

AMIS

André Michaux International Society

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AMIS Symposium 2007 Celebrates the most famous Michaux plant *Shortia galacifolia*, the “Oconee Bell”

The Oconee Bell, *Shortia galacifolia*, was the ‘star’ of the *Oconee Bell Celebration* held at Clemson University and Devil’s Fork State Park March 16-18.

AMIS joined with the Clemson University Museum of Natural Sciences, South Carolina Botanical Garden and South Carolina Department of Parks Recreation and Tourism to present *An Oconee Bell Celebration*. Seventy-five people participated in this 2007 AMIS meeting. The program featured the latest historical findings about Michaux and *Shortia*, reports by the scientific researchers with the most recent studies of *Shortia* and a field trip to observe *Shortia* during the peak of flowering in the plant’s native habitat. A superb dinner featuring a performance of the one-man play about André Michaux’s adventurous life and a guided tour of the South Carolina Botanical Garden rounded out the three-day program.

Twenty-two of the participants in the Oconee Bell Celebration had attended the 2002 Michaux Celebration at Belmont Abbey College and Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden and five of them had also attended the Michaux event in Rambouillet, France in 2004. Attendees at the Oconee Bell Celebration came to Clemson from as far away as Philadelphia and Chicago, but most were from the Carolinas.

The program began on Friday evening with Patrick McMillan’s multimedia keynote address, a provocative and thoughtful examination of André Michaux’s 1787 journey to the southern mountains. Dr. McMillan is not only an accomplished field botanist and the Curator of the Clemson University Herbarium, but also host of SC ETV’s award-winning natural history series *Expeditions with Patrick McMillan*. A DVD of the *Expeditions* episode “On the Trail of Oconee Bell” is available: see www.clemson.edu/expeditions/

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AMIS Consortium Gives Special Service Award to Mike Baranski



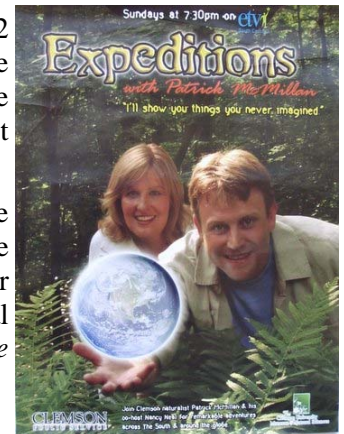
Michael J. Baranski, PhD, shown left with AMIS Chairman Charlie Williams, was recognized for his outstanding service as Program Chairman of the 2002 André Michaux International Symposium and Editor-in-Charge of the peer-reviewed symposium proceedings published in 2006 as a special issue of *Castanea, Journal of the Southern Appalachian Botanical Society (SABS)*.

Standing in for Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden Executive Director Kara Newport, Williams presented the award at the SABS breakfast during the Association of Southeastern Biologists’ annual meeting in Columbia, SC in April.

2007 AMIS Newsletter

Oconee Bells

Anna ‘Gitana’ Layton’s Painting Inspired by the Conference



“André Michaux Day” at Tipton-Haynes Historic Site Features Dedication of Tennessee Historical Marker Remembering André Michaux’s Visits With Colonel John Tipton

André Michaux visited Tennessee pioneer Colonel John Tipton at his farm near modern Johnson City in May 1795 and March 1796. Characteristically, Michaux reported on the variety of lovely wild plants in bloom in the area during his visits.

Today Tipton’s farm is preserved as a Tennessee State Historic Site. Surrounding the house and outbuildings today are a few acres of the fields and woodlands of Tipton’s large original farm still unspoiled by modern urban encroachment. Site director Dr. Penny McLaughlin and gardener Dr. Beth Keiter have developed the André Michaux trail in this lovely outdoor space where Michaux and Tipton may have examined the spring blossoms together. Modern visitors can still find the same species of wild flowers that Michaux noted in his journal when he visited the Tipton farm over 200 years ago.

Beginning in 2003 with the dedication of the André Michaux Trail, Tipton-Haynes has featured an annual spring event named André Michaux Day. The programs at André Michaux Day both remember Michaux’s visit and promote the natural history interpretation of this historic site.

During André Michaux Day 2007 Tenn. State Senator Rusty Crowe dedicated a Tennessee State Historical Marker commemorating Michaux’s visits with Tipton. Funding for the marker was provided by The Tenn. Native Plant Society (TNPS), East Tenn. State Univ. (ETSU), the Tipton family and AMIS.



From left: Tipton family, Lynn Distelhorst; Senator Rusty Crowe; Dr. Penny McLaughlin, Exec. Dir. of Tipton-Haynes; Charlie Williams, AMIS; US Congressman David Davis, Karl Heintzman, Past President TNPS, Dr. Dan Johnson, ETSU.

AMIS Trees in Rambouillet

By Gérard Clerc, President, AMIS of Rambouillet
Translated by Françoise Winieska

Concerning the trees donated by the American AMIS in 2003, all the trees of good enough size have been planted in the *Jardin anglais* of the castle at Rambouillet. For instance, all the *Taxodium distichum* (Bald Cypress) have been planted. These were grown from seeds sent by AMIS. Some trees judged not yet large enough to be planted in their permanent places are still in containers in the plant nursery of the State Domain at Rambouillet (*pépinière du Domaine de l'Etat*). All the trees are healthy.

I am conveying through this message my sentiment of deep friendship to Mr. Charlie Williams and to all the American AMIS who supported this project to replace the American trees lost at Rambouillet in the storm of 26 December 1999.



Gérard Clerc

Michaux Friends Group Forms in Charleston

Some of the best news for the spread of knowledge about André Michaux has come out of Charleston, SC this year. A group of citizens interested in André Michaux has focused on the long-neglected site of Michaux’s garden near the Charleston International Airport. This newly-formed group has gathered around Dr. George Williams, a retired professor from Duke University and Mary Miller, Science Librarian at the Charleston County Public Library.

Attendees at the Oconee Bell Celebration may remember Dr. Williams’s announcement about the group’s formation and immediate goals. The Friends of Michaux’s Garden in Charleston wanted to mark the site of Michaux’s Charleston garden with an official SC historical marker, to gain better recognition for Michaux at the Charleston International Airport and to have the Michaux garden site added to the National Register of Historic Places. The preliminary archaeological dig conducted by Dr. Dee Dee Joyce of the College of Charleston in the 1980’s found many artifacts on the site, but more archaeology needs to be done in conjunction with a National Register application.

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Friends of Michaux's Charleston Garden at the site in March 2007 with Brad Sanders. From left: Mary Jane Harris, Mary Miller, Dr. Dee Dee Joyce, Dr. George Williams, Brad Sanders, Dr. Jeff Kline, Walter Dunlap.

In February the Friends of Michaux's Charleston Garden arranged a cordial informational meeting with officials from the SCANA Corporation. SCANA had recently acquired the land where the garden site is located. In pursuit of their goals, the group has also had productive meetings with officials from the airport authority, city of North Charleston and the Charleston County School District. A new middle school will soon be built in the area and Dr. George McDaniel of Drayton Hall has led the group in making a proposal that the school be named for André Michaux and that it offer a special curriculum to take advantage of the unique heritage of Michaux. The group has also conducted numerous visits and tours at the site to acquaint interested parties with the location and present condition of the property.

Late News: Michaux Historical Marker Approved! Dedication Scheduled for March 8, 2008

Mark the date on your calendar.

The Friends of Michaux's Charleston Garden has now affiliated with the 1,100-member Charleston Horticultural Society and has become the Society's *Michaux Garden Committee*. Correspondence may be addressed to: Michaux Garden Committee; Charleston Horticultural Society ; 43 Windermere Blvd.; Charleston, SC 29407



Recent Publications of Interest

The March/April 2007 issue of the *Tennessee Conservationist* includes a color-illustrated article on André and François André Michaux's travels and discoveries in Tennessee by Charlie Williams.

Our AMIS Correspondent in France, Regis Pluchet, reports the publication of his new article on François André Michaux in the autumn 2007 issue of the French magazine *Hommes et Plantes*.

Brad Sanders edited and published the 48-page symposium book *An Oconee Bell Celebration, Clemson University March 16-18* under the imprint of his Fevertree Press, Athens, GA. It includes the work of all presenters at the conference as well as reprints of three important studies previously published in *Castanea*.

Copies are \$5.00 ea. plus shipping directly from www.fevertreepress.com check the website for details.

We are also pleased to report on a work now in progress. James McClellan III, Eliane Norman, Walter Taylor and Charlie Williams are under contract with the University of Georgia Press to prepare an annotated translation of Michaux's North American Journals entitled: *The North American Travels of André Michaux: People, Places and Plants*.



Oconee Bell Celebration, continued from page 1

Oconee Bell Celebration Saturday Morning Presentations

Tim Drake led off the Saturday morning presentations in the auditorium of Clemson's Madren Conference Center. An entomologist by training, Dr. Drake is a historian by avocation and especially active in historical building restorations. A descendant of SC's Middleton and Pickens families, who were among André Michaux's American friends, Dr. Drake brought a personal perspective to his description of the Carolina frontier that Michaux visited in 1787 and 1788 and a display of family heirlooms, several examples of fine china from Andrew Pickens' household.

The presentations continued with Brad Sanders, author and illustrator of *The Travels of William Bartram*, who provided a careful delineation of the routes taken by William Bartram and André Michaux as they separately explored this area pointing out where each botanist noted an important new species. AMIS Chairman Charlie Williams followed with the romantic story of André Michaux, Asa Gray, C.S. Sargent and the nineteenth century quest for and rediscovery of the "lost *Shortia*". He then brought the audience up to date on the latest chapter in this story, the 2004 discovery in France confirming the accuracy of the *Shortia* studies published in *Castanea* by Davies (1956) and Zahner and Jones (1983) who proposed that Michaux had collected his *Shortia* specimens in 1787 not 1788 as usually reported in books.

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Science and Gardening Complete the Saturday Morning Oconee Bell Celebration Presentations

Attendees chose between concurrent presentations on native plant gardening and the latest scientific research on *Shortia*. Dr. Lisa Wagner, Education Director of the SC Botanical Garden and noted authority on gardening with native plants made a presentation on gardening with plants discovered by Michaux and other favorite natives for the garden. Those who chose the latest scientific research on *Shortia* heard presentations by Katherine Weeks and Todd Linscott.

As a graduate student working toward a Master of Science degree at Clemson, Mrs. Weeks studied reproduction in *Shortia* populations and she presented the results of this study. Dr. Linscott is engaged in an ongoing study of the genetics of *Shortia* and he shared his preliminary findings. Each researcher reported on the implications of their research on the conservation of this imperiled species. After assessing some of the threats to the future of the species such as hydroelectric projects, road building, horticultural collection and current real estate development in the areas where the plant occurs, Katherine Weeks' treated the audience to an explanation of the methods and the results of her study of reproduction in *Shortia*.

Dr. Linscott first took us on a tour of the genus *Shortia* worldwide with descriptions, illustrations and range maps of the five Asian species before focusing in on the North American species that he has studied. He then noted that two varieties of *Shortia galacifolia* have been recognized. One, *Shortia galacifolia* var. *galacifolia*, is found in Oconee and Pickens Counties in SC and adjacent Transylvania County, NC while the other *Shortia galacifolia* var. *brevistyla*, is restricted to a few sites in McDowell County, NC. The data gathered from his initial genetic studies of the SC populations revealed high levels of diversity for a species that primarily spreads vegetatively. Future work will try to discover if the variation is due to individual plants with different numbers of chromosomes living within the same population and determine if the two varieties are genetically distinct.

Images From the Oconee Bell Celebration Field Trips, Dinner and Show

The group then traveled by tour bus to Devil's Fork State Park, stopping for lunch at the picturesque picnic area overlooking Lake Keowee. The Oconee Bells, *Shortia galacifolia*, waving in the spring sunshine were the real stars of the field trip, but we were fortunate to have two extraordinarily well-informed field trip leaders in Tim Lee and John Garton. Everyone enjoyed the flowers in bloom before we returned to Clemson and a great evening meal followed by Charlie Williams' first person interpretation of Michaux. The conference ended on a high note Sunday morning with Dr. Lisa Wagner's guided tour of the South Carolina Botanical Garden.



Eliane Norman and Jim Costa (above) observe from one of the small bridges noting how closely *Shortia* hugs the stream bank.



Triumphant and smiling, Lucile MacLennan (above) hikes the Oconee Bell Trail.



Anna Layton (above with guide Tim Lee) has made blank note cards from her watercolor painting of *Shortia* shown on our front page. A package of 7 cards is \$10 (incl. shipping). Write to Anna at P.O. Box 11, Blountstown, FL 32424. If you want to order, make check payable to Anna Layton.

Aline Lambert (below), who is French, wanted a photo with "Michaux" after the performance



On Sunday morning more than forty people gathered at the SC Botanical Garden for Dr. Lisa Wagner's tour. When the tour was over, some were reluctant to leave, not wanting this enjoyable, stimulating weekend program to end. There were requests for future AMIS meetings; please send us your suggestions for future programs and sites. We would like to hear from you. **AMIS, PO Box 220283, Charlotte, NC 28222**