

For updates and more information, go to www.scnps.org

UPSTATE happenings

NOV 2009

Tuesday, October 27
Field Trip: Photography Workshop
Tentative Destination: DuPont Forest, NC
Noted nature photographer, Bill Robertson, assisted by NPS member Bill Sharpton, will lead a photography workshop designed to hone your skills in capturing fall scenes in the field.
This field trip is full!

October-November: Native Plant Seed Collection Field Trips

We will tour country roadsides, utility rights-of-way and national forests collecting native plant seed (*yes, you may keep a few for your garden*) in Abbeville, Aiken, Berkeley, Chesterfield, Edgefield, Greenwood, McCormick, Oconee, Pickens, and Union Counties. There are multiple pickup points for each field trip, so — *Select a day, invite a friend, and sign up!*

If you would like to participate, please register at least one week in advance via email (catboyz@nctv.com) or phone (864-979-8034). Provide date(s), name, phone # (cell phone if available), where you will meet the van, number of participants.

SCNPS will provide transportation to and from collection sites. The following is an approximate travel schedule for the vans. Volunteers may meet the vans at any location indicated as a meeting site. We will eat lunch at nearby restaurants. You might want to pack snacks and water.

Stringer cell phone: 864-979-3169

Saturday, Oct 31, Oconee & Pickens Counties
7:30 Meet at the Caboose at the SC Botanical Garden in Clemson, 8:15 at the Ingles in Westminster (1 day)

Sunday, Nov 1, Union & Chester Counties
7:30 Meet at Hardee's @ US 123/US 178 in Liberty, 8:15 Home Depot @ Woodruff Rd in Greenville (1 day)

Saturday, Nov 7, Greenwood & Abbeville Counties
7:15 Meet at Hardee's @ US 123/US 178 in Liberty, 7:45 Anderson Kmart (1 day)

Sunday, Nov 8, Edgefield & McCormick Counties
7:15 Meet at Hardee's @ US 123/US 178 in

... continued on page 2, Upcoming Events

a web resource focusing on

& naturalized Native Plants OF THE CAROLINAS & GEORGIA

Part of the joy of discovering an unfamiliar native plant or flower is learning about your find — its names, requirements, growth habits, plant community, and so on. The ideal plant-identification and education system is a field trip led by a knowledgeable, easy-to-understand plant expert, but you don't have that advantage every time you find a new plant, so you need good books and websites.

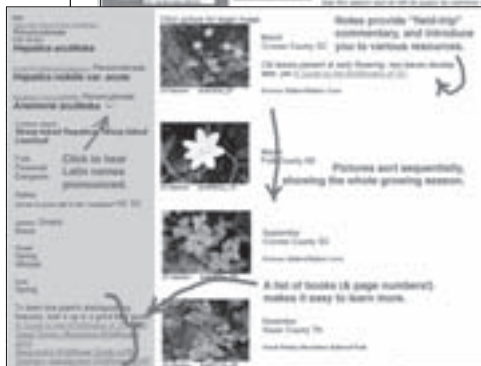
If you could have a website that's almost as helpful as an ever-present plant expert, what would you want it to contain? Certainly, it needs to provide accurate botanical information in easy-to-understand language and a way to find a plant when you haven't any idea of its genus or family. It must include clear plant pictures. A pronunciation guide for the Latin names would be a big help. And how about simple explanations of those peculiar terms that botanists use to describe plant parts?

There is a website with all that and more. It's called www.NameThatPlant.net, and its designer is the Native Plant Society's own Janie Marlow.

In a way, Janie's website began on her hikes in the mountains and piedmont. She loved seeing and photographing plants and flowers and she always came home eager to identify her new finds. She pestered knowledgeable people with questions, and she turned to books and websites. There were many useful sites, but Janie never found her ideal plant website. So — after several pushes in that direction — she decided she would just have to build it.

While Janie is quick to credit the plant experts, photographers, and others

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Janie Marlow

www.NameThatPlant.net

Tuesday, Nov 17, 7:00 pm

Founders Hall, Southern Wesleyan University, Central

For more information, visit www.scnps.org

Carolina Prairies...

Early 20th century history textbooks painted the vision of the first settlers encountering endless deep forest from the eastern seaboard to the Mississippi via the “traveling squirrel” myth. This does not square with the images of “leagues of savanna” reported by the very first Europeans to explore Georgia and the Carolinas. The conquistador Hernando de Soto reported (1540-41) large native villages, extensive agriculture, and large expanses of grassland with sparse trees along his route (modern-day Augusta-Orangeburg-Columbia-Camden-Spartanburg). He also reported extensive evidence of regular landscape burning by the natives. Unfortunately, the large native populations crashed rapidly due to widespread European diseases brought by the conquistadores.

When Charleston was settled in 1670, there was still considerable grassland in the Carolinas. There arose a booming beef cattle industry, when British settlers brought British-breed cattle over to exploit the extensive grasslands. At one time South Carolina was reported as having the highest per-capita wealth of any of the American colonies, thanks in large part proceeds from the beef cattle industry.

William Bartram (240 years after de Soto) traveled through Abbeville, Anderson and Oconee Counties, and reported “grassy bases of the rising hills”; “delightful strawberry plains”; and “vast crops of excellent grass and herbage fit for pasturage and hay”. He also listed genera of forbs that are indicative of open prairie-like grassland: crownbeard, blackeyed Susan, larkspur, groundnut, turtlehead, thicketbean, coreopsis, asters, goldenrods, beggarticks, Eupatoriums, sunflowers and compass plant.

Unfortunately, except for one entry (eastern gamagrass), he only refers to grasses in the generic sense, which oversight I attribute to his (and his patrons’) bias towards “ornamental” species.

Where are the prairies today? We can find small areas of prairie and prairie-like communities only where regular disturbance of the succession process occurs. Thus we find prairie-like communities where the land is mowed at intervals of at most a couple of years, like road and railroad corridors, and utility rights-of-way.

The best example of a prairie in the Carolinas is the Suther Prairie near Concord, NC, where a low-lying hayfield can only be mowed in the driest part of summer.

But if you travel down most any country road, you can find prairie grass and forb species, like Indiangrass, little bluestem, coreopsis, compass plant, baptisias, and leadplant. The potential is there to restore prairie communities, if we invest the time to collect and plant seeds, and maintain the appropriate mowing or burning schedule. It is certainly worth the effort. — *Bill Stringer*

On Dec 5 we'll continue our prairie restoration efforts at Conestee Nature Park. [See calendar.](#)

Upcoming Events

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Liberty, 7:45 Anderson Kmart, 8:45 Abbeville Square (1 day)

Saturday, Nov 14, 8:30 am

Plant Rescue at Twin Chimneys/Planting at Conestee Nature Park

Rain date and/or continuation: Dec 5

We will rescue plants from Twin Chimneys in the morning (*yes, volunteers do get to take a few plants home :-)*; in the afternoon we will plant in the grounds surrounding Lake Conestee Nature Park's newly renovated office building.

A carpool will leave at 8:00 am from the Home Depot parking lot on South Pleasantburg Dr in Greenville. For those coming from other areas and wanting to carpool, meet at the Clock Restaurant on SC Hwy 25 south just past the 185 toll road, ready to depart at 8:10.

We'll be at the Greenville County landfill at 8:30 and remove plants until about 11:00, then have lunch at the Clock. (If you cannot be there in the morning, you can meet us at the Conestee site a little before 1:00.) At Conestee we will put these plants into the ground, and plan to be done by mid-afternoon.

Please sign up with Bill Sharpton, gsharpton@aol.com This will allow us to better plan the day's agenda, and it is the only way we can know whom to contact if there is a change of plans, rain delay, etc! Be sure to provide a phone number!

Bring gloves, shovel or sharp-shooter; wear long pants.

Directions to the Twin Chimneys Landfill plant rescue site: From Greenville, take US Hwy 25 South to Ware Place (where 418 & 8 intersect 25). Go south approximately 7.5 miles; turn left onto West Ridgeway; bear right onto Traynham Rd.

Directions to Conestee Nature Park office (601 Fork Shoals Rd): From the intersection of I-85 and South Pleasantburg Dr/Hwy 291 (Exit 46), follow SC 291 South for 1.1 miles and turn left at the traffic light onto Old Augusta Rd; after 0.4 miles turn left (gas station on corner) onto Fork Shoals Rd. Follow Fork Shoals Rd 0.5 miles then turn left into the Park Office Trailhead parking lot at the junction of Fork Shoals Rd and White Horse. (See map: www.conestee.org)

Signs will be posted.

Hey-where-are-you-guys phone number for the day: Cathy Foster 864-202-5062.

October-November: Native Plant Seed Collection Field Trips

...continued

Saturday, Nov 14, Aiken County

7:00 Meet at Hardee's @ US 123/US 178 in Liberty, 7:30 Anderson Kmart, 8:30 Abbeville Square (1 day)

Sunday, Nov 15, Chesterfield County (Carolina Sandhills NWR)

6:30 Meet at Hardee's @ US 123/US 178 in Liberty, 7:00 Home Depot @ Woodruff Rd in Greenville, 8:30 at a site to be determined in Columbia (1 day)

Tuesday, Nov 17, 7:00 pm

www.NameThatPlant.net — a web resource focusing on Native & Naturalized Plants of the Carolinas & Georgia

See story page 1.

October-November: Native Plant Seed Collection Field Trips

...continued

Saturday, Nov 21, Berkeley County
6:00 Meet at Hardee's @ US 123/US 178 in Liberty, 6:30 Home Depot @ Woodruff Rd in Greenville, 8:00 at a site to be determined in Columbia (overnite*)

Sunday, Nov 22, Berkeley County

*Unlike in the past, SCNPS cannot help with lodging this year. We will locate inexpensive lodging near the site (probably Moncks Corner).



Wednesday, December 2
Field Trip: Turkey Creek Trail in the Clemson Forest

Well-known naturalist and NPS member, John Garton, assisted by Ette Ruppert, will lead a late fall outing on the newly designated and marked Turkey Creek Trail in the

north Clemson Forest. Easy-to-moderate walking of 3.8 miles. We plan to offer more seasonal hikes on other Clemson Forest Trails during this next year.

To register, call Janine McCreery at 864-238-3253 and tell her your name, phone number, and email address. Outing limited to 20 participants. Preference given to paid-up NPS members.

Meet at 9:30 at the Forest gate. Bring lunch and a drink. Directions:

If coming from Clemson, turn left off Rt 133 at a water tower just past Maws Grocery Store, a few miles north of Clemson, past Daniel High School, on the way to Six Mile.

Folks arriving from Hwy 11 should take 133 south through Six Mile and a few miles beyond to the right turn just before Maws Grocery Store.

Carpooling is encouraged: Greenville folks can meet at the Walmart @ 6119 White Horse Rd, in the corner of the parking lot nearest Ryans, leaving there at 8:30 am. Travel on Hwy123 to Clemson. Turn right onto Rt 133 at the railroad viaduct on Clemson Blvd.

Saturday, Dec 5, 8:30 am
Prairie Restoration & Invasive Species Work Day at Conestee Nature Park
Plant Rescue at Twin Chimneys
More details in the next newsletter.

A HUGE THANK YOU

to all those who helped with the Fall plant sale! All that lifting, loading, and labeling paid off in an attractive and enticing display of native plants for our customers. When the buyers came on Saturday, your suggestions and help made it easy for them to take home almost everything! You have promoted the Society's outreach and education missions, and you helped generate funds that are used for all our conservation work.

Volunteers are the key to success in all our projects. You make the Native Plant Society what it is. Thanks again for a job well done.

— Susan Lochridge, plant sale chair

Clemson Forest Meadow

Ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes*) at the Clemson Forest meadow.

PHOTOS BY CATHY FOSTER



On Sept 23 SCNPS members joined hands with Upstate Master Naturalists in the Clemson Forest Meadow. A great turn-out! We pulled privet and multiflora rose.

Station Cove



PHOTO BY JOHN GARTON

SCNPS volunteers are continuing cooperative efforts with SC State Park Service and the US Forest Service at Station Cove, and others are joining in. Some of the most recent work has involved placement of two routed wooden signs that ask visitors to stay on the trails (and thus help protect the fragile and unique flora of the area).

The photo shows one of the signs in place and two volunteers, John Landers (left) and Jim Dunlap. John, who is an active member of the Foothills Group of the Sierra Club, made the signs as a contribution to the overall Station Cove Trail project.

a web resource focusing on

& naturalized Native Plants

OF THE CAROLINAS & GEORGIA ... continued from page 1

who have contributed the information that NameThatPlant presents, her own skills and hard work deserve major credit too. Janie brings an ideal combination of talent, training, and experience to the task.

Janie understands how design can subtly encourage a viewer to keep reading or enhance comprehension, because she's worked as a graphic designer. She understands the power of combining database and website because she's built a customized inventory database. She is fascinated by the beauty of native plants and has a well-catalogued collection of native plant photos. In 2003, she continued to expand a network of "plant people" with knowledge to share, purchased a domain name, and set out to learn how to build a database-driven website.

Janie describes NameThatPlant.net as a work in progress. If so, it's truly a big and very useful "work in progress," currently featuring 2559 plants and 8543 photos. For 2405 plants, it displays maps showing physiographic provinces within the Carolinas and Georgia in which the plant has been documented. For 1181 plants, it provides pronunciation of the scientific name — you can click to hear it spoken.

In November, Janie will demonstrate how www.NameThatPlant.net can help us select plants for our gardens, learn to see features which distinguish one species from another, and — along the way — painlessly build botanical vocabulary and broaden knowledge of natural communities. Plus, she'll unveil an exciting new feature! — Amy Fendley

Janie Marlow earned a BA in art from Furman University, completed graduate courses in graphic arts at Clemson University, and is a member of SCNPS, the South Carolina Association of Naturalists, Carolina Nature Photographers Association, Georgia Botanical Society, and Greater Greenville Master Gardeners Association. For 25 years she and her husband Steve owned The Map Shop in downtown Greenville.

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Upstate Chapter

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Invasive Plants: What's the Big Deal

Let's propose an arbitrary new scheme for categorization of plants. We'll group plants into three groups: 1) Native plants; 2) Introduced (or exotic) plants; and 3) Invasive plants.

Native Plants — Those plant species that have developed and evolved in place in a defined region (region is defined at several scales: region of the state, statewide, the country, the continent, etc). These species have been here a long, long time, at least since before Europeans arrived, and some for thousands of millennia. They have had plenty of time to evolve genetically in response to the climate, soils, other plants, animals and microbes of the region. Because of this evolution in place, these plants are well adapted to the environment, and are mutually compatible with the other native plants, animals and microbes found here.

Exotic Plants (aka, introduced plants) — Those plants that were brought here from other countries by immigrants to this region (*by definition, exotic is the opposite of native*). They may have been introduced as intact plants or as seeds. These plants may have been brought here intentionally for various reasons, or they may have been accidentally introduced (for instance in packing material). They may also have been brought here by individuals, government agencies, business interests, or other kinds of groups. By the way, plants continue to be introduced into this country every year.

Invasive Plants — Plants that have the ability to establish, spread, and persist within a habitat, to the point that they are able to oust established native plants & communities from a habitat. A high percentage (*but not all*) of invasive plants are exotic. The ability to invade arises from some reproductive advantage an invasive plant has, compared to the native occupants of the habitat. Invasions may occur when a habitat is disturbed, and an invasive plant is able to establish before the native vegetation is able to recover from the disturbance. An invasive plant may produce more seeds, or faster germinating seed, or have faster growing seedlings. Invasive plants may have less herbivore activity, or may be more resistant to microbial infection than the native species.

The predominance of exotic species in the invasive category is interesting. This appears to be the result of introduced plants being brought here without the suite of herbivores and pathogens that they live with in their native habitat. For instance, kudzu is not nearly so invasive in its native Japan and China. Surveys have identified 116 insect species and 7 fungal pathogens that attack kudzu in its home regions.

Other traits of invasive plants contribute to their invasiveness. Some species produce lots of fruits and seeds that are relished by birds, ie. japanese privet. This allows widespread distribution of viable seed from a single plant. Some species climb up on and over native plants and shade them out.

There are numerous other mechanisms that invasive plants use to establish their hold on native habitat.

Why should we be concerned with whether a plant is invasive or not? After all, they suck up CO₂ and release O₂, and they help to control soil erosion, just like native plants, right?

It turns out that native plants being compatible members of their ecosystem has value far beyond photosynthesis. Native plant communities are by nature very diverse. There may be 10 to 100 times more plant species in a native community than in a habitat dominated by an invasive plant. All these native species support a suite of insects and other herbivores (for example butterfly and moth larvae). These herbivores provide food for a variety of wildlife, including birds. Without the host of insect larvae, birds cannot successfully rear their young. Many mature birds eat seeds, but the nestlings require the high protein content of insect larvae to reach the stage where they can leave the nest. So the impact of invasive species goes far beyond the fact that they crowd out native plants.

We have lost millions of acres of intact native plant communities to a number of causes, not the least of which is exotic plant invasion. We cannot afford to sit around like Pollyanna here, folks! Let's get cracking!

— Bill Stringer

*On Dec 5 we'll learn techniques for removing invasive species such as Chinese Privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) & Multiflora Rose (*Rosa multiflora*). See calendar.*