

CHESSIE TRAIL March 18, 2023

Bring binoculars to better see plants on cliff
Upper James River Chapter, VA Native Plant Society

<https://www.friendsofthechessietrail.org/>

To reach the trail from downtown Lexington, take Rt. 11 north to Old Buena Vista Road (just after the Maury River Bridge), turn right and go 1/2 mile. Just after the Pure Oil sign, turn right into the Chessie Trail parking lot and take the walking path to the Kiosk.

ID# 1

***Lindera benzoin* Spice Bush** (Native). A pair not far from Kiosk, male on left and female right of flag. Both male and female shrubs have yellow flowers in the early spring. The female flower has one white pistil. The male flower has multiple yellow anthers so it seems like the flowers are brighter. Only the females will have small green fruits (wherever their flowers were pollinated). These will grow to about 1/2 inch-long, turn red, then black, and be relished by many birds! Host plant to the Spicebush Swallowtail butterfly. Broken twigs smell spicy.



ID#2

***Packera aurea* Golden ragwort** (Native). Small yellow flowers that turn to white fluffs like dandelions. Evergreen foliage, fairly deer-resistant. Likes moist conditions, full sun to light shade. Bees and flies are pollinators.



ID#3

***Cardamine concatenata* Toothwort** (Native) owes its name to the tooth-like projections on its underground stems (rhizomes). Member of the mustard family. The flower provides nectar for honeybees and bumblebees.



ID# 4

***Corydalis flavula* Yellow fumewort** (Native) Small annual yellow flower with delicate foliage that likes floodplains and mesic forests.



ID# 5

***Boechera canadensis* Sicklepod/Rock cress** (Native)
 The flowers are minimal but the seed pods are a cool sickle shape.



ID# 6

***Cornus alternifolia* Pagoda dogwoods** (Native) Unique horizontal branching and unlike other dogwoods, its branches are alternate not opposite. Supports pollinators

in spring, is the host plant for the Spring and Summer Azure butterflies, and birds enjoy its red berries in winter.



ID# 7

***Sanguinaria canadensis* Bloodroot** (Native). The seed pod will turn reddish after about 2 weeks, and then it will pop and spread its seeds. Like many seeds, these have elaiosomes (fleshy appendages that are rich in fatty acids and diglycerides), which are attractive to ants. The ants gather the seeds and carry them to their nests, where the elaiosomes are eaten and the seeds discarded.



ID# 8

LOOK up to see....*Sedum ternatum* Woodland sedum and many other names (Native) Easy to grow; widely available commercially. **AND *Pellaea atropurpurea* Cliff-brake fern** (Native) Likes crevices in limestone. The leathery leaves and the wiry stem resist desiccation.



And *Heuchera americana* Alum root (Native) Look up on cliff. Flower panicles emerge in the spring on leafless stalks above the foliage. The individual tiny flowers are bell-shaped with extended stamens and are greenish or creamy with a pinkish tint. Good early bee plant. Plant contains tannins so somewhat deer resistant. Highly modified cultivars have no wildlife benefit.



ID# 9

***Carex* Species ??? Sedge** Thin grasslike leaves and already blooming.

ID#10

***Osmorhiza claytonii* Sweet Cicely** (Native)—"sweet" because its foliage and root smell like licorice. A tall plant with leaves divided into threes, hairy stems, and flat clusters of small white flowers.








ID#11

Missing identification

ID#12

***Dicentra cucullaria* Dutchman's Breeches** (Native) Feathery foliage and the flowers look like pantaloons. Seeds are dispersed by ants, who are enticed to carry the seeds underground because the seeds contain Elaiosome, a favorite to many ant species The fruit is a two-part capsule, pollinated by bumble bees whose proboscises are long enough to reach the nectar. Other insect species that can't reach the nectar will snip a hole at the bottom of the flower to "steal" it of nectar.

	Dutchman's breeches	
ID#13	<p><i>Dryopteris maginialis</i> Marginal Wood Fern (Native) Is a leathery, evergreen fern, blue-green above and light green on underside. It gets its name from the sori (aggregations of spore-bearing structures in ferns) located at margins or edges of the underside of the pinnules.</p> 	
ID#14	<p><i>Euonymus americanus</i> (Native) known as Hearts a-bustin or Strawberry Bush for its unique seed pods. When mature, Burning bush has “wings” along its stems.</p> 	
ID#15	<p><i>Thalictrum dioicum</i> Early Meadow Rue (Native) Rue has soft gray-green foliage that might remind you of the delicate leaves of columbine. Male and female flowers are on different plants (dioecious) and are different colors. The dangling male flowers have no petals and are mostly made up of yellow anthers. The female flowers can be green to purple.</p> 	
ID#16	<p><i>Asimina triloba</i> Paw Paw Tree colony (Native) Also known as American Custard Apple. Produces maroon flowers that become green sweet banana flavored fruits in late summer. Fly pollinated. Host plant to the Zebra Swallowtail butterfly. Trees often are flat or two dimensional.</p> 	
ID#17	<p><i>Staphylea trifolia</i> Bladdernut tree (Native) Flaggers suggest it should be called Balloon-Nut, a more attractive name. Note dark speckled new growth. Pretty bell like white flowers. Cool “bladder-like” seed pods that look like little balloons. Great favorite of bees and other pollinators.</p>	



ID#18

***Geranium maculatum* Wild or Cranesbill Geranium** (Native). Deeply cut, palmate 5-lobed, dark green leaves, up to 6" across. Five-petaled rose-purple, pale or violet-purple flowers give way to distinctive, beaked seed capsules (like a crane's bill); when seeds ripen, capsules zip open, flinging seed out. Deer resistant. VA Native Plant Society 2020 Wild Flower of the Year.



ID#19

Claytonia virginica or caroliniana (leaves longer and narrower than virginica) **Spring Beauty** (Native) One of the earliest spring flowers so it is important for many species of native bees and flies.



ID#20

No flower ID since no flag

ID#21

No flower ID since no flag

ID#22

***Hydrangea arborescens* Smooth Hydrangea** (Native). Shrub w/ broad oval leaves with pointed tips. Likes loamy, well-drained soil. This is the plant that the common 'Annabelle' hydrangea was developed from. Unfortunately, 'Annabelle' has sterile florets so produces no nectar. Not deer resistant, so is present mostly on steep slopes.



Photos from Wiki common. Thank you Jen Coluzzi for formatting to fit phones.