre-fall day in the Fall Line Sandhills of Georgia. As you probably already know, the Fall Line in Georgia forms a line that runs roughly northeasterly between Columbus on the Alabama state line and Augusta on the South Carolina line. The Fall Line is a linear physiographic feature separating two more extensive physiographic

Fall Line Sandhills—Continued from Page 7



© Hal Massie

Asters like these sandhill golden-asters (*Pityopsis pinifolia*) above dominated the kiosk/parking lot at the trip's first stop. Below, adding splashes of white were wedgeleaf eupatorium (*Eupatorium glaucescens*). Photos by Hal Massie.

flora that has basal leaves similar to the stem leaves.

As for white color, the predominant contributor was sandhills scrub-mint (*Dicerandra linearifolia*), though it often looks pale pink or lavender with a few purple spots (as in Hal's picture on the previous page). It has a few purple spots on the upper floral lobe. Hal said that the mint and Carolina warea



© Hal Massie

Fall Line Sandhills—Continued from Page 8



Pictured above, Bobby Hattaway (left) makes a point as Charlie Seabrook (center) and Bob Pemberton look on. Pictured below right, Sarah Kelsey stands in Black Creek Bog in the Fall Line Sandhills WMA. Photos by Hal Massie.

(*Warea cuneifolia*) were among his favorite sandhill plants. Though the warea bloom period was a little past, it was still putting on a show with its white and blue petals. Its linear fruit, which was now abundant, clearly showed its affinity with the mustard family.

Hal continued to show us many other plants in bloom. One of them was wedgeleaf eupatorium (*Eupatorium glaucescens*). Besides the wedge-shaped leaf base, the most notable characteristic feature was its tendency to hold many of its leaves in a vertical orientation. This semaphore-like position is similar to the way turkey oak (*Quercus laevis*), which was growing nearby, holds its

leaves. This pattern is hypothesized to be an adaptation to the extreme heat and light reflecting off the arid sands.

After about one-and-one-half hours, we got in four-wheel-drive vehicles and headed out over the sandhills. We saw a lot of the beautiful lopsided Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum secundum*) and two species of purple foxglove (*Agalinus fasciculata* and *A. setacea*), both in full bloom. As we drove, we saw the beautiful southern oak leach (*Aureolaria pectinata*), a hemiparasite. It was nice to compare this to its smaller flowered "cousin," which we saw back at the kiosk, comb seymeria (*Seymeria pectinata*). Both have yellow flowers and are in the same family, the broomrape family (Orobanchaceae).

The longleaf sunflower (*Helianthus longifolius*) was a treat because it was good to see a sunflower that was relatively easy to identify, and that was because it has lots of mostly basal leaves, something not that common in the genus *Helianthus*. Next we saw spires of the pinkish to whitish elegant blazing star (*Liatris elegans*). Then we stopped for lunch on the porch of a large house on the property which is used by Georgia Department of Natural Resource (DNR) seasonal fire crews during the winter and by visiting scientists year-round.

After that we headed to the Black Creek Bog and saw the holy grail of plants – at least in Georgia, as it probably occurs nowhere else in the state – tawny cottongrass (*Eriophorum virginicum*). Despite the common name, it is



Fall Line Sandhills—Continued from Page 9

a sedge, and the genus is more common in the arctic and subarctic than down here. Hal told us about how our own late Tom Patrick — the senior botanist for Georgia Department of Natural Resources who did extensive work with rare and endangered species and was also a longtime, key contributor to the Georgia Botanical Society and a former president — had found one plant in fruit and collected seeds from it.

The seeds were germinated by the Atlanta Botanical Garden, and hundreds of seedlings were eventually planted in the bog. There are now more than 120 plants flowering and producing seed in the bog — a nice win for ecological restoration.

Other plants nearby, including the sweet pitcher plant (*Sarracenia rubra*), also profit from the measures taken to bring back the sedge, including prescribed fire to keep the bog open. Another highlight in the bog was a new plant family for me and most of the rest of the group - bogmoss (*Mayaca fluviatilis*) in the Mayacaceae family. I don't think I'd have gotten out of the bog if Chris Inhulsen had not assisted me, but getting momentarily "bogged down" was worth the effort, at least for me. The bog was really loaded with diversity, and you could clearly see that the place was being managed properly because conservation lands do not manage themselves. Fire is an important tool, even occasionally in a bog. We found a couple of new plants for the bog that were not already on the list Hal had given us in advance, a yellow-eyed grass (*Xyris elliottii*) and an evergreen bayberry (*Morella caroliniensis*).

On the drive out, we spied another new plant for the WMA, one that Hal had been looking for, summer farewell (*Dalea pinnata*). That's the advantage of looking for plants in a group — lots of eyes and interests. All in all, it was a wonderful trip and a place I recommend going to in the fall.



Above, Sarah Kelsey (left) and Kennedy Glanton thread their way through Black Creek Bog. Below right, tawny cottongrass (*Eriophorum virginicum*), one of the rarest plants in Georgia. Photos by Hal Massie. Below left, summer farewell (*Dalea pinnata*). Photo by Bobby Hattaway.



Upcoming Field Trips

Information for the field trips listed below was that available when this issue of the newsletter was composed. Check the BotSoc website's [2021 Field Trip Schedule page](https://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=10537) (https://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=10537) regularly for updates and additions. Email addresses for the trip leaders listed below may be found on the following page (page 12).

BOTSOC FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES

You'll find the Georgia Botanical Society Field Trip Policy Rules and Recommendations, effective June 1, 2021, on our [website](https://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=3) (https://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=3). Note that the guidelines give considerable discretion to trip leaders. It's good practice always to reach out to trip leaders via email in advance of a trip, even when there is no stated requirement to do so. Remember also that cell phone reception may be spotty in some locales, making it hard to reach trip leaders by phone the day of the trip.

<p>Nov. 11 Hal Massie</p>	<p>Description: This trip will take us to F.D. Roosevelt State Park (FDR State Park) in Harris and Meriwether counties for fall foliage and wildflowers. <i>Please note: This is a Thursday and Veterans Day.</i></p> <p>The focus of this trip will be a spectacular display of kidney-leaf grass-of-Parnassus (<i>Parnassia asarifolia</i>). In past years, this display has been at its best on or about Veterans Day. The site is a boggy springhead on the south side of Pine Mountain. Soapwort gentian (<i>Gentiana Saponaria</i>) is another possibility for this wet area. We'll walk down part of the Boottop Trail where there is a nice stand of bigleaf magnolia (<i>Magnolia macrophylla</i>), and then connect to the Pine Mountain Trail (PMT), which we'll follow down to Sparks Creek. Hopefully we'll have colorful fall foliage and a late wildflower or two along the way. This section of the PMT has a few scattered American chestnuts (<i>Castanea dentata</i>). After the grass-of-Parnassus site at Sparks Creek, we will walk gradually uphill for about a mile to the Rocky Point Trailhead parking lot. Georgia oak (<i>Quercus georgiana</i>) and Alabama cherry (<i>Prunus alabamensis</i>) are both particularly abundant along this last mile.</p> <p>Leader contact information: Hal Massie 478-550-1062 (C), massiefarm@aol.com. Should have good cell reception the day of the hike.</p>	<p>Directions: 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 Warm Springs and up Pine Mountain. As you crest 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. Coming from the south, take US 27A north from Columbus until you crest Pine Mountain, then turn left onto GA 190.</p> <p>Walking: Easy to moderately strenuous. We'll walk about a half mile on the Boottop Trail to its intersection with the Pine Mountain Trail (PMT), then hike the PMT gradually downhill for about three-quarters of a mile to Sparks Creek where we'll see the grass-of-Parnassus. The trail is rocky but well-used and well maintained. Total hiking distance will be about 2.4 miles. We will arrange a return shuttle to the Boottop Trail Parking Area <i>if COVID conditions permit</i>. If not, we'll walk in and back from Rocky Point.</p> <p>Facilities: There are no facilities at the eastern end of FDR State Park. There are public bathrooms at the park headquarters on the west end of the park.</p> <p>Bring: Comfortable walking shoes, \$5.00 parking fee or annual pass, water, camera, binoculars to see features high in the trees, and a lunch to eat somewhere along the trail. Dress for the weather.</p>
<p>Nov. 26 Hal Massie</p>	<p>Description: Camp Thunder Voluntary Public Access Area (VPA) is owned by the Boy Scouts of America but jointly managed by the Scouts and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The VPA is 1,627 acres of rocky ridges, montane longleaf pine and steep bluffs above the Flint River. We may see some fall foliage color, and we will see old longleaf pines. This walk on Black Friday is as much about peace and quiet as anything else!</p> <p>Leader contact information: Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com 478-550-1062</p> <p>Facilities: None at the VPA.</p> <p>Bring: Lunch to eat on the trail, hand lens, camera, and curiosity. Dress for the weather. We will be walking on gravel roads and rocky, sometimes faint, trails. Sturdy boots are recommended.</p> <p>Difficulty: We will be walking from the top of the Pine Mountain Ridge down to the Flint River, and the climb back up will be strenuous. Total distance will be just under 3 miles.</p>	<p>Directions: From Woodbury, take GA 74 5.7 miles to Thundering Springs Road. Turn right onto Thundering Springs Rd and follow it for 2.3 miles (you will pass a lake and the scout base on the right). The pavement will end just past the scout camp. Turn right at the top of a long hill at a gate. The kiosk is just inside the gate. From Thomaston, follow GA 74 west for 13 miles. Turn left onto Thundering Springs Rd. Go 2.3 miles to the dirt road and kiosk on the right.</p>  <p>Trip leader Hal Massie stands at the foot of Moss Falls, the tallest waterfall on Pine Mountain and one of the highlights of the Nov. 26 Black Friday field trip.</p>

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