7 p.m. Meeting - Homewood Library  October 8, 2018

"The Magical World of Mosses"

We are pleased to welcome Lindsey Ruth Barcliff, who will speak to us tonight about a member of the plant world of which there are almost 12,000 species – even in Antarctica and the Arctic tundra. The sometimes overlooked Bryophyta is among the oldest, most hardy and environmentally beneficial division of flora on earth. They serve not only as powerful sequesters of carbon but are also highly efficient fighters of storm water drainage and beautiful additions to urban environments, where in many European cities they are now used as “green roofs” to soften otherwise gray surroundings.

Lindsey’s program will answer such questions as, What is and is not a moss; how and where do mosses grow; and how to cultivate moss. She will also display and discuss her 12 favorite mosses.

A Montgomery native, she attended Auburn University and received a B.A. in Economics from UAB. A former classical ballet dancer, she has worked as a bank auditor and operations analyst and is married to Bill Barcliff with two children and two grandchildren. Lindsey is a Master Gardener, a former 12-year member of the Mountain Brook Tree Commission and a back yard gardener – a “constant weeder,” she says. For the past 20 years, she has volunteered at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, first with Perennials, then Natives and currently with Herbs, primarily growing lavenders and thymes. A yoga instructor at the BBG and a lover of good food and wine. Lindsey says she became interested in moss gardening in 1991 following the purchase of a rustic log cabin in Western North Carolina.

Volunteers are still needed at the Blanche Dean Chapter tent during the Festival and during set-up the day before (Friday, Nov. 2.) -- your helping hands would be appreciated!

Another way you can assist is by joining Linda Sherk in potting up native plants to give to new members who come by our tent. If you can contribute plants of your own, they would be welcomed.

This fun, popular festival always features dozens of groups, and this year’s exhibitors include a Tiny Home, a nature enthusiasts district, Ideas for SmartLIVING, and designer craftsmen.

Please contact Linda at 205-415-1643 or blt111@bellsouth.net. She and Karen Hutchinson would love to have you there!

Sign up now! for the Moss Rock Festival Nov. 3-4!
Fieldtrip!
Saturday, Oct 6
Watercress Darter Habitat at Roebuck Springs

Marty Schulman will lead us on a field trip to see this recently restored habitat at Roebuck Springs. We will meet in the parking lot of the Don Hawkins Recreational Center (8920 Roebuck Blvd., B’ham, AL 35206) at 10 a.m. and afterwards, for those who are interested, enjoy lunch nearby. Of the now six places in the world where the federally endangered watercress darter (Etheostoma nuchale) lives, all six are in Jefferson County.

While there is a good bit of parking @ Hawkins Rec Center, it could easily be full. There is an upper level, as well as a few spots on Roebuck Blvd. reserved for Hawkins RC users, next to a pavilion.

Our tour will begin at the recently completely greenway (thank you Fresh Water Land Trust!) downstream of the tennis courts & continue along the spring run. Bring insect repellant if you desire, but please stay away from the water when applying it, as well as any other chemical, such as sunscreen.

After lunch, we may visit the Eastern “B Center”, the mural shown here, and the Irondale Furnace.

2018 Fall AWS State Meeting
Friday, October 26-Sunday, October 28

Come join us for the fall meeting of the Alabama Wildflower Society in Montgomery this year!

We will be visiting Lagoon Park which consists of approximately 175 acres. The park includes sunny meadows, sunny and shady bogs, ponds and creeks, hard-wood forests and piney flats. There are seven miles of trails for hiking.

We will be hiking the Forest Road Trail which is approximately one mile of easy walking and we can hike others as we have time.

***Bring lunch*** and in case of rain, we will move to the lodge. Our main purpose today is to help with the planting of native plants in the park. Two of our newest members from the Montgomery (both are master gardeners) are working hard to accomplish this.

I am asking each one of us to donate one native plant or bring seeds for the meadow. If you will, please select now, pot up and harden off for the planting in October. Please bring garden tools and gloves necessary to plant your plant! Thank You!

Sunday morning, we will meet at Fort Toulouse for a wildflower walk. Mr. Ned Jenkins, state archaeologist, will be our host. The fort is located off I-65 toward Birmingham.

Lodging and Reservation Details: A block of rooms with 2 queen beds each has been reserved for us at the Holiday Inn Express, 9250 Boyd Cop- per Parkway, Montgomery, AL 36117, Exit 11 on I-85. The rate is $104.00 per night, including breakfast, plus tax and fees. Please make reservations by October 5th by calling 334-271-5516. Please identify you are with the Alabama Wildflower Society. Our dinner meeting Saturday evening will be at Sinclair’s Restaurant on Vaughn Road which is convenient to the hotel. Please use the lower entrance at the foot of the stairs at the front exterior of the building. We will be ordering from the menu. A copy of the menu will be provided when you check into the hotel. Timetable is as follows: 5:00-5:15 for social hour at the restaurant. We will place our dinner orders at the time. Dinner at 6:00, program at 6:30. Our speaker will be Joe Watts, President of the Birmingham Audubon Society and the Coordinator for the birding trail project. He is also a consultant for the Alabama Trails Commission’s online database of statewide trails, Association of RC&D Councils, and a multitude of other non-profits across Alabama. He graduated from Auburn University and from Birmingham-Southern College.

Questions?
contact AWS Vice President Anne Kitchens: 256-714-1607 kitchensanne64@gmail.com
Tonight’s meeting was held at the Homewood Public Library. Proceedings commenced at 7:05 p.m. with President Linda Sherk calling the meeting to order. Treasurer Ida Gleaton announced that we now had $2730.35 tucked away with a large chunk of this being a posthumous estate gift from Maryalys Griffis, our former Treasurer. (May we be thankful for this.) There were several announcements of upcoming events, including: a Bog Garden tour at the BBG on Saturday, Sept. 15, a field trip to the Watercress Darter Habitat in Roebuck Springs on Sat., Oct. 6; the fall plant sale at the BBG on Oct. 20 & 21; and) The Moss Rock Festival in Hoover on Nov. 3 & 4.

Our presentation tonight, “Native Plants for Attracting and Feeding Birds”, was rendered by one Jan Newton, a reformed foot-stomping ballet glider. She has now been a resident of Auburn for about five years and stays quite busy as a native plant consultant for schools, organizations, and landowners.

Birds are living creatures with needs similar to so many others, namely food and water, shelter and cover, and favorable reproduction and maturation sites. Food consists of berries, seeds, fruits, nuts, and insects, with 90% of birds feeding the latter to their young, providing the essentials of protein and fat. White milkweed is a good supplement. Caterpillars are a favorite food for young; chickadees need huge numbers just to feed one clutch. Birds in general look for the holes in leaves, knowing they can find caterpillars there.

Native (!) plants were repeatedly emphasized. They have more to offer to wildlife as adaptation has materialized into an ecosystem. Plant diversity was strongly encouraged but “diversity” was meant to be of an endogenous mode, not exogenous. NATIVE, NATIVE, NATIVE!!

The topic of “layering” was given special attention, such referring to groupings which attract different species. Examples are forbs and grasses for ground cover, blueberries, sumacs, azaleas, and hollies for a shrub layer, an understory layer, and beech and tulip trees for a canopy. The insertion of black-eyed Susan’s, cutleaf coneflower, and purple coneflowers is good. Some seeds are better than others. Liking seeds are towhees, cardinals, buntings, nuthatches, and robins.

Native berries have a higher fat content than non-natives. They are also known to enhance the red gloss of the male cardinal. Dried berries make a very good winter food. Winterberry is a native holly and a good food for bluebirds, flickers, and mockingbirds. Be aware that all varieties of holly need both sexes to propagate.

The southern wax myrtle also needs both sexes. It feeds many birds, e.g., the thrush. The American beautyberry is liked by in excess of 100 species, as is the elderberry, a target for woodpeckers, especially. The serviceberry is much preferred to the similar non-native Bradford pear. The Blackhaw viburnum bears good fruit, as does the flowering dogwood, used by the summer tanager as a nesting site. Oak trees with acorns are good and serve to breed many insects. A mix of pine trees, with their nuts, is favorable.

Other pointers included the coral/trumpet honeysuckle being a good provider of nectar and berries, the cardinal flower being good for hummingbirds, and the yaupon holly being good for both berries and nesting. Again, the yaupon, like all hollies, needs both sexes to propagate. Christmas and cinnamon ferns provide good shelter for ground birds as brown thrashers, quail, etc. Remember: Diversity of native plants translates into a diversity of birds.

The delightful presentation concluded shortly after 8:00 p.m. We will again convene on October 8, same place, same time.

Respectfully submitted, Charles E. Gleaton, Recorder

October gave a party;
The leaves by hundreds came,
The Ashes, Oaks, and Maples,
and leaves of every name.
The sunshine spread a carpet,
and everything was grand;
Miss Weather led the dancing;
Professor Wind, the band....
The sight was like a rainbow
new-fallen from the sky....

~George Cooper (1840–1927), "October's Party," c.1887
Dear Wildflower Society Friends,

I’m looking for Thicket Bean/Wild Kidney Bean (Phaseolus polystachios) in Alabama. This summer it has been exciting for Sara Bright and me to document its use as a host plant by Golden Banded-Skippers. It is probably their sole host in the Eastern U.S., but because it was initially misidentified as Hog Peanut (Amphicarpa bracteata) back in the 1920’s, people have been looking for skippers on the wrong plant for decades. The host plant’s true identity was discovered a few years ago.

Using the Alabama Plant Atlas, I have found the bean in Bibb, Talladega, Coosa, Crenshaw, Butler, and Wilcox counties. Amazingly, I have found Golden Banded Skipper caterpillars on it in all but Butler County. In four of those counties, the Alabama Butterfly Atlas had no previous records of Golden Banded–Skippers. I’d love to find some additional sites to check!

Thicket Bean/Wild Kidney Bean should be blooming now, and I have attached a photo of its distinctive flowers. It is a vine and will climb up trees. The leaves tend to be larger than some of the other viney little legumes, such as Spurred Butterfly Pea. When folded in half, Thicket Bean leaves stick together almost like Velcro. That is a great field test!

If anybody knows a spot where Thicket Bean is growing in Alabama, I’d love to hear from you!

Thank you,
Paulette Haywood Ogard (habitatdesigns@hotmail.com)
Co-author, Butterflies of Alabama: Glimpses into Their Lives

P.S. Here’s an article that has some interesting facts about the importance of this native North American bean.
http://nmnh.typepad.com/the_plant_press/2016/03/the-quest-for-the-wild-kidney-bean.html