

THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



Spiderwort
(*Tradescantia virginiana*)



April 2011

April Meeting

Thursday April 7, 2011 at 7:00 PM

at the Education and Library Complex of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Classroom 2

The room is available at 6:30, come early and Socialize

This month's Presentation will be:

"Flowers of the Blue Ridge"

by Catharine Tucker

A naturalist by training and a teacher by both training and inclination, Catharine Tucker received her Bachelor of Science degree from Duke University and her Master's from the University of Michigan, both in botany. She has led field trips, taught classes and addressed civic groups on topics as varied as "Natural History for Moms and Tots", "Wildflowers of a Trout Stream" and "Virginia's Native Shrubs" for organizations as varied as county recreation departments and the Maymont Flower and Garden Show. Her own photographs of wildflowers and their habitats illustrate her presentations.

Chapter Events:

Thursday, April 14 Field Trip to the North Carolina Botanical Gardens in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The gardens has one of the greatest collection of native plants in the east. Our trip leader, Ernest Wilson, is going for 2 days, April 14 and April 15. Please Contact Ernest for Details at (804) 502-6346) or ewilson611@aol.com.

Saturday, April 16, 10 AM. North Bank Field Trip. Start at the Pump House, cross the rail tracks and follow the river to the break in the canal across from the Japanese Garden in Maymont. This area has some of the best wild flowers in the park. Meet on Pump House Road, the last turn to the right before going through the toll on the Boulevard Bridge. (From the south it is first turn to left immediately after passing toll booth.) The road is blocked. We will park on side of road immediately before barrier. Bring walking sticks and boots for this trip.

Saturday, May 7 - Annual Chapter Picnic and Field Trip: 11 am at Richard Moss's house, 12565 Brook Lane Chester. Bring food to share, Kitchen facilities available. A walk will follow in the woods back of his house. Directions in the May Newsletter.

Saturday, May 14: Blue Ridge Field Trip. This will be largely a "road trip" with minimal walking. There should be many wildflowers blooming in mid-May. See the Parkway's "Bloom Schedule" at: <http://www.blueridgeparkway.org/v.php?pg=77>. Meet at 8:00 AM in the commuter parking lot on Parham Road. This lot is 1 block south of I-64 (toward Regency Mall). There's a traffic light at this corner. Turn east (toward town) between the church and the lot and park near the side street.

We will leave promptly at 8:15 AM. Travel route is West on I-64 to Rockfish Gap at the top of the Blue Ridge (approx. 2 hrs). Then south on the Blue Ridge Parkway (toward Roanoke), stopping at Humpback Rocks Visitor Center and other parking areas along the 27 miles to junction with Rt. 56. Return home via 56 east to US29, north to I-64 to Richmond. Or return home via 56 west to I-81 to I-64 & back to Richmond. Please contact trip leader Catharine Tucker at 804-938-6941 or e-mail cath.tucker@gmail.com to let her know who to expect at the parking lot.

Ernest Wilson is going to take 1-1 half hour walks at the following locations during April: Members who might want to go on one of these walks can call his cell phone (804) 502-6346) and select a meeting place.

Monday, **April 11** 2 PM Larus Park, Wednesday, **April 13** Ferndale Park (Appomattox River Park) Matoaca 7:30 AM in conjunction with Richmond Audubon, Monday, **April 18** 2 PM Pony Pasture, Tuesday, **April 19** 10 AM Joseph Bryan Park.

Minutes of the March 3, 2011 Meeting of The Pocahontas Chapter of the VNPS

Daune Polkis opened the meeting in the absence of President Ernest Wilson who was on a trip.

Announcements: We have been invited to 3 Lakes Park for Earth Day, April 16th to have a table and answer questions. Please let Daune know if you are interested in participating.

The spring plant sale at Lewis Ginter Park April 28-30. Thursday 1pm-6pm; Friday 1pm-6pm; Saturday 9-5. We need some volunteers to be available to let people know about native plants in gardening and landscaping.

~~We plan a field trip to North Carolina Botanical Gardens in Chapel Hill April 13th. We will meet at the parking lot in Bermuda Square by Martin's in Chester. It will take approximately 3 hours to get there. The gardens have one of the greatest collections of native plants in the east. We can bring our lunch or eat there. It has also been suggested that we spend the night and go to some of the other local parks the next morning.~~

Note: Update -The Botanical Gardens field trip has been rescheduled to April 14. Our trip leader, Ernest Wilson, is going for 2 days, April 14 - 15. Please Contact Ernest for Details at (804) 502-6346 or ewilson611@aol.com

If you get the chance, Please go and see the Orchids galore show Before April 10th at the conservatory at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens.

It truly is a glorious showing of the different species of orchids. I saw it and spent about 2 hours there and really learned a lot about orchids and their care and feeding and soil and methods of growing. Look for Daune if you get the chance and say Hello!

Tara Quinn from the Capitol Region Land Conservancy spoke about the land conservancy and its role in protecting land in the Richmond area. Their purpose is to make healthier and happy communities and protect land around the area. They are a private non-profit organization and have been around for 6 years. They have protected over 4,500 acres of property easements. The things that are at stake are our water, plant animal habitats, locally formed food and historical resources. Without their benefit, we could lose local flora and fauna. For more information, Please contact Tara@capitolregionland.org. (804)301-5352. Resources are somewhat limited, but if you have any questions, e-mail or call the organization.

Last but not least, Don't forget about our picnic on May the 7th at Richard Moss's house in Chester. A walk will follow in his woods.

Thanks to Duane Polkis for standing in for Ernest while he was on holiday!

Tom Mateny, Secretary

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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Report on the Field Trip on the South Bank of the James River, Saturday, March 26, 2011

On a cool and cloudy Saturday five members walked on the Buttermilk Trail from the Reedy Creek Parking lot to the Boulevard Bridge. We returned along the River Trail to our starting point. We observed the following wild flowers in bloom: Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), Cut-leaved Toothwort (*Cardamine concatenata*), Slender Toothwort (*Cardamine heterophylla*), Early Saxifrage (*Micranthes virginensis*), Yellow Corydalis (*Corydalis flavula*). A Trillium probably planted next to the trail was observed but it was not in bloom nor was the Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), Yellow-flowered Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*) or Alumroot (*Heuchera americana*) seen. The Saxifrage and Cut-leaved Toothwort were especially beautiful being prolific in a few places such as rock outcrops for the Saxifrage and bottom lands for the Toothwort. Both have a hard time struggling against the invasives such as the vines: English Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), Wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*), and the shrub, Amur River Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackei*) introduced as ornamentals from China which have taken over so much of the park. Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria officinalis*), a herb introduced from Europe, was very prominent trailside in disturbed areas. One surprise was the presence of Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*) in certain wet areas. I had never seen this in this part of the park although there is a lot of it in the Pony pasture area. Certain trees had started to

bloom: Box elder (*Acer negundo*), Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*), Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), and Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*). Spice Bush (*Lindera benzoin*) had mostly finished blooming. Although the hike was long and difficult in some places, the participants enjoyed it and learned to recognize some plants.



Left: Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*)



Right: Early Saxifrage (*Micranthes virginiensis*) formerly *Saxifraga virginiensis*.



Far right: Cutleaf Toothwort (*Cardamine concatenata*) formerly called *Dentaria laciniata*.

Field Trip to the South Bank of the James River April 2, 2011

Six people joined leader Ernie Wilson for this walk. The participants all brought climbing sticks and sturdy boots so were well prepared for walk. Some of them were from out-of-town from as far away as Florida.

The walk started at the parking lot at the end of Texas Court and returned there. After showing the group the half dozen winter annual weeds on the side of the parking lot all of which originated in Europe, Ernie led the group down the hill and across the steel bridge over the Kanawha Canal and CSX rail line. The woods are low and wet and heavily enveloped in invasive East Asian exotics such as Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), Amur River Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*), Common Privet (*Ligustrum vulgaris*) and especially English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) which has climbed many of the trees and bloomed. Asian Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) is unfortunately common in this area and has climbed and overcome many trees upstream from Texas Beach. Even so a number of wild flowers are relatively common in spots. Golden Ragwort (*Packera aurea*) and Spring Cress (*Cardamine bulbosa*) had started to bloom in certain wet areas. Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) and Yellow Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*) were common in certain areas where the ivy was cleared out or not present yet. May-apple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) some already with buds on them poked its leaves through the ivy mats in seemingly in defiance of them. Smooth Rock Cress (*Arabis laevigata*) was found here and there beside the path. Cut-leaved Toothwort (*Cardamine concatenata*) was present in some areas but the plants we saw had few blooms. Yellow Corydalis (*Corydalis flavula*) was fairly common but its relative Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) in full bloom was a real find because of its rarity in the park. A number of shrubs were in bloom. For the most part Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) had finished blooming while the Bladder Nut (*Staphylea trifolia*) was just starting to bloom. Although the Black Haw (*Viburnum prunifolium*) was a common shrub none seemed to have formed blooms. Many trees were in full bloom these included Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), Box Elder (*Acer negundo*). Since these trees are for the most part wind pollinated none has spectacular blooms. The PawPaw (*Asimina triloba*) had just started to open its brownish flowers. They are small and not present all over the branches. They are usually overlooked.



The weather was sunny and cool, just about perfect for a nature walk. Because the walk involved climbing up and down stairs and hills and went a considerable distance, we decided to end it about half way through the intended walk and do the rest of the walk two weeks later. All the participants enjoyed the walk and were greatly diverted by the antics of Ernie's dog Chester who insisted on jumping in and out of the cold water of the James in pursuit of a stick thrown in by one of the hikers.

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Some of the Plants we saw along the trail:



A. Yellow Corydalis (*Corydalis flavula*).
B. Flower from Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*).
C. Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*)
D. Bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*)



E. Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*)

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