

LUTHERANCH NAMING OPPORTUNITIES – OCTOBER 2008

RIDGES

R1 - Cherokee Lookout

The name of his highpoint on Lutheranch reminds us that Northwest Georgia was the last stronghold of the Cherokee Nation before its removal to Oklahoma on the infamous Trail of Tears in 1838. Their last capital, New Echota, was in this section of the state.

R2 - Resurrection Fern Ridge

Resurrection Fern grows on the limbs of great hardwood trees, especially those having deeply furrowed bark. Its habit is to curl up tightly during periods of drought, its fronds curling outward giving it the appearance of being dead. On receiving good rain, the fronds absorb water, uncurl and resurrect to become alive and green again.

R3 - Gold Ridge (existing name)

Tallapoosa means golden water(s) in the Cherokee language, which suggests that these are gold-bearing streams. The discovery of gold on Cherokee lands led to their forced march to Oklahoma during the Jackson Administration. There actually was some gold-mining activity on this hill.

HILLTOPS

H1 - Red Oak Hill

There are two species of red oaks in this locale – Northern and Southern, illustrating the transitional nature of the area between northern and southern plants and animals. Northern Red Oak has deep sinuses or indentations toward the midrib except at the broader base, while Southern Red Oak leaves have a bell-shaped base with lobes tapering in length toward the end. See if you can spot both and tell the difference.

H2 - Hickory Hill

Three species of hickory - Pignut, Mockernut and Shagbark – are an important component of the oak-hickory forest which is prevalent here. Hickories have rather large, compound leaves and tough wood. Their nuts are vital to a number of wildlife species as a Fall food.

H3 - Turkey Hill (different from existing Turkey Ridge)

Wild Turkeys are wary, noble game birds which resemble barnyard turkeys. However, they are much taller and leaner and have bronze-tipped tail feathers rather than white. Turkeys are quite common at Lutheranch. Look for them in mature, open woods.

H4 - Whispering Pines Overlook

Loblolly Pines are the predominant species here. This is the common pine of the South. Its needles, 6 inches long, are in clusters of 3; its cones, 4 inches long.

H5 - Sassafras Knob

Sassafras is a small to medium-size, fast-growing tree which is quick to return to abandoned fields, that is, it is an early successional tree. Its pale yellow flowers in early Spring and its bright orange, mitten-shaped leaves in Fall make it attractive during these seasons. The roots have long been used to make tea and root beer.

H6 - Big Cedar Gap

The huge Red-cedar standing alone probably indicates a former house site. Red-cedar is not actually a cedar, but an arbor vitae. Its fragrant needles, blue berries and durable red wood make it a highly prized tree. It is often used for a Christmas tree.

H7 - **Sourwood Hill**

Sourwood has deeply furrowed bark and leans from the forest edge to get maximum sunlight. The bright green, lance-shaped leaves are followed by prolific white flowers on drooping stems in June and July. They are valued for making light honey.

H8 - **Fox Squirrel Ridge**

Weighing up to 3 pounds and being nearly 30 inches in length (including tail), the Fox Squirrel is twice as large as the much more common Gray Squirrel. In the South, Fox Squirrels generally have blackish heads and grizzled, grayish bodies.

H9 - **Pine Tree Overlook**

The three species of pine at Lutheranch are Loblolly (3 needles in a cluster), Short-leaf (2-3 short needles in a cluster) and Virginia (2 very short needles in a cluster and very small cones). See if you can find and identify all three.

H10 - **Eagle's Watch**

While still uncommon, the Bald Eagle is no longer an endangered species. These birds do not acquire the distinctive white head and tail until their fourth year. Look for them perched in a tall tree, often a pine, or soaring, especially near water.

MEADOWS/PASTURES

P1 - **Goldenrod Field (likely recreational field)**

Common Goldenrod is a 2- to 7-foot tall perennial of fields and meadows. It is surely one of the most widespread and showiest of Fall wildflowers.

P2 - **Joe-Pye Meadow**

Joe-Pye Weed or Queen-of-the-Meadow is a very tall, spectacular wildflower which blooms late Summer-early Fall. Its huge pinkish-purple flower heads adorn the edges of streamside fields throughout the foothills.

P3 - **Mann Creek Bottom**

Mann Creek, which bisects Lutheranch, is a tributary of the Tallapoosa (means Golden Water in Cherokee) River. The fact that this watershed is a designated trout fishery speaks well of its cool, clear, pristine nature.

P4 - **Woodchuck Meadow**

This medium-sized, frosted brownish rodent with darker feet is the well-known star of Ground-hog Day. It inhabits woodland edges and nearby fields, where its burrows are often used by other animals for safe shelter from predators.

P5 - **Cardinal Flower Flats**

Spikes of cardinal-red blossoms of the Cardinal Flower are often found along stream banks and wet meadows. These striking blooms appear July-October.

P6 - **Old Mill Flats**

Look for an old grist mill site here on the creek. Some of the mill's large, rough-hewn timbers can still be found, as can the old road leading uphill across the creek.

P7 - **Creek Cove**

Tucked in between the ridge and Mann Creek, this grassy cove is typical of streamside bottoms, flats and hollows in hilly country.

ROLLING MEADOWS (HILL-MEADOW COMBINATION)

RM1 - Quail Meadow

Bobwhite is the only quail east of the Rockies. This 10-inch, chicken-like bird is much more often heard calling bob-WHITE or bob-bob-WHITE, than it is seen.

RM2 - Hawk Hill

You may see any one of three species of soaring hawks – Red-tailed, Red-shouldered or Broad-winged – circling above or perched in a big tree. Broad-winged Hawks migrate southwesterly down the Appalachians by the tens thousands en route to winter in Central and South America. The other two species are seen here year-around.

LAKES

L1 - Kingfisher Lake

Belted Kingfishers live near water, nesting in banks and feeding mostly on small fish. They are large-headed and long-billed, blue-gray and white birds with shaggy crests; the female has a clay-colored belt across her stomach.

L2 - Lake Stender (already named)