



SCOTT WITHROW | SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL

Named after a naturalist in South Carolina, Catesby's trillium has three petals, three sepals and three leaves. Noted historian and naturalist Scott Withrow said the Cherokee used the plant as an aid for women in childbirth.

Noted historian, naturalist leads hike at Hagood Mill

BY STEPHANIE JADRNICEK
THE JOURNAL

PICKENS — Scott Withrow is a geographer at heart, a historian by profession and a photographer by hobby.

And he has found a way to weave all these interests together.

When Withrow started photographing wildflowers years ago, he developed a curiosity about the plants he found.

"I wanted to know the history behind the plant, how it was used in history for medicine, food or other uses," he said. "It was a way for me to connect geography with natural and cultural history."

From 10:30 a.m.-noon Saturday, he will lead an educational and inspirational hike at Hagood Mill, discussing natural history and folklore along the way.

"(Withrow will guide) us through the nearly 2 miles of nature and hiking trails located within the boundaries of the Hagood Mill site," Hagood Mill director Billy Crawford said. "On this journey we will explore and discover the fascinating natural history, folklore and medicinal history associated with the wide variety of native wildflowers, trees and shrubs found within the preserve."

Withrow visited the Hagood site last weekend to see what's blooming, and he plans to sneak another peek before Saturday.

He said it's hard to identify every

plant, but that's his goal. He'll definitely talk about doghobble. The drooping evergreen shrub grows along streams, and its white flowers are blooming this time of year.

"Most of it's poison, but Native Americans had uses for just about all plants," he said. "They call it doghobble because dogs that got caught up in this thick growth were hobbled. It's hard to run through it. But it helps stop erosion along streams and it's a good landscaping plant."

Participants will also see bloodroot. The red-rooted plants bloom early, but Withrow expects to see some flowering on Saturday even though they're waning.

He'll also point out the Mayapple trees that grow in colonies in the forest. He said the Cherokee used the trees for food and medicine. Everything on the plant is poisonous except for its little ripe apples.

"I want folks to leave with an appreciation for these plants and their uses," Withrow said. "I hope they understand the importance of each plant and also understand to leave them in the wild as they are."

Withrow will lead a second session on April 29. The course costs \$3, and participants are required to register prior to the class by calling (864) 898-2936. Hagood Mill is located at 138 Hagood Mill Road in Pickens.