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www.scnps.org

UPSTATE happenings

MARCH 2012



PHOTO BY STEVE MARLOW

Friday-Sunday, March 2-4 Southern Home & Garden Show

Thanks to the generosity of the Home Builders Association of Greenville, we again have a booth at the Southern Home & Garden Show. Almost 20,000 people will have an opportunity to learn about native plants and about SCNPS — *if you will help staff our booth!*

Volunteers receive an exhibitor's badge and a pass to the exhibitor's parking lot, both good for the duration of the show. Open time slots are underlined below:

Show hours/Volunteer shifts:

March 2, Friday, 12 noon to 8 pm

Shift: 12-3 / 3-6 / 6-8

March 3, Saturday, 10 am to 8 pm

Shift: 10-1 / 1-3 / 3-6 / 6-8

March 4, Sunday, 1 pm to 6 pm

Shift: 1-3 / 3-6

Sign up at a meeting, or email Steve,
steve@marlowcreativeservices.com

Tuesday, Mar 20, 7:00 pm

Propagating (really) Native Plants... because Ball Seed doesn't sell local genotypes

See story at right.

Friday-Saturday-Sunday, Apr 13-14-15 15th Annual Native Plant Symposium Native Plants: Living History Lessons

Native plants are the descendants of natural ecosystems that occupied this place in pre-Columbian times, in pre-Pre Age times, in pre-human times, and far beyond that.

Native elk and bison disappeared from the Carolinas after European settlement, but we still have

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Propagating (really) Native Plants

...because Ball Seed doesn't sell local genotypes — and neither do most mail-order sources of native plants, or even many local nurseries. South Carolina Botanical Garden Greenhouse and Nursery Manager Ryan Merck explains that many "native" plants for sale in the Southeast got their start in the far West — Washington, Oregon, California. Even the majority of "local" plants on the market were propagated in North Carolina or Georgia, not South Carolina. Ryan emphasizes the importance of preserving local genotypes and will begin his March program by explaining the importance of local genotypes to native plant and animal communities.

The first step in growing truly local native plants is collecting seeds, cuttings or both. To produce *really* native plants, it is important to collect from plants growing as close as possible to the area where new plants will grow. Ryan will describe appropriate collection methods for both seeds and cuttings.

Once you have collected cuttings or seeds, the next step is starting new plants via either asexual or sexual reproduction. Asexual reproduction using stem cuttings is widely practiced in the nursery industry and produces a genetically exact copy of the parent plant: the grower knows exactly what characteristics to expect. However, starting new plants from cuttings can be complicated and challenging for the home gardener.

Sexual reproduction, or growing plants from seeds, leads to greater diversity of characteristics, potentially more vigorous plants — and possible surprises for the gardener. This method, however, is simpler and easier for the less experienced or less well-equipped grower

Ryan will describe and illustrate collecting, storing, and starting seeds. He plans to discuss where and when to collect, as well as seed characteristics such as seed dormancies, overcoming dormancies, and scarifying seeds when appropriate. Ryan says seed dormancy often seems to be a complicated subject but is basically a matter of imitating local weather and, he adds, "You *know* what the weather is." He

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Ryan Merck

South Carolina Botanical Garden

Tuesday, March 20, 7:00 pm

Founders Hall in Dining Commons, Southern Wesleyan University, Central

For a map and more information, visit http://www.scnps.org/activities_ups.html

Pickens County Museum Field School announces schedule for spring-summer Plant Appreciation Classes

The Pickens County Cultural Commission is proud to share with our community the Pickens County Museum Field School. This program, supporting the Hagood Mill Historic Site's Nature Conservation Plan, includes a variety of conservation and primitive skills programs, classes and workshops.

As springtime approaches and many plants emerge from their winter hiatus, flowers and greenery emerge throughout the year. The Pickens County Museum Field School is pleased to welcome returning instructor, Joe Townsend, and our new instructor, Chris Sermons, who will offer a series of

plant appreciation classes (some free) so that you can learn more about our regional flora.

Joe Townsend has been appreciating and growing wildflowers for 20 years. He is a charter member of the Native Plant Society and the owner of WildSide Gardens, a native plant nursery located in the Six Mile area of Pickens County. He resides on a 24-acre farm where he lives off grid with solar power.

Chris Sermons is the founder and manager of Bio-Way Farm, a Certified Organic produce farm, evolving on Permaculture Design principles located in Ware Shoals,

SC. He received his Permaculture Design certificate in 2010 after studying and practicing it for 10 yrs. At the farm, he is able to engage his passion for forest gardening, ecological restoration and cultural transformation.

Feb 23 (Thursday): Meet the Natives with Joe Townsend at the Pickens County Museum; 5:30-7:00 pm. In this lecture you will learn about some of the familiar and noteworthy native plants of the Upcountry. Come join us and celebrate the wonderful world of wildflowers, jewels of the Upcountry. This lecture is free to the public.

March 10 (Saturday): Wildflower propagation with Joe Townsend at the Hagood Mill; 10:00 am-2:00 pm. Tuition: \$40 (\$30 for Museum members). In this workshop you will learn how to successfully propagate your own wildflowers from seed, cuttings and division. You will learn proper seed storage; seed stratification methods and how to make a low cost mist chamber for your stem cuttings. Some seeds will be provided. Plan to bring your bag lunch. For 18-years & above.

March 24 (Saturday): Introduction to Permaculture with Chris Sermons at the Hagood Mill; Noon-3:00 pm. Tuition: \$40 (\$30 for Museum members). Permaculture is a holistic system of design, based on direct observation of nature, learning from traditional knowledge, and the findings of modern science. Embodying a philosophy of positive action and grassroots education, Permaculture aims to restructure society by returning control of resources for living: food, water, shelter and the means of livelihood, to ordinary people in their communities. This class will cover the basics of Perma-culture ethics, principles and design theory and include a design walk on the Hagood Mill site. 18-years & above.

May 5 (Saturday): Nature Discovery Day at the Hagood Mill; 9:00 am-3:00 pm. The public is invited to join in this day of celebrating nature with a host of experts in this field. Take a nature walk with Patrick McMillan; learn about amphibians with DNR's Greg Lucas; hear about mammals with Ed Pivorun; find out tips on Heirloom Vegetables with Kate Cummings; visit the booth of the South Carolina Native Plant Society, and the South Carolina State Botanical Garden; Robin McGee will share information about herbs and how to use them; and Recreational Equipment Inc (REI) from Greenville will showcase how important a clean environment is to

Important News Regarding SCNPS Native Plant Sale

The SC Native Plant Society would like to inform you of recent decisions that affect vendors, suppliers, and volunteers of our annual plant sales.

The SCNPS Upstate Chapter is thrilled to announce that Ryan Merck has agreed to become the new chair of the Plant Sale Committee. Professionally, Ryan serves as nursery manager at the SC Botanical Garden, and thus brings considerable experience and resources to our effort. As an existing member of the SCNPS Plant Sale Committee, Ryan is already well connected to our volunteer leaders, and has made valuable suggestions for improvement throughout his tenure. We look forward to his leadership!

The intention of the SCNPS board is to continue to hold 2 plant sales each year to generate revenue for the chapter's outreach and education. This spring, however, we are hosting the Society's Annual Spring Symposium the very weekend we had originally planned to hold the Spring Sale; April 13-14 was the only weekend the Madren Conference center was available to us for the Symposium. We looked at a series of different dates for the Spring Plant Sale, but all conflicted with partner organizations' plant sales or location

availability. We also were sensitive to the demand on our volunteer corps of doing 2 major events within a couple weeks of each other. With all that said, we have decided NOT to hold a Spring Plant Sale in 2012.

We wanted to let you know as soon as possible since many of you profit through your affiliation with our plant sales. We want you to know that we look forward to our Fall Plant Sale and hope that you will plan to participate in making that a huge success. We value our relationships with you and our customers!!

As plans for the Fall Sale unfold, Ryan will be in touch with you.

In the meantime, feel free to contact Ryan at plantsalecoordinator@hotmail.com

Thank you for your friendship, and we hope to see you at our upcoming Symposium (www.scnps.org) featuring keynote speaker naturalist/painter Philip Juras, numerous guided field trips, on-site workshops, a silent auction, and lots of fun together!

Sincerely yours,

Kathy Russ

Outgoing Plant Sale Committee Chair
Edenwalk_1@hotmail.com

Bill Stringer

Upstate SCNPS President

recreation. Little Bistro will offer breakfast and lunch food items for sale and there will be a variety of music and several other experts joining in to make this a very enjoyable day.

May 12 (Saturday): Tree & Shrub Identification with Joe Townsend at the Hagood Mill; 10:00 am-2:00 pm. Tuition: \$40 (\$30 for Museum members). Does the forest appear to you as a green blur as you walk along a nature trail? Would you like to develop some familiarity with our "green neighbors"? This class is for those interested in "getting to know" dozens of trees and shrubs commonly found in the Upcountry. Bring bag lunch. 18-years & above.

May 26 (Saturday): Learn that Fern with Joe Townsend at the Hagood Mill; 10:00 am-2:00 pm. Tuition: \$40 (\$30 for Museum members). This class will be offered for those interested in learning how to identify some of our common fern species of the Upcountry. Some basic botanical terminology will be introduced that will be helpful for the participant to successfully identify and appreciate our native ferns. Bring your bag lunch. 18-years & above.

June 2 (Saturday): Edible and Medicinal Plants with Joe Townsend at the Hagood Mill; 10:00 am-2:00 pm. Tuition: \$40 (\$30 for Museum members). Participants will explore how to identify some of our wild plants that were used by our ancestors and Native Americans both for food and medicine. We will also look at plants that were used for other purposes such as basketry, dyes and arrow making. Bring your bag lunch. 18-years and above.

Robin McGee is a community herbalist, organic gardener, herbal medicine-maker, writer and herbal educator in Anderson, SC. She has been studying, using and creating herbal medicines and products for more than a decade. Along with producing her line of herbal products, Wild Earth Botanicals, Robin teaches herbal medicine classes and workshops, does private consultations, leads plant identification walks, and is a popular speaker and storyteller.

March 29 (Thursday) Medicine At Our Feet: Common Weeds For Common Needs. A plant identification walk with Herbalist Robin McGee at Hagood Mill. 12-3:00 pm. Tuition: FREE. Join us for this fun, informative, and experiential "plant crawl" (an herbalist never gets very far in a few hours) and learn how to use many of our local "weeds" for medicine. We will explore the immediate area around the Mill, stream, woods, and transition zones at

a very gently, easy pace, and discuss how they are here to help give us ease!

April 12 (Thursday): Tree Medicine — Honoring The Tall Standing Ones, with Robin McGee at Hagood Mill. 12-3:00 pm. Tuition: \$50 (\$40 for Museum members). Pine, White Oak, Wild Cherry, Tulip Poplar, Sassafras, Sweet Gum, Cedar, and Black Walnut are some of the most common trees found in the south. Traditionally, they have been used for cough, colds, parasites, poison ivy rash, and much, much more. Come and learn some of the magic and medicine that our Tall Standing Ones have to offer. *This Tree Identification class will be held outside unless we have heavy rain.*

April 26 (Thursday): Gathering Plants for Medicine — The Wonders of Wildcrafting, Robin McGee at Hagood Mill, 12-3:00 pm. Tuition: \$50 (\$40 for Museum members). The fulfillment of gathering is a primal need inherent in all of us, and there is a proper, respectful, sustainable way to harvest plants

Highlands Biological Station announces summer schedule

The Highlands Biological Station, an inter-institutional research center of the University of North Carolina, is offering a series of summer courses and workshops that can be taken for undergraduate OR graduate credit toward your academic program.

The following field-based courses and workshops are focused on the diversity of organisms in the region with special emphasis on identification and collection techniques as well as principles of evolution, ecology and conservation.

Scholarships, Grants-in-aid of research for graduate students, and summer internships also available. For more information and to apply, visit www.wcu.edu/hbs, email hbs@email.wcu.edu, or call 828-526-2602.

Biodiversity & Conservation of Birds - Rob Bierregaard, UNC-Charlotte (May 7 - 19)

Molecular Methods Workshop for Biologists - Ron Michaelis, UNC (May 14 - 18)

Climate Change Ecology - Robert Warren, Yale School of Forestry & Env. Studies (May 21 - June 2)

Natural History Illustration Workshop - Nancy Lowe, Discover Life in America (May 28 - June 1)

Biology of Plethodontid Salamanders - Ken Kozak, Univ. of Minnesota & Joe

for medicine. Even roots can be harvested sustainably! In this part lecture/part experiential class, students will learn how to prepare for harvesting, how to approach the plants, positive plant identification, and sustainable wild-crafting practices. Dress for the weather.

Pre-registration is required and you may register in person or by calling the Pickens County Museum at (864) 898-5963. Full Tuition must be paid before first class. Students will be notified if a class is cancelled or filled. If class is cancelled all tuition will be reimbursed to registered student. No tuition reimbursements after start of class.

For a full list of classes offered at the Pickens County Museum Field School, visit www.pickenscountymuseum.org or call the museum at (864) 898-5963 and request this information.

The Hagood Mill is located just 3 miles north of Pickens or 5 miles south of Cherokee Foothills Scenic Hwy 11 off SC Hwy 178 at 138 Hagood Mill Road.

Pechmann, WCU (June 4 - 16)

Mammals of the Southern Appalachian Mountains - Ed Pivorun, Clemson University (June 18 - 30)

Mountain Biodiversity - *for science educators only* - Karen Kandl, WCU (June 25 - 29)

Terrestrial Mollusks of the Southern Appalachians - Amy & Wayne Van Devender, Appalachian State University (July 2 - 14)

Spiders of the Southern Appalachians - Kefyn M. Catley, WCU (July 16 - 28)

Fleshy Fungi of the Highlands Plateau - Andrew S. Methven, Eastern Illinois University (July 30 - Aug. 11)

Taxonomy & Natural History of Southern Appalachian Mayflies, Stoneflies, & Caddisflies - John C. Morse, Clemson University & Christy Jo Geraci, NSF & National Museum of Natural History (Aug. 6 - 18)

Check website for course fees, credits, applications, detailed descriptions, and prerequisite requirements: www.wcu.edu/hbs/currentcourses.htm

Highlands Biological Station & Foundation, 265 N. Sixth St, Highlands, NC 28741

Station 828.526.2602

Foundation 828.526.2221

www.wcu.edu/hbs/Home.htm

**South Carolina
Native Plant Society**
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Upstate Chapter

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Upcoming Events *...continued from page 1*

Indiangrass and little bluestem. The mastodons were ushered out even earlier, but we still have remnant spruce and fir forests. The ice sheet retreated, but we still find boreal forest plants in Canada and in the mountains of the Carolinas.

Our surviving native plants can teach us about what was here before us, and give us clues about what happened in the intervening time period. With a little luck, they will be here to speak to our children's children about the conditions we encountered, and that we created.

The annual Native Plant Symposium will feature Philip Juras, a wonderful writer and painter who has recently taken on the task of rendering topographic and plant community views of important sites from William Bartram's travels, working from historical site descriptions and from remnants of these and the few similar sites still available.

On Saturday and Sunday, we will feature field trips to explore several such sites in the Oconee-Pickens-Greenville-Anderson counties area, as well as on-site workshops (with limited or no hiking involved).

For more information and to register, go to www.scnp.org/symposium.html

Tuesday, Apr 17, 7:00 pm **SC Mushrooms: Soulmates for Life**

Most of us notice the plants, but how many of us are aware that fungi are their important ecological partners facilitating cycling of nutrients, soil creation, and habitat renewal? With over 90% of all plants associating with fungal partners, it stands to reason that the fungi are equally diverse. Tradd Cotter will discuss the complex com-

munication between our native plant and fungal communities that, combined with bacterial interactions, harmonize and orchestrate stabilizing phenomena. Greenville.

Douglas Tallamy to speak in Clemson

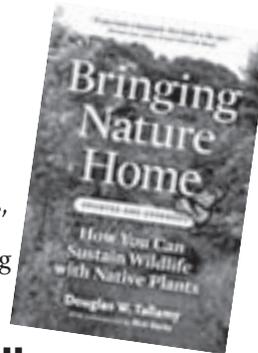
Doug Tallamy, author of the award-winning book *Bringing Nature Home*, will be speaking in **Clemson** on **Saturday, March 17, at 6:00 pm**. If you haven't heard him, grab a friend and go. If you have heard him, grab several friends — just go!

Doug's book makes a compelling case for using native plants in the landscape; hearing him present that case in person is even more powerful.

This is not a plant guy talking! Research obtained during his tenure as Chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at University of Delaware has convinced this entomology professor of the vital importance of native plants to the well-being of wildlife of all kinds (including us).

The event is **free** and open to the public, at Self Auditorium, Strom Thurmond Institute, Clemson University. You can find driving directions and a campus map at www.clemson.edu/library/special_collections/directions.html

For additional information, contact Lisa Wagner (656-3679) at the South Carolina Botanical Garden.



Propagating (really) Native Plants

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will share some books and other resources for learning about specific plants and their germination and growth requirements.

For the more advanced — or adventurous — grower, Ryan will also describe and illustrate plant propagation with cuttings, including apical and medial cuttings and re-cuttings, or plant division.

Whether you choose to work with seeds, cuttings or both, you can raise plants with true local genotypes. These *really* native plants will provide essential habitat for native insects, birds and other small creatures that interact with local flora in a natural community.

— Amy Fendley

Ryan Merck grew up in Pickens County and is a graduate of Clemson University's Horticulture Department. He worked at the South Carolina Botanical Garden as a student, propagating plants and doing all kinds of associated chores. In his current manager position he is responsible for the greenhouse, nursery facilities, and plant sales, as well as administrative and public outreach activities.