

POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 22, No 4

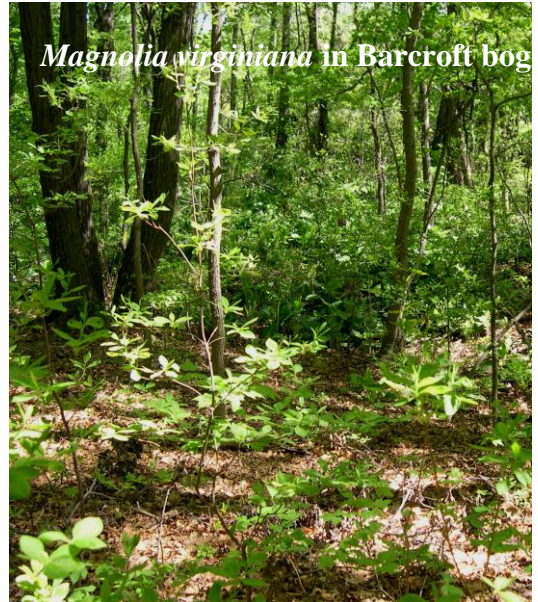
Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Jul/Aug 2004

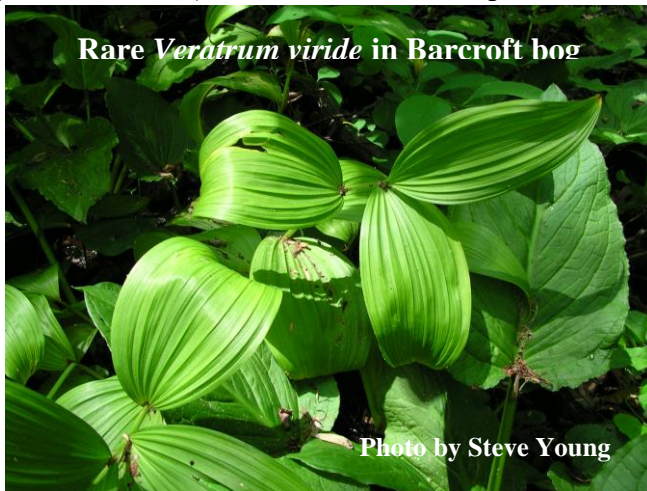
MAGNIFICENT MAGNOLIA BOG IN BARCROFT PARK by Ginny Yacovissi

On May 22, VNPS members led by Rod Simmons visited Barcroft Park's globally rare remnant Magnolia Bog complex along Four Mile Run. The walk began in a section of the bog beyond the area previously explored by Rod in 2002. Rod pointed out a large sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*), one the largest growing in Arlington County. The group then set out to find the rare false hellebore (*Veratrum viride*), which Rod knew was somewhere in the bog. Along the way, they spotted many other plants characteristic of Magnolia Bog habitat, including poison sumac (*Toxicodendron vernix*) and swamp-haw (*Viburnum nudum*). After much searching, they located the false hellebore. Although not in bloom, the false hellebore was striking in appearance with its large, shiny, conspicuously veined leaves. It is an Arlington County record species.

In a Terrace Gravel Forest section of the park, members observed two other rare plants. One was yellow pimpernel (*Taenidia integerrima*), which had just finished blooming. The second was Small's ragwort (*Senecio smallii*), in full bloom. Both plants are County Records.



Magnolia virginiana in Barcroft bog



Rare *Veratrum viride* in Barcroft bog

Photo by Steve Young

Other highlights of the walk included sightings of fowl manna grass (*Glyceria striata*), winterberry holly (*Ilex verticillata*), fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*), black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*), wood anemone (*Anemone quinquefolia*), yellow stargrass (*Hypoxis hirsuta*) in bloom, royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*) with fertile fronds, Indian cucumber root (*Medeola virginiana*) in bloom, wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), and a large lovely patch of mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*).

In addition to botanizing, VNPS members picked up trash and pulled out some invasive non-native plants encroaching upon this very special place.

"Do we not owe a duty to posterity in making an attempt to save a tract like this for future students, in the neighborhood of each city, town or college? If the Government purchases and preserves the birthplace of a great man, the field of celebrated battle, why not a strip of Mother Earth, rich with indigenous vegetation?"

From *Summer in a Bog* by Katherine Dooris Sharp, 1900

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:

A few days ago, I regretfully accepted the resignation of able and dedicated board member Liz Nalle. In wondering how to replace Liz, I started thinking about some of the many wonderful things she'd done; given slide shows about invasive and native plants, taken our display to events, kept our publications current. Then I thought of what other board members do: edit and write the newsletter, arrange programs and walks, attend meetings, take the minutes, keep the books, pay the checks, do the publicity, maintain the listserv, update the membership, weed the beds, sell the plants, lead the walks, survey sites, speak at public meetings, go to seminars, provide ideas and input, share news with members....the list goes on! Our board is wonderful and they have my, and deserve your, heartfelt thanks for all they do. **Marianne Mooney**

**REPORT ON THE PLANT SALE by
propagation Co-chairs Beth Smith and Laura Beaty.**

The May plant sale held by the Potowmack Chapter at Green Spring was a tremendous success. The fine weather brought out many native plant enthusiasts. Our volunteers enjoyed helping buyers find 1,036 plants for their gardens. All this fun and success would not have been possible without the hard work of the chapter volunteers.

We wish to thank Vivian Attermeyer, Edie Bradbury, Tiana Camfiord, Margaret Chatham, Nancy Christmas, Susan Crawford, Dusty Dukes, Virgil Frizzell, Eleanor Kask, Mary Ann Lawler, Marianne Mooney, Louis Nichols, Laura Reichenbaugh, Lesa Schmidt, Sally Sieracki, Elaine Squeri, Billie Trump, Ginny Yacovissi, Shirley Gay, Paul Kovenock, Rob Aldrich, Lisa Palmer, Beth Smith and Laura Beaty for their contribution of time and energy.

In addition we want to thank the kind individuals who donated many plants to the sale, including Vivian Attermeyer, Mary Ann Lawler, Sandy Austin, Will Feldman, Margaret Chatham, Edie Bradbury, Esther Laidig, Louis Nichols, Marianne Mooney, Beth Smith and Laura Beaty.

While parents were locating plants the children entertained themselves by watching our very own Brood X cicadas split out of their shells. The timing was perfect for insect education. **Speaking of timing, now is time to check through your native gardens and locate those excess plants that you can donate to our fall sale on September 18. Drop them off on Wednesday or Saturday morning 9:30 to noon at our propagation beds behind Green Spring's hort' center. If you'd like to learn about gardening with natives, meet new people, (and take home spare seedlings), join us as a volunteer on either of those mornings. No experience necessary!** Thanks to all members for your support in donating and buying plants.

Congratulations and kudos to Earth Sangha! The Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and Earth Sangha have reached an agreement on a partnership to develop the 20-acre Marie Butler Leven Preserve in McLean, VA, as a "Native Arboretum." It will be a comprehensive display of woodland plants native to the mid-Atlantic piedmont. The arboretum will be an outdoor educational resource unique in our area.

WANT TO JOIN THE CHAPTER LISTSERV? Send an e-mail to Mary Ann Lawler at malawler@aol.com 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>

BOARD OFFICERS		
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Garden Tours	Billie Trump	960-1476
(All numbers should include the 703 area code, unless otherwise noted.) <i>Potowmack News</i> is published 6 times per year, in Jan, Mar, May, Jul, Sep, and Nov. 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 .		

SAVING OUR MATURE TREES

by Mary Ann Lawler

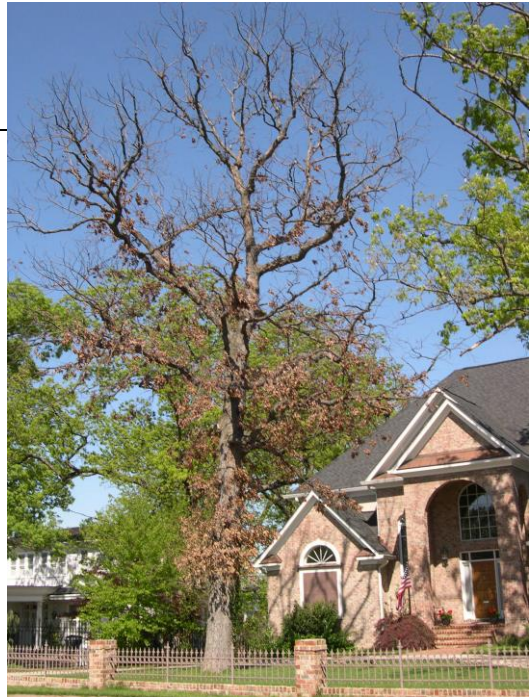
What can we do to protect the old oaks, hickories, tulip poplars, sycamores, and other native trees in our neighborhoods that were part of our original eastern deciduous forest? One thoughtful resident of Falls Church recently wrote a letter to the *Falls Church News-Press* lamenting the loss to the community of the old giants as developers make way for “super size” houses. She says that old city standards once required builders to preserve trees, to site houses around them and to replace the trees that had to be cut. She says: “Let’s revisit this erosion of the city’s standards....Let’s not hide behind condemnations that ‘the tree was diseased.’ Like all things old, trees show signs of wear and tear....Save as many as we can....Keep the tree-ed look of our town...don’t cave to developer pressure.” Her pleas apply well beyond Falls Church.

Even where developers say they will save trees, we must be mindful of construction practices which do so much damage that 3 or 4 years after the house is sold, the trees are dead, such as in the example in the photo on the right. At this site, the construction trucks drove over the tree roots, and workers put materials and equipment directly against the trunk and on the roots for weeks.

We must educate the public about the benefits of a green infrastructure. Organizations such as American Forests (www.americanforests.org) have excellent resources of information on those benefits.

We must continue to be vigilant on Rezoning Issues and Notices of Requests for Variance related to construction in our neighborhoods, and then make our views known. Participate in the planning activities of your Urban Forestry Commissions and in the activities in our civic associations related to development. The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan and Policy Plan guides development in that county. Residents there should work with their homeowner or civic associations, as well as land use councils in their districts, to stay abreast of development plans and to provide input. For additional information contact the Urban Forestry Division or the Fairfax County Tree Commission at 703-324-1770.

Arlington County has a tree preservation ordinance which allows for the designation of trees as Heritage, Memorial, Specimen or Street trees and



protects such trees from removal or damage. *Quercus alba* killed by construction

Community members may suggest a tree for protection by contacting the Urban Forester, authorized arborist, or the County Manager. Furthermore, Arlington County is drafting its Urban Forest Plan. (See article below.)

Individuals can make a difference. Please speak up for the voiceless giants that shade and enhance our neighborhoods.

ARLINGTON’S URBAN FOREST MASTER PLAN—MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Arlington County has completed a draft of its Urban Forest Master Plan. The proposed Plan can be found at the following website:

<http://www.co.arlington.va.us/forums/forest/> A public hearing for adoption of the plan will be held at the July 10 meeting of the Arlington County Board. Public comments will be accepted until and during the meeting. Written comments received by July 2nd may be incorporated into the plan or summarized for the County Board. Oral comments will be heard by the County Board prior to voting on adoption of the plan at the July 10 meeting. If you have any comments please contact: trees@co.arlington.va.us or Robert Corletta, Urban Forester, Arlington County, PRCR, Parks and Natural Resources, Division, 3700 South Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington, VA 22206, (703) 228-1863, rcorletta@co.arlington.va.us.

POTOWMACK CHAPTER MEMBERS HELP ENHANCE MASON NECK MEADOWS by Barbara Farron

You may have seen Nicky Staunton’s June 7 post on our listserv requesting help for Mason Neck State Park. Paul Billings (District II Resource Specialist, Division of State Parks) is in charge of using native plants in maintaining state parks in his district. He had purchased 700 butterfly-attracting wildflowers and needed volunteers to help him plant the plugs the next day, Tuesday. Two of our Potowmack Chapter members (Beth Smith and Barbara Farron) were able to meet Paul to assist with planting – a good turnout, considering it was a weekday and there had been only a one-day notice.

When we arrived at the Mason Neck visitor’s center, Beth and I felt we had been paid in advance when we saw a bald eagle in a nearby tree, calling to other eagles as they flew overhead. We then met Paul and two summer interns, Kevin and Jonathan, and followed them along a picturesque unpaved road to a meadow area not usually open to the public. Dragonflies and butterflies flew around our cars. The clouds kept the heat and humidity bearable while we worked in wet areas Paul had selected for the plugs of swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*).

We felt we had the best job because we planted while the men dug the holes. Some areas were damp; others were wet enough that planting was reminiscent of making mud pies. There was time for conversation and to observe the plants in the meadow. Paul has been working on the meadows, and native grasses which he seeded the previous year are doing well among other grasses and perennials. The field was surrounded with trees, including paw-paw (*Asimina triloba*), the host plant for the Zebra Swallowtail butterflies which flew gracefully around us. Other butterflies were nectaring on the flowers of a stand of common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) which Paul had carefully protected from mowing.

The five of us planted 400 young swamp milkweed plants in about two hours. Beth and I both had to leave at noon, so we were not able to help plant the butterfly weed and asters. It was a good morning’s work in pleasant company. Paul, a member of the Northern Neck Chapter, is dedicated to using native plants at Mason Neck, often choosing plants which also provide food for birds and butterflies. Paul assured us the Potowmack Chapter would be welcome to arrange a field trip to the meadow area to check on the progress of what we planted and to enjoy the flora and fauna in the area.

This is the kind of project VNPS can encourage and support!

AUDUBON AT HOME GARDEN TOUR SATURDAY, JULY 24 1PM – 5PM

Tour local gardens, including VNPS member properties, to see Audubon at Home in Northern Virginia. Talk with homeowners and property managers to learn how they use environmentally friendly gardening practices to create healthier habitats for humans and wildlife. For details and directions see the website, www.fairfaxaudubon.org, or call 703-256-6895.

LOCAL EVENTS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

June 28-Sep. 6—Grasses USDA Graduate School; Rust Sanctuary, Leesburg, VA, 7 – 9pm. Classes plus field trips: \$295 Instructor, Gary Evans. Call 202-314-3320 or register on line at www.grad.usda.gov

June 29-Aug 31—Ferns and Fern Allies USDA Graduate School; Woodend Sanctuary, Chevy Chase. 7 – 9pm. Classes plus field trips: \$295 Instructor, Carole Bergmann. Call 202-314-3320 or register on line at www.grad.usda.gov

Sat. July 3 Walk with a Naturalist 10:30 am –noon. Hidden Pond Nature Center. Pohick Stream Valley walk. Free. Call 703-451-9588

Sat. July 10 Invasive removal/ Four Mile Run Park, Alexandria, 10am to noon Call Brooke Andrews of the Northern Virginia Senior Environment Corps at 703 -549-1607 Ext. 141 for information. Volunteers should wear pants and sturdy shoes. If working with invasive plants please also wear a long-sleeve shirt. Four Mile Run Park is located at 3700 Commonwealth Ave., Alexandria, VA 22305. *Directions: From Old Town Alexandria take Route 1 north (Patrick St.) to E. Glebe Rd. Make a left onto E. Glebe Rd. and a right onto Commonwealth Ave. The next left is W. Reed Ave. (Cora Kelly Elementary School is on the corner of Commonwealth Ave. and W. Reed Ave.) Make a left onto W. Reed Ave. and make a right onto Edison St. Go straight on Edison St. to the dead end. Park on the street and meet at the registration table by the Edison St. cul-de-sac.*

LOCAL EVENTS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (Continued):

July 15-18. The 55th annual meeting of the Lepidopterists' Society in College Park. Co-sponsored by The Smithsonian Institution, USDA, and U. of Maryland Entomology Dept. See <http://alpha.furman.edu/~snyder/lep/meet.htm>

Sat. July 17. Habitat Workshop. Gulf Branch Nature Center, Arlington. 10:00am to noon. Did you know that your yard could provide important habitat for wildlife? Loss of habitat is the number one threat to wildlife today. Many concerned citizens have decided to do something about it and you can too! Explore the many exciting ways that you can make your landscape wildlife friendly. Learn what plants to use and other elements needed to provide habitat for birds, butterflies and other animals. Learn how you can create a backyard sanctuary and find out how to have your property certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat. For adults. Free.

Reservations required: Reservations may be made by phone or in person with the Registration Office at Lubber Run Recreation Center, 300 N. Park Dr., 2nd floor: 703-228-4747. The Office is open Monday - Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. You will be asked to provide the program activity: #655280A. Meet at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 N. Military Rd., Arlington, VA 22207

July 17 Summer Wildflowers of Great Falls Park, VA 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Leader: Cris Fleming. Come explore the varied habitats of Great Falls Park to look for summer-blooming wildflowers. We'll search the riverside floodplain, upland forest, and the high open bedrock terrace for common summer species and more unusual ones such as whorled milkweed, culver's-root, erect dayflower, anglepod, and the rare riverbank goldenrod. Wear sturdy shoes, as there will be some walking over rocky terrain. Bring a field guide, binoculars, hat, lunch, and plenty of water. *Park entrance fee is waived for participants of this program.* Audubon Naturalist Society \$31 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

July 17. Butterfly Safari 11 am -12:30pm Hidden Pond Nature Center. With naturalist Alonso Abugattas. Reservations required. \$3. 703-451-9588.

July 24. Audubon at Home Garden Tour 1-5pm (see box on previous page)

July 24, 2 p.m. Invasive exotic plants. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Road, North Arlington, Virginia. Learn how to identify and cope with non-native plants that spread and damage the landscape, destroying native plants and habitat. Registration is required for this free program; 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. "A Delicate Balance" event.*

July 24, 2 p.m. Butterflies of Potomac Overlook Regional Park, Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Road, North Arlington, Virginia. View images of butterflies who flutter through Northern Virginia, explore their ecology, then take a walk to collect, examine and release these colorful insects. Gather butterfly gardening tips, too, at this free presentation. Reservations are required; 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 Road, continue on Military and turn left when it divides; turn right on Marcey Road and park at the end of the cul-de-sac in the lot for Potomac Overlook Regional Park. "A Delicate Balance" event.*

July 25 The Summer Meadow. 8 am to noon. Audubon Naturalist Society \$28 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

Aug 7 Summer Wildflowers of Clark's Crossing Park, VA along the W&OD Bike Trail near Vienna 9 am to noon Audubon Naturalist Society \$28 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

August 7 Invasives Removal Broad Run 8am to noon. Join the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust and the Bull Run Mountain Conservancy Saturday, August 7th from 8am to noon as we protect a state-dedicated Natural Area Preserve from invasion by invasive species. The location is part of the globally-rare Basic-Oak Hickory forest and needs your help! Participants should bring gloves, hand tools, and rakes if possible. Please dress for the weather and be prepared to hike. For more information or to RSVP contact Kelley Elliott at information@nvct.org or call 703-354-5093.

Directions: From I-495 North get on I-66 West and continue west for about 24 miles before taking exit number 40, US-15 toward Haymarket/Leesburg. Make a LEFT onto James Madison Highway/US-15 South, then a RIGHT onto VA-55/John Marshall Highway. Continue on John Marshall Highway for 2.7 miles before making a RIGHT onto Turner Road, and then a LEFT onto Beverley Mill Road. We will meet at 17405 Beverly Mill Dr. OR use Mapquest to 17405 Beverly Mill Dr., Broad Run, VA 20137.

Aug 14 Invasive removal/cleanup Dyke Marsh, Alexandria, 10am to noon Call Brooke Andrews of the Northern Virginia Senior Environment Corps at 703 -549-1607 Ext. 141 for information. Registration: All volunteers need to register upon arrival. The registration table is located near the brown bathrooms next to the benches and water fountain in Belle Haven Park (left of the parking lot). Individual volunteers will need to fill out a National Park Service Volunteer Agreement Form. Volunteers under the age of 18 need to get a parental approval form signed by a parent or guardian. Returning volunteers do not need to fill out an agreement if already done so. The Volunteers should wear pants, sturdy shoes, bug spray and bring sunscreen if needed. If working with invasive plants please wear a long-sleeve shirt.

Aug 16-18 Bear Island Microstegium removal. Potomac Gorge, near Great Falls, MD. One of the worst invasive plants in our region is Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*) which is spreading like wildfire and threatening rare species and natural communities throughout the Potomac Gorge. The Nature Conservancy is helping the National Park Service's Exotic Plant Management Team recruit microstegium control volunteers for full-day (9 - 4) or half-day (9 - 12, 1 - 4) shifts on lower Bear Island (home of the Billy Goat Trail), August 16-19, 2004. We will need up to 15 volunteers per shift to pull microstegium. To sign up, please email volunteermd@tnc.org. When you sign up, let us know which time and date you will join us! We will then send you additional information on the workdays.

Aug 22 Meadow Wildflower Walk 10am – 1pm Ellanor C. Lawrence Park \$5 Reservations required. 703-631-0013.

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE AND THE POTOMAC RIVER

Alas, in spite of our best efforts, purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria L.*) has now crept down to the mouth of Four Mile Run and has reached the Potomac River at the George Washington Memorial Parkway near the airport. The National Park Service will now have to deal with it as it slinks inexorably down river.

FROM MEADOWLARK BOTANIC GARDENS

Many thanks to VNPS, Environmental Research Services Inc. (ESRI), George Mason University Geography Department and several scientific advisors for continuing support of the Potomac Valley Native Plant Collection

Meadowlark staff recently returned from the 2nd World Botanic Garden Congress in Barcelona, Spain, attended by 450 Delegates from 70 countries. Meadowlark presented a symposium paper titled Implementing the International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation: the Potomac Valley Collection. Consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) the Potomac Valley Collection (PVC) approaches conservation of plant diversity from an eco-regional perspective. Further, the PVC takes an "earth systems" approach to composition and distribution of plant communities. Geology, climate, floristics, geomorphic processes and natural history are considered in collection development. To Learn more about the conservation of plant diversity at the regional, national and global levels visit www.bgci.org the website of Botanic Gardens Conservation International. *For more information see: <http://www.nvrpa.org/meadowlark.htm>*

ARLINGTON'S RiP PROJECT

Sat. Jul. 10- - Second Saturdays at Bluemont Park 9am to noon. Volunteers will continue to meet on Second Sats. near the "rocks" at the base of Illinois St. Enter Illinois St from Wilson Blvd. Long pants, hat, sunscreen and water recommended. Cool drinks provided. Come enjoy the warm weather and be a part of this successful site! Contact John Huennekens at 524-3853, or jhuenn@gwu.edu.

Tues. Aug. 3 – Remove Invasive Plants Volunteer meeting 7:30 - 8:30 pm, Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. This important meeting will allow volunteers to find out more about how their site can be included in the countywide invasive plant volunteer day planned for Oct 23, 2004. Volunteers and interested residents will also have the opportunity to comment on the new Arlington Invasive Species Draft Plan and Update Report. Before the end of July copies of the plan will be posted on the RiP listserv (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RiP_Arlington/). Contact Jan Ferrigan at jferriga@vt.edu or 703 228 7636 for more info.

Sat. Aug. 14 Second Saturdays at Bluemont Park 9am to noon (See above for details)

For information about any of these events, please contact Jan Ferrigan, Invasive Species Program Coordinator at (703) 228 7636 or jferriga@vt.edu or Kasey Spriggs at (703) 228 6401



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

Chapter Events Calendar

Jul	8	Chapter Board Meeting M.Mooney
Aug	12	Chapter Board Meeting 7:30 Green Spring
Sept	18	Plant Sale Green Spring
Oct.	2	VNPS annual Meeting Charlottesville

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