

# POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 27. No.1

Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

March/April 2009

~ T A L K S ~

## **COMPARTMENTALIZATION: THE TREE'S DYNAMIC DEFENSE PROCESS, Thursday, March 12, 7:30pm Green Spring Gardens**

Arborist and author Richard Murray will be our speaker at 7:30 on Thursday, March 12, at Green Spring Gardens. His basic theme of tree biology is energy management that includes the capacity for defense. Trees are active, responding organisms. They receive numerous wounds and subsequent infections throughout their lives. Survival after wounding involves actions that, in healthy trees, effectively contain infections. Richard will bring in dissected tree samples to help convey concepts.

Richard C. Murray is the author of *Tree Biology Notebook: An Introduction to the Science and Ecology of Trees*. (Copies of this book will be available at the talk.) Working in New England and Maryland, Richard's career in arboriculture extends over 35 years. He currently resides in Silver Spring, MD, where he owns and operates Shannon Tree and Landscaping, Inc. *Directions to Green Spring Gardens Park: From Interstate 395, exit at Route 236 West (Little River Turnpike); turn right at Braddock Road and go 1 block north to park entrance.*

## **THE SECRET TO MAINTAINING A PRODUCTIVE BUTTERFLY GARDEN Thursday, April 16 at 7:30pm Green Spring Gardens**

Our April 16 program will feature Jim Gallion, owner of Jim's Wildlife Gardening Adventures in Walkersville, MD. This presentation will reveal the secrets to establishing and maintaining a productive butterfly garden. Topics include: design ideas, plant choices for nectar and larva, life cycle, and many proven tips for a beautiful and sustainable garden.

Jim provides consulting services for those who want to enhance or create a wildlife friendly property and encourage the use of native plants in the plan. Jim has been featured in national and local publications as well as public television. Jim is a trained Wildlife Habitat Steward and is on the BOD of the Maryland Native Plant Society. *Directions: See above.*

~ W A L K S ~

## **TURKEY RUN SPRING WALK Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2:00pm**

Margaret Chatham and Alan Ford will lead a walk in Turkey Run searching for those joyful spring ephemerals: Spring Beauties and Virginia Bluebells, Dutchman's Breeches are sure to show. (The leaves are sure to show, flowers are always uncertain until you see them.) We will also look for Hepatica and Early Saxifrage. The walk will show the consequence of invasive plants in the forest, especially the Wisteria Vine, but also Garlic Mustard and Oriental Bittersweet.

The walk is moderately strenuous and will cross streams several times. We recommend you bring a walking stick for support. Good walking shoes or boots are necessary. We will meet in Parking Area B at Turkey Run Park off the GW Memorial Parkway. There are two porta-potties at this lot. The main bathroom area is closed until April 1. Space is limited. Please contact Alan Ford to reserve a spot. Include a contact number or email in case of postponement or cancellation. Email: [amford@acm.org](mailto:amford@acm.org) Cell: 703.732.5291.

## **BULL RUN BLUEBELL CELEBRATION Sunday, April 12, 1:30pm (for details, see box on page 7)**

## **WILDFLOWERS FOR BEGINNERS WALK Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup> 10am to noon**

The spring wildflower season will be in full bloom in mid-April. Scott's Run Nature Preserve is the perfect place to celebrate spring and see a wonderful assortment of native plants in an enchanted setting. Hillsides of trout-lilies, Dutchman's breeches and spring beauties are renowned in our area. Upland woods, a stream, waterfall and the Potomac River ensure a rich and scenic variety of plant habitats and plants. This walk is geared towards beginners and will be led by chapter board members **Laura Beaty and Marianne Mooney**. Meet in the lower (second) parking lot at 10 a.m., no reservations necessary. *Directions: From the Beltway, take Georgetown Pike west approximately 0.7 of a mile to the second parking lot on the right (across from Swink's Mill Rd.).*

**"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."**  
**Aldo Leopold**

**A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

Spring is just a whisper away. You can feel it in the tips of your fingers. You can see it in the buds just beginning to swell. The desire to see the early spring flowers drives us into the parks and woods and into our backyards to check those spots we hope and expect to see some shoot poking out of the ground. We look in the catalogs and maybe surf the web looking for something. And we think about the chance to explore some new location nearby we have not encountered before.



But what should we do to add a new planting? Where can we find native plants for sale? How do we have confidence in the source and provenance? Many of us have heard sad stories of the consequence of wild collected plants for sale. It is unfortunate that the demand causes the unregulated and often illegal collection of native plants. But it is our responsibility to become educated and to speak out against such behavior.

Just a few weeks ago I was fortunate to attend a lecture by Don Hyatt, a recognized authority on native rhododendrons such as the amazing flame azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*). His talk was engaging and stimulating and he spent a few minutes talking about seeing the evidence of plant theft on his trips to the Blue Ridge and the Smokies. The regret in his voice, of knowing specific plants that have disappeared, and the tale of one particularly prized specimen, considered unique, which the park rangers protect mostly through the obscurity of the location, spoke volumes about the effect of this behavior.

Well, we can do more than express our regrets. We can act to improve the state of the industry by making conscious choices to speak out. We can ask the purveyors of plants to identify their stock as native and non-native, and we should ask, of each seller, where he or she came by the stock. And we can choose not to buy if unsatisfied with the answers.

There are many vendors and groups who are making a good faith effort to provide native plants to the public, plants grown from seed or cutting with conscious commitment to preserving the local genotypes. But we can also communicate this message to the larger commercial nurseries. Ask the manager to add more and to advertise native plants; they are better adapted to the climate and able to support more wildlife such as birds and butterflies. Later in this issue we list some upcoming sales, several hosted by local chapters and other nonprofits. As the springtime blossoms we can support those striving to protect native plants and communicate the importance of using them in our landscaping. **Alan Ford**

**INFORMATION ON BEES**

1) A set of 5 presentations on the Bee Genera within Apidae of Eastern North America is available at:

<http://www.slideshare.net/sdroege>

The compressed slide shows are also available for downloading at:

<ftp://ftpext.usgs.gov/pub/er/md/laurel/Droege/>

Feel free to link to these guides, embed them in web sites, or use them in talks wherever you please. There are fewer and fewer excuses now for not learning your bee identification.

Sam Droege [sdroege@usgs.gov](mailto:sdroege@usgs.gov)

USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

2) The U.S. National Entomological Collection (National Museum of Natural History) now has type specimen information for its bee collection available on the internet. Most entries also contain a series of images for the type specimen. These data are available using the following weblink and searching for your taxon of interest:

<http://nhb-acsmith1.si.edu/emuwebentoweb/pages/nmnh/ento/Query.php>

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<p><i>Potowmack News</i> is published 6 times per year, in January, March, May, July, September, and November. The deadline for submissions is the 15th day of the month prior to publication. Call Mary Ann Lawler for more information or e-mail her at <a href="mailto:malawler@aol.com">malawler@aol.com</a>.  <i>Many thanks to our new assistant editor Susan Wexelblat!!</i></p>		

## **SUGARCANE PLUMEGRASS REDISCOVERED IN FAIRFAX COUNTY**

By Rod Simmons with Charles Smith, and David Lawlor

It was a pleasant surprise to hear that Charles Smith, Natural Resource Specialist with Fairfax County, and David Lawlor, Natural Resource Manager at Huntley Meadows Park, had discovered a large stand of Sugarcane Plumegrass (*Saccharum giganteum*) growing in a seasonally-wet, boggy swale in the central-western portion of the park. Sugarcane Plumegrass is a large, rhizomatous, attractive native grass that grows in moist to wet soils of bogs, swales, and swamps, mainly along the eastern coastal plain to the southeast and into South America (Webster 2003).

While it was apparently never common in the greater Washington, D.C. area, this population represents the only known extant occurrence of this species in Fairfax County. The only other known locations for Sugarcane Plumegrass in the region occur to the south in similar habitats on Quantico Marine Corps Base in Prince William County (Gary Fleming, Virginia Division of Natural Heritage, pers. comm.) and in wet, sandy-sphagnous soil surrounding the Buck Lodge Bog in Prince George's County, Maryland near College Park. Gary's experience with this grass on the southeastern Virginia coastal plain is that it can become fairly aggressive and weedy in places that are burned frequently. Perhaps that accounts for the large stands in the field at Huntley Meadows, where Charles and Dave conducted a prescribed burn two years ago to promote the health of native species and manage unwanted species.



Photo courtesy of David Lawlor, Natural Resource Manager at Huntley Meadows Park

Most of the region's historical collections of this grass are housed at the National Herbarium – D.C. and Vicinity Collection at the Smithsonian Institution. Six specimens were collected from Maryland, with the most recent from the Buck Lodge Bog. Most others from Maryland are from the general College Park – Laurel area as well. Nineteen specimens were collected from D.C., with most over a hundred years old, and mostly from pristine Magnolia Bog habitats: Terra Cotta, Holmead Swamp, Brightwood, and Kenilworth Swamp. Seven specimens are from Falls Church, Arlington County, Fairfax County, and Stafford County, Virginia, ranging in date from the 1870s to the 1930s. These include a *J.W. Chickering, Jr.*, 28 Sep 1878, specimen from "Falls Church"; an *E.S. Steele*, 28 Sep 1919, specimen from "Four Mile Run, at Torrison Station [along W&OD Railroad]"; an *S.F. Blake*, 16 Sep 1923, specimen "in meadow, near Lorton"; an *F.J. Hermann*, 3 Sep 1939, specimen from "low field, ¼ mile E. Brooke, Stafford County"; an *F.R. Fosberg*, 7 Sep 1939, specimen from "Virginia Highlands; weedy partially drained bog [below Ft. Scott towards Rt. 1 in Arlington]"; and two *F.J. Hermann & R.F. Martin*, 22 Sep 1939, specimens from "low field on Rt. 50 east of Merrifield."

The last known collection of Sugarcane Plumegrass in Fairfax County was by Ted Bradley, now-retired George Mason University botany professor, from "marsh and old field on Shreve Road" in 1973. The population at Huntley Meadows likely survived because the land was always low and boggy, and the military owned the property through the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when much of development in the area was occurring. The field where the plumegrass population is located was mowed by the military and contains one of the old concrete foundations from an air defense artillery gun emplacement. With this plant (and the habitats themselves) being so scarce in the Washington, D.C. region, finding it at Huntley Meadows is an important discovery. It is also fortuitous to have a large seed bank to propagate from.

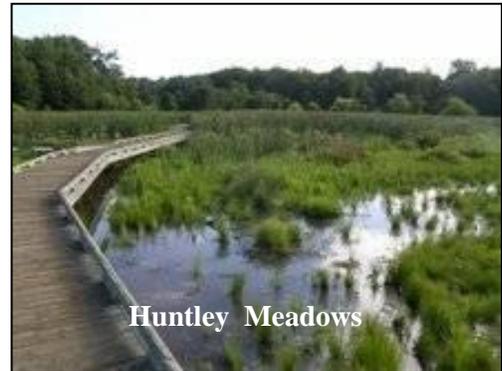
### Literature Cited:

Webster, R.D. 2003. *Saccharum* L. tribe *Andropogoneae* Dumort. Volume 25, p. 611. In: Flora of North America Editorial Committee (eds.). 1993+. Flora of North America North of Mexico. New York, New York.

**SPEAK UP FOR NATURAL AREAS IN BUDGET DELIBERATIONS!**

The Commonwealth of Virginia, Fairfax and Arlington counties, and the Cities of Falls Church and Alexandria are all facing revenue shortfalls and budget cuts. As the political leadership in your area makes decisions among all the competing priorities in the budgets, take the time to speak up for natural areas and wildlife habitat.

For example, in FY 2010, Fairfax County is projecting a budget deficit of more than \$600 million. As part of overall budget reductions, the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) has been asked to reduce their tax-supported budget by 15% or \$4 million. One million dollars of this amount will come from proposed reductions at eight Resource Management Division sites, including **Huntley Meadows and Riverbend, which are VNPS registry sites**. Eleven crucial positions will be abolished. Seven Naturalist positions in the division will be changed to 50% revenue-supported, and can be considered next on the chopping block.



Conservation of parks and open space in the County is threatened by the choices that the Park Authority has made in its budget-cutting decisions. These cuts will have a devastating effect on natural and cultural resource protection in the county, as well as on the education of the next generation of environmental stewards. The staff directly responsible for maintaining treasured parks and for educating the public is already feeling the strain of these proposed cuts. Both the public’s experience in the parks and their understanding of the importance of the environment will greatly suffer.

The Board of Supervisors’ stated environmental goals are in great part carried out by the Resource Management Division. The three primary goals include energy conservation, protection for the County’s natural resources, and the major charge of “Open space conservation, which seeks to preserve and protect stream valleys, woodlands and other ecologically valuable areas to protect plant and animal life.” Fully half of the FCPA’s mission encompasses the goals set by the County Board. Besides creating opportunities for recreation, the Park Authority’s mission is to “set aside public spaces for and assist citizens in the protection and enhancement of environmental values, diversity of natural habitats and cultural heritage to guarantee that these resources will be available to both present and future generations.” The Park Authority seems to find it difficult to balance self-supporting operations like golf courses with the need to preserve and support the environment through parks and nature centers. They are distinct, and at times, opposing missions. In short, parks cannot be run like businesses.

Parks are important to the quality of life of people and to the environment. While the FCPA budget is only one percent of the county’s total budget, its mission is central to the health and well being of the county’s citizens and its environment. Fairfax County officials have consistently touted and promoted its wonderful park system and natural resources. They need to be reminded of this now.

If you feel strongly about these cuts, you can help! How? It’s as simple as making a phone call, writing a letter or attending one of the FY2010 County Budget Hearings next month. The county considers public input to be a key factor in making budget decisions and welcomes public opinion. You can easily make a call to the county’s budget hotline, which will record your opinion. You can also write to your local supervisor and to the Park Authority Board stating your support for parks. Finally, you can attend the public budget hearings scheduled for late March and tell the County Board what you think-- in three minutes or less. Full contact information is below. Please help your parks by taking action.

Call in your support for parks to the County’s Budget Hotline: 703-324-9400. Or you can write letters to:

Sharon Bulova, Chairman  
Fairfax County Board of  
Supervisors  
12000 Government Center  
Parkway, Suite 530  
Fairfax, VA 22035  
Or email the BOS clerk:  
[clerktothebos@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:clerktothebos@fairfaxcounty.gov)

William G. Bouie, Chairman  
Fairfax County Park Authority  
Board  
12055 Government Center Pkwy.  
Suite 927  
Fairfax, VA 22035  
[Bbouie@aol.com](mailto:Bbouie@aol.com)

John Dargle, Director  
Fairfax County Park Authority  
12055 Government Center Pkwy.  
Suite 927  
Fairfax, VA 22035  
[john.darglejr@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:john.darglejr@fairfaxcounty.gov)

Attend the public Budget Hearings. The Budget Hearings are scheduled for March 30, 31 and April 1 and are held at the Fairfax County Government Center. To testify at the hearings, you are encouraged to register in advance with the Clerk to the Board by calling 703-324-3151. You will have three minutes to speak. The hearings begin at approximately 3 p.m.

For more information on the budget, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget).

*As we obtain information on other area jurisdictions, we will put it on our listserv. Thanks for your help.*

**ARLINGTON COUNTY RiP PROGRAM**

Free. For ages 9 to adult. Not all plants are good for the environment. Invasive plants crowd native ones out for space and light and some can even grow a "mile-a-minute"! Come learn what these troublesome beasts look like and help rescue our parks from these alien invaders! We meet monthly at the locations listed below. If you have your own garden gloves and tools, please bring them along. Some supplies will be provided. Be sure to come dressed for work, wear sturdy shoes, long pants, long sleeves, and perhaps a hat. You may also want to bring along a reusable water bottle. Register at [jtruong@vt.edu](mailto:jtruong@vt.edu) or 703-228-7636.

Second Saturdays @ Lacey Woods 1200 N. George Mason Dr., Arlington, VA March 14, April 11 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM Meet at the N. Frederick St. & 11th St. N. entrance. Site leader: Nora Palmatier	Third Saturdays @ Tuckahoe Park 2400 N. Sycamore St., Arlington, VA March 21, April 18 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Meet in front of Tuckahoe Elementary Site leader: Mary Mclean
Second Sundays @ Gulf Branch Nature Center 3608 Military Road, Arlington, VA 22205 March 8, April 12 12:00 PM – 2:30 PM Site leaders: Jen Soles, Lorne Peterson	Third Sundays @ Long Branch Nature Center 625 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA 22204 March 15, April 19 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Site leaders: Matt Neff, Steve Young

**FAIRFAX COUNTY’S INVASIVE MANAGEMENT AREA (IMA) PROGRAM**

The IMA (Invasive Management Area) program is a volunteer based project that is working towards habitat restoration. Help us remove invasive plants, learn new species of invasive plants, and work outdoors!

- Mar. 7**, 9:00 – 12:00, **Nottoway** workday
- Mar. 8**, 10:00 – 12:00, **Marie Butler Leven Preserve**
- Mar. 14**, 9:00 – 11:00, **Laurel Hill** workday
- Mar. 21**, 9:30 – 12:00, **Huntley Meadows** workday
- Mar. 22**, 10:00 – 12:00, **Marie Butler Leven Preserve**
- Mar. 28**, 10:00 – 12:00, **Pohick SV** workday
- Mar. 28**, 9:30 – 11:30, **Woodglen Lake** workday

- Apr. 4**, 9:00 – 12:00, **Nottoway** workday
- April 5**, 10:00 – 12:00, **Marie Butler Leven Preserve**
- April 14**, 9:30 – 11:30, **Woodglen Lake** workday
- Apr. 18**, 9:30 – 12:00, **Huntley Meadows** workday
- Apr. 19**, 10:00 – 12:00, **Marie Butler Leven Preserve**
- Apr. 25**, 10:00 – 12:00, **Pohick SV** workday

For more information: [Katherine.Frederick@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Katherine.Frederick@fairfaxcounty.gov) or call 703 324 8681. Check out the IMA schedule of events and activities at: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/nrp-ima.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/nrp-ima.htm).

**BECOME A WEED WARRIOR VOLUNTEER WITH THE NATURE CONSERVANCY**

This training is for folks committed to donating a few hours each month to controlling invasive plants in the Potomac Gorge area National Parks with The Nature Conservancy. Two sessions are available, students must be able to attend all three classes for their session. For further information see:

<http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/maryland/events/>

**Session 1:** Wednesday, April 29, 6:30-9:00 pm in Bethesda TNC offices; Sunday, May 3, 11am-4 pm field trip in Potomac Gorge; Wednesday, May 6, 6:30-9:00 in Bethesda TNC offices

**Session 2:** Tuesday, May 12, 6:30-9:00 pm in Bethesda TNC offices; Saturday, May 16, 11am-4 pm field trip in Potomac Gorge; Tuesday, May 19, 6:30-9:00 in Bethesda TNC offices

To sign up, contact Mary Travaglini at (301) 897-8570 or email her at [PotomacGorgeVol@tnc.org](mailto:PotomacGorgeVol@tnc.org)

## **FALLS CHURCH INVASIVE PLANT REMOVAL TASK FORCE Upcoming 2009 Events:**

**Sat. Mar 7, 10:00–12:00 Hamlett / Rees Tract Park**

**Sat. Apr 4, 10:00 – 12:00, Isaac Crossman Park**

*For directions to events please visit [www.fallschurchva.gov](http://www.fallschurchva.gov). For more information, contact Jeremy Edwards, City of Falls Church, Senior Urban Forester, 703-248-5016 or [jedwards@fallschurchva.gov](mailto:jedwards@fallschurchva.gov).*

**LOOKING FOR WILDFLOWERS THIS SPRING?** Don't forget the wonderful database at the Smithsonian Institution's Department of Botany: <http://botany.si.edu/DCFlora/springflowers/> It shows the locations in the Washington area to find wildflowers, information on what's blooming from March through May, and a searchable database.

## **LOCAL EVENTS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:**

**Fri. Mar. 27: EnviroYard Workshop** Arlington Central Library 1-5pm (1015 North Quincy Street, Arlington, VA 22201). Come hear about invasive plant control, landscaping with native plants, creating certified backyard wildlife habitats and rain garden installation. Workshop ends with hands-on activities in our English Ivy Alternatives Demonstration Garden – clean, weed, and plant new native plants. Sponsored by the Arlington County Invasive Species Program. Space is limited. Registration required at [jtruong@vt.edu](mailto:jtruong@vt.edu) or 703-228-7636.

**Fri. Mar. 27 and Sat. Mar 28: Smithsonian Botanical Symposium “Genes, Genomics, and Genome Evolution in Plants”.** The National Museum of Natural History in collaboration with the United States Botanic Garden and supported by the National Science Foundation and the Cuatrecasas Family Foundation. Ever since Darwin, biologists have sought to understand how species evolve. The complexity and flexibility of the plant genome, as first revealed by Mendelian genetic methods, likely render plants especially able to adapt to changing environments. The new tools of genomics, initially driven by studies of model organisms, are now being applied across the diversity of plant life. Comparative studies have addressed the role of variation in genes, gene families and genomes in such processes as speciation, domestication and floral development. This Symposium, hosted by the Department of Botany, will highlight results of current studies on plant genes and genomes, especially as they apply to fundamental questions in evolutionary biology, crop improvement and ecosystem sustenance in rapidly changing environments worldwide. For more information go to: <http://botany.si.edu/sbs/>.

**Sat. Mar. 28: Early Spring Wildflowers** 9am to 3pm. Leader: Cris Fleming. Beat the winter blues by finding early spring wildflowers often missed by those who don't get out until mid-April. We'll search for early bloomers such as harbinger of spring, purple cress, early saxifrage, dutchman's breeches, bloodroot, hepaticas, trailing arbutus, and many other species. Our field trip will visit Great Falls Park and Difficult Run on the Virginia side of the Potomac River. Park entrance fee is waived for participants. Non-members \$41. For information or to register

**Sat. Mar. 28: The 23rd Annual Lahr Native Plant Symposium and Plant Sale** 8:30 am– 3:30 pm. Plant Sale Only 9:30am – 3:30pm. Mark your calendar! This year's symposium, “Native Plants: In Design” features an exciting group of speakers who will present an array of topics related to designing landscapes with native plants. The annual Native Plant Sale will run concurrently, featuring a collection of local native plant nurseries offering an extensive selection of plants. Experienced growers will be present to offer expert advice. Registration information at <http://www.usna.usda.gov/Education/2009lahrweb.pdf>. Fee: \$85 (\$68 FONA members). Fee includes lunch and early admission (8:30 am) to the Native Plant Sale Location: US National Arboretum, 3501 New York Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002.

call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form.

**Thurs. Apr. 2: Introduction to Wildflower Identification** 7:30-9:30pm with full day field trip **Sat. April 4.** Leader: Stephanie Mason. In April, spring wildflowers in the Washington area are dazzling! Thursday evening will be at Woodend discussing books, equipment, and terminology for beginning wildflower identification On Saturday travel to the Carderock area along the C&O Canal and explore several short trails between the Canal and the Potomac River. Practice using keys to identify wildflowers. Nonmembers: \$52. For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form.

**Sat. Apr. 11: Spring Wildflowers of Scott's Run** 9am to noon. Leader: Stephanie Mason. The colorful display of spring wildflowers in the Washington area is especially rich in the rocky woods and bottomlands along the Potomac River. Search for trout lily, dutchman's breeches, bloodroot, and other spring blooms. There will be some uphill and downhill, as well as uneven and muddy terrain, with two crossings over Scott's Run on concrete "Stepping stones." Free, but you must register: For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form.

**Sun. Apr. 12, Bull Run Bluebell Celebration** 1:30pm. Celebrate spring and Virginia Bluebells! View the profusion of blooms at the site of possibly the most extravagant flowering display of bluebells on the east coast. Over 800 acres of Bull Run Regional Park are filled with bluebells and spring beauties. The sheer quantity of blooming bluebells has to be seen to be believed! This event is sponsored by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority whose naturalists will be on hand at 2 p.m. to lead folks down a trail through the bluebells. VNPS will be on hand early, at 1:30 pm, to help out and provide kids with some interactive handouts for exploring. A family-friendly event, no reservations are necessary and the event is free to the public. Please join us.  
*Directions: Park address is 7700 Bull Run Dr., Centreville. Take I-66 to Exit 52 (Rte. 29), drive 2 miles south, turn left onto Bull Run Post Office Rd. and follow the signs to the park entrance.*

**Fri. Apr. 17: Signs of Spring C&O Canal Walk** 8:30am - 2:30pm. Adults. Walk the flat four-mile loop near Widewater on the canal. Discover what plants, birds and other animals are stirring. Dress for the weather, wear boots or walking shoes and bring a bag lunch to eat by the falls. \$20 fee due upon registration. Van will leave from Lubber Run Recreation Center parking lot. 300 N. Park Dr. Arlington, VA 22203. Registration required: on-line <https://registration.arlingtonva.us/vsiwebtrac.html> or call 703-228-4747. Program # 632504C.

**Fri. Apr. 17: Bluebells at Bull Run** 10:30am-2pm. Leader Stephanie Mason. Bull Run Regional Park, known for its showy, mid-April display of Virginia bluebells is located near Centreville on the western edge of Fairfax County. Look for trout lily, swamp buttercup, and other wildflowers sharing the spring stage with the vast carpet of bluebells. Non-members \$26.50. For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form.

**Sat. Apr. 18: Spring Bees at Long Branch Nature Center** 1-2pm. Ages 8 and up with an adult. Not all bees are honey bees. Come see and learn about a few of the hundreds of species of native bees in our area. How do they survive? What plants do they pollinate? We'll spend the time outside searching for bee homes and plants. For information call 703-228-6535. Free. Registration required. Program #632502H. 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA 22204.

**Sat. Apr 25: Spring Plant Sale at Long Branch Nature Center** 1-3pm. The vast majority of the plants at Long Branch are propagated on site. There will be a variety of spring and summer bloomers along with ferns, vines and shrubs. Cardboard boxes will be provided for transporting your new purchases. Rain date: Sunday, April 26, 1-3pm. Payment can be made by cash or check only. Information: 703-228-6535. LBNC: 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA 22204.

**Wed. April 29: Every Day is Earth Day** (for kids ages 6-10) 3:30-4:30pm. Learn how you can help protect the Earth and take home a native green friend. \$4 fee. Meet at Long Branch Nature Center. Program #632502U. 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA 22204.

**Sun. May 3: Trillium Trek to Linden, Virginia** 8:30am-4pm. Adults. Travel to Linden, VA, to see one of the largest (millions!) Great White Trillium displays in the world. This area is resplendent with many (often rare) wildflowers and trees, including native orchids. On the somewhat rocky two-mile trail we'll discuss plant folklore and ethnobotany. We'll stop to purchase local country crafts and apple produces. Dress for hiking; bring water and a bag lunch. \$25 fee due upon registration. Van leaves from Lubber Run Center parking lot, 300 N Park Dr. Arlington, VA 22203 or will pick up from Ballston Metro Station with advance request: Registration required, register on-line <https://registration.arlingtonva.us/vsiwebtrac.html> or call 703-228-4747. Program # 632504D.

**Sat. May 9: Butterfly Gardening for Beginners** 6 to adult Hidden Oaks Nature Center 10am. Discover how easily you can attract butterflies and hummingbirds to your backyard by providing the host and nectar plants for native butterflies. Learn how to create your own backyard habitat and start host plants for monarch butterflies. Classroom and garden experience included.

**Sat. May 9: Native Plant Sale** Friends of Riverbend Park will hold its annual Native Plant Sale at the Grange in Great Falls.

**Sun. Mar. 1 BARCROFT PARK (1-3 pm)** 4200 S. Four Mile Run Drive. **Help preserve Arlington's globally rare magnolia bog, a chapter heritage site.** Meet by the parking garage off Four Mile Run. Wear sturdy footwear and bring pruners, hand saws and heavy gloves, if you have them (limited number available on-site).  
 Contact Marty Nielsen ([mrtynlns@gmail.com](mailto:mrtynlns@gmail.com)).

**INVASIVES CONTROL WORK PARTIES AT TURKEY RUN PARK ALONG THE POTOMAC**  
 Join with The Nature Conservancy to help control invasive plant species on National Park Service lands in the Potomac Gorge at Turkey Run Park off the GW Memorial Parkway. Wear work gloves and boots or sturdy shoes, and bring water, snacks, and hand saws or loppers if you have them. The schedule for March and April is:  
**Thurs. March 12 10-1, Sat. March 21 10-1, Thurs. April 9 10-1, and Sat. April 18 1-4pm**  
 Check on meeting location with Alan Ford: 703.732.5291; email: [amford@acm.org](mailto:amford@acm.org)

**SAVE THE DATE! VIRGINIA INVASIVE PLANT REMOVAL DAY: MAY 2**

First ever Statewide Removal Day sponsored by **Virginia Master Naturalists and the Virginia Native Plant Society**. Activities are planned throughout Virginia including Arlington County, Charlottesville, Fairfax County, Falls Church, Reston and Alexandria. In coordination with local park managers, please visit the website to register projects in your area and encourage your friends to visit and search for projects they can participate in. The website will be continually updated. [www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/invasives/index.html](http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/invasives/index.html)

May 2nd will be a prime date for pulling Garlic Mustard in most areas of Virginia. It is easy for volunteers to identify and easy to pull without any experience or tools necessary. In most areas of the state, it will also be before the plant has produced seeds and could be composted on site (pull and drop method), reducing the need for bagging and landfilling. We highly suggest this as a target species for removal events on May 2nd if it is a problem plant in your area. However, we hope organizations will help to mobilize volunteers in any fashion which promotes the issue of invasives and restoration of our natural areas. **Jenn Truong, Invasives Day Coordinator**



**Potowmack Chapter  
 Virginia Native Plant Society  
 P.O. Box 5311  
 Arlington, VA 22205**

**Chapter Events Calendar**

- Mar 12 Board Meeting 6:45pm  
**Compartmentalization:  
 Tree's Defense** 7:30  
 Green Spring Gardens
- Mar 22 Chapter Walk **Turkey  
 Run** 2 pm
- Apr 12 Bull Run Bluebell  
 Celebration 1:30pm
- Apr 16 Board Meeting 6:45pm  
**Butterfly Gardens** 7:30  
 Green Spring Gardens
- Apr 19 Chapter Walk **Scotts  
 Run** 10 am

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