

Chechinquamin

The Newsletter of the
Southern Appalachian Botanical Society



Vol. 1, No. 1

Spring 1993

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the SABS newsletter

You probably do not recognize *Castanea pumila* under this alias! But I hope your interest is piqued enough to help us with an answer to this question: What is the preferred spelling for the name of our newsletter? CHINQUAPIN? CHINKAPIN? CHINCAPIN? Or perhaps you favor this attempt to Anglicize the Amerindian name: CHECHINQUAMIN. My friend George Ellison, of Bryson City, N.C., uncovered this term when he looked up the alternate spelling for

chinkapin. The term was coined by Capt. John Smith in 1624, perhaps for the more coastal form of the plant since he did not make it into the Appalachian Mountains. If the name is found to be the same in the Cherokee language, we might wish to adopt it to add a native cultural flavor to our publication. Alas, I am afraid too many of us would have tangled tongues attempting to pronounce it.

Because our journal is officially named *Castanea*, the newsletter committee felt that

the first-cousin name should be chinquapin or chinkapin. There was no complete agreement on the spelling, and as editor I need your help with two things. First, send me your preferred choice on the spelling before the next issue. This will be your newsletter, and we want to abide by your wishes. Also, please submit news or features that would be of interest to our members and other readers. Perhaps we can claim this first issue will be a collector's item, for we are printing only 1500 copies of it. -Ed.

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Newsletter format and topics

It is our plan to have the newsletter alternate with *Castanea*, with mailings scheduled for the middle of February, May, August, and November. We hope to publish items of interest to a broader spectrum of our members. Dr. William Logan, who ably chaired the newsletter committee, suggests that more information about various tree species be included in the newsletter. We also wish to have themes on rare and endangered species, conservation efforts of industry and government, research project summaries, and reprints of exceptional articles in other plant societies. Informa-

tional articles could include SABS meetings and events, field trips, regional native plant society news, and book reviews. Initially, we plan to use an eight-page format, and if warranted, perhaps expand to somewhat larger issues later.

SABS President John Herr recently noted that one of Earl Core's close associates in West Virginia was mathematician Hannibal Albert Davis, who often contributed to the general interest reports in the early days of *Castanea*. Perhaps we can recapture in the newsletter some of the flavor and intent of those early articles of the journal.

Let me emphasize that this is

Cont on page 2

Cont from page 1

your newsletter. You are invited to share your comments about our topics, organization, appearance, or whatever. In addition to news and features, I would be happy to publish letters to the editor, space permitting. We hope to reach a wide audience but not replace the newsletters of several naturalist and botanical groups throughout the Southeast. As Dr. Core, the original editor of *Castanea*, wrote in the "Forward" to the first issue of *Castanea* in 1936:

"A more careful and systematic investigation of the flora of the region by its permanent residents would doubtless reveal numerous additional new species and significant extensions of ranges, while shedding light on the many intricate problems of phytogeography and plant migrations hidden among the tangled ranges of the Southern Appalachians."

This prediction remains true 57 years later, and likely will remain true for some time into the future.

—Ed.

Georgia Botanical Society plans 24th Wildflower Pilgrimage

Coastal Georgia will be the site of the Georgia Botanical Society's 24th Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage, scheduled for March 26-28.

The pilgrimage will feature several speakers as well as field trips to a variety of ecosystems,

1993 Natural Areas Conference scheduled at University of Maine

The 20th annual Natural Areas Conference, with the focus "Conservation in Working Landscapes," has been set for June 22-25 at the University of Maine in Orono.

Participants will have a chance to interact through presented papers, posters, workshops and field workshops. Six symposia topics will be featured at the

Clayton Exhibition March 23-26 at James Madison University

The life and work of early 18th-century botanist John Clayton will be celebrated at the "John Clayton Exhibition," March 23-26 at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va.

Clayton, clerk of court for Gloucester County, Va., for better than half a century, is remembered for collecting plant specimens of the New World. His work formed the basis of the 1739 publishing of *Flora Virginica*, the first publication devoted to plant life in America.

The four-day exhibition, sponsored by the James Madison University Arboretum, provides an opportunity to view 30 original plant specimens Clayton collected in Virginia and sent to Europe for further study and safekeeping. The herbarium sheets at James Madison are on loan from the

British Museum of Natural History, the present repository of the John Clayton Collection, which comprises more than 500 original specimens.

"These (30) specimens should be known and seen by Americans," says Dr. Norlyn Bodkin, JMU Arboretum director who helped compile the Clayton collection.

Highlight of the exhibit is the spring beauty, *Claytonia virginica*, collected by Clayton and named for him by Carl Linnaeus. Other exhibition activities include symposia by botany experts, 18th-century botanical literature and paintings, two receptions and an 18th-century dinner.

For reservations and travel information, call Julie Stickley, JMU Arboretum Advisory Council, (703) 433-0163.

including the Altamaha River, Harris Neck Wildlife Refuge, Cumberland Island National Seashore, and St. Simons Islands' natural communities.

The Episcopal Conference Center at Dover Bluff, in Camden County, will serve as base for the

pilgrimage. Although the reservations deadline for lodging and meals at the conference center was March 4, information on individual field trips is available from Lucy Cabot-Smethurst, (404) 843-1395, or from Will Griffin, (404) 378-1920.

conference:

* Biological diversity in working landscapes: topical perspective.

* Biological diversity in working landscapes: institutional perspective.

* Conserving endangered species and natural communities in working landscapes.

* Conservation in marine

ecosystems.

* Inventorying and monitoring natural areas in working landscapes.

* Managing natural areas in working landscapes.

For a conference brochure and registration form, write Hank Tyler, Maine State Planning Office, Station 38, Augusta, ME 04333; or call (207) 624-6041.

43rd Annual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage In Great Smokies

More than 85 field trips and other activities are listed in the Annual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage to the Great Smoky Mountains, April 22-24. While the wildflowers are the usual main attraction, there are also photography workshops, ecol-

ogy walks, spider forays, bicycle flower tours, pollination walks, and sessions on sketching, folklore, mosses, and poisonous plants. In addition, three evening illustrated lectures are scheduled: "A Cove Forest Under Glass,"

on Thursday; "The World's Oldest Profession," on Friday; and "Nature Photographer's Slide Show," on Saturday. With a little luck and good weather, this promises to be one of the best years yet for nature lovers in the Smokies.

Kentucky's Natural Bridge site of 1993 Wildflower Weekend

The peak of spring wildflowers in eastern Kentucky provides the impetus for the annual Wildflower Weekend at Natural Bridge State Park, April 30-May 2 at Slade, Ky.

Field trips and evening programs are planned at the gathering, which coincides with

the spring meeting of the Kentucky Native Plant Society. Guest speaker will be Fred Case, an educator and researcher from Saginaw, Mich., and author of Orchids of the Western Great Lakes Region. His program on Saturday night will be "North American

Terrestrial Orchids."

Participants may register for \$3 per person or \$5 per family after 3 p.m. on April 30. For further information, call Natural Bridge State Park, (800) 325-1710 or (606) 663-2214.

Calendar Of Events

The John Clayton Exhibition
James Madison University, VA
Mar 23-26
(703) 433-0163

Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage
Georgia Botanical Society
Dover Bluff, GA
Mar 26-28
(404) 378-1920

Association of Southeastern
Biologists and Annual Meeting
of SABS
Virginia Beach, VA
Apr 14-17
(804) 683-3595

Spring Wildflower Workshop
Cashiers, NC
Apr 14-16
(704) 743-2411

Spring Flower Hiking Week
Fontana Village, NC
Apr 18-23
(704) 498-2211 or
(800) 849-2258

Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage
Great Smoky Mtns., TN
Apr 22-24
(615) 448-6134

Conservation Retreat
Cashiers, NC
Apr 22-25
(704) 743-2411

Wildflower Weekend
Natural Bridge, KY
Apr 30-May 2
(606) 663-2214 or
(800) 325-1710

Appalachian Trail Conf.
Dahlonega, GA
Jun 12-18
Deep South '93
POB 33396
Dahlonega, GA 30033

Landscaping with Native Plants
Cullowhee, NC
Jul 21-24
(704) 227-7397

Autumn Wildflower Workshop
Cashiers, NC
Sep 22-24
(704) 743-2411

Bartram Trail Conference
Fontana Village, NC
Oct 14-17
(704) 498-2211
(800) 849-2258

A southern city's success story in saving its trees

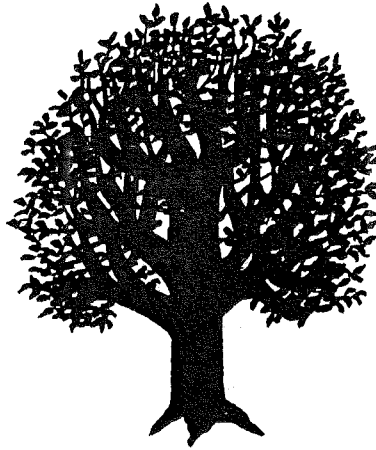
The term "urban forest," an apparent oxymoron, is in fact an important expression of our need to surround ourselves with reminders of a more natural world. A lucky few of you who read this may be able to look through the nearest window and gaze upon undisturbed wilderness. Most of us, though, will be ensconced in our home or workplace and will not see anything approaching an undisturbed landscape. We likely, however, will be able to see trees. Even if we are trapped inside a downtown office building, on our trip home we will pass trees. Consciously and deliberately, we have surrounded ourselves with this more visible representative of the woodland. Whether along a shaded boulevard, in a central park or on a landscaped lawn, trees define the urban forest just as they do the virgin forest.

Unfortunately, the urban forest is also an endangered community, no less than tropical rainforests or old-growth timber. The threat may come from an enlarged parking lot, a widened street or a new shopping mall, but regardless of the specific circumstances, city trees face a precarious future.

In Charlotte, N.C., we are doing something about protecting trees. As with any conservation project, the key to success is education and

awareness. If the community can come to value its trees, it will protect and preserve them.

In 1989, an organized effort by the Mecklenburg County Forestry Association resulted in the



formation of the Treasure Tree Program. The purpose of the program is to locate, document, and protect trees in our almost completely urban county that have historical or ecological significance. Of the qualities that make a given tree special, the one that has captured the public's fancy is size.

Under the program, the size of a tree is determined by a formula used by the American Forestry Association and the North Carolina Division of Forestry Resources. A point total is derived by giving one point for every foot of height, for every inch of circumference at breast height (4 1/2 feet), and for every four feet of the crown's

average spread. The system is somewhat flawed, particularly in failing to correct for multi-trunked trees, but it has the advantage of being objective and uniform.

After obtaining permission from the owner, a member of the Treasure Tree Committee evaluates the tree. Each tree is scrutinized according to many criteria, but principally size. In general, to be considered a tree must be 80 percent of the point total of the reigning State Champion for the species. The owner and nominator of each Treasure Tree receives an attractive certificate, and the tree is identified with a permanent marker bearing the program logo. The owner is informed of the uniqueness of the tree and given suggestions for care to ensure its health and longevity.

Over the past three years, 51 trees have been designated as Treasure Trees, including nine new State Champions and one possible National Champion. The popularity of the program continues to grow, and with it the hope of preserving our urban forest is enhanced.

If you are interested in initiating a similar program in your community, please write Mr. Tom Martin, Urban Forester, Mecklenburg County Cooperative Extension Office, 700 N. Tryon St., Charlotte, NC 28202-2222.

—Bill Logan,
Charlotte, N.C.

BOTANICAL EXCURSIONS

By GEORGE ELLISON

The manner in which we locate, identify, learn about, and become infatuated with certain plants and habitats is continually fascinating. The entire process — not just plant location and identification — is one I like to think of as “botanizing.” In the field and in the library, so much seemingly happens by chance; yet, given time and care, things often fall into place as if preordained. The process itself becomes addictive so that we continually require new plants, new habitats to contemplate. And however much the stated intentions of the academic and non-academic “botanizer” may differ, I suspect our emotional experiences and rewards are quite similar.

The Botanical Excursions column in this newsletter will be based on those premises. We will focus upon specific plants or habitats found in the southern mountains and adjacent regions, but the ongoing process through which one explores and ultimately comes to terms with the natural world will always lie at the heart of the matter.

The mid-19th century was surely one of the most exciting periods in regard to the systematic botanical exploration of

North America. It was a time when forays into previously unexplored regions were viewed as “botanical excursions” and reported upon as backcountry or frontier adventures. From time to time it’s stimulating to recall the pervading spirit of that era and perhaps even emulate it to some degree in our own endeavors. Before we can hope to locate, identify, and learn about the flora of our chosen region, we have to get out the door and into the field consistently. Consistent motivation requires a certain mindset, an attitude.

Who among us would not have wanted to accompany the 31-year-old Asa Gray on his first trip into the southern mountains in the summer of 1841? He described it with relish in 49 rambling pages of text in that year’s December issue of *The American Journal of Science* under the heading, “Notes of a Botanical Excursion to the Mountains of North Carolina, &c; with some remarks on the Botany of the higher Allegheny Mountains.” Gray did not find His “*Plantae incognitae*” (*Shortia galacifolia*); but he saw and collected many fine Appalachian plants in their native habitats for the first time, while

traversing “difficult mountain tracks” in a “carry-all” (i.e., a light covered wagon drawn by a single horse). At one point near the South Fork of the Holston, the wagon crashed in “a heap of stones,” so that the horse was “overthrown into the boughs of a prostrate tree.” But after “extricating the poor animal” and repairing the wagon, Gray and his party continued undaunted into the highest mountains of North Carolina.

It was an adventure, and Gray reported it as such. Primarily a “closet botanist” by his own admission, Gray was able to maintain a youthful sense of adventure in the herbarium and botanical garden throughout a long career that did not end until his death in 1888. This zestful attitude toward botanizing in all its aspects was infectious and motivated several generations of field workers — professional and amateur botanists alike — who shipped collections made in every nook and cranny of the continent back to Gray for classification.

Who among us would not have wanted to tour the Kentucky hills with Gray’s correspondent and friend Charles Wilkins Short, for whom he named the unlocated “*Plantae* Cont on page 6

From page 5
incognitae"? A gentleman botanist in every sense, Short ventured forth in style with his family to collect plants in the countryside around Lexington. His eldest daughter, Mary, recalled those botanical excursions as a time when they "would ride through the countryside in his carriage, with the doors tied open so that he could

tion Appalachian endemic Blue Ridge St. John's-wort, *Hypericum buckleyi*, is named) and the immigrant botanist Ferdinand Rugel (discoverer of Rugel's ragwort, *Cacalia rugeli*, another high-elevation Appalachian endemic) as they set off with other plant collectors on horseback for "the Iron Mountain" via Sevierville, Tennessee, in the 1840's?

dashed by, with Rugel crying 'Whoa, Fox! Whoa, Fox!' his hair streaming in the wind, with tin box and hat dashing up and down at every jump the horse made." Buckley relocated Rugel a mile or so down the road at a steep hill where Fox had finally come to a stop. Without further ado they proceeded on their excursion into "the Iron Mountain" to



Found as a matted shrub on high-elevation seepage slopes and in rock crevices, Blue Ridge St. John's-wort (*Hypericum buckleyi*) was discovered in 1839 at Whiteside Mountain near Highlands by North Carolina botanist Moses A. Curtis. It is named for Appalachian plant collector Samuel Buckley -- drawing by Elizabeth Ellison

jump out at any moment when a new object attracted his attention, and with trunks, boxes, baskets, and curtains of the carriage rolled up full of plants, he seemed to be in a state of exquisite happiness." <Letter quoted in Deborah Susan Skaggs, "Charles Wilkins Short: Kentucky Botanist and Physician, 1794-1863," MA thesis, Univ. of Louisville, 1982, p. 75.>

And who would not have wanted to travel with Samuel Botsford Buckley (for whom the lovely, high-eleva-

Rugel — "the best prepared and equipped for collecting and preserving specimens of any person" Buckley had ever met — rode his horse Fox with "a large, square tin strapped to his shoulder and a straw hat tied underneath his chin." In retrospect, Buckley surmised the party must have appeared to curious onlookers "like peddlers, who often travel on horseback through the southwestern states."

The journey was uneventful until there was "a clattering of hoofs, and Fox

explore the steep ridges above Alum Cave Bluffs, that lead up to Mt. LeConte. While botanizing out along Duckhawk Ridge, Buckley "persisted until he reached a hole through the rock where 'with palpitating heart I crept back, and hastened down the mountain.'" <Letter quoted in Ronald H. Peterson, "Samuel Botsford Buckley's Expedition into the Southern Appalachian Mountains in 1842, with Additional Biographical Notes," *Memoirs of the New York Botanical Garden*, 49 (Feb.

Cont on page 8

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN BOTANICAL SOCIETY

Application for Membership

Name: _____ Date: _____

(name and address as it should appear on labels; use allotted spaces)

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Zip Code (9 digit if avail.)

AFFILIATION (Check one):

- College or university _____
- Other educational or research institution _____
- Non-institutional _____

Indicate primary interest area (1) and secondary interest area (2):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| _____ Floristics and distribution | _____ Vascular plant systematics |
| _____ Community ecology | _____ Non-vascular plant systematics |
| _____ Physiological ecology | _____ Other (specify) |

Membership category desired:

	1993
Regular membership()	\$20.00
Sustaining membership()	\$50.00
Family membership()	\$30.00
Emeritus()	\$15.00
Student()	\$10.00
Life membership()	\$400.00

Indicate when membership, Journal, and Newsletter subscriptions are to start:

_____ January of the current year

_____ January of the next year

(you will receive a complete current volume of *Castanea*)

**** Note: Would you prefer to receive only the Newsletter, at a reduced membership rate, if this is approved by the council?****

_____ Yes

_____ No

Send To: Cynthia Aulbach-Smith, Secretary-Treasurer
 Department of Biological Sciences, University of South Carolina
 Columbia, SC 29208

From page 6
1989), p3. and associated plant communities of the southern mountain region occurred during the 18th and 19th centuries and was then concluded, becoming something of a static — if not dead — chapter in our scientific and cultural history. It is true, of course, that the European investigation of the plants, animals, and terrain of the “mountains” was undertaken with great vigor by the pioneering English, French, and German explorer-naturalists. They were, however, neither the first nor the last. Indeed, their

period was just an intense phase in an ongoing exploration that began 10,000 or so years ago with the first wandering bands of Paleo-Indians and continues today in the herbaria, exhibit areas, gardens, labs, and computer terminals of our universities, research stations, nature centers, and botanical or home wildflower gardens. But primarily, this continuing exploration is renewed each time one of us makes a botanical excursion undertaken with the sort of zest epitomized by Asa Gray and his far-flung colleagues. Our

stated goal will be a surer understanding of the teeming plant systems of which these mountains are composed. Our secret reward will be yet another serving of Dr. Short's “exquisitehappiness.”

Bryson City, N.C., writer-naturalist George Ellison writes a weekly Nature Journal column for the “Smoky Mountain Neighbors” supplement of the Asheville Citizen-Times and serves as a field trip leader for Western Carolina University's annual Native Plants Conference. His upcoming Botanical Excursions piece will consider the curious floral and seed characteristics of American colombo (*Frasera caroliniensis*).

Cynthia Aulbach-Smith, Sec-Treasurer
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