
BotSoc News



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Georgia Botanical Society

Tom Patrick Remembered

Dear GA Bot Soc,

We have a hole in our hearts: Tom Patrick, botanist, will no longer walk the woods with us.

First I will emphasize what you all know: Tom is a light for field botany and plant conservation. Tom instilled love between plants and people - no small feat given that humans don't often relate to green organisms. Tom brought people to love the land and wild places. Tom valued individuals, plants and people: He worked to move even the most stubborn plants from harm's way. He opened opportunities for young and old to study and enjoy botanical treasures.

My Tom story is of a torn-short, T-shirt-wearing college student, shy, passionate, calling on the "STATE BOTANIST" for tips on undergraduate research for rare plants. Tom trusted me, gave me access to rare plant data and his extensive network of native plant enthusiasts. He gave me a key where many would never trust. Tom is one of those leaders from whom I have taken my key life lessons.

Next I will emphasize what I hope you all know: Tom showed me how important YOU are, people who love plants, love Earth, who cherish rare places. Each of you adds to our collective knowledge of places important to native plants for their survival. You bring weight to these rare places. You are the ones who help keep these places alive. If a place is never visited, never experienced, never loved, it will fade from our human consciousness. That is dangerous when our species has so much power to morph the landscape to fit our vision. These places are important not only for our enjoyment, but for the survival of biodiversity and the fabric of life itself.

Tom was adamant: "STAY IN THE FIELD!" It is a message for everyone - keep at least a toe, an elbow, an hour, outdoors observing nature.

Tom chose to implement his passion for plants in a career with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR). In this work he stayed true to his values while negotiating the bureaucracy of a human organization. With support from passionate colleagues and leaders, Tom made his work place a vehicle for meaningful conservation. Our mission in the Wildlife Conservation Section of the GA DNR is conservation. Tom showed me the vital importance between you all, individuals who love native plants in their habitats, and the mission of the GA DNR.

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President's Perspective



BotSoc News

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Editorial Office

Ellen Honeycutt
Jo Ann Buchanan

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I have been a member of the Georgia Botanical since the early 1980s and for most of that time our most knowledgeable and popular field trip leader was Tom Patrick. Tom was the consummate field botanist - he had an encyclopedic memory combined with a deep and focused love of Georgia's plants. He also had an uncanny ability to look at a landscape and decide that it contained rare plants.

Tom Patrick died on August 22 after fighting cancer for several years. His passing leaves a huge hole in our hearts, in our collective knowledge of Georgia's flora, and in the social structure of our field trips. I doubt there is any member of this society who has not been touched by Tom's generous sharing of his knowledge and his gentle way of correcting or guiding one to a better plant identification. Tom's field trips were so popular that leading a trip opposite him during a Pilgrimage could be quite discouraging. I once led a field trip to the famous Doerun Bog during a Pilgrimage in Valdosta. Tom was leading a field trip at the same time near Tifton. I had five people, Tom had nearly 60.

Three memorial services were held for Tom during September. The first was in Macon at the Unitarian Universalist Church that he attended regularly. The second was held in the chapel at the State Botanical Garden. The third memorial was a celebration at the home of John Jensen and Kristina Sorenson in Monticello, a celebration that was originally intended to be Tom's retirement party. All three memorials were beautifully organized in lovely settings and were well attended by Botanical Society members, as well as colleagues and friends from the DNR and associated organizations.

I learned a lot about Tom from attending those memorials. Much of it I knew, like the fact he was originally from New York and got his first degree from Syracuse University and then had spent time at the University of Tennessee. I didn't know that he had been through ROTC training at Syracuse and was a fellow veteran - a captain in an Army medical support unit in Alaska. He picked up a Master of Science degree from Cornell after his time in the army, and later a Specialist in Education degree from Vanderbilt. While in Tennessee, he was a charter member of the Tennessee Native Plant Society, something I had never heard before but was not surprised by. After a stint with the TVA, Tom moved here for a job with the DNR as a botanist in the Natural Heritage Program.

It was at this point that Tom Patrick fell into our lap. I wish I knew when and where Tom led his first field trip for the Botanical Society. I know that I heard about him long before I actually met him. He quickly established a reputation as a great field trip leader, as well as a botanist with a passion for an iconic spring ephemeral genus, the *Trillium*.

My first, hesitant, contact with Tom involved trilliums. I'd been told that he had written a nice key to the southeastern species and was willing to share it...if you could get him to respond to requests. This was in the early days of email (at least for both Tom and me), so I sent him an email asking for a copy of the key. I got no response. So I sent him another request. Nothing. Someone then suggested that I put 'Trillium' prominently in the subject line. I did so in my next email and Tom responded immediately.

It was stories like the one above that made the memorial services so special for me. It seems like everyone has a favorite 'Tom story'. Steve Bowling, who may be the longest-running member in the Society (around 50 years, I believe), was particularly eloquent with his reminiscences of botanizing with Tom.

President's Perspective (cont'd)

There was a lot more to Tom than trilliums and leading field trips for the Society. I had the pleasure of working with Tom as a DNR colleague, especially in bogs. Tom loved bogs and never missed a chance to spend time among pitcher plants and sundews. One particular bog in the sandhills that I help to manage was discovered by Tom many years ago. In helping to fill requests for pictures of Tom to use at the memorials, I discovered that nearly every picture I had of Tom was in either a bog or a swamp.

Besides the Botanical Society, Tom was active with the Georgia Native Plant Society, the Great Smoky Mountain Wildflower Pilgrimage, the Association of Southeast Biologists, the Nature Conservancy, and the Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance, among many other organizations. The GPCA recently honored him with a lifetime achievement award, both by naming the award for him and by making him the first recipient of the Tom Patrick Lifetime Achievement Award.

While we will always remember Tom as a great field botanist, field trip leader, and as 'Tom Trillium,' those of us that knew him will also remember him as a kind and gentle person. Tom could be outspoken on topics that he cared about, such as protecting rare plant communities, but he seldom spoke in anger. He was kind and patient with beginners, listened attentively when he was right and you were wrong, was quick to give credit when you got it right. Tom will be missed for many reasons, not the least was that he was simply a good man.

Even though Tom is gone, he continues to inspire. I've had a couple of younger members contact me to let me know how much Tom influenced them and to tell me that they intended to start leading field trips because of him. At the memorials, I had the pleasure of seeing several old members that I haven't seen in many years. Most of them told me a similar story of how thinking about Tom reminded them of how much they missed the Botanical Society and that they hoped to become involved again.

The one person who gave me the most hope for our future was Lisa Kruse, the newly promoted Senior Botanist for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Lisa called me and pledged to continue Tom's legacy of partnership with the Botanical Society, then backed it up by adding two field trips to our fall schedule. Please read her letter to the Society on page one of this newsletter. I think we are in good hands.

Hal Massie

Photos by Hal Massie



Tom Patrick Remembered (cont'd)

Tom fostered the connection between the GA DNR and the Georgia Botanical Society, the Georgia Native Plant Society, botanical gardens big and small, and individuals region-wide who value native plants and habitats. So much about the distribution of Georgia's plant species remains a mystery. It takes a whole community to explore it, document it, and make the data available for planning and protection purposes. YOU ALL ARE THE ONES we depend on to sort out that riddle and to keep the love of native plants and their habitats thriving.

I am no Tom Patrick—my brain is not a rare plant encyclopedia! But I am lucky; I am in a position to pledge that I will work to keep the connection between GA DNR and the native plant community *of people* alive. A step at a time I will work with you all to honor Tom's spirit, that it may find new ways of growth and that we will continue to benefit from his generosity for unforeseen lengths of time. This is a big pledge but I will be brave to make it with the energy of you all in my mind. I have support of my colleagues and leaders. I will need your help and determination. I will ask of you all: how can we drop our veil of cynicism, how can we keep from feeling overwhelmed when we see how many rare plants are disappearing from our landscape? How can we nurture each other and grow the plant conservation community?

Please consider stepping out - leading a trip to a favorite place - no matter how small. Botanical expertise? Oh, so many times I have quavered at the idea of being a trip leader and not knowing the names of all the plants! But do not fear! Bringing people outdoors to enjoy plants and animals together is the purpose. Or reach out - invite new friends from diverse backgrounds; we all have a lot to share. Or consider stepping in - assisting with data collection, sorting details and specimens, providing documentation for the record of what treasures we have to protect.

Thank you everyone for sharing your wonderful memories of Tom with me. I will miss him. I will look forward to working with you.

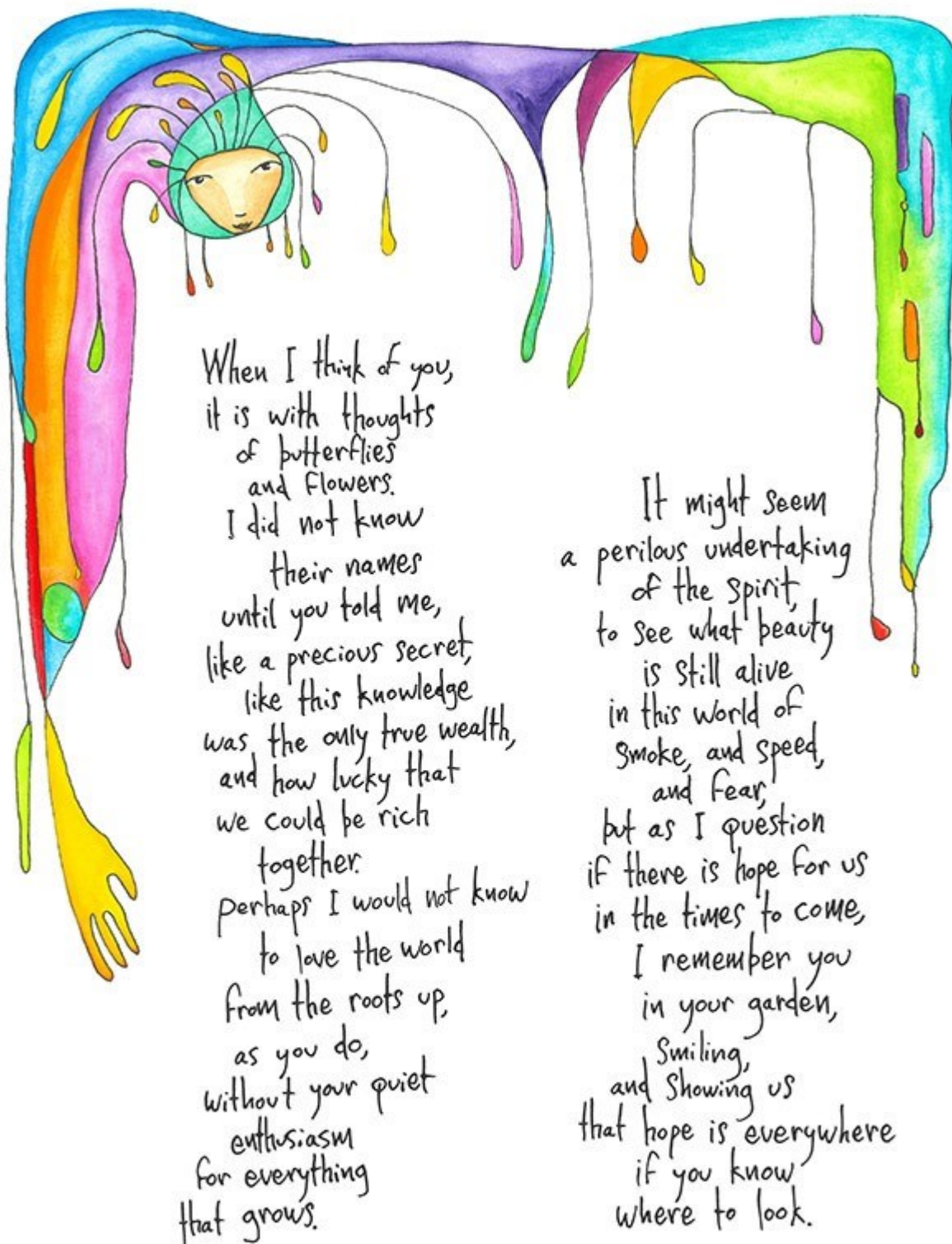
Sincerely,

Lisa Kruse
Senior Botanist
Wildlife Conservation Section
Georgia Department of Natural Resources



Photo by Jim Drake

Tom Patrick Remembered



'earth mother (for heidi)' by gabriel andreas
art by matthew andreas

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Society News

by Jo Anne Romfh

Welcome to our new members who joined from June 1st through September 30th; we look forward to seeing you at a field trip or a meeting.

Chris Hastings (Alpharetta)

Sarah Hutchinson (Athens)

Walter Bland (Atlanta)

Pamela Helms (Atlanta)

Sally and Bob Hilton (Atlanta)

Clara Williams (Atlanta)

Andrew Navratil (Decatur)

Leslie Real (Morganton)

Shannon Matzke (Savannah)

Linda Sherk (Vandiver, AL)

Mark Frey (Cabin John, MD)

2020 Pilgrimage—Note Date Change!

Please note that the 2020 Pilgrimage will be **April 3-5, 2020** which is different than what we put in the September newsletter. It is still in the same area: the Coastal Empire near Savannah. Our hub will be in Port Wentworth. Currently our motel hub is called Holiday Inn Express but by pilgrimage time, it should be called the Wyndham Wingate. It is on Hwy 21. In case you are wondering why we are not centered in picturesque downtown Savannah, it has to do with traffic for field trips as well as the crime situation downtown. My second choice – south Savannah – including Richmond Hill, was ruled out due to poor motel ratings and lack of a suitable banquet facility for a reasonable price.

Our blocked room rate for our single hub motel is \$119.99 + tax. At first glance that rate seems high, especially when compared to the rate we had in Clayton at our last pilgrimage which was atypically low (same as 2012). The rate for the 2020 pilgrimage is more comparable to some of the motel rates we had in 2017 in Chattanooga. The good news on our hub motel is that – it is truly a single headquarters location this year. That means, besides having only one motel, that facility will also be the site of the Friday night registration *and* the banquet. There are few other motels near our hub motel along Hwy 21, but this is spring break season and the rates reflect that.

Field trip planning is well under way. Since we are in South Georgia, the timeframe is a little earlier than for a North Georgia setting. And due to South Georgia's wider geographical stance, travel times for a few field trips could approach 75 minutes instead of a normal 60 minute limit. Although we are near the coast, not all our trips will emphasize coastal landscapes. Some of our trips will be similar to, if not the same location as those in the 1996 Pilgrimage. We have a terrific speaker for the banquet.

The pilgrimage brochure is in progress as usual and thank goodness Ellen Honeycutt is again my "go to" person for that. It should be available in January. In the meantime, feel free to contact Bobby Hattaway via email at botanikman@g-net.net with any questions.

Field Trip: Rome (Floyd County)

About a dozen BotSoc members showed up to join Richard and Teresa Ware on a romp through Richard's old stomping grounds along the Oostanaula River. This particular area is home to an impressive diversity of native trees including: 5 species of maple (*Acer*), 2 hickory (*Carya*), 3 ash (*Fraxinus*), 7 oak (*Quercus*) and many others. In addition, we had the opportunity to compare the native red mulberry (*Morus rubra*) with the non-native white mulberry (*Morus alba*). After lunch, we visited a trail along the river near Ridge Ferry Park. Included here are some of the pictures that I took during the day.

Photos and text by Ellen Honeycutt



Top: the velvety twig of Biltmore ash (*Fraxinus biltmoreana*), the red fruits of coralbead (*Cocculus carolinus*); Bottom: a few remaining flowers on foldwing (*Dicliptera brachiata*), and the unusual fruit of American basswood (*Tilia americana*).



Field Trip Report: Dawson Forest Oak-Pine Savanna

A good group of 13 folks joined on a relatively cool day - only 85 degrees for the high! We were of diverse backgrounds - professionals, university, students, retired - and enjoyed spending time observing the plants and landscape together. We visited the Goethe Tract of the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The area can be found by going to the Dawson Forest check station entrance off of Hwy. 53, about 5 miles west of Dawsonville, and then entering the forest on a handicap – accessible hunting road to the east of the check station, south of Hwy 53 (see <https://georgiawildlife.com/dawson-forest-wma> for a map). This is a well-maintained gravel road, steep in some places but accessible to most any car.

Travel on down that road a piece, less than a mile, and there's no missing the change in landscape from maintained dove fields to a grand pine-oak savanna. In autumn it is striking, even during a drought, with the warm yellow-brown of blooming grasses framing the tall pine. This savanna is natural. For decades the area was a dense loblolly pine plantation that fell to a pine beetle epidemic in the mid-1990's. Trees were let fall without re-planting. GA DNR Biologists noted a resurgence of native wildflowers and grasses from the seedbank in the area. Several of these species had a geographic distribution that included the prairies of the Midwest. The pine beetles' work has been expanded upon with prescribed fire and targeted herbicide treatment of re-sprouting hardwoods such as sweetgum, maple, tulip poplar, and some oak to help the natural restoration process.

We spent time considering differences between loblolly, shortleaf, and Virginia pine. From a distance, tall Virginia pine can be confused with shortleaf, but they have much scrapper bark and branches than shortleaf, and lack "resin dots"- small crater-shaped divots - in the bark plates. Only shortleaf has these resin dots. We also found easily recognizable characters of grasses, clues to ID's of these subtly-flowered plants, such as the single raceme of little bluestem, showy forked racemes of split-beard bluestem, and twisty awns of plume grass. Little blue (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) is a significant find, rather than an early successional species, it is an "old growth grass" that does not do well with disturbance and indicates a long-present grassland.

Small-headed sunflower (*Helianthus microcephalus*) was present in great abundance, just past peak bloom but joyful. Maryland golden-aster (*Chrysopsis mariana*) and licorice goldenrod (*Solidago odora*) added with their bright yellows. Lespedezas were diverse. This is a native legume that is important forage for diverse wildlife. Fun finds were bellflower (*Campanula* sp.), striped gentian (*Gentiana villosa*), and meter-tall downy lobelia (*Lobelia puberula*).

We finished up relaxing over lunch and stories in the lush shade of a stream-head seep, surrounded by a plethora of ferns (cinnamon, southern lady, woodland chain, royal, New York, and Christmas fern). Southern blackhaw (*Viburnum rufidulum*) was in bright fruit. We departed while still puzzling over the ID of a cane - river cane? hill cane? A pleasant trip to a significant example of rare Piedmont savanna.

Field Trip Report: Dawson Forest Oak-Pine Savanna



Above: striped gentian (*Gentiana villosa*); Right: small-headed blazingstar (*Liatris microcephala*). Both photos by Rich Reaves



Left: Some of the field trip participants with trip leader Lisa Kruse (front, right). Photo by Shirley Andrews.

The 2020 Long Distance BotSoc trip

Summer of 2020 will mark the return of the “Out of Georgia Excursions” that I have been leading in even numbered years. Previous extended BotSoc trips have been to the Everglades (2012), the Sonoran Desert (2014), the Snowy range of Wyoming (2016), and the Chihuahuan Desert (2018). This time we are planning a week in and around the mountains of Olympic National Park in Washington State, the farthest afield we have gone to date. Dates for the trip are July 19-25, which allows Saturday the 18 and Sunday the 25 for travel, with a week for doing things while we are there. I am going to limit stuff to the mountainous parts due to the logistics – it is a long way to the beaches and the rain forest (and it is the dry season in the rain forest) with extremely limited accommodations. We will operate out of Port Angeles, WA, which is on the coast north of the Park. You are welcome to come for some or all of the week.

I am still putting together the slate of trips, and some places I would like to take folks will likely not be accessible due to recent landslides and lack of funding to repair roads. However, we will soldier on and have fun anyway. Here are some of the things we could do based on areas that were open this summer:

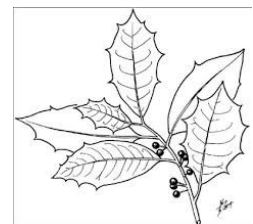
- Roadside botanizing on the road to Hurricane Ridge
- Trails at/near the Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center (at least those that will be open)
- Obstruction Point
- Sol Duc Falls and trails in that area
- Barnes Creek and Merymere Falls and associated trails
- Little River Trail up from Little River Road (trailhead is outside the park, but the trail climbs into the park) – this would be an up and back, as the other end of the trail is in a currently closed area up top.
- Roadside botanizing to the Mount Walker Overlook (National Forest Service area about an hour from the park but with a nice flora display along the drive and a great view of Mount Rainier across the sound from the top).

If you are interested in participating in some or all of the excursion, let me know (Rich Reaves, rich.reaves@att.net). I will be using email to discuss planning among those interested and detailed planning will begin in earnest in late January.

There is plenty more to see and do in northern Washington. Other things that may be of interest on your own if you decide to join us (in addition to the other parts of Olympic that we will not be visiting as a group) include: Mount Rainier National Park, Mount St. Helens, North Cascades National Park, Vancouver, and the E.C. Manning Provincial Park in British Columbia. Any of these would be worth extending your trip a bit to take in while you are nearby.

Holiday Party

December 7th, 2019 at 10 am
 Newman Wetlands Center
 2755 Freeman Rd, Hampton, GA 30228

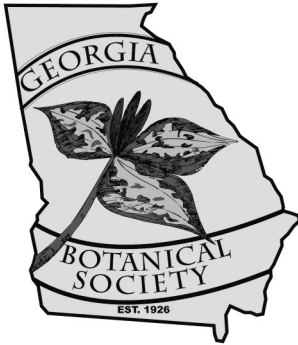


This is a potluck lunch, so bring your favorite dish, non-alcoholic drink, or dessert. New members are very welcome...this is a great opportunity to meet other members and to ask questions. What could be more festive than a day spent with like-minded plant nuts?

Upcoming Field Trips

<p>Nov 11 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Monday</p>	<p>Pine Mountain Trail, F.D. Roosevelt State Park</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 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 part of the Pine Mountain Trail, hopefully with colorful fall foliage and late wildflowers like southern harebell (<i>Campanula divaricata</i>) and clasping aster (<i>Symphotrichum patens</i>). We should see a couple of American chestnuts (<i>Castanea dentata</i>) on the way to the grass-of-Parnassus site.</p>	<p>Directions: From the Atlanta area, take I-85 south to Exit 41 (I-185), and head south on US 27 Alt. Stay on US 27 Alt all the way through the town of Warm Springs, then up the side of Pine Mountain. 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. Turn left onto GA 190 and go to the Rocky Point Trailhead parking lot.</p> <p>Facilities: None</p> <p>Difficulty: Moderate. We'll walk approximately 2.4 miles of the Pine Mountain Trail, with the grass-of-Parnassus site just past midway. The trail is rocky, but well-used and well maintained.</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.</p>	<p>Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com 478-550-1062</p>
<p>Nov 29 10:00 AM</p> <p>Note: This is a Friday</p>	<p>Pine Mountain Trail, FDR State Park</p> <p>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. The trail will make several stream crossings and pass at least four cascades on Wolfden Branch, including a small waterfall at Wolfden.</p> <p>Pine Mountain has a unique flora that consists of Coastal Plain, Piedmont, and Mountain species. We will see odd pairings, like galax, <i>Galax urceolata</i>, growing under ti-ti, <i>Cyrilla racemiflora</i>; and chestnut oak, <i>Quercus montana</i> towering over devilwood, <i>Cartrema americanum</i>. Old growth montane longleaf pines, <i>Pinus palustris</i>, are abundant in several areas, with an especially nice stand high on a hogback ridge. One particular highlight will be the Georgia Champion loblolly pine, <i>Pinus taeda</i>.</p> <p>Difficulty: Moderately difficult. This is a longer than usual hike for a Botanical Society field trip. We will walk 5 miles of a 6.7 mile loop trail. The trail is rocky and occasionally wet at stream crossings. There are at least two moderately steep ascents.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the WJSP 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.</p> <p>Facilities: None.</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.</p>	<p>Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com 478-550-1062 Chris Inhulsen</p>
<p>Dec 7 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Holiday Party</p> <p>The 2019 Holiday Party will be held on Saturday, Dec. 7 at the Newman Wetlands Center in Hampton (same place we held it last year). Join us for a day of friends, cheer, plant talk, and memories, beginning at 10 AM. This is a potluck lunch, so bring your favorite dish, non-alcoholic drink, or dessert. New members are very welcome...this is a great opportunity to meet other members and to ask questions. What could be more festive than a day spent with like-minded plant nuts?</p> <p>After we've had all the fellowship and food we can stand, we'll take a ramble around the grounds of the Wetland Center. We always see interesting plants and wildlife, no matter the time of year.</p>	<p>The Wetlands Center is an educational facility operated by Clayton County Water Authority. It features wildlife exhibits and a honey bee observation hive. Outside, a half-mile boardwalk provides an opportunity to observe wading birds, woodpeckers, turtles, and a beaver lodge. You can find directions to the Newman Wetlands Center at:</p> <p>http://www.ccwa.us/system/media_files/attachments/19/original/</p> <p>We are going to use a digital projector to display pictures from Botanical Society activities over the past year on a continuous loop. If you'd like to be a part of the show, send your favorite digital images of people or plants from our field trips to Hal Massie</p>	<p>Hal Massie massiefarm@aol.com</p>

Society Contacts



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

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