

# THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

March 2004



Spiderwort  
(*Tradescantia virginiana*)

## MARCH MEETING

### “Strategic Planning Meeting”

**Thursday March 4th at 7:00 PM at the Education and Library Complex of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden**

For the March meeting we will have a strategic planning meeting. We need to discuss our up-coming agenda for the next year, fill the vacant Vice President slot, etc.

## CHAPTER NEWS

**Photographs from John Hayden's  
Conifer Walk at Lewis Ginter  
Botanical Gardens on Feb. 7.**

The weather was cool and windy, but the sun was warm and we learned a lot about conifers including the wide variation between various cultivars of the same species.



## EVENTS

### **VNPS ANNUAL WORKSHOP: Biodiversity: How do we save what remains?**

9AM - 3PM March 6, 2004, Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, Richmond, VA

The goal of the 2004 Workshop is to present a sample of the many dedicated and passionate people actively involved in preservation efforts in Virginia. Gary Fleming and Stephanie Flack will share details of their efforts in the morning of the workshop. In the afternoon, other four other speakers will give you a brief introduction to their work and then sit as a panel to address your questions. Everyone has a role in preservation. Hopefully, hearing from these special, caring people will help all of us find or refine our own roles. Register by March 1, call VNPS at 540-837-1600, \$25.00 members, \$55.00 non-members.

### **GREAT GARDENING AT MAYMONT: ROSE PRUNING**

Wednesday, March 10, 2004, 9am, Maymont's Stone Barn & Italian Garden

Maymont's roses bloom from May through late fall, and are often still vibrant with color in December. Peggy Singlemann, Maymont's Manager of Horticulture, reveals the secrets of the incredible Italian Garden roses during this popular annual workshop at Maymont. A brief discussion of proper rose care is followed by lots of hands-on experience pruning some of Richmond's most famous roses. Learn about everything from plant diseases to hybridization along the way, and meet and work with others who are interested in the world's most popular and widely cultivated garden flower. Register by March 5th; call 804-358-7166, ext. 310. \$15.00 for members, \$18.00 for non-members.

### **HERBS GALORE**

Saturday, April 24th, 9am-5pm, Maymont's Hampton Entrance

Celebrate “20 Years and Growing” at the 2004 Herbs Galore festival which features herbs, herbal products, herb classes and more. From a small plant sale tucked into Maymont's Peacock Alley, this herb extravaganza has grown into an essential part of the spring routine for thousands of herb lovers. The Marketplace on the Lawn now includes more than 40 plant and craft vendors

selling unusual and popular herb plants, fruit trees, herbal cosmetics, garden ornaments, luncheon fare and other related products. Classes are available for every gardening level and interest, too. This year, experts share their knowledge of herbal first aid, beginning herb gardening, the 2004 herb of the year - garlic - and other interesting topics. A \$2 donation is suggested for the Marketplace; fees vary for seminars for which advance registration is required. For information, call 804-358-7166, ext. 310 or visit [www.maymont.org](http://www.maymont.org).

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## A Note from Robert Wright about interesting Web Sites:

While researching some stuff, I came across an impressive website that readers of the newsletter may wish to investigate, or bookmark. It is published by the Tennessee Valley Authority, and is a Native Plant section site.

<http://www.tva.gov/river/landandshore/stabilization/plantsearch.htm>

Here is another one:

PLANTS Website provides scientifically credible plant information to about 350,000 visitors (12 million hits) per month. One of NRCS's three strategic databases (along with Climate and SOILS), PLANTS provides diverse, taxonomically standardized information to promote sound land management and ecologically healthy landscapes. It is recognized as the Federal Government's plant data standard for the exchange of natural resource information, and has revolutionized access to fundamental plant information about the land plants of the U.S. and its territories. <http://plants.usda.gov/index.html>

Best,

Robert Wright

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## MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 5, 2004 MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Dean Walton, President. He welcomed new members and guests. Old Business: The clean-up at Lee Park in Petersburg is scheduled for April 17 at 10:00 a.m. Bring a brown bag lunch and we will eat at the picnic shelter and then walk out to the wildflower preserve. We had a good time at this event last year so please try to attend. Duane Poklis is in

### **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.

### **Chapter Officers**

President	Dean Walton
Vice President	-
Secretary	Peggy Furqueron
Treasurer	Bucci Zeugner
Membership Chair	Pat Brodie

Address all correspondence to  
Richard Moss, Editor  
12565 Brook Lane  
Chester VA 23831  
[mossrd@mindspring.com](mailto:mossrd@mindspring.com)

charge of the refreshments at the workshop in March at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. Box lunches will be provided by the caterer at the Ginter gardens. Any one who would like to help set up the refreshments for the workshop should arrive early on March 6. New Business: Noreen Culleen asked if the group would be interested in having a speaker educate the members on advocacy techniques. Noreen's husband is an advocacy volunteer at the General Assembly. Advocacy volunteers are not lobbyists. This information would help the group be more effective in dealing with conservation issue with the local and state governments. The techniques that are taught are general in nature and can be applied to conservation issues. Duane asked if this would effect our tax status. Noreen said the advocacy speaker would be able to answer questions like that. Dean made the motion to have an advocacy speaker at one of our meetings. It was seconded and the motion was passed without opposition. Dean reminded the group that we do not have a vice-president and he needs help with the club duties. Any one who is interested in helping, please contact Dean.

Program: John Haydn gave a very interesting slide program on Conifers. On February 7, he will give a nature walk on conifers at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. Dr. Haydn presented beautiful slides of the different types of conifers, including coastal redwoods, bristle cone pine and sequoia. He also gave some detail on the reproductive structures of the different trees and some of the evolutionary history.

Meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Peggy Furqueron, Secretary

# NATIVE PLANT OF THE MONTH

## Red Maple (*Acer Rubrum*)



Red maple (*Acer rubrum*) also known as scarlet maple, swamp maple, soft maple, Carolina red maple, Drummond red maple, and water maple, is one of the first trees to flower in the spring, generally several weeks before vegetative bud break. The flowers are small, with slender stalks, red or rarely yellowish, with petals; they appear from March to May depending upon elevation and latitude.

Red maple is one of the most abundant and widespread trees in eastern North America (see Range map below) The species is native to all regions of the United States east of the 95th meridian, with three exceptions: Prairie Peninsula proper of the Midwest, the coastal prairie of southern Louisiana and south-eastern Texas, and the swamp prairie of the Florida Everglades. The most notable exception is the Prairie

Peninsula, where red maple is absent from the bottom land forests of the Corn Belt, though it grows abundantly in similar situations and species associations both to the north and south of the Peninsula.

Red maple shows an early tendency to develop root system characteristics according to soil conditions, enabling it to grow on greatly different sites ranging from swamp to dry upland. On wet sites, red maple seedlings produce short taproots with long, well-developed laterals. On dry sites, they develop long taproots with much shorter laterals.

Although the sugar and black maple (*Acer nigrum*) are principally used for syrup production, red maple is also suitable. When sap and syrup from sugar maple, is compared with those of red and silver maple, boxelder (*A. negundo*), and Norway maple (*A. platanoides*), they were found to be equal in sweetness, flavor, and quality. The buds of red and silver maple and boxelder break dormancy much earlier in the spring than sugar maple, however, and the chemical content of the sap then changes, imparting an undesirable flavor to the syrup.(1)

Red maple leaves are toxic to horses. The toxin has not been identified, but is believed to be an oxidant due to its effects on red blood cells. Only horses are known to be affected. The ingestion of wilted or fallen leaves causes massive destruction of red blood cells, and the blood can no longer carry sufficient oxygen. Ingestion of 1.5 pounds of leaves is toxic, and ingestion of 3 pounds is lethal. Wilted or dry leaves remain toxic for about a month. Fresh and undamaged leaves have not been implicated, but ingestion is still not advised.

Clinical signs develop within one or two days and can include depression, lethargy, increased rate and depth of breathing, increased heart rate, jaundice, dark brown urine, coma, and death. Approximately 50% to 75% of affected horses die or are euthanized.(2)

Brilliant fall coloring is one of the outstanding features of red maple. In the northern forest, its bright red foliage is a striking contrast against the dark green conifers and the white bark and yellow foliage of the paper birches. Red maple is widely used as a landscape tree. (1)

**Sources:** (1) Burns, Russell M., and Barbara H. Honkala, tech. coords. 1990.

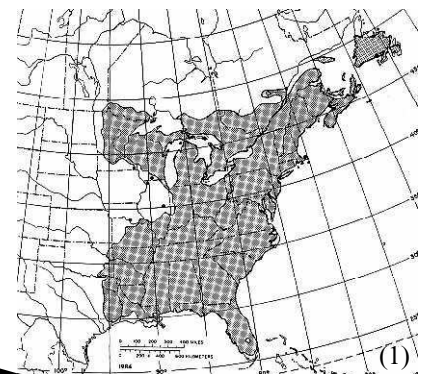
Silvics of North America: 1. Conifers; 2. Hardwoods. Agriculture Handbook 654. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Washington, DC. vol.2, 877 p. [http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/silvics\\_manual/table\\_of\\_contents.htm](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/silvics_manual/table_of_contents.htm)

(2) <http://www.vet.purdue.edu/depts/addl/toxic/plant50.htm>

**Photographs:** Leaves & Seeds - The Dendrology homepage at Virginia Tech <http://www.cnr.vt.edu/dendro/dendrology/syllabus/arubrum.htm>

Flowers - Richard Moss

Range of *Acer Rubrum*



# Virginia Native Plant Society Membership Application

## Pocahontas Chapter

**Make Check payable to VNPS and Mail to:**

**Membership Chair, Blandy Experimental Farm, 400 Blandy Farm Lane, Unit 2, Boyce, VA 22620**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

___ Individual	\$30.00	___ Sustaining	\$100.00
___ Family	\$40.00	___ Life	\$500.00
___ Student	\$15.00	___ Associate Groups	\$40.00
___ Patron	\$50.00	(Garden Clubs, etc.)	

**I wish to make an additional contribution to \_\_\_ VNPS or \_\_\_ The Pocahontas Chapter, VNPS in the amount of:**

\_\_\_ \$10    \_\_\_ \$20    \_\_\_ \$50    \_\_\_ \$100    Other \_\_\_\_\_

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