

POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 28. No. 2 Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

March/April 2010

~ ~ ~ WEEKEND WALKS ~ ~ ~

RIPPON LODGE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

TOUR SATURDAY APRIL 3, 9am-11am

Historic sites used to be all about the houses, the stuff and the people who lived there. Increasingly the landscape is becoming just as important. Join us on a walk of one such landscape that is in its preservation infancy. Rippon Lodge (circa 1747) sits on 40 acres with great views of the Potomac River, a champion elm, and the bones of gardens waiting for restoration. Join site manager **Becky Super** on a guided tour and learn some of the unique challenges faced by landscape historians. A tour of the house will be included. Site may be muddy, wear appropriate walking shoes. \$5 per person.

Directions: From I-95 South, take exit 156 toward State Route 784 E/Rippon Landing; merge onto Dale Blvd; turn right at Blackburn Rd. to 15520 Blackburn Rd, Woodbridge VA 22191. Please use parking lot on Admiral Black Drive.

WILDFLOWER WALK FOR BEGINNERS,

SATURDAY APRIL 10 from 9:30am to 11:30am

The spring wildflower season will be in full bloom in April. **Scott's Run Nature Preserve** is the perfect place to celebrate spring and see a wonderful assortment of native plants in an enchanted setting. Hillsides of trout-lilies, Dutchman's breeches and spring beauties are renowned in our area. Upland woods, a stream, waterfall and the Potomac River ensure a rich and scenic variety of plant habitats. This walk is geared towards beginners and will be led by chapter board members **Laura Beaty** and **Marianne Mooney**. Meet in the lower parking lot at 9:30am no reservations necessary.

Directions: From the Beltway, take Georgetown Pike west approximately .7 of a mile to the second parking lot on the right (across from Swink's Mill Rd.).

~ ~ ~ THURSDAY TALKS ~ ~ ~

OUR NATURAL PUZZLE: PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

Thursday, March 11 at 7:30 pm at Green Spring Gardens

Although nature is incredibly diverse it is also intricately interconnected. While we certainly don't know how all those pieces go together, we can have some informative fun trying to put them together. Join Park Naturalist **Alonso Abugattas** for an interesting look at how our local pieces of the puzzle fit together – focusing on our native flora of course. Get a peek at just how interdependent our plants, insects, other wildlife, and even humans can be and try to put together our local nature puzzle. Take a look at host plants, ethnobotany, and other wildlife interactions. **Alonso Abugattas** is a Master Naturalist, Master Gardener, and Acting Director at Long Branch Nature Center in Arlington. He has held several offices including president of the Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society.

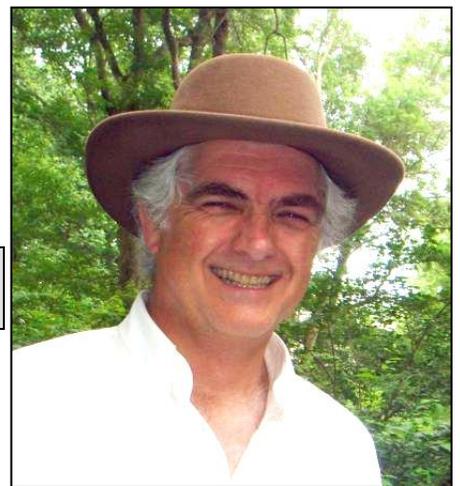
Directions to Green Spring Gardens: From Interstate 395, exit at Route 236 West (Little River Turnpike); turn right at Braddock Road and go one block north to park entrance: 4603 Green Spring Rd

THE FIRST FLORA OF VIRGINIA IN TWO AND A HALF CENTURIES

Thursday, April 8 at 7:30 pm at Green Spring Gardens

Flora Virginica, the first reference book to document the plant species of Virginia, was published in two parts in 1739 and 1743 by the Dutchman **Johan Frederick Gronovius**, based on a manuscript by **John Clayton**. Now over 250 years later, we are close to completing a new flora for Virginia. Meet the Associate Director of this exciting project, which will describe more than 3,500 plant species in 200 families and feature 1,400 captioned, scaled, and botanically accurate illustrations. Learn about the team that's doing the work, and about the magnificent illustrations going into the book. If you are a botanist, an educator, a naturalist, a student, a natural resources professional, or any citizen who's interested in plants of the commonwealth the Flora of Virginia is being created with you in mind. **Bland Crowder** is an editor with the New York Botanical Garden Press and science editor with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

*Direction
s to Green
Spring Gardens:
See left*



"Biodiversity is life. Biodiversity is our life." The logo for the International Year of Biodiversity 2010

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

As I write this we are still buried in a blanket of white. I have been watching the robins work over any open soil they can find, I am sure they have been stripping the hollies bare. It is good to know that all the life lying dormant under this will soon be bursting forth and filling our lives with color and fragrance and reminding us why we love the Earth so.

But while we wait for the warming sun, it might be worthwhile to consider some other places you can see plants during the winter. Our state is blessed with many first rate Herbaria. These repositories are a critical scientific link to our understanding of the flora of our region. Although the specimens have been dried and mounted, they provide an unparalleled link to a historical record and can be a fascinating way of learning more about the species. Below I have included links to four of our major Herbaria including one close by at George Mason University. Dr. Andrea Weeks, the director, provided us a look into the Bradley Herbarium during our Annual Meeting in Fall 2008.

<http://esp.gmu.edu/research/facilities/herbarium.html> **Fairfax**

<http://www.lewisginter.org/library/Herbarium.php>

Richmond

<http://www.biol.vt.edu/herbarium/> **Blacksburg**

<http://www.lynchburg.edu/x2677.xml>

Lynchburg

Finally, it is my pleasure to inform you this has been declared as the International Year of Biodiversity, see the note below. This important concept, championed by Pulitzer Prize winning author and Harvard biologist, E.O. Wilson, poses that species cannot exist in isolation, and that conserving diversity is critical to the interdependent web of all life on earth. This month, Alonso Abugattas, a past president of our chapter, will be speaking with us about natural diversity. Please join us.

Alan Ford

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<p><i>Potowmack News</i> 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 or Susan Wexelblat at susanwexelblat@gmail.com</p>		

2010, THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

The United Nations declared 2010

to be the International Year of Biodiversity. It is a celebration of life on earth and of the value of biodiversity for our lives. The world is invited to take action in 2010 to safeguard the variety of life on earth: biodiversity Seeking to stop an unprecedented loss of species -- at a rate that some experts estimate to be 1,000 times the natural progression -- as a result of human activities, the General Assembly declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity. The Year provides an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity for life on Earth, reflect on what has been done to safeguard it, and focus on the urgency of action.

Stephen E. Sanderson, president of the Wildlife Conservation Society

A TALE OF TRILLIUM TENACITY By Susan Wexelblat

Michael Jenkins, of Purdue University, and Christopher Webster, of Michigan Technological University, studied the effects of commercial logging on the forest floor in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. They compared the populations of trillium in eight cove forests--four areas had been logged in the early 1900s and four locations were untouched.



Trillium is a woodland herb that spreads slowly, often with ants moving its seeds only a meter at a time. The slow spread makes trillium a model plant to show the effect that a major disturbance such as logging has on a forest floor. Trillium plants also can live for more than 20 years, and stem scars act much in the way rings do in tree trunks to allow for determining the plant's age.

The trillium populations in untouched areas grew more evenly, with fewer patches, than those found in secondary forests. However, aside from being on-average younger due to a higher concentration of juvenile plants, the plant ages in the logged areas were similar to those of undisturbed forests and both forest types had similar maximum plant ages.

In addition, Theodore Simons, Susan Shriner and George Farnsworth, from the North Carolina Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit of the USGS, studied both plant and bird communities in an area logged in the early 1900s and in an untouched area of Great Smokey Mountains National Park. The bird and vegetation communities are now similar, but retain some differences in species composition. Bird species composition was similar on the two sites which shared 24 of the 25 most frequently recorded species. Nonetheless, three bird species were more abundant on primary forest sites and one bird species was significantly more abundant on secondary forest sites.

Comparing the plant communities, untouched forest sites had more large trees (trees greater than 50 cm diameter at breast height) and late successional species. Formerly logged forest sites had a denser canopy layer, while untouched forest sites had a denser tall shrub layer. Nonetheless, tree species richness, basal area of live trees, and number of standing snags did not differ between untouched and logged forest sites. Breeding bird communities on sites within the park that were logged commercially 70 years ago are currently quite similar to bird communities on sites with no history of human disturbance.

The encouraging conclusion from both these studies is that commercially logged forests can recover, at least in the Smokey Mountains. If the logged area is subsequently protected from further damage and there are untouched areas of forest near the logged area, both plants and animals can re-colonize the disturbed area and recreate a similar environment.

References, retrieved 09 Dec. 09.

~Jenkins and Webster, Spatial patterning and population structure of a common woodland herb, *Trillium erectum*, in primary and post-logging secondary forests. *Forest Ecology and Management*, 2009; 258 (11): 2569 DOI: [10.1016/j.foreco.2009.09.013](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foreco.2009.09.013)

~Purdue University (2009, December 2). Logging effects vary based on a forest's history, climate. *ScienceDaily*.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/12/091202114046.htm>

Simons, Shriner and Farnsworth, Comparison of breeding bird and vegetation communities in primary and secondary forests of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. *Biological Conservation* 129:3, May 2006, Pages 302-311 DOI:

[10.1016/j.biocon.2005.10.044](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2005.10.044)

THE POTOWMAK CHAPTER ENTERS THE COMPUTER AGE! Thanks to work by our Publicity Chair **Becky Super**, the Potowmack Chapter now has a Facebook page. Become a fan on Facebook—search Potowmack Chapter-VA Native Plant Society. And thanks to **Marty Nielsen**, our new Technology chair, the chapter has a web site <http://www.vnps-pot.org/>. Please check out our on-line calendar of events, past issues of the Potowmack News and our email contact/question form.

SUPPORT YOUR NATIVE BEES by Susan Wexelblat

Approximately one-third of our food comes from crops that depend on bee pollination. In today's world of commercial farming, many farmers hire beekeepers to bring in hives of domesticated honey bees, *Apis mellifera*, during the crop's blooming period. Unfortunately, in 2006 beekeepers and scientists began to realize that something was killing whole hives of domesticated honey bees. This problem is called Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Studies over the past years have shown that dying hives frequently have mites or viruses; however a single cause for CCD has not yet been determined and no cure is available. Meanwhile, there are crops and flowers waiting for pollination.

About 4,000 native bee species exist in North America; most of them are solitary bees that nest in the ground or in wood cavities. With no colony to defend, most native bees do not sting. Since native bees do not live in hives, they are not easily transported from field to orchard. This means that sustaining local native bee populations is vitally important. In addition to studying CCD, many scientists are also turning their attention to our native bees.

Studies on Michigan blueberry farms showed that over 100 different native bee species are active when the blueberries need pollinating. Many of the native species are more efficient than honey bees, visiting more flowers and transferring more pollen. The vast majority of the bees found pollinating the blueberries were native, solitary, soil-dwelling bees. One interesting result was that more species were found at the edges of fields than in the center, this suggests that dividing larger fields with untouched corridors containing alternative plants may increase pollination. In addition, some pesticide application practices may need to be modified to aid in native bee survival. See <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/03/090324131550.htm> for more information.

Researchers at Penn State have been studying the over 300 different species of native bees that live in Pennsylvania. Their findings have been published as a pamphlet called "Conserving Wild Bees in Pennsylvania." The pamphlet is also available on line at <http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/FreePubs/pdfs/uf023.pdf>. It includes information on the size and shape of many bee species as well as a quick guide to native plants that help support bees.

The USDA is funding a study through Virginia State University to develop the eastern subspecies of the native blue orchard bee, *Osmia lignaria lignaria*. These bees are valuable for pollinating apple and peach orchards as well as other crops like strawberries. They apparently also use native redbud trees to gather pollen and nectar to feed their eggs. See <http://www.reeis.usda.gov/web/crisprojectpages/211370.html> for further information.

Even more locally, T'ai Roulston at Blandy Farm—who spoke at the January 2009 meeting—has also been studying native bees. His studies and others have shown that for crops such as squash and watermelon, native bees are sufficient for pollination and honey bees are not needed. Check out the Blandy Farm page on bees http://people.virginia.edu/~thr8z/Bee_Diversity/Blandy_Bee_Diversity.php. Also see <http://www.xerces.org/pollinators-mid-atlantic-region/> for more information on native bees and how to increase the native bee population in your neighborhood.





WHENCE HEPATICA? by Mary Ann Lawler

Hepatica are lovely blue members of the buttercup family (Ranunculaceae) which bloom in early spring. They can be found throughout Virginia, but are particular about soils. In the wildflower guides and the Atlas of the Flora of Virginia *Hepatica* are listed as two species *Hepatica Americana* (round-lobed) and *Hepatica acutiloba* (sharp-lobed), but apparently they have been reclassified. The USDA Plants Database considers them varieties of a single species *Hepatica nobilis*.

The common names are more confusing. Park naturalist **Alonso Abugattus** has provided a list of them as well as interesting historical information:

“As far as common names, of course there are tons...liverwort, liver-leaf, squirrel cup, snow trillium, mayflower, blue anemone, liver-moss, mouse-ears, crystalwort, golden trefoil, ivy flower, herb trinity, and kidneywort. Both forms were used extensively for a variety of medical problems (abdominal aches, contraceptive, inducing childbirth, breathing problems, convulsions, as a laxative, bruises, dysentery, etc) by Native American Indian tribes (including for liver type problems by the Cherokee among others). Unusual uses included the Iroquois using it for fortune-telling, the Chippewa as a charm to help trap furbearing animals, the Potawatomi as a dye, and the Meskwaki as a wash for crossed-eyes. The Cherokee supposedly used it to throw-up and thus eliminate bad snake dreams. *Hepatica* uses ants to distribute its seeds (myrmecochory). According to author Jack Sanders, it was used as a commercial medicine called Dr. Rogers' Liverwort and Tar in the 1800's. According to him, more than 200 tons of hepatica leaves were imported to Europe in 1883 alone.”

And field ecologist **Rod Simmons** tells us why they are located where they are. He has found that they like limestone outcrops and diabase communities like the Basic Oak-Hickory Forests. In an email discussion he says: “In fact, there are a good number of *H. americana* easily seen growing amongst diabase boulders along Sugarland Run at Runnymede Park in Fairfax County, Virginia - also Basic Oak-Hickory Forest.

“Most other piedmont and fall line sites with *Hepatica*, on either side of river, ... will be Mesic Mixed Hardwood Forest, with richer coves and slopes in certain areas of Potomac Gorge being Basic Mesic Forest.

“As *Hepatica* moves east towards and into the coastal plain, it becomes quite rare to absent. In some cases on colluvial slopes below Terrace Gravel Forests (Oak-Heath Forest) along the fall line, where ancient, highly weathered clays (probably montmorillonite) of the Potomac Formation are exposed, one or two *Hepatica* plants are often found in small microniches with an amazing diversity of plants typical of Basic Forests and acidic Oak-Hickory Forests of the Triassic Basin. *Hepatica* is fairly well distributed, even today, in these remaining woodlands along the fall line, but is very rare. Natural Resource Inventory surveys in Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, Virginia have uncovered two very isolated occurrences of *Hepatica* from upland colluvial slope forest communities, at Barcroft Park in Arlington and a nearby similar site in Alexandria.

“*Hepatica* is very rare to absent on the coastal plain, but we found a couple of old specimens years ago at Chapman Forest in Charles County, Maryland growing amidst calcareous marine sands and fossil shells in a steep ravine in Shell-Marl Ravine Forest (Basic Mesic Forest).

So where can we find these little lovelies, so incongruously associated with the liver? In addition to those areas mentioned by Rod Simmons, below is a list of other areas close to us in Virginia from **Finding Wildflowers in the Washington-Baltimore Area** by C. Fleming, M. Lobstein and B. Tufty. April is a good time to look.

Potomac Overlook Regional Park along the Donaldson Run Trail

Turkey Run Park in the upland trails.

Scott's Run Nature Preserve along the rocky trail.

Great Falls Park along the Swamp Trail

Riverbend Park on south facing rocks

Fraser Preserve

Reston's Vernon J Walker Nature Area

Ellenor C. Lawrence Park

(Adapted from an article by Melanie Choukas-Bradley for the Wildflower in Focus column of the Maryland Native Plant Society.)

THE USA NATIONAL PHENOLOGY NETWORK

The USA Plant Phenology Network (USA-NPN) is a consortium of Federal agencies, universities, non-profit organizations and others which monitors the influence of climate on the phenology of plants, animals, and landscapes. They do this by encouraging people to observe phenological events like leaf out, flowering, migrations, and egg laying, and by providing a place for people to enter, store, and share their observations. They also work with researchers to develop tools and techniques to use these observations to support a wide range of decisions made routinely by citizens, managers, scientists and others, including decisions related to allergies, wildfires, water, and conservation.

The project is looking for participants to observe and collect data on these seasonal phenomena. <http://usanpn.org/?q=how-observe>. The website is very interesting: <http://usanpn.org/?q=home>. The 2010 project is to be extended to collect data on animal observation and behavior.

<p><u>ARLINGTON COUNTY RiP PROGRAM</u> Free. For ages 9 to adult. Not all plants are good for the environment. Invasive plants crowd native ones out for space and light and some can even grow a "mile-a-minute"! Come learn what these troublesome beasts look like and help rescue our parks from these alien invaders! We meet monthly at the locations listed below. If you have your own garden gloves and tools, please bring them along. Some supplies will be provided. Be sure to come dressed for work, wear sturdy shoes, long pants, long sleeves, and perhaps a hat. You may want to bring along a reusable water bottle. Register at jtruong@vt.edu or 703-228-7636.</p>	
<p>Second Saturdays @ Lacey Woods 1200 N. George Mason Dr., Arlington, VA 22205 Mar 13, Apr 10, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM Meet at the N. Frederick St. & 11th St. N. entrance. Site leader: Nora Palmatier</p>	<p>Third Saturdays @ Tuckahoe Park 2400 N. Sycamore St., Arlington, VA 22213 Mar 20, Apr. 17, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Meet in front of Tuckahoe Elementary Site leader: Mary Mclean</p>
<p>Second Sundays @ Gulf Branch Nature Center 3608 Military Road, Arlington, VA 22205 Mar 14, Apr. 11 1:00 – 3:00 PM Site leader: Jennifer Soles</p>	<p>Third Sundays @ Long Branch Nature Center 625 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA 22204 Mar 21, Apr 18, 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Site leader: Steve Young</p>
<p>First Tuesdays @ Zachary Taylor Park Meet at 2533 N. Utah St., Arlington, VA 22207 Mar 2, Apr 6, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM Site leader: Marilyn Greene</p>	<p>Fourth Saturdays @ Benjamin Banneker Park 1500 N. Sycamore St., Arlington, VA 22205 Mar 27, Apr 24, 10:00 Am – 12:00 PM Site leaders: Melanie La Force, Eric & Dawn Sword</p>

FAIRFAX COUNTY’S INVASIVE MANAGEMENT AREA (IMA) PROGRAM

The IMA program is a volunteer-based project that is working towards habitat restoration. Help us remove invasive plants, learn new species of invasive plants, and work outdoors during the following workdays:

- Wed. Mar. 3, 9:00am-1:00pm, Lake Accotink
- Sat. Mar. 6, 8:00-11:00am, White Oaks
- Sat. Mar. 6, 9:00–11:00am, Idylwood
- Wed. Mar. 10, 9:00am-1:00pm, Americana
- Sat. Mar. 13, 8:00-11:00am, White Oaks
- Wed. Mar. 17, 9:00am-1:00pm, Lake Accotink
- Sat. Mar 20, 9:00–12:00, Nottoway Park
- Sat. Mar 20, 9:30–12:00, Huntley Meadows
- Wed. Mar. 31, 9:00am-1:00pm, Lake Accotink

- Wed. Apr. 7, 9:00am-1:00pm, Lake Accotink
- Sat. Apr. 10, 9:00–12:00, Mclean Hunt Estates
- Wed. Apr. 14, 9:00am-1:00pm, Americana
- Sat. Apr. 17, 8:00-11:00am, White Oaks
- Sat. Apr. 17, 9:00am–12:00, Nottoway Park
- Sat. Apr. 17, 9:30am–12:00, Huntley Meadows
- Wed. Apr. 21, 9:00am-1:00pm, Lake Accotink
- Wed. Apr. 28, 9:00am-1:00pm, Lake Accotink

For more information contact: Katherine.Frederick@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703 324 8681. Check out the IMA schedule of events and activities at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/nrp-ima.htm.

PARKS HOLD ORIENTATION SESSIONS FOR INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT: EARLY DETECTION EXPEDITION TEAM LEADERS

Lead volunteers are needed for the Fairfax County Park Authority's Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) program. This program aims to locate highly invasive plant species through surveys of valuable natural habitats. This project will allow the Park Authority to locate and remove extremely invasive plant species before they wreak havoc within the parks. The program is an essential component in restoring the native ecology. EDRR Orientation Expeditions to be held on April 1st, May 20th and June 17th at three different locations.

During the orientations volunteers will be trained how to lead, organize and manage a group of volunteers to conduct a systematic survey of designated parkland, identify targeted plant species, mark their location via hand-held GPS units and log data into an established website. Early detection efforts have already identified highly invasive species like linden viburnum and a wart-removing herb.

Space is limited to 6 volunteers per orientation session. For more information about the EDRR program, scheduled excursions or how to become involved, contact Kathy Frederick, IMA volunteer coordinator at 703-324-8681 or send an email to katherine.frederick@fairfaxcounty.gov. Information about the IMA program can be found online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/ima>.

Early Warning— Invasive Plant Removal (IPR) Day—May 1st

Would you like to enjoy the beauty of spring, learn to identify plants and help the environment? Please join the Fairfax County Master Naturalists and Park Authority volunteers for the 3rd Annual Statewide Invasive Plant Removal Day. Bring a friend, and a willingness to get muddy, as you assist with habitat restoration of local natural areas by removing non-native invasive plants. Garlic mustard, a biennial herbaceous plant originally from Europe that prevents oak seedlings from growing, will be targeted at most Invasive Management Area (IMA) sites. This invasive is easy to identify and fun to remove. Garlic mustard pulls are suitable for the whole family, young and old. Check IMA website for locations: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/ima/>

FALLS CHURCH HABITAT RESTORATION TEAM UPCOMING EVENTS: Please visit the Falls Church website www.fallschurchva.gov for updates on this program.

Saturday March 13 BARCROFT PARK (1-3 pm) 4200 S. Four Mile Run Drive.

Help preserve Arlington's globally rare magnolia bog, a chapter heritage site. Meet by the parking garage off Four Mile Run. Wear sturdy footwear and bring pruners, hand saws and heavy gloves, if you have them (limited number available on-site). Contact Marty Nielsen (mrtynlsn@gmail.com).

LOCAL EVENTS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

Sat Mar. 13 The Trees and History of Fort C.F. Smith Park 9:00am 10:00am. Ages 10 - Adult. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Fort C.F. Smith was one of the last Union forts built to protect Washington during the Civil War. Today it is the home of the largest tree in Arlington County as well as other state and county champion trees. We'll learn about the park's history and nature during this walking tour of the park. Dress for the weather, terrain will be uneven and possibly muddy. Meet at Fort C. F. Smith Park, 2411 N. 24th St., Arlington, VA 22207. Free. Register at <https://registration.arlingtonva.us>. Program #: 644410-02

Sat. Mar. 13: English Ivy Saw-Down along the C&O Canal Anyone who drives or hikes along the C&O Canal near Locks 10-5 knows just how bad the English Ivy has become--join us as members of the Appalachian Mountain Club help us tackle this infestation. The trees could use all of our help to save them from these huge vines! Sign up at volunteermd@tnc.org.

Sun. Mar 14 Natural History of Our Trees 1:30pm - 3:00pm Adults and families with children ages 10 and up. Join Naturalists and Tree Stewards Elizabeth Rives and Joanne Hutton as they guide you on a walk through the early spring forest, discussing the natural history of our urban park's trees, helping you identify field marks, understanding the species represented there, and answering questions you may have about planting and caring for native trees in your gardens. Info: 703-228-6535. Free program. Registration required. Meet at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, Register at <https://registration.arlingtonva.us>. Program #: 643610-01

Mar 16-28, Environmental Film Festival in the Nation's Capital join The Nature Conservancy for the 18th Annual Environmental Film Festival in the Nation's Capital. The festival will feature more than 130 films, including two produced by the Conservancy, providing fresh perspectives on environmental issues facing our planet. For a complete schedule of the films, visit the festival Web site at <http://dcenvironmentalfilmfest.org/>

Sat. Mar 20. Bee Aware, 11:00am - 12:00pm Adults. Not all bees are honey bees. In fact, there are over 4,000 kinds of native bees in North America. Find out about a few of these natives and particularly how to attract the hard working, gentle mason bees to your yards. Find out why Long Branch is considered a Model Bee Habitat by Audubon-at-Home. Information: 703-228-6535. Free. Meet at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA 22204. \$3 fee due upon registration. Register at Register at http://www.arlingtonva.us/calendar/default.aspx#EventDetails_8895.

Thurs. Mar. 25 Restoring Biodiversity; Benefitting Butterflies 7:15pm-9:00pm Adults. Join the Washington Area Butterfly Club for a presentation on the work of the Native Grassland Conservancy. Learn how pollinators have benefited from their restoration activities, and how you can help. Information: 703-228-6535. Meet at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA 22204. Free. program # 643610-03

Sat. Mar. 27: Bull Run Swamp Stomp 7-8 pm. Join naturalist Rich Bailey on a night hike and search for the fascinating amphibian life of Bull Run Regional Park. Find salamanders, spring peepers, woods frogs and more. Rubber boots and warm clothes recommended. Adults and children age 6 and older. Please call 703-528-5406 to make a reservation and get directions.

Sat. March 27 Managing Wildlife Conflict 1:30-3pm at Green Spring Gardens. Are you having troubles with deer and rabbits feasting on your garden? This is the lecture for you. Victoria Monroe, Wildlife Biologist for Fairfax County will discuss strategies for managing wildlife conflicts in your garden. Cost \$10. *Registration and non-refundable prepayment to FCPA required for all programs. Call 703-642-5173.*

Thur. Apr. 1: April Fool's Day is for Pulling Garlic Mustard! TIME Let's play a trick on garlic mustard, and pull it up by the roots! Join us to tackle garlic mustard where it's trying to push out the wildflowers and tree seedlings at Turkey Run Park. Sign up at volunteermd@tnc.org.

Sat. Apr. 3: Spring Wildflowers of Scotts Run Walk 10-11:30am. Walk the trails in search of spring beauty, Dutchman's breeches and other spring ephemerals in these rich woods. Meet in West parking lot. Wear sturdy hiking shoes. Canceled if rain. \$5/person, call 703-759-9018 (Riverbend Park) for reservations.

Sat. Apr. 3. Early Spring Wildflowers 9am-3pm. Leader **Cris Fleming**. Beat the winter blues by finding early spring wildflowers often missed by those who don't get out until mid-April. We'll search for early bloomers such as harbinger of spring, purple cress, early saxifrage, dutchman's breeches, bloodroot, hepatica, trailing arbutus, and many other species. Our field trip will visit Great Falls Park and Difficult Run on the Virginia side of the Potomac River. Park entrance fee is waived for participants. Members \$30, Nonmembers \$42. For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form.

Thurs. Apr. 8 and Sat. Apr. 10 (full day field trip) Introduction to Wildflower Identification. Leader: Stephanie Mason. In April spring wildflowers in the Washington area are dazzling. Spend Thursday evening at Woodend discussing books, equipment, and terminology for beginning wildflower identification. Saturday travel to the Carderock area along the C&O Canal and explore several short trails between the Canal and the Potomac River. Practice using keys to identify wildflowers and look for Virginia bluebells, dutchman's breeches, twinleaf, toad trillium and many others. Members \$30; nonmembers \$52.50. For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form.

Sat Apr. 10. Spring Plant Sale, 1:00pm- 3:00pm Adults. Join Long Branch for its highly anticipated native plant sale! The vast majority of their plants are propagated on site. There will be a variety of spring and summer bloomers along with ferns, vines and shrubs. Cardboard boxes will be provided for transporting your new purchases. Rain date: Sunday, April 26, 1-3pm. Payment can be made by cash or check (sorry, no credit cards). Plant advice is free, fee per plant as marked. Information: 703-228-6535. Meet at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA 22204.

Sat. Apr. 10: Spring Wildflowers of the Towpath 10-11:30am. C&O Canal. Walk the towpath down to Plummer's Island to discover the spring wildflowers of the Potomac floodplain. Meet at Lock 10 (on Clara Barton Parkway, Cabin John, MD). Canceled if rain. \$5/person, call 703-759-9018 (Riverbend Park) for reservations.

Sun Apr. 11. Wild Ones: Wild Wildflowers 3:30pm-4:30pm Ages 6 - 10. Register child only. Your child is invited to join our exciting nature club which meets twice a month. Choose just a few programs or attend them all! We'll search the park some wild flowers beginning to bloom. See bloodroot bleed, etc. For more information: 703-228-3403. Meet at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Rd., Arlington. \$3 fee payable upon registration. Register at http://www.arlingtonva.us/calendar/default.aspx#EventDetails_8935. Program #: 623510-20

Sat. Apr. 17: Bluebells and Bloodroot – Spring Wildflowers of the Floodplain 10-11:30am. C&O Canal. Identify Riverbend's beautiful spring ephemerals and learn their associated folklore as we walk along the banks of the Potomac River. Canceled if rain. \$5/person.

Sun. Apr. 18. A Spring Morning Along the River. 7:30am to noon. Leader Stephanie Mason. Join this early spring exploration of the season's great burst of life in the bottomland woods along the Potomac River just above Great Falls, MD. The senior naturalist leads this search for spring wildflowers, swelling buds, and early spring wildlife activity, including birds, butterflies, and amphibians. The natural surface trail is mostly level, but could be muddy. Members \$23; Nonmembers: \$32. . For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form.

Sun. Apr. 18: Bull Run Bluebell Walk 2-3pm. All ages. A spectacular show of bluebells, spring beauties and other spring wildflowers along a 1 ½ mile path! Join us for this over 30 year tradition. No reservations required. Call the nature center or Bull Run Regional Park directly at 703/631-0550 for more info.

Sat. May 1. Project Learning Tree 10:00am - 4:00pm Adults. Project Learning Tree (PLT) is an interdisciplinary, award winning environmental education program designed by educators for educators. PLT's mission is to increase understanding of our environment, and to stimulate critical and creative thinking as well as develop the ability to make informed decisions on environmental issues. PLT activities help students connect classroom concepts to the real world through a variety of hands-on activities. Participants will receive a copy of the PLT PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide packed with 96 multi-disciplinary activities - each tailored to specific grade levels and learning objectives. All include up-to-date student resources and reproducibles, background information for educators and easy-to-follow instructions. Please bring a bag lunch and drink. The facilitator is environmental educator and Fairfax Master Naturalist Elizabeth Burke. For information: 703-228-6535. Meet at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S Carlin Springs Rd, Arlington, VA 22204. Free. Register at http://www.arlingtonva.us/calendar/default.aspx#EventDetails_8933. Program #: 643610-04

Sun. May 2. Spring Woods of Chapman's Forest. 10am-3pm. Leader: Bob Pickett. Chapman's Landing on the Potomac River in Charles County, MD, is an extraordinary and unique place with a diversity of magnificent old-growth trees. Protected since 1750, this site contains 13 species with a trunk diameter of 9' or more including a tulip tree and chinquapin oak over 16' in diameter and a 15' sycamore. Hike through the various habitats and ravines in search of these behemoths, enjoying their fresh spring foliage, as well as the wildflowers that grow beneath them. We'll plan to cover up to 4 miles, mostly on natural surface trails, but with some off-trail hiking and some steep, but short, ascents and descents. Members: \$25; nonmembers: \$35 For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form.

Sun May 2. Trillium Trek 8:30am - 4:00pm Adults. Travel to Linden, VA to see one of the largest (millions!) Great White Trillium displays in the world! This area is resplendent with many (often rare) wildflowers and trees, including native orchids and a variety of wildlife to observe. On the somewhat rocky two-mile trail we'll discuss plant folklore and ethnobotany. Before we head home, we'll stop to purchase local country crafts and apple products. Dress for hiking; bring water and a bag lunch to eat on the trail. \$25 fee due upon registration. Van leaves from Lubber Run Center parking lot, 300 N Park Dr., Arlington, VA 22203 or will pick up from Ballston Metro Station with advance request: 703-228-6535. \$30 fee due upon registration Register at <https://registration.arlingtonva.us>. Program #: 643610-09

VNPS ANNUAL WORKSHOP MARCH 6

Don't forget the VNPS 2010 annual workshop, "At Water's Edge, Virginia's Wetland Habitats," will take place at the University of Richmond on March 6. Speakers include Dot Fields, Eastern Shore Region Steward, Virginia Natural Heritage Program, whose presentation is "Plants of the Coastal Edge." She will also include a brief overview of the State Natural Area Preserves under her stewardship. Joe Scalf, Habitat Restoration Specialist with The Nature Conservancy's Virginia Coast Reserve Program, will talk about his "Living Shoreline" project. In his presentation, "Rising Tides", Dr. James Perry of VIMS will address the potential impact of global climate change on the plant communities of our mid-Atlantic wetlands. And, Dr. Randy Chambers, Professor of Biology, William and Mary will introduce the ecology of wetland environments in Virginia and discuss the problem of *Phragmites* in his talk "Wetland Invaders." See VNPS.org for details.

INVASIVES CONTROL WORK PARTIES AT TURKEY RUN PARK ALONG THE POTOMAC

Join 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. Time is 10-1 on each workday. Dates are: **Mar. 11, Apr. 8, and Apr 17.** Contact Alan Ford: 703.732.5291 or amford@acm.org or Mary or Jamie at volunteermd@tnc.org.

IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP CURRENT?

Please look at the mailing address label on this newsletter. If the expiration date is highlighted in yellow, then our Potowmack Chapter records show your VNPS membership has expired. If you have not renewed your membership, please consider doing so. You can find a copy of the membership renewal form in the VNPS Bulletin. If you have mailed in a VNPS membership renewal and our records are not showing an updated or correct expiration date, please contact VNPS at vnpsoc@shentel.net or at (540) 837-1600.

Chapter Events Calendar



- Mar 11 **Board meeting 6:45**
Our Natural Puzzle
program 7:30
Green Spring
- Apr 3 **Ripon Lodge Nature**
Walk 9 to 11
- Apr 8 **Board meeting 6:45**
Flora of Virginia program
7:30
Green Spring
- Apr. 10 **Scotts Run Wildflower**
Walk 9:30 to 11:30

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

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

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