



Native Plant News

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 1 ELECTONIC

JAN - FEB 2008

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Native Plant News

**Contribute! Deadline for
next issue:**

March 15, 2008

Contact the editor:

Katherine Schlosser, 1402 Bear-
hollow Rd., Greensboro, NC
27410

kathys@ncwildflower.org

NCNPS Spring Trip: Hike a Private Paradise

May 9 -11, 2008

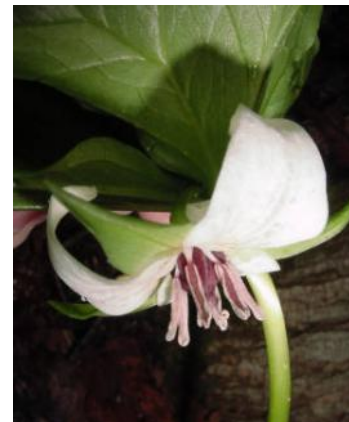
A very County, the 100th and last county to be formed in North Carolina, contains thousands of streams and creeks that flow into major rivers. Approximately three miles outside of Newland, Avery's county seat, the North Toe River runs strong between two mountains. It is here that NCNPS members and friends will have the opportunity this spring to walk and observe the thousands of plants that have grown on the mountainside, virtually undisturbed for many years.

At one time, this unique property had a well-known NC icon along the river : Tweetsie Railroad. Tweetsie's history dates back to 1866 in Tennessee; by 1896 the rail connected the communities of Cranberry, Minneapolis, Newland, Montezuma, and Saginaw (now Pineola) to Linville and later to Boone. The land in between these areas remained sparsely populated, leaving much of the mountainside flourishing. Mother Nature can be cruel, of course, and in 1940 a major flood wiped out the tracks along the Toe River. The competition of trucking spelled the end of

railroad days in these communities.

Thus these lands fell into the ownership of a local banker, Gene Penland, and later to Lennie Suttles, who gradually added more acreage to what became a trout fishing club. Fifteen years ago the Toe River Club was established and members have kept the now 200 acres of land along the mountainside in its natural state. Wildflowers and other native plants along the river continue to surprise and delight visitors to the club. Although trout fishing is the primary purpose of the club, nature watching, relaxing and enjoying the surroundings are also important to members.

On the south side of the river a separate 140 acres, known as the Levitt property, goes up to Big Haw Mountain (4,687'), while the ridge of Jake's Mountain on the club side is slightly lower. Visitors will have the opportunity to hike both sides of this river to enjoy the outstanding scenic beauty with many native plants.



*continued
on page 3...*

Trillium rugelii by Mary Baumeister, May 2007

President's letter

Tom Harville

Here I go again, wanting you to do something for the Society and for yourself!

In the October newsletter we ran a short item about signing up with Food Lion so the Society could participate in their "Lion Shop and Share" program. It really is very simple and has the potential to let us increase the number of Cullowhee scholarships that we sponsor each year. All you have to do is get one of those MVP cards from Food Lion. I had very little to do with signing up for a card because my wife handed me a little key chain card and said "use it." I'm guessing most of you have a card.

So now you go to www.foodlion.com and you will see a section called "In the Community." Under that heading you will see "Lion Shop and Share." You click on that link and it takes you to the Lion Shop and Share page. The NCNPS is already registered so all you do is click on "Register MVP Card." On the next page, you should click on "Select Organization." Select NC, then select Chapel Hill, then select NC Native Plant Society (we are under Chapel Hill because that's our official address). You should see at least part of the Society name in the organization block. Then click on "Add MVP Cards." Fill in the information and click next and your card is registered against the NCNPS.

We must have at least 25 participants and then each time someone shops and they scan your card, a portion will be returned to the Society. Simple huh? You get to help an aspiring native plant expert increase their

knowledge at one of the best conferences around by just buying groceries!

I also want you to get active! Just stop and think about the places within 5 miles of your house. I'm really lucky because I have the Swift Creek Bluffs, a Triangle Land Conservancy tract, and Hemlock Bluffs very close to my house. I try to walk each area at least 3 times a year just to watch the changes. One trip just won't do it. Carry your favorite native plant book along and ID all the plants you can. Then, here's the fun part, drag a friend along—better yet friends—hey, how about the whole chapter. Sorry, got a little carried away there. But take someone along and enjoy the plants and the woods together. And don't give that song and dance about not knowing the plants—that's why you're there, to learn.

See you in the woods,

Tom



Spring Trip Registration Form on Page 20.

Registration Deadline: April 25, 2008

NCNPS Spring Trip continued

Although one can never guarantee what will be blooming in the mountains this time of year, visitors can expect to see many plants typical of the mafic zone, according to Jerry Reese, local biologist. "Typically we find more plant diversity and some rare flora ... *Trillium rugelii* finds its most northern point of distribution here at the club property," he adds. Birders will also find many interesting types.

Both properties have a well-marked slowly ascending trail that groups will follow, alternating Saturday to Sunday so that participants will be able to walk both trails. In addition, the former Tweetsie railroad bed has created a lovely level walk alongside 7200 feet of the river, and those who do not want to climb the trails can explore an array of wildflowers at a pace that permits closer study.

In order to enjoy these hikes, participants are asked to sign a liability waiver for these private owners, and access to these properties will only be on the designated days of the hikes arranged by NCNPS.

Tentative schedule

Friday, May 9, 2008

Arrive Linville/Newland area:

- 1:00 – 5:00 Optional tour Treetops, native plant habitat of Pat and Guy Ross in Little Switzerland or Waterfalls Park Hwy.194 north of Newland)
- Dinner on your own
- 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. Meet & Greet at the Fire Dept. (no alcohol, but bring a sweet or savorie to share)

Saturday, May 10, 2008

- 9:30 a.m. - Meet at the Toe River Club
- 10:00 a.m.- 4:00 - Botanize, Toe River Club or Levitt Farm*
Lunch along the trail. Bring your own, or purchase box lunch \$8.00, which will be delivered to you along the trail.
- 6:00 p.m. – Dinner \$12.00 at Fabios, Newland (no alcohol)
- 7:30 p.m. – Presentation: "The Natural History of the Southern Appalachians, A Photographic Essay." Dr. Stewart Skeate, Department of Biology,

Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk and author of *A Nature Guide to Northwest North Carolina*. Native plant auction to follow.

- Be sure to bring plants to donate for the auction. Proceeds become part of the B. W. Wells Fund.

Sunday, May 11, 2008

- 8:30 a.m. Meet at the Toe River Club
- 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Botanize, Toe River Club or Levitt Farm*
- Depart for home or
- 2:00 – 5:00p.m. Optional visit to the Ross's garden in Little Switzerland.

*Note: Participants will alternate hikes each day. Some participants may elect to stroll along the river on the level path. We will divide the group after the meeting on Saturday a.m. Some bottled water will be provided, but we recommend that you bring extra water, snacks, sturdy walking shoes and a walking stick, binoculars, rain jacket, field guides, hat/sunscreen, insect repellent, and enthusiasm.

There are no motels in Newland; in the area are the following:

Buck Hill Campground
6401 South US 19E
828-765-7387

Elk River Campground
Elk River Rd, Elk Park
828-733-0455

Whispering Pines Campground
24 Whispering Pines, Newport
828-726-4902

Huskins Court & Cottages
2450 Highway # 221
828-733-2564

Pineola Lodging

Roan Mountain State Park Cabins & Campground
TN SR143 (423) 772-3030 for cabins, or 1-800-250-8620
(This campground does not take reservations- First come basis)

Continued on page 4.....

More trip details....

Linville Lodging

The Eseeola Lodge \$\$\$
175 Linville Avenue
800-742-6717

The Pixie Motel
US Highway 221
828-733-2597
Jim & Buddy Hughes

Other Lodging

Best Western
Banner Elk
828-898-4571

Pineola Inn
Pineola
828-733-4979

Food

Newland

Fabio's Restaurant
112 Pineola Street
828-733-1314
B (8-11) – L (11-2) – D(6-9), Tuesday – Sunday

Newland Country House
110 Pineola Street
828-737-0076
Bill & BJ Close

McDonald's

Hardee's

Linville

The Tartan Restaurant
1 Henningway St
828-733-0779
Donnie Peters

Old Hampton Store
77 Ruffin St
828-733-5213
restaurant 11-5

NCNPS Event Policy

“Members or guests who are not registered before April 25th will be accepted on the day of the hike only as space is available. To check availability, you must contact Lynda Waldrep (lyndawaldrep@aol.com or 336-643-5555 before April 25th; after May 6th call 336-708-1196, or 828-297-2943) before making plans to attend. Those who show-up without calling ahead may be disappointed to find that there are no slots available. In all cases, lunch and dinner will not be available for later-comers, as reservations are required two weeks in advance.”



*Twenty-seven cardinals
on a viburnum*



*If I ever doubted a birds' taste for viburnum berries (*Viburnum trilobum*, American cranberrybush viburnum), all doubts are erased. This morning, with the temperature at 22°, I counted 27 cardinals on one shrub—most were females.*

Directions will appear in the April newsletter.

Many thanks to Lynda and George Waldrep for making these arrangements!

NCNPS: Members in the News

This interesting bit of information is on the webpage for the Rhode Island Natural History Survey, Biodiversity Center. It was written by David Gregg, and as you see, is about our own Lisa Gould, who returned to North Carolina on her retirement two years ago.

Reprinted with permission of RIWPS

Thanks to the Rhode Island Wild Plant Society, including Karen Asher and Cheryl Cadwell, to the URI CELS Outreach Center, including Marion Gold, and to URI's W. Alton Jones Campus for help with the program. Thanks to program presenters Hope Leeson, Garry Plunkett, and Anne Wagner, and special guest Lisa Gould. A big thanks to Belmont Market, in Wakefield, for donating the refreshments.

A BIG SUCCESS FOR THE 1ST ANNUAL LISA LOFLAND GOULD NATIVE PLANT PROGRAM

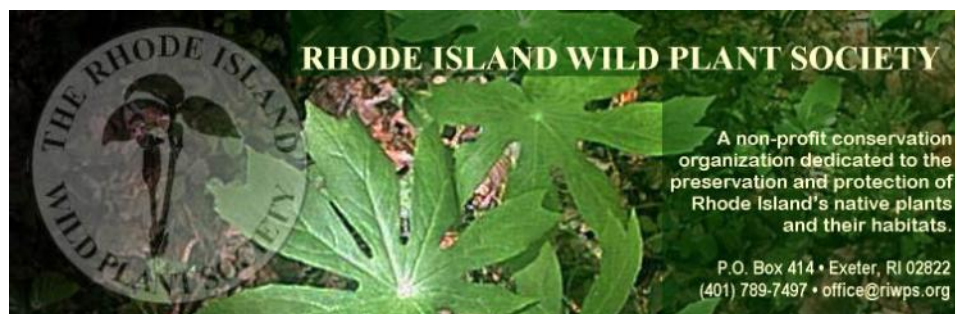
The 1st Annual Lisa Lofland Gould Native Plant Program on October 13 was a big success and a perfect beginning for what we hope will be a great permanent addition to environmental education in Rhode Island. Attendees, including Lisa Gould herself, agreed the day went wonderfully and was just the right combination of fun and information...and what's better than fun information? To read more about the Barberry control demonstration plots featured in the presentation go to that page on the invasive species portal.

Invasive Control Demonstration Project

Thirty people attended, including science students from N. Kingstown High School. All together, the event raised another \$160 for the LLGNPP fund, bringing the total to \$10,742! This fund is now invested with the Rhode Island Foundation where it will grow and provide income for more programs. We also raised awareness of the Nettie Jones Preserve and the beautiful W. Alton Jones Campus.



Photo by Erik Endrulat.

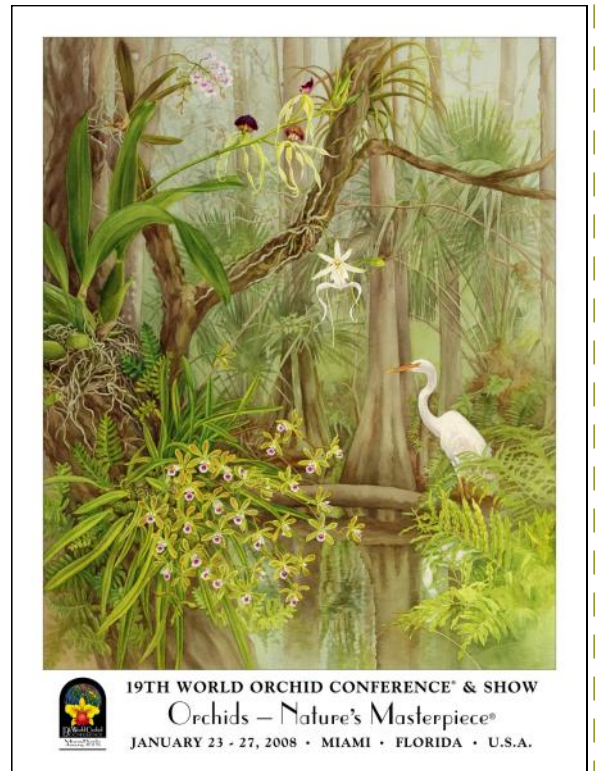


NCNPS: More Members in the News

David McAdoo, Triad Chapter member and co-founder of the Native Orchid Conference (with Mark Rose), was recently awarded a large glass trophy for the **best educational exhibit** at the 19th World Orchid Conference, “Orchids—Nature’s Masterpiece.” The NC group also won another award for “best display in their category” along with a bronze medal for the display. The Conference was held in Miami, Florida the last week of January.

Folks, this was a big deal. This Conference, held every three years in a different country, had 72 speakers representing 18 countries. There were 18 lectures daily, over the course of four days. This was no small potatoes meeting!

The photo below shows the exhibit with Robert Fuchs, owner of RF Orchids who served as chairman of the 19th World Orchid Conference, and the trophies on the floor beside the stand.



The winning poster for the conference was designed by renowned artist Angela Mirro. Her original painting depicts The Fakahatchee Strand State Preserve in Florida.



News of Interest

The Eastern Native Grass Symposium is held every two years, and deals with all aspects of native grass communities and culture in Eastern North America. This meeting will be held in Columbia, SC October 7-10, 2008. A webpage with preliminary information on the Symposium, which will be updated frequently as planning proceeds.

There will be Plenary papers, volunteer presentations and field trips, and topics for all native grass interest areas. To learn more about this upcoming conference on native grasses in the Eastern US, go to www.scnps.org/engs.html.



The new One NC Naturally Conservation Planning Tool is now available online at <http://www.onencnaturally.org> under *Features*. Access maps and data, download an overview brochure, or use the online map viewer.

The Natural Heritage Program at NCDENR worked with multiple partners to develop the *Conservation Planning Tool* that integrates natural resource data. Two assessment maps that show state conservation priorities are currently available: Biodiversity / Wildlife Habitat and Open Space / Conservation.

A draft Web site at <http://www.conservision-nc.net/> currently provides several functions:

- * Printable maps (requires Adobe Acrobat to view and print)
- * Interactive map viewer (use on Web; limited GIS functions)
- * GIS data download for GIS professionals (requires GIS software; full functions)

Enhancements to the map viewer are being developed and should be online shortly. Within a year, four more assessment maps will be added: Water Services, Agricultural Lands, Forest Lands, and Marine / Estuarine Resources.

The One NC Naturally Conservation Planning Tool is designed to inform land use planning efforts and conservation funding decisions throughout the state.

Funding for this effort was provided through a grant from the Natural Heritage Trust Fund.

Misty Buchanan, Botanist
 NC Natural Heritage Program
 1601 MSC, Raleigh, NC 27699-1601
 (919) 715-8700
www.ncnhp.org
misty.buchanan@ncmail.net

Big Bluetem

Little bluestem

Wiregrass



From the archives...

From Vol. II, No 4 of the North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society newsletter, February 1956

The Distribution of Wild Flowers in Relation to Plant Succession

By Dr. B. W. Wells

In the normal Piedmont upland succession few wild flowers occur in the primary crabgrass community. Many more, however, are to be found in the succeeding tall weed communities (aster, ragweed, horseweed, etc.). With the advent of the broomsedge grasses, the wild flowers are almost eliminated by the severity of root competition. The next stage involving juvenile pines is still very low in number of species but when the pines become tall and the hardwood invasion is taking place the wild flowers make a real comeback reaching their maximum in the final hardwood forests of oak and hickory on the uplands and south slopes and the beech and maple of the north slopes and low ground. Thus it may be seen clearly that for the Piedmont and mountains as well, wild flower preservation is involved in hardwood preservation.

In the mountains, the successional story is much the same except the hardwoods tend to take over the old fields and abandoned pastures more quickly. Frequently no pine stage occurs. At the high altitudes shrub and grass balds occur and these are most attractive wild flower areas. A large rhododendron bald in early June is perhaps the most beautiful natural display in the entire country.

In great contrast to the Piedmont and mountains is the situation in the lower coastal plain where a reverse succession has taken place. Here, under the impact of both the Indian and white man who initiated fires, the swamp forests on peat lands have given way to shrubs and these in turn where the peat has been destroyed and the poorly drained mineral soil exposed, have been taken over by herbaceous perennials. Most of these are extraordinarily beautiful wild flowers. These natural gardens are known locally as savannas and are without question the finest wild flower areas of

of the herbaceous type in the eastern United States. Strangely enough, to keep a savanna in full wild flower production, it must be burned every year.

Most unfortunately these fire-made savannas are few and restricted because of drainage and attempts to grow crops on them. Such has been the fate of the beautiful big Savanna near Burgaw in Pender County.



B. W. Wells (1884—1978) was a founding member of the North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society (NCNPS).

"The regenerative powers of organisms constitute one of life's most important aspects; only living things can heal their wounds. The broken or maladjusted machine is utterly helpless and completely dependent on outside forces for its repair.

But not so is life."

The Natural Gardens of North Carolina, B. W. Wells (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1932), 140.

Featured Plant: *Zigadenus* spp.

Oceanoros, *Stenanthium*, *Zygadenus*, *Zigadenus* – my mind was spinning as I searched through literature for the plant B.W. Wells called *Oceanoros leimanthoides*, branched fly poison (Wells, 1932, page 295). What I found is a taxonomic maze with bewildering twists, turns, and dead-ends. Apparently, though diminishing in size, the maze continues as the proper placement and names for several plants is sorted out. My search centered around three, currently named *Amianthium muscitoxicum* (fly poison), *Zigadenus densus* (pine barren camas), and *Zigadenus leimanthoides* (branched fly poison). To the casual observer and the practiced botanist, they are quite similar in appearance. I'll jump right in with the names I ran across for these plants:

Current Name: *Zigadenus densus* (Desrousseaux) Fernald, *Rhodora*. 42: 254. 1940.

Common names: Osceola's plume, black snake-root, crow poison, pine-barren death camas

Synonyms

Melanthium densum Desrousseaux in J. Lamarck et al. (Encycl. 4: 26. 1796)
Amianthium angustifolium (Michaux) A. Gray;
A. texanum (Bush) R. R. Gates;
Helonias angustifolia Michaux;
Oceanoros leimanthoides (A. Gray) Small;
Stenanthium densum (Desr.) Zomlefer & Judd
Tracyanthus angustifolius (Michaux) Small;
T. angustifolius var. *texanus* Bush;
T. texanus (Bush) Small;



Zigadenus angustifolius (Michaux) S. Watson;
Z. leimanthoides A. Gray

Current Name: *Zigadenus leimanthoides*

Common names: branched fly poison, pine-barren death camas, coastal death camas, black snakeroot, crow poison, bog camas

Synonyms:

Amianthium leimanthoides A. Gray (1837)
Melanthium densum Desr. (1797)
Oceanoros leimanthoides A. Gray
Oceanoros leimanthoides (Gray) Small-S. (1903)
Stenanthium densum (Desr.) Zomlefer & Judd (2002)
Tracyanthus angustifolius
Zigadenus leimanthoides (1856)

Current Name: *Amianthium muscitoxicum* (Walter) A. Gray, *Ann. Lyceum Nat. Hist. New York*. 4: 122. 1837

Common names: fly poison, crow poison, fall poison, staggrass

Synonyms:

Chrosperma muscitoxicum (Walt.) Kuntze
Melanthium muscitoxicum Walter
Zigadenus muscitoxicus (Walt.) Regel

If you look at the distributional range for these plants, you begin to get a sense that the common names have multiplied the confusion. For instance, *Z. leimanthoides* and *Z. densus* share the common name pine-barren death camas. *Z. leimanthoides* is found only in Watauga and Avery counties in North Carolina—hardly pine barrens. *Z. densus* is found in the southeastern part of the state—right where you find pine barrens. The Flora of North America suggests that *Zigadenus densus* and *Z. leimanthoides* be recognized at the varietal level.

Continued on page 10

Featured Plant: *Zigadenus* spp. continued

Plant descriptions:

Amianthium muscitoxicum

Stems 3–14 dm. Leaves 10–45(–60) × 0.5–2.8 cm. Inflorescences densely ovoid in flower, cylindric in fruit, 3–13 × 2–3 cm; bracts ovate, 1–2 mm. Tepals 5–7 mm; pedicel (7–)10–17(–20) mm. Capsules 5–7 mm. Seeds 4–5 × 1.5–2 mm. 2n = 32.

Flowers May – July; seed July – Sept. Mesic wooded slopes, meadows, savannas; throughout.



c. Larry Allain @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database. Used with permission.



Amianthium muscitoxicum

Zigadenus densus

Plants 4–20 dm, from bulbs; bulbs not clumped, tunicate, ovoid, 0.5–2 × 1–2 cm. Leaves: proximal blades 10–50 cm × 2–12 mm. Inflorescences racemose or paniculate, 40–100-flowered, cylindrical, 4–15 × 2.5–5 cm. Flowers: perianth hypogynous, 5–10 mm diam.; tepals persistent in fruit, cream colored to greenish, ovate to elliptic, 3–5 mm, narrowed but not sharply contracted basally; gland 1, obscure; pedicel 1–2 cm, bracts often tinged with red, lanceolate, 2–12 mm. Capsules narrowly conic, 10–20 mm.

Flowers April – early June; seed May – July. Common in savannas, pocosins, pine bogs of the coastal plain.



c. William S. Justice @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database. Use with permission.



Z. densus

Plants are found in North Carolina in the counties shaded in green.

Featured Plant: *Zigadenus* spp. continued

Zigadenus leimanthoides

Plants 2 – 5 feet tall; leaves not keeled, 3-6 dm long and 4-12 mm wide, obtuse to emarginated, stem leaves alternate. Inflorescence a panicle of racemes, the terminal 7-10 cm long, the 2-5 lateral each 2-5 cm long; bracts subtending pedicels 2-12 mm long, the lowest the longest, acute; pedicels 2-3.5 mm wide, rounded at the apex. Glands connate (joined), forming a band at base of perianth segments.

Flowers July – Aug., capsule and seeds not seen. Rocky, wooded habitats, rare. Avery & Watauga counties.



Jim Stasz @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database . Used with permission.



Z. leimanthoides

The one thing that all of these plants have in common is the poisonous nature of all parts, attested to by many of the common names. Staggergrass refers to the gait of livestock after consuming the plant—and before their death. There are some reported medicinal uses for *Amianthium muscitoxicum*, including its use as a dermatological aid (for itch). Even that supposed remedy admits that the cure was “rather severe.” All three refer to their use as a crow poison—crows must have been a huge problem—when mixed with a bit of honey.

As the genus *Zigadenus* has 43 species and I can barely wade through two of them, plus the *Amianthium*, I think I will leave further research for another day. In the meantime, pay close attention to these look-alike plants when you are out this summer. In general, in Watauga and Avery counties, you are likely seeing *A. muscitoxicum* or, if the flower is branched, *Z. leimanthoides*. In the coastal plain, you will see *Z. densus*, or if the flower is densely packed, *A. muscitoxicum*. In the Piedmont and mountains, you will likely see *A. muscitoxicum*.

Katherine Schlosser

Zigadenus is from the Greek for ‘zygadēn’ which means “jointly, or in pairs,” which is from the Greek ‘zygon’ which means yoke. The word refers to the glands on the ovaries of some plants, which sometimes appear in pairs.

Maps from USDA Plants Database.

NCNPS Chapter News:

The **Western North Carolina/Asheville Chapter** will be meeting on the following dates at 6:00 pm. The location is TBD.

Wed., 26 March
Wed., 28 May
Wed., 30 July
Wed., 24 Sept.
Wed., 19 Nov.

Also, we have the following field trips we are working on arranging:

April 28th: Pearson Falls

Mid-late May: private garden in WNC - a real treat

Contact Mitch Russell at mitch@ncwildflower.org or 828.505.2476 for more information.

Here are future field trips that hopefully will get specific info to you before they occur.

Early-Mid June: Roan Mtn

August: Botanical Gardens at Asheville

October: Joyce Kilmer tree walk

Mitch



Charlotte Chapter Meetings take place the 2nd Sunday of the month at the UNCC Botanical Center at 2:30 p.m. There is a \$5 donation for non-members.

Charlotte is reading a new book per quarter and here they are:

Jan-Mar: "Noah's Garden: Restoring the Ecology of our Own Backyards by Sara B. Stein

Angela Haigler, Charlotte contact
(angela@ncwildflower.org)

Triad Chapter

Mar. 1st walk: Bear Slide Rock (Rockingham Co.).
Tentative—call for details

Mar. 5th Meeting: Healing Plants—Native American Plant Lore, Lisa Gould. Southside Library, Winston-Salem, 7:00 p.m.

April 2nd Meeting: A Meadowlark Sanctuary, Dennis Burnette. Greensboro, 7:00 p.m.

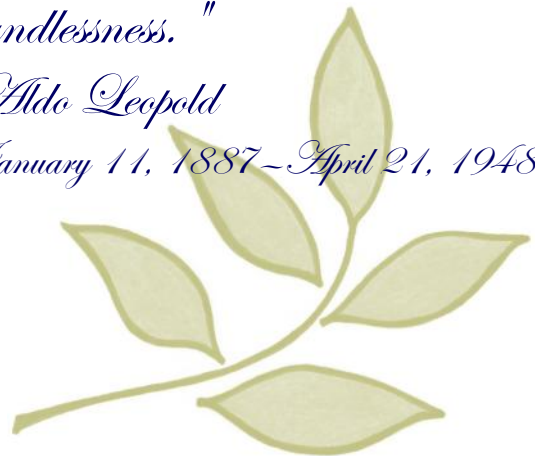
April 5th walk: South Mountain State Park and Wee-Du Nursery

Kathy Schlosser (kathys@ncwildflower.org)

"The problem, then, is how to bring about a striving for harmony with land among a people many of whom have forgotten that there is any such thing as land, among whom education and culture have become almost synonymous with landlessness."

Aldo Leopold

January 11, 1887—April 21, 1948



NCNPS Chapter News: Ridges Mountain Mimi Westervelt

The Triad Chapter joined with the Piedmont Land Conservancy in November for a hike on Ridge's Mountain in the Uwharries. Biologist Roger Robbins, Ph.D., led the hike, sharing his intimate knowledge of this limited access site. The



rich golds of *Carya spp* (hickory) and *Quercus prinus* (chestnut oaks), the brilliant *Liriodendron tulipifera* (tulip poplars) all mingled with iridescent red-oranges of *Oxydendrum arboreum* (sourwood) and *Cornus florida* (dogwoods) against the deep blue morning sky, making for a perfect morning for an outing.

Robbins started the hike by pointing out an unusual tree in this part of NC: *Populus grandidentata*, the big tooth aspen, one of the earliest deciduous trees to drop its leaves. He then pulled out his geological map showing the diversity of the area and dispelled some common myths. The Uwharries are not, as commonly thought, the oldest mountains in NC, an honor which likely belongs to Roan Mountain. The Uwharries are not truly mountains; rather, they are the remnants of the erosion of a volcanic island chain, formed some 37,000 years ago and known now as monadnocks.

A short distance along the trail, Robbins led the group 500 yards off the main path to the first of two ephemeral pools we were to see. Robbins has done extensive research on salamander migration and has spent a lot of time observing these particular pools. They lacked moisture due to the extreme drought in NC, however, even the most casual observer could see the change in vegetation within the bounds of the ephemeral pools. The surrounding forest floor was blanketed with a dense cover of brown leaf litter; yet the tall grasses, sedges, moss and ferns within the depression of the pool remained bright green. Robbins invited the group to explore the flora from the edges, mindful to point out the delicate nature of this environment.



Returning to the main trail, we continued the gentle ascent toward the summit of Ridge's Mountain, stopping in a large clearing known as Godfrey's Ridge. Godfrey established a trading post here in the 1700's. John Lawson may also have traveled in this area which marks the convergence of several early thoroughfares. Robbins feels that much that has been written on the early local history was based on Lawson's *A New Voyage to Carolina*, Douglas Rights' *The American Indian in North Carolina* or Joffre Coe's *Time Before History in North Carolina*. Some believe that Lawson's Keyauwee stockade may have been here on Godfrey's Ridge. In the 1930's some archaeological sites excavated in the area identified artifacts dating from the 1500's. However, interest in Town Creek and other old sites in NC distracted attention from the Ridges Mountain area. A few years after Lawson came through this area, the Keyauwee were moved to the Albemarle Sound area. Some eventually migrated back but by 1750 the Keyauwee tribe had disappeared, possibly decimated by small pox.

Robbins took us to a second ephemeral pool; this one partially man-made, with a 2'-3' high stone wall on one side, which may have been used as a corral for the trading post. It is unknown whether the corral came first or if the natural pool was used to create a sanctuary for livestock. Nonetheless, viewing the site today gives one pause for the endeavors of those who were here some 260 plus years ago.

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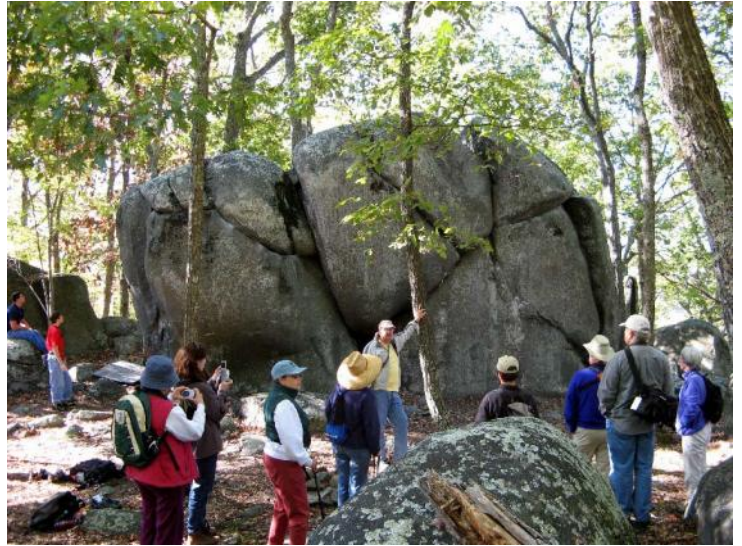
NCNPS Chapter News

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Walking toward the crest of Ridge's Mountain, rock outcroppings and boulders became more frequent and increasingly larger. Robbins pointed out *Woodsia obtusa* (bluntlobe cliff fern) and *Pleopeltis polypodioides* (resurrection fern) growing among the massive formations. The crimson foliage of *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* (Virginia creeper) clung to the natural stone monuments. Most of the flora was already dormant; even the late blooming asters and goldenrods had already formed their seed. A single blossom of *Cassia fasciculatae* (partridge pea) was the only bloom spotted this day; yet, the forest was a kaleidoscope of warm, autumnal color. Other tree species noted on the hike included: *Carya ovata* (shagbark hickory), *Diospyros virginiana* (persimmon in fruit), *Acer rubrum* (red maple), *Acer leucoderme* (chalk maple), *Quercus rubra* (red oak), and *Quercus alba* (white oak).

On the southwestern side of the 842' summit, the land fell away at a steep slope, creating great thermals for soaring turkey vultures. Standing among the 25'-30' tall rock formations, Robbins told the group that this site has been claimed by some to be John Lawson's infamous cave, "large enough for 100 people to dine in". No known caves are in this area, and many of Lawson's descriptions were exaggerated, so there is no concrete evidence regarding the site. The group rested and enjoyed lunch amidst the setting reminiscent of a naturally formed Stonehenge.

A moderate hike, Ridge's Mountain gives the sensation of being at a much greater elevation. Robbins' knowledge of the area was a special treat, particularly because it is doubt



Lunch among the boulders

ful we would have seen the ephemeral pools without his guidance. Leaving this woodland wonder, Triad Chapter members excitedly spoke of returning to the site on some future spring morning, in hopes of discovering the flora which might thrive in this incredible habitat.



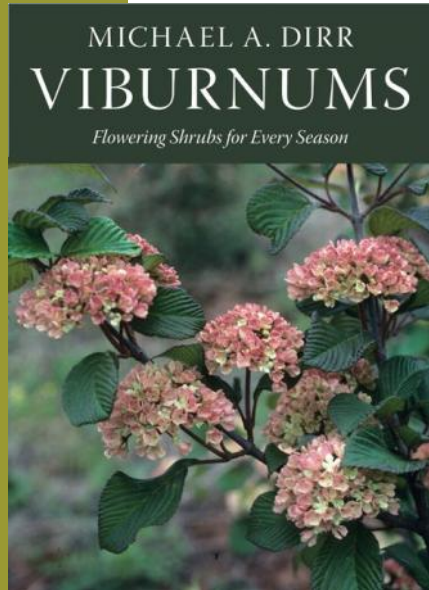
View from the top

Story by Mimi Westervelt, all photos courtesy of David McAdoo.

Off the Shelf...books worth a read

Viburnums: Flowering Shrubs for Every Season

Michael A. Dirr. (Timber Press: Portland, OR) 2007. Illustrations by Bonnie L. Dirr, photographs by Michael A. Dirr. 262 pages, 424 full color photographs, 6 color illustrations. ISBN-13:978-0-88192-853-2. \$39.95



Michael Dirr, a professor of Horticulture at the University of Georgia and author of twelve books, set out to create a book for amateurs and professionals on a topic for which he developed a

passion during his undergraduate years—viburnums. With the publication of *Viburnums: Flowering Shrubs for Every Season*, he has accomplished his goal. This is a book that will not only be eagerly read, it will also be carried to nurseries to as an aide in selecting the perfect viburnum to enhance a landscape. Vivid descriptions and photographs, horticultural requirements, and personal anecdotes for more than 150 species are included in this readable work. Bonnie Dirr's lovely color drawings add to the warm and personal feel of the book.

The largest section is that part devoted to plant descriptions, from *Viburnum acerifolium* (our native maple leaf viburnum) to *Viburnum wrightii* (introduced in 1892 from Japan, China and Korea), with cultivars de-

scribed for many species. Of *Viburnum bracteatum* (native to the southeastern US) Dirr says, "Even for the advanced gardener, this is a difficult species to properly identify. Consider it a souped up version (72 chromosomes, an octaploid) of *V. dentatum* with glossier, thicker-textured leaves...I have grown a selection, 'Emerald Luster' for ten years in the UGA trials that is 10 feet by 8 feet in outline..." Accompanied by gorgeous photos of the mature plant, the leaf, the bloom, and the fruit, it is only one of many you will long to find in your local nursery.

Dirr personally saw, touched, photographed and checked the nomenclature for the entries in his book. His familiarity with his subject and his understanding of the needs of gardeners combined to create an ideal book for plant identification and selection.

Once you have made your list of "must have" viburnums, Dirr sets about advising you on "Planting, Pruning and Fertilization" and "Diseases, Insects and Pests." Confident that by now you are feeling comfortable with the genus, he leads you into "Seed, Cutting, and Grafting Propagation Techniques," providing guidance every step of the way from his own life-long experiences with the plants.

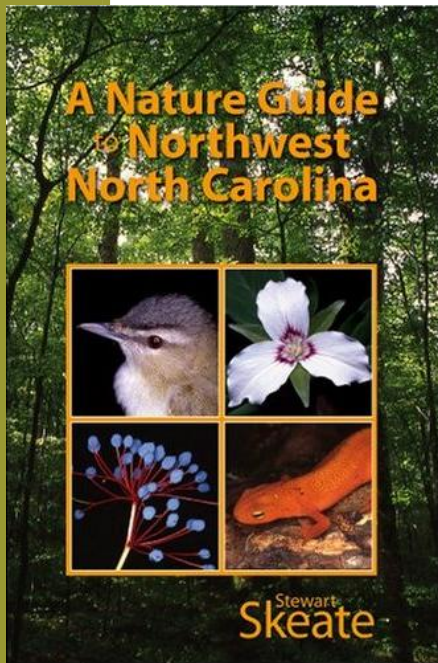
You are sure to select a favorite from among Dirr's choices, and may find yourself eager to get out into the woods with your camera to learn more about our native viburnums. For those of our members who are plant collectors, not necessarily limiting themselves to natives, there are some real beauties among the genus. Dirr will point you in the right direction.

(Available from Amazon.com for \$26.37)

Off the Shelf....books worth a read

A Nature Guide to Northwest North Carolina

Stewart T. Skeate. (Parkway Publishers, Boone NC; Feb. 2006) 224 pages, 44 page color insert. 978-1-887905-96-1 ; 1-887905-96-0 \$24.95 paperback



Stewart Skeate (Professor of Biology at Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk and coordinator of the Biology Naturalist Program) has written an in-

depth, 215-page, profusely illustrated reference and guide to the flora and fauna found in the natural areas of the northwestern counties of North Carolina, and a well-written collective mapping of the landmarks to be found. Introducing the reader to an expertly informed and soundly informative text, *A Nature Guide To Northwest North Carolina* provides a descriptive summary of Grandfather Mountain, Pisgah National Forest, Roan Mountain, Linville Gorge Wilderness Area, the Blue Ridge Parkway, Mount Jefferson State Park, the New River, and many more interesting

places. Inclusive of 260 color plates for animal and plant identification, specific locations highlighted with descriptive details of habitats—from the rich Northern hardwood forests and coves, to the vast mixed oak forests, the scenic grassy balds, the high-elevation spruce-fir forests and the unusual mountain bog communities—trails, directions, and a precise text for each location focusing on the varied habitats of the region, *A Nature Guide To Northwest North Carolina* is recommended for hikers or naturalists visiting the northwestern landscapes of North Carolina.

Skeates describes plants found in each habitat and provides key characteristics and points of interest for each species. The book includes descriptions in detail the local fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals as well as aids to animal identification.

(Available from Amazon.com for \$18.96)

Events of Interest...

Herbaceous Havens: Creating Garden Sanctuaries

March 3-4, 2008. Davidson College, Davidson, NC
Registration deadline: Feb. 25. Limited to 400

Speakers:

Tracy DiSabato-Aust; *The Well-Designed Mixed Garden; The Well-Tended Perennial Garden.*
Stephanie Cohen, *The Perennial Gardener's Design Primer.*
Tom Goforth, Crow Dog Native Ferns
John Hoffman, Hoffman Nursery in Durham County.
Mary Stauble, environmental educator and consultant in Charlotte
Details: http://www.davidsonsymposium.org/Home_Page.html

Native Plants and Ecological Design: Myths and Realities

C. Colston "Cole" Burrell, Lecturer, Architecture and Landscape Architecture, UVA

Thursday, March 27, 2008, 7 p.m.

LOCATION: Doris Duke Center, Sarah P. Duke Gardens, Durham

Lecture FEE: Friends \$10m General Public \$15

Gardeners, restorationists and landscape architects are planting natives, but do we really know what is meant by native? C. Colston Burrell will focus on the possibilities, techniques and issues behind ecologically based sustainable landscape design using native plant communities and regionally native species as the basis for creating gardens and restorations.

America's Vanishing Flora, a Call to Action

Dr. Kathryn Kennedy, Center for Plant Conservation, St. Louis, MO

Tuesday, April 1, 2008, 7 p.m.

LOCATION: Doris Duke Center, Sarah P. Duke Gardens, Durham

FEE: Friends \$5, General Public \$10

Dr. Kennedy will discuss the important work of the Missouri Botanical Garden in the preservation and restoration of endangered native species. Learn more about plant conservation and the functions of the Plant Conservation Center.



The Mt. Cuba Center
TRILLIUM
Symposium 

April 17-19, 2008
Wilmington, Delaware

Celebrate Trilliums!

Join the world's leading trillium experts to discover and share unique scientific, conservation, and gardening knowledge about this magnificent woodland treasure.

Mark your calendar today!

Don't forget!

Mark Rose is one of the presenters for the trillium symposium April 17-19 in Wilmington, DE. Visit the website for details and registration information.

<http://www.trilliumsymposium2008.org/index.html>

A Turtle Tale from 1884

Uz Gaunt's Talk About Turtles

Christmas of '77 [1877] was a green one, you may remember," remarked Uz, as he shook the ashes from his pipe. "It didn't need any hickory logs blazin' on the hearth, such as these," and he stirred the ashes and rearranged the wood on the andirons as he spoke of them. "The weather had been mild for a long time, and once I heard frogs singin'. Well, this kind of thing sort of came to a focus on Christmas day, which was warm even in the shade. The river was low, the meadows dry, and the crows as noisy as in April. I felt sort of restless like, and took a walk in the meadows. I left my gun home, and thought I'd just look 'round. Without thinking of them when I started out, I wandered over to your marshy meadow, and began pokin' about with my cane for snappers. You know I take kindly to a bowl of snapper-soup of my own fixin'."

"Yes, I do that, and can run along neck-and-neck with you, when you're the cook."

"Well, I followed the main ditch down, jumpin' from hassock to hassock, and kept probin' in the mud with my cane, when, after a bit, I felt something hard at the end of my stick. It wasn't a stone or a stump, I knew at once. There was a little tremble run up the stick to my hand that told me that much. A sort of shake, as though you hit an empty barrel, as near as I can tell you. I'd a turtle down in the mud, and concluded to bring it out into the daylight. There's more than one way to do this, but none of 'em is an easy job to get through with. I kept probin' 'round him, to try and make out where his head was, and then I could feel for his tail, and pull him out. Now this does very well for one of your common snappers, but didn't work so easy in this case. I could sort of feel that turtle all over the meadow. Wherever I put my cane down, I seemed to come to his back shell; but after edgin' out a bit for some time I could make out the rim of it, and I tell you he was a whopper, accordin' to my probin'. That turtle seemed about as big 'round as a wash-tub, and I got regularly worked up about him. Probin' showed he was about three feet deep in the mud, but I made up my mind to lo-

cate his tail
and then
reach
down for

him. So I did, but it was no use. I felt about, and got one ugly scratch from a hind foot, but he kept his tail out of reach, or hadn't any; I didn't know which, then. After thinkin' a spell, I concluded I'd try to get a pry under him, and went for a fence-rail. It took me some time to get what I wanted, and when I got back that turtle had got out. I probed all 'round, but he'd moved. This rather took me down, but I kept up my hunt, and after a bit found he'd moved straight for the main ditch, and was tearin' up the mud on the bottom as he went. This was all that saved him for me, and I no sooner learned his whereabouts than I went for him in earnest. I ran the rail I had right under him, and tried to lift him up. Thunder and lightnin', boy, you might as well try to lift a steer. I disturbed him, though, and checked his course a bit. Jammin' the rail down again, I guess I hit his head, for it riled him, evidently, and he raised right up. His head and neck came up out of the sand, and I was for standin' back just then. If ever you saw a wicked eye, that turtle had one, and his head was as big as my fist. Stickin' his head out, though, gave me the knowledge I wanted. I knew how he laid in the mud, and I ran my rail down under him as far as I could. It kept him from divin' down, and I went right into the ditch to try and get a hold on his tail if I could. This I did, after feelin' for it a bit, and no sooner had I got a good grip on it than the old fellow got free of the rail and commenced goin' deep into the mud. I tugged and he dug, and it was a clear case of "pull Dick, pull devil" between us. He was gettin' the better of me, though, for I was gettin' chilled in that water, and had nearly lost my hold, when the turtle gave an extra jerk, and if it hadn't been for the fence-rail I'd a lost him. I was pulled for'ard, but the rail was right in front, so I put one foot on it, to keep from sinkin' any deeper in the mire. This bracin' gave me the advantage now, and I put all my strength to it. The turtle came a little, and I seemed to gain strength. I tugged and tugged with all my might, and presently his hind feet showed. You see, he hadn't firm



enough mud to hold on to. I backed slowly across the ditch when I got him in open water, and got a fair footin' on the ditch-bank at last. Still, I wasn't out of the woods by a long shot. That turtle weighed close onto seventy pounds, and I'd no means of handlin' him. Chilled through, with both hands needed to hold him, and in the middle of the mucky meadow, all that was left me was to try and drag him to the high, smooth meadows. It was a tough job, I tell you. I had to walk backward, and he pulled against me like a frightened horse. I gained a little, slowly, and after a bit got on the high ground. Then I felt more at ease and took a rest. I couldn't take him home, of course, in the same fashion, but I had a chance to let him loose, and rest my hands. How I looked 'round for a bit of rope to bridle him! It was no use, though, and after all I was likely to lose him altogether. After a minute's thinkin', it occurred to me I'd make a hobble out of my shirt and then slip home lively for the right sort of tackle. I wasn't long in gettin' the shirt off, and I twisted it into a sort of rope and hobbled him with it. It was a desperate, odd-lookin' turtle when I got through, and I laughed at him a bit as I turned toward the house. You see, I left him on his back, and his legs bound so he couldn't use 'em to turn over. I skipped pretty lively, I tell you, for that mile or so twixt me and home, and was in a good glow when I got in. Hettie looked kind o' scared when she saw me, but I put her mind to rest in two words, and soon was on my way back. A bit of rope and my sheath-knife was all I needed. I skipped over the fields pretty lively, and was soon again in sight. Now, I don't think it was an hour, by some minutes, before I was back on the high meadow, but, by gracious! It don't take long for scenes to change in natur' any more than it does in a theatre. Of all queer sights, that was the funniest I saw when I got back. The turtle had got half free of my old red shirt, and was pawin' the air like mad, tryin' to get on his feet again. I could see that much a long way off, and put on extra speed; but when I was about fifty yards off I stopped short. There was that turtle wrapped in my shirt, and a pesky skunk sort of standin' guard over him. Now, I hate skunks. They don't pay to trap, and they rob my hen-roost every winter. I was afraid to frighten him, too, for fear he'd spoil my snapper, and I wanted the value of a shirt out of the turtle, if nothin' more. I walked a bit nearer, to make sure of how matters

stood, and it was clear as day, the skunk thought he had a good thing of it, if he could only kill that snapper. I thought the same way, and didn't want to be bettered by a pesky skunk. I made up my mind to jockey about it, a little; and so, first, heaved a stone at the critter. It gave me a look and started on a slow trot, but it was all up with me, sure enough. He shook that thunderin' old brush right at the turtle and—well! if he didn't sicken the snapper, he did me, that's certain. I stood the racket a bit, though, and tried to move the snapper, but it was no use; I couldn't keep at it long enough to do anything, and don't believe it would have amounted to much anyhow. I got a stick and put the snapper on his feet, as well as I could, without touchin' him, and he waddled off for the mucky meadow, with most of my shirt still stickin' to him, and plunged into the ditch as soon as he could."



"So you lost the turtle after all," I remarked in a low tone, not feeling sure I had heard the last of the story.

"No I didn't either," Uz replied quickly. "Don't set me down for such a fool as that. I knew well enough the turtle wouldn't wander far, so I kept him in mind, and the next April I went out in proper trim and hunted him up. I found him after two days' huntin', when I got a dozen big ones besides, but he was the king of the lot. He couldn't turn 'round in a wash-tub, and weighed somethin' over seventy pounds. I looked all over him for some sign of my shirt, but there wasn't a thread left."

"How old do you suppose he was?" I asked, when Uz had concluded his story.

"I'm not sure I can say, but he was no chicken, that's certain."

"According to Professor Agassiz, a turtle a foot long is close to fifty years old," I replied.

"Fifty years old! Then my big snapper came out of the ark, I guess," remarked Uz.

A Naturalist's Rambles About Home, Charles C. Abbott. D. Appleton and Company, New York. 1884. (From the second edition, revised, 1889, p. 276-281).

Toe River Trip Registration

May 9-11, 2008

45 person limit – Members will have priority

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Registration fee: NCNPS member - \$20.00 per person (\$10.00 limited income) \$ _____

Registration: non NCNPS member - \$30.00 per person \$ _____

Hiker's Lunch for Saturday, your choice

meat sandwich, \$8.00, \$ _____

vegetarian sandwich \$8.00 \$ _____

Saturday Dinner

Vegetarian, \$12.00 per person \$ _____

Meat, \$12.00 per person \$ _____

Join the NCNPS - \$25.00 for an individual membership \$ _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Registration deadline: April 30, 2008

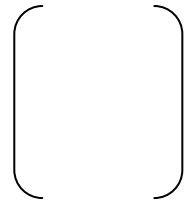
I/we will bring a food item for the Friday evening reception and roundtable discussion.

I/we understand that we will be required to sign a liability waiver before the hike on Saturday morning.

Please make checks payable to NC Native Plant Society and mail to: **Hugh Partridge, Treasurer**
736 Linda Court
Cary NC 27513

DRIVING DIRECTIONS WILL BE IN THE APRIL NEWSLETTER

NC Native Plant Society
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Carolyn M. Henion
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www.carolynmhenion.com

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