

THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

May 2004

Spiderwort
(*Tradescantia virginiana*)



MAY PICNIC AND PLANT WALK

Instead of a May meeting we will have a picnic at Richard Moss's house at 12565 Brook Lane in Chester, starting at 12:00 noon on **Saturday, May 1st**. Bring a dish to share, soft drinks will be provided. We will also have a plant walk in the woods in back of his house where we will have the opportunity to see many of the plants seen in the April presentation. The ladyslippers should be in bloom.

Directions: I 95 south or North, Take Exit 61B, Route 10 West to Chester, Go through 2 traffic lights and turn left at the third traffic light on to Curtis Street. Turn left from Curtis street on to Petersburg Street and turn left on to Brook Lane which is the second street on the left (The Brook lane turn is hard to see, but it is a little before a 25MPH speed limit sign.) Richard's house is the 6th house on the left.

From the west you can take Route 10 East to Chester, then turn on to Curtis street and follow the above directions, or take Route 288 to Chester Road (Route 144), then to turn left on Route 10 at Chester and turn right on Curtis street and follow the directions above. See the maps on page 2.

CHAPTER NEWS

The plant walk on April 3 led by John Roberts to see the Trout lilies in bloom was spectacular. The site was on the flood plain near where the North and South Anna Rivers join and was literally carpeted with Trout lilies. Cold weather, however, had slowed the trout lilies so only a few were in full bloom but the Virginia bluebells, spring beauties and assorted other plants were in bloom so it was an impressive site.



Photographs from the Trout Lily walk:

1. Trout lily (*Erythronium americanum*)
2. Virginia Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*)
3. Yellow Corydalis (*Corydalis flavula*)
4. Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*)
5. The field leaving the trout lily site - We saw an immature eagle there.

MINUTES OF THE April 1, 2004 MEETING

Dean Walton, President, called the meeting to order.

Old Business: The Annual May picnic will be on Saturday, May 1 at 12:00 p.m. at Richard Moss's house. Bring a dish to share at the pot-luck lunch. Directions to Richard's house will be in the next newsletter.

John announced that he will be conducting a plant walk to see a big stand of trout lilies on private property in Ashland on Saturday, April 3, 2004, at 1:30 p.m. He gave directions to meet him at the Dairy Queen in Ashland to visit the site. If it is raining, the walk will be rescheduled for Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

The clean-up at Lee Park in Petersburg is scheduled for Saturday, April 17, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. Meet at the picnic shelter. After the clean-up, we will have lunch and then walk out to the wildflower preserve.

New Business: A fungal disease called Sudden Oak Death has been introduced into Virginia from California. A large plant nursery in Southern California called Monrovia has shipped infected shrubs to retail sites throughout the United States. Fourteen nurseries in Virginia have received plants from this nursery. This fungus can infect most woody stem shrubs, including native plant species, particularly oaks. Department of Agriculture inspectors are trying to track down all the plants shipped from the nursery and in considering a state- wide quarantine if the increased federal inspections do not seem to be adequate.

Program: Richard Moss gave a beautiful slide show of some of the wildflowers that he has photographed on his Chester property. Hopefully we will be able to see some of these lovely flowers on our May plant walk. Some of the flowers that he presented were the pink azalea, bayberry, arrowhead, crane fly orchid, fringe tree, and Devil's Walking Stick.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Peggy Furqueron, Secretary

Maps to the Picnic at Richard Moss's house:

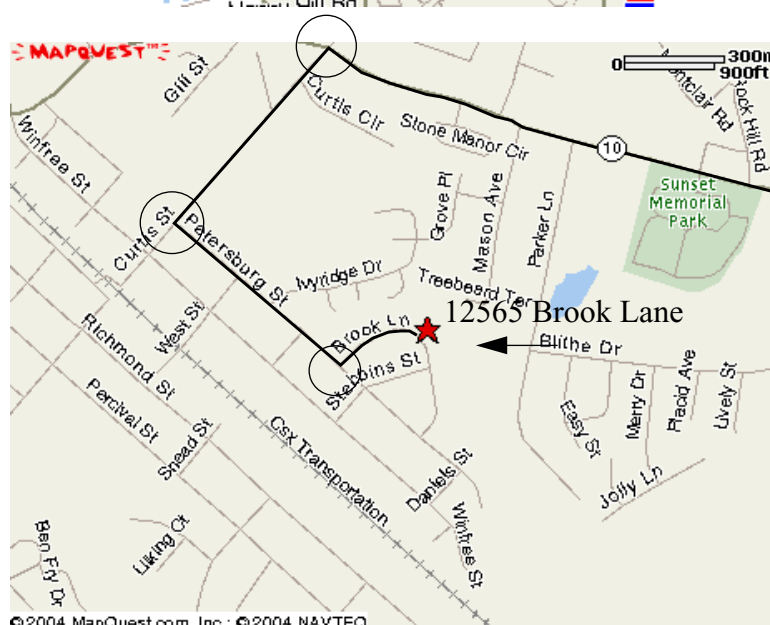
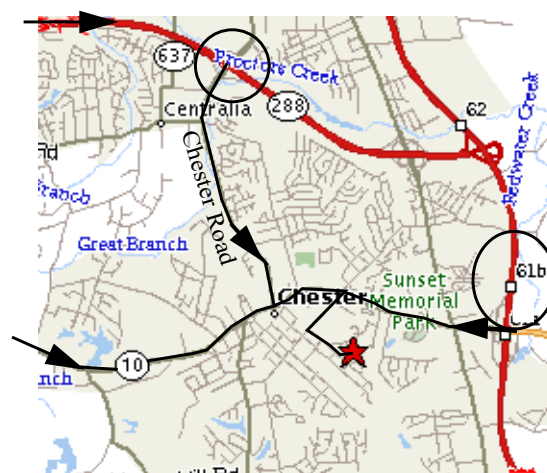
The Pocahontas Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

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

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NATIVE PLANT OF THE MONTH

Bluets (*Houstonia caerulea*)



Bluets, also called Quaker-ladies or Innocence, occur throughout the eastern United States in deciduous woods, old fields, and roadsides but are noticeable only when they flower in the spring. Look for these delicate but colorful blossoms in lawns, clearings, and forest margins, in March and April. These tiny perennial plants grow only about six inches tall and are often much shorter. The flowering stems arise in tufts from slender rhizomes, with a rosette of tiny leaves at the base, and even smaller leaves in pairs on the stems. Each stem ends in a single flower. They grow in open shade and well-drained acidic poor soil often associated with moss.

The flower is a narrow tube crowned by four lobes spreading sharply at right angles, about one-half inch across. However, occasionally there are 5 lobed flowers as in the lower right photo. The species name means “sky blue” and the flowers are often that color; but they may be a clear white, or shades of blue and lilac. The center or “eye” is a bright yellow. A single clump may have a dozen or so flowering stalks. These flowers are among those which botanists term dimorphous (meaning occurring in two forms) and refers to the stamens and pistils. These vary in size, some flowers having a tall pistil and short stamens, others short pistil and tall stamens. The blossoms with the tall pistils must be fertilized with pollen from the tall stamens, and the short pistils are only acted upon by the short stamens. Thus fertile seeds are produced only by cross-pollination between plants with different style lengths. This is an interesting example of a safeguard against self-pollination.

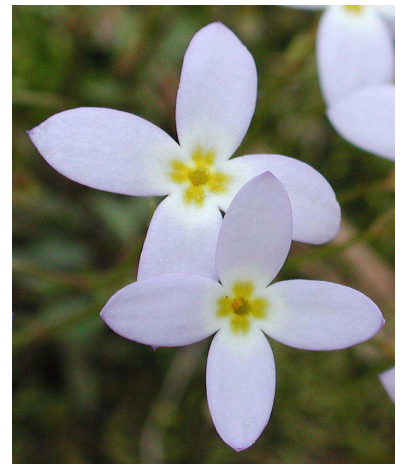
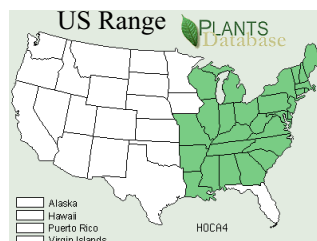
Bluets are common and easily transplanted, but may be challenging to get established. They seem to need lean soil and because of their diminutive size, freedom from competition.

References:

1. <http://www.sunlightgardens.com/pages/1265.html>
2. <http://www.auburn.edu/~deancar/wfnotes/bluet.htm>

Photographs: Richard Moss

Range data: USDA, NRCS. 2004. The PLANTS Database, Version 3.5 (<http://plants.usda.gov>). National Plant Data Center, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA.



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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Chester, VA 23831

