



THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

December, 2015



**Holiday Party 1:00 - 3:00 PM,
Sunday December 6, 2015
at the home of Mauro Correa, 5900 Upham Drive, Henrico, VA**

Come and bring a dish or beverage to share. We can feast in the Gazebo and enjoy the view, or walk around Mauro's 13 acres and see the native plant beds he has created since our visit last Spring.

Please let Catharine know (804-938-6941 or cath.tucker@gmail.com) if you're coming so we can give the Correas a head count! Note: We will not meet at Lewis Ginter in December.

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## **Chapter Meetings:**

**January 14, 2016:** Kristi Orcutt will tell us "How to Keep Bees Happy." That's with native plants, of course!

NOTE: Because of the Holiday lighting festivities at the Garden, our first meeting in 2016 will be on the second Thursday, January 14.

## **Chapter Events:**

### **Privet Removal work days at Lewis Ginter:**

Please come and help untangle the wild Vale at Lewis Ginter; note the starting time change. Your assistance is sorely needed to honor the volunteer requirement for labor hours, a condition for our use of the meeting room in the Garden.

Dec 5 Sat 9:45AM to 12N, leader Caroline Meehan

Dec 15 Tues 9:45AM to 12N, leader Beth Farmer

Meet at Admission Hall, dress for the weather and bring your favorite small tools, hat, gloves etc. Please notify host in advance that you will come to help. Many thanks in advance for your assistance, see you in the Garden!

Any questions please contact Beth Farmer, [beth16085@hotmail.com](mailto:beth16085@hotmail.com), or Caroline Meehan at [cjrtmeehan@juno.com](mailto:cjrtmeehan@juno.com).

### **February 19, 2016 (Friday) from 5:00 PM 9:00 PM "Ecology in Motion" at the Science Museum:**

Doug Tallamy will be the featured speaker at a free community event held at the Science Museum of Virginia.

Sponsored by the Richmond Ballet, the theme is "Ecology in Motion." Junior members of the ballet will perform a work on the theme of ecology and native plants. We will have a booth to promote Virginia's native plants. A number of local natural history-related organizations will be there including the Riverine Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalists. We will need 8-10 people to set up, clean up, and answer questions over that 4-hour period so that no one has to stay more than an hour or so at the table. If you have not heard Dr. Tallamy. [Bringing Nature Home], or want to hear him again, this is your chance. Contact Catharine for details about helping at (804) 938-6941 or [cath.tucker@gmail.com](mailto:cath.tucker@gmail.com).

## **March 12, 2016 - VNPS Winter Workshop**

The VNPS Winter Workshop will be at the University of Richmond on Saturday, March 12, 2016. Our chapter is again asked to provide morning refreshments before the seminars begin and at the morning break. All we contribute is the effort to provide the coffee, tea, fruit, and sweet rolls. There is a list of what to do and where to obtain the food. Expenses are reimbursed by the state treasurer. We need 5 or 6 people to help with this. Contact Catharine [(804) 938-6941 or [cath.tucker@gmail.com](mailto:cath.tucker@gmail.com)] if you would like to help deliver goodies or set up at 8:30 AM or to help pack up at 3:00 PM.

Information on the theme and speakers for the workshop will be available in December with registration opening sometime in January as usual. Registration for the workshop is separate from this volunteer project.

Catharine White Tucker

**President's Message**

Laughing, squealing, stomping grandchildren fill my thoughts right now, so I'm having trouble concentrating on writing for this newsletter. The first thing I think of is that there's a lot going on, a lot of activities to choose from in the chapter.

Two projects to remove invasive plants, in the Vale at the Garden and in James River Park, are opportunities to contribute to and be visible in our community. Field trips are more opportunities to learn about plants and natural areas around the Metro area, and also to reach out to interested people who might not know about our chapter. We will host refreshments for the statewide Winter Workshop at University of Richmond again in 2016. Already a member from NC has volunteered to help that day, and we will need 5 or 6 more folks to pitch in. Read more about this below.

We can reach an even wider audience with our messages about the value of preserving and protecting Virginia's native plants and planting natives for butterflies and bees on February 19. Having Doug Tallamy as speaker should encourage many of you to volunteer for this.

Best of all, I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at the Holiday Party at the Correas' home. Mauro is eager to show us what he has accomplished in remodeling his lawn to include beds of native plants. Come join us, bring a dish to share & perhaps a beverage, and I'll see you in the gazebo on Sunday, afternoon, December 6!

All we contribute is the effort to provide the coffee, tea, fruit, and sweet rolls. There is a list of what to do and where to obtain the food. Expenses are reimbursed by the state treasurer. We need 5 or 6 people to help with this. Contact Catharine at (804) 938-6941 or email [cath.tucker@gmail.com](mailto:cath.tucker@gmail.com) to help either delivering goodies or setting up at 8:30 AM or helping pack up before 3:00 PM.

Catharine White Tucker

**Minutes of the Pocahontas Chapter, VNPS Meeting, November 5, 2015**

**Welcome:** Catharine Tucker called the meeting to order with thirty persons present.

**The Pocahontas Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society**

serves the counties of: Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, King William, New Kent, Powhatan and the cities of Ashland, Hopewell, Petersburg, and Richmond. It meets the first Thursday of September through April at 7:00 PM in the Education and Library Complex of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, unless otherwise stated.

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**Program:** Suzanne Jenkins introduced the evening's speaker, Dr. Ruth Douglas. Ruth, the Invasive Plant Educator for the Virginia Native Plant Society, is a biologist and has been an instructor and administrator at Piedmont Valley Community College. Her topic was "Dispatch from the Front Lines: Invasive Plants and Noxious Weeds in Virginia."

Ruth had prepared the audience prior to the meeting by displaying invasive plants and encouraging an identification for each. She outlined the history of the Noxious Weed Law beginning with 1970. The definition of a noxious weed includes that it is not widely disseminated, which has made the issue complex. Progress requires that Virginia nursery and landscaping associations as well as conservation groups work together. Currently, there have been identified two tiers of noxious weeds. Tier 1 plants represent those where successful eradication or suppression is likely. These include beach vitex, giant salvinia, tropical soda apple, giant hogweed, and wavyleaf basket grass. Tier 2 plants are those where successful suppression is feasible but eradication is unlikely. Tier 2 plants include cogon grass (including Japanese blood grass), purple loosestrife, and water spinach. Ruth explained Blue Ridge PRISM, a partnership of land managers of both public and private lands in counties bordering the Shenandoah

National Park plus Nelson and Clarke Counties. We were reminded that the VNPS is dedicated to the protection and preservation of the native plants of Virginia and their habitats. She concluded her presentation with a question as to what we are doing as a chapter and as individuals with the challenge of invasives. The audience responded with positive and enthusiastic examples of current individual and chapter projects.

**Business Meeting:** The meeting was opened with announcements. Minutes of the last meeting (October 2015) were available in the newsletter. Richard Moss, treasurer, reported that the chapter's current balance is \$4,359. The membership update indicated that the chapter has about 105 members.

**Upcoming Field Trips:** The next field trip will be held at Dorey Park, November 8, 2-4 p.m. This will be the last field trip at Dorey Park until February 2016. A guided hike in the Brown and Williamson Conservation Area will take place November 21, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Additional information about this trip will be sent to members via email.

**Project Reports:** Work days for the Ginter Botanical Garden privet pull project were listed in the November newsletter. Leslie Allanson has met with Henrico County twice regarding planning for the use of native plants. She and Joy Antrim are working on a list of plant alternatives, which will be presented to the chapter's board. Catharine and any other interested persons will attend a meeting November 19, 2:30 p.m., to hear the status of the James River Park Invasives Removal project. **New Business:** On February 19, 5-9 p.m., "Ecology in Motion" will take place at the Science Museum of Virginia. Doug Tallamy, author of "Bringing Nature Home," will speak at this free event which will include a ballet, "The Journey of the Monarch." The chapter will have a table display to promote native plants. Ten volunteers are needed to staff the table for an hour each. Contact Catharine if you're able to volunteer. The Winter Workshop will be held at the University of Richmond on March 12, and the chapter will again host refreshments. Volunteers and a coordinator are needed.

**Next Meeting:** Sunday, December 6, 1 p.m., the chapter will meet at the home of Mauro Correa, 5900 Upham Drive, for a covered-dish holiday celebration. The next business meeting will take place at 6:30 p.m., January 14, 2016, at Ginter Botanical Garden. Kristi Orcutt will provide the program, "How to Keep Bees Happy."

Respectfully submitted,  
Irene Caperton, Secretary

## **"In Search Of": Botanical Adventures of a Plant Detective.**

by Robert Wright

I have personally been "studying" plants and growing a garden in Richmond since I was in 7th grade, but really started investigating the Richmond Flora in 1983. In the intervening years, I have amassed much data and documentation through library and archive trolling, herbarium research, preparation of herbarium specimens and personal observations, starting with the James River and branching out into its tributaries. Always being interested in weeds and exotics, I later started to focus on the vast areas of disturbed ground in all of the City, including Henrico and Chesterfield Counties. There is no dearth of these types of plants. And we have special novelties as well.

In doing so, I have come to appreciate the unusual, strange, exotic, and novel, as well as the uncommon, rare and otherwise botanically significant plants in the Richmond area. Now, I have decided to share these with the Chapter membership in hopes that this new section of the newsletter will inspire some to seek out new and wondrous species right here in town.

I will feature one local plant each month that is worthy of our esteem and attention. Upcoming months will feature the ferns and fern allies.

The theory behind this is simple. Get out and discover new places and new plants. Take some pictures. Record some notes. Once you do, please share your experiences with me so I can report the information to our editor so that everyone can benefit. We can then have discussions about these finds at our Chapter meetings and by email at [RVApplantdetectives@outlook.com](mailto:RVApplantdetectives@outlook.com).

This month's target: *Bryodesma rupestre* (L.) J. Sojak

In 1929, Dr. Edgar T. Wherry, a plant chemist at the USDA in Washington DC (and later, Professor of Botany at the University of Pennsylvania), visited Richmond in search of calciphilic orchids. Guided by several local botanists of the day, Dr. Wherry was taken to a little area of granite flat rocks and old quarry on Powhite Creek, along the

Southern Railroad at “Granite Station”, located just east of the current track crossing on Forest Hill Avenue. There, he collected some lithophillic specialties, and placed them in the herbarium collection at the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences. Among the collections was the rock spike-moss, which to my knowledge has not been seen or collected anywhere in Richmond since this date.

This curious spikemoss is often called bird’s nest moss because of its habit of drying up and crinkling up into a ball (like a birds nest), and re-opening when rehydrating. In Virginia, the plant is found on exposed rock outcrops of many types of stone, and is very local in the Piedmont. If you have seen or know anything about this target plant, please send info via email. Happy Hunting.

Photo - This month’s target: *Bryodesma rupestre*  
(*Selaginella rupestris*)

Source: Photo by Gary P. Fleming, Virginia DCR-DNH.  
Image acquired from Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora at:  
[<http://www.vaplantatlas.org/index.php?do=plant&plant=956>].



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