POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 25. No.6

Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Nov/Dec 2007

NATIVE PLANT ID WORKSHOP, RUNNYMEDE PARK NOVEMBER 3 FROM 10AM TO 2PM

Field Ecologist Rod Simmons will lead a field trip to one of our most floristically diverse local sites. Nearly 500 species of naturally-occurring native plants occur at VNPS Registry Site, Runnymede



Runnymede Park on right.

Park. We should see a wide diversity of native grasses and wildflowers that were once common in fields and along roadsides in the county, but have become increasingly uncommon as a result of urbanization. We will also see many different species of oaks and other woody plants, including shingle oak, shortleaf pine, ninebark, and silky willow. Bring lunch or a snack. Meet at parking area. Several of us will probably meet at the Tortilla Factory after the walk. For more information call Marianne Mooney at 703-534-8179. Directions: Route 7 west from Tysons Corner to Baron Cameron Avenue. Turn left onto Baron Cameron Avenue and continue for several miles. (Baron Cameron Ave. becomes Elden Street in Town of Herndon.) Just past Sugarland Run, turn right onto Herndon Parkway and proceed a short distance to entrance to

FROM GONDWANALAND TO GEORGETOWN: AN ODYSSEY OF REGIONAL GEOLOGY IN THE GREATER WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA NOVEMBER 8 AT 7:30 PM GREEN SPRING

On Thursday, November 8 at 7:30 pm geologist, Tony Fleming, will give an overview of regional geology, focusing on the origin, distribution, landforms, geochemistry, and soils of major rock units in the Washington, D.C. area including northern Virginia. The talk will examine how these factors, along with modern surface processes and hydrology, interact to produce a variety of different geologic settings throughout the region. Tony is a geologist formerly with the United States Geological Survey and the Indiana Geologic Survey, and is the author of the Washington West Quadrangle Geologic Map and numerous technical reports, such as geohydrologic surveys of local Magnolia Bogs and a geologic resources map for Arlington County. He is currently working on a geologic map of the City of Alexandria and a geologic guide book of Rock Creek Park. Directions to Green Spring Gardens Park: From Interstate

395, exit at Route 236 West (Little River Turnpike); turn right at Braddock Road and go 1 block north to park entrance.

The hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) shown on the right is in the Yorktown National Battlefield along the York River in eastern Virginia. (More on hackberry--page 3)

"You've got to understand what kind of creature a tree is and what kind of a creature the forest is. Because of our great powers of destructiveness, they have to receive from us a certain deference, a certain respect, as we would extend to any neighbor."

Poet Wendell Berry



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

At a very festive annual meeting on October 14th, members celebrated the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society. What started as a small group of local native plant lovers concerned about the destruction of forests, meadows and wetlands by rampant development, now has evolved into an amazing organization with thirteen chapters spread across the state. Development still claims plant habitats and the destructive force of invasive exotic plants threatens native flora in many natural areas. But still we persevere in our message of conservation of and education about Virginia's native plants. In pursuing this mission, we need your help. Spread the word about the beauty of Virginia's flora. Take a friend to see the bluebell or trillium displays in spring, or the wondrous skunk cabbage blooms of winter. Invite a neighbor to one of our meetings or walks, volunteer to remove invasives, help to establish native plant gardens at local schools or join our board. If everyone did just a little, we can grow our organization and continue on for another 25 years.

Marianne Mooney

COUNTY TREE CANOPY GOALS

Trees in our urban and suburban areas can help filter pollutants, cool our homes, absorb carbon dioxide, help retain storm water, and benefit wildlife. But because of development much of northern Virginia has lost its tree cover in the past 30 years. Arlington and Fairfax County have both established goals to increase their tree canopies. When Arlington County adopted an Urban Forest Master Plan in 2004, it set a goal of maintaining 40 percent or more overall tree cover for the County. And in June of this year Fairfax County adopted a goal to achieve 45 percent tree canopy by 2037, the most ambitious of the region.

Fairfax County's goal will raise the tree canopy by an estimated 8 percent and add 20,400 new acres of trees over the next 30 years. Those trees will provide an estimated \$10 million a year in environmental benefits to county residents. To achieve this goal will require private property owners in Fairfax County to actively participate in tree planting and tree preservation.

IS TREE PLANTING TO OFFSET CARBON MERELY GREENWASH FOR INDUSTRIES?

According to Ted Williams in an article in the September/October issue of <u>Audubon</u> magazine the answer to this question is "yes." He says: "Of all the damage done by ill-considered tree planting, none is more dangerous than

BOARD OFFICERS		
President	Marianne Mooney	534-8179
Vice President	Debbie Waugh	941-7987
Secretary	Lee Ann Kinzer	768-4048
Treasurer	Cindy Gustafson	532-4182
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Conservation	Alan Ford	202-213-6196
Education	Vacant	
Membership	Marty Nielson	979-8777
Newsletter	Mary Ann Lawler	684-8622
Programs	Shirley Gay	920-1913
Propagation/Plant Sales	Laura Beaty	534-8746
Publications	Roberta Day	560-5528
Publicity	Becky Super	477 2914
Site Registry	Rod Simmons	
Special Projects	Lesa Schmidt	716-4275
At Large	Bob Yaccovissi	641-8914

(All numbers should include the 703 area code, unless otherwise noted.) *Potowmack News* is published 6 times per year, in January, March, May, July, September, and November. The deadline for submissions is the 15th day of the month prior to publication. Call Mary Ann Lawler for more information or e-mail her at malawler@aol.com.

the false sense of absolution provided by 'carbon offsetting,' a booming industry in which greenhouse gas polluters and governments constrained by the Kyoto protocol purchase supposed mitigation...by jamming seedlings into the earth." He cites numerous large scale tree planting projects used to mitigate the construction of coal-fired power plants or other carbon polluters, where non-native pine and eucalyptus or other trees were planted which replaced or prevented native vegetation or which dried up streams and swamps. Many projects resulted in gross ecological or social devastation. He asserts that planting "faux forest monocultures" of alien trees or even native trees in forests doesn't restore the forests; it prevents the natural regeneration of the many organisms that compose a forest. Trees are not forests, and too many organizations are planting the wrong trees in the wrong places for the wrong reasons. One example is Indonesia where they are converting peat bogs (which trap carbon dioxide) to palm plantations. And many Americans are abetting these practices by paying extra fares to offset carbon when we don't know what trees are being planted where. We're salving our conscience, not helping the planet.

The carbon offsetting which does make excellent sense is that which supports energy conservation or renewable energy or prairie pothole restoration. Williams says one way we can help slow the rate of global warming is "preventing deforestation and restoring cutover forests (usually by letting trees do it, sometimes by carefully planting native and diverse species)." He also says that the tree planting in urban areas is doing good and that planting trees around your house as an alternative to air conditioning is fine. "But don't let carbon polluters and their apologists convince you that these kinds of voluntary measures are going to make a difference." He says mandatory and draconian caps on carbon emissions are the only solution.

3Potowmack News Jul/Aug 2000

<u>CELTIS OCCIDENTALIS L. COMMON</u> <u>HACKBERRY</u> Ulmaceae (Elm Family)

The common hackberry is a 60-100 ft. deciduous tree varying greatly in response to habitat. Its drought tolerance is evident by its ability to thrive in the Great Plains and throughout the eastern United States.

It is elm-like in appearance with rounded crown of spreading or slightly drooping branches. The bark is distinctively lined and warty. Leaves are finely toothed, dull-green, and rough. The common name apparently was derived from hagberry meaning marsh berry, a name used in Scotland for a cherry.

Hackberries are among the best food and shelter trees for wildlife. Its narrow crotches and cavities are good for nesting and hibernation. The greenish flowers are inconspicuous, but are attractive to butterflies. And it is a larval host for several butterfly species including the question mark, mourning cloak, tawny emperor, hackberry butterfly and American snout.

The hackberry is monoecious. Its orangebrown to dark-purple drupes are arranged in clusters and persist for long periods. These leathery raisin like fruits are relished by many birds including quail, pheasants, woodpeckers, and cedar waxwings.

Native Americans pulverized the entire fruit including the seed making a nutritious cake that could be stored. They also used hackberry extracts medicinally for sore throats, colds, and regulation of menstrual periods. Dakota people used the dried fruit as a spice.

Propagation: Stratified seed sown in spring or untreated seed sown in fall. Plants can be rooted from juvenile wood and from root sprouts or suckers.

Seed Collection and Treatment: Pick mature fruits in late summer until winter. Airdry with pulp on or soak overnight and rub pulp off on screen. Store in sealed, refrigerated containers. Stratify 60-90 days at 41 degrees.



OTHER TREES NATIVE TO VIRGINIA WHICH TOLERATE LOW MOISTURE Botanical Name Common Name

Carya glabra pignut hickory Carya pallida sand hickory Carya tomentosa mockernut hickory Celtis occidentalis hackberry Diospyros virginiana persimmon Juniperus virginiana eastern red cedar Pinus echinata shortleaf pine Pinus taeda loblolly pine Pinus virginiana Virginia pine Prunus serotina black cherry Quercus alba white oak Quercus montana chestnut oak Quercus marilandica blackjack oak Quercus stellata post oak Quercus velutina black oak Sassafras albidum sassafras

On October 14, 2007, the Potowmack Chapter celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with many of the original charter members of the Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society (as it was called then) in attendance. Mary Pockman gave a history of the organization, including amusing references to the days of hand written treasurer's ledgers and meeting minutes typed on old typewriters. Brenda Skarphol told of how the native plant trail and garden project at Green Spring evolved over time under her able direction. John Dodge presented slides showing some of the registry sites within the Chapter's organizational boundaries and discussed the importance of preserving native plant communities. Mary Travaglini's power point depicted how the Chapter has aided the

National Park Service and the Nature Conservancy in the preservation of Turkey Run Park's natural heritage by the removal of alien *Linden viburnum* and other invasives. The celebration included a reception, recognition of the charter members and the chapter's life members, and cutting of the anniversary cake.



Faith Campbell with original t-shirt designed by Larry Morse



Cindy Gustafson and Potowmack Chapter President, Marianne Mooney



Leo Berger with the Ennis family

THE FIRST YEARS – NOTES FROM VWPS & POTOWMACK



Liz Smith, Cris Fleming, and Reg Smith



Bob Yacovissi, Paul Kovenok, and Stan Shetler



Marion Lobstein and Lesa Schmidt



CHAPTER NEWSLETTERS

- The Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society (VWPS) was formed on April 1, 1982.
- First edition of the Newsletter of the VWPS Society, Vol. 1 No.1 June-July 1982 was published.
- VWPS became a corporation on July 22, 1982 upon the Commonwealth of Virginia's acceptance of VWPS Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws.
- VWPS met with the newly-established Prince William Wildflower Society in July 1982 to discuss forming associate chapters within VWPS.
- VWPS First Annual Meeting and First Plant Sale held on October 16, 1982 at the National Wildlife Federation site in Vienna.
- First meeting of the Potowmack Chapter's Board of Directors held on November 17, 1982 at the John Calvin Presbyterian Church in Annandale. Chapter's name officially designated as Potowmack.
- VWPS accepts the application of the Potowmack Chapter as the first VWPS chapter on November 23, 1982.
- VWPS accepts the application from the Prince William Wildflower Society as the second VWPS chapter on January 11, 1983.
- First edition of Potowmack News from the Potowmack Chapter of the VWPS, Vol.1 No.1 February-March 1983 was published.
- VWPS received a tax exempt status from the IRS on March 17, 1983 as a publicly supported organization. Membership dues are tax-deductible.
- Potowmack Chapter First Spring Plant Sale held on May 8, 1983 at the Green Spring Farm Park.
- First Annual Meeting of the Potowmack Chapter held on September 18, 1983 at the Green Spring Farm Park.

Later Years:

At the 1988 VWPS Annual Meeting, members voted to change the name to the Virginia Native Plant Society (VNPS) to reflect the need to support and preserve all native flora.

In 2006, VNPS welcomed its 13th chapter, the New River Chapter, covering the counties of Bland, Carroll, Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski and Wythe.

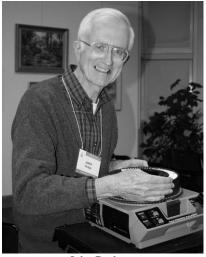


Bob Yacovissi, intern Kiki Wilson, and Brenda Skarphol



Jim and Suzanne Long





John Dodge



Mary Travaglini

VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT GARDEN INTERNSHIP 2007 by Kiki Wilson

As a student in George Washington University's Landscape Design Program, I came to Green Spring Gardens with a desire to learn more about locally indigenous plants and their cultivation. Green Spring is well known in the area for its extensive collection of Virginia natives. My time at Green Spring has given me invaluable experience working with these plants. During the internship, my work was divided into three distinct areas of attention: maintenance of the garden, visits to other public gardens, and development of interpretive signage for the garden.

Maintenance of the Virginia Native Plant Garden included planting, mulching, and weeding in the spring, and continual weeding and watering throughout the summer. Even these mundane tasks were educational, as it takes familiarity which comes only with experience to know that the ironweed (Vernonia species) is desirable in the Forest's edge (middle section opposite the upper rock wall) but not welcome at the front of the native perennial border, and that the honewort (Cryptotaenia canadensis) which flourishes in the stream valley should be kept away from the path edge. Weeding also brought home the lesson learned from textbooks - many imported plants now commonly grown locally have become highly invasive. Part of the job of weeding included the repetitive removal of numerous invasive species such as English ivy (Hedera helix), fiveleaf akebia (Akebia quinata), Asian honeysuckle species (Lonicera japonica and L. morrowii), and Asian euonymus species (Euonymus alatus and E. fortunei). In this growing season of severe drought, much time was spent watering, since just keeping plants alive became a priority - even mature specimens of tough native trees like redbud (Cercis canadensis) needed watering. I learned to propagate plants from cuttings and from seed - hand rolling American beautyberry (Callicarpa americana) fruit to extract the seed itself. The literally 'grass roots' component of this gardening internship showed me the constant and unwavering attention needed to keep a garden of this size growing and flourishing. I learned many aspects of horticultural care as part of this daily work alongside horticulturalist Brenda Skarphol, whose deep understanding of the plants and willingness to share her knowledge with wisdom and good humor made working at Green Spring both an invaluable professional training and a personal pleasure.

I was fortunate to visit several other public gardens during my internship, each of which offered a wealth of plant information and many points of comparison – both in terms of planting composition and public education. A visit to the U.S. Botanic Gardens included the native plant display in the new National Garden featuring many native plants. The Terrace Garden also showcased an innovative grouping of native shrubs, with wax myrtle (*Morella cerifera*), sweetshrub (*Calycanthus floridus*), and smooth witherod viburnum (*Viburnum nudum* var. *nudum*) planted together in containers for an ornamental display. A guided tour of the grand naturalistic garden of Winterthur in Delaware included a discussion of ways in which they have developed and protected their resources, including the restoration of gardens, the construction of a whimsical children's garden in a wooded area, and the importance of deer control. These projects demonstrated the public garden's need to be compatible with its historical context and existing gardens and grounds yet allow for innovation in design and materials. I also visited the lush gardens at Chanticleer in Pennsylvania, with many unexpected plant combinations. Finally, at the Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College near Philadelphia I saw a beautiful swale garden using swaths of native plant color to emphasize the sense of movement of water through the swale. This showed me that landscaping can be environmentally sound and have ecologically wise plantings without compromising aesthetic values.

In addition, my work as an intern included developing five interpretive signs for the native plant garden. These colorful signs have been developed in the desktop publishing program of Publisher, and Adobe Photoshop has been used to edit some of the images. Three pre-existing 'Dirt Doctor' signs were conceived and developed by the 2006 native plant intern, Brent Sisco; he finished two drafts before he completed his internship (the first draft was in Word; the second draft was in Publisher). These signs suggest potential native plants for three challenging areas: dry sun, dry shade, and wet shade. These signs required proofreading, image research, and graphic organization, so I learned how to use new software. Green Spring Director Mary Olien was very helpful with Publisher and editing, and Brenda Skarphol assisted with images, slide scanning, Photoshop, and editing. Two new signs are being developed as well, after looking at signs that Carol Dickerson (now a gardener at Green Spring) developed in Word while she was the native plant intern. One sign talks about the Virginia Native Plant Garden and what it entails: native plants of Virginia, the benefits of native plants, the major natural plant community the Virginia Native Plant Garden is situated in, and the fact that this is a maintained garden, not a natural area. The second sign deals with exotic invasive plants, specifically addressing six species still sold in the nursery trade. These signs are in the final editorial stages and will placed in the garden by the spring of 2008.

Altogether, my internship gave me a well-rounded view of work at a public garden, as well as the opportunity for extended hands-on horticultural learning. I am grateful to Green Spring Gardens and the Virginia Native Plant Society for making this opportunity possible. My time at Green Spring has given me a strong foundation for future work with native plants and sustainable design. It was a great summer and I'm looking forward to working in the garden into the fall!

On September 18, 2007, the Native Plant Conservation Campaign, Ecological Society of America, Botanical Society of America, American Society of Plant Taxonomists, and the American Society for Horticultural Science sent a letter asking Congressional leaders to add provisions to protect plants to new legislation designed to help wildlife survive threats from global climate change. The Native Plant Conservation Campaign is a program of the Center for Biological Diversity. The campaign is a network of 38 native-plant societies, [including the Virginia Native Plant Society] botanical gardens, and other plant science and conservation organizations representing more than 80,000 individual plant scientists and enthusiasts nationwide.

The request addresses the Global Warming Wildlife Survival Act, a section of the Energy Independence, National Security, and Consumer Protection Act. The legislation passed the House this summer and may soon be considered by the Senate. The Act contains groundbreaking provisions that would direct federal agencies to develop strategies to assist wildlife affected by global warming. But it does not allow the agencies to develop strategies for the thousands of plants also at risk from climate change.

"While we applaud this step forward in addressing the impacts of climate change on wildlife, the most effective conservation strategies must be designed at the ecosystem level — to include plants, wildlife, and their habitats," said Dr. Norman Christensen, president of the Ecological Society of America. "Because of complex interactions among species, it is imperative to employ protection for plants as well as wildlife to ensure the health of ecosystems and their resilience to climate change."

"Plants are the foundation of life on this planet, and critical to human welfare," said Dr. Emily Roberson, director of the Native Plant Conservation Campaign. "Through photosynthesis, plants generate the oxygen we breathe and create the fuel for life. Their roots help clean the water we drink, and they supply foods, fibers, medicines and countless other products and commodities we depend on for survival, jobs, and economic security."

Scientists are already identifying numerous plants that may be lost to climate change. These include delicate mountain wildflowers like the deep-yellow snow buttercup and bright blue sky pilot as well as alpine forest types like spruce/fir in New England — all of which may disappear completely as mountaintops warm. Coastal plants are also at risk as sea levels rise. Some mangrove forests, for example, may be wiped out, causing serious problems in areas like Florida where mangroves have protected coasts from hurricanes and floods and created habitat essential to multi-billion dollar fisheries and other industries.

The omission of plants from the Global Warming Wildlife Survival Act is part of a broader trend. Plants are often treated as "second-class conservation citizens" in the United States; funding and legal requirements for their conservation are substantially lower than for animal species. Nearly 60 percent of species listed under the Endangered Species Act are plants, but less than three percent of federal endangered species funding goes to plants.

One example is the federally funded Wildlife Action Plan program, which provides money for state species and habitat conservation projects. More than \$400 million was disbursed by the program between 2001 and 2006, but not a dollar went to plants since federal law explicitly prohibits states from using Wildlife Action Plan funds for plant conservation (unless such conservation comes as a byproduct of "wildlife" conservation projects).

"No scientific evidence supports the contention that meaningful conservation of wildlife or habitats can be accomplished in the absence of vigorous plant conservation," said Roberson. "If it is to achieve its goals, this landmark energy legislation, like all conservation laws and policies, must provide equal protection for the plant kingdom. (*from a NPCC news release*)

LOCAL EVENTS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

Fri. Nov. 2 <u>Fall Flora of C&O Canal Park</u> 10am -12:30pm Bring field guides, binoculars, a snack and water. Nonmembers \$22 nonmembers Registration required. Call 301-652-9188 x 16 or <u>info@asnv.org</u>.

Fri. Nov. 2 <u>Conifer Identification. Green Spring Gardens</u> 1:30-3:30 Learn how to distinguish the junipers, cedars and cypresses.Bring a hand lens or magnifying glass. \$20 Reservations <u>703-642-5173</u>

Sat. Nov. 3. Walk with a Naturalist Hidden Pond Nature Center 10:30am-noon. Walk along Pohick Creek. Free. Call 703-451-9588. Cancelled if rain.

Sat. Nov 10 Invasive Plant Control Riverbend Park 10am-noon. Refreshments, instruction and tools provided. Reservations required. Free. Call 703-759-9018

Sun. Dec. 9 <u>Geology of Great Falls, VA</u>. 9am to 2pm Hike a 4-mile loop on the River Trail and the Old carriage Road. Nonmembers \$32 Call 301-652-9188 x 16 or info@asnv.org.

Thurs. Aug. 16. Endangered in Virginia Gulf Branch Nature Center 7-8pm Adults. Virginia Sneezeweed in peril! Learn about some truly fascinating plants and animals struggling to survive right nearby. Free. Registration requied Program #643203F 703-228-4747

ARLINGTON'S RIP PROJECT

Sat. Nov. 10- Second Saturdays at Bluemont Park 9 am to noon. Neighbors and RiP volunteers will continue to meet at Bluemont Junction Park on second Saturdays. Come help out for an hour or two. Park near bike trail at the bottom of Illinois St. Enter Illinois St. from Wilson Blvd. Meet alongside the Bluemont Bicycle Trail near N Jefferson and Fifth Streets Contact John Huennekens at 524-3853, or jhuenn@gwu.edu.

Sat Dec. 8-Second Saturdays at Bluemont Park 9 am to noon (See above for details)

Sun. Dec. 2 Bluemont Park with Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment 1:00pm to 3:00pm Same location as above.

NOTE: Some training and tools provided. Long pants and long sleeves recommended. If you have clippers, loppers and/or gloves, please bring them. For more information contact Kasey Spriggs at Kspriggs@arlingtonva.us or Jamie Bartalon at703-228-7747.

FALLS CHURCH INVASIVE PLANT REMOVAL TASK FORCE Upcoming 2007 Events:

Sat. Nov. 3 Cherry Hill Park Invasive Plant Removal Party 10am to noon. 300 Park Avenue. Meet at the Basketball Court. For more information, contact Jeremy Edwards, City of Falls Church Senior Urban Forester, 703-248-5016 or jedwards@fallschurchva.gov.

FAIRFAX COUNTY'S INVASIVE MANAGEMENT AREA (IMA) PROGRAM

The IMA program is winding down for the year, but will have more workdays again in Spring. Please check the latest schedule of events, and activities at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/nrp-ima.htm.

Wed Nov. 7
Wed. Nov. 14
Sat. Nov. 17
Sat. Nov. 17
Wed. Nov. 21
Wed. Nov. 21
Wed. Nov. 28
Lake Accotink 9am – 2pm

For more information: Katherine.Frederick@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703 324 8681.

INVASIVES CONTROL WORK PARTIES AT TURKEY RUN PARK ALONG THE POTOMAC!

Help work with The Nature Conservancy to help control invasive plant species on National Park Service lands in the Potomac Gorge at Turkey Run Park off the GW Memorial Parkway. Wear work gloves and boots or sturdy shoes, and bring water, snacks, and hand saws or loppers if you have them. Our schedule for November and December is: **Thurs, Nov. 8, Sat. Nov. 27 Thurs. Dec. 6, and Sat. Dec 15.** Check on meeting location with Alan Ford; cell: 202-213-6196; email: amford@acm.org



Potowmack Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society P.O. Box 5311 Arlington, VA 22205

Chapter Events Calendar

Nov 3 Runnymede Walk . 10am to 2pm

Nov. 8 Geology Program Green Spring 7:30pm

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