

THE POCAHONTAS CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

April 2006

Spiderwort
(*Tradescantia virginiana*)



April Meeting

Thursday April 6, 2006, 7:00 PM

at the Education and Library Complex of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
in Classroom 2

Wolves and Wildflowers!

by

John Roberts

VNPS Member John Roberts will give a brief presentation on his recent travels to places in North America which have wolves, both in the wild, and in captivity. During one trip to Yellowstone Park, he learned that wolves are changing the flora of the park. This effect is called the Top Predator Trophic Cascade.

Following will be a 12 minute VCR program on this effect in Yellowstone, and then a third part will briefly touch on large Pleistocene mammals and what losing them may have done to our landscape and how reintroduction of large mammals, especially top predators can re-wild North America.

Discussion will follow, so please bring your own ideas about wilderness, wilderness restoration, and even favorite quotes about wild things!

Chapter News and Upcoming Events

Field Trips: The April field trip will be to Monticello and will cost \$10.00 for a guided wildflower walk. Meet April 8 at the North Park Library at 8:00 a.m. with the tour starting at 9:30 a.m. so be on time. Call Kristi at 790-1295 to sign-up. The May field trip will be to the Thompson Natural Area in Front Royal to see the trilliums and to remove wild garlic. Please bring gloves and a lunch. Will leave at 7:00 a.m. at the North Park Library May 11.

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### **VNPS Annual Meeting - SAVE THIS WEEKEND: September 23-24, 2006**

The Shenandoah Chapter is hosting the annual VNPS meeting this fall. It is a weekend event which includes full day and half-day field trips on Saturday, an annual meeting with a speaker and dinner Saturday evening and half-day field trips on Sunday. More information later.

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Volunteers Needed for Plant Inventory in a New Nature Park: The Pocahontas Chapter has a unique opportunity to participate in the environmental planning of a newly proposed nature park in Hanover called March Park. It is located off Jamestown and Woodside Lane, abutting the Town of Ashland. A public interest organization, Hanover Naturally, Inc. with the Hanover Parks and Recreation Department have asked Robert Wright to spearhead natural resources inventory in the park this year. As part of the inventory, an effort to document all the plants and plant habitats in the park will be undertaken on Action Days. These are proposed for April 29th, rain date April 30 and May 27th, rain or shine. Summer and fall season dates for inventories will be announced later.

This park is composed of a mosaic of wooded and edge habitats and creek bottoms that promises to support an interesting and surprisingly diverse flora. Hopefully Richmond Audubon will be joining us for additional birding and inventory work. The assistance of the Virginia Herpetological Society, Richmond Naturalists Club and others are being recruited to help out in this community-based effort.

This is a great opportunity for members to get real hands-on experience in “uncharted waters” to help develop, brush up or hone plant identification skills, and to learn and/or better appreciate how environmental planning processes work at the local level. Information gathered by the inventory team will be used for trail layouts, preservation and management decisions, and as a basis for further scientific studies.

All those interested in this important project or for more information can contact Robert Wright via e-mail at robertwright_1@hotmail.com or can call him at 703.425.8924 (home) during evening hours.

Minutes for the March 2, 2006 Meeting of the Pocahontas Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Kristi Orcutt, President opened the meeting. Kristi asked the members to share some of the plants that they have seen blooming in the area over the last few weeks. Some of the plants mentioned are hepatica, bloodroot, common blue and white violets, bittercress, and the evergreen ginger is not blooming

Dr. Ernest Wilson, our speaker was asked to give a report on the ivy removal at the James River Park and he said they had cleared some of the ivy off of the trees near the wetlands. The trees were actually common privet which is not a native species. He didn't know if another eradication session was scheduled but Richard will put the announcement in the newsletter if the chapter gets any news.

The annual workshop will be on March 11 at University of Richmond. Fliers are available to publicize the event. The organizers are hoping to have 75 people attend.

Kristi reported that Robert Wright is organizing a natural resources inventory at the proposed nature park in Hanover County called March Park. He is asking members of the Native Plant Society to help with the survey on April 29, rain date April 30 and on May 27 rain or shine. More information will be in the newsletter as the chapter receives it.

The 2006 Bioblitz will be held at the Potomac Gorge near Washington D.C.

Maymont is hosting a lecture series called *Backyard Wildlife- Pests or Guests?* Meetings are held on Thursday, 7:00 p.m. from March 23 to May 4 at he Nature Center at Maymont, \$5.00/ lecture or \$25/series. Brochures were available at the meeting.

The March field trip will be to the Brown and Williamson Nature area. This is a Thursday. Members should meet at the Chesterfield County Courthouse at 8:30 a.m. Call Kristi at 790-1295 to sign-up. Wear sturdy boots and mudworthy clothes. The April field trip will be to Monticello and will cost \$10.00 for a guided wildflower walk. A sign-up sheet was sent around for those who wanted to attend. Members will meet April 8 at the North Park Library at 8:00 a.m. with the tour starting at 9:30 a.m. so be on time. The May field trip will be to the Thompson Natural Area in Front Royal to see the trilliums and to remove wild garlic. Please bring gloves and a lunch. Will leave at 7:00 a.m. at the North Park Library May 11.

Kristi asked the members to resubmit their suggestions for the name of the newsletter. The earlier suggestions were lost in cyberspace; so everyone has a new opportunity to win the prize of a free Virginia Native Plant Society membership for one year. Send suggestions to Richard Moss at mossrd@mindspring.com. Members will vote on the newsletter name at the annual picnic on May 6 at York River State Park.

Pat Brodie, membership chair, reported that the chapter has 3 new members.

Kristi suggested that the chapter find ways to raise money for the Flora of Virginia project. One idea is a kayak trip to see the rare sensitive vetch. Money charged for this trip would go to the Flora project. Other suggestions from the members were to have a booth at the Ginter Botanical Garden Plant sale in April. Daune said that the Botanical Garden charges a large booth fee for their plant sale so probably not enough money would be raised to make this effort

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	Kristi Orcutt
Vice President	Daune Poklis
Secretary	Peggy Furqueron
Treasurer	Bucci Zeugner
Membership Chair	Pat Brodie

Address all correspondence to
Richard Moss, Editor
12565 Brook Lane
Chester, VA 23831
mossrd@mindspring.com
VNPS Website - www.vnps.org

worthwhile. It is also suggested that members attending the field trips contribute a few dollars toward the project. Pat Brodie has raised \$80.00 from her card sales for the Flora project.

Richard Moss reported that Office Max charged him more for the printing of the newsletter this month. He is trying to find out why it was more expensive. The clerk said it was because of the paper used but it was the same paper as last month. If the price stays at the higher level, Richard will need to be reimbursed for the cost of printing.

Daune reported on the Maymont Flower and Garden Show. 1201 people visited our booth. Daune thanked everyone who had volunteered and the chapter members thanked Daune for all of her hard work bringing the Native Plant Society booth to the Flower Show. She doesn't know if the Executive Board of the State Chapter will approve having a booth for next year. The booth costs \$400; our chapter paid \$160, the State chapter paid \$200, and the rest was paid by the other local chapters. The thinking at the State chapter may be to go to different venues for a couple of years and then to go back to the Flower Show.

Kristi had t-shirts and notepads from the state headquarters. Notepads are \$4.00 each and the T-shirts are \$15.00.

Program: Dr. Ernest Wilson gave a very informative lecture on spring ephemerals. Most of the spring bulbs that can be purchased commercially like tulips and daffodils were originally spring ephemerals in the Mediterranean region. He talked about the flower of the skunk cabbage that produces its own heat which allows it to bloom in the late winter. He also gave some very interesting facts about dog tooth violets and their propensity to move deeper into the soil; sometimes to be too deep for the flowering stalk to reach the surface. Dr. Wilson had lovely slides to accompany his lecture.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Peggy Furqueron, Secretary

March Field Trip to the Brown and Williamson Nature Area

The Brown and Williamson Nature area is an undeveloped 262 acre park in Chesterfield County bordering on the James River with restricted public access. It has wooded flat upland areas intersected with deep ravines containing streams and wetlands. There is also a pond separated from the James River by a dam.

What we saw: The upland area consisted of a hardwood forest with chestnut oaks, and Mountain Laurel growing at the edge of the ravines. There were sections which were covered with trout lilies (*Erythronium americanum*) many of which were in bloom (Photo 1). We also saw two snakes basking in the sun,



a garter snake (Photo 2) and a black snake. In the ravines there was more trout lily and star chickweed (*Stellaria pubera*) in bloom (Photos 3 and close up of flower 4). Along the dam separating the pond and the river was a bamboo thicket from which we are emerging in Photo 5.



**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** _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$30.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$40.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Life	\$500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Groups	\$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> 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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Virginia Native Plant Society
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Chester, VA 23831**

