

POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 16, No 5

Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Sept/Oct 1998

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW
FOR THE POTOWMACK CHAPTER'S FALL PLANT SALE
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 12, GREEN SPRING GARDENS PARK
10 AM TO 3 PM

POTOWMACK CHAPTER TO HOST STATE ANNUAL MEETING SEPTEMBER 18-20

As you should know by now, this year's state convention will be held right here in Northern Virginia. This is a wonderful opportunity for those of you who have not previously attended a state annual meeting to find out what goes on without having to travel. Join your fellow members from all over the state and see why these conventions are so much fun. We want a good Potowmack Chapter turnout! Friday night's schedule includes talks by VNPS founder **Mary Painter** and naturalist **John Trott**, and after Saturday night's banquet at the Holiday Inn, 2460 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria, hear **James Duke** speak on medicinal plants as described in his book, *The Green Pharmacy*. (The public is also invited to this lecture beginning at 8:30 p.m., for a fee of \$10.) There is a full schedule of exciting field trips being offered on Saturday and on Sunday morning. For further details, consult your August copy of the VNPS *Bulletin* or call Liz Smith at 768-1697. If you haven't yet sent in your registration, DO IT NOW!

CHAPTER ANNUAL MEETING OCTOBER 11, 1998, FROM 2-4 P.M.

Potowmack Chapter's own **Annual Meeting** will take place at **Pohick Regional Library**, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke, Virginia. This is an occasion to visit with other chapter members, participate in a short business meeting, vote on the nominations for new officers and annual budget, and enjoy a slide presentation and walk of the grounds offered by **Beth Smith** and focused on native plants and butterfly gardening. Beth, a chapter member and propagation beds worker, is a volunteer landscape coordinator in charge of installing and maintaining the library grounds. She is also a master gardener, naturalist, and landscape consultant and is frequently interviewed on this and other subjects including backyard wildlife habitats. Attendees are asked to **bring finger foods**; the chapter will furnish drinks and utensils. **Please call for reservations by Thursday, October 8**, to Norma Vermillion at 451-0572, Joan Van Ryzin at 799-4520, or Sally Sieracki at 978-5865. Pohick Library is near the intersection of Sydenstricker and Old Keene Mill Roads in West Springfield. Park in the overflow lot in the park adjacent to the library. If you can't attend, please send in your proxy ballot (see p.5) by October 8.

A CALL FOR E-MAIL

Do you have a computer with e-mail capability at home or at work? Would you like to receive announcements of plant-related events that miss the deadline for inclusion in our chapter newsletter, *Potowmack News*? If so, please send an e-mail message to bfarron@vais.net stating that you would like to be placed on the VNPS e-mail list. The VNPS notices should not fill up your mailbox; there have been only two so far this year.

We have correct e-mail addresses for only about 10 percent of the Potowmack Chapter's members. Let's increase the percentage of members who receive timely information about plant rescues, spur-of-the-moment field trips, native plant seminars, opportunities to assist with plant surveys, and so on. If you later decide you do not want to continue receiving VNPS electronic mail, we will promptly honor your request to be removed from the list.

BOARD OFFICERS

President	Norma Vermillion	451-0572
Vice President	Liz Smith	768-1697
Secretary	Marianne Mooney	534-8179
Treasurer	Bill Kreitz	620-4415

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Botany	Cris Fleming	301 657-9289
Conservation	Kathleen Kust	836-5868
Education	-open-	
Hospitality	Joan Van Ryzin	799-4520
Exhibits/Displays	Lori Markoff	573-7121
Membership/Recognition	Anne Crocker	437-0355
Native Plant Trail	-open-	
Newsletter Editor	Sally Sieracki	978-5865
Labeling/Mailing	Markoff family	573-7121
P.O. Box Mail Distributor	Laura Beaty	534-8746
Programs	Liz Smith	768-1697
Propagation / Plant Sales	Gerry Pratt	323-1094
Publications	Roberta Day	560-5528
Publicity	Barbara Farron	354-9668
Site Registry	-open-	
State's Annual Meeting	Liz Smith	768-1697
	Alonso Abugattas	w 228-6535
Chapter Annual Meeting	Beth Smith	644-1760
Immediate Past President	Alonso Abugattas	w 228-6535

NEED LANDSCAPING HELP?

Sometimes your own landscaping ideas just don't cut it, or you don't even have time to *think* about landscaping your yard. That's the time to call one of the following Potowmack Chapter members with professional experience using native plants: **Marion Cambel**, landscape designer, 356-3230
Jane Collins, landscape designer, 525-1304
Susan Hornbostel, landscape designer, 202 966-3107

Kathleen Kust, landscape architect, 836-5868
Beth Smith, landscape consultant and naturalist, 644-1760

A list with additional information on each person's credentials, interests, and experience will be available at the plant sale. If you would like your name added to the list, please contact the editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

☉ So—what have *you* done recently to help Potowmack Chapter? As we go to press, the Nominating Committee has not been able to find anyone willing to serve as President for the coming year. In my mind, this puts Potowmack Chapter in a precarious situation. I've asked for help for different jobs in every newsletter but have never received a single call in response. With a current membership of 494, where *are* you when we need help to fill offices and committee chairs? Those who help with Propagation and Plant Sales are greatly appreciated, but there are so many other positions that are unfilled that make it difficult to run this Chapter the way it should be run.

☉ At the State Annual Meeting on Sat., Sept. 19, we are opening up Jim Duke's lecture to the public at 8:30 p.m. for a fee of \$10. So, if you know someone who might attend only the lecture, invite them to come and be seated at 8:30 (after the State's business meeting has adjourned). To reserve a seat, call 451-0572 or 768-1697. After his slide presentation, Jim Duke will stay around to autograph his book, *The Green Pharmacy*, which Ginny McNair (chapter member and owner of One Good Tern store) will have on her sale table at the meeting. James Duke, Ph.D., called the world's top herbalist, spends a lot of time globe-trotting and leading eco-tours of the Brazilian/Amazonian rainforests. He is an expert on our interdependence with the plant kingdom. As a botanist, Jim is world-renowned for his knowledge of plant phytochemicals. He's the author of 20 books and scientific articles, the latest being *The Green Pharmacy*.

☉ If you can't attend either the State's or our Chapter's Annual Meeting, please mail in your ballots so that we will have the necessary quorum of votes needed for both elections.

☉ Forty-two (only four VNPS members) attended the July 26 program at Green Spring on Framing Pressed Flower Pictures. Joan and Helen Van Ryzin, artist and gardener, provided a very interesting lecture and demonstration of their craft. Joan's creative art work with pressed flowers is outstanding. Hopefully, she may have a display at our Chapter's Annual Meeting on October 11.

☉ On to other things...One of my favorite plants, purple loosestrife (*Lythrum*), is on the list of 'invasives.' My beautiful plant is 8 feet tall this summer and has been blooming for a month. It attracts many butterflies and hummingbirds. There is a simple, easy way to keep loosestrife from becoming invasive in your yard. As the bloom stems turn brown, go out once a week and snip off the spent stems before seeds develop. It's so simple and easy to do—you just have to remember to do it regularly.

HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE ANNUAL MEETINGS!

Norma Vermillion

FALL PLANT SALE SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH FROM 10 A.M. TO 3 P.M.

The Propagation Committee has worked hard all spring and summer to prepare plants for the fall sale and to keep the beds well watered during what has become a tradition...a very dry summer!

We have prepared a wonderful assortment of native plants that features summer and fall bloomers for both sun and shade. Extend the bloom in your garden by selecting *Boltonias*, *Chelone lyoni*, *Solidagos*, and *Asters*.

Many of our clients have asked us to recommend native plant replacements for exotic ground covers they now use. We are happy to be able to offer a number of species this fall, such as partridgeberry, wild ginger, native carex, and a variety of ferns.

In addition to our native perennials, this fall we will offer a variety of native grasses for those of you who are interested in establishing meadow gardens. Through the generosity of our friends and members, we will also offer a variety of native woody plants and vines.

If you are **planning to donate plants for the fall sale, please bring them in as soon as possible** so that we can include them in our inventory and assure ourselves that they have weathered the stress of transplantation.

We invite all of you to come to the sale at Green Spring Gardens Park and to bring your friends. Our committee members will be happy to help you with suggestions for landscaping with the plants we offer. Our plants will again be divided between sun and shade tents, and there will be sections for ferns, woody plants, grasses, and ground covers. We have tried to arrange the plants so that you can spot the particular plants that will meet your needs.

If you are interested in helping with the preparation for the sale and/or the sale itself, please contact Gerry Pratt at 323-1094. We are always looking for enthusiastic workers for our propagation beds. We have a great group of people who enjoy sharing their enthusiasm for native plants and wildlife.

PLANTS FOR THE LATE SUMMER GARDEN by Marianne Mooney

As the katydids and crickets chime the summer's end, the garden experiences a revival in late-summer-blooming perennials. While the dominant flowering plants are sun-loving meadow flowers, there are also some notable shade-tolerant species. Both the lobelias, *L. cardinalis* and *L. siphilitica*, grow in shady conditions and offer the gardener a choice of deep red or blue flowers. Turtlehead has unusual snapdragon-like flowers of pink (*Chelone lyoni*) or white (*C. glabra*). In the aster family, *A. cordifolius*, which is blue, and *A. divaricatus*, the white wood aster, provide late summer bloom in the woodland garden.

Asters are also prominent in the sunny garden. English gardeners have been growing our native asters (their Michaelmas daisies) for 250 years. Of the many species available, *Aster novae-angliae* (New England aster), *A. patens*, and *A. laevis* make great replacements for the ubiquitous

chrysanthemum. *Boltonia asteroides*, a large bouquet-like plant of white composite flowers, is a wonderful companion plant to the asters. And for a yellow accent to the purples and whites, choose one of the many varieties of goldenrod (which do **not** produce wind-borne allergens as is sometimes alleged). Blue-stemmed goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*) and zigzag goldenrod (*S. flexicaulis*) are small at 1 to 3 feet. Seaside goldenrod (*S. sempervirens*) is much larger at 4 to 5 feet but with delicate yellow plumes that wave in the breeze. An added bonus of these plants are the butterflies that will be flocking to your garden.

These perennials and more will be available at the VNPS tent on Garden Day at Green Spring Park on September 12. You're sure to find other late-summer plants and ideas for your own garden as well.

TIPS FROM THE PROPAGATION BEDS by Gerry Pratt*

Fall is an ideal time to sow seeds. Perennials germinate best when planted outdoors in the fall. We will offer a variety of native plant seeds at the Fall Sale which have been collected from our propagation beds.

By planting outdoors, you avoid damping off and many other diseases that attack seedlings. By planting in the fall, you provide the alternating periods of warm and cold temperatures that most perennials need to break dormancy and that are necessary for good seed germination.

Select a spot in the yard that does not get full sun and which is more or less protected. Section off this area with lumber or blocks. Place your seed flats within these boundaries after you have prepared them. Cover with an old screen or metal mesh that rests on the blocks or bricks and secure the covering with a couple of rocks or bricks. This arrangement protects the plants from mischievous small animals that enjoy frustrating the serious gardener.

For those of you who would like a recipe for a seed-growing medium, I would recommend 1 part perlite or vermiculite, 1 part sand, and 2 parts peat moss. Mix and moisten, spread out in the flat, and scatter seed on top. Small seeds should not be covered. Larger seeds should be very lightly covered. Press seeds lightly into the medium. Keep lightly watered for the first 2 weeks. Natural rainfall in the autumn should be sufficient after the initial period. When planting outdoors, it is not necessary to sterilize the medium or the flats. Label with the name of the species and the date planted.

Seedlings will emerge the following spring for most plants. When they get a set of "true" leaves (characteristic of the species), transplant them to little individual pots and allow them to grow until they are big enough to hold their own in the garden. Some seeds may require more than 1 year to germinate. Be patient and place their flats in an out-of-the-way corner of the yard which is protected (as described above) and allow nature to take its course. Nothing makes you feel quite as professional a gardener as growing perennials from seed. When they are native plants, the joy is almost immeasurable!

If you are serious about propagating and gardening with native plants, I highly recommend a book that is almost a bible on this subject: *Growing and Propagating Wild Flowers* by Harry R. Phillips. It is a softback published in 1985 by the University of NC Press and sells for about \$20.

* If you have a specific propagation topic you would like discussed by Gerry in a future issue, address it to Gerry Pratt, care of Editor, *Potowmack News*, 4125 Elizabeth Lane, Fairfax, VA 22032; or call the editor at 978-5865/ e-mail Sieracki@erols.com.

WELCOME...

The Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society welcomes the following new members who have joined between mid June and mid August: Leah Daniels, Springfield; David Farrar, Vienna; E. Lyn and E. Dwight Fielder, Arlington; Marilyn Fraley, Fairfax; Gilah G. Goldsmith, Arlington; Arlene Kigin, Arlington; John C. Loyd, Falls Church; Community Lutheran Church, Sterling; Andrew Mavian, Arlington; Stephanie Meeks, Fairfax; Mary Plimpton, Springfield; Richard Schubert, Bethesda; David and Margaret Smith, Vienna; and Clint Stretch, Arlington.

LORTON BOTANICAL SURVEY--FALL SCHEDULE

The fall survey schedule at Lorton Reformatory is tentatively set for the following dates:

Sunday, **August 30** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, **September 12** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunday, **September 27** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, **October 3** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sunday, **October 18** from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

These dates are subject to last minute changes.

If you are on the list of interested people and have not been getting reminder calls, please

excuse this omission due to my heavy workload. Those who are on-line have received e-mail reminders. If you do not have e-mail, there are some options: ask someone who does have e-mail to call you; call me, Kathleen Kust (836-5868), periodically to find out what is going on; or volunteer to set up a phone tree. Together we can make this a successful effort!

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The 1997-1998 Nominating Committee, consisting of Anne Crocker (Chair), Laura Beaty, and Gerry Pratt, is pleased to present the following slate of candidates for offices in the Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society for 1998-1999. At this time, there is no candidate for president.

OFFICERS

President - unfilled

Vice President - **Robert G. Schmidt**: Bob has been a member of VNPS since 1990. As the son of a botanist and a horticulturalist, he has had a life-long interest in native plants. Bob has volunteered at and donated numerous unique wildflowers to the plant sales. He is a retired geologist who volunteers for the Geologic Survey and the Natural History Museum. In September Bob will be in Spain working on a geo-botany project.

Secretary - **Anne Van Ryzin**: Anne has served previously as chapter secretary (90/91), vice president (93/94), and member of the nominating committee (91/93), as well as as a member of the propagation committee. She is a social worker for the Fairfax County Mental Health Dept., and volunteers in the Fairfax County Archaeologist's Office.

Treasurer - **William E. Kreitz**: Bill has been our treasurer for the 1997-98 term. He is a charter member of VNPS and member of the Nature Conservancy. He enjoys landscaping his home with native plants.

AT LARGE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Alonzo Abugattas: Alonzo served as our chapter president during the 1996-97 season and as program chair the year before. He is a naturalist at Long Branch Nature Center with an interest in butterflies as well as native plants.

Beth Smith: Beth Smith is a landscape consultant who works extensively with native plants. One of her projects has been the highly successful gardens at Pohick Regional Library. She served the chapter as program chair in 1996-97 and will be responsible for this year's Chapter Annual Meeting.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE POTOWMACK CHAPTER BYLAWS (Changes are in Bold Print)

Section 5: OFFICERS

5.6 Currently reads: In the absence of the Treasurer, the President shall perform the duties of the Treasurer.

5.6 Proposed change: In the absence of the Treasurer, the President shall perform the duties of the Treasurer. **The Treasurer may, with the approval of the Board, authorize another bonded board member to sign checks.**

5.7 Currently reads: Both the Treasurer and the President shall be bonded.

5.7 Proposed change: The Treasurer, the President, **and any person authorized to sign checks** shall be bonded.

Section 10: NOMINATING COMMITTEE

10.1 Currently reads: The Nominating Committee shall consist of one (1) non-elected Board member and two (2) members-at-large who are not members of the Board. Members of the Nominating Committee shall serve from one annual meeting until the next.

10.1 Proposed change: The Nominating Committee shall consist of one (1) non-elected Board member and two (2) members-at-large who are not members of the Board. **In addition, the Membership Chair shall serve ex-officio (non-voting) as a member of the Nominating Committee.** Members of the Nominating Committee shall serve from one annual meeting until the next.

IF YOU WILL BE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE CHAPTER ANNUAL MEEING ON OCTOBER 11, PLEASE MAIL THE FOLLOWING BALLOT BY OCTOBER 8 TO:

Marianne Mooney, Secretary 1112 N. Powhatan St. Arlington, Va 22205

-----cut here-----

1998-99 Potowmack Ballot

___ I approve the slate of nominees

___ I approve of the proposed bylaw changes

signature

(For Use of Spouse in Family Membership)

___ I approve the slate of nominees

___ I approve of the proposed bylaw changes

signature

LOBSTEIN VIDEO WINS TELLY AWARD

Chapter member **Marion Lobstein** and her former students **John DeMary** and **Suzanne Lohr** have received a prestigious Telly Award for their recently produced video, "Spring Wildflowers of the Mid-Atlantic Region: A New Wildflower Video for 1998" (see also the VNPS *Bulletin* for May 1998). The Telly is a national award established in the early 1980's for excellence in non-network video and film productions. Submissions are judged against a high standard of excellence rather than against each other. There were over 10,000 entries for this year's awards. Winning an award for a first-time production is an honor that speaks to the competence of its creators.

The video includes information on nearly 100 species of spring wildflowers. The slides used to develop the visual part of the video provide details for identification as well as enjoyment of the beauty of the wildflowers. Life cycle information, including descriptions of ecological influences on vegetative and flower production, pollination, seed/fruit dispersal, and underground storage structures is offered, as well as historic medicinal and edible uses for these plants.

Copies of the video will be available for sale at the Fall Plant Sale as well as the State Convention and the Chapter Annual Meeting in October. For more information, contact Marion at 536-7150 or her web page at www.mnsinc.com/mlobst.

WHAT'S YOUR QUESTION?

Q. Is there an official list of Virginia native plants?

A.. It all depends on how inclusive a list you want. The Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) and VNPS have published a booklet and brochures entitled "Native Plants for Conservation, Restoration, and Landscaping: Master List." This information is keyed to region and includes plants that are likely to be available at nurseries. These free brochures are available at chapter meetings or from the DCR web site at www.state.va.us/~dcr/vaher.html or the Project Review Coordinator, Dept. Of Conservation & Recreation, Div. of Natural Heritage, 217 Governor St., Third Floor, Richmond, VA 23219. Another possibility is *The Atlas of the Virginia Flora, 3rd ed.* by A.S. Harvill, Jr. et al. This book is technical and hard to find, but there is a copy at Long Branch Nature Center that you can consult (but not borrow). According to the DCR's Lesa Berlinghoff, "*The Atlas of the Virginia Flora* does contain all known species in Virginia but does not recognize most subspecies and varieties."

Send your questions to the editor at Sieracki@erols.com or call 978-5865.

Chapter Events Calendar

Sep	10	Board meeting
	12	<u>Plant sale</u>
	18-20	<u>Potowmack Chapter hosts State Annual Meeting.</u>
Oct	8	Board meeting newsletter deadline
	11	<u>Potowmack Chapter Annual Meeting</u>
Nov	12	Board meeting



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

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