



Bark of a young black cherry

Bark of a young sycamore

PHOTOS BY KEN MOORE

FLORA
FROM PAGE I

our three locally common pines in a couple of weeks. For now, concentrate on variations of bark on the other trees. Is the bark smooth, and if so, is it colored or rippled like a muscular arm? If the bark is rough, you have a whole world to explore. Is the bark peeling away from the tree in distinctive patterns? Is the bark deeply grooved (furrowed), and are those grooves vertical, sometimes making diamond shapes, or crisscrossed with horizontal cuts making square or angular patterns?

Don't be concerned with names of all these different trees. It's As if you're at a holiday gathering of mostly new people. There are way too many new names to remember. Just enjoy meeting new personalities. If you are inclined, begin keeping a nature journal of sketches of bark patterns, or begin a digital photo collection. Either or both can come in handy later. If you sketch, I promise you'll never forget what you're seeing.

And now, as you continue your walk, notice how some trees may disappear or appear around you as you change your position from low ground to high ground, from sunny south slopes to darker north slopes. You're observing that some trees can be mighty particular about the ground upon which they stand.

Well now, that's enough for today's walk. Enjoy the new nameless friends you've just made, and with whom you'll be getting better acquainted on subsequent walks.

Email Ken Moore at flora@carrborocitizen.com. Find previous Ken Moore Citizen columns at [The Annotated Flora](http://TheAnnotatedFlora.com) (carrborocitizen.com/flora).



Polar Plunge, Lake Lure

Of all the crazy ways to celebrate the New Year, throwing yourself into icy waters strikes me as one of the most bizarre. Up near our mountain cabin at Lake Lure in Western North Carolina, they have this tradition on New Year's Day called the Polar Plunge, which annually attracts a motley crew of zanies who dress for the event, including folks in polar bear caps – and this year's highlight, a self-proclaimed "Poor White Trash Elvis" in a red bikini, here slapping a high five with his buddy, "Dirty Dorothy." Ever the intrepid photo-reporter, the 1k Word guy was there to record this defining moment in the history of our civilization. Happy New Year, y'all.



"Poor White Trash Elvis" and "Dirty Dorothy"

WATER WATCH OUR RESERVOIRS ARE 70.60% FULL

PRECIP THIS MONTH: .01" **PAST 12 MONTHS:** 39.78"

CUSTOMER DEMAND TUES: 6.205 million gallons / Monthly avg: 5.91 million gallons

ESTIMATED SUPPLY: 426 days worth



A THOUSAND WORDS

BY JOCK LAUTERER

Do you have an important old photo that you value? Email your photo to jock@email.unc.edu and include the story behind the picture. Because every picture tells a story. And its worth? A thousand words.

Stay tuned.
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PAY THE DAY

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