



## Our Post-Baccalaureate Fellow's Year in Review



As I find myself in the final days of my fellowship, I am proud of all the projects that I have completed in the Herbarium, around Sewanee, and through the state of Tennessee. First, I must thank Oak Spring Garden Foundation for funding me throughout this past year, for without them I would not have been able to do any of the conservation work or research, nor would I have been able to learn as much as I did this year.

The Herbarium was my “office” this past year, and I was fortunate enough to be around and meet all the great people who built and make the Sewanee Herbarium what it is today. For example, I loved teaming up with Dr. Evans, Mary Priestley, and Yolande Gottfried to present to the Land Management Forum about the “State of the Domain Flora,” focusing

on the recent publication of the flora of the Domain. Our flora now has about 1,128 species, representing 39 percent of the total flora of Tennessee, 69 percent of the total Cumberland Plateau flora. There are 10 species listed as protected at either the state or federal level. One concern we identified is our invasive species: 20.5 percent of the flora is exotic, some of which are invasive, including Japanese spiraea, garlic mustard, white pine, privet, Nepal grass, and multiflora rose. Other threats are deer, fire, climate change, and poaching and collecting, all of which can be monitored and addressed.

Recently I worked with Tennessee State Natural Heritage Botanist Todd Crabtree in monitoring a population of *Clematis morefieldii*, which is one of the Domain's rare species. We found that the population has been maintaining itself over the past six years. However, it is not flowering as abundantly as Todd had hoped.

Also, with the help of Parker Jaquillard, C'18, and the Office of Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability, I put together a “weed wrangle” for Earth Week. We identified a stream on campus that had been overrun with invasive species, including Oriental bittersweet, privet,

and multiflora rose. About 28 students helped remove many of the invasive plants in and around that stream for a very successful day! If we have more events like this on campus and around the Domain, we might be able to make a small difference in invasive plant control on the Domain. I am so thankful for the opportunity to learn more about botany and plant conservation this past year, and I hope that we all remain appreciative of this beautiful Domain.

—Shelby Meckstroth, C'17



## Two New Herbarium Volunteers

The Herbarium is a richer place because of its volunteers, including both curators. Our semi-annual plant specimen “mountathons” are entirely volunteer-driven, and from time to time we have had wonderful volunteers in various capacities.

This spring we have been blessed with the services of two young men: Trae Moore and Douglas Tuers. Both men have been engaged in the full range of curatorial work: mounting plant specimens, entering data in the computer, and filing specimens away. This summer, Trae will also be leading some hikes for

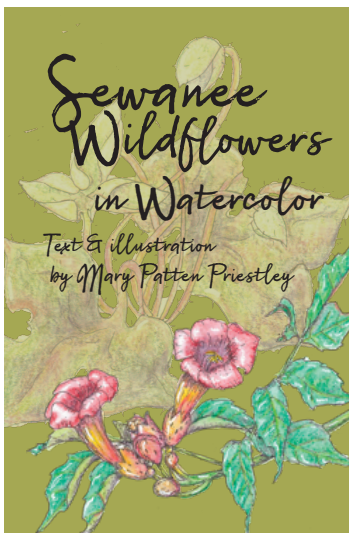
the herbarium. Check the Calendar of Events for more on those.

A native of nearby Jasper, Tennessee, Trae lives on a plateau farm with his wife Laura Candler, who is a Sewanee grad, and their young daughter Rudy. Curiosity about plant diversity is only one of this stay-at-home dad’s interests. Trae has a degree in traditional blacksmithing from the Appalachian Center for Craft, has operated a butcher shop, and recently served as interim manager of the University Farm.

Douglas is an AmeriCorps VISTA Leader with the South Cumberland

Plateau VISTA Project which is hosted here at Sewanee. He studied history and library science in North Carolina. His main area of interest is currently the history of American botany. Douglas is also a trained archivist and brings this expertise to the herbarium. In his free time he likes to hike and go bird watching.

—Mary Priestley



## Herbarium to Release New Wildflower Book

*“The rest of the flowers you wouldn’t believe in if I told you, so I’ll tell you.”*  
—William Alexander Percy, *Lanterns on the Levee*

Be on the lookout this fall for the Herbarium’s latest publication about the plants and places of the Domain and surrounding plateau. *Sewanee Wildflowers in Watercolor* by herbarium curator and *Sewanee Plant Press* editor Mary Priestley will be available in the University Book and Supply Store, as well as other local venues and on amazon.com. Mary has chosen to highlight about 50 of her favorite species in Sewanee’s diverse flora in this copiously illustrated little book. It should serve as a handy guide for anyone interested in learning a little more about these gems of Sewanee’s forests, fields, and byways.

## Summer Educational Outreach

This Herbarium curator is having a busy summer! Unlike most years when the Herbarium is bustling with interns, doing research and collecting plants, this summer the concentration is on educational outreach. In addition to our schedule of events, which are described in the Calendar on page three of this newsletter, the Herbarium is hosting one garden club, presenting programs for two more, and leading walks in Abbo’s Alley for two children’s summer programs: Cowan Elementary School’s Read to be Ready students, who are learning about gardening, and Grundy County’s Camp Discover students who are learning about water. These outreach activities are a lot of fun, and if your group would like a tour of the Herbarium, special hike, or other program, just let us know.

—Mary Priestley



# Friends of the Sewanee Herbarium

The Friends of the Sewanee Herbarium support the work of the Herbarium: education, research, and conservation. A \$10 annual contribution would be very much appreciated. The date of your most recent contribution is printed on your address label.

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Others who might like to receive *The Sewanee Plant Press*: \_\_\_\_\_



## Summer Calendar of Events

### Sewanee's H-tree, Sat., June 30, 9 a.m., Trae Moore

The H-tree is a pair of white oaks on the side of the plateau below the War Memorial Cross. In addition to visiting this botanical curiosity, the group will investigate the woody and herbaceous plants of this forest. The walk includes a short trek on the "Old Cowan Road." For those interested in a longer hike, Trae will also lead the group on a two-mile loop trail consisting of the brand new section connecting Morgan's Steep and the Cross, circling back via the old section. This hike is moderately difficult owing to the elevation change and some loose rocks on the Old Cowan Road. Meet at the War Memorial Cross in Sewanee.



a wonderful way to bring your outdoor memories to life. Meet in the Herbarium (Spencer room 171) for this one-hour indoor workshop.

### Foster Falls, Sat., Aug. 4, 9 a.m. Trae Moore

This has long been a favorite spot for late season wildflowers that thrive in the open sun, such as blazing star and numerous asters. Meet at the Foster Falls parking area for this one- to two-hour easy walk in the power line right-of-way above the gorge with optional short but steep trek to the bottom of the falls and back to see some trees and ferns. Call the South Cumberland State Park Visitors' Center for directions (931.924.2980). Want to take a dip after the walk? Bring your suit! Foster Falls is also a wonderful

place for a picnic.

### Introduction to Nature Journaling Sat., July 14, 10 a.m., Mary Priestley

Learn about nature journaling and make a sample journal "page" to take home. Choose from quotations, observations, sketches, pressed plants, and more to organize your page. Who knows? You may discover that nature journaling is

The Herbarium sponsors a **nature journaling** group that meets Thursdays, 9–11 a.m. led by Mary Priestley. All are welcome. This summer the group is meeting at Lake Cheston. Email Mary for more information.

*All times are CST or CDT. Wear appropriate shoes on all of these walks. Risks involved in hiking include physical exertion, rough terrain, forces of nature, and other hazards not present in everyday life. Picking flowers and digging plants are prohibited in all of the above-mentioned natural areas.*

*For more information on these or other Sewanee Herbarium events, please contact Mary Priestley by email. A map of meeting place locations is available at [sewanee.edu/media/offices/herbarium/sewanee\\_herbarium\\_maps.pdf](http://sewanee.edu/media/offices/herbarium/sewanee_herbarium_maps.pdf).*

### THE SEWANEE PLANT PRESS

The Sewanee Herbarium  
Dr. Jon Evans, Director  
Department of Biology  
The University of the South  
735 University Avenue  
Sewanee, TN 37383

#### WEBSITE

[sewanee.edu/offices/herbarium](http://sewanee.edu/offices/herbarium)

#### EDITOR

Mary Priestley  
[mpriestley0150@gmail.com](mailto:mpriestley0150@gmail.com)

#### DIRECTOR

Jon Evans  
[jevans@sewanee.edu](mailto:jevans@sewanee.edu)

#### COMPOSITOR

Tammy Elliott

*Flower illustrations, by Mary Priestley, are of Clematis, spiderwort, coneflower, blazing star, and Joe-Pye weed.*

### HERBARIUM PUBLICATIONS

*Fiery Gizzard: Voices from the Wilderness*  
*What If Trees Could Walk?*  
*Trail Guide to Shakerag Hollow*

### HERBARIUM BLOG

[sewaneeherbarium.wordpress.com](http://sewaneeherbarium.wordpress.com)

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## Botanical Notes from Sapelo Island

*A student reflection on the Coastal Ecology and Conservation class trip to Sapelo Island over spring break, led by Jon Evans and Post-Baccalaureate Fellow Shelby Meckstroth*

Southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) has been a long-standing presence in the maritime forests of the Southern coastal plain and barrier islands. Larger magnolia specimens on these islands are typically found in older forests and act as an indicator of forests that have experienced less extensive human disturbance.

On Sapelo Island, we found many large magnolias in old growth forests on the northeastern portion of the island. These forests are characterized by an uneven soil microtopography and an extensive palmetto understory, both signs that they have never been cleared for agriculture. The magnolia trees also offer ecological benefits through the production of large annual, compound fruit in the form of an aggregate of follicles. Wildlife such as birds, squirrels, and rabbits take advantage of this annual seed crop. Small mammals and birds will also use the tree's large, twisting canopy as cover and habitat.

However, even with an obvious canopy presence of magnolia and copious seed production, there was no recruitment in the understory that would lead to a new cohort of trees. Possible explanations for this could be over-browsing by deer populations. This lack of recruitment might present a problem for the future of Southern magnolia in the maritime forest of Sapelo island.

—Eli Walker, C'19

