

# Native Plant News

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH CAROLINA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

**Native Plant News**  
Katherine Schlosser, editor

**February 2012**  
ISSN: 2151-2159

## Spring Trip: April 13—15 Saluda/Pearson's Falls

A search for a rail passage in the Blue Ridge Mountains from Spartanburg to Asheville in the 1870's took a young engineer through an area of incredible beauty and delighted Charles William Pearson so much that he bought much of the land along the Pacolet River that contains the site of NCNPS's spring 2012 trip: Pearson's Falls, scheduled for April 13 – 15, 2012.

This wildflower and bird sanctuary, named for its early resident, is a glen perhaps unknown to many white settlers at that time. There was no road in the area until 1910. Captain Pearson, as he was known, allowed visitors to enjoy the site of the falls, and scientists came early on to collect and describe the plants in the glen.

In 1931 the property was to be sold to a timber company. The Tryon Garden Club came forward to advance the funds that would save the falls from destruction, and in 1939 the mortgage was settled. Pearson's Falls became an Historic Landmark in 1996 but is still operated by the Tryon Garden Club. The story of the falls was recorded in 1932 by Donald Culross Peattie, and NCNPS members who visit this April 14 will receive a copy of his book, updated in a fourth edition in 1999 with both bird and flora species list. The registration fee will cover the price of each individual's entry to Pearson's Falls and the book.

Visitors should also check out the official website: <http://www.pearsonsfalls.org/> and our member's review, written by Jerry and Anna Weston, and published in the August 2011 newsletter.

Although the Saturday visit to Pearson's Falls is the highlight of the spring outing, the official activities begin Friday night with an hour social at 7:00 p.m. at the Saluda Library, followed by an 8:00 p.m. presentation on wildflower and plant communities of the Southern Appalachian Mountains, given by Dr. Tim Spira of Clemson. (See Oct. 2011 newsletter for a full description.) Early Friday arrivals can enjoy an optional hike along Twin Bridges Trail, led by NCNPS member Jean Woods. (Meet

at Saluda Mountain Lodge at 2:00 p.m. to car pool. There are few parking spaces at the trail head.)

Another optional "on-your-own" hike near the motel is Bradley Falls.

<http://www.alleneasler.com/bigbradley.html> This is very near the motel but may be difficult to find. Ask at the motel. Saturday morning begins at 9:00 a.m. with a walk along Pearson's Falls road, where there are plenty of small waterfalls and wildflowers to see. At noon the group will move to Pearson's Falls for lunch and a subsequent hike along the trails in the glen. (Note: Since we will be so close to civilization this day, water and snacks will not be provided. Bring your own if needed.)

Saturday night the group will assemble at 6:00 p.m. at the Saluda Center for dinner, followed by the plant auction that helps NCNPS support the B. W. Wells Fund for stewardship. Bring plants to share for the auction.

Sunday the half day outing will begin at 9:00 a.m. at Saluda Mountain Lodge to car pool to Pacolet Falls, a private site of the Saluda Land Trust. Water and snacks will be available at the end of the hike, approximately 1:00 p.m.

Although the official gathering place for this weekend is Saluda Mountain Lodge, overlooking the Green River Gorge, there are many wonderful B&B's in the area. Also recommended are the nearby Orchard Lake Campground facilities, with both camping and small lodges available.

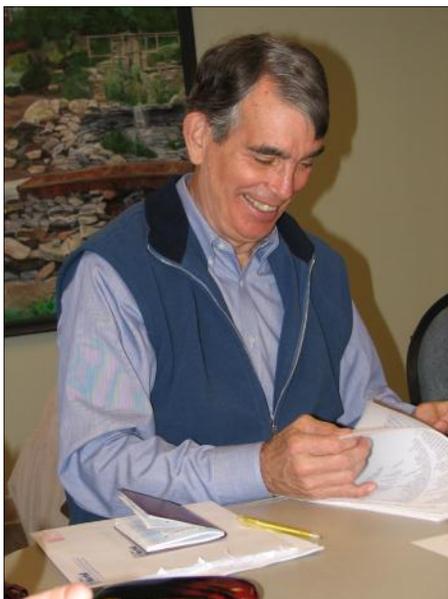
<http://saludamountainlodge.com/>

<http://orchardlakecampground.com/>





## **President's Message**



I really want to thank all the folks serving and those who served with me for building a great organization. We have helped numerous people, businesses, cities and other organizations to get more involved with natives. We have educated many, many people about our natives and we had fun doing it. We have all met really nice folks and made friendships that will last beyond the Society.

I'm proud and honored that you let me serve as your president.



**T**his is my last president's letter because I will step down at our spring outing. I am assuming that Jean Woods will be confirmed as your new president at that meeting. Jean comes in with outstanding qualifications. She was the Charlotte chapter chair for years until she moved to the mountains and she is currently the education chair for the Society. She was instrumental in getting our impressive website up and running, she has given talk after talk on our wonderful natives, she was a moving force to get the UNCC Native Plant Certification program established and she established a great working relationship with the SCNPS and other organizations around Charlotte. I am confident that Jean will be a great leader for the NCNPS.

See you in the woods  
Tom

### **Early Bird Wildflower Walk & Plant Sale**

**(Rain or shine)**

**DANIEL BOONE NATIVE GARDENS**

**Saturday, April 28, 2012**

**8 a.m. to Noon**

**Location: 651 Horn in the West Drive, Boone, NC**



## SCHEDULE PEARSON'S FALLS/SALUDA

**April 13-15, 2012**

**Friday, April 13:**

2:00 p.m. Optional hike to Twin Falls. Meet at Saluda Mountain Lodge to car pool. Parking is limited.

7:00 p.m. Meet at the Saluda Public Library for dessert and snacks social hour, followed by 8:00 p.m. presentation on Wildflower and Plant Communities by Dr. Tim Spira of Clemson.

**Saturday, April 14:**

9:00 a.m. Meet at Saluda Mountain Lodge to car pool to Pearson's Falls Road for botanizing along the way to a noon entrance to Pearson's Falls.

12:00 noon Lunch (pre-purchased or bring your own) at the Falls, followed by hikes along the trails in the glen.

6:00 p.m. Meet at the Saluda Center for dinner. (Pre-purchased and provided by Saluda Grade Restaurant.) Plant auction to follow. Proceeds to benefit the B. W. Wells Fund.

**Sunday, April 14**

9:00 a.m. Meet at Saluda Mountain Lodge to car pool to Pacolet Falls, finishing by approximately 1:00 p.m. Snacks and water provided.

**PLEASE PRINT THIS OUT AND BRING WITH YOU.**

**Registration form is at end of newsletter.**

**The form may be filled out on your computer, printed, and mailed to**

**Jeff Prather, Treasurer along with your check.**

**There is also a copy on our website:**

**[www.ncwildflower.org](http://www.ncwildflower.org)**



## Special offer: Tommy McNabb knife will be raffled at April event



This Tommy McNabb knife is being offered as a special raffle item for the NCNPS. 100% of the proceeds from ticket sales will benefit NCNPS and it's causes. **Tickets will be \$1 per each or \$5 for 6 and are available from your chapter chair or any board member.** A drawing will be held at the annual auction April 14th during the Spring Trip to Saluda on April 14th. You do not have to be present to win.

The knife has a Micarta handle with the image of a pink lady slipper scrimshawed on front and back. The blade is ATS-34 stainless steel with a Damascus Bolster. The overall size is: 8.75"; Blade size is: 3.87". It comes with a hand-fitted sheath made from the finest quality leather, richly polished and bur-nished at the edges, the sheath affords maximum protection for both you and the knife.



For more information about Tommy and his knives visit:

[www.carolinaknives.com](http://www.carolinaknives.com)

Tommy's knives are expertly crafted for people who appreciate superb handling characteristics in elegant custom-made knives. Each knife starts with a functional design in which every line achieves a specific purpose. Beauty and function are an integral part of the design, and painstaking care is given to each step in the creation process to ensure a maximum blend of style and performance. The final product is a strong,

beautiful cutting tool that works as a natural extension of your own hand.

### About the Knifemaker:



Tommy McNabb has studied knifemaking and blacksmithing at the John C. Campbell Folk School and at Penland School in North Carolina. His skills have been appreciated at knifemaking classes for Montgomery Community College in North Carolina and for the National Rifle Association.

As founding member, he served as the first president of the North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild; he is also a member of the American Bladesmith Society, The Artist Blacksmith Association of North America (ABANA), and is a voting member of the Knifemakers Guild. Tommy served as Treasurer of ABANA for six years, and has taught numerous workshops for Knifemakers.

Tommy's work has been featured in the *NC Wildlife Magazine*, *NC State Magazine* and many knife publications.



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### Board Member News

Several members of the Triad Chapter set up an information booth at the Green & Growin' Show at the Greensboro Coliseum in January. P.L. Byrd of farmcarolina.com reported:

While plants, tools and fertilizers were being sold on the trade floor, professional and educational booths offering free information queued up in the lobby.

The hottest topic was native plants, and many growers said they have seen an up click in the market. "Customers are asking for them," said one local grower.

Lynda Waldrep, vice president of The N.C. Native Plant Society, said, "So many plants from China and Japan are taking over our native species. They are aggressive growers. Plus, they come in without the same natural predators, so there's no control."

One of the most important things about native plants, according to society volunteer Joanne Lapple, is maintaining a healthy ecosystem and keeping food corridors open.

"It's not just about the plant," she said. "Native plants support native bugs and birds."

For example, the non-native, offensively odiferous Bradford Pear tree may support a dozen species of bugs, including a few non-discriminating butterflies, but an oak tree supports over 500. "Maybe someday bugs will love non-native plants, but it will take eons."

To see the full article, visit:

<http://www.farmcarolina.com/article/013012-fc-greengrowin>

### *A Plea*

*If you change your email address, please send the new address to our Treasurer, who keeps the membership list: jandcprather@earthlink.net*

*Otherwise, you won't receive notification of NCNPS events.*





## Introducing board member Larry Mellichamp

I am writing a new book for Timber Press on native plants of the Southeast and their landscape uses. Don't get your hopes up; it won't be out until late 2013. However, having just finished the chapter on ferns, I am impressed by how many natives we have that make good garden subjects.

I would like to know who of our NCNPS members have an special interest in growing ferns in their gardens such that I could find out which of our rarer ferns are being grown (outside the mountains) and how well they are doing. Folks could email me at [tlmellic@uncc.edu](mailto:tlmellic@uncc.edu) if they have any thoughts about their own or someone else's garden, especially public ones.

I do know that the NC Botanical Garden has a great fern collection, as does Plant Delights Nursery and the Southern Highland Reserve (look at their web sites). Some specific ferns that I would ask about now are Goldie's Fern, Rock-cap polypody, Blunt-lobed Woodsia, Purple Cliff-brake (or other Pellaea), Grape ferns, American climbing fern, Spinulose woodfern, Virginia chain fern, Shining Clubmoss, Bulblet fern, Aspleniums (other than ebony spleenwort), hay-scented fern, adder's-tongue, fancy forms of Osmunda or fancy forms of Christmas fern. Do let me know.

I have discovered that a small book, *The Fern Guide* by Edgar Wherry, first published in 1961, is a great resource as he gives concise botanical descriptions and cultural notes (even if some of the nomenclature has changed). I think ferns have been one of the great "victims" of the current massive reorganization of botanical nomenclature. I would love to hear from people as to whether they would rather have the current new name or the old standard name, or both. After all, even names we know were new once, and there was a revolution and a bunch of changes at some point (points) in the past. Perhaps we would have a special program on ferns at one of our annual meetings.

At UNCCCharlotte Botanical Gardens we grow – or have grown – some 60 species of native ferns and fern allies (horsetails, clubmosses, spikemosses) and I would like to know of other good fern collections.



Above: Lady-in-red southern lady fern  
Below: *Lygopodium palmatum*, American climbing fern  
Below left: Rock dwelling ferns at Plant Delights Nursery





## *Introducing Jeff Prather, Treasurer*

**T**he North Carolina Native Plant Society is a business – a small non-profit, but still a business with a current net worth of approximately \$82,700. As such we have both federal and state reporting requirements along with the routine requirements of tracking income and expenses for our membership.

I took over as treasurer in May 2009. Our former treasurer, Hugh Partridge, kept excellent records in Quicken. Hugh was also a Mac person. Guess who is not a Mac or a Quicken person? Regardless, Mac Quicken files CANNOT be converted to my Windows version of Quicken. So, I have developed a series of simple Excel spreadsheets for our membership database and field trip rosters. Your payment dues are backed up 3 ways. First, your membership application or last renewal letter with payment and date received is kept on file. Second, the data is also posted on the membership spreadsheet that is sent out to Board members and Chapter chairs on the 1st and 15th of each month. Third, a separate monthly summary for each deposit is maintained including name/purpose/amount which serves as the final backup. One of the most unpleasant duties associated with the job will shortly come to an end when we sell the last of our propagation handbooks. The Society has to pay sales tax for each handbook we sell. Typically, this amounts to less than \$10.00 per quarter, but I have to track the county each handbook was sold in and then back calculate the sales tax for each county – Mecklenburg County even has a small transportation tax added in. I know our \$0.05 payment made a difference in their new rail system.

We also have to file for Federal taxes, since our annual income is under \$25,000; this is a simple postcard requirement, IRS Form 990-N. This year, the State of North Carolina, required a new annual reporting through their Charitable Licensing office that while initially appeared daunting, was relatively simple once I determined the appropriate category for our income/

expenses. These reporting requirements are not onerous, but they are important to keep our exempt non-profit status. So if I ever have to ask you for more detail information regarding an expense, please understand the importance of tracking this information. Do you realize that our printing and mailing expenses for each newsletter is over \$200-- multiply that for 5 mailings per year. This is the type of information we have to maintain for the Charitable License application.

For the first time this year we sent out renewal letters to those members with expired memberships. For years we have tried to find a simple and inexpensive method for notifying members when their membership expired, much like a magazine subscription renewal notice. With the Board's approval, I will start deleting members who have not renewed within 6 months of the expiration of their membership. No member will be deleted who was not notified in June that their membership was expired.



Are you aware that the society provides 4 student scholarships to the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference each year (\$1,600 total)? The Board has no say in the selection process, we just require the recipients to be North Carolina residents/students. The Cullowhee scholarship committee makes the final selection along with similar scholarships given by other State native plant societies, the Cullowhee plant vendors, private individuals, etc.

The society also supports stewardship activities through the B. W. Wells Stewardship fund. More information is available on the criteria and how to apply for these funds on our website. (<http://www.ncwildflower.org/scholarships/wellsfund.htm>) Recent projects have covered a wide range of projects from improved signage at the Daniel Boone Garden in Boone, deer fencing at the North Carolina Botanical Garden, and a native plant habitat for The Haven, a new homeless shelter in Brevard. The Board has not established a goal or limit for these awards. Each application is evaluated on its own merits re-



## More about Jeff—and Cheryl!.....

quiring the support of all the Board members. The Society routinely makes \$200 annual donations to the NC Botanical Garden, the UNCC Botanical Garden and to the Blomquist Garden of Native Plants at the Sarah P. Duke Garden. We also make a \$100 annual donation to the B.W. Wells Association.

In addition, the Native Plant Society sponsors Tom & Bruce Shinn Grants (in the amount of \$100.00 - \$1000.00 each) for the purpose of supporting basic or applied research on native plants in botanical or horticultural areas that fulfill the mission of the North Carolina Native Plant Society. These grants are awarded to United States citizens attending North Carolina schools who are either graduate students or qualified undergraduate students working on projects with an advisor. The 2011 Shinn Grant Awards were Robert Thornhill, NCSU, for his research on The Vascular Flora and Soils of Shaken Creek Savannas (Pender County, NC), Advisor: Dr. Alexander Krings, NCSU; Aline M. Waguespack Claytor, Duke, Plant defense research using *Passiflora incarnata*, Advisor: Dr. William F. Morris, Duke; and Lindsay D. Leverett, ECU, Seed ecology of the native species *Packera tomentosa* (Asteraceae), Advisor: Dr. Claudia L. Jolls, ECU. I have been amazed that despite repeated attempts to increase awareness of these scholarship funds, some years we have not awarded any scholarships because no one has applied. So if you know a potential eligible student, encourage them to apply. Once again, the criteria and application are available on the aforementioned website.

When Kathy asked the Board members write an article about their responsibilities on the board, she also asked us to talk about any recent activities we thought the membership might appreciate. Unfortunately, from late November until mid-February, we have little time for leisurely hikes in the woods. Our focus is on leaf season. For those of you who have visited our woodland garden, a brief explanation is in order. We live on ¾ acre lot backing up to a 50 foot open sewage right-of-way

in a golf course community with an active Home Owners Association where the typical homeowner pays to have his/her landscape meticulously maintained. Our lot is pie shaped with the narrow front yard maintained according to typical neighborhood standards. We have managed to reduce our lawn area to a narrow strip of grass that I can mow in 10 minutes – just enough grass clippings for our double barrel composter. Our native plant focus is on our wider backyard with its meandering stream. Each year we bag and shred between 350 and 400 contractor bags of leaves. Most of our neighbors have their leaves blown to the curve side ostensibly for the city to



collect, but in reality, they mostly blow down to our yard/driveway or wash into our creek. When we first purchased our lot in 1990, we recognized our woodland edge was badly degraded. Thanks to numerous plant rescues we have been able to transplant thousands of native plants in mass along this woodland edge/stream bank. We think that part of our success has been in returning Mother Nature's best fertilizer back into the soil.

Some plants, such as partridgeberry, do not like to be cover with thick leaf mulch. But this annual ritual also serves another purpose; it helps us to keep on top of the constant onslaught of invasive plants and weeds. It also enables us to identify those areas of worst vole activity where we continue our efforts to control their population – does anyone know how to neuter a vole? While some may not appreciate our manicured approach – I can't help it, I "are an engineer."

Still, approximately a third of our back yard is kept "natural" with fallen leaves intact. We think we have noticed a major difference in the spread of our spring bloomers in those areas where we have replaced the thick cover with shredded leaf mulch. When our beds are covered in a layer of finely shredded leaves, we can finally sit back and await the arrival of our spring wildflowers from their long dormancy. Our first hepatica are blooming and our *Trillium underwoodii* has been in bloom since early January. All is well with our woodland garden.



## *More on Jeff...*

Happy gardening to all and find a way to give back to NCNPS or to a garden near you. To paraphrase our friend and landscape architect Alicia Berry, "The best way to learn about gardening is to go volunteer in one."

Jeff Prather, Treasurer

Note: Jeff and his wife Cheryl are active volunteers at the Sarah P. Duke Gardens where Cheryl is in her 15th year as a volunteer in the Blomquist Garden of Native Plants, having amassed almost 5,000 volunteer hours. She was the recipient of the Gelman Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service to the Garden in 2002. Jeff volunteers with the water lily program and serves as head of a plant rescue team for the gardens. He is in his second term on the Garden's Board of Advisors. They also volunteer at UNC's Battle Park/Forest Theater.



## **Is your wardrobe ready for Spring?**

January ended with beautiful warm days. T-shirts will be coming out of the closet, soon. Are your Native Plant Society T's getting worn out? We have a fine selection of 100% cotton short sleeved shirts in yellow, green, tan, deep red and blue in the standard cut. The scoop-neck inventory includes pink and blue/violet. The shirts range from small to XXL at a cost to you of just \$15. Let me know if you need Ts. I will be bringing them to the Spring Weekend in Saluda so you can find the correct size for you.

We are also selling a nice sized canvas tote bag, with forest green bottom and handles, that sports our logo on the front. A special deal for non-members is that included with the purchase of the \$15 totes is a one year free membership.

Nancy Saint  
535 Colony Court  
Statesville, NC 28677  
704-878-2817  
[gnsaint@bellsouth.net](mailto:gnsaint@bellsouth.net)



## SE Coast Chapter Report

Our last two field trips (to the Greentree Impoundment of Holly Shelter Game Land in November with Alistair Glen, and to Poplar Grove Plantation's Abbey Nature Preserve with Charlotte Glen) have focused on recognizing plant communities. Charlotte suggested that we continue to make this part of all our walks as an aid to species identification. If you know what plants to expect in various habitats, it helps narrow your focus. So that will add a new depth to our knowledge of favorite sites. We are looking forward to our February walk at Green Swamp where Roger Shew of UNCW will connect what grows in various habitats with the underlying geology of the region.

Here also is a photograph of the Pine Barrens Gentian, *Gentiana autumnalis*, from the Holly Shelter: Greentree Impoundment walk. Lara Berkley took the photograph.



Cary Paynter, co-chair, SE Coast Chapter

## Native Plant Certification Courses

The Native Plant Certificate Program, taught at UNC-Charlotte, graduated 11 people on December 3. Thirteen people graduated last year, bringing the total number of graduates to 23 people. Those graduating are: Karen Hudson-Brown, John Mooney, Roy Hamme, Lee Ann Kozak, Daricia McKnight, Jamie Kent, Karen Busby, Joe Ormsby, Jake Clapperton, Dawn Holshouser and Ann Westphal.

The response continues to be excellent for classes and we are entering the new year with a great line-up of classes:

**Basic Botany** (core course)

**Forest Ecology** (elective – pre-requisite: Basic Botany)

**Journaling in the Dark Days of Winter** (open to anyone)

**Advanced Ecology** (elective – pre-requisite: Basic Ecology)

**Winter Tree Identification** (elective – Pre-requisite: Basic Botany)

**Basic Horticulture** (core – Pre-requisite: Basic Botany)

**Soils of the Piedmont** (elective – Pre-requisite: Basic Botany)

**Birds' Spring Behavior** (open to anyone)

**Creating a Certified Wildlife Habitat** (open to anyone)

This program continues to be a huge success, serving to educate people about our native plants and habitats. For more information go to [gardens.uncc.edu](http://gardens.uncc.edu) and click on the link on the right side of the page.

Jean Woods



## Introducing board member Jean Woods

It will be 4 years this June since we moved to the mountains. Joe and I hike or walk 3-4 days a week along the 10 miles of trails along the Davidson River. I have become interested in mosses and the winter is a great time to see mosses. All the rain we are having has nurtured the mosses into amazing shades of green, some so startlingly beautiful that they look unreal. I am still terrible at identifying them, but am having great fun trying. The best book I have found is "Outstanding Mosses and Liverworts of Pennsylvania" by Susan Munch. It is for Pennsylvania, but I find it is applicable here. Joe and I are also working on our winter tree ID skills. We are better at the trees than the shrubs, but we are making progress.



I think this may be cushion moss, *Leucobryum* spp.

We were walking one of the trails along the Davidson River a few weeks ago and, as we neared the Ranger Station, we heard loud cracks to our left. I looked up and a very large, tall hemlock was beginning its descent toward us. I was in front, so I turned and while yelling, "Go! Go! Go!" started running back the way we had come. All of this took seconds, but when we looked back, the top of the hemlock was now lying across our path where had been seconds earlier. It was the top of

the tree, but the trunk at that point was about 6" in diameter, with many branches, so, while we might not have been killed, we would likely have been badly injured. We checked the base of the tree and it had a blue dot which means that it was treated for the woolly adelgid. The tree broke about 5 feet up, so the treatment did not save the tree.

The forest service is treating trees near the campground and the nature centers, saying that is cheaper than taking the trees down or risking them falling on people. Good idea, but it may be too late for some trees.

This winter has been unusually warm. I have one poor, confused *Hepatica americana* in flower and my jonquils are out of the ground but no buds so far. We could still have very cold temperatures and possibly snow. People here are worried about the apple crop.

I will have a table at a "Garden Fair" that the master gardeners are having at our library mid March and I will give one of the talks. My topic will be "A Native Plant Palette for your Garden." We hike with Western Carolina Botany Club here in Brevard and Hendersonville. During the winter we meet indoors and have talks. I will give a talk next month on our trip last fall to Shaken Creek.

I am looking forward to our spring meeting in Saluda. See you there!



I think this is fern moss, *Thuidium delicatulum*  
*Sporophytes sticking up.*



## NCNPS grant goes to The Haven in Transylvania County

The North Carolina Native Plant Society has awarded Nina Shippen, owner of Hidden Road Landscape Design, a grant of \$908 from the B.W. Wells Stewardship Fund to be used to purchase and install native plants at The Haven of Transylvania County. Nearing completion, The Haven will provide shelter and assistance to individuals and families in Transylvania County.



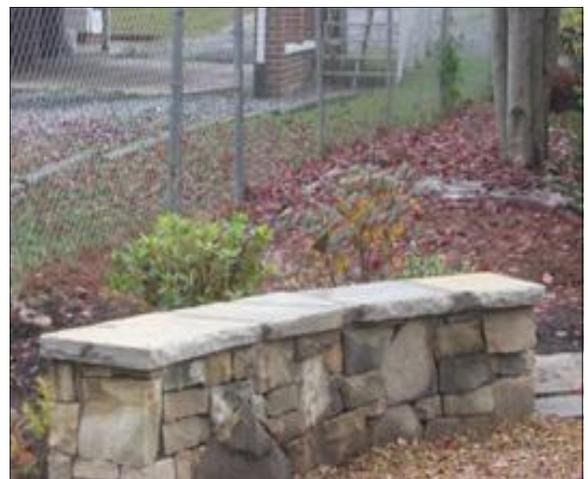
Ms. Shippen designed the landscape using a palette of native plants that she selected for year-round beauty and low maintenance requirements. The intent of her design is to offer a sense of sanctuary to the clients and staff of The Haven as well as the neighboring Bread of Life food pantry.

In addition to the grant, the project is funded by individual donations and the donated labor and materials from nursery, landscaping, and stone masons based in Transylvania County. "I'm really proud to belong to an industry that stepped right up to provide the kind of comfort that good landscaping offers to us, wherever we are and whatever our circumstances. And native plants fit right into a plan that requires beautiful plants that are also resilient and don't ask for a lot of fussing" said Shippen.

The B. W. Wells Stewardship fund supports activities that are in keeping with its mission to promote the enjoyment and conservation of North Carolina's native plants. The NC Native Plant Society, founded in 1951, promotes enjoyment and conservation of North Carolina's native plants and their habitats through education, protection, propagation, and advocacy.

Nina used dogwood blueberries, winterberries, St. Johnswort, azaleas, inkberries, and fothergilas and clethra for the shrubs and solidago, phlox, baptisia, *Amsonia hubrechtii*, and asters for the perennials.

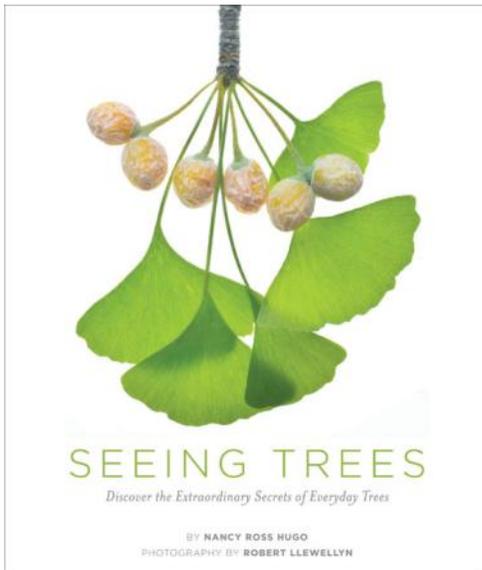
Article and photos submitted by Jean Woods.  
Photo at top courtesy of Eric Crews and *The Transylvania Times*



*Plantings around the courtyard.*



## Seeing Trees: Discover the Extraordinary Secrets of Everyday Trees



Timber Press, 2011.

Nancy Hugo's book, *Seeing Trees*, is a wonderful resource for tree-lovers. The author's goal is to grab our attention and focus it - really focus it - on the common trees in our yards and neighborhoods. From the text and heart-stopping photographs, we discover what is going on up there in that faraway canopy and how we can see a bit of the action.

The book deals in details of leaf, flower, fruit, buds, leaf scars, bark and twigs. These are illustrated by photographs made by stitching together 8 - 45 images, each taken at a different focus point. It's like holding the object in your hand. The text then describes appearances and processes in exact and memorable words. Here she is on black walnut trees: "On the black walnut leaf scar, which is a sort of flattened shamrock shape, like E. T.'s head, are three tiny horseshoe-shaped clusters of bundle scars that look like eyes and a mouth." Look at the photo on that page and there are the tiny E. T. heads looking out from the twig. Who could forget?!

*Seeing Trees* does what the author and photographer intend. It makes you fall in love with trees because "sometimes romance can accomplish what rhetoric cannot."

Reviewed and recommended by Cary Paynter  
SE Coast Chapter

## Andre Michaux in NC

Several years the NCNPS gave a small donation to the UNC-Charlotte Botanical Gardens to help develop a trail to highlight the work of the famous French botanist André Michaux (pronounced mish show'). He collected more new plants in his day (1785-96 collecting in America) than any other single botanist, more than 275 species. He published the first broad-based flora of North America in 1803.

We have begun collecting the plants of Michaux that we can (and want to) grow, and have the beginnings of a "Michaux Trail" with hopes for a brochure guide soon. Perhaps Michaux's most celebrated discovery that anyone can successfully grow anywhere is the Bigleaf Magnolia (*Magnolia macrophylla*), first discovered in Gaston County near Mount Holly, just west of Charlotte. It has leaves up to 40 inches long and fragrant May flowers the size of dinner plates. Other famous, but less easy to grow, examples are purple rhododendron, Oconee bells, Carolina lily, fever tree, Carolina spring beauty, speckled wood lily, white trillium, mountain sweet pepperbush, and flame azalea. There are several excellent web sites that tell about Michaux, developed by Charlie Williams, of Charlotte, who has done more to revive interest in Michaux and his legacy than anyone alive today.

See <http://www.michaux.org/photos.htm> and <http://www.michaux.org/plantscarolina.htm>

Larry Mellichamp



Larry Allain @ USDA-NRCS Plants Database



## Mountain laurels in NC Coastal Plain Counties

A.J. Bullard

The mountain laurel has one of the most beautiful flowers known, yet it is one of the most poisonous to livestock and humans. All parts and even its smoke can be deadly to cattle, horses, sheep, and even goats.

This plant ranges from Canada to Florida and into the Midwest but is more common in mountainous or hilly regions such as the North Carolina mountains. It is the state flower of Pennsylvania and was introduced from the wild into the nursery trade here in 1734. Much breeding and selection has resulted in a plethora of cultivars over the years.

Mountain laurel is a member of the extensive heath family including blueberries, huckleberries, rhododendron and azaleas. These family members range in toxicity from the blueberry and huckleberry which present no toxic problems to the rhododendron and mountain laurel members which can be deadly. Fatalities have been reported from mountain laurel honey, but skin rashes seldom occur.

The genus for mountain laurel is *Kalmia* in honor of Peter Kalm, a Swedish botanist who collected plants in North America in the mid 1780s. During this period a number of foreign as well as many American botanists collected and named a multitude of new plants. Prime examples of this were John and William Bartram of Philadelphia, who in their travels in Eastern North America discovered, collected and named some 125 new plants. This included the Ben Franklin tree, *Franklinia*, which was propagated in their Philadelphia gardens but was never found in the wild after this period. I have failed in my attempts to grow this tree.

This genus (*Kalmia*) has several other species native to Eastern

North Carolina including the rare and beautiful *Kalmia cuneata*, whitewicky, as well as sheep kill (wicky), which can also prove fatal to cattle and sheep. Sheep kill is a woody bush up to 5 feet tall blooming in May and June. It sports purple flowers and inhabits low boggy bay areas.



*Kalmia latifolia* L.

Photo: Jeff McMillan. USDA Plants Database.

As has been described before, many of these toxic plants (yellow jessamine, foxglove, etc.) produce poisons (glycosides and alkaloids) for their own defense against predators. Some of these poisons in very small amounts can be used by humans as "herbal medicines."

Mountain laurel leaves were formerly used for internal treatment of diarrhea and syphilis and externally for various skin diseases.

The hard growths (burls) at the base of the trunk were formerly used to make smoking pipes but even this wood had an unpleasant taste and the practice was abandoned.

In our area, mountain laurel (also called laurel by locals) is usually not found abundantly and the state botanical texts do not give it credit for ever being in Sampson County, but it has been found in several locations there. I haven't heard of it in Duplin County but it has been recorded in Wayne County at two locations. A colony existed at Cox Mill and now a large colony is present on Little River near Goldsboro.

In Sampson county it is a completely different story! I know of its presence in upper, mid, and lower Sampson. Here its habitat varies considerably from branch head streams to moist flatwoods to bluffs along major streams to dry upland hillsides.



### Mountain laurel continued

It blooms around Mother's Day in May with whitish-pink bloom heads and bursts from obscurity to brilliance. In the off season this evergreen shrub blends in with a couple of look-alike bushes—ti-ti and horse sugar.

To the discerning eye the brown, shredding bark and gnarled drooping branches will help identify it in the non-blooming periods. Like all members of the heath family, acid soil is required and is always present where it is found.

The greatest concentration of this shrub in our general area is in central Sampson County around Salemburg extending toward Bonnettsville over a several mile span. Interestingly, Laurel Lake, outside Salemburg, was named for these native bushes formerly growing around the lake. Land clearing has resulted in their demise here, but there are plenty still thriving in the general area.

Mrs. Jane Price, owner, presently living by the lake, named it Laurel Lake around 1947. Many plants can be found on sloping bluff's along Rye swamp which drains the former millpond.

An even wider range is found east of here in the entire area east of the former Sampson Sheriff, William Hall's Pond. Here, many plants occupy a variety of habitats. Some are along steams, in low woods, and on high sandy hillsides. One private homestead has 45—50 large bushes. In Sampson County, historically, these plants have been dug from the wild and planted in neighboring yards to live for years. My home place near Roseboro had such a transplanted bush.

In Clinton, Mrs. Willie Warren moved one laurel from the wild to her garden some 60 years ago. Today, it has spread to 25 feet across by numerous sagging limbs taking root. What a sight in spring along with her numerous rhododendrons and azaleas. Laurels from the wild still grow in additional yards near Bonnettsville and Giddenville, both in Sampson County.

For a plant not credited with existing in Sampson County, mountain laurel is doing quite well, thank you!

A. J. Bullard



© William S. Justice

*Kalmia cuneata*, whitewicky  
William S. Justice@ USDA-NRCS PLANTS



© Smithsonian Institution

*Kalmia angustifolia*, sheep kill or  
sheep laurel  
R.A. Howard @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database



## Making locally adapted butternut available to landowners

The mission of HTIRC with respect to butternut is to make locally adapted, canker-resistant butternut available to landowners and forest managers in the Central Hardwoods region of the United States. The most likely way for us to accomplish our mission will be by breeding disease-resistant (or disease-tolerant) butternuts, and deploying them as grafted clones in seed orchards. Ideally, these seed orchards will be regional or even state-wide. Thus, each state or region would have a butternut seed orchard—a group of adapted trees that cross with each other to produce seeds that could be planted directly or planted into a nursery for the production of seedlings.



Scions from butternuts identified as candidate resistant trees are grafted onto black walnut rootstock by staff at HTIRC.

The seed orchards might be maintained by a public agency (such as your state's Division of Forestry), by a nonprofit, or by a private nursery. Our goal is to have select, disease resistant or disease-tolerant planting stock for butternut available as widely and as inexpensively as possible. We also want to make sure that once seeds or planting stock are available, there will be clear and effective guidelines for planting and managing young trees. This is the kind of research that is our focus at HTIRC. HTIRC is ready with expert advice and support for agencies or other groups that need help collecting or propagating butternut.

HTIRC researchers, staff and students have been working with landowners and other scientists on butternut almost since its establishment in 1999. Ongoing or recently completed research at HTIRC related to butternut includes:

- Studies of the growth of butternut and hybrids in mixed hardwood plantations.
- Studies of the efficiency of photosynthesis and water use of butternuts and hybrids, with a focus on stress tolerance and site preference.
- Studies of the disease process and mechanisms of disease resistance in butternut and hybrids.
- Studies of the ecology and genetic diversity of butternut in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- Development of genetic tools for identifying butternut hybrids and for understanding the extent of hybridization between butternut and Japanese walnut.
- Results from inoculation trials investigating the resistance of butternuts and hybrids and the effects of fungal strain on canker disease development.

We are a long way from achieving our goals for butternut. But with this letter and attachment, I want to emphasize the importance of your contribution to butternut's future. Although the management of butternut on public lands in the U.S. is vitally important, most butternuts grow on private land, and most of those who care about sustaining butternut are private landowners.

To serve private landowners, HTIRC has tried to emphasize the practical, even as its researchers



## Butternuts continued...

have tackled important basic science questions about butternut and butternut canker disease.

Those of you who live in the U.S. may not be aware that butternut has been listed as an endangered species in Canada for several years. As a consequence, scientists in the U.S. and Canada have been working together to try to solve the most important practical questions related to butternut, butternut canker, and butternut recovery. I have included here some links to the Canadian websites: [http://www.rvca.ca/programs/green\\_acres/butternut/BNR\\_2010.pdf](http://www.rvca.ca/programs/green_acres/butternut/BNR_2010.pdf)  
[http://www.ontariostewardship.org/councils/northsimcoe/files/FGCA\\_ButternutPamphlet.pdf](http://www.ontariostewardship.org/councils/northsimcoe/files/FGCA_ButternutPamphlet.pdf)

What can each of us do to help? Here are several suggestions:

1. Learn more about forest management, reforestation and tree planting. Consider contacting interest groups such as the International Walnut Council (<http://www.walnutcouncil.org/>)

2. If you have butternuts on your forested property, consider managing them to encourage regeneration. Best practices for butternut management still involve a lot of guesswork, but there are a few publications that should help (<http://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/FNR/FNR-421-W.pdf>)

[http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/howtos/ht\\_but/ht\\_but.htm](http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/howtos/ht_but/ht_but.htm)

3. Contact your state's division of forestry to see if your state has any programs for identifying and sustaining butternut.

4. **Eat butternuts**—and tell others about them too. It may sound surprising, but one important way to help butternut is to get people excited about how good they are. If you send me butternut recipes, I will post them on my website. A lively market for butternuts would result in a lot of butternut trees being planted. Please be aware that if you live in Canada, harvesting butternuts is likely restricted under the recovery program. Consult before you gather. Here is a link concerning the use of butternut wood (<http://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/FNR/FNR-280-W.pdf>)

Over the past 10 years, HTIRC has received thousands of butternut seeds from hundreds of landowners. These seeds are a living library and resource for studying butternut. They are extremely valuable, as they provide access to a large sample of the genetic diversity for butternut, and HTIRC invests considerable resources each year in their maintenance (please see photos

below). Sources of some of the donated seeds can be found on this map: <http://www.agriculture.purdue.edu/fnr/HTIRC/woeste/2008%20Butternuts.htm>.

Please be patient if you want to look at the map, it can take a few moments to load. The map is interactive (you can zoom in) but the exact location of each source has been altered to protect people's privacy and to protect the trees. Many of the seeds you sent produced seedlings that spent a year at the Indiana State Tree Nursery in Vallonia and were then transplanted to study sites around the Midwest. We keep records related to the origins of these seeds so that we and future scientists can learn about how seed source affects tree growth and development.



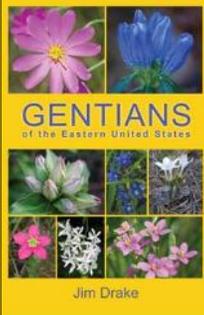
Butternut seedlings in a nursery bed.

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*Article submitted by  
Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration Center  
Northern Research Station  
USDA Forest Service  
Dept. of Forestry and Natural Resources  
Purdue University*



## Support our Advertisers!



This book by author Jim Drake covers the family Gentianaceae occurring within the Eastern United States. It is possibly the most comprehensive text covering the vast range of genera within the family Gentianaceae.

Jim has attempted to provide descriptions of all members of this family within his very broadly defined "eastern" U.S. Text descriptions along with ample photographs help the reader to understand and enjoy the range of wildflowers included within this diverse family.

Beginning with *Bartonia* and finishing with *Voyria*, this text attempts to fill the genera in between including, *Gentiana*, *Sabatia*, lesser-known genera such as *Centaurium*, *Halenia* and many others. Not only focusing on the blue gentians, this 220 page guide gives equal treatment to the rest of the eastern gentian family including both common and less well known members.

Available in late January 2011  
inquiries may be made to  
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# *NC Native Plant News*

c/o Katherine Schlosser  
1402 Bearhollow Road  
Greensboro, NC 27410

NORTH CAROLINA'S NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SINCE 1954

***New Date for Annual Picnic: Saturday, June 2, 2012  
Hagan Stone Park, Greensboro, NC***

*Lindera benzoin*, spicebush, with ladybug

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[www.ncwildflower.org](http://www.ncwildflower.org)



c. K. Schlosser

# "Saluda/Pearson's Falls" Registration Form

April 13-15, 2012

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Home and Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

*(We would like to have your cell phone # so we have a means of communicating when traveling; however, be aware that cell reception is spotty at best in these locations.)*

Registration fee: NCNPS member - \$25.00 per person (\$15.00 limited income) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Single day participation - \$15. Please indicate/circle Saturday or Sunday. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Registration: non-NCNPS member - \$35.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Single day participation - \$20. Please indicate/circle Saturday or Sunday. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday box lunch (optional) \$8.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate vegetarian salad or turkey & provolone foccacia

(delivered to the Falls) \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday night dinner (optional) \$15.00 per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate regular or vegetarian. \_\_\_\_\_

Join the NCNPS - \$25.00 for an individual membership; \$35 for family \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration deadline: received by April 9, 2012**

I/we will bring a food item for the Friday evening social. (Enough for four people; no large amounts necessary.)

**Please make checks payable to NC Native Plant Society**

**Mail to:**

**Jeff Prather, Treasurer**

**108 Wicklow Place**

**Chapel Hill NC 27517**

**Be sure to bring your sunscreen, hat, rain gear (we walk, rain or shine), and extra water.**

**Also don't forget a food item for the Friday social.**

**Confirmation of registration and directions to meeting sites will be sent on receipt of registration via email.**