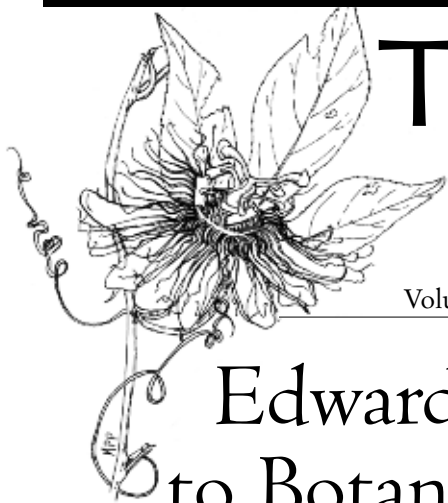


TENNESSEE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Volume 37, Number 4

December 2013



Edward Schell Named to Botanist Hall of Fame

TNPS inducted long-time TNPS member Ed Schell into its Hall of Fame, during the annual meeting in September, a meeting held jointly with the Kentucky Native Plant Society at Lake Barkley State Park.

Schell is widely known as a photographer, accomplished amateur botanist, and champion of Roan Mountain, the popular preserve in East Tennessee.

He joins other revered botanists in the Hall of Fame, including André Michaux, eighteenth century French botanist who identified some 260 species found in Tennessee, including three which bear his name; Augustin Gattinger, often called the father of Tennessee botany for his field work in the mid and late 1800s; Elsie Quarterman, professor emerita of biology at Vanderbilt University, who, among her other accomplishments, rediscovered the Tennessee coneflower, which had been considered extinct; Jack Sharp, who taught at the University of Tennessee for 44 years and received numerous honors for his contribution to the field of botany; and Robert Kral, emeritus professor at Vanderbilt, whose research and contributions to botanical literature are unsurpassed.

Ed Schell was a physicist professionally but acquired an abiding interest in nature. His book *Potomac: The Nation's River* was published in 1976. Later he came to Tennessee and settled in Johnson City and in spare time studied birds and later the plants that attracted the birds, focusing much of



Ed Schell, scouting in his favorite place, among the rhododendrons and grassy balds of Roan Mountain.

Continued on back page

Four Nominated for Board Seats, Please Vote

Deadline Dec. 31

For the first time in recent memory and, perhaps, for the first time ever, TNPS members are asked to vote for specific nominees to the Board of Directors.

We have four excellent candidates for the three open positions on the board. Please select three of the candidates and send your vote to TNPS, PO Box 159274, Nashville, TN 37215 or vote through the website.

The nominees are Susan Sweetser, Alice Jensen, Michelle Haynes, and Bertha Chrietzberg.

Bertha is a charter member of TNPS and has served many years as a director. She was the first recipient of the TNPS Conservation Award and has received many other awards from the state and various organizations. Bertha hails from Murfreesboro.

Continued on page 3



*Merry Christmas
& Happy
New Year*

TNPS Newsletter

December 2013

Vol. 37, No. 4

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

Officers

Bart Jones, President
Todd Crabtree, Vice-President
Margie Hunter, Secretary
Darel Hess, Treasurer

Directors

Bertha Chrietzburg
Lorie Emens
Michelle Haynes
Dennis Horn
Larry Pounds
Mary Priestley
Susan Sweetser

Latham Davis, Editor

Please send comments or material for the newsletter to TNPS Newsletter, P.O. Box 856, Sewanee, TN 37375 or lathamdavis@bellsouth.net

TNPS Website:
www.tnps.org/



A Letter from the President

It is really hard to believe that it is November and another year is quickly approaching its end. 2013 was another excellent year for TNPS. With the emergence of our new website and Facebook pages came a resurgence in new memberships. We thank each of you and hope your experience with TNPS has been positive. If we didn't get a chance to meet you this year, I hope you will attend one of our field trips or the annual meeting next year. I want to also thank Karen Ripple for the great job of maintaining our website and Joanna Brichetto and Lorie Emens for the fantastic Facebook page. Please check them out if you haven't lately as they are constantly being updated with new photos and comments.

I want to recognize all those who were field trip leaders this year: Todd Crabtree, Allan Trently, Dennis Horn, Margie Hunter, Larry Pounds, Jon Evans, and Susan and

Allen Sweetser (along with yours truly). As I can attest, it takes quite a bit of planning and scouting to put on a successful field trip (not to mention the ensuing fretting about weather and attendance). In a few weeks the field trip planning committee will be meeting to begin fleshing out next year's schedule. Any suggestions on possible sites are always welcome, so please let us know if there is a special place that you know of or would like to visit again. I'm sure we'll have another tremendous series of trips for 2014.

I so appreciate the excellent job Latham Davis does with our newsletter. I know everyone thoroughly enjoys reading about our goings-on and viewing the nice photos of the flowers that illustrate the field trip reports. Thanks to all who contributed articles and pictures this year. 2013 saw the initiation of our color electronic newsletter, so if you aren't currently receiving the newsletter via email and want to enjoy the photos in color, please indicate that when you renew your dues. And remember, you can renew through PayPal on the website or the traditional route by mail to our P.O. box.

Our annual meeting, which was a joint affair with the Kentucky Native Plant Society, was a great success. Over 60 people were in attendance with Lake Barkley State Park providing a spectacular backdrop. We were treated to two



Chelone glabra, photographed on annual meeting trip



Dr. Edward Chester at TNPS annual meeting

Board Election Attracts Four Candidates

—Continued

Michelle is currently serving her second two-year term on the Board of Directors and also serves as the TNPS representative to the Tennessee Conservation Voters. Michelle resides in Gallatin.

Alice is a long time member of TNPS, as well as several other botanical organizations. She has operated an ornamental horticulture business for many years at her home in Shelbyville.

Susan has been involved with TNPS since its early years as both an officer and in her present position as a director. A regular field trip leader, Susan calls Powell home.

Vote for three of these candidates

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bertha Chrietzberg | <input type="checkbox"/> Alice Jensen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Michelle Haynes | <input type="checkbox"/> Susan Sweetser |

Please return ballots by December 31, 2013, to:
TNPS, PO Box 159274, Nashville, TN 37215
Or vote at the TNPS website

President's Letter — continued

wonderful talks, with Dr. Ed Chester speaking Friday evening and Dr. Ron Jones presenting Saturday night. For those who chose not to go on the field trip Saturday, Rita Venable led two discussions on butterflies and butterfly gardening. A visit to Hematite Lake in Land Between the Lakes highlighted Saturday's field trip (see page 7). This hike and a stop at the Nature Center on Sunday were organized and led by Tara Littlefield and Julian Campbell of KNPS. Thanks go to all these folks, and a big round of applause is due Lorie Emens who once again did an excellent job organizing the meeting. It's not too early to start making your plans for next year's meeting when we will return to the Beersheba Springs Assembly. This is always a favorite and I'm sure we'll have an enjoyable weekend together on the Cumberland Plateau September 19–21.

For the first time since I joined TNPS, we will have a contested election of three directors. See the biographies of the four nominees to help inform you about your choices and send in your ballot. All four are worthy candidates and are dedicated to the continued growth of TNPS, so you can't go wrong.

The first of the three new books TNPS has been involved with is out! *Woody Plants of Kentucky and Tennessee: the Complete Winter Guide to Their Identification and Use* by Eugene Wofford and Ron Jones is available on Amazon, or you can pick one up from either Dennis Horn or myself when you see us. The cost is \$35 if you get one from Dennis or me and slightly higher from Amazon. The other two books are awaiting publication. Rita Venable's *Butterflies of Tennessee* should be available in the very near future and the *Manual of Tennessee Vascular Plants* coordinated by Dr. Chester is on schedule for a fall 2014 release.

I wish everyone a joyous holiday season and...

See you on the trail!

Bart

TVC Releases New Legislative Scores

Tennessee Conservation Voters has just released its eleventh annual Legislative Scorecard.

The Scorecard helps bring accountability to the state legislators for actions on important conservation issues. If you have not received one and want one please call 615-269-9090 or email info@tnconservationvoters.org. You can also view the Scorecard on our website, www.tnconservationvoters.org. Many issues of importance to the environment generally and some to native plants specifically are included.

Also, if you want to receive weekly updates during the legislative session from TCV, let us know and we will add you to our list.

On behalf of our board, our members, and our other member groups, we thank the Native Plant Society for your steadfast support for the last several years! Please mark the evening of February 28 for the always entertaining and informative Nature Votes fundraising event. Details later.

Stewart Clifton

Registered lobbyist for TCV



Aster oblongifolius

photo by Bart Jones

On a Tennessee Waltz for Orchids

Ohio Enthusiasts Find Treasures in Tennessee Meadows

by Tom Sampliner

Out of state contacts willing to act as plant spotters and then guides are a treasure worth their weight in gold.

One of my favorite and most valuable contacts has to be the most remarkable Dennis Horn of Tullahoma, Tennessee. During the summer I kept in email contact with Dennis who had agreed to watch the seasonal floral progression especially with an eye to certain target orchid species. Dennis is perhaps the primary of the four contributing authors to the Tennessee Native Plant Society's excellent book, *Wildflowers of Tennessee, the Ohio Valley and the Southern Appalachians*. I heartily recommend this work to any native plant/wildflower enthusiast.

Dennis and some of his local cronies would monitor the progress of various species on my hit list so as to determine the prime blooming window for a whirlwind trip down there to photograph. Middle Tennessee has some noteworthy plant species and habitats. As time passed, the exact time window or predictions as to when we could come down to see most of what we wanted waffled back and forth by days or even a week or two. Finally, in early August, the exact dates for the trip were established.

I have never been a fan of hot humid weather. August in Middle Tennessee conjures up images of the type of weather I abhor. At least it would provide an in-the-field test for my newly acquired wardrobe of outdoor wear meant to be insect proof and sun proof, with wicking action to keep the toasty human inside semi-dry. My French legionnaire style baseball cap with rear and side flaps made me look very "sheik", if you will excuse the word play.

It takes ten plus hours to drive from Cleveland, Ohio, to Manchester, Tennessee. There my friend, Dick Gold, and I would overnight and be ready for the 8 AM plant-hunting start to the day. For quite some time prior to departure, the region had been inundated by steady hot,

humid stormy weather carrying so much rain that storm sewers and rivers could not contain the flow. Places like Nashville were making the news due to flooding. Our drive down involved going through storms. The overnight saw a concert of thunder, lightning, and some heavy downpours that would be repeated periodically during our outing.

Refreshed by sleep we awoke, breakfasted and were ready for Dennis and his friend, Darel Hess. We took two cars and headed slightly eastward toward a state natural and scientific preserve known as May Prairie. This is a 346 acre preserve in Coffee County within the municipality of Manchester, on the Eastern Highland Rim, a part of the Interior Low Plateau.

The preserve adjoins Hickory Flat Wood Wildlife Management Area adding up to about 1000 acres of total public land. The prairie is a grassland community dominated by tall grass and occasional sedge meadows in wet depressions. It is the only state site for snowy orchid (*Platanthera nivea*), one of our primary goals. I had never previously seen this species.

We entered via the rear. This requires fording a wet ditch converted by the storms into a raging current. Next was the perimeter to the woods guarded by robust well-armed greenbriers in the family *Smilacaceae*. A machete is called for. After somehow surviving and penetrating into the woods one finally enters the prairie.

Once into the open prairie an astonishing view awaits the visitor. Loads of bright pink coastal meadow beauty (*Rhexia mariana*), orange-yellow coppery St. John's wort (*Hypericum denticulatum*), tall cut-leaf prairie dock (*Silphium pinnatifidum*) and the silvery haired ashy sunflower (*Helianthus mollis*) among many other attractive flowers and grasses were putting on a show. We however, were primarily here for the orchids. Soon our guides were taking us to the bright white flowering stalks of our primary target, the snowy orchid (*Platanthera nivea*). For photographic purposes we would have preferred that our timing had been better to catch the racemes in prime full bloom. These



Photo by Dennis Horn

Snowy orchid (*Platanthera nivea*)



Monkey-face orchid (*Platanthera integrilabia*)

were all showing signs of browning at some point along each raceme. Nevertheless, portions of some were photogenic.

The high heat and humidity were a distraction from the task of trying to control one's camera gear. I could have used several head sweatbands as the flow from my head kept dripping into and stinging my eyes. Towards mid-day, the occasional showers added thunder and lightning component as well as heavier downpours. This caused us to perform the two step shuffle hurriedly trying to put away and protect camera equipment. This occurred several times and I became quite adept at it. At least the showers kept down the insect pests. My every step became part of a rinse cycle.

The hot white racemes of the orchids provided plenty of photo ops. So too did the stately bright orange colored orchid stalks of the so-called yellow fringed orchid (*Platanthera ciliaris*); all orchid aficionados wonder why this is not called the orange-fringed orchid. We would see more of these later in the day.

By this time not only had thunder shows dampened our equipment and enthusiasm, but we were quite hungry. So we headed for a late lunch break before heading up into the Cumberland Plateau. Apparently the humidity was not taking any lunch break. Nonetheless we traveled perhaps one hour and ended up somewhere along Route 111 perhaps two miles north of a small town called Cagle. Here a wide deep roadside ditch descended from the highway, widened into a wetland and then abruptly rose to meet a woods. In the wettest areas we found our first monkey-faced orchids (*Platanthera integrilabia*). Unlike their smaller cousin the snowy orchids, these specimens were

caught in prime condition. Here we met our third local guide, Chuck Wilson, who had been keeping track of these orchids for Dennis. Chuck is a talented guy who follows orchids in his home state of Tennessee but also helps out several times a year with orchid tracking and research in the famous Fakahatchee in Florida.

I had seen these orchids about six or seven years prior, but my equipment and techniques then left much to be desired. So I was anxious to rephotograph. Lens fogging, of both equipment and eyeglasses, was somewhat of a barrier to the task at hand. Stimulated by these long spurred white orchids with delicate fringing along part margins, I was bound to give it my best effort. Water and mud created some treacherous footing as well as difficulty in setting up tripods. Stately yellow fringed orchids also demanded some of my time. All too soon it was time to put away equipment and head on down the road to a second site on Welchland Rd. which was ten miles north of the first stop. Here we added to our orchid repertoire with some ladies' tresses. We encountered both *Spiranthes lacera* var. *gracilis* and *Spiranthes vernalis*. Here, we left one member, Dick Gold, while the rest of us drove on to private property where we would walk a low wet area then turn into a forest to, we hoped, scout up some crested orchid (*Platanthera cristata*). Chuck did not understate the difficulty of this last site's walk as if to put a whole

new meaning to the concept of the Tennessee two step or a waltz. In order to make any progress in the woods it was mandatory you lift one leg high and stomp down on greenbriers on steroids that seemed to block any pathway. These shrubs were down-right grabby. We found the targets and they became ours, photographically that is. They were small but quite prime specimens. They are the same bright orange of the *ciliaris* and smaller in flower size. We obtained our images and left content. On our way out we found and had to take at least a couple of images of the crane fly orchid (*Tipularia discolor*).

We returned to pick up Dick Gold and put away equipment for our return drive back to Manchester. We were tired but satisfied. The only species we did not catch

up with on the target list was yellow fringeless orchid (*Platanthera integra*). Oh well, an excuse for a future visit.



Maryland Meadow Beauty (*Rhexia mariana*)

Photos by
Tom Sampliner

Gardening for Biodiversity

A Review

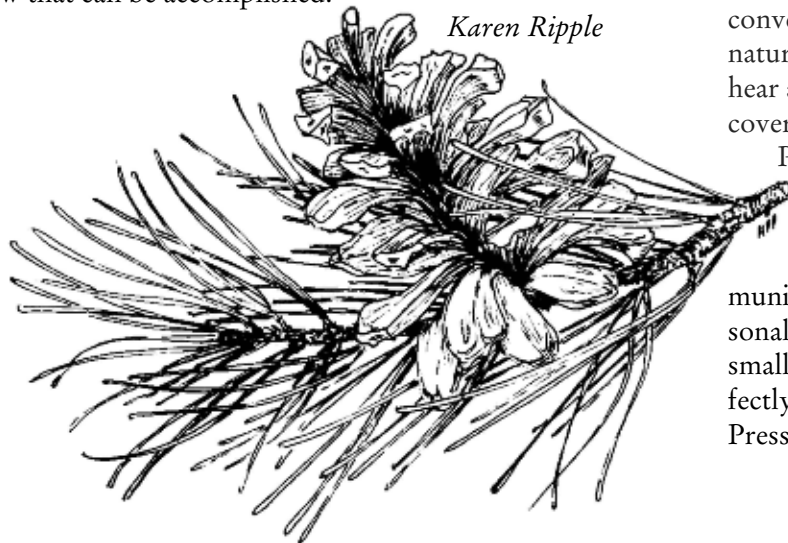
If you're looking for a great Christmas gift for the gardener in your life, *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants* by Douglas W. Tallamy (2009, Timber Press) provides stimulating winter reading and thought-provoking ideas for spring garden planning. First published in 2007 *Bringing Nature Home* was updated and expanded in 2009, but remains timely.

Tallamy begins with the observation that the native plants on his property showed abundant signs of insect attack, but not so the alien ornamental plants which come from another part of the world and lack local predators, or have long been bred to resist insects and diseases. That resistance, however, prevents alien plants from contributing to the sustenance of native insects, birds and wildlife. The aliens are not part of a food web. They take up space but are not part of a balanced community nor do they support insect biodiversity which birds and wildlife depend upon.

Tallamy reasons that if backyards and gardens were converted to native plants (or at least the non-natives removed), then a tremendous amount of wildlife food and habitat would be provided, local biodiversity would increase, insect invaders would be controlled by their predators, and a balanced community could take the place of our typically labor intensive gardens. And we all have seen native plants that easily rival the ornamentals in beauty.

Tallamy's arguments are supported by observations and studies, facts and numbers. Half of the book contains suggestions of what should be planted "to support a diverse and balanced food web essential to all sustainable ecosystems."

Bringing Nature Home presents solid arguments for planting with natives as well as reasonable suggestions of how that can be accomplished.



Karen Ripple



The Wild Here and Now

A new book of nature essays, *The Wild Here and Now*, written by Susan Charkes and illustrated by Mary Priestley, is just out.

Charkes, who lived in Sewanee, Tennessee, in 2006, writes about nature where you least expect to find it: right in front of you. Nature in *The Wild Here and Now* is not something you go somewhere else to discover. It's all around you: a squirrel in a tree cavity, a mayfly on the hood of a car, a turkey vulture overhead, a gnat under the collar.

Both a poet and a writer of nonfiction (including several books on the outdoors), Charkes has a supple style that conveys the same quality of surprise that she finds in nature. *The Wild Here and Now* inspires the reader to see, hear and feel nature with newly sharpened senses: to discover a new world, right outside the front door.

Priestley's pen and ink drawings throughout capture this spirit. Charkes comments, "When I moved to Sewanee it was Mary Priestley's writings about the outdoors that first drew me to the community's unique natural wonders, and also initiated a personal relationship that is based on a shared love for the small things in nature that Mary's drawings convey perfectly." *The Wild Here and Now*, published by Arboreality Press, is sold through amazon.com. (\$8.96 paperback)

TNPS FIELD TRIPS

Hematite Lake, Land Between the Lakes September 21, 2013 (TNPS Annual Meeting)

Our trip around Hematite Lake at Land Between the Lakes began with two groups going in opposite directions to loop around the lake.

At the far end of the lake where the two groups met, we shared the locations of interesting finds and this gave each group a few goals. It was like a little botanical treasure hunt.

One of the treasures we found was sweet scented indian plantain (*Hasteola suaveolens*). This species is on the rare plant list in Tennessee and is found in floodplains along rivers where the ground is periodically disturbed. The leaves are unique and once learned will allow you to easily identify this plant even without flowers.

We arrived too late to smell the sweet flowers. If you happen to notice these along a river it is well worth a side trip to experience the sweet smell of the flowers. The plants are tall and the flowers are at a convenient height to allow a person to bend over just slightly to catch the scent.

Many species in the bean family (*Fabaceae*) have showy flowers but the fruits are less often appreciated or even seen. We saw two species with intricately patterned beans within plain pods. Butterfly pea (*Clitoria mariana*) has an extravagantly showy flower borne along vines that scramble on and over other plants. The oval seeds inside the pod are a dull olive green with tiny blobs and squiggly lines of a fuliginous red color.

Hog peanut (*Amphicarpea bracteata*) has rather small flowers of white and is a frequent inhabitant of moist woods. It usually covers much of the ground where it is happy. The kidney shaped seeds are pale green with speckles and blobs of grayish purple.

Orchids always create a stir among botanists, and on this day it was no different. We decided the first one we encountered was nodding ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes cernua*). While very beautiful this species is one of the most common and is seen frequently in moist areas usually near rivers and streams.

The second orchid species we saw was much less common. October ladies' tresses (*Spiranthes ovalis*) is widespread east

of the rockies but is nowhere common. The plant we saw had numerous flowers but only a few were near to being fully open at the base of the inflorescence. This species and others benefit from periodic disturbance which creates open habitat. This is contrary to the stable, untouched habitats that most people would associate with orchids.

As the crowd began to disperse from our examination of the orchids, we continued around the lake. After enjoying a good selection of wetland plants from the vantage point of a long boardwalk across the shallows of the lake, we discovered a paw paw (*Asimina triloba*) patch. Ripe paw paws are a rare commodity, and when I am with a group I try to make sure that everyone gets to sample the delicious fruit. I was the first to see the trees, so I collected the first ripe fruit I saw and passed it to the group. I saw a few more and passed those along, and then as I looked around I realized that this was one of the best paw paw patches I had seen, and there were plenty of fruit for everyone. So I grabbed a few for myself and began to enjoy them. If the fruit are ripe, they will yield the sweet pudding-like mesocarp when squeezed gently. Paw paws are in the custard apple family (*Annonaceae*) and the family name is an apt one. The fruit contain what could easily be mistaken



Photo by Dr. David Hill

for sweet custard. *Asimina triloba* is only one species among 1,785 in the family. Most members of the family reside in the tropics. How many more delectable fruits are in that group I wonder.

When the two hiking parties met again at the trail head, we settled down to have lunch and trade experiences and knowledge from that day and others. There is no better venue for learning about plants than outdoors with other botanists. When we get together we share the latest wonders that we have seen and sometimes a little foolproof method to separate one species from another in the field with a 10x lens. Much was shared on this day, including the pleasure of eating paw paws.

Todd Crabtree

Hall of Fame— Continued

his interest on Roan Mountain and its botanical treasures. For years he led field trips for the Southern Highlands Conservancy, the Nature Conservancy, Roan Mountain Naturalist Rally, Smoky Mountain Wildflower Pilgrimage, Grayson Highlands State Park in Virginia, as well as TNPS.

Ed gave freely of his time and his beautiful photographs. He won the prestigious Ansel Adams Award in 1990 from the Sierra Club. He coauthored with Wilma Dykeman the book *Tennessee* (1986) and contributed to other books.



Ed Schell Photograph

His photographs can be found on the walls of the Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga, in the introduction of the TNPS wildflower book, and on notecards and calendars of many environmental groups.

2014 Annual Meeting Set for Beersheba Springs

Next year's annual meeting will be held September 19–21 at the Beersheba Springs Assembly near Savage Gulf State Natural Area.

A modern lodge and meeting rooms are located within the historic assembly and the village of anti-bellum homes. Beersheba Springs is perched at the edge of the Cumberland Plateau with a stunning view into the valley and the Collins River 1,000 feet below. This location offers numerous opportunities for botanical explorations.

Mark your calendar for this 2014 gathering.

Check Your Dues Date?

Check your mailing label—the year through which you have paid dues is printed at the top. If the date's 2012 or 2011, please send a check promptly to Darel Hess, our treasurer. TNPS, P.O. Box 159274, Nashville, TN 37215.

TNPS Newsletter
P.O. Box 856
Sewanee, TN 37375