

CHINQUAPIN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN BOTANICAL SOCIETY

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SPRING 2021



Earl Core Student Report: Population genomics of a Pennsylvania rare plant, Blue False Indigo

by Cheyenne Moore

With funding from the Earl Core Award from the Southern Appalachian Botanical Society I was able to finish my master's thesis on the population genomics of the showy, perennial wildflower, *Baptisia australis* var. *australis* (Blue False Indigo) in Pennsylvania. Funds from SABS allowed me to complete rigorous sampling of most all known populations of the species in Pennsylvania where it is considered to be threatened by the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and imperiled by the Natural Heritage Program. Part of the reason for this is that Pennsylvania populations of *B. australis* var. *australis* occur in unique riparian prairies in a threatened habitat type classified as Big Bluestem – Indian-grass Floodplain Grassland. This

habitat type relies on periodic disturbance, typically of ice scour, to be maintained. Pennsylvania populations occur along just four waterways in the western part of the state: Allegheny River, Youghiogheny River, Clarion River, and Red Bank Creek.

One of the main goals of my work was to understand gene flow, genetic diversity, and genetic structure of the populations. Essentially what I was interested in is whether the populations share gene flow, or whether they are becoming isolated, potentially due to fragmentation or shrinkage of populations. Reduced gene flow would influence genetic diversity, inbreeding rates, and overall genetic health of populations.

Funding from SABS allowed me to travel to and collect samples of plant tissue for DNA extraction from 24 populations in Pennsylvania. Fieldwork was in partnership with the Natural Heritage Program and was typically done by kayak. In total, I extracted DNA from 326 plant tissue samples. DNA was then sent to be sequenced using a Genotyping-by-Sequencing (GBS) protocol. Resulting data was filtered and analyzed to calculate pairwise gene flow between the 24 populations, inbreeding for populations, and genetic diversity. Our results show there is less gene flow between populations within Pennsylvania than we expected. When we used multiple clustering analyses, each indicated there are five genetic clusters of the species in Pennsylvania: populations along the Red Bank Creek, populations along the Clarion River, the lone population along the Youghiogheny River, and two genetic clusters along the Allegheny River, one upstream of the confluence of the Clarion River and one downstream (Figure 2). Each population also had lower genetic diversity than expected and varying levels of inbreeding. Overall, the results indicate that we need to preserve existing populations and avoid further population fragmentation in hopes of maintaining gene flow between populations.



Figure 1. Field site with *Baptisia australis* var. *australis*. This photograph appeared on the cover of *Natural Areas Journal* 41(1), January 2021.

Population genomics continued on Page 3

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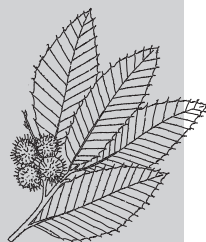
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**SABS AWARD WINNERS**

The Southern Appalachian Botanical Society is pleased to announce the winners of recent scholarships, grants, and awards. For award descriptions, please visit our website, <http://sabs.us>. Fewer awards were given in 2020 due to cancellation of the annual meeting.

Awards announced at ASB 2021

Conference Support Award– Sarah Brown, James Madison University

John Fairey Field Station Scholarship –

Luke Sheaffer, Western Carolina University
Brittany Martin, Haywood Community College
Alna Hicks, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
Brandon Wheeler, Western Carolina University
Morgan Gaglianese-Woody, Appalachian State University
Neely Millard, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
Laura Hamon, North Carolina State University

Earl Core Student Research Awards –

Michelle L. Gaynor, University of Florida, “Formation and Persistence of a Co-occurring Mixed Cytotype Autopolyploid System in the Southern Appalachians.”
Noah Dennis Yawn, Auburn University, “Testing for the Hybrid Speciation of a Fertile Population of the Sterile Fern Hybrid, *Asplenium* × *gravesii* (Aspleniaceae)”

Richard and Minnie Windler Award for best paper in ecology -

Justin P. Williams and Tracy S. Hawkins, “Acorn Weevil (Coleoptera: Curculionidae) Predation Dynamics in a Mississippi Bottomland Hardwood Forest” (*Castanea* 85(1): 159-168)

Richard and Minnie Windler Award for best paper in systematics –

Elizabeth McMurchie and Andrea Weeks, “Vascular Flora and Ecological Community Assessment of the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, Loudoun County, Virginia” (*Castanea* 85(1): 42-64)

Student Presentation Awards, Oral Presentation

Rebekah Shupe, Marshall University, “The Effect of Fire on Oak-forest Regeneration: A 25-year Study”

Student Presentation Awards, Poster Presentation

Katie Krogmeier, Appalachian State University, “Impacts of Polyploidy on the Ecophysiology of *Solidago altissima*”

Elizabeth Ann Bartholomew Award – Zack Murrell, Appalachian State University

Awards announced in spring, 2020

Earl Core Student Research Awards –

Jessie Pelosi, University of Florida, “Life Without a Sporophyte: Reconstructing the Demographic History of the Appalachian Gametophyte-Only Fern, *Vittaria appalachiana*, Using Population Genomics”
Remington Burwell, Ohio University, Integrative Taxonomical Approach for Delineating Species within the Affinis and Edulis Species Complexes in *Viola* of the Coastal Plains”

Richard and Minnie Windler Award for best paper in ecology –

Ryan Huish, Amy E. Faivre, Melissa Manow, and Conley K. McMullen, “Investigations Into the Reproductive Biology of the Southern Appalachian Endemic Piratebush (*Buckleya distichophylla*): Pollination Biology, Fruit Development, and Seed Germination”

Richard and Minnie Windler Award for best paper in systematics –

Max S. Lanning and Katherine G. Mathews, “Taxonomy, Distribution, and Lectotypification of Two Rare, Southern Appalachian Saxifrages, *Micranthes careyana* and *M. caroliniana*”

Elizabeth Ann Bartholomew Award – Wendy Zomlefer, University of Georgia

That Untravell'd World: Bialowieza Forest— the Last of a Kind

By L. L. Gaddy, President – *terra incognita*

*Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world ...
"Ulysses", Tennyson*

I have just finished dinner at the old Victorian train station—now converted into a restaurant—in Bialowieza (pronounced Be-yowuh-ve-asia), Poland. This little village (just over 2000 inhabitants) is in eastern Poland a few miles from the Belorussian border and is surrounded by what's called the "Bialowieza Forest," a complex of old-growth deciduous forests and managed pine, spruce, and birch forests. At approximately 1200 square miles (786,000 acres), this giant forest is about the size of Rhode Island.

Polish and Lithuanian kings hunted game for salted meat to supply their armies here from the 1400s into the nineteenth century. In the 1880s, Czar Alexander III decided to annex the region to Russia and claimed Bialowieza Forest for his private family estate. He built a 120-bedroom palace/hunting lodge for his visits to the area and later constructed a direct rail line from Moscow to the little town of Bialowieza. He and later czars would come to the great expanses of forest here to hunt the European bison, wild boars, and various species of deer. Because the Russians visited regularly (the Russian nobles let the local people stay as long as they agreed to be forest rangers or cooks), these forests were protected from logging—in fact, one section of the forest is the last remaining lowland old-growth deciduous forest in Europe.

World War I brought the private kingdom and the czars to an end. Bialowieza again became part of Poland. But the people and the forest here have had little peace since the czars left. In the 1940s, the Germans massacred many of the adult males in Bialowieza village (Fig. 1). And the Russians, who came to liberate Poland, captured the remaining able-bodied men and sent them east to work in Russia. Modern history has not been kind to the Polish people; many Poles—



Figure 1. Woodland grave of townspeople executed by Germans in 1945

Jews and non-Jews alike—were killed side by side in German concentration camps. After WWII, Poland was under the thumb of the USSR and controlled by Moscow; only recently, in 1989, did Poland become a free country again.

My phytogeographical travels rarely lead me to Europe. I usually find myself in a remote place, surrounded by strange genera and species, most of which I do not know. But Bialowieza Forest is different on both counts: I was in a foreign realm, but I

amazed my guide Iric, from the Warsaw Geobotanical Station here, by knowing nearly all the genera and many of the species we encountered. Bialowieza is an old-growth remnant of what has been called "The Great Northern Temperate Deciduous Forest"—a biome with a forest flora of oaks, maples, willows, poplars, and walnuts, all

That Untravell'd World continued on Page 5

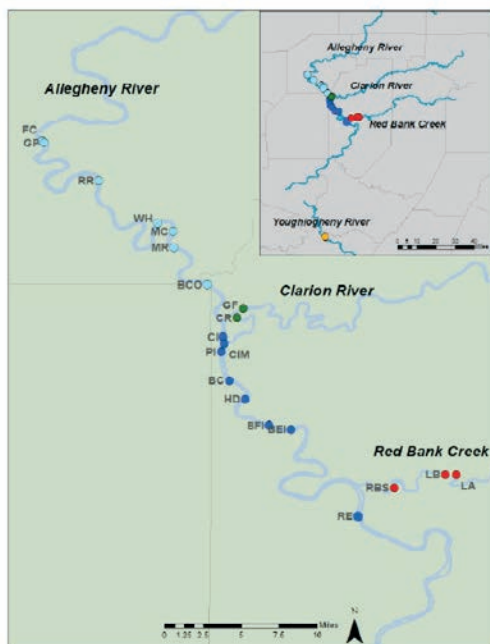
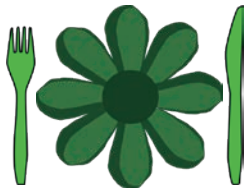


Figure 2. Sampled populations in Pennsylvania. Color of points corresponds with genetic clustering analyses: light blue is upper Allegheny River, dark blue is lower Allegheny River, green is the Clarion River, red is the Red Bank Creek, and orange in the Youghiogheny population (only visible in inset).

Population genomics *continued from p. 1*

I have been working to use this data to help our partners at Pennsylvania DCNR and the Natural Heritage Program reassess the conservation status of *Baptisia australis* var. *australis* in Pennsylvania. This work includes better defining the extent of populations and whether the historically known populations that I sampled are expanding or diminishing. I'm actively working to get this work published and collaborating with these groups to give them a better understanding of the population genomics of *B. australis* var. *australis* in Pennsylvania, as well as the implications of my results. I'm excited to see my results being translated to conservation planning for this charismatic taxon here in Pennsylvania!

Cheyenne Moore is currently a Ph.D. Student at the University of Pittsburgh. The research reported here was part of her M.S. thesis at Bucknell University.



Edible Wild Plants: Magnificent Mucilaginous Mallows

By Lytton John Musselman, Old Dominion University

The Malvaceae, the mallow family, is a moderate sized family in the Southeast. Many members of the family are edible (basswood), some are used as vegetables (okra), others for herbal teas (hollyhock).

The native genus *Hibiscus* contains some of our largest native flowers. The most widespread species is the swamp rose mallow, *H. moscheutos*, but the best-known member of the genus to southerners is okra, *H. esculentus*. In Wisconsin okra was an exotic vegetable, as foreign as jackfruit. It was only when I moved to North Carolina that I discovered this vastly underrated delicacy both fried and boiled. Few vegetables have the delicate taste of fried okra. We make ours Yankee style, i.e., sans cornmeal. But it is also scrumptious cooked with tomatoes where it displays its "slimy" character. The slime, more delicately termed mucilage, manifests itself in most members of this family when they are boiled.

Armed with this knowledge, I examined native and weedy members of the Malvaceae for edibility. I started with the swamp rose mallow which flowers in eastern Virginia and North Carolina in mid-August with magnificent white flowers up to ten inches across and a red center (Fig. 1). While most have white flowers, pink flowered plants are also present in a large population. A roadside marsh filled with this species is a spectacular site and a good place to forage.

Most parts of the plants are edible. But while studying the species, I was struck by the resemblance of the developing fruits to okra. Harvest supported my impression. Fruits should be collected when they are no more than two inches long but like okra, the younger fruits are better (Fig. 1). And unlike okra, the green fruits of the rose mallow become woody when they are only about two inches long. Prepare like okra. I have not tried frying the young rose mallow fruits but the boiled fruits are very similar to okra including the requisite slime. The young fruits can be sliced and dehydrated for later use.



Figure 1. Swamp rose mallow along the Chowan River, North Carolina. Right-green fruits, lower right calyx and epicalyx removed.

In addition to the swamp rose mallow, another native hibiscus is widespread and forage-able. This is the archaically named halberd leaf rose mallow (Fig. 2). This mallow also provides okra-like fodder from its young fruits.



Figure 2. Halberd leaf rose mallow, North Branch Edisto River, South Carolina.

Far less spectacular but better known as a comestible is the weedy common mallow, *Malva neglecta*, introduced from Eurasia. It is frequently found in disturbed areas on basic soils and has small bluish-white flowers. The round leaves, preferably young, are tasty when steamed. The flavor is difficult to describe, somewhere between spinach and amaranth. Local people harvest it from the wild in the Middle East where it is known in Arabic as *khubasya*, because of its resemblance to the traditional circular flat bread (Fig. 3). Like many native greens, common mallow can be dried and added to soup where it acts as a thickening agent.

Less common but no less desirable as a green vegetable is the high mallow, *M. sylvestris*. It is recognized by its five-lobed leaves and large pink flowers. Like its congener, it is a plant of disturbed areas and an introduction from Europe. This weedy species is prepared like common mallow.



Figure 3. Common mallow in a weedy field in Elkton, Virginia.



Figure 4. High mallow along a canal verge, Amstel district, Amsterdam.

WARNING! As with all wild plants use caution and moderation when using them.

Parts of this essay will be in a forthcoming book *Edible Wild Plants of the Carolinas: A Forager's Guide* by Lytton John Musselman and Peter W. Schafran to

be published by University of North Carolina Press as one of their Southern Gateways Guide series.

That Untravell'd World *continued from p. 3*

species familiar to Northern Hemisphere dwellers. After Pangaea—earth's early supercontinent—broke apart, two large continents were formed: Gondwanaland (which everyone seems to know) and Laurasia. Gondwanaland eventually became Antarctica, South America, Africa, and India. The northern temperate deciduous forest as we now know it evolved on Laurasia, which mothered North America, Asia, and Europe. Laurasia broke up about 200 million years ago in the late Triassic period: the basic elements of the northern deciduous forest flora were then separated and isolated in habitats and microhabitats on three continents, essentially leaving a tripartite northern deciduous flora. After millions of years of evolution and climate change, the common genera of the northern temperate deciduous forest still exist on these three continents.



Figure 2. Large English oak,
Quercus robur

layer here are also strikingly similar to the North American temperate deciduous forest. Hazelnut (*Corylus*), bedstraw (*Galium*), false garlic (*Allium*), wind flower (*Anemone*), mayflower (*Maianthemum*), avens (*Geum*), geranium (*Geranium*), violet (*Viola*), wild ginger (*Asarum*), and other genera found in our southern Appalachians are common here, and some of the same species from our forests—*Oxalis acetosella*, *Circaea lutetiana*, and *Urtica dioica*—are dominants on the forest floor at Bialowieza.



Figure 3. *Asarum europaeum*
(European wild ginger or *Asarabacca*)

years ago) and its northern latitude (52.7° N—about the same as

The heart of Bialowieza Forest is Bialowieza National Park where in the canopy mature linden (basswood) (*Tilia*), hornbeam (*Carpinus*), oak (*Quercus robur*), ash (*Fraxinus*), Norway maple (*Acer plantanoides*), and Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) dominate. Trees to nearly 50 meters tall and over 400 years old are known from in the park. And, yes, that is why I flew on three different airlines and rented a Fiat to get here—it was worth the trouble to see this rare sight. It is a spectacular forest. The understory and the ground

I was weaned on the arboreal diversity of Congaree Swamp in South Carolina and that in the rich coves of the southern Appalachians, and later in life I explored the diverse forests of China. I, therefore, am somewhat spoiled when it comes to species diversity. Due to recent glaciation (the region may have been under an ice sheet as recently as 15,000

the southern tip of Hudson Bay), Bialowieza Forest does not harbor the diversity of eastern North America nor that of major Chinese temperate deciduous forests. There are less than 50 tree species there, compared to the 90 or so in Congaree National Park, a large old-growth floodplain forest in South Carolina, to the 125 tree species in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, on the North Carolina-Tennessee border in the southern Appalachians (the northern temperate deciduous forest in China may have over 150 tree species). Bialowieza, in fact, is not too far from the northern extent of the northern temperate deciduous forest, which crosses the Baltic Sea and extends into southern Finland. In Eurasia, the range of the northern temperate deciduous forest extends into the Caucasus in Georgia, and there are outlier deciduous forests as far south as Turkey and Iran.



Figure 4. Fallen European ash,
Fraxinus excelsior

forest systems for maximum economic value, while Nature manages for ecological and evolutionary diversity. In natural forests, fallen trees, standing dead trees, and rotting logs are common and create a myriad of habitats for invertebrates and vertebrates absent from most managed forests. Old-growth forests let us see how things really work in forests and give us a window into what the natural ecosystems of north temperate continents looked like when man first arrived. There are few old-growth stands of the temperate deciduous forests left in Europe, North America, and Asia; but, luckily, many of these stands are preserved. Bialowieza is off the beaten path, but there one often finds some of Earth's most interesting treasures.

L. L. Gaddy is president of terra incognita (www.tibooks.org/) and can be contacted at llgaddy2@gmail.com

"Improving upon nature is the very essence of plant breeding, and so it goes to the heart of one of the central debates of the human condition: the relationship between humanity and nature and the degree to which the human race has a right (or indeed a responsibility) to change plant life for its own ends."

– Noel Kingsbury, Hybrid:
The History and Science of Plant Breeding



Botanical Brainteasers

By Joe Pollard and Janie Marlow

Our Brainteasers in the last issue [Chinquapin 27(2)] were: (A) *Conopholis americana*, squawroot; (B) *Castilleja coccinea*, Indian paintbrush; (C) *Aphyllon uniflorum* (= *Orobanchae uniflora*), one-flowered cancer-root; (D) *Epifagus virginiana*, beechdrops; and (E) *Monotropa uniflora*, Indian pipes. There are many ways these could be grouped. It's true that *Castilleja* is unique in this group as a photosynthetic hemiparasite, and that it was formerly classified in the Scrophulariaceae. But it's now placed in the Orobanchaceae, along with the other true parasites *Conopholis*, *Aphyllon*, and *Epifagus*. The real outlier in the group is

Monotropa. For one thing, it is only distantly related to the other four, though experts disagree whether its family should be regarded as the Monotropaceae, Pyrolaceae, or Ericaceae. Ecologically, it's even more distinct, because it's not a haustorial parasite like the other four, but a heterotroph that receives energy from a mycorrhizal partner. We received five entries on this one. Everybody got the identifications correct. Ernest Wilson submitted a rapid response that was 100% correct, and so he was the winner of this round.

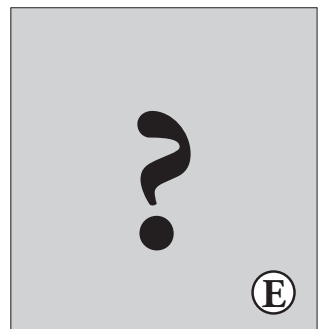
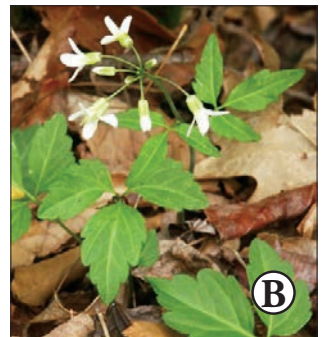
The production schedule of *Chinquapin* has been a mess recently. We had only two issues in 2018 and two in 2019. We're just going to total up the points for those four issues and declare a champion for Volumes 26-27. And (drum-roll, please) the winner is Jim Hull! We'll be sending Jim a copy of George Ellison's latest book, "Back of Beyond, A Horace Kephart Biography", winner of the 2019 Thomas Wolfe Literary Award. For more information on the book, see the box in the middle of the next page, just below the Botanical Excursions feature.

So here's the first Brainteaser of Volume 28. This one works a little differently, so pay attention to the rules! There are pictures of four plant species. Of course we're going to ask you to identify them. When you do, you will hopefully see a pattern, and be able to predict what the fifth, empty box should contain. Yes, we are really asking you to identify a plant you can't even see! (There are several equally correct answers for box E.) Send your answers for all five plants to joe_pollard@att.net (that's an underscore character between first and last names). Email is preferred, but you can also send snail-mail to Joe Pollard, Biology Dept., Furman Univ., Greenville, SC, 29605.

We'll award points for right answers (and close guesses). At the end of the year, we'll total the points from all four issues and send a prize to the winner. To maximize your chances of winning, play regularly and don't be shy if you're not sure. There's always partial credit!

Color photos will be posted at <http://sabs.us/publications/chinquapin-issues>.

[Photo credits: A: K Bradley; B, C, D: JK Marlow]



Fallen leaves...

In the long gap since our last issue, we have been saddened to receive notice of the death of three eminent southeastern botanists, each of whom served the Southern Appalachian Botanical Society in multiple roles over many decades. All will be deeply missed.

Ed Clebsch served as President of SABS in 1974-1975, and received the society's highest honor, the Elizabeth Ann Bartholomew Award, in 1992. A memorial for Ed was published in the May, 2020 issue of *Castanea* (vol. 85, no. 2), which members may access at <http://castaneajournal.com>.

Joe Winstead was President of SABS in 2000-2002, and was honored with the Elizabeth Ann Bartholomew award in 2006. A brief obituary was published in *Castanea* along with that for Ed Clebsch (see reference above), and a longer article appeared in *Southeastern Biology*, the journal of the Association of Southeastern Biologists, available online at http://www.sebiologists.org/uploads/1/0/3/0/103013314/seb_2020_vol67.pdf.

Mike Held served as President of SABS in 2004-2006, and was the recipient of the Elizabeth Ann Bartholomew Award in 2019. A tribute to Mike was published in the December, 2020 issue of *Castanea* (vol. 85, no. 2), which members may access at <http://castaneajournal.com>.

BOTANICAL EXCURSIONS

By George Ellison (www.georgeellison.com)

Artwork by Elizabeth Ellison (www.elizabethellisongallery.com)

Jasmine for Christmas: Taxonomic Verse



It is an elegant vine composed of wiry reddish slightly angled stems that grow from ten to thirty feet high by twining clockwise; leaves are opposite smooth-edged lance-shaped short-stemmed & from two to four inches long; flowers borne in axillary clusters funnel-shaped five-lobed & about an inch in length with stamens that extend either beyond the styles (or exactly the opposite) so as to implement cross-fertilization.

Jasmin ... jasmina ... jasmine ... jasminium ... jasmyn ...
jassamine ... jesmine ... jessamine ... call it what you will
Carolina jasmine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*) bloomed
here for the first time on Christmas day.

On trellises attached to the deck
cascades of shiny evergreen leaves
& yellow flowers looked just right
in the pale winter light.

George Ellison receives 2019 Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award

The Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award has been given annually since 1955 for printed works that focus special attention on Western North Carolina. The 2019 award was presented to George Ellison and Janet McCue for their book "Back of Beyond: A Horace Kephart Biography". Kephart (1862-1931) was instrumental in the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Appalachian Trail. For more information, see <https://www.wnchistory.org/award/thomas-wolfe-memorial-literary-award/>.

An accomplished essayist and poet, George Ellison has been a regular contributor to Chinquapin since its first issue in 1993. This award was announced just before our extended hiatus due to COVID-19.

SABS Welcomes Our New Members

Normally, Chinquapin includes a list of the names of members who have recently joined SABS. That's not possible this time, due to a quirk in our changeover to a new record-keeping system. We know that a lot of folks joined SABS during the long hiatus since the last issue of Chinquapin. We regret that we can't list you by name, but please know that you are very welcome, especially student members. We hope that this is the start of a long, productive, and fun botanical relationship.

A. JOSEPH POLLARD PHD, NEWSLETTER EDITOR
SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN BOTANICAL SOCIETY
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Chinquapin is Back!

The last two years will be indelibly etched in the memory of each of us. I know I speak for the leadership of the Southern Appalachian Botanical Society in expressing the sincere hope that our members, their families, and their loved ones have managed to avoid personal tragedy while navigating COVID-19. For those who have endured hardship and loss, our thoughts and compassion go out to you.

This is the first issue of Chinquapin published in 18 months. You don't have to be a mathematician to realize that this goes back to before the pandemic started, and indeed some of the delays are related to other factors, such as a database error that forced us to reconstruct our member address list. But I take personal responsibility for most of that down-time. Producing the newsletter is something I have done in my "spare time." That was always a somewhat fanciful notion, but it became as rare as pink unicorns once we started with online teaching and the other challenges of the last year. I apologize for the disruption.

Changes are on the horizon. I have asked the Council to look for a new newsletter editor. Several names are being considered, but please feel free to volunteer or nominate someone. We also want to think creatively about what the membership wants their newsletter to be. Printed or online? Just society news, or general-interest articles too? Longer or shorter? Our president,

Rebecca Cook, has appointed an ad-hoc committee charged with considering all these questions and more. Members can expect to receive an email in the near future, inviting them to express their wishes in an online survey. Please share your thoughts and ideas!

– Joe Pollard, Newsletter Editor

Last Reminder

Virtual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage

May 8 – 16, 2021

Many SABS and ASB members are enthusiastic participants in the annual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Sadly, the COVID-19 pandemic has once again forced cancellation of the face-to-face event. But there may still be time to participate in the Virtual Pilgrimage, organized through the iNaturalist platform. You can register up to the last minute, at <http://www.wildflowerpilgrimage.org/>. Please participate if you can, and consider making a donation to this worthy cause. Plans are underway for an in-person pilgrimage next year!