

# Oconee Bell Celebration, March 16-18 2007

Madren Conference Center, Clemson University

The year 2007 will mark the 220<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the legendary French botanist André Michaux's 1787 discovery of the plant we know as *Shortia galacifolia*, the "Oconee Bells". Michaux's rare and beautiful discovery was lost to science for almost 100 years. The romantic story of the search for "*the lost Shortia*" and its eventual rediscovery remains the most celebrated quest in the annals of North American botany. The date of Michaux's discovery has been the subject of a long-running controversy. Previously unknown evidence uncovered in France in 2004 has at last confirmed that Michaux did discover *Shortia* in 1787.

The celebration offers a program to see and learn about this special plant and the area's rich heritage of plant exploration in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Scheduled during the peak bloom of the Oconee Bells, and spring break at Clemson, this will be a special event you don't want to miss!

## *Sponsors and cooperating organizations*

Clemson University Natural History Museum  
South Carolina Botanical Garden  
South Carolina Dept. of Parks Recreation and Tourism  
AMIS, the *André Michaux International Society*

## Program Highlights

- Keynote presentation Friday evening: "*André Michaux the Botanist-Explorer*" Patrick McMillan, Director of the Clemson University Museum of Natural History and host of SC ETV's new program *Expeditions with Patrick McMillan*
- Saturday morning presentation topics include: upstate SC history at the time of Michaux, plant explorer William Bartram's area travels, uncovering "new" evidence about Michaux's discovery in Paris in 2004, current scientific studies of the Oconee Bell and a session on planting a Michaux garden
- Saturday afternoon expert guides lead a field trip to see Oconee Bells in bloom in their natural habitat at Devil's Fork State Park
- Saturday evening dinner & presentation "*André Michaux Live*" a one-man play about the life and adventures of the botanist presented by Charlie Williams
- Sunday guided tour of the South Carolina Botanical Garden featuring the plants discovered or named by André Michaux

*Registration packet available November 2006  
for info write AMIS, PO Box 220283, Charlotte, NC 28222*

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