

# Mississippi Native Plants

The Newsletter of the Mississippi Native Plant Society

Spring 1997

Volume 17 Issue 2



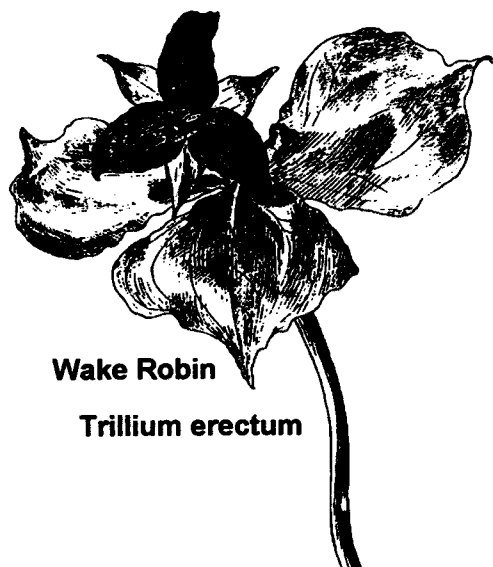
## Restoring a Lost Natural Heritage- The Clinton Community Nature Center (CCNC)

by Ron Larson and Bill Stark

Like an island surrounded by housing development, 100 acres of forest still exist near downtown Clinton. The land owned by the Price family, once was a dairy and prior to that was probably used for growing cotton and other row crops. Now, 32 acres have been dedicated as a nature center. The site off 617 Dunton Road, consists mostly of oak-pine-red cedar uplands and elm-oak-pecan-hackberry bottomlands. About two acres of site forms a bluestem "prairie" with invading pine and red cedar. Exotics, such as privet, Japanese honeysuckle, Nandina, and

Eleagnus, have largely replaced native species in the understory, especially the former two species. Typical for such sites that have supported agriculture and grazing for over a century, much of the plant diversity is gone.

This past year, CCNC began restoring the lost biodiversity with plants rescued from sites slated for development or from property owned by Mississippi College. Two sites at the Center that have had most of the most attention are "fern gully" and "butterfly garden." The banks of an eroded gully became the site for fern gully where about 15 species of ferns, especially christmas ferns, now grow. Mayapples, trillium, butterweed, springcress, violets, phlox, and other spring ephemerals have been transplanted into nearby moist bottomlands. The bluestem "prairie" habitat has become the "butterfly garden" with the addition of milkweeds, blazing star, sunflowers, goldenrods, iron weed, coneflowers, black-eyed susans, etc. Several areas, each about 200 sq. ft. in size, were mowed, surface-tilled, and seeded this past autumn with the above-mentioned species. If this technique is successful,



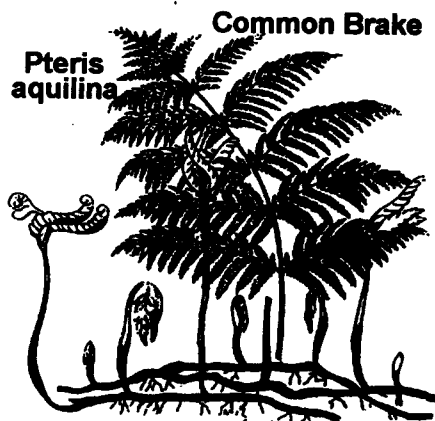
Wake Robin

Trillium erectum

additional areas will be seeded in the upcoming seasons.

Working to restore damaged plant communities, is rewarding but frustrating. With hundreds of hours of work we have mostly made visual changes in the species composition near the trails, while vast areas are still dominated by exotics. With the aid of an Urban Forestry Grant from the Mississippi Forestry Commission, CCNC will begin planting large numbers of seeds and seedlings of over 30 species of woody plants native to Mississippi, but either absent or rare at the site. Our goal is to have representative native Mississippi plants in a natural setting to serve both to attract wildlife and to educate the public about our rich native flora. This year we will be adding about one-half mile of trail to the existing half-mile. We also will be building a forest education kiosk and amphitheater.

We started a lecture series this year and among the speakers are Jack Herring (MS Dept. Wild. Fish. & Parks) who will speak on 4 March on "Planting for wildlife," and Earl Alford (MS Forestry Comm.) who will speak on 24 April on native trees, and plan to have additional speakers next year. We also plan to have an Arbor Day celebration on 26 April with native plant sales. Continued on page 2



Common Brake

Pteris  
aquilina

If you would like to help out or receive more information about the CCNC

Contact:

Bill Stark- 601-925-3340 (D)  
601-924-2244 (E)  
or  
Ron Larson- 601-965-4900 X 27 (D)  
601- 924-0179 (E)

CCNC is totally run by volunteers and we are especially interested in getting help from members of the Mississippi Native Plant Society. We can use help in gathering native plant seed, growing plants, rescuing plants

and transplanting them. We also need help removing privet, honeysuckle, and other exotics as well as building trails.

We will be selling native plants at the Clinton 'Brick Streets Festival' on 12 April and any plant donations would be welcome. Come join us and get to know more about the Clinton Community Nature Center.

The Center is located off of 617 Dunton Road in Clinton (east of the Post Office) and is open daily to the public. Admission is free.

A) 2 B) 9, 11, 14, 17 C) 2, 11, 12 D) 4, 5, 7, 10, 14, 15 E) 16 F) 5  
G) 3, 6, 8, 11, 12

## Springtime Blues

The blues that nature sings in spring will never bring you down. Unless, of course, it's to your knees for a closer look or a deeper inhale. These flowers come in numerous shapes and sizes and in nearly shade of blue imaginable. From light sky blue to a deep lavender blue they grace the spring landscape each year.

Varying in their cultural requirements as well, many of these plants can be found occurring naturally throughout the state while others are found only certain areas. Some of the better known 'blues' include:

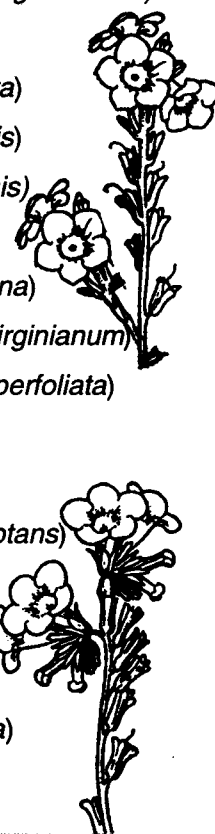
### Test your knowledge about the accompanying list of Mississippi 'Springtime Blues'

Do you know which plant(s):

- A) Has only been found in Tishomingo County?
- B) Are reseeding annuals?
- C) Are currently on the MS Natural Heritage Program list as Rare or Imperiled in our state?
- D) Can be found occurring throughout the state?
- E) Makes its home almost exclusively in the Mississippi coastal and adjacent counties?
- F) Has hairs on its stamens that change color from blue to pink when exposed to radiation?
- G) Are seldom found outside of the Black prairie, Fall Line Hills, North Central Plains, Pontotoc Hills, and Flat woods areas in the northeast and east central part of the state?

Answers can be found right above the article!  
Lynn Libous-Bailey

- 1 Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*)
- 2 Blue bells (*Mertensia virginica*)
- 3 Woodland phlox (*Phlox divaricata*)
- 4 Dayflower (*Commelina communis*)
- 5 Spiderwort (*Tradescantia ohimensis*)
- 6 Blue flag iris (*Iris virginica*)
- 7 Blue star (*Amsonia taebermontana*)
- 8 Hounds tongue (*Cynoglossum virginianum*)
- 9 Venus' looking glass (*Triodanis perfoliata*)
- 10 Lyre-leaved sage (*Salvia lyrata*)
- 11 Phacelia (*Phacelia dubia*)
- 12 Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium reptans*)
- 13 Bluets (*Hedyotis caerulea*)
- 14 Toadflax (*Linaria canadensis*)
- 15 Speedwell (*Vernonica arvensis*)
- 16 Butterwort (*Pinguicula caerulea*)
- 17 Field pansy (*Viola rafinesquii*)



SOMETHING ON YOUR ADDRESS LABEL CAUGHT YOUR EYE?  
IF THERE'S CELERY GREEN ON THE DATE THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE @@. IF THERE IS ORANGE  
YOUR DUES ARE DELIQUENT. DON'T PUT IT OFF - MAIL YOUR RENEWAL CHECK TODAY!!!

**Huckleberries that grace my woods**

-Gail Barton

I've been roaming a little patch of woods behind my house for over ten years now. I've walked there in rain and snow and sweltering summer heat. I've come to know the plants in these woods as a community and as individuals.

These woods are hilly and dry with carpets of partridge berry and crane fly orchid. The canopies are largely white oak, southern red oak and hickory with lower layers of sourwood, ironwood and red maple. The woods are fairly open but there is a generous sprinkling of understory shrubs and I count the huckleberries among my favorites.

As I write in mid-January, a few precocious Elliot's huckleberries (*Vaccinium elliotii*) are beginning to bloom. Because of the early bloom, these shrubs produce black juicy berries by late spring. I've recently learned that this species is sometimes called Mayberry. Perhaps some enterprising nurseryman should make a selection and name it 'Barney Fife'!

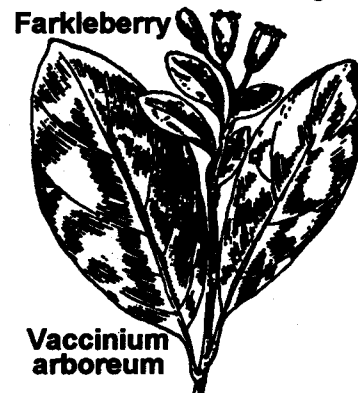
At any rate, the Mayberry is an upright shrub, six feet tall or slightly larger. Leaves are oval and 1/2" to 1 1/2" long, arranged on arching branches. The small leaves and delicate twigs contribute to this species' attractive fine texture. At the edge of the woods, where plants get more sun, the fall foliage turns an intense crimson and stays on for much of the winter before falling. The Mayberry's delicate green twigs are adorned with plump pink flower buds in late winter. These lacy twigs are harvested for use by discerning floral designers. By mid spring, most of the mayberries in my woods have white urceolate (urn-like) flowers dangling from each twig. In late spring the juicy fruit provides a picnic for wildlife. I snack on the berries occasionally myself, but the strain growing in my woods is not very flavorful.

Partridge  
berry

The other huckleberries growing in my woods are interesting and beautiful also. *Vaccinium arboreum* is called tree huckleberry or farkleberry. This species is a multi-trunked small tree which is usually about the size of a crape myrtle. The farkleberry's attractive reddish peeling bark really stands out in the winterwoods. Leaves are oval, glossy and less than two inches long. They turn a deep red in fall and are often held on the tree through much of the winter. In late spring the twigs are covered with drooping white campanulate (bell-shaped) flowers. The flowers are fragrant and really attractive. My favorite flowering specimen is atop a sandy bank. When I walk beneath the arching branches in May, I feel as if there is a galaxy of flowers overhead.

Since farkleberries bloom so late, the fruit does not ripen until October. In fact, the dry gritty berries often stay on until Christmas before being consumed by wildlife. Perhaps the reflections of the low winter sun on the black shiny fruit is the reason some call it sparkleberry.

About the same time the farkleberries are blooming, the diminutive deerberries (*Vaccinium stamineum*) flower as well. The books report that deerberry (also known as squaw-huckleberry or gooseberry) can be over ten feet tall. Those in my woods are attractive small shrubs, averaging only about two feet, with foliage arranged in flat sprays. Continued on page 4

Farkleberry  
*Vaccinium  
arboreum*

**Mississippi Native Plants**  
**The Newsletter of the Mississippi Native Plant Society**

**Mississippi Native Plants** is the quarterly publication of the Mississippi Native Plant Society.

|                  |                            |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| Winter (Issue 1) | December/January/February  |
| Spring (Issue 2) | March/April/May            |
| Summer (Issue 3) | June/July/August           |
| Fall (Issue 4)   | September/October/November |



Deadlines for the **Summer Issue** are as follows:  
Articles---**Apr 15**      Calendar of Events--- **Apr 30**

Deadlines for the **Fall Issue** are as follows:  
Articles---**July 15**      Calendar of Events---**July 30**

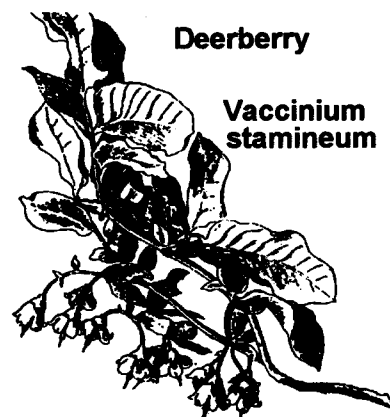
Hard copies or articles in Word Perfect or Word submitted to the Editor are solicited and welcomed.

Huckleberries - Continued from page 3

In spite of the low growth habit, the deerberry has the largest leaves (up to four inches) of those species described here. The deerberry's white campanulate flowers are large as well. These flowers flare open and stamens are clearly visible. Large glossy black fruit is formed in late summer and quickly consumed by wildlife.

So, the birds feast on these three species of huckleberries in my woods from late spring into autumn. And as I make my woodland walks, quite often I stop in my tracks to feast my eyes on the huckleberries as well.

Gail Barton roams the woods in Meridian MS.  
She is a Horticulture Instructor at MCC.



## Do you recognize...

This 6-10 inch tall perennial has narrow basal, linear leaves which arise from a bulb. The inflorescence is a loose umbel comprised of flowers that have six creamy white or yellowish perianth segments. Found in prairies, roadsides, pinelands, and savannas throughout the state, it can be seen blooming most heavily from February through May. Unlike many of its relatives, it is not aromatic.

## Tidy-Up Tidbit

If you're growing American beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) in your garden now is a good time to prune it. This shrub blooms on the current seasons growth so cutting it to within eight inches of the ground early each spring will help keep it in shape without affecting the bloom or number of berries produced in the fall.



The **Mississippi Native Plant Society** is a non-profit organization established in 1980 to promote the preservation of native and naturalized plants and their habitats in Mississippi through conservation, education and utilization.

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Calendar of Events**March 29****10:00 A.M. - Noon(ish)**

Join Gail Barton for a walk in the mixed woodland area near Meridian, known locally as Bonita Lake. This city owned land is being considered for development and a proposed arboretum is on the table for consideration. Rain reschedules to April 5. Contact Gail Barton (601-483-3588) for more information and specifics about the meeting place.

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**April 1****Noon**

MS Museum of Natural Science 'Lunch with a Naturalist'. Jack Herring will speak on 'Landscaping with Native Plants'. Bring your lunch, kick back and enjoy. For more information call MS M of NS at 601-354-7303

~~~~~ **Last Minute Additions - See Page 6** ~~~~~**April 12****9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.**

Spring Plant Sale at the Dixon Gallery and Gardens. Wonderful selection of native shrubs and perennials. Free. Dixon Gallery (Memphis) 901-761-5250

~~~~~ **Last Minute Additions - See Page 6** ~~~~~**April 18 9:30 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.****April 19 9:30 A.M.- 4:00 P.M.**

Spring Plant Sale at Lichterman Nature Center. Native perennials, trees and shrubs for sale. Free, Lichterman Nature Center (Memphis) 901-767-7322

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**April 18 - 19 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.****April 20 11:00 A.M.- 4:00 P.M.**

Spring Plant Sale at the Memphis Botanic Garden. Native and other reliable garden plants for sale. Free. Memphis Botanic Garden (Memphis) 901-685-1566

~~~~~ **Last Minute Additions - See Page 6** ~~~~~**April 26****10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.**

Pearl River Waterfowl Refuge and Wildlife Management Area, Canton, MS

This trip includes a 1/4 mile walk through bottomland hardwoods to a heronry located in a Tupelo Gum-Cypress Swamp with ample opportunities to view nesting Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets and Anhingas. Also hike the one mile Jack's Ridge Natural Trail and Arboretum with over 170 labeled native plants. Bring a bag lunch. Contact Mary Stevens (601-354-7303) at MS Museum of Natural Science for more information

**April 27****11:00 A.M.- ?****MNPS Spring Field Trip - Camp Shelby**

Julie Moore and Steve Leonard will lead the group. See spring unfold in the Piney Woods. Depending on conditions we will visit upland longleaf pine savannah, rich mesic woods of Magnolia and Beech, or old growth swamp forests. It's an opportunity to see over 25% of the MS state flora, including the federally listed endangered quillwort (*Isoetes louisianensis*). The Camp can be reached by taking Highway 49S from Hattiesburg. Take a left at the north gate entrance. Pass under railroad tracks, over a hill, and through the gates to the Camp Training Site. Meet at the Dogwood Lake Picnic Shelter on your right. Bring hiking boots and a lunch if desired. Contact Ron Wieland (601-354-7303) or Julie Moore (601-558-2931) if you plan on attending.

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**May 3****9:00 A.M. - ?**

Join members of the Sierra Club for this co-sponsored search for elusive spring blooming native orchids at the Mississippi Sandhill Crane National Wildlife Refuge in Gautier. Meet at the Visitor Center. MS Sandhill Crane NWR is located north of I-10 at the Gautier/Vancleve exit. Contact Scott Hereford (601-497-6322) at the Refuge for additional information and directions.

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**May 3****10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.**

The St. Catherine National Wildlife Refuge near Natchez, MS offers a great chance to view colonies of nesting waterbirds. Join other 'Partners in Flight' Sponsors in seeing the Cypress swamp come alive. Bring a sack lunch. Contact Terry Jacobson at USFWS (601-965-4900 Ext 30) for directions and more information.

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**May 10****9:00 A.M.- ?**

Ron Wieland will lead a trip to the southern portion of the Bienville National Forest near Raleigh, MS (about an hours drive from Jackson). Natural forest areas, including sandy upland forests, which contain nine different species of oak; mesic big leaf magnolia ravines with royal and cinnamon fern. Meet at the MS Museum of Natural Science in Jackson at 9:00. In addition, we will stop on the way to Bienville to explore the northern most location of longleaf pine forests in MS. Bring a sack lunch, hiking boots and wear comfortable clothing. Contact Ron Wieland (601-354-7303) for more info.

Continued on page 6

**Calender of Events Continued****May 10****7:30 A.M. - 12:00 Noon**

Join naturalist Ken Hackman on a YOUTH WALK suitable for ages 10-16 to explore the rich variety of birds at Lefleur's Bluff State Park during spring migration. Limit 15. Contact Ken Hackman (601-853-2719) for more information.

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**May 18****1:00 P.M. - ?**

Come join with Sierra Club members for a tour through the Clower-Thorton Nature Area in Gulfport, located at 330 28th Street. This area contains wetland, intermediate and upland tree species and native plants as well as tropical specimens. There will be a work time for labeling specimens in the Nature Area after the tour which will emphasize the native tree species. For a map and brochure, call Liz Cox (601-831-2640)

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**June 7****9:00 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.**

Third Annual Perennial Plant Symposium to be held at the Memphis Botanic Garden. Speakers include Nancy Goodwin (Helleborous and Epimediums for the South & The Bold Palette of Montrose Gardens); Greg Toulitos (Water-gardening - How to do and What to Plant); Lark Foster and Walter Glenn (What's Hot in Perennials); Jack Kenner (Photographing Nature's Beauty); and Evelyn Flint (Creative Arrangements using Roadside Perennials). The \$45.00 registration fee includes lunch, and garden reception at The Dixon Gallery and Gardens following the seminars. There will be plants for sale as well. For a copy of the brochure and registration form send a SASE (Legal size) to MBG/PPS; PO Box 357; Stoneville, MS 39876-0357, or call the Memphis Botanic Garden at 901-685-1566.

**Last Minute Additions:****April 5 & 6****11:00 A.M. Saturday - 12:00 Noon Sunday**

The Plymouth Bluff Center in Columbus will host a Wildflower Weekend. The center is located on 190 acres of flood plain, wooded slopes and upland fields and woods. Registration Fee includes all meals and modern sleeping facilities with private baths (\$45.00 p/p Double; \$60.00 p/p single). For more information or to register call Sandra Spencer at 601-241-6214 or visit their web site at <http://www.plymouthbluff.com>

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**April 16****6:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M. Central Time**

The Alberta Canada native Plant Council will be hosting a discussion on native plant gardening on the internet. To join this event you need to register with the online service a week in advance. There is no charge to register, simply go to the address <http://webchat6.wbs.net/> Point and click on new users. Also from this screen you can get to where the event will occur. Click on the category "Home and Garden" and then go under the menu for "Home and Garden" and choose 'gardening'. Anyone having problems can contact Adrien Corbiere at [wright@hg.uleth.ca](mailto:wright@hg.uleth.ca)

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**April 24****9:00 A.M.- Late Afternoon**

Floewood Plantation, Greenwood MS will host the first Delta Gardening Expo. Seminars will be given throughout the day by Norman Winter, Martha Hill, Alice Holmes, Nell Newman, Lynn Libous-Bailey and Felder Rushing. Exhibits include natural backyard wildlife habitats and exhibitors with examples of herb gardening, container gardening. In addition catfish and barbeque vendors will be present all day. Plant sales by exhibitors, a seed/plant swap and much more. Free to the public. Contact Karan Lott (601-455-2715) or Pam Quinn (601-453-0480) for more specifics.

**Local Chapters on the Move**

**Meridian**--MNPS member Gail Barton is trying to locate members around the Meridian MS area that are interested in a local chapter. If that's you, contact Gail at 601-482-5686.

**Jackson**--MNPS President Ron Wieland has scheduled a meeting for Saturday, April 19 at 10:30 A.M. at the Museum of Natural Science for members interested in forming a Jackson Area Chapter. A program is planned and a short meeting will follow. Items of discussion include: support for local projects, membership, and field trips. This is an excellent opportunity for you to meet others with similar interest to discuss native plant conservation activities, backyard habitat design, and other society activities. Call Ron at 601-354-7303 for more information.

## Book Review

### Hiking Mississippi: A Guide To Trails And Natural Areas

Helen McGinnis; 1994; University Press of Mississippi  
ISBN 0-87805-704-8 Softcover - \$15.95

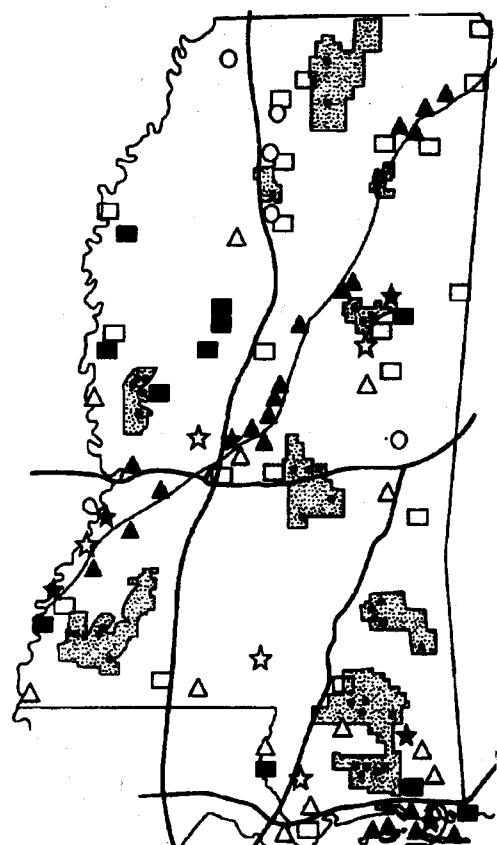
It was with a bit of apprehension that I had the library obtain this book through interlibrary loan. While I enjoy walks and botanizing in natural areas I have never considered myself a hiker. The book arrived. After the first few minutes of thumbing through it my apprehension disappeared.

The first paragraph states "This is a guide to the larger areas of public land in Mississippi where natural conditions prevail..." It is much more. McGinnis discusses the Natural History, geology, and state history of the areas across the state and presents it in a interesting format that's anything but boring. It reads like a well written short course textbook chocked full of facts and information.

McGinnis uses the division of management for chapters that consist of The National Forests, The National Wildlife Refuges, The National Park System, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Reservoirs, The State Parks, State Wildlife Management Areas, Other Public Lands, and Private Natural Areas and Resorts.

The book includes over 79 maps of areas and trails across the state. Contact addresses and phone numbers for the park offices as well as the State or Federal agencies that manage them are also included. The two tables provide information about the facilities at the State Parks and the National Forest Recreation Areas at a glance.

I have already broken my copy in trying to find out exactly where the Refuges, National Forests and Wildlife Management areas listed in for in the Calendar of Events were located. If you enjoy exploring thenatural areas around the state, its a book you'll find hard to be without. -Lynn Libous-Bailey



- ▨ Areas and trails in national forests. See page 8.
- National wildlife refuges. See page 68.
- ▲ Areas in the national park system. See page 94.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reservoirs. See page 124.
- State parks. See page 152.
- △ State wildlife management areas, water parks and natural areas.
- ★ Other public lands.

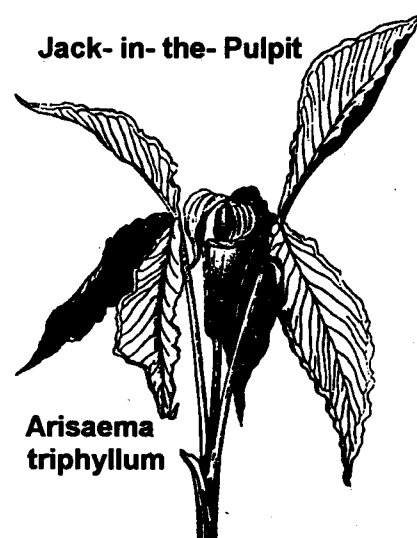
## Spring Blooms Bring With Them Years of Memories

It is almost impossible for me to name my favorite spring flower. When I step out my back door and see the Sweet William (*Dianthus sp.*) blooming, I always get excited. It brings back memories of more than 50 years ago when I was on a nature walk with my family. Mother and I were digging up Sweet William to take home and plant and realized that we were sitting in poison ivy. You know the rest of the story.

When I see the Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) I remember like yesterday finding tall Jack-in-the-Pulpits while spending a weekend with my best friends Grandparents. We were in 6th grade and happened to be studying about this plant so we dug some and took them to school. I feel like my garden is really wild because I had one volunteer last year.

When my violets bloom they are a beautiful carpet of purple, even though they are called common blue violets (*Viola floridana*). Since they are edible, we have experimented with mixing them in salads and have candied the blooms for desserts.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit



*Arisaema triphyllum*

My Flame Azalea (*Rhododendron austrinum*) is beautiful although I prefer the pink flowered Piedmont azalea (*Rhododendron canescens*). Of all the plants in my wildflower garden, I guess I value the Big Leaf Snowbell (*Styrax grandifolia*) most of fall. My husband and I happened to be walking on the river bank when it was blooming and I took a cutting. It rooted and has grown into a beautiful specimen in the garden. My husband is no longer living, but I still have this beautiful memory of our time together.

Many of our plants came from Sheryl Owens 'Wildflower Heaven'. She gave us Green Dragons (*Arisaema draconitum*) and much to our surprise, Mayapples (*Podophyllum peltatum*) volunteered around them. She also gave us a start of Spice Bush (*Lindera benzoin*) and many other natives. Sheryl and her husband live at Amory MS. It's been years since I've seen them but their generosity will always be a living reminder of the last Tishomingo County field trip to that Frank and I attended.

-Caroline Jones

## Other plants in my garden include:

Coreopsis (*Coreopsis* sp.)  
 Blue flag iris (*Iris virginiana*)  
 Yellow flag (*Iris pseudacorus*)  
 Copper iris (*Iris fulva*)  
 Spiderwort (*Tradescantia virginiana*)  
 Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus* sp.)  
 Goldenrod (*Solidago* sp.)  
 Blazing stars (*Liatris spicata*)  
 Ironweed (*Vernonia gigantea*)  
 Maypops (*Passiflora incarnata*)  
 Bouncing Bet (*Saponaria officinalis*)  
 Fringe Tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*)  
 Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*)

Caroline Jones is a Life member of the MNPS. She lives in Greenwood MS and has converted a former 'Guest Dog Pen' into her wildflower garden. The article could have been entitled 'Dog Gone It - It's a Garden'!

## What's on the Menu?



For generations children of all walks of life have been singing 'Where oh where is dear little Sally?...Way down yonder in the pawpaw patch'. I remember walking around the school gym acting out the entire song reaching down and picking up those imaginary pawpaws while singing 'Pickin' up pawpaws put'em in your pocket..'. Not one of us in the class had a clue as to what it was we were suppose to be picking up. But it didn't seem to matter. Childhood imagination is a wonderful thing.

Pawpaw (*Asimia triloba*) can be found naturally throughout Mississippi. It is an understory species that prefers partial shade from neighboring hardwoods and is found most often in wooded areas of deep, rich, moist soil, or wooded slopes along streams. When growing in optimal conditions the Pawpaw can reach heights of up to 25 feet.

It is a deciduous tree, with drooping dark green, oblong leaves that can grow up to 12 inches long. Its overall appearance is somewhat topical and is in fact placed in the same family as the tropical soursop, custard apple, and sweetsop. The leaves turn an attractive yellow during the fall.

Velvety, dark brown flower buds form in the axils of the previous years' leaves. The maroon flowers normally open before the leaves appear and continue blooming for about 6 weeks beginning in March. It is a unique flower that once seen is not easily forgotten, nor is the distinctly fetid odor they emit.

The fruit on the Pawpaw is the largest edible fruit native to America. Individual fruits may weight 5 to 16 ounces and are 3 to 6 inches in length. Larger ones often resemble small mangos. The fruit is highly aromatic, with a taste that resembles a creamy mixture of papaya, banana, mango and pineapple and is rich in vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and food energy value. The seeds however contain alkaloids that are emetic and if chewed may impair mammalian digestion.

Ripe fruits, although best eaten fresh, may be easily pureed and frozen. The intense tropical flavor lends itself well to processed products such as blended fruit drinks, baby food, and ice cream. The ripe fruit is easily substituted in equal parts for banana in most recipes.

The Zebra Swallowtail (*Eurytides marcellus*) uses all species of *Asimia* as its larval host plant. Needing natural undisturbed conditions for breeding it does not adapted well to urban development. However, if some larval food plants are provided in yards near natural stands of Pawpaw, the female readily uses the ones in the gardens along with the wild plants for depositing her eggs. Both the male and female Zebra Swallowtail can be found using the underside of the Pawpaw leaves for roosting at night and resting during inclement weather.

Animals, such as, opossums, raccoons, squirrels, and foxes find the fruit of the Pawpaw as flavorful as humans do and often times will get to the ripe fruit before they can be harvested. The buds, twigs and leaves however are left alone by deer, rabbits, and goats. Research conducted at Purdue University by medical chemist Dr. Jerry McLaughlin has located a compound in the bark of Pawpaw that has shown preliminary success as a botanical insecticide (asinicin) and other compounds with anti-cancer properties (acetogeninins). While Pawpaw cannot tolerate full sun and dry, hard soils it adapts well in the backyard plantings where high dappled shade and moist but well drained soil can be provided. Used near the back of the area the Pawpaw is an ideal choice in the mixed shrub and small tree area. It combines well with the native Piedmont Azalea (*Rhododendron canescens*), spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), parsley hawthorn (*Crataegus marshallii*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), and other moist shade tolerant species.

Because of their lush, tropical appearance, attractive growth form, size, fall color and delicious fruit, Pawpaws are ideally suited for the 'edible' landscape and for backyard habitat plantings.



**Sassafras**

#### REFERENCES:

Ajilvsgi, Geyata; Butterfly Gardening for the South

California Rare Fruit Growers, Inc.; <http://www.crfg.org/pubs>

Layne, Desmond R.; Purdue NewCrop Homepage; <http://www.hort.purdue.edu.newcrop/Crops/CropFactSheets>

Timme, S. Lee; Wildflowers of Mississippi

#### Spring ephemerals include

*Claytonia virginica* (Spring Beauty)  
*Dodecatheon meadia* (Shooting Star)  
*Sisyrinchium angustifolium* (Blue-eyed Grass)  
*Erythronium albidum* (Trout Lily)  
*Mertensia virginica* (Blue Bells)  
*Sanquinaria canadensis* (Bloodroot)  
*Trillium* sp. (Trillium)  
*Dicentra cucullaria* (Dutchmans Breeches)

#### Coming to terms with...

It's spring. A time when we often hear the phrase 'Spring ephemeral' used when referring to dozen of native perennials that bloom this time of the year. **Ephemeral** is defined as something which lasts a very short time; short-lived; transitory, fleeting, or transient. When used in reference to spring bloomers, however, it refers to the time the plant remains actively growing. Rather than remain green after flowering and having a winter dormancy, spring ephemerals normally go dormant within months after blooming. By mid-July most of these plants lay dormant beneath the mulch, leaving neighboring perennials to contend with Mother Nature's sweltering summer heat and humidity by themselves. Smart plants those spring ephemerals! -Lynn Libous-Bailey

**Native Plant conservation requires cooperation among government agencies, private groups and the public. What can YOU do to help?**

- ❖ Volunteer in parks, national forests, and other public lands to help protect native plants and their habitats.
- ❖ Encourage conservation of native plant habitats in your local community. Get involved with local beautification groups or garden clubs and encourage the use native plants in their projects.

## United Plant Savers want to make sure native medicinal plants don't go extinct.

The ever increasing popularity of botanical medicine and the corresponding demand for herbal products along with habitat destruction and destructive logging practices have put many of our abundant native medicinal plants at risk of extinction. A group of concerned herbalist who care about the earth and medicinal plants recently formed United Plant Savers. UPS is currently working on establishing a list of at risk medicinal plants and a guide to nurseries and farms that supply nursery-grown medicinal plant stock. Long term goals include providing consultation services to help farmers-growers on how to cultivate these plants and establish sanctuaries for medicinal plants. UPS will hold its first conference in April 1997 in Santa Cruz, CA. They can be reached at UPS, PO Box 420, East Barre, VT 05649.

## Scholarships available for the Cullowhee Conference on Landscaping with Native Plants

Up to 27 scholarships for the Cullowhee Conference on Landscaping with Native Plants, to be held 24 - 26 July 1997 at Cullowhee, NC, will be awarded to college students, botanic garden, nature center, park and / or arboreta interns who are involved with a program dealing with native plants and who are interested in the propagation, production or perpetuation of native plants in the landscape. Students and interns in Landscape Architecture, Horticulture, Botany and Ecology programs are especially encouraged to apply, but **anyone may apply** if he/she can demonstrate a particular interest in native plants and their use in the landscape.

As many scholarships have been donated with restrictions, the scholarships will fall into the following categories listed at the right. Applicants may apply in all categories they qualify for. Scholarships will cover the meeting registration fee, semi-private room, and meals. In addition, pre-conference field trip scholarships will be awarded to a limited number of applicants. Field trip scholarship winners will need to arrive at Cullowhee by 5 PM on 22 July 1997. These scholarships will cover the extra two nights of semi-private room, meals, plus a Wed. field trip. To be considered for this additional award, place an 'X' in front of your indicated categories : i.e. X-M, X-O, X-P, or X-Q.

Recipients will be selected primarily on the strength of their letter of application and their letter of faculty (related professional if non-student) recommendation. In the event of ties, or near ties, applicants closer to completion of their current degree program will be selected.

**To apply, write a letter which includes the following (modify if non-student):**

- Degree program/internship and school/institution in which currently enrolled.
- A statement explaining applicant's specific interest in native plants in the landscape, what applicant intends to do with their current involvement with native plants, and why applicant believes attendance at the conference would be of value.
- INCLUDE with the letter of application, one letter of recommendation from a faculty member in his/her present program, verifying applicant's academic program, status as a student in good standing and any comments that will help the committee in the selection process.
- Applicants are requested to ATTACH A CARD to their application materials listing all Categories (M-Q) for which they are applying. Any applications without this information will be considered for Category M only. The categories will be used only to honor the restrictions from specific scholarship donors and scholarship recipients will be recognized at the Conference as a group. For more information call 901-680-9756.

**Mail application to:** Cullowhee Scholarship, LNC  
5992 Quince Road  
Memphis, TN 38119

All applications must be received by  
Noon CDT 24 May 1997. Results will be  
mailed to applicants by 7 June 1997.

### Hedgerows and Other Corners of Natural Diversity

Whether you manage a small back yard, a 10-acre homestead or a 500-acre farm, it's possible to walk more lightly on the land by allowing natural communities of wild plants and wildlife to thrive here and there.

Patches, corners and strips of natural diversity - a meadow let go, a wet field bottom, a part of a yard - can achieve a wonderfully rich succession of habitat. As native plants grow up, or are encouraged by deliberate planting, the native songbirds, insects and mammals will return to enjoy the food, shelter and nesting places amid the natural tangle.

Hedgerows and unmowed edges are wildlife's highways as well as its homes and supermarkets. Natural areas provide vital travel corridors for birds, insects, toads and others amid the expanses of empty green lawn that act as barriers to animal movement and native plant dispersal.

These natural places, spared the obliterating force of mowers and weedeaters, can create islands of wild beauty on your land. Plan these "let go" places with the same care that you give your more manicured areas and you'll find them as rewarding as your mowed lawn and weeded garden. Perhaps more so, as an uncut strip of lawn or field can offer a natural succession of bloom from spring dogwoods to fall asters.

As the 21st century dawns, mankind cannot rely solely on public lands to safeguard the planet's natural diversity of life. Private landowners who recognize the responsibility and opportunity that their ownership gives them can help ensure the survival of the world's wild plants and wildlife. Together many individual private stewards of the planet can achieve much more than any public agency or government policy.

So look out on your personal landscape. What do you see? A perfect expanse of green grass and a manicured landscape that depends entirely on heavy applications of fertilizers, pesticides and water during the summers? Or a more casual combination of lawn, taller growth and hedgerow? A little less tidiness can help restore the natural beauty and ecological health of our countryside. The choice is yours.

Editors Note: Taken in part from the Virginia Native Plant Society Information Flyer



### Mississippi Native Plant Society Membership Application

#### Membership Categories:

\_\_\_\_\_ New Member      \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal  
\_\_\_\_\_ Gift                \_\_\_\_\_ Address Change

Sender: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Student.....\$5.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Individual or Family.....\$7.50  
\_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining.....\$10.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Contributing.....\$25.00  
\_\_\_\_\_ Life.....\$125.00



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I prefer not to have my name appear  
on the membership list.

Return this form along with a check made  
payable to Mississippi Native Plant Society  
to:

Mississippi Native Plant Society  
C/O Ron Wieland  
MS. Museum of Natural Science  
111 N. Jefferson St.  
Jackson, MS 39202



All members receive Mississippi Native Plants.  
Life members also receive Wildflowers of  
Mississippi by S. Lee Timme

#### Do you recognize....

**Nothoscordum  
bivalve**



**False Wild Garlic**



**Spring bloomers punctuate the railroad edge**

It is now the first week in March and this year, just as in years past, the embankment along the C&G Railroad track that I pass each day going to work is in full bloom. There are the light lavender blue flowers of Johnny Jump-Ups (*Viola rafenesquii*) by the thousands blooming in tandem with the soft pink flowers of the spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*). Henbit (*Lamium amplexicaule*) provides the deep purple hue that catches your eye. Bold dots of yellow are courtesy of the hundreds of dandelions (*Taraxicum officinalis*) now in bloom throughout the carpet of white chickweed flowers (*Stellaria pubera*). Seeing these plants in bloom may not make arriving at work any less dreary, but they do add to the pleasure of the exit at the end of the day.



**Mississippi Native Plant Society**  
**PO Box 357**  
**Stoneville, MS 38776-0357**

**M**  
**N**  
**P**  
**S**