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# UPSTATE happenings

DEC 2013

## Upcoming Events

### Saturday, Dec 7 Plant Rescue at Twin Chimneys

The purpose of a plant rescue is to relocate native plants (with the landowner's permission) that are in the direct path of development. Rescued plants go primarily to public spaces, but one of the perks of being a rescuer is the opportunity to take some plants home!

This morning we will rescue plants from the Twin Chimneys landfill site in southern Greenville County, reserving them for restoration work next season.

A carpool will leave at 8:30 am from the Home Depot parking lot on South Pleasantburg Dr in Greenville. For those coming from other areas and wanting to carpool, meet at the Clock Restaurant on SC Hwy 25 south just past the 185 toll road, ready to depart at 8:40.

We'll be at the Greenville County landfill at 9:00 and remove plants until 11:00 or so, then (optionally) have lunch at a nearby restaurant.

Please sign up with Bill Sharpton, [gsharpton@aol.com](mailto:gsharpton@aol.com). This will allow us to better plan the day's agenda, and it is the only way we can know whom to contact if there is a change of plans, rain delay, etc! Be sure to provide a phone number!

Bring gloves, shovel or sharp-shooter; wear long pants.

Directions to Twin Chimneys Landfill plant rescue site: From Greenville, take US Hwy 25 South to Ware Place (where

## Let's have a party!

You bring finger foods! We'll provide beverages, and we'll all plan to enjoy good food, fellowship, and an exciting round of Native Plant JEOPARDY!!!

Bring a small gift too, if you like (this is optional): those who bring something will receive something in a round-robin gift exchange!

Please note that this is the 2nd Tuesday, not the usual 3rd!

## Christmas Party!

### Tuesday, Dec 10, 7:00 pm

University Center: Greenville Tec, 225 South Pleasantburg Dr, Greenville

For a map and more information, visit <http://www.scnps.org>



(left) Oct 22: After a hike in the Clemson Forest led by John Garton, the hikers take a break under one of the Forest's "outdoor art" installations. John shared his extensive knowledge of the history, importance, and beauty of the experimental forest. Photo by Jerry Lambert.



(right) Oct 27: Red buckets in hand, the NPS seed collecting crew heads down the road during a beautiful October daylong field trip. They collected seeds of wildflowers and grasses for use in future NPS meadow projects. Photo by David Littlejohn.

418 & 8 intersect 25). Go south approx 7.5 miles; turn left onto West Ridgeway; bear right onto Traynham Rd & look for signs.

Note that the December meeting is the second Tuesday, not the third —

**Tuesday, Dec 10, 7:00 pm  
Christmas Party!**

See above.

**Tuesday, Feb 18, 7:00 pm  
Wild Orchids of Newfoundland**

With an abundance of rainfall and limestone bedrock, Newfoundland's bogs

and fens provide excellent orchid habitat. This easternmost province of Canada is the northern extension of the Appalachian Mountain range, so there is a geographic connection to the Carolinas.

At our February meeting, photographer and orchid specialist Jim Fowler will share with us some of his excellent images of 35 orchids native to Newfoundland. Some of the species will be familiar to us, but due to the harsh local environment, they may have a very different appearance.  
Greenville.

South Carolina  
Native Plant Society  
PO Box 491  
Norris, SC 29667  
Upstate Chapter

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## The Plight of the Honey (and other) Bees

We are seeing a surge of reporting on the plight of honey bees and native bees that serve as pollinators for many of our food crops. Most vegetable, berry and tree fruit crops depend on bees to carry out the cross-pollination required for producing the tomatoes, blueberries and apples we eat.

The populations of these important facilitators of food crop production are plunging from a number of causes, some identified, and some still clouded in mystery. Pest mites, fungal and bacterial diseases, and certain insecticides that are widely used to control crop pests have all been implicated. Another factor with potential to have large negative effect is the current increasing reliance by farmers on wind-pollinated crops such as corn and wheat. These plants rely on wind to spread their pollen, and thus don't produce nectar that bees harvest for energy and honey production. Areas with a large proportion of the crop acreage devoted to these wind-pollinated crops will have a low value as bee habitat.

But most of us are not farmers, so we are not making decisions on which crops to grow, or which pesticide to use on millions of acres. *So what can we do?* A lot, it turns out. You probably have white clover in your lawn; most lawns do. Ever notice all those bees flying around the clover flowers when you are mowing? They are after the nectar and pollen from those flowers, and are very happy to find your "weedy"

white clover. Yet a significant number of lawn owners apply an herbicide in an effort to stamp out the clover. My suggestion: leave the clover, and supplant the pride of a uniform, dark green lawn, with the knowledge that you are helping our great friends the bees.

*Another easy thing we can do* is to not be so quick to mow our "edges" to control "unsightly" flowering plants that grow there. Managers of roadside rights-of-way can make a huge contribution by reducing the frequency of mowing roadsides. I am an ardent admirer of native sunflowers, milkweeds and other wildflowers that grow naturally on our roadsides. In particular, by mid-June, I know where every butterfly milkweed plant can be found along roads

that I frequent. If you've ever looked closely at a milkweed or sunflower in bloom, you've seen how many honeybees, native bees and butterflies are working the plants. Yet, two to three times during a growing season, I will travel those roads, and note with sadness that the mowers were there yesterday, and all those blooms are gone. Where are those bees going to find a replacement food source for today? With luck they can find a white clover lawn nearby?

Well, maybe not. We could reduce the number of mowings, reduce the cost of right-of-way maintenance, and improve the lives of our pollinator friends.

The point is, *we need to expand our horizons, and evolve our esthetic, to make room for more wildflowers in our surroundings.*

We will be helping to support bees and other pollinators, and where there are more insects there will be more songbirds.

So, here's a challenge for you: next summer, stop along a country road (find a safe pullover spot), step off the road shoulder, and take a few minutes to look (closely) at the plants growing on the edges (beyond the mowed grass). You will find there are lots of different plant species growing there. And if they are blooming you will see lots of bees and other insects working the flowers.

There is beauty to be found in diversity and in the knowledge that we have improved the functioning of the ecosystem that surrounds us. — *Bill Stringer*

## NEWS — Invasive weed discovered in the state

A weed with a pretty flower and a nasty tendency to infest important crops has been discovered in South Carolina nestled in a homeowner's yard. Officials with the Department of Plant Industry, a regulatory arm of Clemson University that helps protect the state from plant pests and diseases, confirmed the discovery of Benghal dayflower in Beaufort.

"We've been looking for it for years," said Christel Harden, the assistant department head who leads the department's effort to curb the spread of regulated plant pests. "We expected to find it in a soybean field and found it in someone's yard instead."

Benghal dayflower, which bears the alias "tropical spiderwort" and an official name of *Commelina benghalensis*, is regulated by both the state and federal governments as a noxious weed. Plant inspectors will conduct a house-to-house

survey for the weed in Beaufort.

Benghal dayflower grows a dense stand that can smother other plants. "Benghal dayflower is a significant problem in round-up ready crops because it is tolerant to many herbicides, including glyphosate," Harden said. "In Georgia, it's caused a lot of problems on soybeans and cotton. That's where the weed is typically found and that's where we've been looking."

The occurrence in Beaufort was detected by a landscaper who reported it to Clemson Extension agent Laura Lee Rose. A Clemson lab confirmed the find. "We're asking for the public's help in locating Benghal dayflower plants. It is not always easy to identify because there are native dayflower species that look similar," Harden said.

This is the first time the weed has been found in the state outside of a plant nursery. — *Clemson University Media Relations*