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UPSTATE happenings

MAY 2012

April-May-June Annual Cogongrass Survey in South Carolina

South Carolina is in the early stage of invasion: Cogongrass has already been found in several counties. We believe we can stop this plant from becoming the complete menace we see in Alabama and Florida, but we need your help. We need the eyes and ears of people who spend time outside to find this grass and report any sightings.

A Cogongrass Survey Training Class will be held on April 18th at 10am at the Clemson Extension Office in Walhalla.

If you would like to find out more about the Cogongrass Survey or would like to help volunteer, please call Extension Agent Carolyn Dawson at (828) 638-5889, ext. 117, to find out how.

For more information:
www.clemson.edu/cafls/departments/forestry/cogongrass/resources.html

Please pass this information along to anyone you think may be interested.

Tuesday, May 15, 7:00 pm Gentians of the Mountains and Piedmont

See story page 1.

Tuesday, June 19, 7:00 pm Edible Landscaping with Native Plants

The interest in growing your own food is increasing, and native plants have a lot to offer in the edible landscape.

Chris Sermons of Bio-Way Farm in Ware Shoals will tell us about some of the more promising species and how we can incorporate them into our yards.
University Center: Greenville Tec,
225 South Pleasantburg Drive,
Greenville.

Put it on your calendar!

Saturday, Sept 22 Fall Native Plant Sale!

Gentians of the Mountains and Piedmont

Blue Gentians are interesting and attractive plants that are exciting to find, but sometimes hard to identify! Some of the distinguishing characteristics can be hard to see, and the descriptions in many books may be brief or confusing. If you've ever struggled with this, the most helpful gentian resource that you are likely to find is Jim Drake's *Gentians of the Eastern United States*.

In May, Jim Drake will talk to us about Gentians. He will begin with a description of the characteristics of *Gentianaceae* and an overview of its members. The family includes some plants that you might not expect, such as American Colombo (*Frasera caroliniensis*), which produces only basal rosettes for years, finally flowers, then dies; and Ghostplant (*Voyria parasitica*), which lacks chlorophyll.

The major focus of his program, however, will be on the *Gentianaceae* species we are likely to see here in the Upstate. Jim will show us what the various local species look like and describe their usual habitats and bloom times. He will tell us which are common here and which would be a rare find. He may even tell us where on our local trails we might see them! For instance, he says that Pennywort (*Obolaria virginica*) can be seen near the end of Oconee Station Falls trail. Be sure to look for it, especially if you're there in springtime.

Jim, who is the current president of the Georgia Botanical Society, is excited about native plants, knowledgeable, and eager to learn more. When he found a rare Fringed Gentian (*Gentianopsis crinita*) in North Georgia, he became intrigued by native Gentians and set out to learn all about them, along the way deciding to put together a booklet modeled after his earlier publication, *Lady's Slippers of the Eastern United States*.

Jim researched *Gentiana*, *Gentianella*, *Gentianopsis*, *Sabatia*, *Bartonia*, *Obolaria*, *Frasera*, and all the other members of the *Gentianaceae* family, consulting existing texts as well as other botanists. He sought out each species, studying it in the field, taking lots of pictures, and amassing a comprehensive collection of data: What had started out as a booklet was now a book! *Gentians of the Eastern United States* includes detailed descriptions, photographs, even drawings of some of those hard-to-see features, along with helpful notes on the characters that distinguish one species from

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Jim Drake

Georgia Botanical Society

Tuesday, May 15, 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

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Native Plant Society
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Upstate Chapter

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South Carolina Native Plant Society is now on Facebook!

Join the conversation, share your images and ask your questions at

www.facebook.com/scnps



The South Carolina Native Plant Society is working across the state to help protect and preserve native plant habitats in South Carolina. Please help us spread the word about our important mission by supporting us on Facebook. By sharing photos, asking questions and creating a sense of community, we can promote native plants and the Society — and have fun at the same time!

Our Facebook page is open to both members of SCNPS and non-members, so we have a large potential audience. Seasoned and knowledgeable long-time members will be “rubbing shoulders” with folks who are there just wanting to learn more about native plants. Please jump in and answer a question or offer a tip... educating the public about native plants is a very important part of why we are here.

Thanks... and we hope to see you soon at www.facebook.com/scnps!

PULSE coming to Enoree District of Sumter National Forest

We are invited to participate in PULSE 2012, the 25th Annual Carolina Vegetation Survey Field Foray. Through PULSE events and other initiatives, high-quality data on over 9000 vegetation plots has been accumulated, an achievement that has involved the contributions of over 1000 different persons.

1) The first Pulse event will be held May 21-24 in the central Coastal Plain of North Carolina (Greenville-Goldsboro-Kinston area). Lodging is arranged (at no cost to you) for the nights of May 20-23 on the campus of Eastern Carolina University in Greenville, NC.

2) The second Pulse event will be held mid- July (dates to be announced) and will focus on the north-central Piedmont of South Carolina with special emphasis on the Enoree District of the Sumter National Forest.

Any level of experience is appropriate; the only requirement is that you bring an enthusiasm for field work.

To find out more, visit the website

<http://cvs.bio.unc.edu/pulses.htm>

To get on the mailing list to receive PULSE announcements, email Dr. Bob Peet, peet@unc.edu.

Gentians...continued from page 1 another. — Amy Fendley

Jim Drake grew up in the Southern Appalachians in western North Carolina, an area with a rich diversity of flora. After earning a degree in biology, he chose a career in environmental health, but he never lost his early love of wildflowers. He is active in the Georgia Botanical Society (current president) and in other southeastern native plant societies. Jim's particular interests include the gentian family, lilies and orchids.