Powhatan Creek is a 23 mile tributary that flows into the James River at historic Jamestown Island. The creek is tidal for a distance of 4 miles upstream from the James River and averages a depth of 6 feet at high tide. This area is recognized as one of the most environmentally significant and biodiverse natural resources on the Virginia Peninsula.

In colonial times, the creek offered abundant resources for meeting basic human needs. This ancient waterway was used by the Powhatan Confederacy of Indian tribes, including Chief Powhatan and his daughter, Pocahontas. In 1607, Captains Christopher Newport and John Smith explored the area while establishing the first permanent English settlement in North America.

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Arrow Arum
4 to 8 foot leaves, can grow to be 4 to 8 feet tall; arrow-shaped leaves on stalks; grows at marsh edge; blooms in late spring.

Lobolly Pine
60 to 110 feet, most common pine tree in Virginia; often the tallest tree in a landscape; loses lower branches as it grows; needles come in sets of three and are up to 10 inches long.

Pickerelweed
2 feet above water, leaves are arrow shaped with rounded bottoms; long spikes of purple flowers attract bees and butterflies; May to October.

Sweet Autumn Clematis (Introduced)
12 to 15 feet, vine with fragrant white flowers; often found covering bushes; leaves are dark green, shiny, and smooth; can be invasive and crowd out other plants; blooms in late summer.

Soft Rush
Up to 3 feet, stems are smooth and round; grows in large clumps at the water’s edge; blooms during summer.

Groundsel or High Tide Bush
6 to 12 feet, mound forming shrub with white flowers in late summer; female plants have fluffy, silvery seed pods.

Northern Water Snake
Up to 55 inches, non-venomous; common in tidal marshes; female plant forms small, blue berries in the fall.

Trumpet Vine
Up to 30 feet, has a woody vine that covers trees or whatever is in its path; orange to red flowers in late summer; a favorite of hummingbirds.

Groundsel or High Tide Bush
6 to 12 feet, mound forming shrub with white flowers in late summer; female plants have fluffy, silvery seed pods.

Virginia Seashore or Saltmarsh Mallow
Up to 3 feet, looks like hibiscus with smaller flowers; blooms summer into fall.

Fiddler Crabs
Up to 2 inches, seen at low tide; come in a variety of species.

Atlantic Rangia Clams
Up to 2 inches, inhabit a mixture of low salinity, brackish water, sandy mud, and vegetation; non-selective filter-feeder; found from the Mexican Gulf to the Chesapeake Bay.

Fiddler Crabs
Up to 2 inches, seen at low tide; come in a variety of species.

Sourwood or Sorrel Tree
30 to 40 feet, small tree with crooked branches; can live 100 to 200 years; white clusters of flowers in July and pale yellow seeds in fall; bees use flower pollen to make honey.

Wild Rice
3 to 4 feet above the water, grows well in shallow, slow-flowing water. Often, only the flowering head of wild rice rises above the water; a source of food and environmental cover; food source for birds and other aquatic wildlife.

Wax Myrtle or Bayberry
12 to 20 feet, multi-trunked evergreen shrub with green flowers in the spring; female plant forms small, blue berries in the fall.

Naupaka or Saltmarsh Mallow
Up to 3 feet, looks like hibiscus with smaller flowers; blooms in late summer.

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Virginia Seashore or Saltmarsh Mallow
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Swamp Rose
3 to 6 feet, found in swamps, marshes, and along the bank; blooms in the summer and pea-sized rose hips form after blooming.

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