

**Virginia Native Plant Society  
Potowmack Chapter Board Meeting  
22 January 2015**

The meeting was held at Green Spring Gardens Park. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M. by Alan Ford, president. Attendees were Laura Beaty, Diana Carter, Margaret Chatham, Roberta Day, Sue Dingwell, Donna Murphy, Maureen Pardue, Michael Reinemer, Pat Salamone, and Bob Yacovissi.

**MINUTES**

The minutes from the 4 September 2014 board meeting and the 9 November 2014 chapter annual meeting were approved.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Bob reported that at the end of December our chapter had 450 memberships, of which 90 are family memberships, so we have a total of about 540 members. This constitutes 27% of the total VNPS membership.

Bob and Michael did some research and discovered that the VNPS-POT listserv does not reach a significant percentage of our members; of the 311 subscribers receiving the postings, only 128 are current VNPS members.

The board discussed ideas for improving outreach to our members, including sending emails to those members for whom we have email addresses using a service like MailChimp. To date we have not done this because of concerns about spamming our members. Further discussion is needed to develop a policy on this topic (How often would these membership emails be sent? What subject areas would be appropriate? And so on) and to figure out how to do it and who would be responsible.

The board also discussed the idea of transitioning to an integrated membership/notification system. This has been researched in the past, and such systems were found to be prohibitively expensive.

Alan recommended creating a subcommittee to look into these issues and technologies; he will take the lead.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Maureen provided copies of the budget versus actuals for 2014. As of 31 December 2014 our checking account balance was \$4,869.76 and our money market account balance was \$30,586.18.

Maureen has made some changes in how the 15% fee on all sales made at Green Spring (plants, books, cards, etc.) is accounted for. She noted that when one of our speakers sells copies of his or her book, we cover the Green Spring fee for them so as not to cut into their profit, which is often not large to begin with.

**PROGRAMS**

Donna has a number of programs already planned, but is still looking for speakers for April and May and a walk leader for May. She would like to set up a walk at Riverbend Park in June or July to see the large stand of naturally occurring butterflyweed there.

She said that two of our members, Paul Kovenock and Susan Graham, have offered to allow tours of their gardens. Donna will follow up with them to establish a date. Several VNPS volunteers will be

needed to lead the tours during the four-hour “open garden.” It was noted that other organizations, such as Audubon at Home or master naturalist groups, might also be interested in participating.

Alan suggested Keith Tomlinson, park manager at the Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, as a possible speaker for May or June. Keith has expressed interest in developing a stronger relationship with VNPS and has offered to “host” us at Meadowlark. Sue and Diana plan to follow up with him to see what he has in mind.

#### **OLD BUSINESS - PLANT NOVA NATIVES CAMPAIGN**

The state funding for printing the *Native Plants for Northern Virginia* booklet developed by the Plant NoVA Natives campaign has run out. The steering committee is looking for ways to ensure that the booklet does not go out of print. Alan, who is a member of the steering committee, volunteered the Potowmack Chapter—a partner organization in this group—to help. He distributed copies of a draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the chapter and the Plant NoVA Natives Campaign, documenting a proposed arrangement in which the chapter would accept and hold donations on behalf of the Plant NoVA Natives campaign for the purpose of printing the plant guide. The campaign cannot do this itself because it is not chartered as a non-profit organization and does not have tax-exempt status.

The sense of the board was strong that the booklet should not be allowed to go out of print, but concerns were raised about the legal and tax implications of the arrangement proposed in the draft MOU. Alan will research this further and provide additional information to the board for an electronic vote.

#### **ADJOURNMENT AND FUTURE MEETINGS**

The board meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:05 P.M. The next meeting will be on 5 March 2015 at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted, Patricia P. Salamone, Secretary