



Patrick McMillan speaks in September, Greenville

# UPSTATE happenings

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AUGUST 2015

NEWSLETTER OF THE UPSTATE CHAPTER OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

## Upcoming Events ± Approximate Times

**Thursday, August 6, 9:15am - 1:00pm**  
**Field Trip on Lake Jocassee • \$30 cost**  
**Leaders: Brooks and Kay Wade**

Beat the August heat with a three hour pontoon boat tour of Lake Jocassee. This trip follows-up the July general meeting presentation by Brooks and Kay Wade about Lake Jocassee. The Wades will show us the flora and fauna of the lake and shore and explain how Lake Jocassee came to be. No doubt a few waterfalls will be included in the trip.

In August we can expect to see a shore lined with flowering sourwoods, blooming devil's walkingstick, the red cones of fraser magnolias, cardinal flower, blue lobelia, mountain mint, asters and sunflowers, and possibly some colonies of bryozoans underwater. Great blue herons and even a family of bald eagles could show up!

Meet at the boat ramp at Devil's Fork State Park at 9:15 for a 9:30 departure. Cost is \$30 per person payable upon arrival. Restroom facilities available at the Visitors Center. There is a small park entrance fee or bring your state park pass. To reserve your space, email your name, cell phone number and the number in your party to: [judy\\_seeley@hotmail.com](mailto:judy_seeley@hotmail.com).

### No Program in August!

*Enjoy the last remaining days of summer!*

**Saturday, September 12, 10am - 3pm**  
**Field Trip to Buck Creek Serpentine Barrens, NC**

**Leader: Rick Huffman**

*(This trip is the first of two visits to serpentine ecosystems. See the Oct. 17 Burk's Mountain trip for a description of serpentines.)* The Buck Creek barren is in the Nantahala National Forest about 17 miles west of Franklin on Hwy 64 at Buck Creek Road. The area supports a great variety of plants due to its ultramafic soil/rock composition and regular prescribed burns. Rare plants of note in Sept. are fringed gentian (*Gentianopsis crinata*) bigleaf grass-of-parnassus (*Parnassia grandifolia*), spiked muhly grass (*Symphotrichum rhiannon*), and prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*).

Bring water, lunch and snacks, and wear hiking footwear and layered clothing as the mountain weather may be variable. A hand lens and hiking stick are recommended.

**Carpool meets 8:15am** in the parking lot of Ingles south of Walhalla at the intersection of Hwy. 11 and Hwy 28 (*Scenic Plaza Shopping Center*). To reserve your space, email [judy\\_seeley@hotmail.com](mailto:judy_seeley@hotmail.com). Include cell phone number, name, number in your party and if you will carpool or drive on your own.

## "Certificate in Native Plant Studies"

The South Carolina Botanical Garden (SCBG) and the South Carolina Native Plant Society (SCNPS) are excited to announce a Certificate in Native Plant Studies program that will begin this fall.

Based on South Carolina's rich botanical heritage, and through hands-on field-based classes, students learn about native plants and their vast diversity, plant communities and the habitats that define South Carolina from the mountains to the sea.

Participants also learn about the significant benefits of native plants in ensuring biodiversity, and improving soil, water and air quality, as well as discover the importance of sustainable and appropriate development, become aware of conservation issues facing native plants and plant communities, and become educated environmental stewards.

In elective courses, students will also have the opportunity to visit and learn more about the various ecosystems in South Carolina.

This is the only program of its kind in South Carolina. Similar programs are offered across the country, the nearest ones being in Charlotte, NC (UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens in partnership with the NC Native Plant Society and the Habitat and Wildlife Keepers); Athens, GA (State Botanical Garden of Georgia); and Chapel Hill, NC (NC Botanical Garden).

Unless otherwise indicated, courses will take place at the South Carolina Botanical Garden, 150 Discovery Lane, Clemson, SC 29634.

The certificate program is composed of seven (7) core classes plus four (4) electives. Students are not required to pursue a Certificate in order to enroll. All classes are taught by qualified professionals.

For more information and to download a brochure, visit <http://www.scnps.org/certificate/>



*Classes are taught by qualified professionals in the field of botany and native plants, including university professors or experts in a particular field.*



South Carolina  
Native Plant Society  
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Upstate Chapter

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## Fresh ideas NEEDED

Help keep our field trips going by volunteering as Field Trips Coordinator.

Plan and schedule outings to special native plant areas in the upstate. Use your creative and organizational talents for this important NPS job. Contact current coordinator Judy Seeley at [judy\\_seeley@hotmail.com](mailto:judy_seeley@hotmail.com) for more information.

## Upcoming Events (continued from page 1)

**Tuesday, Sep 15, 7:00pm,  
J. Verne Smith Auditorium,  
Greenville Tec Main  
Campus, Greenville**  
**"Rediscovering Catesby"**  
**Speaker: Patrick McMillan**

Plan to join us for Dr. Patrick McMillan's presentation as he takes us back in time to examine a Carolina that most of us would find quite foreign today — and learn just how powerful our choices are in transforming the world around us.

Before September, visit: <http://folio.furman.edu/projects/botanica.caroliniana/>

Patrick is the host, co-creator, and writer of the popular, Emmy-award winning ETV nature program *Expeditions with Patrick McMillan*.



**Saturday, Oct 17, 10:30am - 3pm**  
**Field Trip to Burk's Mountain, GA,**  
**Carpool meets 8am**  
**Leader: Bill Stringer**

Option to camp at Mistletoe State Park on Friday/Saturday nights. *(This is the second of our trips to a serpentine ecosystem.)*

Burk's Mountain is part of a very small (three peaks in three miles) mountain range on the lower edge of the Piedmont, just across the river in Georgia. It is located in Columbia County, GA, just north of Augusta.

So, you ask, "Why would we travel that far to see some native plants?" Well, what makes this tiny little mountain such a fascinating field trip venue is the geology. Much of the mountainside is composed of serpentinite, a complex rock type that is formed when water comes in contact with high-base rocks under hot conditions, as in crustal plate boundaries under the ocean. At Burk's, rocks that have been thrust upward as plates moved are now exposed on land. Serpentinite outcrops can contain a variety of rock types, including talc, steatite (asbestos) and soapstone. These and other serpentinite rocks contain a variety of metallic elements, some of which are toxic to plants (such as nickel and chromium). As these

rocks weather into soil, these toxic elements become available. This condition excludes many plant species that don't tolerate these elements, and leads to the presence of interesting plants that have evolved to be tolerant of these conditions.

As a result of the serpentinite-influenced soils on Burk's Mountain, we find some very interesting plant species and communities. One of the most interesting aspects of Burk's is a self-sustaining longleaf pine savanna. In a region like ours, where the natural succession leads to oak-hickory forest, we can sustain a savanna community only by regular controlled burns or tree thinning. But the south-facing slopes of Burk's are covered in such a savanna, without intervention, for at least 100 years that we can document.

There are scattered longleaf pines and blackjack and post oaks, with a ground layer of bluestems and other prairie grasses, along with native legumes and other wildflower species (see accompanying image). We also will see several species that occur very rarely in Georgia and South Carolina. Very rare plants include piedmont breadroot (*Pediomelum piedmontanum*) and Georgia plume (*Elliottia racemosa*). In addition, there are a large number of not so rare, but equally interesting species.



Burks Mountain, Columbia County, Georgia  
Copyright © 2010 Philip Juras

It appears that William Bartram passed close by Burk's Mountain without examining it closely. We thus have a chance to examine plant communities that he missed out on. He may never have known how close he came to a very intriguing landscape. Sorry, William!

See image in color at: <http://www.philipjuras.com/2010/201010burksmountain.htm>

Bring water, lunch and snacks and wear field footwear and clothing. Meet at 10:30am in the parking lot of Angies Steak and Seafood, 6003 Clarks Hill Road, Appling, GA. (at Pollards Corner). To reserve your space, email [judy\\_seeley@hotmail.com](mailto:judy_seeley@hotmail.com). Include your cell phone number, name, number in your party and indicate if you wish to carpool or are interested in camping at Mistletoe State Park. (Make your own reservation)

**Tuesday, Oct 20, 7:00pm, Spartanburg**  
**Speaker: Dr. Douglas Rayner**  
*(Details in next newsletter.)*

**Tuesday, Nov 17, 7:00pm, SWU, Central**  
**Speaker: Bobby Holliday**  
*(Details pending.)*

growings on  
at the GREENHOUSE

## Greenhouse Volunteers Needed

Miller Putnam has started holding regular work mornings at the Putnam's greenhouse to prepare plants for our next sale. In August we will meet on Thursday, the 13th and Friday the 21st. We start at 8am and quit at Noon. Come anytime during those hours. If those days do not work for you, you are welcome to come over on your own schedule. Miller keeps a list of jobs on the greenhouse whiteboard. Call Miller at 864 325-9700 to let him know when you will be there. Email [judy\\_seeley@hotmail.com](mailto:judy_seeley@hotmail.com) to be added to the email notification list of scheduled work days. If you like to propagate plants, this is for you!

For updates and more information about SCNPS, go to [www.scnps.org](http://www.scnps.org)