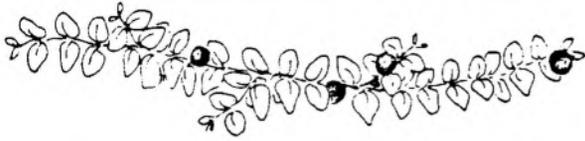


POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 11, No. 5

Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Fall 1993



Invasive Exotics Workshop

January 29, 1994

1-4 PM

Potomac Overlook Regional Park

Walk at Mason Neck

Liz Smith

During a walk at Mason Neck State Park on Saturday, October 16, Potowmack Chapter members were able to study and enjoy a variety of habitats—woodland, swamp and shoreline, and to observe firsthand the problems of erosion and defoliation which the park service must fight against.

The defoliation is caused by repeated Gypsy moth infestations and by over browsing by the large herds of deer in Mason Neck. David Stapleton, park ranger who led the walk, said that the park does not try to combat the Gypsy moth but that they do allow controlled deer hunting in an effort to contain the population.

Mr. Stapleton also expressed the appreciation of the staff at Mason Neck for Potowmack Chapters' generous donation of native plants used in landscaping their Visitors' Center. Bill Frailey, a chapter member who volunteers at Mason Neck, discussed the evolution of the gardens and plans for continued expansion of the beds. Use of native plants for landscaping is now an official policy of the Virginia State Park System.

Are invasive exotics like English ivy and Japanese honeysuckle seriously affecting native plant populations? In addition to creeping unchecked through our forests and meadows, are these aggressive plants significantly inhibiting the growth and spread of our native vegetation? What happens when forests are cleared of invasives? What takes their place? How quickly do invasives move back in? Believe it or not, botanists do not have the answers to these questions.

The problem of what to do about kudzu, mile-a-minute vine, porcelainberry and other imported competitors is troubling many people today, particularly the caretakers who find their property riddled with starred species from Newcomb's. Some park managers have experimented with various eradication techniques (e.g., Dr. L.K. Thomas, research biologist for the National Park Service, on Roosevelt Island), others aren't sure they have a problem (e.g., at a park where over half the identified plant species are non-native and where, in at least some areas, invasives constitute 90% of the plant material). No guidelines exist to inform resource managers about

when and how to take action. A project we propose to do at Potomac Overlook Regional Park seeks to help document the facts about invasives so that appropriate responses can be made.

Potomac Overlook Regional Park is a 70-acre, urban, second-growth forest purchased by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority to preserve natural recreational space for area residents. The three miles of trails are often flanked by dense covers of English ivy, porcelainberry, Japanese honeysuckle, mile-a-minute vine, and multiflora rose. To the average jogger, this jungle of vines may appear as natural growth, but to the knowledgeable hiker the often impenetrable growth frustrates discovery of indigenous plants. One area symbolizes the problem: a gently sloping bank along the trail leading to the park's overlook is dotted with several varieties of ferns. The vista from path to horizon would compare to a storybook dell were it not for the thorny screen of multiflora rose. While we can't live in a fantasy landscape,

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Photography Show

Congratulations to the winners of the Chapter's September amateur photography show:

First Place: Kevin Bond
 Second Place: Edith Bradbury
 Third Place: Anne Crocker

We are grateful to professional photographer, Jesse Harris, for judging the show and for adding her own stunning photographs to our display. We appreciate, too, the patience and help of the Green Spring staff and volunteers, particularly Dorothy Norpel. Please pick up your entries if you haven't already done so.

Potowmack Chapter
 Virginia Native Plant Society
 P.O. Box 161
 McLean, VA 22101

Board Officers

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Mail articles for the newsletter to:
 Mark Etheridge
 9422 Fairleigh Court
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Message From The President

This is impressive—a space just for my thoughts! One of the perks of the office. I am usually not at a loss for words, but when there's so little space and so much to say. . . . Focus, Nancy, focus. Okay, let's pick the reason why I think being president is going to be so much fun: you! Yes, *you*, the chapter members. I like native plants, but I love socializing with the people who like the plants. In fact, those of you who haven't, really ought to try one of the chapter's meetings. There are the most interesting people at them! If you'd been at the annual meeting you would have met Dorothy Beck who plays the concertina (it was delightful!). If you'd been at Roosevelt Island you would have met Gary Hilbert who showed up with his handmade machete to slice English ivy. If you'd been at our last board meeting (yes, everyone is welcome), you would have met "Butterfly Man", your new newsletter editor. In other words, if you don't get out you're going to miss knowing these special individuals. When you talk to people who share your interests, you feel their energy fueling your own. This flow of energy is what keeps organizations like ours working. Jerry Ellis, a Cherokee Indian who walked the 900 mile Trail of Tears (Walking The Trail), writes, "I love to hear people get excited about their dreams. It's as though their energy comes into my body to feed me and further awaken my own hopes." I know what he means. As president, I feel inspired when I see eyes light up with an idea or a thought (you should hear Gerry Pratt talk about the propagation beds! . . . Ben FitzGerald positively glows when he reads the plant sale numbers!). Wow! What would happen if we all showed up at a meeting?????



FINDING WILDFLOWERS SCOTT'S RUN NATURE PRESERVE

by Cris Fleming

A favorite place for many wildflower enthusiasts in the Washington area is Scott's Run Nature Preserve, formerly called Dranesville District Park. This park lies just outside the Capital Beltway near McLean and contains almost 400 acres of relatively undisturbed upland woods, moist hillsides, and bottomlands along the Potomac River. The upland forest features large mature specimens of oak, tuliptree, black birch, and sugar maple, and there is a beech-hemlock ravine complete with waterfall that resembles areas in the mountains. The bottomland forest has huge sycamore, river birch, and silver maple trees.

Scott's Run Nature Preserve is known for its great diversity of plant life. The varieties of soils, moisture, and slope direction have created several microhabitats that support many different species of plants. Dr. Arthur Radford of the botany department at the University of North Carolina described the area as "the most diverse forest, from a plant community and species viewpoint, seen in the entire Piedmont". In a survey done several years ago, 175 species were found in bloom between March and June, and over 20 species of ferns were identified.

Formerly known as the "Burling Tract", the park also has an

interesting social history. After serving as a rustic retreat for a well-known Washington lawyer, the area was slated to become a housing development until local citizens and students acted to save the natural woodlands. The park has a few main trails and many unmarked trails wandering through the uplands, hillsides, ravines, and bottomlands.

On the floodplain near the river, look in late March for the early-blooming harbinger-of-spring (*Eriogenia bulbosa*). Come back in early April to search for the rare white trout-lily (*Erythronium albidum*) and again in mid April to see Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*).

Early April wildflowers on the rocky trail along Scott's Run include star chickweed (*Stellaria pubera*), early saxifrage (*Saxifraga virginensis*), trailing arbutus (*Epigaea repens*), bluets (*Houstonia caerulea*), and solitary pussy-toes (*Antennaria solitaria*). In the upland woods are spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), round-lobed hepatica (*Hepatica americana*), blood-root (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), cut-leaved toothwort (*Dentaria laciniata*), and slender toothwort (*Dentaria heterophylla*).

The moist hillsides near the river are carpeted with both the red and green forms of sessile trillium (*Trillium sessile*), as well as trout-lily (*Erythronium americanum*), Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), and squirrel corn (*Dicentra canadensis*). Other flowers on the rich slopes include wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), twin-leaf (*Jeffersonia diphylla*), and blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*).

In late April, Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*), sessile bellwort (*Uvularia sessilifolia*), early meadowrue (*Thalictrum dioicum*), rue-anemone (*Anemonella thalictroides*), and wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) are added to the upland slopes. One particularly moist area along a little stream is covered with dwarf ginseng (*Panax trifolius*) and also has a few plants of crested iris (*Iris cristata*), shooting star (*Dodecatheon meadia*), and erect trillium (*Trillium erectum*). Since these last three species are not common in the Piedmont and occur here so

close together, it is thought that they were planted sometime in the past.

In early May, the upland trails flower with yellow star-grass (*Hypoxis hirsuta*), spiderwort (*Tradescantia virginiana*), hispid buttercup (*Ranunculus hispidus*), golden alexanders (*Zizia aurea*), clustered snakeroot (*Sanicula gregaria*), lyre-leaved sage (*Salvia lyrata*), one-flowered cancer-root (*Orobanche uniflora*), and rattlesnake-weed (*Hieracium venosum*). Several orchids flower in these rich woods, including pink lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*), yellow lady's-slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus*), showy orchis (*Orchis spectabilis*), puttyroot (*Aplectrum hyemale*), and large whorled pogonia (*Isotria verticillata*). Wood anemone (*Anemone quinquefolia*) and wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), species of the mountains, also occur here on cool, north-facing slopes.

Scott's Run Nature Preserve is managed by the Fairfax County Park Authority and administered through Riverbend Park. There are no visitor facilities at Scott's Run at present, although there are plans for some "improvements". For more information or for a pamphlet on spring wildflowers of Scott's Run Nature Preserve, call the Riverbend Nature Center at (703)759-3211.

Directions: From the Capital Beltway (I-495), take Georgetown Pike (VA-193) west. The park appears very quickly on the right. The upper parking lot gives access to trails through the upland woods and the lower parking lot leads to the trail along Scott's Run.

This article is adapted from the book, Finding Wildflowers in the Washington-Baltimore Area, by Cris Fleming, Marion Lobstein, and Barbara Tufty, in publication 1994 by Johns Hopkins University Press. Copyright Johns Hopkins University Press.



Round-lobed Hepatica
Hepatica triloba

EXOTICS

from page 1

should we ignore this quiet battle over turf?

The proposed project at Potomac Overlook will answer some of the questions concerning removal of invasives by targeting specific species such as multiflora rose. Over a several year period we will record what happens to the park's native plants when the aggressive exotics are eliminated. Using a method he has designed specifically for our purposes, David Sacchi, director of the Virginia State Arboretum, will teach VNPS members how to set up and monitor study plots. He will explain the significance of different types of data and suggest ways VNPS might use the information gained from the study.

Two Potowmack members have already volunteered to help with this exciting effort. We need at least three more people. After setting up the study plots (we are not certain how long this will take—probably several hours), the volunteer's job will be to regularly (probably once a month) record changes in the designated areas. You do not need to know how to ID plants; this project, in fact, is a wonderful opportunity to learn from the experts who will be advising us. The January workshop will be devoted to David Sacchi's presentation. Whether you want to join the survey team or not, come to the workshop to see what we're up to! Please call Nancy Luria (703)528-3612 before December 15th if you would like to attend.

Directions to Potomac Overlook:

From Chain Bridge Road, (123): Right on Glebe Road (120) and watch for right turn to Military Road. Follow signs (two left turns) to make "U" turn over Glebe Road to stay on Military Road. Pass Zachary Taylor Park on right and turn left at next signal onto Marcey Road. Park at dead-end.

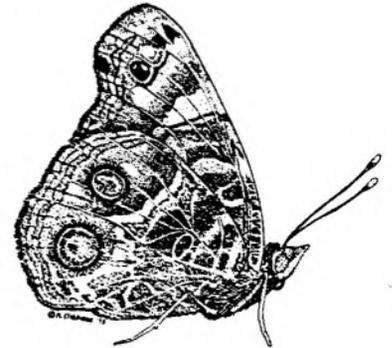
From I-66 : Exit at Lee Highway and turn left at end of ramp (west on Lee Highway). Turn right on Military Road (there will be a right turn lane at the light). Follow Military Road (it takes a 90 degree left turn) to the light at Marcey Road. Turn right and park at the dead-end.

From George Washington Memorial Parkway: Access only from north bound lanes!!! Left exit at Spout Run. Take right turn for Lorcom Lane to right turn lane at Nellie Custis Drive and turn right. Nellie Custis turns into Military Road. Turn right at light on Marcey Road and park at dead-end. **THERE IS NO EXIT FOR SPOUT RUN FROM SOUTH BOUND LANES OF THE GW PARKWAY!** (Use Chain Bridge and directions for Chain Bridge Road above).

After parking at the end of Marcey Road, walk down the service road to the nature center (300 yards). If you are physically disabled you may drive down to the nature center.

**HOLIDAY GIFTS WITH
A NATURAL TWIST**

Find the perfect gifts for the nature-lovers on your list. On Sunday, November 21, the National Association for Interpretation is sponsoring its Arts and Crafts Show at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City in Alexandria, Virginia. The free show runs from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM and is accessible by Metro. For more information call Brookside Nature Center (301) 946-9071.

**Volunteer Needed**

Hospitality Chair: Duties include providing food (through cooking, soliciting donations, and/or purchasing) for occasional receptions and meetings. Also in charge of purchasing and maintaining entertainment supplies such as cups, utensils, etc. This service provides the personal, welcoming touch that we like to have at all of our gatherings.

Remember that volunteering in any capacity helps further the Chapter's mission to protect and to enjoy native plants.

Call Nancy Luria (703)528-3612

VNPS Fall Plant Sale

In spite of a rainy morning, which drenched workers and customers alike, we realized a very successful sale, second only to our Fall record breaking sale last year. We offered almost 1,000 plants, of which 260 were donated.

Volunteers, many of whom came at 8 a.m. and stayed until 3 p.m. included Laura Beaty, Edith Bradbury, Anne Crocker, Robynne DeYoung, Ben FitzGerald, Gail Minnich-Blewis, Dustinn and Gerry Pratt, Dan Sealey, Margaret Shutler, Sally Sieracki, Karen Sorenson, Beth Smith (the Younger), Sharon Terango and Billie Trump. It was a cheerful and knowledgeable crew which contributed to our successful day.

Plant donations for the sale were received from Laura Beaty, Tiana Camfiord, Lilly Harper, Trish Hendershot, Margaret James, Walker Newman, Gerry Pratt, Beth Smith and Billy Trump.

We were especially appreciative of the native woody plants which were donated because we are not equipped to propagate and grow these plants in our beds. We encourage those of you who have native woody plants to share, to plan on doing so for the spring sale next year.

The increased interest in landscaping with native plants has increased requests we receive from non-profit organizations which lack the funds to purchase them. This fall, some of the plants not sold at the sale were donated for the landscaping projects listed below:

- Mason Neck Regional Park and native plant entry garden.
- Pohick Regional Library.
- Eagle Scout project at Abiding Presence Lutheran Church.
- Landscape Memorial at CIA for two employees killed at the agency.

At the end of October, our work at the propagation beds ended until Spring of 1994. I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the volunteers who faithfully came and worked in the beds. This year we had time to start some new beds and straighten up and divide others because of the interest and enthusiasm of our committee members. We are always looking for new recruits to join us. If you'd like to work with us, (Wednesday and/or Saturday mornings) please call me either now or in the spring.

Gerry Pratt
(703)323-1094



**Virginia Native Plant Society
Potowmack Chapter**

Plant Sale Results

<u>Year</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Total</u>
1983			\$1,546.61
1984			\$1,643.60
1985	\$1,246.35	\$625.73	\$1,872.08
1986	\$1,529.52	\$621.64	\$2,151.16
1987	\$1,436.57	\$841.31	\$2,277.88
1988	\$1,695.85	\$942.96	\$2,638.81
1989	\$1,538.56	\$595.64	\$2,134.22
1990	\$1,592.61	\$863.76	\$2,456.37
1991	\$1,916.88	\$1,003.10	\$2,919.98
1992	\$2,069.77	\$1,987.13	\$4,056.90
1993	\$3,333.27	\$1,817.10	\$5,150.37

Virginia Native Plant Consultant Listing

The chapter receives frequent requests for referrals to persons who are knowledgeable about landscape design or cultivation requirements for Virginia native plants. Requests for help are made by homeowners and community planners. We are preparing a listing of VNPS Potowmack Chapter members who are interested in providing these services. The listing will be sent out on request and will be available at the semi-annual plant sales. Members on the list will be responsible for setting and collecting fees themselves and inclusion will not constitute endorsement by the Chapter.

To be on the first listing, please mail the following information by December 30, 1993 to VNPS, c/o Anne Van Ryzin, 9545 Bel Glade St., Fairfax, VA 22031:

-Your name
-Any related degrees or certifications
-Your specific interests in working with native plants (15 word maximum)
-Your phone number (or other means of contact)

For VNPS membership information, contact Anne Crocker at (703)437-0355

Potowmack Chapter
Virginia Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 161
McLean, Virginia 22101

Calendar

NOVEMBER

18 Thursday Board Meeting - Green Spring Gardens Park, 7:00 PM.

DECEMBER (No meetings)

JANUARY, 1994

27 Thursday Board meeting - Green Spring Gardens Park, 7:00 PM.

29 Saturday Invasive Exotics Workshop, Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 1-4 p.m.
Call Nancy Luria
(703)528-3612

FrOGS

Friends Of Green Spring would love to have new FrOGS! Please consider joining this motivated, creative support group for Green Spring Gardens Park. Your membership helps to support all of the park's activities, including the Native Plant Trail (a chapter funded display garden). If you have questions about FrOGS, please call its president, Sandy Austin (250-6031). Membership costs \$15 for an individual and \$20 for a family. Send check made out to FrOGS to Gerry Pratt, Membership Chair, 4114 Whitacre Road, Fairfax, VA 22032.

