

POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 10, No. 5

Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

August/Sept 1992

Fall Plant Sale - Start Planning Now

September 19
11am-3pm
Green Spring Gardens Park

Our Plant Sale this year will be early. Instead of an October date as in the past, Green Spring has scheduled its mum sale for Saturday, September 19th. The rationale is that most gardeners purchase and plant fall plants in September.

In view of the early date for our plant sale, we encourage our members who are planning to contribute to the sale to pot up plants from mid to late August. Remember to label each plant with its botanical name, common name and your name.

Among those plants we would like to receive to augment our inventory for the sale are:

- 1 - Ferns of all kinds
- 2 - Joe-Pye-weed
- 3 - Ironweed
- 4 - Monarda
- 5 - Boltonia
- 6 - Butterfly-weed
- 7 - Tiarella cordifolia

We also urge our members to join us at the propagation beds at Green Spring on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. It takes a concerted effort to prepare for our plant sale. If you are interested call Gerry Pratt (323-1094) or Tiana Camfiord (830-3783).

The Chapter's Tenth Anniversary HOW WE BEGAN

By Ed Ballard

This retrospective account of VNPS and Potowmack Chapter beginnings shows that volunteers can make a difference with knowledgeable leaders, willing associates and continuity of purpose.

In April 1982, District Naturalist Susan Allen (now long-range planner) with the Fairfax County Park Authority enlisted plantsperson Mary Painter to conduct three meetings at County Nature centers. Mary stimulated a core group of volunteers to help in organizing the Virginia



Wildflower Preservation Society (VWPS) soon thereafter. She became the first President of the new organization. Officers and committee chairs were chosen on the basis of their training and talents to form the initial Board of Directors. Six top professional advisors agreed to serve as resource persons.

To start the ball rolling, nine charter members drove to the North Carolina Botanical Garden in May for a day-long workshop hosted by Harry R. Phillips and the

Chapter Events

August 4 and 8
Native Plant Trail

September 8 and 12
Native Plant Trail

September 19
Fall Plant Sale

September 27
Annual Meeting
Election of Officers

garden staff. His ten years of pioneering research as curator of native plants culminated in 1985 with the publication of his landmark book Growing and Propagating Wildflowers. It was an educative experience to see the productive work of garden volunteers in propagating native herbaceous plants for public sale, to compare the representative plant groups from each region of Virginia, and to walk the native plant trail with a stimulating teacher.

The Society's first newsletter, June - July 1982, edited by Publication Chair Norma Vermillion, revealed

continued on page 4

Membership Renewal!

Please check your mailing label. If there is a green dot your membership is about to expire or has expired. Please renew now.

Thoughts from the Vice - President:

Lucky Anne Haynes is off enjoying tropical flora so I am borrowing her space to send you a special invitation: please come to Hemlock Overlook Regional Park on September 27th at 12 o'clock noon for Potowmack Chapter's and Prince William Wildflower Society's joint 10th Anniversary celebration. Potowmack was the first chapter of the newly created Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society (as it was then called) in 1982. Society founder, Mary Painter, initially dubbed us the "Alpha" Chapter. The already formed Prince William Wildflower Society quickly joined as the second chapter in the same year. The current officers of both chapters thought it would be fun and appropriate to hold a joint annual meeting to pay tribute to those charter members who founded and nurtured the Society.

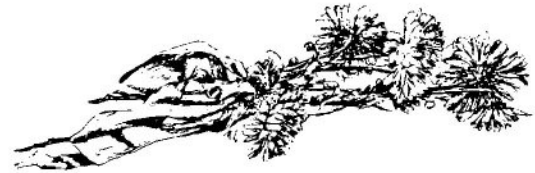
Potowmack Chapter charter member and past president, Ed Ballard, has written a wonderful article for this newsletter on the history of the Society called "How We

Began". Ed, along with Mary Painter and other charter members will be treating us to more stories during an informal group discussion at the annual meeting. Besides listening to these wonderfully entertaining people, we will have a short walk and a pot-luck picnic.

We hope you will make a special effort to come this year. Not only will you meet many talented and informed people, but also you will see what some of your fellow members are busy doing. There are exciting possibilities for you to become more involved with Chapter activities. Whether you write an article, participate in a photography show or pot up a plant, your contribution of time helps us to make the causes of the Society more widely known and accepted. You can start by responding to the membership challenge (see page 5) and by coming to the annual meeting to have fun.

Hope to see you on September 27th!

Nancy Luria



Photography Show Results

What an impressive revival for what we hope will once again become an annual tradition! A small number of entries, only twelve, but a generous display of effort and talent characterized our photography show. We heartily thank Potowmack member and professional photographer, Jessie Harris, who not only judged the show but spent an entire afternoon helping to hang it, but also contributed several of her stunning photographs to help make the presentation more effective.

Ms. Harris awarded the three ribbons to photographers whose pictures best exemplified desirable composition, exposure and focus. Congratulations to:

Neil Snyder - FIRST PLACE
Trillium grandiflorum

Elizabeth Aulakh - SECOND PLACE
Arisaema atrorubens

Kevin Bond - THIRD PLACE
Hypericum spathulatum

The photographs were on display in the Manor House at Green Spring Gardens Park through the month of July and may be kept up through August (call the Manor House 642-5258 to verify).

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

Board Officers

President	Anne Haynes	(703) 836-0925
Vice President	Nancy Luria	(703) 528-3612
Secretary	Emma Erdahl	(703) 243-3053
Treasurer	Ben FitzGerald	(703) 280-4918

Committee Chairs

Botany	Marion Blois Lobstein	(703) 536-7150
Education	Liz Smith	(703) 768-1697
Tours	Edith Bradbury	(703) 971-8878
Hospitality	Margaret Pridgen	(703) 591-1235
Membership	Anne Crocker	(703) 437-0355
Propagation and Sales	Tiana Camfiord	(703) 830-3783
	Gerry Pratt	(703) 323-1094
Publications	Norma Vermillion	(703) 451-0572
Newsletter	Lynda Heise	(703) 354-6560
Site Registry	Mary Pockman	(703) 356-7425

Mail articles for the newsletter to
L. Heise,
5409 Mallard Landing
Lothian, MD 20711

THE ASTER SPECIES OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA



by Marion Blois Lobstein

This time of year, in late summer on into early fall, the wildflowers that we enjoy (or may not enjoy, in the case of ragweed allergy sufferers) are dominated by members of the composite family Asteraceae. In Northern Virginia, there are approximately 150 species of composites that bloom from late summer on frost. Of the species of composites, roughly one quarter are species of two genera -- 18 species of goldenrods (*Solidago*) and 24 species of aster (*Aster*). This article is an overview of our species of *Aster*.

Virtually all of our species of asters are perennials with alternate leaves as well as often prominent basal leaves. As composites, the flower heads are made up of many separate flowers with an involucre of bracts (modified leaves) on the lower surface of the head. In *Aster* species, flower heads are made up of both petal-like ray flowers as well as tubular disk flowers that are usually yellow but can turn purple to brown with age. The flowers of this genus are all pollinated by insects such as bees, bumblebees, butterflies, moths, wasps, beetles, and even flies. The name of the genus *Aster* is derived from a Greek word for star. Dried aster flower heads often appear star-shaped and contain fruits known as nutlets.

Differences among species of this genus are not always that distinct and identification of species can be further complicated by hybridization between species. Still, the challenge of identifying members of this genus can be satisfying. Peterson's Field Guide to Wildflowers covers 21 of the 24 species and Newcomb's Wildflower Guide also does a good job covering this genus.

The basically white-flowered species of *Aster* in northern Virginia (color can vary to pink, or even lavender in this group) are:

- A. divaricatus* ("widely-branching") - white wood aster
- A. ericoides* ("heath-like") - heath aster, or Michaelmas daisy
- A. infirmus* ("weak") - cornel-leaved aster
- A. lateriflorus* ("with one-sided flower cluster") - calico or starved aster

- A. pilosus* ("pilose", or "with long, soft hairs") - white heath aster
- A. schreberi* (named for Johann von Schreber) - Schreber's aster
- A. simplex* ("simple") - paniced aster, or tall white aster
- A. umbellatus* ("umbellate", as in an umbel) - flat-top white aster
- A. vimineus* ("like osier") - small white aster

The basically blue to violet-flowered species of northern Virginia asters are:

- A. concolor* ("of one color") - eastern silvery aster
- A. cordifolius* ("heart-leaved") - blue wood aster
- A. dumosus* ("bushy") - bushy aster (may also be white-flowered)
- A. laevis* ("smooth") - smooth aster
- A. linariifolius* ("leaves like Linaria") - stiff-leaved aster
- A. macrophyllus* ("large-leaved") - bigleaf aster
- A. novae-angliae* ("of New England") New England aster
- A. oblongifolius* ("oblong-leaved") - shale barren aster
- A. patens* ("spreading") - late purple aster
- A. prenanthoides* ("suggesting Prenanthes") - crooked-stem aster
- A. punceus* ("red or purple") - purple-stem aster
- A. sagittifolius* ("arrow-leaved") - arrow-leaved aster
- A. shortii* (named for Charles Short) - Short's aster
- A. tataricus* ("Tartarian") - Tartarian aster
- A. undulatus* ("undulate") - wavy-leaved aster

The medicinal and culinary uses of asters have been more limited than uses of many other groups of composites. However, the young leaves of the large-leaved aster (*A. macrophyllus*) are recommended as greens in edible-wild-plant books. Various American Indian tribes did use native species of asters for a wide variety of medicinal purposes ranging from teas to dried leaf/root preparations to treat fevers, diarrhea, stomach problems, pregnancy complications, colds, wounds, abrasions, and even venereal diseases. The Iroquois tribe used a preparation as a love medicine or potion. Some tribes burned dried aster flowers as incense to drive away evil spirits while other tribes smoked dried aster leaves and blew the smoke through a tube into the nostrils of the very ill or unconscious.

This summer into fall, enjoy the handsome displays of asters and goldenrods that bring color to this time of year. Do not blame your allergies on members of either of these groups, which are both insect pollinated. Ragweed (*Artemisia artemisiifolia*, *A. trifida*), which is wind-pollinated, is to blame for your suffering. Accept and enjoy the challenge of identifying the many species of *Aster* in our area this summer into fall.

(Marion adapted this article from her article published in the September, 1989 *Wildnews*, the Prince William Wildflower Society newsletter.)

Marion Blois Lobstein is an Associate Professor of Biology at NVCC - Manassas Campus.

How We Began

continued from page 1

the rapidly spreading membership and program:

- Over 100 charter members in Northern Virginia
- Society letterhead and floral symbol (Marsh Marigold)
- Calendar of events— committee meetings, plant rescue projects, illustrated lectures, herbarium and photography workshops and promotional slide talks to garden clubs
- Wildflower notes on Pink Lady's Slipper
- Committee reports
- Volunteer guidelines
- Membership profiles
- Completion of bylaws and Article of Incorporation
- Description of two-volume Atlas of Virginia Flora
- Passage of Endangered Species Act by Congress
- Membership application form with dues schedule

Mary Painter reported in that issue that she would be meeting in early July with representatives of newly-established Prince William Wildflower Society from Manassas to discuss chapter formation within the VWPS.

The Society's first annual meeting and plant sale were held at the National Wildlife Federation's Conservation Education Center on October 16. (VWPS had become a state-authorized corporation on July 22.) Bylaws were approved at the meeting and were to be submitted with the Articles of Incorporation, to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for a tax-exempt ruling. Reporting on the meeting, the third issue of the Newsletter, November 1982, listed members of the overlapping VWPS Board and Alpha Chapter Executive Committee for 1983, with Mary Painter as President of both groups.

The Spring 1983 Bulletin of the VWPS warmly welcomed the Prince William Wildflower Society as its sec-

ond recognized chapter. In less than a year, the fledgling organization had made remarkable progress with growing membership and influence toward state-wide coverage. Both the Society and Mary Painter were recognized with *Volunteer Activist Awards* of the Washington Metropolitan Area at the 1983 ceremony in the nation's capital.

Potowmack Chapter (initially Alpha) was chartered as the first VWPS chapter on November 23, 1982. The Chapter name was chosen (as a variant spelling of George Washington's Patowmack Canal at Great Falls) to relate its territory to the upper tide-water river. After serving as the Chapter's first Propagation Chair, charter member Mary Pockman took over the reins as Chapter President in late 1983, and was elected Society President in 1985. Her words as incoming Chapter President in the October/November 1983 *Potowmack News* voice a pertinent challenge to the membership:

"One of the delights of this organization is the generous spirit of our members... With a strong foundation on which to build, all of us on your new Board look forward to an exciting year. Our task, I think, is to shape a program that strongly backs the state-wide work of the VWPS in ways that are clearly focused on the particular needs and opportunities of our own area. We will welcome your ideas, your suggestions, your questions, and we count on your continued enthusiasm and support."

Under a written agreement with the Fairfax County Park Authority, Green Spring Gardens Park and its Horticulture Center have always been the Chapter's home. In the early years repository sites there were planted with doomed wild plants rescued by members from development sites. A demonstration wildflower meadow was tried on poor soil along the entrance road. The Spring and Fall Plant Sales have been fixtures

since 1983, and provided a prime source of Chapter funds. With strong support from park personnel the member-maintained propagation beds have provided sale plants from the beginning. Now the long-planned Virginia Native Plant Trail is a major Chapter/Park project.

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of founders and many associates, the programs of the Virginia Native Plant Society¹ and its nine chapters have become known and admired as effective volunteer undertakings that have endured.

Ed Ballard is a Charter Member and served on the Society's initial Board of Directors. He was Chapter President from 1985-87.

¹At the Society's annual meeting on September 25, 1988, the membership voted to change its name from The Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society to The Virginia Native Plant Society to encompass the conservation of native plants other than just those commonly considered as "wildflowers".

10th Anniversary Membership Challenge

Help celebrate Potowmack's 10th Anniversary: ask a fellow wildflower enthusiast to become a member of VNPS or give them a membership as a gift. Membership fees allow both the Society and the Chapter to carry out important conservation and educational programs. Currently, Potowmack Chapter has 343 members. Can we make it 443 by the annual meeting? Look for the new membership brochure enclosed in this newsletter.

Potowmack Chapter Proposed Bylaw Changes

The proposed revisions will be voted on at the 1992 Annual Chapter Meeting, September 27, 1992. The portion(s) of the current By-laws to be changed are in bold print.

Section 6 - Committees and Committee Chairmen

Current -

6.2 The chairmen of standing committees shall be **elected by the membership as provided in Section 9 of these bylaws.**

Proposed -

6.2 The chairmen of standing committees shall be appointed by the Board.

Section 9 - Election of Chapter Officers and Committee Chairmen

Current -

9.1 A slate of one or more candidates for each office and **standing committee chairmanship and of six (6) candidates for the** three at-large memberships of the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the membership at least thirty (30) days before each annual meeting of the Chapter and shall be voted upon at that meeting. In the event that a candidate withdraws after the slate has been sent to the members, the Nominating Committee may present the name of a new candidate at the annual meeting or ask the members to authorize the BOARD to appoint a member to the vacant position.

Proposed -

9.1 A slate of one or more candidates for each office and for each of the three at-large memberships of the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the membership at least thirty (30) days before each annual meeting of the Chapter and shall be voted upon at that meeting. In the event that a candidate withdraws after the slate has been sent to the members, the Nominating Committee may present the name of a new candidate at the annual meeting or ask the members to authorize the board to appoint a member to the vacant position.

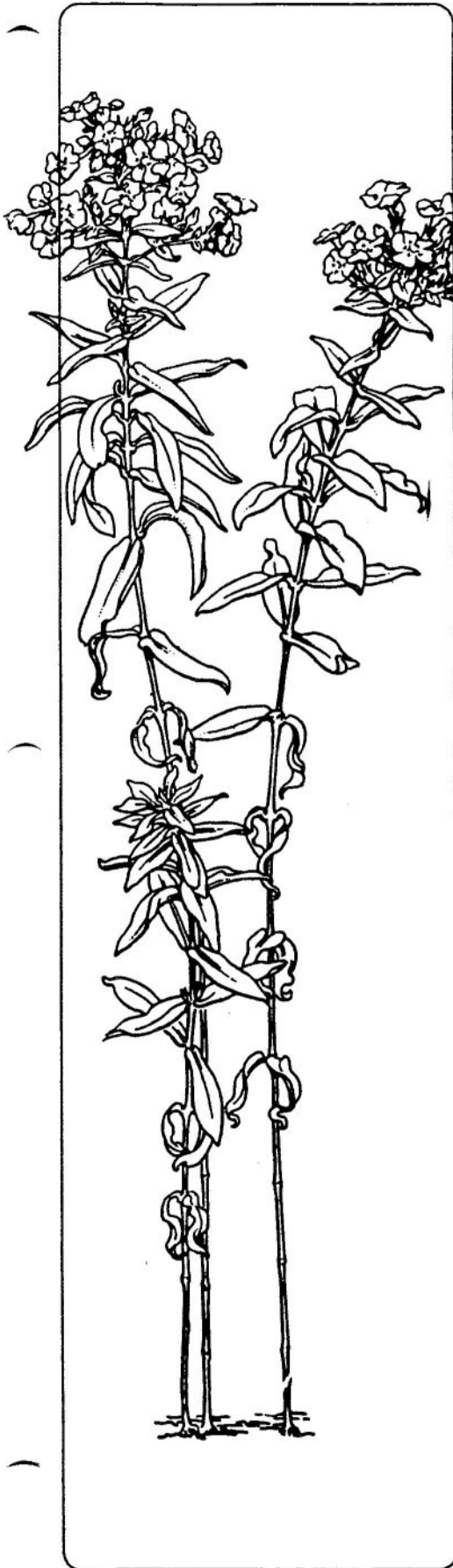
Section 10 - Nominating Committee

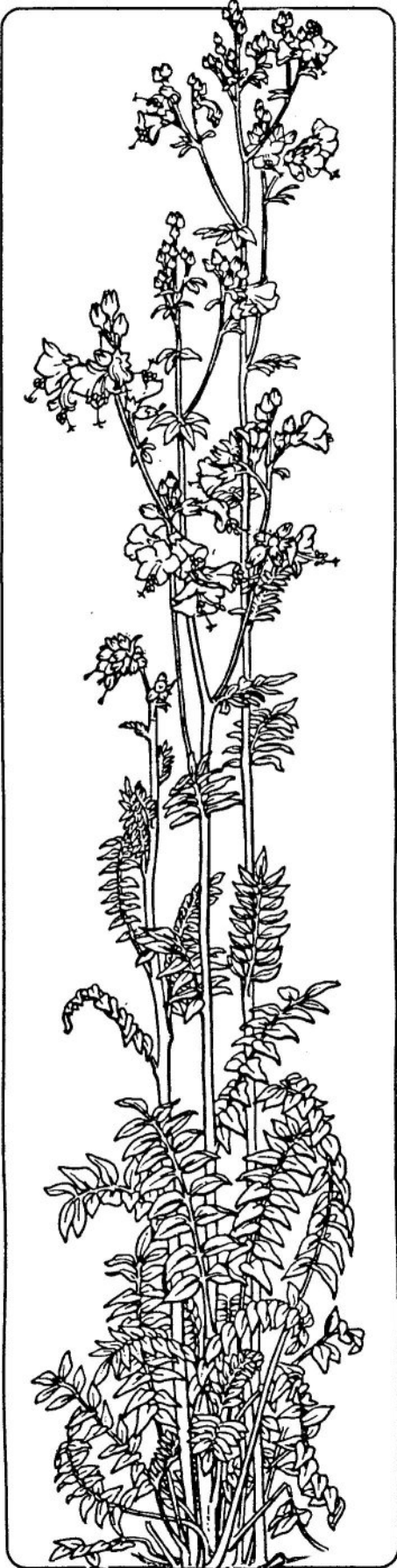
Current -

10.1 The Nominating Committee shall consist of two (2) Board members and three (3) members-at-large who are not members of the Board. The former shall be elected by the Board; the latter shall be elected by the Chapter membership. Members of the Nominating Committee shall serve from one annual meeting unit the next, **and may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms.**

Proposed -

10.1 The Nominating Committee shall consist of two (2) Board members and three (3) members-at-large who are not members of the Board. The former shall be elected by the Board; the latter shall be elected by the Chapter membership. Members of the Nominating Committee shall serve from one annual meeting unit the next.





Proposed Slate 1992-1993

President :	Ann Haynes
Vice President:	Nancy Luria
Treasurer:	Ben FitzGerald
Secretary	Laura Beaty
Nominating	Anne Van Ryzin
	Margaret Pridgen

Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee Anne Crocker (Chair), Liz Smith, and Gerry Pratt, is pleased to present the following slate of candidates for offices in the Potomack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society for 1992-1993:

President: Anne Haynes - Anne has been a VNPS member since 1987 and chapter president since January 1991. She holds a Certificate of Landscape Design from G.W.U. and works in the field as time permits. Anne is active in conservation concerns and comments that it has been an eye-opener to discover the "incredible network" of environmental groups in northern Virginia and hearing they share mutual concerns in the formidable issues confronting this area. She is active in the Alexandria Parks and Recreation commission.

Vice President: Nancy Luria - Nancy has been a member since 1989, has served as education chair and held the office of vice president for the past year. She holds a Certificate of Landscape Design and is a Master Gardener. Nancy has been instrumental in the Native Plant Trail and is a great asset to our Chapter as a Board Member.

Secretary: Laura Beaty - Laura has been a member since 1991. Her services at the plant sales has been a great assest. She enjoys natives in her gardens. (Laura was out of town as we go to press, so more data was not available)

Treasurer: Ben FitzGerald - Ben has been a member since 1985 and the chapter treasurer since February 1990. He and his wife have been interested in natives for many years. Photographing wildflowers, fungi and ferns are of special interest. Ben has also studied botanical subjects through the Smithsonian. He is a retired Colonel in the Army.

Nominating Committee Margaret Pridgen, Anne Van Ryzin

Fall Blooming U.S. Native Perennials

Allium stellatum - The prairie onion, native to Illinois, Minnesota, west to Kansas, is a sun loving perennial, growing one to one and a half foot tall with lavender- pink to white flowers

Artemisia ludoviciana - The silver king artemisia, native to Southern Colorado, south to Texas and west to California, is a sun to partial shade perennial growing two to three and half feet tall with silver gray color.

Aster ericoides - The heath aster, native from Maine to Georgia, west to Minnesota and New Mexico, is a sun to partial shade perennial growing one to three feet tall with white flowers.

Aster novae-angliae - The New England aster, native from Vermont to Alabama, west to Wyoming and New Mexico, is a sun to partial shade perennial growing three to six and a half feet tall with violet flowers.

Aster novi-belgii - The New York aster, native from Newfoundland to Georgia, is a sun to partial shade perennial growing three to six and a half feet tall with violet flowers.

Boltonia asteroides - The boltonia, native to the Eastern United States, is a sun to partial shade perennial growing one to three feet tall with white flowers.

Chrysopsis villosa - The golden aster, native Wisconsin to Texas, west to California, is a sun loving perennial growing one to five feet tall with yellow flowers.

Eupatorium coelestinum - The perennial ageratum, native from New Jersey to Kansas, south to Florida and Texas, is a sun to partial shade perennial growing one to three feet tall with blue flowers.

Helenium autumnale - The Helen's flower, native from Quebec to Florida, west to Arizona and British Columbia, is a sun loving perennial growing four to five feet tall with yellow flowers.

Physostegia virginiana - The obedient plant, native New Brunswick to Minnesota, south to Missouri, is a sun to partial shade perennial growing three to four feet tall with pink flowers.

Salvia azurea grandiflora - The blue sage, native Minnesota to Nebraska, south to Arkansas and Texas, is a sun to partial shade perennial growing three to six feet tall with blue flowers.

Solidago canadensis - The Canada goldenrod, native from Newfoundland to Manitoba, south to Virginia and Colorado, is a sun loving perennial growing five feet tall with gold flowers.

Solidago nemoralis - The gray-stem goldenrod, native from Nova Scotia to Alberta, south to Florida and Texas, is a sun loving perennial growing three to five feet tall with gold flowers.

Solidago odora - The sweet goldenrod, native New Hampshire to Florida and Texas, is a sun loving perennial growing three to five feet tall with gold flowers.

Vernonia altissima - The ironweed, native from New York to Georgia, west to Missouri, is a sun to partial shade perennial growing ten feet tall with purple flowers.



Goldenrod (*Solidago* species). East, Midwest

Calendar

Native Plant Trail: Volunteer work days are scheduled the second week of each month, through November, on Tuesdays and Saturdays: September 8 and 12, October 6 and 10, and November 10 and 14, from 9 AM to noon. If you are interested in volunteering, call Nancy Luria at (703) 528-3612 to register for individual work days. Tasks that volunteers have helped with include planting, watering, weeding, mulching, raking leaves, and clearing brush.

State Annual Meeting: The Society's annual meeting celebrating the tenth anniversary will be held in Roanoke September 11 - 13. It will be hosted by the Blue Ridge Chapter. Special lodging rates are available at the Tanglewood Holiday Inn in Roanoke (703-774-4400). Watch for the registration form and details in the August issue of *The Bulletin*.

Long Branch Nature Center - Programs are free and reservations are required excepted where noted. (703) 358-6535.

August

4 Tue 9am
8 Sat 9am
8 Sat 2 - 4 pm
22 Sat 2 - 4 pm
27 Thur 7 - 9pm

Native Trail Work Day at Green Spring Gardens Park
Native Trail Work Day at Green Spring Gardens Park
Summer Plant Walk at Long Branch Nature Center
Summer Plant Walk at Long Branch Nature Center
Board Meeting at Green Spring Gardens Park

September

8 Tue 9am
12 Sat 9am
11-13
15 Tue
19 Sat 11am-3pm
27 Sun 12 noon

Native Trail Work Day at Green Spring Gardens Park
Native Trail Work Day at Green Spring Gardens Park
State Annual Meeting
Newsletter Deadline for the October/November Issue
Fall Plant Sale Green Spring Gardens Park
Chapter Annual Meeting Joint meeting to celebrate our tenth anniversary.

October

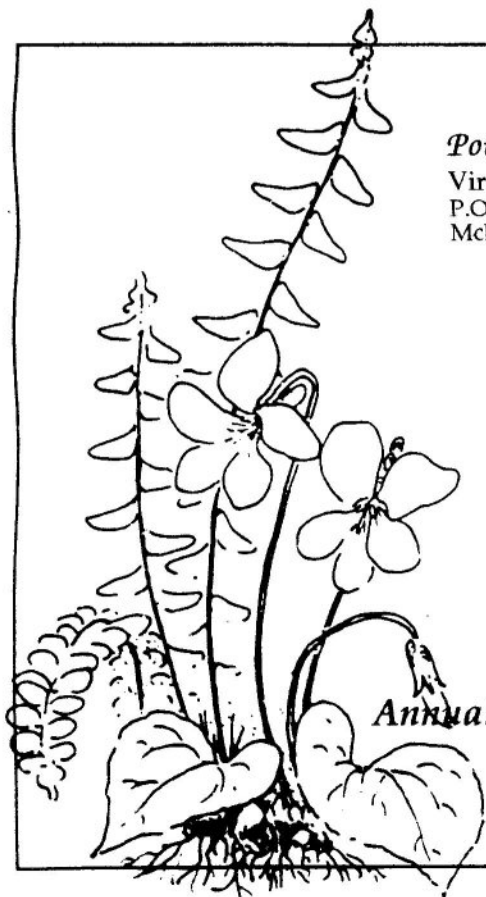
6 Tue 9am
10 Sat 9am

Native Trail Work Day at Green Spring Gardens Park
Native Trail Work Day at Green Spring Gardens Park

November

10 Tue 9am
14 Sat 9am
15 Tue

Native Trail Work Day at Green Spring Gardens Park
Native Trail Work Day at Green Spring Gardens Park
Newsletter Deadline for the December/January Issue



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

Annual Meeting (Potowmack Chapter) Sunday September 27th

