



Lost Plant Found

By Joyce Klaus

One day in May in 2018, my husband and I were driving around in our VW Thing doing what we like to call roadside botanizing – cruising for plants. We were on Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge in Jones County where I provide seasonal help for prescribed burns and wanted to see the results from recent fires.

Little did I know there was a surprise in store: the rediscovery of a plant last seen in Georgia in 1991!

Like a lot of discoveries, this one was waiting in plain sight for the right person. Easing along at 5 mph, the car doors off for a better view of interesting plants, I was lucky enough to be that person.

Tall, showy yellow flowers came into view, a sight more common in the fall in Georgia. My mind ran through possible species. I jumped out as the VW sputtered to a standstill and could easily see by the wings on the stems that these beauties were in the genus *Verbesina*. I quickly identified the plants as *Verbesina helianthoides*. There were probably thousands.

Called hairy wingstem, gravelweed, and even yellow crownbeard, this plant is known in Georgia only from Bibb County and had been presumed extirpated in the state, a status verified by DNR botanist Lisa Kruse. Yet *Verbesina helianthoides* is common in the Midwest and considered a characteristic “prairie plant.”



Verbesina helianthoides Photo by Joyce Klaus

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President's Perspective



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This should be my last column as president of the Georgia Botanical Society. I say *should* because, after all, this is 2020. Bobby Hattaway will be taking over as President and I have no doubt that he will do a fine job. His love for this organization, for botany in general, and his ability to organize, all were readily apparent as he carried out the duties of the vice president over the last two years. Bobby was truly great at managing all the details of planning and implementing our Pilgrimages. It is a shame that his latest effort was curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cancelling the Pilgrimage this year will be the biggest regret from my time as president. Not that it was a hard decision; in fact, it was the only possible decision. I just hate that so much planning and effort suddenly hit a stone wall that was built of a tiny virus. Besides that, I love going to the Pilgrimages. It is one of the two or three highlights of my year. I find great joy in being around so many people who are like-minded and take such pleasure from exploring new places to see plants.

We are canceling our annual meeting for the same reason. Instead of packing everyone into a small room to hold elections, we are going to hold our elections this year by email vote. Details will be forthcoming, as well as a slate of officers.

Fortunately, we have been able to continue field trips, though with limited numbers and other restrictions. Please check the Botanical Society website to see which trips are coming up and what restrictions are in place. The primary change is that *all field trips are restricted to a limited number of people and all require pre-registration* until further notice. Hopefully, by next spring this will all be just a bad dream and we can all go back to trying to figure out which trillium that really is growing on that slope above the trail!

A number of people have propped me up and kept me from embarrassing mistakes during my presidency. I've already mentioned Bobby Hattaway, who I can't say enough good things about. Jo Anne Romfh has been a great communicator and has a much greater presence of mind than I do. Ellen Honeycutt has shown great patience publishing our newsletter, especially when the president himself was always late with his column. I very much appreciate the support and encouragement I have received from the entire Board of Directors.

President's Message (cont'd)

My greatest appreciation is reserved for all of you - the members of the Georgia Botanical Society. We've had a rough couple of years, including the deaths of two of our prominent members, the unprecedented cancellation of a Pilgrimage, and most of the spring field trips wiped out for an entire year. The Pilgrimage shirts were held in Athens for over two months before we could begin to process and mail them. Through all of that, I have not had a single complaint. I've had nothing but support and understanding from everyone I have talked to about issues facing the Society.

So, all of you have my gratitude. I see nothing but sunny days and showy wildflowers ahead of us. We'll get through this and we will thrive.

~ Hal Massie



Photos from the Tennessee Rock Trail, Black Rock Mountain State Park field trip on May 24 by Hal Massie.

Above: Carrie Blair and Ryan Fung at the Tennessee Rock Overlook

Upper right: Speckled wood-lily, *Clintonia umbellulata*

Lower right: Giant chickweed, *Stellaria pubera*

More pictures on page 4

Field Trip Photos (cont'd)



Photos from field trips on May 24 & 25 by Hal Massie.

Left: Mei Lee Fung and her son, Ryan Fung, at the Tennessee Rock Overlook

Middle: Umbrella-leaf, *Diphylleia cymosa*, Till Ridge Cove

Lower row: Indian cucumber-root, *Medeola virginiana*, from the Tennessee Rock Trail



Field Trip Report: Till Ridge Cove

Till Ridge Cove, May 25, 2020

Text and Photos by Eddi Minche

A smallish but eager group met exactly on time to tour Till Ridge Cove. Rich Reaves and Hal Massie were our tour guides and as usual did an excellent job. To most folks, Till Ridge is synonymous with Trilliums and we knew they were finished blooming. We did find a few late to the party trilliums but not up to Till standards, of course. So what did we see? Lots of wonderful flora and even a bit of fauna. A highlight was blooming *Aristolochia macrophylla* and *Asclepias exaltata*. It was good to be in the company of fellow bot soccers even if we did have to keep our distance.



Far left: the flowers of bigleaf pipevine (*Aristolochia macrophylla*)

Right: the starry flowers of Solomon's plume (*Maianthemum racemosum*)

Far right: the wand-like flower stalk of beetleweed (*Galax urceolata*)

Right: softly pink mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*)



Continued on Page 6

Till Ridge Cove (cont'd)



Above left: a snail explores; Above right: delicate flowers on Bowman's root (*Gillenia trifoliata*)

Below left: Speckled wood-lily, (*Clintonia umbellulata*); Below right: sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza claytoniana*)



The Native Garden

Stokes's aster

An occasional series on using native plants in the home landscape.

By Ellen Honeycutt

Stokesia laevis (Hill) Greene

While considered a rare plant in natural areas, this showy perennial enjoys widespread use as a garden favorite, with several forms in cultivation.

Common Names: Stokes' aster (various spellings), cornflower aster.

Taxonomy: *Stokesia* is a monotypic genus of flowering plants in the daisy family, Asteraceae, containing the single species *Stokesia laevis*. The genus is named for Jonathan Stokes, an English botanist. The species epithet *laevis* means 'smooth.'

Habit: Stokes's aster is an herbaceous plant up to 2 feet tall. It has basal stems that persist over winter (evergreen) that are 4-12 inches long, smooth and somewhat fleshy. Flowers are borne on tall stalks with mid-stem leaves that are alternate and clasp the stem.

Characteristics: The large flower heads (up to 4 inches wide) have pale disk flowers and inch-long, blue ray flowers that are cut at the tips, resulting in a very showy flower head. The composite flowers have spiny bracts underneath (most noticeable before the flowers open and once they close). Flower color can vary from white to all shades of blue. It flowers in June and July.



The Native Garden (cont'd)

Habitat and Distribution: Stokes's aster is a plant of special concern in Georgia (G4 rank) in the wild. According to Linda Chafin's Field Guide to the Rare Plants of Georgia, it is found in wet pine savannas and flatwoods as well as pitcherplant bogs. Five populations are known in 4 Coastal Plain counties, according to that publication.

In Cultivation: This is a popular garden plant and will thrive for years, and even make new plants, when given ample sun *and moisture*. Cultivars such as 'Peachies Pick' (still a blue flower, not peach-colored!) and 'Blue Danube' have blue flowers while 'Alba' and others have white flowers. The flowers are attractive to bees and butterflies.



The composite arrangement of center disk flowers surrounded by the showier, fringed ray flowers is more noticeable here. A small green bee checks out the floral goodness. I have observed a number of different bee species visit it.

Lost Plant Found (cont'd)

As with many discoveries, this one raises more questions than it provides answers. Is it evidence that Georgia's native ecosystems historically were more like grasslands and that good management, including prescribed fire, can help bring back lost species? Or does it show how people can move species around, changing the composition and sometimes even the structure and function of ecosystems?

Maybe you know something about the history and distribution of this plant in Georgia, details that can help scientists understand it better and help answer some of these questions. If so, please reach out to DNR via this link: [Wildlife Conservation Section at Georgia DNR](#).



Photos of *Verbesina helianthoides* above by Joyce Klaus.

At left: Photo by Hal Massie

Dr. Joyce Klaus is owner and chief scientist at Terra-Ignea Enterprises. This article originally appeared in the GA DNR newsletter.

Society News

Welcome to our new members who have joined from April 1 - June 8th:

Kay Crane	Eatonton	GA
Mei Lee Fung	Peachtree City	GA
Georgia Hill	Decatur	GA
Ann Smith	Marietta	GA

And please welcome our **new Life Members** since June 2019: Carrie Blair, Kim Mallet, Karen McCaustland, and Beth Wray.

Memorial gifts from June 2019 to June 2020:

- In memory of Tom Patrick: Donna English, Don Fisher, Patricia Lowe, Gail Russell, and Jane Trentin.
- In honor of Eddi Minche and Jennifer Ceska: Elizabeth Fox.

Members who joined or contributed at the donor level (\$100+) in the last year:

Bonnie Arbuckle	Jim and Candee Drake	Sue Mager
Anne Armstrong	Mack & Julie Duncan	Todd & Susan Morrell
Nancy L. Barber	Donna English	Martha Morris
Sam & Laura Breyfogle	Mei Lee Fung	Tom Painter & Carla Roncoli
Heather Brasell	Susan Hanson	Diana Picklesimer
Stephanie Byrne	Olivia Harris	Trammell Starr
Stephen Cook	J. M. M. Harrison	Steve and Joella Walker
Amy Delaplaine	Shepherd Howell	Patricia Warren
Susan & Ron Determann		

If any member's donation has been inadvertently omitted, please contact membership chairman joannromfh@aol.com

We would also like to thank all the other members who supported BOTSOC'S funds that are not included any the above categories:

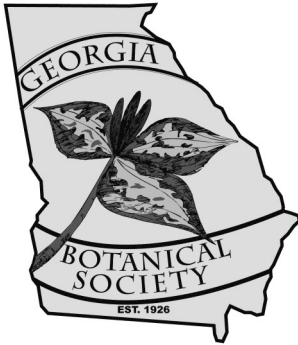
MMR Grant Annual Fund	\$19
General Fund	\$36
Tipularia	\$25
Maureen Donohue Habitat Conservation	\$35

Upcoming Field Trips

<p>Sept 5 12:00 PM Note: late start time</p>	<p>Southeast Georgia Roadside Botanizing, Part 1</p> <p>We will travel south on HWY 1 toward Folkston. Our first area to investigate will be along GA 177, an area designated as an Ecologically Sensitive Area by Georgia DOT in 2019 due to the vegetation. We will make stops along HWY 1 between there and Folkston and then south along GA 23 towards the Florida line or head into the Okefenokee NWR (fee required) for the Swamp Island Drive.</p> <p>While the flowers will likely be less numerous than spring and early summer, the early September flowers normally put on quite a show. In addition to a host of composites and other late summer/early fall bloomers we should see yellow fringed orchid (<i>Platanthera ciliaris</i>), and crested yellow orchid (<i>Platanthera cristata</i>). Bartram's rose gentian (<i>Sabatia dodecandra</i> – formerly <i>S. bartramii</i>), a star of our early summer trips, usually is still blooming to some degree. We will see pitcher plants and sundews, but most likely not blooming.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the Lowe's at 2308 Memorial Drive, Waycross, GA (just off Hwy 1)</p> <p>Facilities: None</p> <p>Difficulty: Short excursions along the roadside; can be muddy or wet.</p> <p>Bring: Water, bug spray, shoes that can get wet. Eat lunch before we meet.</p>	<p>Rich Reaves rich.reaves@att.net 770-827-5186 – cell</p>
<p>Sept 6 8:00 AM Note: this is a Sunday with an early start time</p>	<p>Southeast Georgia Roadside Botanizing, Part 2</p> <p>We will start the day heading east on HWY 82 and stop at interesting locations along the road, do an about-face at the Satilla River and then take GA 301 from intersection in Nahunta down to Folkston. From Folkston, we would return to Waycross via HWY 1 and possibly continue to a <i>Sarracenia flava</i> bog west of Waycross to close out the day. Flowers most likely will be near the same as Saturday, although the Sunday route almost always has the best pine lilies (<i>Lilium catesbaei</i>).</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the Hampton Inn in Waycross</p> <p>Facilities: None</p> <p>Difficulty: Short excursions along the roadside; can be muddy or wet.</p> <p>Bring: Water, bug spray, shoes that can get wet, and your lunch to eat on the road.</p>	<p>Rich Reaves rich.reaves@att.net 770-827-5186 – cell</p>
<p>Sept 19 10:00 AM</p>	<p>Pickett's Mill State Historic Area</p> <p>The meadows at Pickett's Mill will be at peak, with Georgia asters in bloom along with classic prairie plants including several species of goldenrods, bonesets, blazing stars, and more. We'll also hike through oak-pine-hickory forests, mesic forests with two types of deciduous magnolias, and down to the bottomland, where we will check on the status of the three-bird's orchid populations, perhaps catching a few in flower if we are very fortunate.</p> <p>Email the trip leader ahead of time if you would like a comprehensive flora of Pickett's Mill emailed to you ahead of time.</p>	<p>Directions: Meet at the visitors' center at 10 am. Pickett's Mill Battlefield Historic Site is located at 4432 Mt. Tabor Church Rd, Dallas, GA 30157. From I-75, about 15 miles north of Marietta, take exit 277 (Acworth/Hwy 92), and proceed south on GA 92. Be careful: GA 92 makes several turns, including an unexpected right turn just off the freeway. Proceed for 12 miles heading south on GA 92 and turn right at the small, brown, state park sign onto Due West Road (NOT Due West Street!). In 1.8 miles, turn right onto Mt Tabor Church Road.</p> <p>Facilities: At the visitor's center</p> <p>Difficulty: Easy to moderate, about 2.5 miles</p> <p>Bring: Park entry fee, water snacks, lunch, bug spray.</p>	<p>Leslie Edwards edwar1617@yahoo.com</p>

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

Society Contacts



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

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