

# *The Pocahontas Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society*

*January 2010*



## **January Meeting**

**Thursday January 7 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:**

**"The Chestnut Story: The impact of the chestnut blight on the ecology and economy of Virginia and  
status of programs to restore the tree to our forest."**

**by Cathy Mayes**

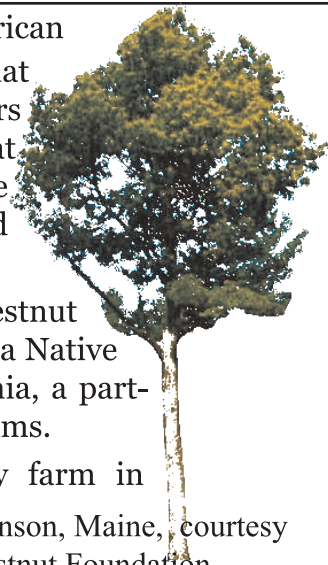
**NOTE:** Due to Garden Fest at LBGG please come in through the main entrance and enter the Education Library Complex building from the garden entrance. That way, we won't be bumping into private party people.

A century ago, 25% of the trees in the Virginia Piedmont were American Chestnuts. So valuable was the tree to the economy and ecology of Virginia that when the chestnut blight wiped them out, scientists, politicians, and foresters threw themselves into trying to find a cure. Now we are on the verge of that cure. The presentation "The Chestnut Story," tells the role of chestnut before the blight, the biology of the blight, the state of chestnut science today, and how citizen scientists can participate in the recovery.

Catherine Mayes, is president of the Virginia chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation, a certified Virginia Master Naturalist and a director of the Virginia Native Plant Society. She is a Graduate of the law school at the University of Virginia, a part-time practicing attorney, and a consultant on international student loan programs.

Cathy lives in Hume in Fauquier County and is a co-owner of a dairy farm in Rappahannock County.

Photo: A surviving 85-foot American chestnut tree in Atkinson, Maine, courtesy of Eric Evans of the Maine Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation.



---

## **EVENTS**

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| January 16 | Field Trip: Appomattox River Park. Meet at 9:30 AM at the Chester Ukrops store. Contact Ernest Wilson at 804-502-6346 or <a href="mailto:ernest_3@msn.com">ernest_3@msn.com</a> for more information. |
| February 4 | Chapter Meeting: Al Poklis - Poisonous plants   |
| March 4    | Chapter Meeting: Catharine Tucker - The Oaks  |
| April 1    | Chapter Meeting: John Hayden - "Husk Tomatoes From Near and Far."   |
| May        | Annual Picnic.  |

# Minutes for the Regular Meeting of the Pocahontas Chapter, VNPS: December 3, 2009

The meeting was opened at 7:00 by the president, Ernest Wilson.

## Announcements:

There is no field trip scheduled for December. Our activities will be suspended until after the New Year. The Butterfly Garden (at the James River Park Headquarter) is in "sleep mode" Later in 2010 we will resume butterfly garden work days and ivy removal at the 42nd Street entrance to the James River Park.

There are refreshments for the members for this, our Holiday meeting.

## Field Trips:

January 16, 2010 to Appomattox River Park. Meet at 9:30 at Chester Ukrops. Contact Ernest Wilson for more information.

## Welcome:

New members and guests in attendance were introduced and welcomed.

**Chris Ludwig's presentation:** "Virginia Wildflowers: Diverse in Form, Unified in Function" - pollination strategies for plants. Chris who has been with Natural Heritage since 1988 is also a co-founder of the Flora of Virginia Foundation (2001). He reviewed the purpose and mandate of the Natural Heritage Program of the Department of Conservation and Recreation and updated us on the progress of the Flora of Virginia.

He began his presentation with a review of the plant kingdom specifically angiosperm (monocot and dicot) reproduction. The focus of his presentation was the various flower characteristics which entice specific pollinators to maximize pollination probability. The plants which depend on insects, birds and mammals for pollination have evolved various colors, scents, shapes and nectar locations and quantities. The plants which depend on the wind for pollination spend their energy producing large quantities of pollen rather than showy flowers. His pictures included examples of the adaptations and the pollinators.

The post presentation discussion included the pros and cons of self vs. cross pollination for any plant population and an explanation of the proposed use of the funds from the VNPS special contribution this year to Natural Heritage. The meeting was called to a close at 8:30. The rest of the evening was spent chatting and eating.

Respectfully submitted,

DSP

## 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..... Ernest Wilson**  
(804) 502-6346.....ernest\_3@msn.com

**Vice President.....Open**

**Secretary.....Open**

**Treasurer.....Richard Moss**  
(804) 748-2940..... mossrd@mindspring.com

**Membership..... Daune Poklis**  
(804) 741-7838..... daune@poklis.org

Address all correspondence to

Richard Moss, Editor

12565 Brook Lane

Chester, VA 23831

mossrd@mindspring.com

**Chapter Website - pocahontaschapter-vnps.org**



## Random Observations

After the snow of the week before Christmas melted, I was walking around in the woods back of my house to see what native plants could be found. I noticed several patches of crane-fly orchids (*Tipularia discolor*) within about 50 feet of each other with quite different leaves. There was one patch with smooth leaves, another with distinctly warty leaves and another with dark purple leaves.

See photos A, B, and C.

I also found pussytoes, *Antennaria plantaginifolia*, shown in photo D, which resembles the crane-fly orchid, but the underside of its leaf is white and woolly, (upper right leaf in photo) unlike the crane-fly orchid's purple.

Other native plants found in the yard included a patch of partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*) with a few berries remaining (Photo E), and a grape fern (*Botrychium dissectum*), photo F.

continued on page 4





More Observations:

Wild Evergreen ginger (*Hexastylis virginica*) like crane-fly orchid has considerable variation in leaf patterns. The plant on the left has much less of the silvery variegation than the one on the right.



Strawberry bush or bursting heart (*Euonymus americanus*) is normally considered to be deciduous (photo I of branches in winter), but young plants often keep their leaves as seen in photo J.



Richard Moss

---

---

Pocahontas Chapter  
Virginia Native Plant Society  
12565 Brook Lane  
Chester, VA 23831

