

TENNESSEE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



Volume 41, Number 2

June 2017

48th Annual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage

Chattanooga served as host city for the 48th Annual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage for the Georgia Botanical Society on April 7-9, 2017.

Over 155 members and guests participated in the three day event, which was the first Georgia Botanical Society pilgrimage held outside the State of Georgia in its 90 year history. The schedule included 28 field trips, comprising sites in North Georgia and East Tennessee.

Several TNPS members and others from Tennessee served in various capacities in support of the bi-state Pilgrimage. Dennis Horn, TNPS Director led a field trip to Shakerag Hollow in Sewanee, TN. Larry Pounds, TNPS Director led field trips to Roaring Creek near Graysville, TN and to Little Cedar Mountain at Lake Nickajack. Mary Priestley, past TNPS President and Halle Henderson, TNPS member, assisted with a field trip to Collins Gulf at Gruetli-Laager, TN along with trip leader, Jason Reynolds, environmental specialist with the South Cumberland State Park. Halle Henderson, TNPS member led a field trip to Sitton's Gulch in Cloudland Canyon State Park near Trenton, GA. Jimmy Grotton, TNPS member led field trips to Little Cedar Mountain on Lake Nickajack and to the Grundy Day Loop Trail in Tracy City, TN. Corey Hagen, Education Director and John Evans, Horticulturist of the Reflection Riding Arboretum and Nature Center led

field trips on the Reflection Riding property. Mitchell Kent, TNPS Outreach / Education Coordinator led field trips to CAS Audubon Acres in Chattanooga, TN and Big Soddy Gulf in Soddy Daisy, TN.

A total of 21 people served as trip

leaders for the Pilgrimage including numerous members from the Georgia Botanical Society. Others served in various volunteer capacities during the event. Many thanks to all of the people who helped make the 2017 Pilgrimage a success! A special note of appreciation goes to Larry Pounds who, in addition to leading two

Pilgrimage field

trips, gave an excellent presentation at the Pilgrimage banquet entitled "Special Plants of the Cumberland Plateau" that was interesting and entertaining! More information on Georgia Botanical Society on their website and facebook. - Mitchell Kent



COPPER IRIS (*IRIS FULVA*) BY BART JONES

TNPS Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the Tennessee Native Plant Society and is published four times a year, generally in February, June, August, and November.

The Tennessee Native Plant Society (TNPS) was founded in 1978. Its purposes are to assist in the exchange of information and encourage fellowship among Tennessee's botanists, both amateur and professional; to promote public education about Tennessee flora and wild plants in general; to provide, through publication of a newsletter or journal, a formal means of documenting information on Tennessee flora and of informing the public about wild plants; and to promote the protection and enhancement of Tennessee's wild plant communities.

Dues for each calendar year are:

Regular: \$20

Student: Complimentary

Institution: \$50

Life: \$250

Dues may be sent to:

Tennessee Native Plant Society

P.O. Box 159274

Nashville, TN 37215

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Please send comments and material for the TNPS newsletter to
djhilgem@gmail.com

A Letter from the President

Hello everyone,

Hopefully you have had a wonderful spring looking at all of our beautiful spring wildflowers. TNPS has had some great field trips to get us into some wonderful sites. There are still many more trips on the schedule. Find one near you and get out with some knowledgeable folks and learn some new plants or revisit some old ones.

REMINDER our Annual Meeting is June 9th through 11th at Beersheba Springs Assembly. If you missed the May 15th deadline through TNPS for registration, contact Beersheba Springs via phone at 931-692-3669 (ask for Thelma Hinton) or email at Thelma.Hinton@tnumc.com or Stephanie.Nunley@tnumc.com.

Hope to see you on the trail,
865-938-7627, ssretiree@yahoo.com
Thanks to all,



Beware Neonicotinoids! Home Depot in Georgia found Selling Milkweeds

Some plants being sold at large home and garden stores have been treated with neonicotinoids to improve their aesthetics. These plants can kill important pollinators and caterpillars.

Some of these stores have committed to phasing out neonicotinoid-laced plants by a certain date, but be aware while you are shopping. Plants will likely be labeled with neonicotinoid information. Milkweeds in particular serve as host plants for the Monarch butterfly and as of April 2017, contaminated milkweeds are still currently being distributed by Home Depot's in the south-east and presumably across the nation.

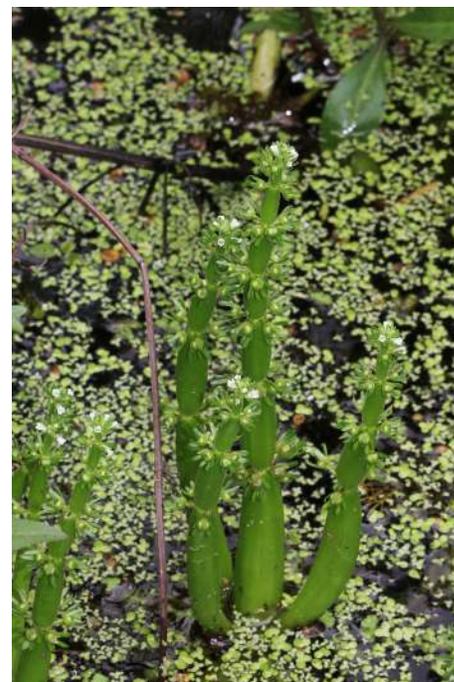
2017 TNPS Field Trip Summaries

Reelfoot Rarities

Lake and Obion Counties

April 29, 2017

On April 29th, a very enthusiastic group gathered at the elementary school in Ridgely on what turned out to be a fine spring day. After introductions to some visitors and catching up with members, we headed over to the Chickasaw Bluff where the Harbison's hawthorns (*Crataegus harbisonii*) were located a few years ago by Barry Hart during his surveys of the bluffs along the Mississippi River. Lucky for us, one of the co-leaders, David Hilgeman, had checked on the trees last year and found them in bloom. So when we got to the area where David had seen them last year, we saw nothing in bloom. But after a bit of searching, we were able to spot 6 trees that had already flowered. We even found one with a cluster of buds, but no open flowers. Still, it is nice to be able to observe such a rare plant in nature, even if we were a week late to catch the flowers. As we walked back to the cars, we found a crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*) blooming on a fencepost allowing for a closeup view of its lovely flowers.



FEATHERFOIL (*HOTTONIA INFLATA*) BY BART JONES

From Ridgely we traveled north to Reelfoot Lake and a stop at the boardwalk behind the park visitors center. Almost immediately, we were greeted by a couple of large clumps of copper iris (*Iris fulva*) a few yards from the boardwalk. It appeared they were in peak bloom and the reddish-orange flowers really stood out against the bright green spring growth around the lakeshore. Near the end of the boardwalk there was a nice flowering clump right beside the woodwork to afford everyone great photographs.

As we entered into the marshy shore we could see dozens of featherfoil (*Hottonia inflata*) protruding through the water. This state-listed rare plant is an odd member of the Primrose family that is completely aquatic. The seeds germinate in the fall and the rosettes of leaves grow throughout the winter on the bottom of the shallow water lining the lake. (Reelfoot-cont'd page 5)



Do you have photos from trips you'd like to share? Are you interested in other TNPS News? Stay up to date and follow us on facebook! [facebook.com/tennesseanativeplantsociety](https://www.facebook.com/tennesseanativeplantsociety)

2017 Field Trip Summaries Continued



RAINBOW FALLS BY
DENNIS HORN

the trail. At the base of the bluff were celandine poppies mingled with Dutchman's breeches. A few *Trillium sessile* were found and added to an already impressive list of spring plants found on this Cat Creek property.

We worked our way back up to the vehicles for lunch. A short drive then took us to the nearby Rainbow Falls property for the afternoon hike. The group, now about 25 strong, began the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile hike to Rainbow Falls. This hike required crossing Hale Branch about four times to reach the falls.

Impressive displays of wildflowers were observed all along the way, including a hillside of large-flowered trillium (*T. grandiflorum*) and blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum*). Large-flowered bellwort (*Uvularia grandiflora*) were scattered along the creek and fire pink (*Silene virginica*), high up on the slopes, were just starting to show their bright red color. Rainbow Falls had a nice flow of water and provided a beautiful setting in the late afternoon sun. We returned to our vehicles after more creek crossings and a few wet feet, but an outing well worth the effort.

Cat Creek and Rainbow Falls *Coffee County* *April 1, 2017*

About 40 participants gathered this April Fool's day for two great hikes near Manchester. We hiked into dissected portions of the Highland Rim on two private properties. The morning hike was along the Duck River near Cat Creek. The winter setting on the Rim soon gave way to a wide assortment of spring wildflowers as we descended to the Duck River floodplain. Within a huge colony of Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) we found three plants with pure white flowers. Toothworts, spring beauties, trilliums, and yellow trout lilies were scattered along



GROUP PHOTO BY
TOM BOVINE

2017 TNPS Field Trip Summaries Continued

(Reelfoot - cont'd)

In early spring, the hollow inflorescences begin to emerge from the leaf axils, and as they grow, air is trapped in them causing the entire plant to become so buoyant it is lifted from the muck and the flower stems are brought above the water's surface. From the joints of the inflorescence, whorls of tiny white flowers are nestled inside relatively large bracts. As spring turns into summer, the seeds are released and the cycle begins again.

Accompanying the featherfoil was another listed rare plant, lake cress (*Rorippa aquatica*, formerly *Armoracia lacustris*). The clusters of snow white flowers contrasted starkly against the duckweed-crusted dark waters. This aquatic mustard family member has two types of leaves. Submerged leaves are finely divided, but as the leaves emerge above the water, they become solidly lance-shaped, and are a dark purplish-green. Also in the open marsh, many plants were just beginning to put up their vegetative growth; halberdleaf rose mallow (*Hibiscus laevis*), swamp loosestrife (*Decodon verticillata*), and giant cut grass (*Zizaniopsis miliacea*). The cut grass is the host plant for one of Reelfoot's special butterflies, the Broad-winged Skipper, of which we saw two bobbing through the clumps of grass. Of course, the entire shore of the lake is ringed with stately, massive bald cypress trees (*Taxodium distichum*).



CLEMATIS CRISPA BY
BART JONES

Near the end of the boardwalk we encountered another uncommon plant, blue jasmine (*Clematis crispa*). This is my favorite native clematis and the flowers can be a stunning purplish-blue. It isn't a very vigorous vine and usually grows low along the tops of the understory plants.

Since we had seen all of the rare plants we had hoped for on this trip, we decided to go for a nice long lunch at a nearby BBQ restaurant. We spent the time swapping stories and talking about the plants and places we've been to recently. Mitchell and Nancy Kent drove over from Chattanooga, but more importantly, Nancy brought a box of mini Moon Pies in celebration of their 100th anniversary (not Mitchell and Nancy, but the Moon Pie). We all enjoyed the dessert!

A few in the group decided to go to Walnut Log on the northern side of the lake as the rest called it a day. We followed the woodland trail and boardwalk there and saw a nice American wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*) and leadplant (*Amorpha fruticosa*) in flower. As we entered the woods, we found several green dragon (*Arisaema dracontium*) in bloom and more and even prettier blue jasmine vines. On the roadside heading back to the parking area, there were dozens of large clumps of stout blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolia*) covered in flowers, some of the nicest I've ever seen.

You don't usually think of wetlands being a good destination for spring wildflowers, but Reelfoot Lake is definitely a place you should consider visiting for its rare spring wildflowers.

- Bart Jones

June 9th - 11th, 2017

**Annual Meeting at
Beersheba Springs**

Annual Meeting Information

TNPS Annual Meeting at Beersheba Springs

Register by May 31st

Scenic Beersheba Springs is the location of this year's TNPS annual meeting. Members will have accommodations at the Beersheba Springs Assembly and Hotel, an historic site with modern facilities. Thirty-five places have been set aside for us, but act soon to reserve your place. Reservations were to be made by May 15th to meet the requirements of Beersheba Springs Hotel. If you missed the May 15th deadline, contact Beersheba Springs via phone at 931-692-3669 (ask for Thelma Hinton) or email at Thelma.Hinton@tnumc.com or Stephanie.Nunley@tnumc.com. The format of this year's annual meeting will follow closely the form of past meetings, with programs on Friday and Saturday evenings after the meals, and at least one field trip on Saturday morning and afternoon. There should be plenty of time to interact with fellow members and guests. In fact, members are encouraged to bring friends who have an interest in wildflowers.

Many members will remember the scenic overlooks and the short drive into the state park at the famous and easily-accessible Stone Door. In the valley 1,000 feet below the hotel, visitors can see the Collins Rivers which has spilled its watershed into Collins Gulf and then merged with the waters of Savage Gulf on one side and Big Creek Gulf on the other. The open campus of the Beersheba Springs Assembly is situated at the center of the village of houses and summer cottages.



Speakers for the 2017 Annual Meeting

Friday June 9th: Dr. Ken McFarland
“Mosses are Plants, Too.”

Dr. McFarland is a retired professor of biology at University of Tennessee-Knoxville. He will be presenting on the often overlooked world of mosses.

Saturday June 10th: David Lincicome

“Capacity Building for Plant Conservation: Establishment of a Tennessee Plant Conservation Alliance (PCA).”

David Lincicome is the Heritage Program Manager for Tennessee. Come hear him speak about efforts to form a PCA in Tennessee.

When Dues Are Due?

Unless you are an email subscriber, check your mailing label for your membership date. You are paid through the year listed just above your name. You can pay TNPS dues at any time, and now you can pay online at the TNPS Website. Just go to www.tnps.org, click “Membership,” and follow directions there. If your address has changed, you can email the new address to info@tnps.org. We cannot print the newsletter in full color, but you may be pleased to find all the color in email copies and at the website. www.tnps.org

TNPS Newsletter
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