

BotSoc News



Georgia Botanical Society

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Florida Panhandle & Greenwood Plantation

By Jim Drake with contributions by Heather Brasell, Bob Pemberton, Richard Ware, Rich Reaves, and Virginia Craig

An eager group of Bot Soccers met early on August 19 at the Hampton Inn in Quincy, Florida. Virginia Craig had previously scouted about a dozen roadside and short walks along FL Highway 65, which cuts north-south through the National Forest, giving us an amazing number of rare and beautiful midsummer botanical treasures. We were also fortunate to have Wilson Baker, a legendary botanist from Florida and south Georgia, along with us.

The weather was fairly accommodating for Florida in August, hot and humid with mostly overcast skies but no rain. The first stop featured the rare and endangered Curtiss' loosestrife (*Lythrum curtissii*). During the next several stops, we saw and identified dozens of wildflowers. Some examples include nine

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Large white fringed orchid
(*Platanthera conspicua*)

(Photo: Richard & Teresa
Ware)

President's Perspective



BotSoc News

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BotSoc recently donated \$2000 to the Canoochee Bogs project to help protect a 50-acre tract that is part of a larger high-quality seepage bog complex. This complex has long been considered one of the top priorities for conservation in Georgia. It contains 3 pitcher plant species, 7 orchid species, and 2 Georgia endemic plant species. It also provides habitat for gopher tortoise (Georgia's state reptile) and neotropical migratory birds. It is the only location in Georgia for *Sarracenia purpurea* var. *venosa* (Coastal Plain purple pitcher plant). The bog species had become restricted to a powerline right-of-way, where mowing kept the area open. In the past, off-road vehicles did a lot of damage to the site. Martha Joiner served as Botanical Guardian for the site and worked with GA Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to get the powerline fenced off to exclude vehicles and to get permission from landowners to initiate burning to improve the habitat.

The \$2000 we contributed to the project this year comes from the donations you have made to our Habitat Conservation Fund when you renew your membership. Last year we donated \$5000 to the same project. I'd like to explain how that money is used.

The 50 acres included in this project are owned by several landowners. Lisa Kruse (DNR) has been working tirelessly with these landowners to provide permanent protection for this bog area. Selling or donating the land outright was not an option. Lisa negotiated a permanent conservation easement for the area. Conservation easements are voluntary but legally binding. When a landowner agrees to a conservation easement, they give up specific rights of ownership, such as the right to develop the land by subdividing, building roads or ponds, or mining (e.g. sand mining). All other rights stay with the landowner. Giving up conservation rights lowers the appraised value of the property. In addition to compensating landowners for the loss of value of the property, costs of establishing a conservation agreement include obtaining a survey, appraisal of property before and after the easement, timber appraisal, and environmental audit. The conservation rights for the Canoochee Bog are transferred to the Oconee River Land Trust, who are responsible for regular monitoring to make sure the conservation rights are not violated. You can check out their role at:

<http://oconeeriverlandtrust.org/the-canoochee-bogs-project.htm>

The conservation easement ensures access for restoration activities such as prescribed burning, pitcher plant propagation, and scientific study. Our donations have made a good-sized dent in covering the \$58,000 needed to secure a conservation easement for this 50 acres of bog. This target has nearly been reached.

There are other ways you can help out with this bog project – sweat equity. On Thursday November 16, Lisa Kruse will be leading a Pitcher Bog Workday at the site. You will help clear around pitcher plants to make sure they get enough sunlight. See the field trip on our website for details.

It is fall and time for many of us to collect seed for use in restoration projects. I have collected passionflower seeds for Jennifer Ceska, GA Plant Conservation Alliance, and she reminded me to collect responsibly – no more than 10% of the seed supply. Bring seeds for swapping to our Holiday Party at Newman Wetlands on December 2nd. I hope to see you all there.

Heather Brasell

Florida Panhandle (cont'd)

species of milkweed (*Asclepias*), five species of fringed orchids (*Platanthera*) including the rare Chapman's orange fringed orchid (*Platanthera chapmanii*), pine lily (*Lilium catesbaei*), three species of rosepink (*Sabatia*), Stokes aster (*Stokesia laevis*), and dozens of others. In fact, the number of species is too long to list here. The entire list can be viewed at http://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=8704.

Apart from the usual glories of orchids, milkweeds, and pitcher plants, we had a special treat learning about air potatoes, an invasive species. When we stopped for lunch at Hickory Landing, Bob Pemberton, retired from USDA, found some air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*) plants that had been defoliated by insects. This was the result of a biological control project he had worked on while employed by the USDA. He and colleagues had introduced a leaf beetle (*Liliocernus cheni*) from Nepal that defoliates air potato, thus reducing the number of bulbils produced. (Bulbils are tiny potato-like structures held in the leaf axils of this species that sprout and form new plants.) The beetle attacks only this species of air potato, so native species of wild yam are not at risk. The leaves we saw were indeed heavily defoliated, some almost to the skeleton stage. We saw several of the beetles – vivid red and black – beautiful as well as doing a great job.

The next morning, August 20, the group met at the Hampton Inn in Thomasville, Georgia before caravanning to the meeting site on the Greenwood Plantation, a privately-owned tract encompassing some 5200 acres, 1000 of which support an ecosystem dominated by longleaf pine. Wilson and Virginia had previously received permission from the Greenwood owner to allow our BotSoc group to visit, and we were very appreciative of the opportunity to botanize among these ancient trees, some believed to be at least 500 years old. We set out on a long loop trail among the longleaf pines, once again enjoying the expert knowledge that Virginia and Wilson shared. They know the plantation and its flora well and often visit to carry out butterfly surveys.

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Air Potato Leaf Beetle (*Liliocernus cheni*)



Air Potato Leaf Beetle
(*Liliocernus cheni*)

(Photo: Jim Drake)

Jim Drake

Florida Panhandle (cont'd)

The weather was clear and hot with no rain. The trip was intended as a half-day event, so a great deal of information was provided within a fairly short time. Some examples of wildflowers seen included pineland milkweed (*Asclepias connivens*), whorled milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*), orange fringed orchid (*Platanthera ciliaris*), crested fringed orchid (*Platanthera cristata*), golden fringeless orchid (*Platanthera integra*), and several other species. Following the loop walk, the group proceeded to another part of the plantation where we were treated to the sight of giant orchid (*Pteroglossaspis ecristata* forma *flava*) in bloom. On the walk back to the meeting site, the group paused to observe, from a distance, a group of red-cockaded woodpeckers that were calling gleefully from high up in the ancient pines.

The complete list of wildflowers seen at the Greenwood Plantation can be accessed at:

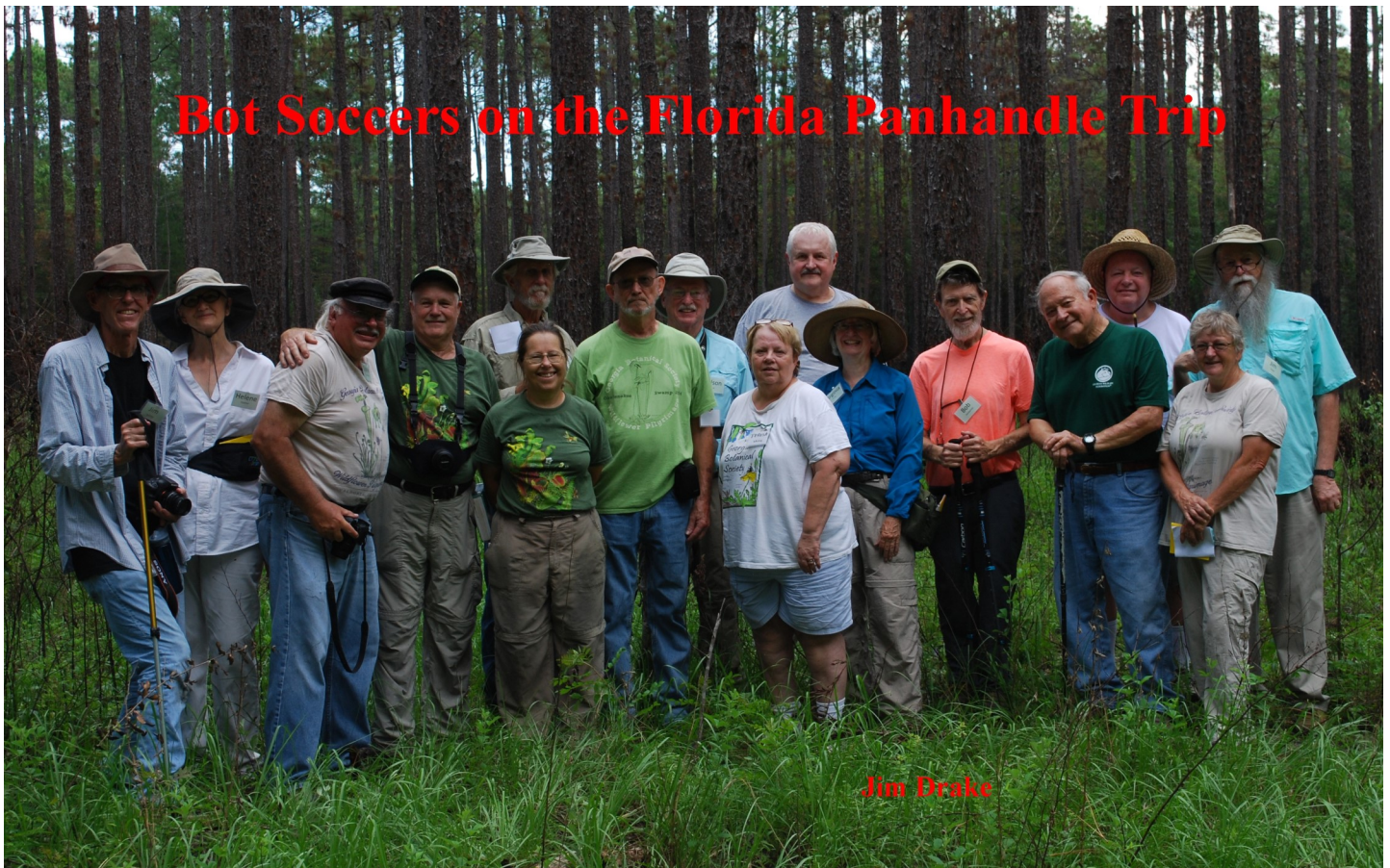
http://www.gabotsoc.org/?page_id=8704



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Above: Stokes aster (*Stokesia laevis*) (Photo: Richard & Teresa Ware)

Below: BotSocers on the Florida Panhandle trip (Photo: Jim Drake)



Jim Drake

Alapaha WMA Trip

By Heather Brasell

Tom Patrick led a field trip to the Alapaha Wildlife Management Area on May 21. The Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources purchased the property (6870 acres) just last year. We visited five dramatically different habitats. In a sandy site with young longleaf pines, we found *Mimosa strigulosa* (sensitive briar), *Lygodesmia aphylla* (rose rush), *Lithospermum caroliniense* (Carolina puccoon), *Styllangia sylvatica* (queen's delight), *Penstemon multiflora* (many-flowered beard-tongue), and a cochineal insect on prickly pear.

We next visited a cypress pond where the highlight was seeing the rare plant *Litsea aestivalis* (pondspice). In addition, we saw other hydric plants, including *Spiranthes praecox* (greenvein ladies tresses) and extensive swaths of *Woodwardia virginica* (Virginia chainfern). Pondspice is in the laurel family and we discussed whether it will be susceptible to the laurel wilt disease that is systematically killing bay trees in the region.

Our third stop was at a slope forest leading down to the Alapaha River, where special plants included *Ophyris insectifera* (green-fly orchid), *Cuthbertia rosea* (Piedmont roseling), and *Stewartia malachodendron* (silky camelia).

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Left: Virginia chainfern (*Woodwardia virginica*). Right: Tom Patrick and Luther Langley at pondspice (*Litsea aestivalis*). (Photos: Heather Brasell)

Alapaha WMA (cont'd)

The next stop was a large sand hill with xeric species such as *Licania michauxii* (gopher apple), *Stipulicida setacea* (pineland scalypink), *Croton argyranthemus* (silver croton), *Amsonia ciliata* (sandhills bluestar), *Berlandiera pumila* (soft greeneyes), *Caryopsis gossypinus*, and *Danthonia sericea* (silky oat grass). Our last stop was on a small bog along a powerline right-of-way. Plants of interest included *Sarracenia minor* (hooded pitcher plant), *Polygala ramosa* (low pinebarren milkwort), *Sabatia angularis* (rosepink), *Lobelia nuttallii* (Nuttall's lobelia), and *Sporobolus teretifolius* (wire-leaf dropseed).

This field trip was particularly interesting to me for two reasons. Tom Patrick has been mentoring Luther Langley, a wildlife student from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) who is doing his senior project on inventories of pondspice and other plants of interest in the Alapaha WMA. Luther was one of the first students to receive a scholarship to attend the pilgrimage in Dahlonega. It is gratifying to see his continued interest in botany.

The Alapaha WMA is a valuable resource for ABAC forestry and wildlife programs. The day after Tom's field trip, I was back on site as one of 15 forestry students in timber management. We did a timber inventory of over 4500 acres of merchantable timber. DNR has started doing controlled burns on the property and plans to burn the entire property on a three-year rotation, so the habitats should get even richer diversity. In addition to improving habitat for wildlife, it will be a lot easier for students like me to cruise in the woods.



Cochineal insect on prickly pear (*Opuntia* sp.)
(Photo: Heather Brasell)

Pilgrimage Field Trip #11 Cloudland Canyon

By Brandi Missouri Griffin

Pilgrimage Trip #11, led by Richard Reaves, visited Cloudland Canyon State Park. At the trailhead, Rich explained that we would start the walk on a sandstone cap (which is acidic) and as we descended through the canyon, limestone outcrops would become more prevalent until they were the norm. This change in the geology causes a change in plant community type. He also informed us that the federally listed Virginia spiraea (*Spiraea virginiana*) is located within the park but that we would not see it on our hike.

There are 12 species of violets in Cloudland Canyon (*Viola affinis*, *V. blanda*, *V. canadensis*, *V. eriocarpa*, *V. hastata*, *V. hirsutula*, *V. palmata*, *V. pedata*, *V. rostrata*, *V. sororia*, and *V. tripartita*), as well as the green violet, *Cubelium concolor*), so we were all on the lookout for those. Downy serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*) was our first flower. Though it was a bit past its prime, there were still a few nice blooms. As we made our way along the trail there was some common bluet (*Houstonia caerulea*) in flower. The eastern redbuds (*Cercis canadensis*) were still in bloom here, which was a treat for someone from the coastal plain where they bloomed in January. Mountain bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla sessilifolia*) was pointed out, though not in flower, as an interesting plant to note.

Then we saw our first violet, *Viola hirsutula*, southern woodland violet, and right behind that we saw *Viola hastata*, halberdleaf yellow violet. Rich pointed out yet another violet species right before we reached Hemlock Falls, the aptly named sweet white violet (*Viola blanda*).

We passed our first irises (*Iris cristata*). Though they were only in bud here, we were told we would see them in full bloom further down the canyon, and we did! Early saxifrage (*Micranthes virginiensis*, formerly *Saxifraga virginiensis*) was seen growing on an outcrop with woodland stonecrop (*Sedum ternatum*). Foam flower (*Tiarella cordifolia*), southern red trillium (*Trillium sulcatum*), rue anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*), early meadow-rue (*Thalictrum dioicum*), yellow mandarin (*Prosartes lanuginosa*) and spotted mandarin (*Prosartes maculata*) were all located on a

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Left: Southern red trillium (*Trillium sulcatum*). Right: Wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*). (Photos: Anita Reaves)

Cloudland Canyon (cont'd)



Green larkspur (*Cubelium concolor*) (Photo: Anita Reaves)

slope near the second waterfall. As we continued our descent we saw Solomon's plume (*Maianthemum racemosum*) and doll's eyes (*Actaea pachypoda*) flowering, which I have never seen in anything but fruit.

In the next portion of our descent we saw star chickweed (*Stellaria pubera*) on a slope with the beautiful blue foliage of blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*) and little sweet Betsy (*Trillium cuneatum*), the second of three trilliums we were to see on this walk. On one side of a slope we saw pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) in flower and on the other side we saw sweetshrub (*Calycanthus floridus*). At that point it seemed like everyone was getting a bit peckish so we lunched.

After lunch we walked on and saw cutleaf toothwort (*Cardamine concatenata*). Canada wood nettle (*Laportea canadensis*) was pointed out by Rich in order to avoid it. Purple phacelia (*Phacelia bipinnatifida*) was seen growing on rocky outcrops. Slender toothwort (*Cardamine angustata*) was seen just along the trail, most plants past flowering. Carolina spring beauty (*Claytonia caroliniana*) with its sweet pink pollen was scattered around.

Trailing trillium (*Trillium decumbens*) was admired by all with its sessile-seeming growth form. (The stems grow along the ground rather than standing upright). There was also wild blue phlox (*Phlox divaricata*) and geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) dispersed throughout the landscape. A few nice Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) could be seen in bloom as well as another flower, Cumberland spurge (*Euphorbia mercurialina*).

Rich showed us a site where he and Anita were attempting to manage the nasty invasive trifoliate orange (*Citrus trifoliata*). Right around that site was dwarf larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*), the deep blue form as well as a blue and white form, and Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*) was seen in flower. A few mayapples (*Podophyllum peltatum*) were seen dispersed on a slope. On the trail was an unusual form of baby blue eyes (*Nemophila aphylla*). It was said to be an unusual form because it was white instead of the more typical blue. Hal pointed out the three-parted yellow violet (*Viola tripartita*).

Towards the end of our hike we saw a couple of diminutive but interesting plants, green violet (*Cubelium concolor*) and *Erigenia bulbosa*, also known as harbinger of spring, or pepper and salt. There was an abundance of Canada violet (*Viola canadensis*). *Stewartia ovata*, known commonly as mountain camellia, was in fruit.

The funniest part of the trip was the film crew we encountered. They told us they were filming a reality television show about people participating in some sort of training camp owned and operated by two former Navy Seals.

2018 Wildflower Pilgrimage Update

By Mitchell Kent

Detailed planning is underway for Georgia Botanical Society's 2018 Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage to be held in Thomaston, GA on May 4-6, 2018. Thomaston, a historic city of about 10,000 people, is located in Upson County on highway US 19 approximately 80 miles south of Atlanta. The surrounding area is marked by rolling hills and verdant valleys. It is on the southern edge of the Georgia Piedmont region near the Fall Line. This gives us the opportunity to visit botanical sites on the Piedmont, Fall Line and Coastal Plain.

Native plants and wildflowers will differ from those typically seen in North Georgia. The area is bisected by the scenic Flint River that flows through the region. The Flint and its tributaries offer members a chance to see a rare plant known as the shoals spider-lily (*Hymenocallis coronaria*) that typically blooms each year in May. Other rare plants that we may see during the 2018 Pilgrimage include: Fringed campion (*Silene catesbaei*); turkeybeard (*Xerophyllum asphodeloides*); showy skullcap (*Scutellaria pseudoserrata*); pyramid magnolia (*Magnolia pyramidata*); and bigpod wild indigo (*Baptisia megacarpa*). Thanks to Hal Massie for providing the image of the spider-lily below and much information about botanical sites and native plants near Thomaston.

We have identified potential sites for field trips within a 40 mile radius of Thomaston. The following is a partial list.

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Shoals spider-lilies (*Hymenocallis coronaria*) (Photo: Hal Massie)

2018 Wildflower Pilgrimage (cont.)

1. Bluffs at Goat Rock Dam
2. Camp Thunder Boy Scout Camp and Dripping Rock ravine
3. Canoe trip through the Pine Mountain gorge on the Flint River
4. Fall Line Sandhills WMA and Pitcher Plant Bogs
5. Flint River: Canoe trip upstream to see the shoals spider-lilies at Big Lazer Creek
6. Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park
7. Pine Mountain Tree and Geology Trek
8. Sprewell Bluff County Park
9. Sprewell Bluff Wildlife Management Area
10. Tanyard Creek in Crawford County

Other interesting sites are under consideration, including several private tracts.

Now, a word about lodging for the 2018 Pilgrimage. Hotel options in Thomaston are very limited. Arrangements have been made with the two main hotels in the city to provide blocks of rooms for members during the pilgrimage at reasonable rates. These hotels are:

Quality Inn
1010 Highway 19 North
Thomaston GA 30286
706-648-2232

Days Inn
1211 Old Highway 19 South
Thomaston GA 30286
706-648-9260

We will use the Quality Inn in Thomaston as our pilgrimage headquarters. We encourage you to consider making your hotel reservations early, given the limited number of hotel rooms available in the city. There is no financial obligation for early registration and cancellations are permitted with notice, if your plans should change. Be sure to tell the reservations agent that you are a Georgia Botanical Society member attending the 2018 Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage to get the best rate. Be aware that depending on the number of people attending the 2018 Pilgrimage there may not be enough hotel rooms for us in the city. Other cities in the area are Forsyth, Macon and Warm Springs where more hotel options exist. There are also camping opportunities at the Sprewell Bluff County Park and Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park for those who may be interested in that option.

Development of the 2018 Pilgrimage brochure is in progress that will contain much more information, such as expanded field trip information and a form for registration. In the meantime, feel free to contact Mitchell Kent via email at mkent423@gmail.com with any questions.

Renew Your Membership

BotSoc memberships run from January through December, so it's time to renew! The January newsletter will include a renewal form, but you can renew now by going to the BotSoc website. You can submit your membership payment online, or you can print a PDF form for mailing. Membership categories and fees are changing for 2018, so be sure to review the new information before submitting your renewal.



BotSoc 2017 Holiday Party



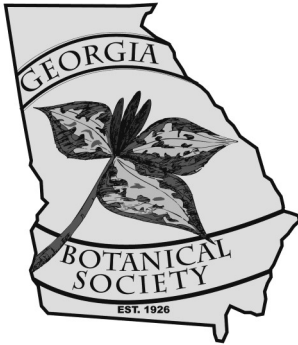
This year's Holiday Party will be held on Saturday December 2, starting at 10 am. The event will be held at Newman Wetlands Center, located at 2755 Freeman Rd., Hampton GA 30228. You can find directions on their website at <http://www.ccwa.us/newman-wetlands-center>.

This is a potluck lunch with a short walk afterwards. Bring a food or drink contribution and your best party spirit. We welcome new members to come as this is a great opportunity to get to know a lot more people than you will meet on any single field trip.

Upcoming Field Trips

<p>Nov 10 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Friday (Veterans Day)</p>	<p>Fall Color Walk</p> <p>The focus of this trip to FDR State Park will be to see 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 Veteran's Day. The site is a boggy springhead on the south side of Pine Mountain. <i>Gentiana saponaria</i>, soapwort gentian is another possibility for this wet area. We'll walk part of the Pine Mountain Trail, hopefully with colorful fall foliage and a wildflower or two along the way. We should see a couple of American chestnuts, <i>Castanea dentata</i> on the way to the grass-of-Parnassus site.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at Rocky Point Trailhead Parking Lot, FDR State Park. We will leave a few cars, then carpool to the Boottop Trail Parking Area. From the Atlanta area, take I-85 south to Exit 41 (I-185), and head south on US 27Alt. Stay on US 27Alt through the town of Warm Springs, then up the side of Pine Mountain. Just as you crest Pine Mtn you will see GA 190 and the western entrance to FDR State Park. Turn right (west) onto 190 and the parking lot is on the left in just under 2 miles. From the south, take US 27A north from Columbus until you crest Pine Mountain, then turn left onto GA 190 to the Rocky Point Trailhead parking lot.</p> <p>Facilities: None.</p> <p>Difficulty: Moderate, approximately 2.4 miles on the Pine Mountain Trail.</p> <p>Bring: Comfortable walking shoes, \$5.00 parking fee or annual pass, water, camera, binoculars, and lunch to eat along the trail.</p>	<p>Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com 478-957-6095</p>
<p>Nov 16 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Thursday</p>	<p>SE Georgia Pitcher Plant Bog Work Day (in conjunction with Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance)</p> <p>This is a pitcher plant habitat restoration work day as well as an opportunity to learn about herbaceous bog ecology and plants. We will hand-cut shrubs or grasses away from pitcher plants to improve their access to sunlight and water. Canoochee Bogs are the one Georgia location for <i>Sarracenia purpurea</i> var. <i>venosa</i> (Coastal Plain purple pitcher plant). We will also see vigorous <i>Sarracenia flava</i> (trumpet pitcher plant) and <i>Sarracenia minor</i> (hooded pitcher plant). We will work for 3-4 hours, followed by a short but rich botanical foray. We expect to finish by 4:00-4:30. Afterwards, for those who are able, we will continue in the bogging spirit by diving into delicious Harry's Barbeque in nearby Hagen.</p> <p>Please email Lisa if you plan to attend.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet in Bellville, Evans County, at the SW corner of the intersection of GA Hwy's 292 and 169, and caravan to the work site. Good parking lot at a restored train depot.</p> <p>Facilities: None. Bernie's Grocery at the meeting location has basic restroom and snacks.</p> <p>Difficulty: Easy to moderate, total walking distance less than 1 mile, but off-trail walking on uneven, moist terrain through 1-2 foot tall vegetation is required. Possible walking across shallow water or small streams.</p> <p>Bring: Work gloves, hand pruners, loppers, and/or a trowel. Lunch and water. Sun protection is critical.</p> <p>Cabins and camping are available at Gordonia-Alatamaha State Park in Reidsville. These are popular on fall weekends, so make reservations soon!</p>	<p>Lisa Kruse lisa.kruse@dnr.ga.gov 706-318-3287 (day of trip only)</p>

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