

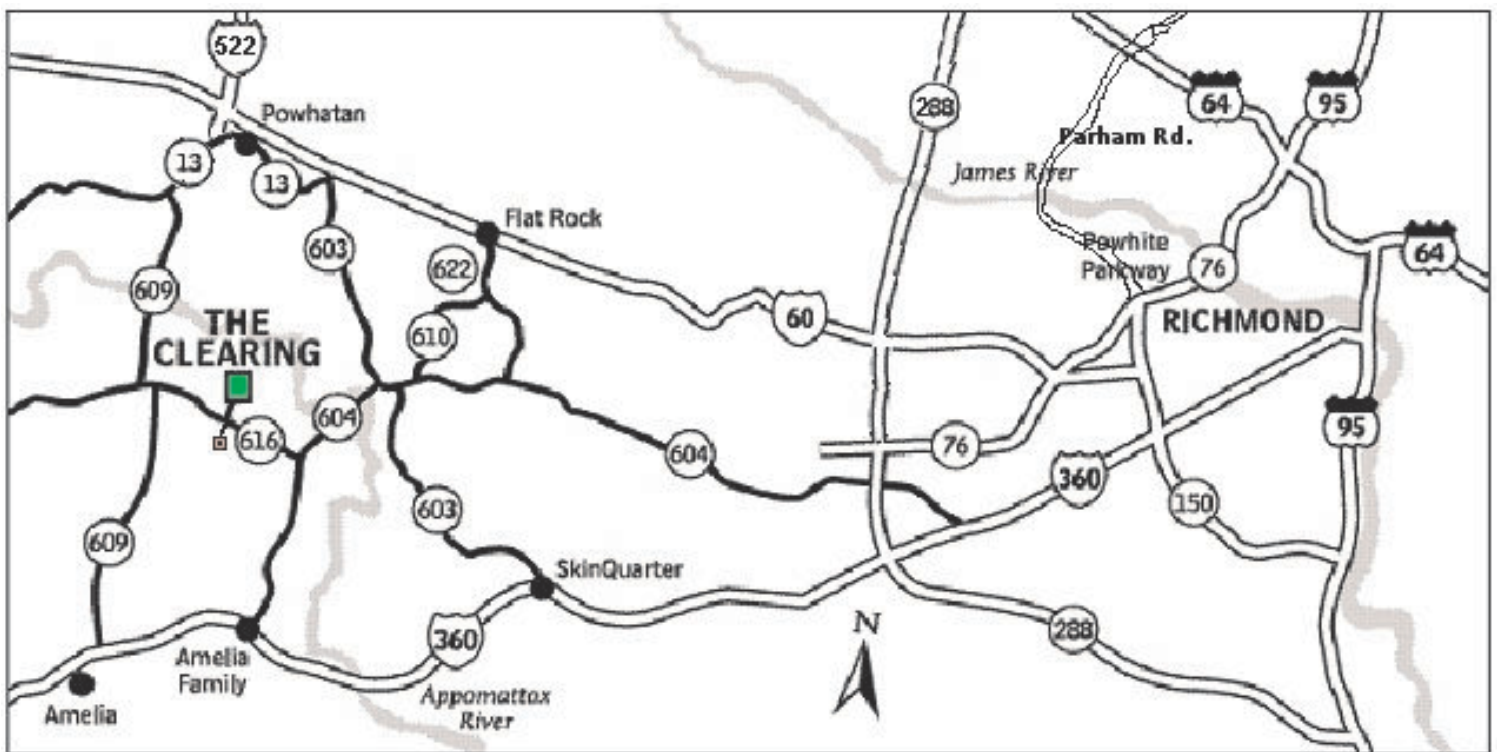
THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

May 2015



**Chapter Picnic 12:30 PM,
Saturday May 2, 2015
at The Clearing in Amelia County
Bring a dish to Share
We will eat, then walk.**

Directions: From points North or East of Richmond: From 95 South or 64, take 195 South to Powhite Parkway (Route 76). Stay on Powhite Pkwy and take the Midlothian Turnpike exit-Route 60 West (Toll 25 cents). Travel West on Route 60 for approx. 11 miles after passing Chesterfield Town Center. Alternately you can use Parham Rd/ Chippenham Pkwy. (route 150) to Route 60 (17 miles on route 60 to Flat Rock) or route 288 to Route 60 (8 miles on 60 to Flat Rock). When you come to Flat rock Village Shopping Center, Turn LEFT at the light onto SR622 (Dorset Rd)



Suggest using odometer from this point on

Go 1.5 miles to SR610 (Schroeder Rd) Turn RIGHT on 610 and go 3.3 miles to SR604 (Genito Rd) Turn RIGHT on 604 and go 3.5 miles to SR616 (Genito Rd again). Turn RIGHT on 616 and go 2.4 miles to a gravel road on the right with a white farmhouse across the road on the left. This is the entrance to the Clearing. Turn RIGHT and follow the road about 0.7 miles to the lodge.

From Route 360 (Hull St): Travel east or west on Hull Street to Amelia County (Route 360). Turn onto Route 604 at Chula Rd (right turn coming from Richmond). Go 4.5 miles to SR616 (Genito Rd). Turn LEFT on 616 and go 2.4 miles to a gravel road on the right with a white farmhouse across the road on the left. This is the entrance to the Clearing. Turn RIGHT and follow the road about 0.7 miles to the lodge.



Announcements:

Field trip at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 6 at the property of Mauro Correa at 5900 Upham Drive, Richmond 23227 (not very far from the Botanic Garden). Home number is 804 - 262-9726. Drive in and there is parking space in driveway.

Mount Rogers Naturalist Rally, May 8-9

Every year the Naturalist Rally Committee assembles a wide variety of excellent field trips with leaders who are experts in their field. Their goal is to make the Mount Rogers area ecology understandable and interesting for everyone, from inquisitive amateurs to accomplished naturalists.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

Friday, May 8, 5:00 PM - Registration begins, Konnarock Community Center. Fee is \$8 for each person 18 or older.

Registration online is greatly appreciated!

5:30-6:30 PM: Chicken supper prepared and served by the Konnarock Community Association at the Konnarock Community Center. Prepaid reservations for supper are required. Tickets for the dinner will be limited to 150 so make sure you reserve early. The cost is \$13.50 per plate.

6:45 PM: Welcome, introductions of field trip leaders, last-minute announcements. 7:30 PM: Speaker: Jennifer Frick-Ruppert
Saturday, May 9

7:00 AM: Continuing registration. Anyone who has not registered should do so.

8:00 AM: Morning field trips. Signs will be on the building for the field trips, so meet at the one you are interested in.

11:30 AM: Lunch break (hot dogs and drinks are for sale at the center or bring your own.) 1:00 PM: Afternoon field trips
For more information and to purchase tickets, see: <http://blueridgediscoverycenter.org/mrnrr/>

Presidents Message

Come to the picnic on May 2!! We can celebrate several chapter achievements.

We have exceeded our commitment to Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens under our 2014-2015 Memo of Understanding. This is due for renewal at the end of June for 2015-2016. We'll continue the removal of invasive plants in The Vale.

We are adding new members each month. Our meeting programs are already arranged through January 2016. Topics vary from special plant communities to plans for marketing native plants to keeping bees happy. Now, we need to expand

participation in the chapter activities beyond attending programs.

We have active chairs for projects, field trips and programs. We have two representatives on the planning team for removing invasive plants from James River Park. We have established a committee to work with Henrico County in getting more native plants incorporated into county approved projects. We need more folks to join these efforts.

As I said last month, I expect to carry the momentum generated this year well into next year with leadership from several new officers. If you have ideas, computer skills, suggestions, or a little time to contribute to Pocahontas Chapter, please contact me or one of the other officers or committee chairs. I look forward to seeing you at the chapter picnic on May 2!

Field Trip to Douthat State Park

Unexpectedly cold! That was our first impression. Clearly, it affected the plants, too. Tulip poplars were beginning to leaf out,

Photo: On left, Partridge Berry (*Mitchella Repens*) and on right, Gaywings (*Polygala paucifolia*).



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..... Catharine Tucker
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Vice President..... Leslie Allanson
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Secretary..... Irene Caperton
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Chapter Website

pocahontaschapter-vnps.org

but the oaks were just beginning to bloom. On Sunday, we hiked east up the Beard's Gap Trail. While trout lilies and bloodroot had finished blooming and had developing fruit, there were lots of flowers along the stream, tucked among the mosses at tree bases, and clinging to rocks on the hillsides. While the trail follows the stream and climbs gently, the hillsides on either side are steep, one facing mostly north and the other south. The contrast in types and amounts of vegetation was striking.

On Monday, we hiked west up the trail to Blue Suck Falls, finding some of the same plants as the day before but also some new ones.

Our many thanks to Andy Wiechorek for planning and leading this exploration. We think Andy is at least half mountain goat, climbing up steep slopes and wet rocks to confirm what we were seeing. If you want to hear more about what we saw, come to the picnic!!



Catharine White Tucker

Minutes of the Pocahontas Chapter, VNPS April 2, 2015

Welcome: Chapter President Catharine Tucker called the meeting to order and welcomed members and guests.

Announcements: Catharine called attention to the new list of invasive plants from the DCR and the LGBG librarian "wish list" and the map of the Bryant Park self guided tour. All posted at the back of the room. Catharine noted April 1 was Poison Ivy Day. The Lewis Ginter work days this month will be April 7 and 19.

The 2015 Mount Rogers Naturalist Rally will be May 8-9. Registration and event details are on the Mount Rogers Naturalist Rally web site.

Program: Chapter Vice President, Leslie Allanson introduced Aaron Proctor, District Wild Life Biologist, DGIF. His presentation covered the topic of feral pigs in VA. The definition of a feral pig is one that is wild or with no proof of ownership. Pigs have been domesticated for about 9000 years. They are a very hardy livestock animal. They came to Florida with Desoto in 1539.

Female hogs are sexually mature by about 6 months old and produce about 2 lighters per year in the wild with an average of 6 piglets/litter. Pigs have no defined breeding season. At 6 months a pig will weigh about 50 pounds; by 2 years of age it will weigh about 250 pounds. The feral pig population is growing exponentially. They have no natural predator enemies. Studies of closed feral pig colony indicate that in order to keep the numbers from increasing, 70% of the existing population needs to be removed.

In the 1980's, an increase in distribution and pockets of population were reported. Pigs do not migrate. Established populations could be accounted for historically by livestock abandonment and intentional importation. The new sightings and colony establishment has been attributed to the increased popularity in wild pig hunting and the deliberate translocation of feral hogs.

With no natural predators and new food sources, the populations thrive. The result is: Ecological damage including competition for food with other species, damage to nests, habitats, including wetland habitat and the frogs, salamanders, sea turtles, eggs of all kinds, ponds, levees, fences, irrigation equipment, and soil erosion. Pigs root with their snouts. Rooting results in enormous financial losses to farm crops, land, equipment and even livestock. Then there are the diseases spread by swine: Swine brucellosis, several kinds of internal parasites and in total more than 40 internal and external diseases. Feral Swine are a noxious invasive species.

At this time the state of VA is behind the curve in instituting policies to manage the problem. It took the state of Missouri 10 years to get the statutes in place to control the pig population. At this time, we are only in the beginning of the process.

Communication with other states' agencies who are dealing with feral pig population problems, developing policies which have proven effective elsewhere and educating the public as to the crisis nature of the feral pig problem is where we (VA) are now.

There is a VA Feral Hog Stakeholder Group meeting scheduled for September 2015. Check out The Sounder: A Newsletter of the Virginia Feral Hog Action Team at the VADGIF.

Business Meeting: Catharine read the letter from Nancy Mears thanking the Chapter for hosting the Winter Workshop last month. The Treasurer, Richard Moss reported that there were no expenditures last month. He donates the newsletter costs. Pocahontas members number 109; including new member Mauro Correa.

Announcements: Leslie announced the next Sunday Strolls at Dorey will be April 12 and May 17 at 2:00 pm. Contact her at 804-248-1578 for more information.

Andy Wichorek (e-mail awichorek1@verizon.net or phone 804-337-2707) reminded members of the Douthat State Park field trip Sunday April 26. If you would like to participate, please contact him.

Annual potluck Picnic: Sat. May 2, 12:30 at The Clearing in Amelia County.

Privet Removal work days at Lewis Ginter: Tuesday April 7th 9:30am to 12:30pm and Sunday April 19th 12:00pm to 3:00pm.

Old Business: Leslie reported that she met with the Henrico County Planning Commission. The goal is to encourage the county to promote the use of more natives in the landscape. They listened to her proposal and agreed to encourage more use of natives in commercial landscape designs. They noted that 80% of the Varina Library plantings are native plants. They will also give us access to past plans so that we may offer suggestions for alternative native plants for those used. In order to educate the planners, we are responsible for assembling an information package for the planning commission. Leslie is seeking volunteers for that.

New Business: The LGBG Librarian wish list for books the chapter donates annually totalled \$184.13. The motion was made by Richard Moss, Seconded by John Hayden and approved by those present to donate that amount. Catharine reminded the members to take advantage of our access to the library and commented on the wide variety topics of interest to us available there. We have been approached to be a part of the development of a unified plan to remove invasives from James River Park. The Riverine Master Naturalists, The Richmond Tree Stewards and the Friends of the J.R. Park are all a part of the effort. The goal is to get a large number of coordinated 'boots on the ground'. Those present agreed that we should join this endeavor.

The Tom Middle School Rain Garden Project is looking for volunteers. Contact Ashley Moulton.

James Shelton invited our members to be a part of iNaturalist.org – “a site where you can record what you see in nature, meet other nature lovers, and learn about the natural world.”

Catharine is seeking volunteers for the chapter nominating committee. If you are interested in an officer position, please contact Catharine.

To date, the following speakers are scheduled for the 2015-16 year: Jim Fowler, Carol Heiser and Kristy Orcutt.

Respectfully submitted,

Daune Poklis

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