

POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 15, No.3

Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Summer, 1997

A RUNNING THEME

You may notice that throughout this issue, there is a common theme; one of volunteerism and taking action. This organization's mission may be to promote and conserve native plants, but without the help and action of its members, that goal can never be reached. Please take the time to think about which direction you want this chapter to go and how you can best get us there. There are many volunteer opportunities, some with long term commitments, others that would only be a small amount of time. This chapter is almost 400 strong. If each of us took just a small amount of time out of our day, week or month, our goals would be that much more attainable.



ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS

It is of utmost importance that you check your mailing label to make sure your membership is not expired! Your membership is vital to us and we are sure it is extremely important to you as well. Check your label for the date your membership expires and if it is soon, please renew!

DID YOU KNOW...

The next board meeting is July 24 at 7:30pm at Green Spring

We want to see you there!!!

Watch for program meetings coming this fall!!

DID YOU ALSO KNOW...

- *There is a Program Meeting for our Chapter almost every month?
- *All meetings and programs are open to all members? In fact, we encourage you to come. We want to see your smiling face!!
- *The speakers at the programs are professional biologists, botanists, authors, and all around interesting folks?
- *Food is available?
- *There are door prizes?
- *You can come early and attend the board meeting first and speak out. Tell us all your great ideas on what we should be doing as a chapter, and how we should be doing it.
- *You can meet other plant people such as yourself and talk plant stuff.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The deadline to submit articles, events, etc for the next newsletter will be Friday, August 22, 1997. Please send or e-mail me your contributions

Long Branch Nature Center 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd. Arlington, Va. 22204. E-mail at <pnewitt@erols.com>. Or give your stuff to Alonso Abugattas

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By any measure it has been a busy Spring. The Society continues to grow and experience great success. The Spring Plant Sale was remarkably well attended, despite rain, and the Chapter's new intern at Green Spring Gardens Park, Kelly Wilson, seems to be a real go-getter. She seems very motivated and is looking into new interpretive uses of the Native Plant Trail at Green Spring. The Chapter has also been well represented at several special events and we had to turn many other events down due to shortage of time and volunteers. Still, it's nice to be in great demand. It only shows that many people are really willing to learn about natives.

If you have a chance and can help out in any of our endeavors, I encourage you to do so. We could always use another regular participant at the board meetings (they are always open to the public, you know) or become a board member. We are looking for people who can offer fresh perspectives and ideas. We are often asked to have a display at a special event or to provide a speaker. Many local parks also ask for help with plant inventories (such as Huntley Meadows or Lorton) and we could always use a hand at identifying flora. It is a very rewarding experience to help out and is usually a learning experience as well. Contact me if you are interested. My number is (703) 358-6535 days or (703) 528-8808 evenings. You won't regret it and neither will the plants.

The State organization has also been very busy and a new web site is soon to be unveiled. Having already seen part of it myself, I can definitely say that it will be a real benefit to the VNPS and a source of information for its members. As long as everyone continues to support the Society and do their part in promoting native plants, not only will the VNPS thrive, but the real winners will be the native plant species that inhabit our area.

VICE-PRESIDENT

Congratulations to our new vice-president, Norma Vermillion. She was voted in to take office at our May board meeting and will immediately start preparations for the chapter's annual meeting. Norma is a charter member who is the current Potowmack Chapter Publicity Chair. She has served in a variety of offices in a number of different environmental and civic associations. The Board is happy she has accepted being the new vice-president and are confident she will do great job in that role. Anyone who can suggestion a speaker for the annual meeting should contact her or the president. Congratulations again Norma!

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The chapter is always in need of member willing to volunteer a few hours of their time each month. If you like to do botanical surveys and are interested in conservation, call Kathleen Kust at (703) 836-7488.

If you like to work in the dirt and are interested in learning about propagation, call Gerry Pratt at (703)323-1094.

If you can help maintain the chapter's data base of members, (MAC-File Maker Pro) call Anne Crocker at (703) 437-0355.

We also need plant enthusiasts who enjoy talking to and working with school children. If you have an idea for a program, or know someone who is a good speaker that would be of interest to native plant people, call Beth Smith at (703) 644-1780.

If your bag is decision making, we could use you on the board or to be a committee chairperson. Call Alonso Abugattas at (703) 358-6535

**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

WILDFLOWER CLIPPINGS

Compiled by Alonso Abugattas

The National Wildlife Federation recently reported in one of its magazines about a cooperative study that was done by ecologists from the Universities of Toronto and Minnesota on the effects of pollution on native grasses. The 12 year study simulated nitrogen emission levels from cars and power plants in the Northeast. Their results: native grasses, which frequently occur in nitrogen poor areas, had impaired growth. Non-native grasses, especially from Europe, were imported for agricultural development and thrive on large doses of nitrogen. Thus roadsides frequently have non-native grasses that are stimulated by emissions. These grasses out-compete natives and subsequently, species diversity declines.

The May 25th issue of the Arlington Journal Newspaper had an excellent article on native plants by Helene Hollander Lepkowski. Entitled "Growing Native". It mentioned the many benefits of growing native plants while not ignoring the real importance of habitat conservation. Ms. Lepkowski really did her research and not only quoted Potowmack Chapter members (she attended our sale at Green Spring) but those of many like-minded organizations such as the Maryland Native Plant Society and Fairfax Releaf. She stressed the importance of not planting invasive species while focusing on all the unique virtues of our Northern Virginia natives.

Just about every issue of American Butterflies, a publication of the North American Butterfly Association, contains articles on the associations between native plants and the butterflies that depend on them as caterpillar hosts or nectar sources. Recent examples: "The Brilliance of Asters (Part 1. The East)" that focuses on native asters and their use by butterflies to obtain nectar or provide caterpillar food (for Pearl Crescent Butterflies in our area), "The Gaea Gardener: False Nettles"

which talks about its use by Red Admiral and Eastern Comma butterfly larvae, and "Native Eupatoriums for the Butterfly Garden". The articles are interesting and often local to our area.

The New Columbia Audubon Society of Washington, D.C. and the Washington Area Butterfly Club have initiated attempts to establish large stands of White Turtlehead (Chelone glabra) at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. They are hoping that if they succeed in getting large stands of turtlehead to become established, they can then attempt to introduce Baltimore Checkerspot Butterflies. Baltimore Checkerspots are very uncommon and one of the primary host plants for the caterpillars are Chelone species. Since there doesn't appear to be any nearby colonies of the butterfly, it is unlikely that they would find the plants themselves. Once the Checkerspots are established, however, they could spread to other nearby areas having suitable habitats. Anyone who would like to donate plants can contact Alonso at (703)358-6535 days or (703)528-8808 evenings.

The Maryland Native Plant Society newsletter recently reported about a study that found that half of the major wildland weeds were introduced for horticultural use. The results are taken from a Brooklyn Botanic Garden book entitled Invasive Plants: Weeds of the Global Garden which covers 82 invasive plant species. The study makes use of the two most comprehensive natural area lists, one by the Nature Conservancy and the other by the National Pest Plant Councils. Many of the plants listed are still being sold commercially. This just goes to prove that gardeners need to be careful about what plants they choose to use in their home landscape. Researchers are reported to be looking into reliable methods of predicting which species can become problematic so that new infestations can hopefully be prevented.

WELCOME...

The Potomack Chapter would like to welcome our new members to our organization. We hope to meet you all soon at one of our events or at a board meeting. Welcome.

Nancy Adamson
 Anthony M Bates
 Dorothy Beling
 Dena Bergstrom
 Helen H Biggs
 Maria Borgia
 Alicia J Boyd
 Kathryn S Cochrane
 Darlene Dickerson
 Daniel Elmer
 Joslin D Gallatin
 Gary Hilbert
 Christopher J Hoh
 Donald W Hyatt
 Nick Ide
 Kathy Walden Kaplan
 Michael Knapp
 Gail Labman
 Diane Lumpkin
 Mrs Janice Marriott
 Lois Matteson
 David A Morris
 Hawsie Nash
 R R & J O B Neuswanger
 Pam Newitt
 Doreen Sechak Peters
 J Burt Peterson
 Marjorie Pitts
 Donna Pomsouvan
 Carol Preston
 Elizabeth H Price
 Mike & Helen Redman
 Christina Roberts
 Barbara C Robinson
 Laurie Ross
 Ingrid Schulze
 Elaine Sevy
 Ms E G Squeri

Susan F Stirn
 Barbara & Randy Swart
 Mary V Thompson
 Bernis & Peter Von Zur Muehlen
 Sharon K Watkins
 Mary Anne Young
 Mark & Anita Zabek

SCHOOL GRANT

Barcroft Elementary School in Arlington, Virginia recently sent us a thank you letter acknowledging the \$200 grant the Potowmack Chapter awarded them. The principal wrote that the funds were used for Wildflower ID classes for 2 teachers, plant books for their library, and will be used to purchase native plants for the school grounds. The plants have yet to be purchased while the school yard plans are prepared and approved.

RAFFLE TICKETS

Please remember to support the State VNPS fundraising efforts and purchase some quilt raffle tickets. They are \$1 a piece or 6 for \$5. Contact Alonso at (703) 358-6535 days or (703) 528-8808 evenings to get your share or get them at any of our meetings.

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS

We would like to thank all the volunteers who pitched in for our spring plant sale.

The following all helped out in the beds and at the sale:

Vivian Attermeyer
 Laura Beaty
 Shirley Gay
 Caol Jori
 Joanne Krumviede
 Lori Markoff
 Marianne Mooney
 Patricia Murphy
 Dust Pratt
 Sally Sieraki
 Beth Smith
 Elaine Squeri
 Billy Trump and
 Rachel Yungman

The following all donated plants to the sale.

Laura Beaty
 Tiana Camfiora
 Margaret Chatham
 Shirley Gay
 Linda Hollenberg
 Frankie Hull
 Joanne Krumviede
 Marianne Mooney
 Walker Newman
 Dust and Gerry Pratt
 Bob Schmidt
 Sally Sieraki
 Beth Smith
 Ralph Wall and
 a mysterious donor whose initials are DLP. Please let us know who you are.

The following all volunteered at the sale.

Alonso Abugattas
 Tiana Camifiord
 Anne Crocker
 Gladys Quintero
 Bob Schmidt and
 Kevin Smith

The following all assisted in preparing for the sale.

Frances Chandler
 Margaret Chatham
 Susan Hornbostel
 Ginny McNeer and
 Norma Vermillion

THANK YOU

A special thank you goes out to Lori Markoff, Vivian Attermeyer, and all the members who helped promote the Potowmack Chapter and native plants at the various events we were invited to attend. By manning information booths and talking to the visitors attending these special events they did a great service for the Virginia Native Plant Society and our cause. Thank you notes from the Wildlife Art and Photography Show, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Potomac Overlook Regional Park Heritage Festival speak of their wonderful work at these events. We are all grateful for their commitment and time. If you would like to help out at any special events please call Alonso at (703) 358-6535 days or (703) 528-8808 evenings. We can always use more help.

BUTTERFLIES AND BLOOMS

Do you like butterflies? Join us for one of these butterfly counts and learn all about butterflies and the plants they visit. It's a great way to get outdoors and help maintain records of our butterfly populations. No experience necessary. Binoculars and field guides are helpful. Call Alonso Abugattas for more information on these trips. Daytime (703) 358-6535 or evenings, (703) 528-8808 unless otherwise noted

Monday, July 14, 7am-5pm. Roosevelt National Forest. Contact Peter Stangel, (703) 319-1655.

Monday, July 14, 8:30am-5pm. Manassas/Bull Run. Contact Peter Stangel, (703) 319-1655.

Saturday, July 19, Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. Leaders needed. Contact Joe Coleman (540) 554-2542 or E-mail at wcoleman@leo.vsla.edu.

Sunday, July 20. Fairfax/Arlington Count

Sunday, July 27. DC Count

Sunday, August 3. Airlie Count

REPORT OF THE 1997 SPRING PLANT SALE

Gerry Pratt

The spring sale was held on Saturday, May 17th. With each sale, our loyal and hard working crew gets more and more professional. The success of our sales is directly attributable to the assistance our volunteers are able to give to our customers.

Some people are very savvy and appreciate the plants we offer. On the other hand, many are intrigued by the idea of using native plants, but need a lot of assistance in choosing which plants are right for their gardens. They have come to trust us so much, that they are willing to buy ephemeral that really look sick by mid-May, knowing they'll be beautiful come next spring.

Behind the sales counters, our more experienced volunteers are happy to help the newer members of our crew. After working a few sales, I've seen the remarkable growth in the knowledge that our volunteers can share with others. The plant sale is a wonderful educational tool that can spread the word about the benefit of using native plants. The public is hungry to know how they can successfully grow them.

Each year we have added more picture cards with information to help the public and our volunteers select the right plant for the right place in the garden. Everyone was so excited and enthusiastic about all the information, that they barely noticed the few sprinkles of rain that fell.

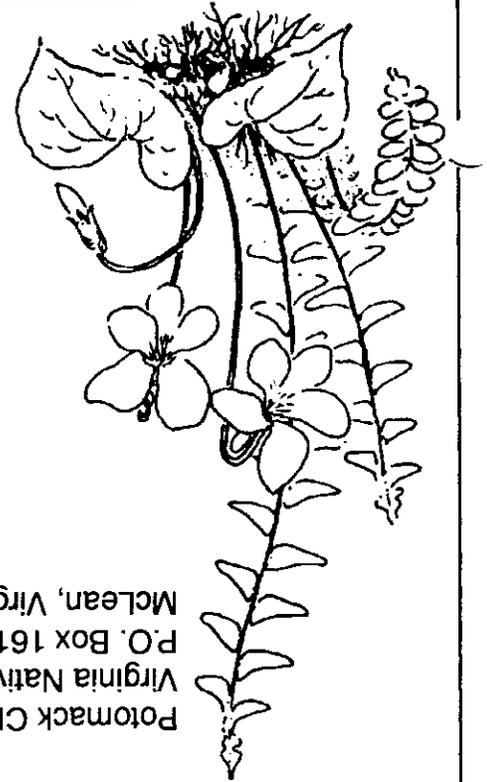
For the last several years, we have been able to offer a few small woody native plants. We hope to increase the number in the future, but we need your help. Propagation of woody plants requires more time, effort and space that we can spare. If you have a wooded lot and can share some small native shrubs and saplings, consider potting them up early this summer and nursing them along until the September plant sale. Mark September 13th on your calendar for our autumn sale.

This spring we offered 119 varieties of plants. We prepared a total of 1878 plants for the sale, of which 882 were donated and the rest were grown in our propagation beds at Green Spring.

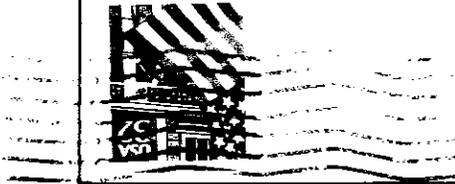
After the sale, one of our customers called to check on some cultural information for a spice bush she purchased. She commented, "You all seem to be having so much fun!". We do....because we approach the sale with missionary zeal....that of sharing the good news of the benefit of including native plants in the garden.

If you want to be a part of this very interesting and successful chapter activity, call Gerry Pratt at (703)323-1094. We do work hard, but we have a good time too.

Please verify your address
information and your renewal
date on the mailing label!



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



**POTOMACK CHAPTER
VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY**

New Membership

Membership Renewal

Name (s) _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone (Home) _____ (Work) _____

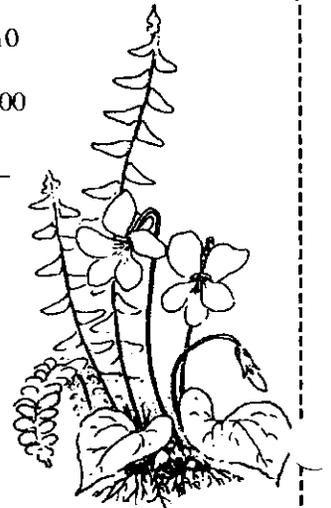
Individual \$15 Family \$25 Student \$10
 Patron \$50 Sustaining \$100 Life \$400
 Associate (group) \$40: Delegate Name _____

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