



**Zebra Swallowtail**  
(*Eurytides marcellus*)

**Butterfly-weed**  
(*Asclepias tuberosa*)

**Host Plant is Paw-Paw**  
(*Asimina triloba*)

**Cathy Flanagan**  
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Treasurer  
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Vice President  
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**Adrienne Frank**  
Plant Sale  
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**Libbey Oliver**  
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**Marie Robertson**  
At Large  
Vacant  
Secretary



VIRGINIA NATIVE  
PLANT SOCIETY

**John Clayton Chapter**  
VNPS  
PO Box 1128  
Williamsburg VA  
23185

# Claytonia

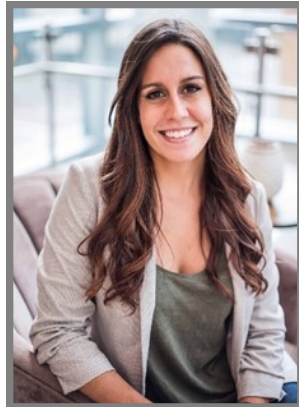
**John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society**



**July-August 2025**

*Happy Summer!*

**vnps.org/johnclayton**



**Please Join Us for a Presentation by**  
**Alexandra Cantwell**

**Norfolk Botanical Garden**

**Tuesday, August 26th**

**Time: 7 PM**

**"Invasive Plants and Native Replacements"**

**Link to Zoom Meeting:**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2274484759?omn=83378357959>**

Participants will not only learn what native plants make great alternatives for common invasive plants in the landscape, but why they become invasive and popular in the first place. From woody plants and vines to trees and perennials, this course works to help homeowners make more environmentally responsible choices starting right in their home gardens.

About the Presenter: Alexandra Cantwell has been with Norfolk Botanical Garden for over a decade, beginning her career as a horticulturist specializing in native plants, habitat restoration, and sustainable landscaping. She now serves as the Senior Director of Adult Education and Conservation, where she leads public programming and oversees the Butterfly House Exhibit, community engagement initiatives, internship programs, and the development of garden-wide conservation efforts.

Alexandra holds a B.S. in both Environmental Horticulture and Landscape Contracting and Design from Virginia Tech, with a minor in Agribusiness. She has also been certified with the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professionals program, the Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association (VNLA), and as a Landscape for Life instructor through the U.S. Botanic Garden in addition to her role as an adjunct professor of horticulture at Tidewater Community College.

**G**reetings! Hoping everyone is having a relaxing summer. Mine has been a bit noisy, both inside and out. For one, the begging calls of the chimney swifts are frequent and loud. I don't consider them a nuisance, though, and have welcomed their return every year for over 30 years. They are considered a species of concern, mostly due to habitat loss, losses in the insect population, and the fact that most people now cap their chimneys. These birds require about 1,000 flying insects a day, and up to 12,000 when they are feeding their young. Which reminds me that Doug Tallamy will be at Jamestown High School in September where we will likely learn more about insect losses.

Outside, my yard is full of tall trees and the cicada song is profoundly loud. I read that it is comparable to a lawn mower or passing jet. I don't consider this a nuisance either. Cicadas are actually beneficial to the ecosystem despite the minor damage they do to branches when depositing their eggs. Their sheer abundance takes some of the pressure off other types of insects. Their burrowing in the ground aerates the soil, and their spent shells and decaying bodies fertilize the soil. They are also high in protein and on the menu in a growing number of places. On that note...I'll get started with our history.

**I**n 1987, the Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society celebrated its 5th Anniversary. A quick review of the timeline is that it was formed in 1982 and the dynamic early leaders Mary Painter and Mary Pockman had successfully grown the organization to 1,000 members and seven chapters. Through their advocacy, and the expertise of botanist Dr. Donna Ware of William & Mary, they won important protection for rare and endangered plants. One such plant was the small whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*) which was in the path of a major highway construction project right here in James City County. Donna was the right one to consult. She was steward of the Nature Conservancy-leased tract where the

pogonia was located. She had also researched the demography and the population ecology of the small whorled pogonia through the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Her work paid off and the Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation actually found a way to realign Rt 199 that accomplished the goal of minimizing the impact of road construction on landowners while keeping the rare plants protected. It made news. In fact, the January 1987 issue of "Virginia Business" magazine included a story entitled "**Flower Power**" about the rescue of the colony of small world pogonia!



**W**hile the success of this rescue was definitely positive, there ensued a discussion about the practicality of plant rescues. Some contended that with so many wild spaces disappearing, they should try to salvage as many as possible, while others felt it was more time and energy than it was worth. President Mary Pockman offered her insight:

"Plant rescues rarely contribute directly to the conservation of Virginia's wild plant species and habitats. Reconstruction from a destruction site can only save individual plants. They aren't designed to maintain a diverse, vigorous flora in the wild. For that,, habitat is crucial and rescue projects enter the picture only when habitat is about to be destroyed. We need to give priority to legal protection of endangered species, to foresighted land-use policies, and sensitive planning by developers and other landowners."

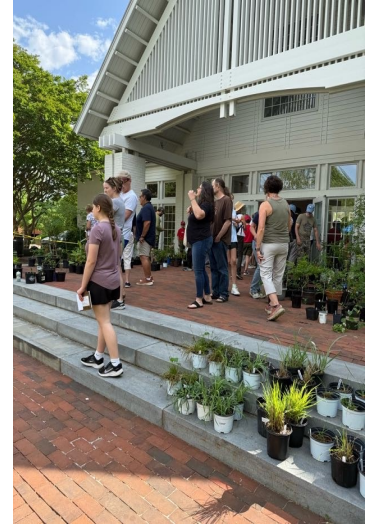
"We also need to look for ways to influence the development process from the beginning long before rescue becomes our only option. Rescue plants can be used to provide some plants for education, public parks, stock plants for propagation, or for botanical research."

"Perhaps most important is that our native plants are shrinking and we need to pay attention."

Mary Pockman



# Scenes from the Annual Native Plant Sale



*No wonder we have successful plant sales-  
We have Jimmy's scouts and  
native plant expert Lucile Kossodo!*

*Early morning debriefing*



Keith Navia

*Many thanks for your expertise and hours of  
volunteering!*



Pat Murphy

*Thank you for your expertise  
and always cheerful spirit*



*Robin's Plantain*



Ayala Dahnke, Madeline Wells, Haley Elton, Kiera Sohoni, Asher Sohoni

**Nature Camp students lend a hand  
at the John Clayton Native Plant Sale**



Adrienne Frank

*Thank you for hours of dedication  
to making the plant sale a success!*



# The Williamsburg Regional Library Seed Exchange

## Helps Our Neighbors Grow Native Plants

by Cynthia Ferentinos

When you visit the James City County Library, you've likely noticed the large wooden cart near the front doors. The cart holds three small cabinets (repurposed card catalogs) labeled "flowers," "herbs," and "vegetables." These are part of the Williamsburg Regional Library (WRL) Seed Exchange program, which offers free seed packets to those who are interested in learning more about growing plants from seed, or who want to try different varieties. There's also a propagation station with test tubes full of stem cuttings that are starting to grow roots for those who enjoy bringing some vegetation inside via house plants. The Williamsburg Library contains a smaller Seed Exchange station between the circulation desk and the book sale area.



The seed exchange concept encourages people to "borrow" seeds and grow plants from them. In an ideal world, once the plants mature, some of the seeds will be harvested and returned to the library. Of course, there are no guarantees in nature. Seeds may fail to germinate; plants may be felled by disease, and sometimes seeds are devoured by wildlife (and that's okay!) before they can even be harvested.

However, when everything goes well, the seed exchange cycle serves to continually expand the offerings of plants available to the community. And although seed catalogs and garden stores sell lots of non-native plants and cultivars, it can be challenging to find seeds of native species. Therefore, the WRL Seed Exchange offers a wonderful opportunity for us to share seeds from native plants in our gardens to help our neighbors provide a healthier habitat for pollinators.

Over the past fall and winter, the WRL Seed Exchange gave away over 1,000 mini packets of native plant seeds. Many of these seeds were donated by members of the Virginia Native Plant Society and

Virginia Master Naturalists. Then they were packaged by volunteer "seed librarians" into small seed packets, which are labeled with information to help gardeners select and nurture their seeds into plants that will thrive. We've also used these seed packets for educational programs at the libraries so adults and children can grow the native plants that they've learned about during library programs.



So, this year as the native flowers finish blooming and start producing seeds, please consider saving some to donate to the WRL Seed Exchange. When you collect the fully dried native plant seeds, please write the common and Latin (if known) plant name on the outside of the paper bag or envelope, your name, and the date. And if you can include a few intact seed pods or seed heads with your seed donation, that helps us educate others about how each plant develops and disperses seeds. Seed donations can be given to the librarians at the circulation desk at either library location or placed in the donation box at each Seed Exchange table.

*Thank you for helping others learn about native plants and how to grow them through the*

### Williamsburg Regional Library's Seed Exchange Program!



## Join Us on Zoom!

Zoom lectures allow for a greater choice of speakers as well as member convenience. The meetings consist of live video presentations followed by an interactive Q&A

Our presenters are experts from a wide variety of relevant fields. All of the presentations are recorded, and the videos can be viewed at the link below:

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/8054025>



Clouded Sulphur  
(*Colias philodice*)  
Field thistle  
(*Cirsium discolor*)

This photo was taken in a field several years ago. I look forward to seeing them but they are often late. According to the publication our own butterfly experts Adrienne Frank, & Gary Driscoll compiled, the earliest sighting was early in March of 2017 and the latest December 21st 2015!

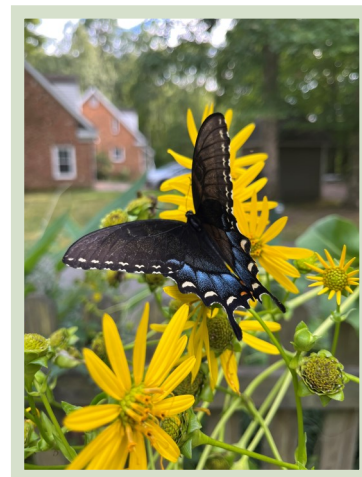
Cathy Flanagan



This bench was recently placed at the beautiful Brickyard Landing Park as a much deserved tribute to Lucile's many years of service and dedication to native plants, and to the John Clayton Chapter for her 10 years of service as its President.



Join us on Saturday, **August 30th** for an informative and enjoyable opportunity to see coastal Virginia Native plants, both cultivated and naturally occurring on his three acre property 3 acre property. Plants that may be in bloom include senna, mountain mint, silphium, boneset, turtle head, and Jerusalem artichoke. Phillip will have a few seedlings to share and encourages others to bring plants to swap. Please note that parking is limited and car-pooling will be necessary The parking area can accommodate 10 cars for a maximum of 40 people. **Contact Emilia** to let us know of your interest and how many people will be taking the tour. [jccvnps2@gmail.com](mailto:jccvnps2@gmail.com)



## Welcome New Members in 2025!

Susan Armentrout	Saluda
Erica ChigosWhite	Yorktown
Michelle Davis	Williamsburg
Mary White	Williamsburg
Rod White	Williamsburg
Stephen Mankowski	Williamsburg
LaVonne Bonney	Williamsburg
Patrice Hobbs	Gloucester
Susan Wolfe	Williamsburg
Izabela Cieszynski	Newport News
David West	Newport News
Dan Hausman	Toano
Rene Kauder	Newport News
Kathryn Barnett	Newport News
Linda Carey	Williamsburg

**Help Wanted:** We need two members to help with our table at the Doug Tallamy event on **September 11th** at Jamestown High School. We have reserved a free table for the pre-lecture opportunity to meet the public and provide information about our chapter. This tabling event will be from 6-7pm. Dr. Tallamy's lecture and Q&A will be from 7-8:30 pm with a raffle following. **Please register at the link below:**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/invite-nature-back-into-your-yard-a-special-evening-with-doug-tallamy-tickets-1293033892179?aff=oddtcreator>

**Questions?** [jccvnps1@gmail.com](mailto:jccvnps1@gmail.com)

