

State Officers

President

Becky Graham
bcg@uwa.edu

Vice-President

Caroline Dean
deancar@auburn.edu

Treasurer

Margie Anderton
margmick271@aol.com

Secretary

Brian Finzel
finzelflowers@knology.net

Newsletter Editor

Rosemary Blethen
5242 CR 220
Knoxville, AL 35469
rgblethen@yahoo.com

Scholarship Chair

Ginny Lusk
ginnyl@bellsouth.net

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Report on Spring 2009 Meeting

The Alabama Wildflower Society's trip to Huntsville in April was a great success. Saturday was a beautiful day at the Botanical Gardens.

Vernon Bush's presentation on propagation of wild azaleas was excellent. Dean Matthews was instrumental in arranging our activities for Saturday morning.

We visited a local garden in the afternoon and then enjoyed a barbeque dinner. We were presented with several trays of azaleas and other plants for our program on Saturday night.

Harold Holmes' tour of the Trillium Garden was very informative and very well done. His program on Saturday night was also excellent. Harold also gave several trilliums as door prizes for our program that night.

On Sunday, there were two trips. One trip was with Brian Finzel to the Sinks at Monte Sano State Park and

the other was to Harold Holmes' garden at his home.



Fall 2009 Meeting Anniston, AL November 6-8, 2009

The Fall meeting will be in Anniston, November 6, 7 and 8. Dan Spaulding and Hayes Jackson will be the leaders. They have arranged a full weekend for us.

Saturday morning's activity will be to see the fall foliage at Mountain Long Leaf Preserve which is part of the former Fort McClellan property. The Mountain Longleaf Refuge was established in 2003 and encompasses over 9000 acres. It became the first mountain national wildlife refuge in the Southeast US. As well as containing the third highest mountain range in Alabama, it contains one of the only remaining stands of old growth mountain longleaf pine forest in the Southeast.

The endangered gray bat has been seen in the area. The endangered red cockaded woodpecker inhabited the refuge through the 1960s, and it is hopeful it can be reestablished in the future. The white fringeless orchid is found in mountain seepages within the refuge. The Nature Conservancy has identified 11 species of flora and 21 species of fauna they consider rare within the refuge lands.

Lunch will be at the Anniston Museum of Natural History with afternoon walks on either of two trails at the museum. Sunday morning we will be seeing the beautiful garden of Hayes Jackson.

Accommodations will be the **Super 8 Motel at 6220 McClellan Blvd.** Rates are \$59.95 for double occupancy. Their telephone number is **256-820-1000**. You must make reservations before Friday, Oct. 30 to receive this rate. Mention the Alabama Wildflower Society.

Dinner will be at the Anniston City Meeting Center (Room A) located at 1615 Noble Street (directions available at the motel front desk). Cost is \$15.00. **Send money to Margie Anderton, 271 CR 68, Killen, AL 35645.**

Spring 2010 Meetings

Two spring meetings are being arranged for 2010. The first, at Dauphin Island will be the second weekend in March (12, 13 & 14). Accommodations will be at the Sea Lab dormitory. Rates will be \$20.00 per person/per night. We will have an entire dorm with 43 rooms and space for 86 people.

You can contact Anne Kitchens for reservations (Cell 256-714-1607; Home 256-881-9058). Dinner will be either Seafood Buffet or regular Dinner Buffet. Cost will be \$11.00 per person. You will have to bring the following since it is a dorm room: Bed linens (twin beds), pillow, bath towels, hand towels, hair dryer, if you need one.

For more information go to: [Dauphin Island Sea Lab](http://www.disl.org) (<http://www.disl.org>)

The second meeting will be the second weekend in April (9, 10 & 11) with Leon and Pat Bates in Ocoee, Tennessee. More details later.

Report on Spring 2009 Meeting Tuscaloosa AL

The fall meeting was held in Tuscaloosa on the weekend of May 29-31. On Friday afternoon Richard Cobb lead a determined group of hikers on a strenuous trip. Apparently they got off trail a bit and ended up scaling quite a steep cliff. All who went, including Weesy Smith were impressed with what they saw.

Friday evening was quite a social at the home of Richard and Nancy Cobb with walks through their incredible landscapes and then food galore. Anyone who has eaten at Nan's knows of what I speak.

Saturday morning the members went to West Blocton to attend the Cahaba Lily Festival. The guest speaker of course was Larry Davenport who gave his usual informative and funny presentation. Then there was the trek to see the lilies which did not give the best show this year. The evening meal was at Covenant Presbyterian church and consisted of pork and chicken BBQ and the fixings. Dr. Charles O'Kelly gave a show of his wildflower photography.

Spring Mtg. Continued

On Sunday morning there was an opportunity to visit the George Wood Memorial Garden at the UA Arboretum. Some of George's azaleas prosper here as well as a number of new plantings.

Then members took the beautiful drive down to Augusta Robinson's property in the Black Belt of Hale County. Augusta has a beautiful showing of native black belt grasslands as well as some low and somewhat damp areas around her ponds.

Of course there was food. It goes without saying that if you come to Tuscaloosa, you will be fed! As well as enjoying the great spread, we were treated to quite a spring flower show. Although some plants were not in peak and others were just beginning, one could appreciate the continuum of bloom that the family has over the seasons.

We hopped in trucks or on wheelers to be able to see the most of the property. There are a number of species of seemingly familiar plants, but with quite unfamiliar names. Augusta has used a prairie identification book and the skills of Jim Allison to identify many of them. The obedient plant and the mint seemed to be personal favorites of the members. The obedient plant is not the familiar *Physostegia virginiana*, rather *P. angustifolia* which is sparsely distributed in a couple of counties in the black belt (Greene, Pickens, and Hale) for sure.

Yellow sensitive briar (mimosa)



Monarda citriodora

Lemon mint



Echinacea angustifolia



Waterfalls and Trilliums by Rosemary Blethen

Our vacation in May began with a visit to Al's family in Kentucky. After a couple of days there we headed east and north. Our first major stop was for me. For some reason I had always wanted to see Fallingwater, the home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright near Pittsburgh. I was certainly not disappointed by the visit. We saw our first Trilliums of the trip on the grounds, we saw our first waterfall, and we saw an incredible but expensive house to maintain. Apparently the son of the original owner saw the wisdom years ago to give the house to the state of Pennsylvania along with the maintenance (some \$1.5 million per year). If you are ever in PA, don't miss this side trip!

We also saw some enormous pink lady slippers.



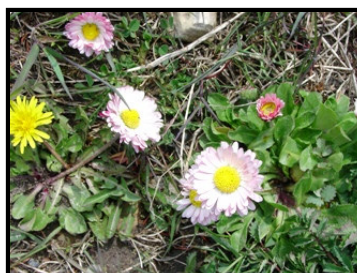
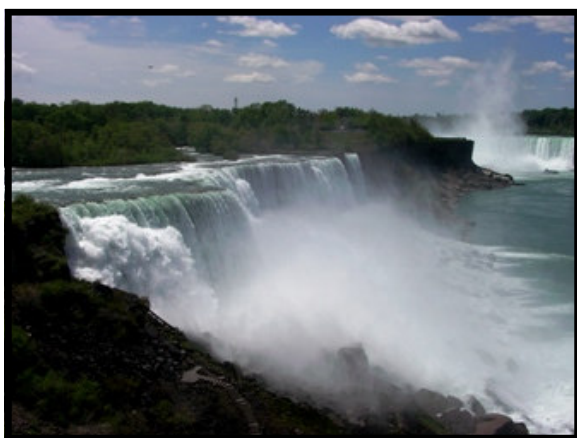
Trilliums at our campground



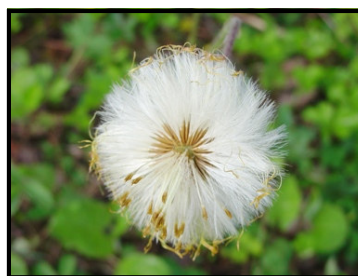
Along the way we saw numerous plants, some familiar but others not. Some I still do not know the name for. Some are pictured below.

Al's stop in Pennsylvania was a personal tour of the Case Knife factory in Bradford. From there we went north to New York state to see part of the Erie Canal.

I guess you can begin to see the theme of this article and this vacation. Our next "waterfall" was the big one located on the border of the US and Canada.



From Niagara Falls we crossed into Ontario Province of Canada. The national flower of Ontario is the trillium, specifically *Trillium grandiflora*. We expected to see many and were certainly not disappointed! Imagine camping among acres of *Trillium*!



Green variants of *Trillium grandiflora*

Our last park stop in Canada was at Trillium Park. It was difficult to locate and not especially large, but as described in our touring Ontario book, loaded with green and white variants of *T. grandiflora*. Worth the trip!!



Double green variant.
Yes, we left it in Canada!



Membership in the Alabama Wildflower Society

If you would like to become a member, dues are: Individual \$8.00 Family \$12.00
(local dues not included in this amount)

Your check should be made payable to the ALABAMA WILDFLOWER SOCIETY and mailed to:
Marge Anderton, 271 County Rd. 68, Killen, AL 35645

Your name _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone No. _____ E-mail _____

Check one: New _____ Renewal _____

Please supply your email address if you have one. It makes contacting each other easier. Supplying your email does not automatically put you on the email newsletter list.

I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL. YES

Most everyone is familiar with *Physostegia virginiana* also known as false dragonhead or obedient plant. Some prefer to call it the disobedient plant as it can form large colonies and crowd out other plantings. This is just one of 12 native species of *Physostegia* in the US.

It is believed that *P. virginiana* was taken to Europe as early as 1674 and grown in gardens there. Cultivars were selected and re-introduced to the US where they were planted in many gardens and sometimes also got loose.

The species found in several counties of the Alabama black belt region is *Physostegia angustifolia*. It is found in heavy clay areas and most often in somewhat damp areas such as around the ponds at Augusta Robinson's farm.



It is much more obedient although to some less showy. It does not form big clumps. It is not aggressive at all. In fact, if one has it, there does not seem to be enough of it.

P. angustifolia also does not bloom in fall. It is found in bloom in mid to late May. The flowers are more pinkish-white and less numerous on the stalk. The stalk is not as prone to branch. The flowers however are quite obedient. They retain the place on the stalk to which they have been moved. This ability to stay in place never ceases to amaze those who play with them.

Rosemary g. Blethen, Editor
5242 County Road 220
Knoxville, AL 35469