



Blanche Dean Chapter

7 p.m. Birmingham Botanical Gardens

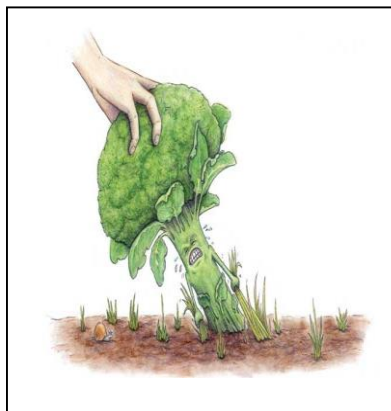
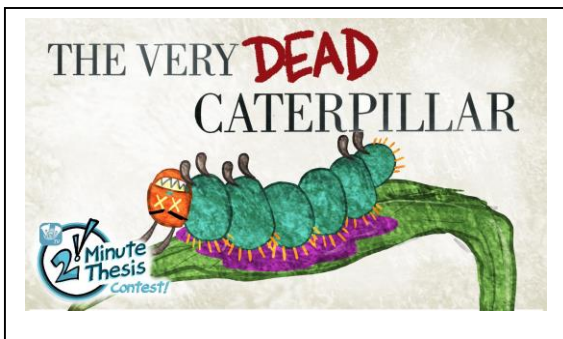
Zac Napier to Speak on "Defensive Plants of Alabama"

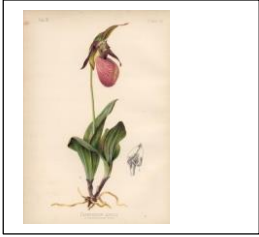
Alabama's best defensive of lineup of all time has nothing to do with a bunch of big strong men throwing around a leather ball. Even more impressive than the goal line stands and hard tackles made by the Alabama and Auburn defenses are a bunch of beautiful green plants who know how to fight back when under attack by insects, disease, and large hooved animals called deer. While Alabama's 3,000 species of plants are incredibly beautiful, many also hold fascinating fighting power in their soft tissues in the form of chemical defenses. Although certain organisms have learned to bypass a plant's defense systems (the Monarch caterpillar-and-milkweed plant combination comes to mind), many pests do succumb to the powerful alkaloids and glycosides with which plants arm themselves.

On May 1st, please join us at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens to hear Zac Napier, Environmental Educator at Turkey Creek Preserve, discuss these amazing Alabama organisms.

Born and raised in rural Birmingham, just a rocks throw away from the banks of Bayview Lake, Zac grew up catching anoles and salamanders on 10 acres of Alabama woodlands. From a young age, he participated and excelled in community sports like baseball and football. Having the opportunity to play in three football state championships and winning two, he considers himself a very blessed individual. He attended Birmingham-Southern College, where, through the biological sciences, he built a major around his passions of conservation, ecology, herpetology, botany, and zoology.

Zac says his whole life was changed by a six-week research trip to La Selva biological station in Costa Rica. Afterward, two influential professors got him a job as a field technician at The Freshwater Land Trust. In two years of time, he moved up to become Land Steward over 5,000 acres of conservation land. There, he broadened his knowledge of Alabama's rich and wondrous biodiversity through personal exploration. With the lofty goal of becoming a naturalist, Zac decided to continue polishing his skill set and take up the mantle of an environmental educator. He has always enjoyed interacting with young people and is excited to have the opportunity to inspire the young minds that will shape our future. You can find Zac most days at Turkey Creek Nature Preserve teaching and preserving.





Friday & Sat., May 5 -7 DeSoto Wildflower Celebration

DeSoto is celebrating their 25th Anniversary Wildflower Weekend May 5 -7, and AWS has reserved a block of rooms for our members. Although the deadline for taking advantage of the special AWS rate has passed, it may be worth a try to call and see if you can get the same price, which is \$79/night or \$158/2 nights. Breakfast is included. Our Group ID # is 1406. Call 1-800-568-8840 toll free or 256-845-5380 to reserve your own room. Of course, you are always welcome to just come for the day on Saturday. The park address is 7104 DeSoto Parkway NE, Fort Payne, AL 35967. The Lodge is to the right on Blalock Drive. Our itinerary is as follows:

Friday: 4:00 p.m. Check In, Welcome Social at 5:00 on the Deck off the Main Lodge Dining hall, followed by dinner inside and a Presentation by park naturalists.

Saturday: 8:00 Breakfast, Main Dining Hall.

9:00 Hike to Azalea Cascade. Hike classified Easy to Moderate. Starts on DeSoto's Azalea Cascade Boardwalk and ends at the Country Store. Meets behind DeSoto's Country Store on the deck. Has the easiest terrain, suitable for people with limited mobility or younger children. Starts out along the Talmadge Butler ADA-Accessible Boardwalk Trail & continues along for both an elevated & ground-floor view of the hardwood forest. Various plants to see: Pink Lady Slipper, Mountain Laurel, Wild Ginger, Catesby's Trillium, Galax, Trout Lilly, Sweet Shrub, Mountain Honeysuckle, Yellowroot, Dwarf Iris, New York Fern, Wild Geranium, Cucumber Magnolia, Wild Azalea, and much more.

12:00 Noon ~ Lunch at the Lodge Dining Hall or on your own

1:00pm and/or 3:00pm Choice of 2 hikes, both classified as moderate to mildly strenuous.

Rhododendron Trail Hike: Goes from Country Store towards DeSoto's pool area and down the yellow trail, ending at Indian Falls. Meets at Desoto's Nature Center is great for walking under the forest canopy & among flowing creeks. Follows along the bluff line overlooking the West Fork of Little River, and ends at scenic Indian Falls. **What to see:** Catawba Rhododendron, Wild Camellia, Rosebay Rhododendron, Yellowstar Grass, Wild Huckleberry, Mountain Laurel, Trailing Arbutus, Bluets, Solomon's Seal, Catesby's Trillium, Galax, Sweet Shrub, Fringe Tree, Partridgeberry, & much more.

Little River Hike: Starts at Indian Falls, follows the yellow trail and circles back to Indian Falls. Meets outside Desoto's Country Store on grass. Terrain is rocky with some minor rock-hopping next to the river. Trail curves around & starts a gradual curve up to the bluff above Little River & ends back at Indian Falls.

What to see: Mountain Honeysuckle, Mountain Laurel, Catawba Rhododendron, Nuttall's Rayless Goldenrod, Yellowroot, Oakleaf Hydrangea, Indian Cucumber Root, Wood Sorrel, Tag Alder, Ashy Hydrangea, Oxeye Daisy, Coral Honeysuckle, Flatrock Onion, Neverwet, Royal Fern, Joe Pye Weed, Cinnamon Fern, Rattlesnake Plantain and much more.

Sunday, May 7 – Glade Hopping on Lookout Mountain!

This is an optional trip for those at the AWS meeting and for those who wish to drive up just for the day. After check-out, we'll meet in the parking lot of the Lodge at 10:30 on Sunday morning. Homeward bound, we'll travel along DeSoto Parkway (County Road 89) and HWY 35 to Little River Falls parking area to meet up with the Blanche Dean Chapter group coming from Birmingham. Estimated time of arrival for the falls is 11 a.m. From the falls, we'll travel on Canyon Rim Drive (HWY 176) through the preserve making several stops along the way. This area is rife with waterfalls, sandstone rock outcrops with thin soils, rare plant communities, and sandy bogs. Elf orpine and stitchwort will be winding down by the time of our trip, but the dwarf sundews & Little River Canyon onion should be blooming then. After the glades, we'll walk a short way to the bog to see Sampson's snakeroot, white colic root, fairy wand, sunnybells & mountain pitcher plants.

Bring plenty of water, snacks or picnic lunch, a hat, and appropriate clothing for the heat. We'll remain close to the cars for this trip. For more details, call Michelle Reynolds 914-7077 or email coverings@bham.rr.com.

Saturday May 13 -- Native Plant Workshop in Leeds. *Volunteers Needed!*

The Alabama Wildflower Society and **Green Up Nursery** at 8257 Farley Avenue in Leeds, will conduct an informal workshop called "Natives in Your Yard" on Saturday, May 13. Members of the Alabama Wildflower Society are needed to be on hand to give visitors tips on planting and maintaining native plants. Linda Sherk is developing hand outs based on the native plants available that day. The workshop is free and open to the public. **Green Up Nursery** is next to the Post Office at 8257 Farley Avenue. Workshop begins at 10AM and ends at noon. Please email Linda at blt111@bellsouth.net if you can help.

Wednesday, May 17 -- Birmingham Fern Society Annual Lecture



The Fern Society announces that on May 17, Garrie P. Landry will speak on "***Ferns: The Rest of the Untold Story***" at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. All events are free and open to the public. All are invited to the 5:30 Reception and 6:30 Lecture .

Sunday, May 21 -- Roberta Case Pine Hills Preserve in Autauga County

The Roberta Case Pine Hills Preserve sits in the rolling hills of the upper coastal plain and contains one of the largest populations of the Alabama canebrake pitcher plant, *Sarracenia rubra ssp. Alabamensi*. Healthy populations of *Harper's ginger Hexastylis speciosa*, another plant found only in Alabama, can also be seen.

The Nature Conservancy is working to restore the upland forests to longleaf pine woodlands. Since 2001 they have had an active prescribed burning program which has opened up the understory of the forest and allowed a variety of grasses and flowers, such as the Alabama canebrake pitcher plant, to multiply. TNC has also worked to replant longleaf pines and native grasses.

Meet Linda Sherk at *Chick-fil-a* in the Promenade Shopping Center, Alabaster, on Highway 31 at 12:30PM. Or meet the group (and Chuck Byrd of the Nature Conservancy at 1PM @ exit 200 of I-65 South (gas station on right). Bring water, bug spray, sunscreen, and walking sticks. This site is on a hillside, so hiking boots or shoes with covered toes are recommended. Questions: Linda Sherk 205-415-1643 or blt111@bellsouth.net.

Saturday, June 10 -- Guided Hike to Ruffner Quarry to see False Aloe

Meet Michelle Reynolds at Ruffner Mtn. Nature Center parking lot by the pavilion, 9 a.m. Saturday, June 10.

Saturday, June 17 -- Don't miss the Birmingham Fern Society Fern Show & Sale !

Between 50 and 50 species of ferns will be available for sale. The Fern Show will be held from 1 – 4 p.m. and the Fern Sale from 1 – 5 p.m. at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens.



Saturday, June 17 -- Harrell Prairie in Forest, Mississippi

This is a joint trip with the Mississippi Native Plant Society to see Harrell Prairie's spectacular variety of wildflowers and native grasses. Located within the Bienville National Forest, the prairie boasts an unusual population of native flowers, grasses, butterflies, and neotropical birds (such as the prairie warbler, indigo bunting, blue grosbeak, yellow-breasted chats, and common yellowthroat.) Guides say that mid-June to late July is the best time to visit.

The Prairie's alkaline soils (pH >than 7.5) ensure a unique plant ecology. Common grasses include Little Bluestem, Indiangrass, Big Bluestem, Broomsedge Bluestem, Bushy Broomsedge, and Switchgrass. Other plants include Yellow Coneflower, Eastern Purple Coneflower, Blazing Star, False Boneset, Green Milkweed, Green Comet Milkweed, Purple Prairie Clover, White Prairie Clover, Aster, Tick-trefoil, Rosepink, Smooth Oxeye, Little-leaved Mountain Mint, and Wild Bergamot. Harrell Prairie (a disjunct of the Alabama Blackbelt Prairie) fortunately avoided agricultural development due to purchase by lumber companies.

The town of Forest is approximately a 3-hour drive from the Birmingham, AL area. There is a Holiday Inn Express at 1275 Hwy 35 South, Forest, MS 39074. Hotel front desk is 601-469-8288. Senior Rate is \$122.55 plus taxes. Linda Sherk has made a reservation and plans on being there Friday afternoon.

We will meet the Mississippi group on Saturday morning at 8 a.m. at Wendy's (just north of the interstate exit 88 on Hwy 35) and then drive to the prairie. (From Wendy's, turn right (east) on Erle Johnston Drive and continue to its end at Hwy 501. Turn left (north) on Hwy 501, and then right (east) on Forest Service Road 518.) Bring shade hat, water, bug spray. Afterwards, we will move down the road to the red cockaded woodpecker colony. Lunch at Penn's Restaurant



Please let our Mississippi guide know by June 12 if you want to join the group:

heather.sullivan@mmns.state.ms.us. Questions? call Linda Sherk 205-415-1643 or blt111@bellsouth.net.



Butterfly website has gone live,

thanks to many contributors

The beautiful and exciting new online *Alabama Butterfly Atlas* has recently launched at [http://www.alabama.butterflyatlas.usf.edu/!](http://www.alabama.butterflyatlas.usf.edu/) This incredible new tool can be used to

- Access butterfly life history accounts, distribution maps, flight charts, and photographs at each life stage
- Gain information about their host plants (with gardening tips!)— all specific to Alabama.
- Search for information about a particular species or look at species lists from specific counties, regions, or selected public lands; and
- Learn more about the plants on which butterflies depend through live linkage to the Alabama Plant Atlas at www.floraofalabama.org.

“The website that you will see is only a beginning. Now we need to put it to use, as well as fill it with new records and observations. So take a look, and then share with your friends and colleagues! Thank you for your interest and support. Together we can make the Alabama Butterfly Atlas a truly important tool for butterfly conservation and education in our state!” -- Paulette Ogard and Sara Bright, co-authors of Butterflies of Alabama and developers of the Alabama Butterfly Atlas.

The Birmingham Fern Society

Presents the Annual Fern Show & Sale

Saturday, June 17, 2017

Entries for the show will be accepted between 8 - 10 a.m.

The Fern Show will take place from 1- 4:00 p.m.

All Public entries are welcomed!!

The Sale will take place from 1 – 5:00 p.m.



2017 Cahaba Lily Festival

May 20, West Blocton, Alabama.

Morning program is held indoors and features a leading authority on the Cahaba Lily with other wildflower speakers. Lunch is provided, followed by a trip to view the lilies on the beautiful Cahaba River. Festival is held annually on the third Saturday in May.

9 a.m. 10:30 am Welcome and speakers

11:40 am Lunch for Registered Guests – No Take Outs, Please. (Contributions welcomed and appreciated)

1:00 – 3:00 pm Canoe rentals available from the Cahaba River Society- \$20

1:15 – 3:00 pm West Blocton Beehive Coke Ovens Park Tours

3:15 pm Story Telling and Musical Entertainment in Cahaba Lily Center

ALABAMA WILDFLOWER SOCIETY-
BLANCH DEAN CHAPTER

Minutes of Meeting of April 3, 2017

Tonight's meeting was a joint venture with the Alabama Paleontological Society. As the Blanche Dean chapter was a guest of the APS, our announcements and business were deferred. The meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m. at the Birmingham Zoo Auditorium. The speaker was Dr. Jenny McGuire of the research faculty at Georgia Tech University. She received her scholastic degrees from Duke University and the University of California-Berkeley and has had post-doctoral positions at other universities.

For several years, Dr. McGuire has spent summers participating in excavations at Natural Trap Cave in Big Horn County, Wyoming. This site has recorded the detailed history of the dynamic changes in mammal communities for 150,000-200,000 years. The title of tonight's presentation was "*What happens to ecosystems after the megafauna go extinct?*" "*Megafauna*" is a scientific term referring to any extinct mammal weighing more than 100 pounds.

The Wyoming cave, with undoubtedly some innocent exaggeration, has been called "just a hole in the ground." Its maximum depth is yet unknown. Its form has led to many fauna falling to their deaths. Some animal remnants have been dropped into the cave by other predators. These two factors together have led to much information regarding community systems within a larger geographical realm.

Many types of animals have met their fate in the cave, including lions, cheetahs, bighorn sheep, antelope, bison, American camels, and different wolf species, including quite large dire wolves. Beringian wolves, largely confined to Alaska, have been found, suggesting there once having been a narrow land corridor from points north. Julie Meachen is a recognized expert with the carnivores.

Time, of course, means changes to tissue. DNA, with good cave refrigeration, can be more accurately analyzed the younger it is. Jaw bones often render more info regarding identification. Technology has assisted with cave studies. The Wyoming cave has been laser-mapped. This has given more data for understanding climate changes with time.

Pollen data is studied and has proven useful. Micro fauna, one of Dr. McGuire's specialties, are also studied, this including field mice, rabbits, lizards, birds, and shrews. Questions abound, including the answer to the title of tonight's presentation, as well as whether megafauna generally go extinct abruptly or gradually. The subject indeed remains a work in progress. .

The informative presentation concluded at approximately 8:07 p.m. We will again convene on Monday, May 1, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens.

Respectfully,
Charles E. Gleaton, Recorder

**TREES AND TREE BARK BIOTA
A SAMFORD UNIVERSITY NATURAL HISTORY COURSE
SATURDAY APRIL 29, 2017**

Learn about the common trees in a one-day class. Common woodland trees in the Shades Creek wetland and the Homewood Forest Preserve will be identified, and microscopes will be used to examine the flora and fauna living on their bark. Bring a digital camera for photography and field guides. Counts towards a Natural History Certificate. Instructor: Dr. Ellen W. McLaughlin, Dept. of Biological and Environmental Sciences, Retired. Meets at Propst Hall Room 242, Samford Univ. Biology Dept., from 9am to 1pm. You can bring a snack or drink; coffee will be available. Free. Email Dr. McLaughlin ewmclaug@samford.edu to register, or call (205) 595-0806 so that enough syllabi will be printed.



President - Linda Sherk
Vice President of Programs - Marty Schulman
Treasurer - Ida Gleaton
Recorder - Charles Gleaton
Newsletter - Chris Underwood
Web Site - Karen Hutchinson

visit us on Facebook as Blanche Dean Chapter of Alabama Wildflower Society

www.alabamawildflower.org