

# POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 15, No.4

Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Fall, 1997

## POTOWMACK CHAPTER'S 15TH ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1997

The Potowmack Chapter's Annual Meeting is set for Sunday, October 5, 1997 from 1-5pm. It will be held at the WOODLAWN PLANTATION (on Route 1 at Mount Vernon Pkwy.). This year's event promises to be grand, but you must RSVP by September 30 to Norma Vermillion 451-0572, Liz Smith at 768-1697 or Joan Van Ryzen at 799-4520. **PLEASE BRING YOUR ELECTION BALLOT.** We'd also appreciate it if you could bring one or two native plants for the gardens at Woodlawn Plantation and native seeds from your backyard in small, labeled packets for the seed exchange. The tentative schedule for the meeting follows.

1:00 pm **MEET AND GREET.** Meet other chapter members and browse the sale table and seed exchange.

1:30 pm **SPEAKERS:** (tentative) Mary Painter, VNPS Founding Director, will speak on how and why she started VNPS in 1982. Susan Olsen, Director of Woodlawn Plantation, will give a brief history of Woodlawn. She will also address a volunteer opportunity to put in a Virginia native plant garden or trail at the site. And, Marion Lobstein, Professor of Biology at NoVA and wildflower expert, will talk about Virginia native plants of colonial times.

2:15 pm. **THOUGHTS, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:** Environmental, ecological and conservation concerns of our elected officials and our members. Congressman Jim Moran, or his Chief of Staff, Paul Reagan, and Virginia State Senator, Joe Gartlan, will share their concerns with us and listen to your thoughts and questions on this subject.

3:15 pm. **POTOWMACK CHAPTER BUSINESS MEETING:** A presentation on the 1997-98 budget, election results, service awards and door prizes, and charter member recognition.

4:00pm. **MANSION TOUR AND REFRESHMENTS.** A guided tour of the Woodlawn Plantation and gardens, followed by refreshments at the Pope-Leighey House. Lauren Pope will be on hand to answer any questions you may have about Marjorie Leighey's gardens and home.

We hope to involve all our Potowmack Chapter members in Woodlawn's efforts to establish the native plant gardens. Any contributions you can offer would be greatly appreciated. Michelle Hearsey, Woodlawn's horticulturalist, is especially interested in various ferns, Mary Ballard Aster, White Bleeding Heart, Blue Lobelia, Virginia Bluebells and Foamflower.

Please RSVP as soon as possible, and Charter Members, we hope to see all of you at this meeting. Take advantage of this offer. The usual entrance fee to get into Woodlawn is \$6.00, but that has been waived for this event. Hope to see all of you there and don't forget your ballots, plants and seed packets. If you can't make it to the meeting, ballots can be mailed, but must be received by September 30.

### FALL PLANT SALE IS HERE!!

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1997**

**10:00am-3:00pm at**

**Green Spring Gardens Park**

Members of the propagation committee have worked hard to keep our sale plants alive and well. We're anxious to have them adopted and cared for by loving native plant enthusiasts.

We will have a wide assortment of summer and fall blooming plants, as well as some woody plants, ground covers and ferns. Although most summer and fall plants are sun lovers, we have a good variety that will thrive in shade and/or part shade.

If you have donations of native plants, have questions about the sale, or would like to help with the sale, please call Gerry Pratt at 323-1094. Hope to see you there.

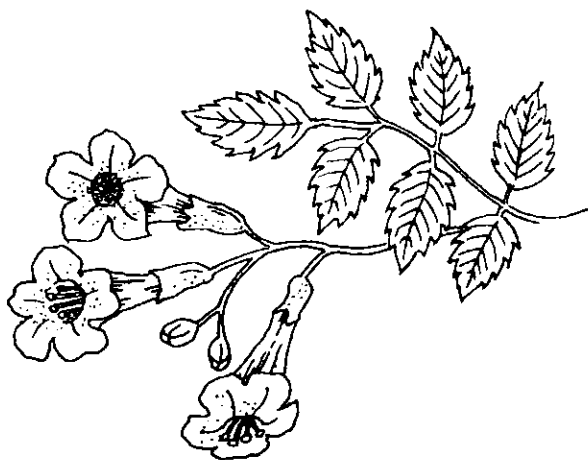
## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I guess this is suppose to be the time that I get to give my good-byes, as I am not going to be on the ballot for next year. But good-byes are really not necessary. I plan to continue to be very involved in the VNPS and with the Potowmack Chapter in particular. Just because I am not president does not mean that I won't be able to contribute to this wonderful organization. Not only do I plan to be active, but I trust that all our board members (whether stepping down or not), as well as the membership in general, will try to participate at every opportunity they find possible. It is everybody's responsibility to work hard and make their organization the best that it can be!

I look back upon this past year with mixed impressions. I certainly am happy with some of things we accomplished, yet we could have done so much more. Not everything went as I had hoped, but I had a rewarding experience and hope I helped make at least some positive impacts. All members should make an attempt to participate in any manner they can, then, they also can find out just how rewarding it can be. If it was all hard work, then I doubt I would try to be very active. In reality I had a lot of fun these past few years as a member and so plan to continue to be active for somewhat selfish reasons. You should give volunteering a try too. You won't be sorry.

So read all the newsletters carefully. Consider buying some raffle tickets (they'll be available at the plant sale). Support the fall plant sale. Attend the chapter's annual meeting (it looks like a REALLY great one this year!). Check out the state's annual meeting in Williamsburg. Just be active! Every little bit helps and goes a long way in helping conserve native plants and their habitats. I look forward to seeing everyone throughout the next exciting new year. Thanks for a great, educational and fun year! Let's make the next one EVEN better!

Alonso



## PLEASE NOTE

The program by David Yost scheduled for September 25 is **CANCELLED**. We will try to reschedule at a later date.

It's still not too late to make plans to attend the State Annual Meeting in Williamsburg September 19-21! See your State Newsletter for details.

We're on the World Wide Web:  
[www.hort.vt.edu/VNPS/](http://www.hort.vt.edu/VNPS/)  
 Check it out!

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

### Board Officers

|                |                  |          |
|----------------|------------------|----------|
| President      | Alonso Abugattas | 528-8808 |
| Vice President | Norma Vermillion | 451-0572 |
| Secretary      | Sally Sieracki   | 978-5865 |
| Treasurer      | Dustin Pratt     | 323-1094 |

### Committee Chairs

|                       |                  |                |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Botany                | Cris Fleming     | (301) 657-9289 |
| Conservation          | Kathleen Kust    | 836-5868       |
| Education             | Nancy Luria      | 351-9723       |
| Hospitality           | Joan Van Ryzin   | 799-4520       |
| Membership            | Anne Crocker     | 437-0355       |
| Native Plant Trail    | Vacant           |                |
| Newsletter            | Pam Newitt       | (301) 949-5066 |
| Program               | Beth Smith       | 644-1760       |
| Propagation and Sales | Gerry Pratt      | 323-1094       |
| Publications          | Liz Smith        | 768-1697       |
| Publicity             | Norma Vermillion | 451-0572       |
| Site Registry         | Jane Collins     | 525-1304       |

## June 16 Walk By the Powerline Golf Course

A small group of VNPS members went to Prince William County for a walk in the woods behind the Powerline Golf Course. Our guide was Rod Simmons, president of the Maryland Native Plant Society. We saw trees approaching old growth size; a fifteen or sixteen foot circumference chestnut oak among them. Many varieties of toads and birds, and several box turtles crossed our path.

Plants of note include Spreading Chervil, a hillside of Christmas Ferns and also seeming acres of Maple Leaf Viburnums, Shining Club Moss, Showy Orchis, Indian Cucumber, Bloodroot, Chain Fern, large stands of Hay Scented Ferns, Charming Sedge, Putty Root, and Trailing Arbutus next to the Mountain Laurel growing on a slate outcrop. A labyrinth of streams cut rectangularly through black slate, with Mountain Laurel and Leucothoe hanging over the steep banks. Many varieties of moss clung to the rock at the edge of the streams. It was an enchanting walk, even though we did not locate any of the globally rare Small Whorled Pogonia that are said to grow in this area. Or maybe our time there was magical, in part, because this holy grail remained out of reach. A floral inventory of this site would be a good idea, given that development encroaches on all sides.

## Lorton Prison Site by Kathleen Kust

The Lorton prison will close in the next four years. This was part of the budget agreement between Congress and the White House reached in the last week of July. This means that our ongoing natural resources survey now surfaces to play a key role in shaping land management development plans. It should become easier for us to get permission to survey the site at our discretion; when the plants are easy to spot, rather than having to stay with the birders or butterfly counters. Please call Kathleen Kust at: (703) 836-5868 if you want to join some of the first people allowed on the 3,200 acre site, to see what plants we can find.

For more information about the transfer of the site over to the Department of the Interior, and the recent approval by the Fairfax County Planning Commission for a 3,300 housing unit development called Laurel Hill, and the Fairfax County Supervisor's decision to leave the land undeveloped, see: The Alexandria Journal, Thursday, July 31, 1997, front page, top story: "Lorton: In Four Years, Gone", and The Washington Post, Tuesday, August 5, 1997, Metro Section: "Leave Lorton Land Open, Fairfax Supervisors Urge"

### POTOMACK CHAPTER VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

#### \_\_\_\_ New Membership

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_

#### \_\_\_\_ Membership Renewal

\_\_\_\_ Individual \$15      \_\_\_\_ Family \$25      \_\_\_\_ Student \$10  
\_\_\_\_ Patron \$50      \_\_\_\_ Sustaining \$100      \_\_\_\_ Life \$400  
\_\_\_\_ Associate (group) \$40: Delegate Name \_\_\_\_\_

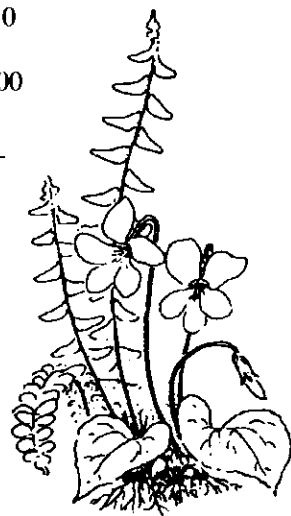
To give a gift membership: Enclose dues, name and address.

I wish to make an additional contribution to the Potomack Chapter  
in the amount of \_\_\_\_\$10 \_\_\_\_\$25 \_\_\_\_\$50 \_\_\_\_\$100 \$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Check here if you do not wish your name to be  
exchanged with similar organizations.

\_\_\_\_ Check here if you do not wish  
to be listed in the chapter directory.

Make checks payable to VNPS and mail to:  
VNPS Membership Chairperson, 3924 Cobbler Mountain Road. Deleplane, VA. 20125



## NATIVE PLANT TRAIL WORK DAYS AT THE STATE ARBORETUM

by Mary Pockman

This fall, Potowmack Chapter members have an opportunity to help with the first major planting on the State Arboretum's new Virginia Native Plant Trail. All interested volunteers are invited to come for all or part of the day on any of the three planned work days: Wednesday, October 1, and two Saturdays, October 4 and November 8, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., rain or shine. Those who take part in the October work days will be planting ferns and wildflowers, and also digging holes to check soil depth around large limestone outcrops. This way, the planned placement of woody plants can be adjusted accordingly. Workers on November 8 will be planting shrubs and small trees. Weeding, mulching, and continued control of invasive exotics will fill out each day's assignment. Beverages and snacks will be provided, and tools will be available; bring your lunch, anything you need to work comfortably, and, if you like, your own favorite tools. For more information, or to let the planners know you're coming, please call 540 837-1758, ext. 26. The Arboretum is located on route 50 about 10 miles east of Winchester.

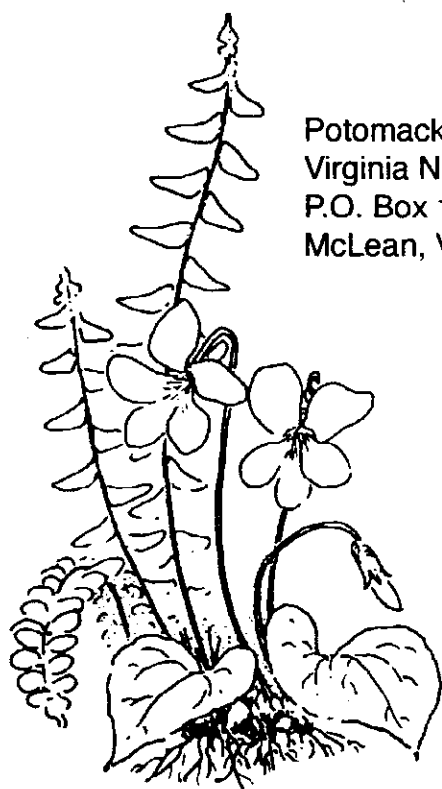
## The Marie Butler Leven Preserve

by Kathleen Kust

This almost twenty acre estate was given to the Fairfax County Park Authority, but never developed into a horticultural center, as planned because of budget constraints. The Park Authority has asked us to inventory the site, and participate and offer our expertise in the removal of invasive species. Native species are being displaced at the edges of cleared areas, and mature trees are being smothered by plants such as porcelain berry.

The Park Authority plans to remove undesirable plants from specific areas, and then restore native plant associations in their place. There are edges between trees and mowed grass, potential area for a meadow or restore a tree grove that had been cleared. Fairfax ReLeaf is involved, and the preserve's neighbors seem to like the idea of restoring the preserve.

The preserve is located on the eastern edge of Fairfax County, close to north Arlington. It is on Kirby Road, near the GW Parkway. No dates have been set, and our part in it is not yet specific. Watch this newsletter for updates, and call Kathleen Kust at: (703) 836-5868, to be on the list of people wanting to participate.



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

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