POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 23, No 3

Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

May/June 2005



SAVE THE BLUEBELLS! <u>TAKE ACTION</u> <u>ON THE TRI-COUNTY PARKWAY OPTIONS (see page 2)</u>

SCOTTS RUN CHAPTER WALK, SATURDAY MAY 7

Botany Chair, **Cris Fleming**, will lead a chapter walk at Scott's Run Nature Preserve in McLean, **Saturday**, **May 7**, from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. As we walk the woodland trails down to the river, we'll look for Dwarf ginseng, Spring cress, Yellow stargrass, Blue cohosh, Golden alexanders and other mid-spring wildflowersParticipation is limited to 16 people and registration is required. To register, please call Cris at 301-657-9289. You may leave a message but be sure to leave your phone number. The trip will be cancelled in case of heavy rain but not for light drizzle. *Meet at the parking lot on Georgetown Pike (Rt. 193) which is 6/10 mile west of the Beltway (exit 44). The parking lot is at the bottom of the hill next to the creek and across from Swink's Mill Road.*



MAY 14 NATIVE PLANT SALE AT GREEN SPRING GARDENS: 9am to 3pm

Saturday, May 14 will be here before you know it. Plan ahead and begin to make a list of the type of plants you need for your native and/or wildlife garden. Be sure to note the type of exposure (meaning sunny vs. shady) and soil type you have in your garden. This is all important when selecting plants that will succeed. Check to be sure your English ivy--if you still happen to have some--is not climbing your trees. Please note that we will offer many alternatives to English ivy at the plant sale. As you are checking around, consider donating spare natives to our propagation committee for the sale. Ferns are always in demand as are small native shrubs and trees. We hope to have native species indigenous to this region. Your contributions will greatly benefit the work of the chapter in educating the public on the preservation and conservation of our natural areas. If you have some donations, but no way to get them to the propagation beds by May 1, call us and we'll help.

While you are doing all that thinking, consider volunteering at our propagation beds Wednesday and Saturday mornings on a regular basis or whenever time permits. There's no better way to learn about plants than working with them. You are welcome to help out during the sale at our beds located behind the Green Spring Horticulture Center. Thanks for your help and we look forward to seeing you on May 14. **Propagation Chair Laura Beaty (703 534-8746)**

Directions to Green Spring Gardens Park: From Interstate 395, exit at Route 236 West (Little River Turnpike) in Alexandria, turn right at Braddock Road and proceed 1 block north to the park entrance.

MAGNOLIA BOG WALK AND CLEANUP, SATURDAY MAY 21

Rod Simmons will lead a walk and clean up at Barcroft Magnolia Bog in Arlington on Saturday, May 21 from 10 AM to 1:00 PM. Bring work gloves, water, and a snack or lunch. Wear long sleeves and long pants. Meet at the entrance to the park at the top of the hill near the intersection South Buchanan and South 23rd Streets, near Wakefield High School and Claremont Elementary School.

Driving directions: From Walter Reed Drive in South Arlington driving south toward Route 7, turn right on Dinwiddie, right on 23^{rd} Street, right on Buchanan. The park entrance is a very short distance on the left. One can also reach the area via the W & OD bike trail. The magnolia bog is a few hundred feet west of Walter Reed Drive. Join the group by walking up the first significant trail west of the town houses.

"Of the 200 species that Lewis and Clark described, 40 percent are in need of conservation because they are seriously declining." Paul Johnsgard, author of Lewis & Clark on the Great Plains: A Natural History

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Acres of Virginia bluebells in full blooming glory surround us as I lead a group of bluebell enthusiasts down the boardwalk at Bull Run Regional Park. It's hard to imagine that this site would be paved over under the Comprehensive Option of the future Tri-County Parkway, a destructive proposed road project that has been hovering under the radar for some years. This westernmost outpost of Fairfax County is far from those of us closer in who worry about in-fill, the widening of I-66, and the state of our local parks. Knowing how to help can be difficult. But you can make a difference. Surprisingly few people show up at most county or other hearings; be one of those who does. Take the time to send a brief note to your supervisor about issues affecting the environment and native plants. If you're more hands on, join an invasives pull, volunteer at our propagation beds, give a talk about native plants to your civic association (we've got one for you, with slides) or serve on our board. Sometimes helping is as simple as sending an email comment. For the Tri-County Parkway, send an email to tricountyparkway@virginiadot.org supporting the NO BUILD option. Or mail your opinion to Ken Wilkinson, VDOT, 1401 E. Broad St., Richmond VA 23219. See details on attending the public hearings below.

SAVING CUB RUN AND BULL RUN FROM THE TRI-COUNTY PARKWAY (TCP)

TCP is a proposed new north-south highway that would connect the City of Manassas with I-66 and the Dulles Airport area. Three different route options are being considered: **West Two** (Alternative C-D) Pageland Lane-Western Transportation Corridor; **West Four** (Alternative C-G-F) Pageland Lane-234 Bypass N. Connector; **Comprehensive Plan** (Alternative E-F-F-1) Flat Branch>Bull Run>Cub Run-BRRP. **The Comprehensive option, would include putting a road through Bull Run Regional Park to follow the watershed pathway through the largest stand of Virginia Bluebells and Spring Beauties in the East.** Another option is NO BUILD.

Under the <u>Comprehensive Plan</u>:200 acres of public parkland would be destroyed. This option would have the greatest negative impact on floodplains, parks and wetlands. 12 neighborhoods would be affected, 463 residentially zoned acres would be lost, 22 residences destroyed, and 10 times more low income individuals would be affected by this option than by any other. 23 prehistoric and historic archaeological sites would be affected. More stream valleys would be affected by polluted road runoff than under other options. To learn more about the study, visit

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(All numbers should inclu			
noted.) Potowmack News			
May, Jul, Sep, and Nov.			
of the month prior to publ		awler for more	
information or e-mail her	at malawler@aol.com.		

www.virginiadot.org/projects/tcp.asp or call the study information line toll-free at 1-866-874-5286.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement was released 4/1/05. Access the DEIS information now at: <u>http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/tri-deis.asp.</u> If you find it will take too long to download the DEIS to read (6 hours by dial-up), a helpful Environmental Impact Assessment Matrix is at the site that reveals the results of the Alternatives comparison in the DEIS report. Listed are VDOT Residency Offices with hard copy DEIS study information for review.

Make your voice heard. Open forum public hearings will be held between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. at each of the following locations:

Prince William County Monday, May 9, 2005 Stonewall Jackson High School 8820 Rixlew Lane Manassas Fairfax County Tuesday, May 10, 2005 Bull Run Elementary School 15301 Lee Highway Centreville Loudoun County Wednesday, May 11, 2005 Arcola Elementary School 24328 Goshen Road Arcola

Comments also may be mailed to the project manager, Ken Wilkinson, Virginia Department of Transportation, 1401 E. Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219 or emailed to <u>tricountyparkway@virginiadot.org</u> The comment period for these Public Hearings is open through May 21, 2005.

UNDERSTANDING THE NATURAL COMMUNITIES OF VIRGINIA

Potowmack News

"The Commonwealth of Virginia spans five of the more than 20 major physiographic provinces found in North America (Fenneman 1938), making it one of the most diverse landscapes – both topographically and floristically – in the East. Because of its location between the glaciated, mountainous regions of the north and the coastal lowlands of the south, Virginia is also uniquely positioned to capture species at or near the southern limit of their range, as well as southern species reaching the northern limits of their distributions, adding to the biotic richness of the state. This combination of landscape diversity and biotic richness leads to the wealth of ecological communities found throughout the state – from the maritime forests of the coastal barrier islands to the spruce forests and shale barrens of the mountains." *(from the Division of Natural Heritage website)*

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation through its Division of Natural Heritage (DNH) maintains a comprehensive classification of natural communities, which can be found on line at <u>http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/dnh/ncintro.htm</u>. Accompanying the community descriptions are some of the most artfully beautiful landscape photographs in Virginia, taken by DNH vegetation ecologist, Gary Fleming. Browse through the Terrestrial System to learn about the "LOW ELEVATION MESIC FORESTS," with its six types of forest communities or the seventeen different communities within the "LOW-ELEVATION DRY AND DRY-MESIC FORESTS AND WOODLANDS." See if you can find the description of the plant community in a natural area near you by reading about the predominant species. Maybe your own backyard has some remnant features of those communities. And as members of VNPS, do all you can to protect this priceless heritage.

FIELD BOTANY COURSE AT BLANDY

Have you ever wanted to know how to identify a wildflower, shrub, tree, or even a weed growing in the wild or in your garden? Do you learn best by hands-on and fieldtrip experiences? If the answer is "yes," Field Botany at Blandy Experimental Farm may be the course for you! Marion Lobstein will be offering her popular 3-credit Field Botany course (EVEC 493/793) during the weeks of June 20-23, June 27-30, and July 5-8, 2005 at Blandy. Classes meet 9am-4pm each of those days. This field-based course will cover the basic principles of botany with emphasis on the classification, identification and evolution of flowering plants. Lectures and laboratories will cover the life cycles of major groups of plants; the structure and function of plant stems, roots, leaves, and reproductive organs; the characteristics of common flowering plant families; and the ecology of plants communities. Fieldwork will focus on the use of plant dichotomous (identification) keys and other aids to identify species of flowering plants and on field recognition of flowering plant family characteristics. **The Flora of West Virginia** will be used for plant identification. For more information call Marion Lobstein at (703)536-7150, email her at mblobstein@earthlink.net and Blandy's webpage (www.virginia.edu/~blandy).

INTERESTED IN POLLINATION ISSUES?

Monitoring native bee populations on organic farms close to wild habitat, organic farms distant from wild habitat, and conventional farms distant from wild habitat (conventional farms tend not to be located with close proximity to wild habitat), Kremen's research group found that 80 percent of organic farms close to wild habitat could rely entirely on native pollinators for pollination services. By contrast, just 50 percent of organic farms located distant from wild habitat could rely on native pollinators alone, and none of the conventional farms had sufficient native pollinators for pollination needs. Overall, native bees provided 28 percent of pollination on conventional farms and 60 percent on organic farms. http://www.newfarm.org/research/2005/mar05/pollinator.shtml

SMARTY PLANTS: THEY CAN FIX THEIR OWN GENES!

Contrary to inheritance laws the scientific world has accepted for more than 100 years, some plants revert to normal traits carried by their grandparents, bypassing genetic abnormalities carried by both parents. These mutant parent plants apparently have hidden templates containing genetic information from the preceding generation that can be transferred to their offspring, even though the traits aren't evident in the parents, according to Purdue University researchers. This discovery flies in the face of the scientific laws of inheritance first described by Gregor Mendel in the mid-1800s and still taught in classrooms around the world today." This means that inheritance can happen more flexibly than we thought in the past," said Robert Pruitt, a Purdue Department of Botany and Plant Pathology molecular geneticist. "While Mendel's laws that we learned in high school still are fundamentally correct, they're not absolute. For more information on this research, see: http://news.uns.purdue.edu/UNS/html4ever/2005/050323.Pruitt.inheritance.html

ARLINGTON'S PUBLIC SPACES MASTER PLAN MEETINGS:

The final draft of the 2005 Public Spaces Master Plan has been released. Public forums are scheduled for:

- Wed. May 4, 7:30pm to 9:30 Central Library
- Thurs. May 5, 7:30pm to 9:30 Aurora Hills Community Center
- Sat. May 21, 10am to noon, Fairlington, Room 10

Speak up for native plants, natural resources, and invasives control!

Invasive Plants: Perspectives, Prescriptions and Partnerships August 16 and 17, 2005 at the University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia, PA

Invasive plants are a major threat to biological diversity. This conference will provide participants with an understanding of the nature and scope of the invasive plant problem and will concentrate on the most current management tools being used to control them. For a complete brochure, contact the Morris Arboretum at 215-247-5777, ext. 156 or 125 or e-mail at jlm@pobox.upenn.edu. Sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council

The University of Massachusetts/Boston has developed an electronic identification key for plant families, invasives, etc. check it out at: <u>http://efg.cs.umb.edu:8080/Keys</u>

WANT TO JOIN THE CHAPTER LISTSERV? Send an email to STONE.SYLVIA@NMNH.SI.EDU and in the message section write subscribe to vnps-pot, your e-mail address, and your full name. Or visit http://groups.yahoo.com/group/vnps-pot/join

BOOK REVIEW: Garden Insects of North <u>America</u> by Whitney Cranshaw "The Ultimate Guide to Backyard Bugs" Princeton University Press, 2004. \$29.95.

How many times have you discovered cute, little eggs on your favorite plant and wondered: are these the treasured eggs of some beautiful butterfly or helpful insect, or are they a potential scourge to be wiped out before it's too late? Or have you searched your insect guides in vain for some indication of what this caterpillar will turn into? At last, help is at hand. Of course, there are so many insects that no one book small enough to carry can possibly cover them all, but Whitney Cranshaw's Garden Insects of North America makes a very good beginning. With multiple, clear photographs facing descriptions of the good, the bad, the beautiful, and the ugly, you finally have a chance to figure out what this creature will eat and whether you should encourage it or not. Cranshaw opens galls and borers' galleries, connects eggs to larvae to adults, and shows who eats whom. When I found this at a Fairfax County public library, I took it home at once. But 3 weeks' study wasn't long enough, so I went to Borders for a copy of my own. -- Margaret Chatham

WEED BOOKS

The Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) and the Southern Society of Weed Science (SWSS) have published two new references. Both can be ordered via the WSSA website: <u>www.wssa.net</u>

Invasive Plants of Range and Wildlands and Their Environmental, Economic, and Societal Impacts. C.A. Duncan and J.K. Clark, Editors This valuable reference for scientists, weed control specialists, resource planners and policymakers provides comprehensive information on the acreage infested, rate of spread and damage caused by sixteen important invasive plant species. The book has individual chapters that document the distribution, the environmental and economic impacts, the recognized value and use, and comprehensive literature citations for each of the sixteen species.

Interactive Encyclopedia of North American Weeds This 3rd Edition of the Interactive Encyclopedia of North American Weeds features 85 additional weed species, revised distribution maps that include Canada and Alaska, an expanded illustrated glossary of 565 botanical terms, and updated common and scientific names. This program is an outstanding resource for agriculturalists, horticulturalists, gardeners, herbalists, and all types of courses in the agricultural and biological sciences at the high school and collegiate level.

ARLINGTON'S RIP PROJECT

Tues May 3rd <u>– INVADERS COFFEEHOUSE – WETA</u> 6:30 – 8:45 pm, 2775 South Quincy St. (corner of S 28th St and Quincy St in Shirlington)Join us and learn more about invasive plants and animals in this special presentation. We will share coffee and dessert and watch the Invaders episode of "**Strange Days on Planet Earth.**" Please bring a dessert to share if you can. Coffee, tea and juice provided. Please PRE-REGISTER for this event by calling Arlington's Invasive Plant Program at 703 228 7636 before the event.

Sat. May 14 - <u>Second Saturdays at Bluemont Park</u> 9am - 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 at "the rocks" next to the bike trail. Contact John Huennekens at 524-3853, or <u>jhuenn@gwu.edu</u>

Sun May 22 - Invasive Plant Removal - Madison Manor Park 1- 3 pm (N. Quantico St and 12th Rd N.) Meet in the parking lot beside the tennis courts on N. Quantico St. Long pants and long sleeves recommended.

Sat. June 11 Second Saturdays at Bluemont Park 9am - Noon. pm (See above for details)

Note: Some tools provided. If you have your own gloves, clippers, loppers or dull flat screwdrivers, please bring them along to removal events. Long pants and long sleeves recommended. For information about any of these events, please contact Jan Ferrigan, Invasive Species Program Coordinator at (703) 228 7636 or <u>iferriga@vt.edu</u> or Kasey Spriggs at (703) 228 6401

LOCAL EVENTS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

Fri. May 6 Spring Wildflowers of the Potomac River Gorge. Carderock, MD 10 am to 12:30pm with Cris Fleming, Audubon Naturalist Society, \$20 for non-members. Call: 301-652-9188 x16 (*Note: discount for more than one walk)

Sat. May 7 – <u>Barcroft Magnolia Bog Tour</u>, 1-3:00 pm at Barcroft Park in south Arlington (off 4 Mile Run Drive). Join NPS Park Ranger, Jim Rosenstock, for an educational tour of the globally rare magnolia bog and associated wetlands. Wear waterproof shoes and be prepared to encounter poison ivy and sumac. Group will meet at Barcroft Park – park in the new parking garage and look for the park ranger uniform near the entrance. For information on how to register or directions to the site, call Long Branch Nature Center at 703-228-6535.

Sat. May 7 – <u>Explore Cub Run. Free Conservation Forum. 10am to noon</u> Sponsored by Audubon Naturalist Society (<u>ANS</u>), the Northern Virginia Conservation District and Fairfax County Watershed Planning. Call ANS for details: 301-652-9188

Sat. May 7 – <u>The Natural and Cultural History of Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve</u>. Loudon County. 9am – 1pm ; Ron Circe, Preserve Manager, will lead an easy 2-mile walk. <u>ANS</u>, \$28 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

Sun. May 8 <u>Appalachian Spring at the Thompson WMA</u> 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. Millions of large flowered trillium, ladies slipper, showy orchis, pennywort and wood betony. W/ Stephanie Mason, <u>ANS</u>, \$38 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

Sun., May 8 <u>Mother's Day Wildflower Walk</u> 2 p.m. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. Reservations are required for this activity for adults and for children age 6 and older; call 703-528-5406.

To reach NVRPA's Potomac Overlook Regional Park, take I-66 to the Lee Highway-Spout Run exit; turn left on Lee Highway, right on Military Rd., continue on Military and turn left when it divides; turn right on Marcey Rd. and park at the end of the cul-de-sac in the Potomac Overlook Regional Park lot.

Sun., May 8 Potomac Valley Native Plant Collection Tour. 2 p.m. Led by Park Manager Keith Tomlinson. Reservations required; call 703-255-3631. A Biodiversity series event. *Meadowlark Botanical Gardens is between Routes 7 and 123, off of Beulah Rd. and south of the Dulles Access Rd.*

Thurs.May 12-May 15 <u>Cape May Birds, Butterflies, and Blooms</u>. Sponsored by Arlington County Conservation Section, Parks Dept. Call 703-243-4342 to receive a trip itinerary and info on lodging and transportation. \$200 fee (excl. lodging/transportation)

Sun., May 15, <u>Weekend foray New Discovery Walk</u> 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. This free program is for all ages. For more information, call 703-528-5406. *See above for directions*.

Fri. May 20. <u>Creating Native Landscapes by Design</u>. Spring Garden Symposium, sponsored by Adkins Arboretum 8:30 am-3 pm. Atkins Arboretum, Chesapeake College, Wye Mills, MD, featuring Cole Burrell and others. \$100 See: <u>http://www.adkinsarboretum.org/</u>

Sat. May 21. Spring on Sugarloaf Mountain 10 to 3 with author Melanie Choukas-Bradley and illustrator Tina Brown. Audubon Naturalist Society \$38 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

Sun., May 29, <u>Weekend foray New Discovery Walk</u> 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. This free program is for all ages. For more information, call 703-528-5406. *See above for directions*

Thurs. June 9, 7:30-9:30pm and Sat. June 11 morning Field trip. <u>Suitland Bog</u> with Cris Fleming. Audubon Naturalist Society \$38 for non-members. For Information call301-652-9188 x16.

Sat Jun. 4– <u>Explore Bull Run and Popes Head Creek. Free Conservation Forum.</u> 9am -2pm Sponsored by Audubon Naturalist Society , the Northern Virginia Conservation District and Fairfax County Watershed Planning. Call ANS for details: : 301-652-9188

Sat. June 11, Weekend foray New Discovery Walk 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. This free program is for all ages. For more information, call 703-528-5406. *See above for directions*

Sun. June 12, <u>Introduction to Chesapeake Bay Ecology</u> 2 p.m. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. Free. Reservations are required; call 703-528-5406.. *See above for directions*.

Sat. June 18, <u>An Introduction to Edible Wild Plants</u> 2 p.m. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. Free. Reservations are required; call 703-528-5406..., call 703-528-5406. *See above for directions*

Thurs. June 23 7:30-9:30 class/ Sat. June 25 field trip to Turkey Run. <u>Ferns and Fern Allies</u> with Cris Fleming with Cris Fleming. Audubon Naturalist Society \$38 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

Sat. June 25, <u>Weekend forav New Discovery Walk</u> 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. This free program is for all ages. For more information, call 703-528-5406. *See above for directions*

Our VNPS Potowmack Chapter board needs a

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

MS Access knowledge helpful to maintain membership database. Please contact Marianne Mooney, 703 534 8179 or <u>m.mooney@comcast.net</u>

Invasives Control Work Parties at Turkey Run Park along the Potomac!

High on a bluff above the Potomac River in Turkey Run Park once stood a homestead, or a mansion, with a fantastic view. Now all that's left there is a fireplace, some steps, and three acres of Asian wisteria. Not much of a legacy. And now someone has to deal with it. Our chapter is removing invasives along the Potomac Gorge in a partnership with The Nature Conservancy and National Park Service. At this particular site, the goal is stopping the invasion of the wisteria into nearby woods which are relatively invasives-free. But the wisteria is a canny plant. I followed above-ground roots (or stems) that shot straight across the hillside for 50 feet, branching out here and there, seemingly biding their time before they send up shoots. I reached the original plant where the main root/stem emerged from the side of what looked like a very tall, straight eight inch diameter tree. It was wisteria and I felt great pleasure in cutting through its girth. I'm only hoping the other VNPS volunteers are getting as much pleasure out of this as I am. We appreciate everyone who's come out to help and look forward to seeing more of you in May. We've been doing only two work parties a month, one on the first Saturday and the other on the 4th Thursday, and we work for 3 hours each time. We're combining our May/June efforts on June 4, 10am to 1pm. Meet at the Park headquarters parking lot on the George Washington Parkway, just south of the actual park entrance. And thanks to all the hardworking and supportive volunteers who have helped out: Susan Wexelblut, Jack Krusberg, Geoffrey Seymour, Steve Wertime, S. Jorge..., Margaret Chatham, Ginny Yacovissi, Shirley and Cliff Gay, Laura Beaty, Rob Aldrich, Lisa Palmer, and me, Marianne Mooney. (Sorry for any misspellings.) We appreciate you!

Contact Mary Travaglini at TNC 301 897 8570 with any questions.

		\$}	Potowmack Chapter Virginia Native Plant Society P.O. Box 5311 Arlington, VA 22205		
Char	pter l	Events Calendar			
May	7	Scotts Run Walk 9:30-12:30			
May.	12	Board meeting 7:30 Green Spring			
May	14	Plant Sale 9-3 Green Spring			
May	21	Magnolia bog walk and cleanup 10 to 1	Please verify your address		
June	9	Board meeting 7:30 Green Spring	information and your renewal date on the mailing label.	Printed on recycled paper	