Common plants along High Bridge trail presented

Members of the Friends of High Bridge Trail State Park, Longwood faculty and staff, and area citizens gathered in Longwood's Chichester Science Hall foyer November 15 to view posters of common trees and wildflowers presented by Longwood's Honors General Biology class. The posters, a project the honors students prepared for their class with Dr. Buckalew, featured 12 commonly observed tree and fall wildflower species found along High Bridge Trail State Park. The posters presented key identifying features of the tree and fall wildflower species that trail users may see as they hike, bike, or horseback ride along High Bridge trail during that time of the year. The project was a joint venture between the Honors students, their professor, and state park rangers Eric Hoagland and Craig Guthrie of High Bridge Trail State Park. To complete the project, students were asked to walk along different sections of the trail and to make notes on which plant species were in greatest abundance. The tree species chosen and identified as being most common were: red cedar, Virginia/scrub pine, sweetgum, tulip/yellow poplar, red oak, sycamore, black gum, red maple, sassafras, smooth sumac, slippery elm, winged elm, and redbud. The twelve most common fall wildflowers (including vines) were: goldenrod, common thistle, spotted knapweed, morning glory/pigweed, trumpet vine, daisy fleabane, mullein, pokeweed, ironweed, evening primrose, passion flower, and milkweed. Several members of the class are interested in developing a condensed version of their tree and fall wildflower identifications for an informational pamphlet or signage to enhance visitor experience to the new state park.

Group photo legend:

Longwood Honors class participants on High Bridge Trail project: Front row (L to R): Alexandra Cumbie, Justin McClure, Michelle McPherson, Alex Vest, Bethany Law, Annaleigh Broad, Brittany Harper, Jessica Blanton, and Lauren VonNordeck. Back row (L to R): Professor Buckalew, Sean Crawford, Jessica Page, and Meghan Banton.