

Mississippi Native Plants

The Newsletter of the Mississippi Native Plant Society

Winter 2001

Volume 19 Issue 1

Chunky River Trail Holds Many Treats

By Joe McGee

In November of 1999, the Okatibbee Creek (Meridian) Audubon Society hosted a hike on the Chunky River Fish Camp Trail. It was an enjoyable day. Autumn foliage was spectacular on that hike and participants saw numerous native plants – including hop tree (wafer ash), little silverbell and pink leather-flower (*Clematis glaucophylla*) in seed, as well as large displays of witch-hazel in bloom.

The trail more or less follows the riparian corridor of the river, passing near or through mixed deciduous woodlands, cut-over pine woods, woodlands apparently dominated by willow oak, and open, shrubby areas with yaupon, waxmyrtle and sweetleaf. A number of sites possessing sharp drainage (xeric) occur along the trail. Some resemble 'postage stamp-size deserts' with their sandy soil and vegetation of bear grass (*Yucca* sp.) and prickly per cactus (*Opuntia* sp.). The diversity continues, as just across the river, near the trail's end a large swamp also occurs.

Spring hikes in the area, like that planned this coming April, will provide participants with yet a different view of the native vegetation. Three very early spring bloomers, Yellowroot, cross vine and serviceberry might still be in bloom, or, in the case of the serviceberry, even in fruit if the season is early. Sloe or flatwoods plum, little silverbell, wild azalea (*Rhododendron canescens*), dwarf pawpaw, and common sweetleaf should be well budded if not blooming by then.

Although later spring bloomers, the fresh spring growth on the oak-leaf hydrangea and the promising flower buds on both it and the mountain laurels in the area give promise of what is yet to come. The pipevine, hop tree and leather-flower (*Clematis glaucophylla*), which bloom more towards until late spring or early summer can also be seen along the trail.

Several species of butterflies, including the zebra swallowtail, frequent the trail and migrating songbirds; especially thrushes, vireos, and wood warblers, sometimes appear in large numbers in the surrounding thickets and woods in April. The sights and sounds nature provides on this easy, but somewhat long (four mile) hike makes it all worthwhile.

MNPS members who enjoy hiking and viewing nature first hand should check out the Field Trip listing on pages 3. And remember, that the dictum "Take only photographs, leave only footprints" is strictly adhered to.



Native Plants and Butterflies go hand and hand

By Joe McGee

During informal discussions over lunch at the December 9, 2000 meeting of the MNPS at the Museum of Natural Science in Jackson, Brian Mather made the point that the pathways leading to an interest and the appreciation of native plants are many and diverse. Some enthusiasts are interested in cultivating native plants and landscaping with them. Others focus on conservation, while some arrive at their love of natives from an interest in insects, especially butterflies. After all, one cannot observe either butterflies or native wild flowers for very long without encountering the other.

MNPS members interested in butterflies or butterfly gardening or who may become butterfly gardeners in the future might want to consider joining the North American Butterfly Association (NABA), a non-profit organization devoted to butterfly appreciation and conservation. Founded in 1993, NABA publishes both the American Butterflies and Butterfly Garden News quarterly. Both publications feature many and varied articles on using both native and non-native plants to attract butterflies.

NABA also conducts field trips around North America, and sponsors numerous educational and conservation projects. For more information on becoming a member of NABA contact:

North American Butterfly Association
4 Delaware Road
Morristown, NJ 07960

Telephone: 973-285-0907
FAX: 973-285-0936
Web Site: www.naba.org

Remember - you can't conserve butterflies without conserving their habitats, the major component of which is native plants!

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 Spring Issue are as follows:
Articles--Feb 15 Calendar of Events- Feb 30

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

Articles of all types submitted to the Editor are welcome.

FIELD TRIPS.....

BOTANIZING...

.....AND MORE!!!

MARCH 3, 2001

TIME 10:00 AM

Gray Camp and Conference Center

10 Miles N of Canton on HWY 51

Heather Sullivan 601.354.7303 (D)

Heather.Sullivan@mmns.state.ms.us

Mr. Bill Nickle of Gray Camp and Conference Center contacted Ron Wieland about having the MNPS assist in a new project called "Earth Lab". It will be an environmental residence center, in which

teachers may bring their classrooms for a 5-day/4-night camping trip. The Center will offer 17 courses including topics about forestry, wildlife biology, and geology. Mr. Nickle has requested our assistance in compiling a botanical survey of the plants on the 700 acre property. He is particularly interested in an audit of an untouched area that consists of 200.

If you would be interested in helping with the project, contact Heather Sullivan at the MMNS for final plans, times and more specific directions.

MARCH 24, 2001

8:00 AM to 2:00PM,

Woodland Hills Nature Area

Ron Wieland 601.354.7303 ext 117

Melba Bowman 601.981.1113

To get to the site from I-55, take the Lakeland Exit (Hwy 25) (at St. Dominic's Hospital). Drive West to a T in the road. Take a right onto Old Canton Road and drive North. Take the first right, which is situated after two closely spaced stop lights, about 1/8 to 1/4 mile from the turn. Take the next left that leads down a steep hill; drive a couple hundred yards to where the road forks. Take the right prong and park near the fork, when safely off the traffic lanes. The nature area is the narrow strip of land between the fork in the road.

Ron Wieland is asking for assistance from MNPS members. There is small area within the city of Jackson, in the Woodland Hills Subdivision, less than 0.5 acre in size and owned by the city, that needs 'cleaning up'. It is situated between two roadways along a ravine that is approximately 20 to 40 yards wide. The only known population of Camassia scilloides (wild hyacinth) in Hinds County is located in this area. Only a couple of other locations of this plant are known from the Jackson Prairie Physiographic Region in Scott County. Another special plant found on the site is Echinacea purpurea (eastern purple coneflower). Both plants are associated with top prairie soils and are likely remnants of prairie openings that existed in the area prior to the settlement of Jackson.

The area has some erosion problems and exotics are overtaking some of the site, especially Liropes sp. (mondo grass) and common wisteria. Ms. Melba Bowman, representative of the WHGC and other garden club members will be on hand to help with the 'clean-up', which will include removing exotic plants as well as trash and debris. Protecting this area from exotics will help to ensure that the Camassia and Echinacea found there will continue to thrive. Ron will be evaluating the site from a conservation standpoint with the Woodland Hills Garden Club to come up with a plan for improving the area, both aesthetically and ecologically.

Bring work clothing, gloves, and useful garden tools for the project cleanup. Beware of poison ivy! Hope to see you there.

APRIL 7, 2001
9:30 am (Meet at the Chunky Baptist Church)
Chunky River Fish Camp Trail
OCAS Pres. Rich Richardson
601.681.9558

From I-20 take the Chunky Exit and drive south on Chunky-Duffee Road (Black-Top) for about 1 mile to Highway 80. The church parking lot is located at that intersection.

Members of the MNPS have been invited to join the Okatibbee Creek Audubon Society as they hike through western Lauderdale/eastern Newton Counties. The hike is an easy one, but somewhat long (4 miles round trip), so participants are encouraged to find their own pace and feel free to return to the trailhead at any time if necessary. Wear comfortable clothing and hiking shoes, bring a sack lunch, drinks and your favorite field guides. There are two facilities at Chunky for those wishing to get together for an evening meal after the hike.

The trail is located on private property and heavy spring rains could produce flooding near the trailhead, making it necessary to reschedule. Please call either Joe McGee (601. 646.5402) or Rich Richardson for information or last minute updates.

MAY 19, 2001
10:00 AM
Linden Plantation Gardens
505 Duncan Road
601.638.1878

\$8.00/Person (MNPS Group Rate)
From Vicksburg take State HWY 27 South (3.1Miles)
Turn Left on Scott Road (1.2 Miles)
Turn Left on Mt. Alban Road (.9 Miles)
Turn Right on Duncan Road (.5 Miles)

MNPS members are invited to tour Linden Plantation Gardens, in Vicksburg. Established in 1827 by John Wesley Vick, son of Newit Vick, founder of the City of Vicksburg, and his bride Anne Marie Brabston, the 1820's plantation has passed down through four generations. Over 8 acres of formal and informal gardens are available for viewing, including Cottage, Parterre, Wild, Butterfly, and Daylily gardens. For more information contact Ron Wieland.

Pretty Soon.....

By Lynn Libous-Bailey

It won't be much longer until colors other than shades of brown and tans began to appear in the grassy embankment along the railroad tracks or the roadside.

Soon there will be the light lavender blue flowers of the annual 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*) will provide the deep purple hue that catches your eye amidst the bold dots of yellow, courtesy of the gazillions of dandelions (*Taraxicum officinalis*) in bloom.

Blankets of white chickweed (*Stellaria pubera*) bordered and punctuated by the low growing bright blue flowers of the annual speedwell (*Veronica arvensis*) turn an area into a nature's Swiss-dotted spring ensemble. Yellow star grass (*Hypoxis hirsutus*) will fill an area with tiny bright yellow stars reflecting the warm rays of the spring sun to anyone who takes the time to glance her way. These late winter bloomers provide color on the roadsides before the wheels of farm equipment, the spray of herbicides, and the blades of the bush-hogs take their toll. Enjoy them while you can.



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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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL FORM

Join the organization devoted to the study and appreciation of wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees native to the state of Mississippi. Members receive *Mississippi Native Plants*, a publication that addresses scientific and gardening issues relevant to the recognition, enjoyment, and conservation of our native plants and natural habitats.

JOIN TODAY

New Member

Renewal

Student \$7.50

Life \$125.00

Individual or Family \$10.00

Check here if you do not want your name to appear on a Membership List.

Sustaining \$15.00

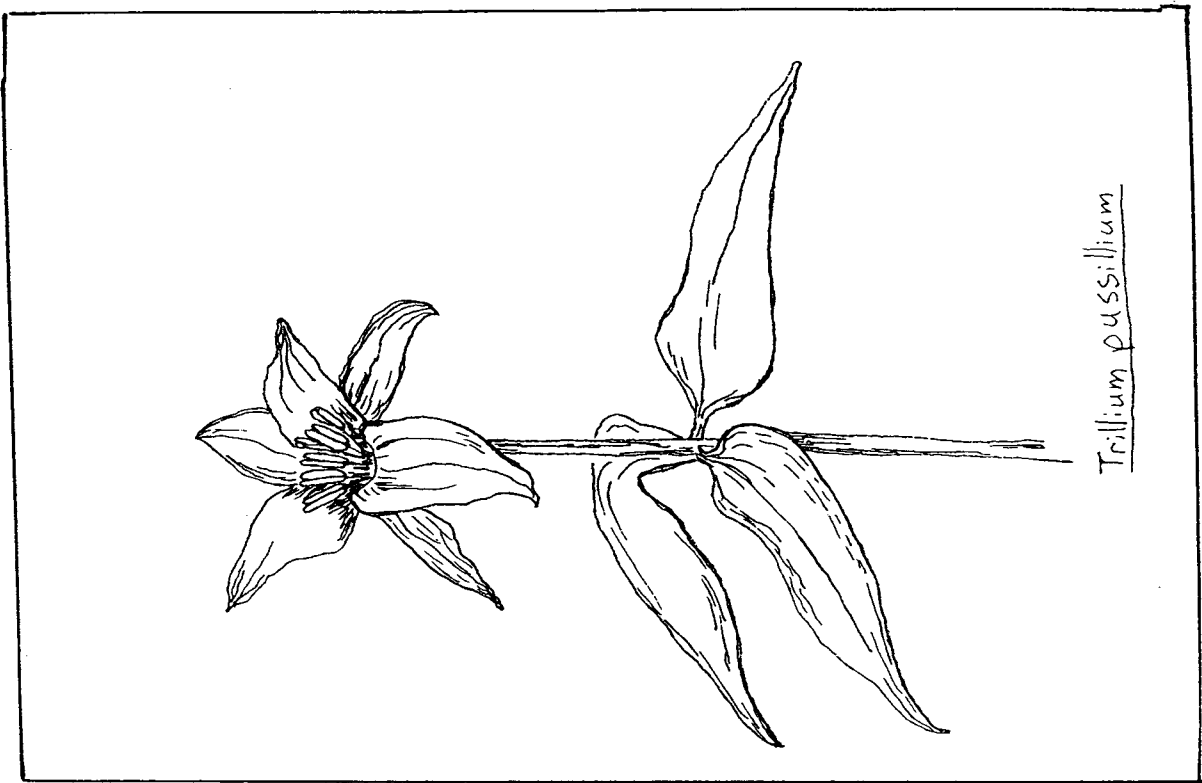
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Return this form and Check to: **Mississippi Native Plant Society**
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MS Museum of Natural Science
2148 Riverside Drive
Jackson, MS 39202



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