

TENNESSEE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



Volume 34, Number 2

June 2010

Annual Meeting Returns to Scenic Linden Valley

Make Plans for Sept. 17-19

Last year's Annual Meeting turned out so well that TNPS will return once again to the Linden Valley Baptist Conference Center, located on the Buffalo River south of Linden.

The conference center provides comfortable accommodations, as well as quiet, natural surroundings and a river walk.

This year's activities will begin on Friday evening, September 17, with a program that follows supper at the conference center dining hall. Saturday field trips will be organized in both morning and afternoon, with the annual business meeting and a program that evening. Members are invited to participate in a photography show. Artists may also sell their work.

Please, do not neglect to make reservations as soon as possible. Contact Lorie Emens, TNPS annual meeting coordinator, before August 1. (See registration form on page 3.)

Programs this year will be given by Todd Crabtree and Dwayne Estes. Todd, state botanist and a key person in the Natural Heritage Inventory Program, has developed a presentation on the rare plants of Tennessee. His photographs will show plants ranging from exotic rare orchids to the more humble and obscure. Tennessee has a number of these endemic plants that are naturally limited to small geographic areas and are found only in Tennessee.

Dwayne, a member of the faculty at Austin Peay State University, has been conducting studies of *Asarum* this summer. He will be selecting a topic for his program which will be announced later.

Bart Jones, TNPS secretary, is once again planning field trips with assistance of other members. You can expect to explore the botanical haunts of the Western Highland Rim and the more moist coves along Tennessee River tributaries. ■



*Arisaema triphyllum, gone
for this year but not forgotten*

Hess Appointed Treasurer, TNPS Elections in Fall

The TNPS Board of Directors has appointed Darel Hess of Mount Juliet as treasurer, replacing Kay Jones, who recently moved with husband Bill to Virginia.

Darel is a retired computer programmer and has spent most of his life in Tennessee. A serious amateur photographer and hiker since 1963, his interest in plant identification has grown from his interest in closeup wildflower photography. He provided an impressive display of his work at last year's annual meeting.

A full slate of officers and directors will be presented for election at this year's annual meeting in September. President Mary Priestley's two-year term ends this year. Directors serve staggered two-year terms.

Susan Sweetser is chairing a nominating committee, and after nomina-

—Continued on page 3

Don't Miss the
Annual Meeting
Sept. 17-19

TNPS Newsletter

June 2010

Vol. 34, No. 2

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: \$15

Institution: \$50

Life: \$250

Dues may be sent to
Tennessee Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 159274
Nashville, TN 37215

Officers

Mary Priestley, President
Todd Crabtree, Vice-President
Bart Jones, Secretary
Darel Hess, Treasurer

Directors

Bertha Chrietzburg
Lorie Emens
Michelle Haynes
Dennis Horn
Larry Pounds
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/



From the President

In June, as many as a dozen species may burst their buds on a single day. No man can heed all of these anniversaries; no man can ignore all of them.

~Aldo Leopold

Although the rate of the appearance of new flower species actually slows down in June around here, I am a fan of both Aldo Leopold and summertime, and I like this quotation! We have had a wonderful spring, full of great field trips, and the summer promises more of the same. Check the TNPS website for the schedule, and email Bart Jones at <bjones7777@hotmail.com> to get on our email field trip reminder list.

Before we know it, fall will be here, and we will be gathering for our annual meeting. The Linden Valley Conference Center was such a nice place to stay and the Western Highland Rim offered such good botanizing that we decided to return there for the second year in a row. I am so pleased about the evening programs that we have lined up: Austin Peay's Dwayne Estes and our own Todd Crabtree, who are both very knowledgeable and have interesting things to say, will speak. Also, we're calling for your botanical photos! We plan to have a display on Saturday night.

Please get your registration in the mail soon. And email me marypriestley@bell-south.net or Lorie Emens wildflowerlorie@gmail.com if you have questions about the annual meeting or have additional ideas for making it a fun and worthwhile time for us all.

See you on the trail!

Mary

Join a hike before the summer's end

If there were adequate space in this issue, we would remind you, with details, of the up-coming TNPS field trips this summer. Suffice it to say here that there will be three planned trips before the annual meeting.

Please check the detail in your March issue of the newsletter or on the TNPS website (www.tnps.org). Here is a quick reminder of what you'll find.

June 26 — A hike in Couchville Cedar Glades State Natural Area to view the federally endangered Tennessee coneflower (*Echinacea tennesseensis*) and other glade species. Leader Todd Crabtree (615-330-4627).

August 7-8 — Exploration of the shore of Reelfoot Lake. Leader Bart Jones (901-726-6891). Members interested in taking a pontoon boat tour of the lake on Sunday (Aug. 10) should notify Bart at least a month in advance.

September 11—Big South Fork. Leader Larry Pounds (865-705-8516)

One hike remains after the annual meeting. Larry Pounds will lead another Cumberland Trail inventory along a section of the New River west of Caryville — “a new area for botanizing,” Larry said.

Just a reminder that you have the option of receiving the TNPS Newsletter electronically, by email. It may actually arrive a little earlier than the snail-mail version.

It's understandable that you may want a newsletter that you can hold in your hand. But you do have the option.

2010 TNPS Annual Meeting

September 17-19, 2010

Please complete and return by August 31

Registration fee per person \$15.00 # _____ @ \$15.00 _____
 Room (rate per night, single or double occupancy) \$62.00 _____

Those sharing a room should register together. Two checks may be sent.

Friday dinner _____ @ \$8.50 _____
 Saturday breakfast _____ @ \$5.75 _____
 Saturday lunch _____ @ \$6.75 _____
 Saturday dinner _____ @ \$8.50 _____
 Sunday breakfast _____ @ \$5.75 _____

TOTAL _____

Registrant #1 Information:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Special Needs _____

Registrant #2 Information (if sharing a room):

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Special Needs _____

Mail check(s) payable to TNPS to:
 Lorie Emens
 557 N. Mendenhall Rd. #6
 Memphis, TN 38117

Board Considers Elections, Increased Memberships

Continued from page 1

tions are presented and approved at the annual meeting, TNPS members can participate in the election, with new officers and directors taking over in January.

The board met on May 8 at Barfield Crescent Nature Center in Murfreesboro. The discussion included a summary of the society's presence at the Nashville Lawn & Garden Show. Volunteers, working at a booth for the four-day show, gathered in 37 new members and sold 27 copies of *Wildflowers of Tennessee*. The booth was shared with the Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council.

TNPS Making Connections

Dennis Horn and Lorie Emens are organizing a program about TNPS and native flora to be presented at the state conference for Friends of State Parks.

The conference will be held in October at Montgomery Bell State Park, and TNPS members will be helping with talks and displays.

Regional Native Plant Organization?

In May Dennis Horn attended a gathering of state native plant societies, sponsored by the Florida Native Plant Society. One major reason for the conference was to explore the possibility of having a regional organization that could respond to issues that affect several states or the region as a whole.

State represented were Georgia, Virginia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas in addition to Florida and Tennessee.

Dennis will provide a full report in the next issue of the newsletter.

Finding the Alabama Snow-wreath

by Mary Patten Priestley

“I first noticed it, I think, on the North river, an affluent of the Black Warrior, a short distance above Tuscaloosa, in Alabama, and at its mouth. It grew in a dense thicket in the first loose soil under a long cliff of rock which is exposed by the wearing away of the bank. It has a southern exposure at that place, and grows about seventy-five or one hundred feet above the level of the plain or bench below.”

— The Rev. Dr. Reuben Nevius, recollecting his 1857 discovery of the Alabama snow-wreath.

“I was on a canoe trip on the Elk River. . . . I noticed a white flowering shrub high up on the bluff. . . . Well I got all the way up to the shrub and still didn’t know what it was. . . .”

— Dennis Horn describing the first sighting of Alabama snow-wreath in Tennessee, 1972.

“Chance favors the prepared mind.” — Louis Pasteur

It’s May, and the Alabama snow-wreath is going to seed. This shrub, listed as “threatened” in Tennessee, is partial to rich calcareous bluffs and slopes in scattered locales in a few Southern states. The only place I have ever seen it, however, was in the parking lot of an inauspicious-looking diner somewhere between Dennis Horn’s house and mine. We met to exchange something or other for TNPS – a box of wildflower books, a banner or poster – I don’t remember. What I do recall is the flowering twig that he held in his hand.

The flowers resembled those of virgin’s bower, *Clematis virginiana* – little white balls of fuzz. As with the *Clematis*, they lacked petals but made up for it with an abundance of stamens. “I was first to find this plant growing in Tennessee, way before I knew much botany,” Dennis explained. His excitement was obvious, despite his understated manner. He gave me the specimen for the Sewanee Herbarium, where it now resides. Last summer when I ran across a reference to the

Rev. Dr. Nevius and the snow-wreath, I emailed Dennis and asked for the details on his Tennessee find. Here is the story:

“I was on a canoe trip on the Elk River. It was April 16, 1972. We had put in at the Farris Creek Bridge on the Franklin-Moore county line and came out at the Shiloh Bridge north of Smithland in Lincoln County. As we passed by Sullenger Bend I hopped out of the canoe on the Moore County side to look at the wildflowers along the bluff line. I noticed a white flowering shrub high up on the bluff. I thought I would go toward it until I recognized the plant and

then go back. Well I got all the way up to the shrub and still didn’t know what it was. I took a couple of flowering twigs from the plant and we continued with the canoe trip.

“This was six years before the TNPS was organized and I was mostly learning plants on my own. I took the specimens to various folks but did not find anyone that knew what they were. Being new to the game, I was unaware that I needed to press the specimens to preserve them. Well after a week the specimens finally withered and were discarded.

“Then in March 1979 I was looking at Blanche Dean’s book on *Wildflowers of Alabama and Adjoining States* and I noticed a photo that looked like the shrub I had seen on the Elk River in 1972. By then the TNPS had been chartered and I had met a few ‘real botanists.’ I contacted Paul Somers who was then the State botanist for Tennessee. Paul said that if I had found *Neviusia alabamensis* in Ten-

nessee it would be a State record. I went back to the site on April 8, 1979 this time on foot from above. Sure enough, the shrub was *Neviusia* and it formed a colony about 100 yards long on a limestone bench below the bluff line of Sullenger Bend in Moore County.

“Later that month I led a team of botanists to the site. They were Paul Somers and Larry Smith with the Tennessee Heritage Program, George Ramseur from the University of the South, and Tom Patrick from the University of Tennessee.



*An isotype specimen of *Neviusia alabamensis* that resides at the New York Botanical Garden and is accessible online through the NYBG Virtual Herbarium. It was collected by the Rev. Dr. Nevius at Tuscaloosa, Alabama.*

The team recorded habitat data, associated plant species, and population abundance.”

He added, “You may want to follow up on Nevius. He was an Episcopal priest.” So I did a little sleuthing, and Dennis was right – the Rev. Dr. Reuben Nevuis’ is a tale worth recounting.

It is the story of an impassioned priest and amateur botanist, most of whose adult life was spent as a missionary in the western states of Oregon and Washington. Born in New York in 1827, Nevius began his career as a priest in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, where he was particularly drawn to minister to the slave population. There he also botanized avidly and began a 40-year correspondence with the great Harvard botanist Asa Gray.

Nevius discovered the Alabama snow-wreath in 1857. He bundled it up and sent it off to Gray with a deferential cover letter. “I take the liberty of sending you a plant that I have been unable to determine. I cannot think it undetermined as it is not rare, though not common. I found the specimens which I send last year before I procured your valuable Manual and have not been able to procure a specimen for analysis since.”

When Gray responded by saying that the plant was new to science, Nevius was thrilled. “I hasten to tell you of my very agreeable surprise in finding that I had made a discovery and to thank you for the kind notice you have taken of the same.” Gray named the plant *Neviusia alabamensis* in his honor.

In 1870, the year he was awarded a Doctor of Divinity degree, Nevius tragically lost his wife and young children to yellow fever. Shortly thereafter, he accepted a call to be Dean of Trinity Cathedral in Portland, Oregon, but left that position almost immediately to become a circuit-riding missionary in eastern Oregon and later the territory of Washington. In all, this gifted clergyman served more than 38 congregations in the Northwest and was involved in the building of at least 17 churches.

Nevius continued his correspondence with Gray until the latter’s death and is credited with being instrumental in the life of Oregon pioneer botanist William Cusick. He died in 1913. Six vascular and nonvascular plants are named in his honor because of his contributions to botany.

Interestingly, Prof. W. S. Wyman, who botanized with Nevius, claimed 43 years later that because he was walking ahead of Nevius on that day in 1857 it was he who had actually discovered the plant. That may be, but Nevius certainly did not ask for the eponym. Nevius’ correspondence with Gray reveals that he first suggested that the plant be named in honor of the late geologist Michael Tuomey. Gray responded that Tuomey had already been honored in the naming of a genus of algae. And so *Neviusia* it was.

Where should we look for this unusual member of the rose family? Certainly it’s good to keep it in mind when botanizing along rich limestone bluffs. Easily propagated, it might be found in the landscapes of savvy native plant gardeners. Or just stick with Dennis Horn. If not the Alabama snow-wreath, some interesting plant is bound to catch his eye. ■

TNPS FIELD TRIPS

March 20, 2010

Leavenworthia Species, Long Hunter State Park

Our trip to see early glade wildflowers at Long Hunter State Park began with a stroll on a trail through a dry to mesic hardwood forest. Along the trail we began to see patches of a characteristic moss of the limestone glades. Its name is appropriately glade moss (*Pleurochaete squarrosa*). A few mats of this moss contained early buttercup (*Ranunculus fascicularis*). As we entered a more open area of the woods a large grass dominated the area. American beak grain (*Diarrhena americana*) is perfectly happy in the shade of woodlands in middle Tennessee. Many times American columbo (*Swertia caroliniana*) can be found interspersed among the drifts of beak grain, and we did see a few dry stalks of columbo that had flowered the previous year. On the edge of the woods we saw winged elm (*Ulmus alata*), and with a slight tap to the flowers a cascade of pollen flowed along the breeze. Each tiny male flower contributed to the larger dramatic effect of yellow dust trails floating through the air, making it clear that this wind-pollinated species needs nothing more than a breeze to carry the male gametophyte to the female. For those with allergies the pollen-filled air is not really a pleasant sight. The first glade we encountered was divided by a small stream. On either side of this stream were numerous Nashville glade cress (*Leavenworthia stylosa*) plants in flower. We crossed the small stream and walked further upslope to another large glade. Areas of limestone bedrock were surrounded by gravelly borders and a cedar blue ash woodland in this glade. Prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia humifosa*) grew in large patches at the edge of the glade. Just under the cedars at the edge of the glade we also found hairy lip fern (*Cheilanthes lanosa*) in large patches. The new fronds had emerged and first year fronds were still very evident. In some of these patches of lipfern a few early saxifrages were flowering nicely. The distinctive samaras of blue ash (*Fraxinus quadrangulata*) were scattered around the glade in the moss and on the bare rock. Glade phacelia (*Phacelia dubia* var. *interior*) was just starting to emerge in the cracks and fissures of the limestone bedrock. At the lower edge of these pavement-like areas of limestone in the mats of moss were many Nashville glade cress plants. We saw almost all of the known color varieties flowering. The most striking flowers are those with lavender petals that contrast sharply with the yellow and orange nectar guides at the base of each petal. These clear guides and the honey-like scent, which I presume

Continued on next page

is also evident to pollinators, assure that this uncommon winter annual is pollinated well and continues to flourish in middle Tennessee. The species is so abundant in some places that it fills roadside ditches. If your windows are rolled down as you drive by these large populations the sweet scent will drift into your car and remind you that it is spring and you are in the Central Basin of Tennessee. We saw more Nashville glade cress at Couchville State Natural Area as well as a few Michaux's gladecress (*Leavenworthia uniflora*) plants in the areas that were not as wet. Despite our searching, the Tennessee gladecress (*Leavenworthia exigua* var. *exigua*) was not found on this early spring day.

Todd Crabtree

March 27, 2010

Exploring Hatchie River Flatwoods

A crisp but beautiful early spring morning greeted fifteen TNPS members and guests in quest of the ephemerals that form part of the bottomland hardwood forest community found along most of West Tennessee's larger waterways, including the Hatchie.

Led by our host Joe B. Guinn, we made the trek to Cypress Creek on his family's property. While most of the land is in cultivation, we were interested in the remnant woodland that lines the creek. These little strips along larger streams and rivers are all that is left of what was an extensive forest that covered most of West Tennessee, and these remnants are the last stronghold for the wildflowers that make spring so special.

Not far into the woods it was clear we were in for a treat. Ahead were large patches of white flowers beckoning us to take a closer look. Thousands of spring beauties (*Claytonia virginica*), sprinkled with harbinger-of-spring (*Erigenia bulbosa*) and spring cress (*Cardamine bulbosa*) were present. Throughout this collection of wildflowers were hundreds of one of our highlight plants, white trout lily (*Erythronium albidum*). The majority were freshly open and very photogenic. Stand-

ing out among the cloud of white were smooth yellow violet (*Viola pubescens*) and purple common violet (*Viola sororia*). Rounding out the list of plants were a couple of species not quite in bloom, but still identifiable: wild blue phlox (*Phlox divaricata*) and prairie trillium (*Trillium recurvatum*).

A short drive led to Joe's farmhouse where we enjoyed our lunches and good conversation. Joe has converted some of the land around the farmhouse into prairie. Even though things were brown we could make out the dried stems of Indian grass



Erythronium albidum finds a place among forest friends along the Hatchie River.

(*Sorghastrum nutans*) and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) and flower heads of Maximillian's sunflower (*Helianthus maximilliani*) and ironweed (*Vernonia gigantea*).

We took a quick hike to another patch of woods in hopes of finding some open flowers on the prairie trillium, but alas, the best we could do was a bud just beginning to crack open, exposing just a hint of maroon. A detour on our way back to the cars took us to a small colony of coralberry (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*), a shrub seldom seen in this part of the state.

As we said our goodbyes, we all agreed this was a great day to be a member of TNPS.

Bart Jones



Claytonia virginica in Hatchie River woods

Photos by Bart Jones

TNPS FIELD TRIPS



A dozen TNPS members hiked to Deer Lick Falls near Monteagle on April 3, and found several young sprouts of *Trillium sulcatum*, not yet blooming. Afterward the group traveled to Shakerag Hollow in Sevanee.



This TNPS team participated in the Cumberland Trail Inventory conducted on May 1 near the New River west of Caryville. From left are Brenda Black, Dr. Gordon Burghardt, Sandra Twardosz, Susan Sweetser, Jimmy Groton, Larry Pounds, Allen Sweetser, Dennis Horn, and Julianna Gregory.

April 10, 2010

Short Springs, Coffee County

We assembled at the Dairy Queen in Tullahoma. This hike had been well advertised as it was Natural Areas Week so there were several guests in addition to TNPS members. While folks gathered I showed twigs of two woody plants in flower. One was an ornamental, the Kuanzan cherry (*Prunus serrulata* 'Kwanzan'), with beautiful doubled pink flowers. The other was Alabama snow-wreath, a shrub I had discovered in Tennessee in the 1970s. It has showy white stamens, but no petals.

We caravanned to Short Springs and began our hike to the Busby Falls overlooks. Susan and Allen Sweetser caught up with us there. There are two falls, an upper and a lower Busby. The leaves were not yet open on the Highland Rim so the views of the falls were nice. The woods on the Rim are primarily oak and hickory with sourwood and dogwood scattered about.

Shrubs included four species of blueberry (*Vaccinium*), mountain laurel, and maple-leaved viburnum. *Nestronia*, a shrub I had discovered in Tennessee in 1982, was in tight bud along the ridgeline between Bobo Creek and Newman Branch. Wildflowers were scarce in this dry ridge environment and a winter setting was still evident.

Then we descended into the ravines of the Central Basin and entered a new world. Here among the moisture-laden limestone slopes spring was in full swing. Along the creeks and flats were buckeye, basswood, sugar maple, sycamore, umbrella magnolia, and spicebush. Wildflowers were in bloom everywhere. We found Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), cream violet (*Viola striata*), dwarf larkspur (*Delphinium tricornis*), fire pink (*Silene virginica*), large-flowered bellwort (*Uvularia grandiflora*), Virginia spiderwort (*Tradescantia virginiana*), three trillium species (*Trillium cuneatum*, *T. grandiflorum*, and *T. sulcatum*), and many others.

We visited Machine Falls which has an impressive 60 foot drop. Then we climbed back up onto the Rim and took the orange trail to Adams Falls near the rear boundary of the property. This falls is actually a spring flowing from the side of a steep ravine. We then returned following the upper elevation trail loop back to our vehicles. Altogether we visited four waterfalls and at least one dripping spring for which Short Springs is well noted.

Dennis Horn

Try a Little Shopping Trip to the TNPS Zazzle Store

A zazzling array of items to celebrate your TNPS membership are available online at Zazzle.com. If you haven't checked it out, go to www.zazzle.com/tnnative.

You'll find a wide variety of tote bags, tee shirts, note cards, calendars, mugs, and even postage stamps.

Most of these items can be customized for the exact design you desire. You'll have fun just shopping. Your purchases will also help TNPS.

The TNPS part of the Zazzle website was done through the efforts of Bart Jones, TNPS secretary. If you have ideas or comments, contact Bart at bjones7777@hotmail.com.

At right, Lorie Emens and Bart Jones hold a color illustrated tote bag designed especially for TNPS. Bart is also wearing a tee shirt imprinted with a new TNPS insignia on the chest.



Are Your Dues Due?

Check your mailing label—the year through which you have paid dues is printed at the top. If the date's 2009 or earlier, 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