

# POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 24, No. 5

Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Sept/Oct 2006

## POTOMAC GORGE WALK WITH GARY FLEMING, SEPTEMBER 9

The eminent ecologist, Gary Fleming, of Virginia's Natural Heritage Program will lead this members-only walk at Great Falls on September 9 from 9am to 12pm in one of the country's most biologically diverse areas—the Potomac Gorge. The Potomac Gorge provides habitat to more than 200 rare plant species and natural communities, making it one of the most important natural areas in the eastern United States. However, the habitats to be visited are fragile. So, this walk is by registration only, and first priority will be given to those members who have volunteered to remove invasives in the gorge throughout the year. To register, please call or email Marianne Mooney at 703-534-8179 or m.mooney@comcast.net for confirmation and directions to meeting spot.

## POTOWMACK CHAPTER FALL PLANT SALE, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Join us at our propagation beds behind the Horticulture Center at Green Spring for our fall plant sale from 11am to 3pm. Fall is the best time of the year to plant, so come out for a great selection of ferns, shrubs, shade and sun perennials. We will be carrying nectar plants and host plants for monarch butterflies. We will also have more spicebush, VNPS wildflower of the year. Laura Beaty 703 534-8746

## FALL FLING BUTTERFLY FEST, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, GREEN SPRING WITH THE EMINENT BIOLOGIST, DR. LINCOLN BROWER

(See page 5)



### Monarchs in Mexico

## POTOWMACK CHAPTER ANNUAL MEETING, SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 30th, 2:00 PM

Join us for an afternoon at the Potowmack Chapter Annual Meeting at Green Spring Gardens. There will be refreshments and a reception for VNPS members starting at 2:00 pm, followed by a short business meeting at 2:30p.m. to approve the slate of officers, offer recognition to our volunteers, and vote on the upcoming year's budget. Our featured speaker will be **Cole Burrell** discussing his recently published book, *Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants*. Afterwards, there will be an opportunity for book signing

**C. Colston Burrell**, a founding member of the Virginia Native Plant Society and the designer of the Native Plant Garden at Green Spring, will explain how to use native plants as a means to combat some of the "top 100 most unwelcome perennials, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees." A competitor plant is one having "tougher survival skills." Can natives be competitive? – yes, according to Cole who offers examples of hardy native plants as attractive alternatives to invasives and for attracting native birds and butterflies. A widely known lecturer and author, Cole has devoted his talents to promoting garden designs that incorporate native plants, emphasizing appreciation of their strengths, beauty and ecological presence. His writings regularly appear in *Horticulture*, *Fine Gardening*, *Landscape Architecture*, and *American Gardener* magazines, and among his published books is the award-winning *A Gardener's Encyclopedia of Wildflowers*. Copies of his latest book, *Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants*, will be available for purchase at the meeting.

VNPS members are asked to **register** early if planning to attend the Annual Meeting by calling Green Spring at 703-642-5173 during its business hours of 9 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Saturday **prior to September 16<sup>th</sup>**. Registration will be necessary because of limited meeting space and attendance is anticipated to be high. After September 16<sup>th</sup>, public announcements regarding the event may be released if seating space remains available.

**"Surely the most compelling reason for butterfly gardening is to increase public awareness of the critical importance of saving natural habitats. In this context, gardening is a means of preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration."**

**Stanwyn G. Shetler** from an essay in **Butterfly Gardening** created by the Xerces Society and the Smithsonian Institution.  
(For the entire essay, see page 3.)

**PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:**

Summer reaches its crescendo this month. Hummingbirds are buzzing cardinal flowers, monarchs are laying eggs on milkweed and luminous blooms of rose mallow are lighting up swamps and wetlands. August is about lazily enjoying late-summer plants, night insect sounds and the last of the warm weather. But September awaits with its return to business and obligations. We have many events planned for September and I hope you'll join us. Our native plant sale is on the 16<sup>th</sup>; we're well-stocked and ready to supply your fall planting needs. That same day our chapter co-sponsors a talk on monarchs in Mexico and the U.S. by renowned research biologist Lincoln Brower at Green Spring. On the 30<sup>th</sup> our chapter annual meeting features VNPS charter member Cole Burrell unveiling his latest book. The work parties continue at Turkey Run twice every month and more willing hands would really help. The propagation committee members will be working at Green Spring every Wednesday morning through October----it's time to get ready for the spring sale and volunteers are always appreciated, and well fed. Call Laura Beaty at 703 534 8746 for info about helping. Summer's almost over; see you in September.

**Marianne Mooney**

**VNPS ANNUAL MEETING**  
**SEPTEMBER 23-24**

The Shenandoah Chapter is hosting the annual VNPS meeting this fall on September 23-24. It is a weekend event which includes full day and half-day field trips on Saturday, an annual meeting with a speaker and dinner Saturday evening; half-day field trips on Sunday. To register, go to [www.vnps.org](http://www.vnps.org).

**THE FOREST SERVICE AND OTHER**  
**FEDERAL AGENCIES ANNOUNCE**  
**CELEBRATING WILDFLOWERS WEBSITE**

A new Forest Service website: **Botany: Celebrating Wildflowers** will be viewable by the public. This new web site is the gateway to an enormous amount of botanical information provided by its partners. The Forest Service web portal is: <http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/> Every Region, Forest, Grassland and Prairie contributed to the content of this new site. Detailers from across the nation came into the Range staff and assisted in the development of emphasis area content such as Pollinators, Beauty of it All, Native Gardening, Just for Kids, and Teacher Resources to name a few. The majority of our partners are reciprocating with links to our new web site, which will dramatically increase traffic to our site and will also emphasize our close working relationship with our public and private partners. A number of other modules such as rare plants, native plant materials, ethnobotany, lichens, ferns and other botany subject areas are currently under development and will be posted to the web site as they are completed. The Forest Service is extremely proud of the work the botanists, plant ecologists and other resource specialists and our many partners contributed to the current content of this site.

JANETTE S. KAISER Director, Rangeland Management

**BOARD OFFICERS**

President	Marianne Mooney	534-8179
Vice President	Bob Yacovissi	641-8914
Secretary	Lee Ann Kinzer	768-4048
Treasurer	Vivian "Dusty" Dukes	938-7912

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Botany	Cris Fleming	301-657-9289
Conservation	Alan Ford	526-0535
Membership	Geoff Seymour	658-2289
Newsletter	Mary Ann Lawler	684-8622
Programs/Education	Shirley Gay	920-1913
Propagation/Plant Sales	Laura Beaty	534-8746
Publications	Roberta Day	560-5528
Publicity	Su Jewell	913-0139
Site Registry	Rod Simmons	
Garden Tours	Vacant	

(All numbers should include the 703 area code, unless otherwise noted.) *Potowmack News* 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](mailto:malawler@aol.com).



**Monarch on swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*),  
a host plant for the monarch larvae**

**BUTTERFLY GARDENING AND CONSERVATION by Stanwyn G. Shetler from an essay in *Butterfly Gardening* created by the Xerces Society and the Smithsonian Institution and published by Sierra Club Books.**

The gentle art and pleasure of gardening for butterflies is one way to light a slender candle of hope as the relentless forces of humanity disturb, fragment, homogenize, and destroy the natural habitat, snuffing out the shining lights of individual species one by one.

The butterfly garden is a wonderful window on the local environment. Like a light trap for moths or a bird feeder, a butterfly garden lets you know what is in the territory or which way the ecological currents are blowing. It is a telling index of the character and well-being of the neighboring patches of nature.

Every time a butterfly flits about, feeding on the nectar of flowers, or a caterpillar chews a swath through green leaves, it tells the story of animals and plants coevolving. The mere presence of the butterfly species indicates the existence of host-plant species, sometimes quite particular ones, and a natural chain of ecological relationships, including birds and other predators. Butterflies signal a set of evolved interactions, and wherever they fly they make a living statement about the vitality of their own natural environment.

But one butterfly or one wildflower does not make an ecosystem. Nature's rich complement of butterflies and flowers and other organisms and their myriad, evolved relationships can only survive if the diversity of the natural habitat is preserved.

The natural landscape is a patchwork of diverse habitats, organisms, and relationships. This patchwork has many layers of interrelated histories—geological, environmental, evolutionary, and ecological—and is a dynamic expression of the current health of the natural estate. It includes histories of migrations, dispersals, invasions, human disturbances, extinctions, and many other events. It is the culmination of a long stream of evolutionary history. The extinction of a species measurably diminishes the spectrum of biological diversity in the habitat and destroys a strand of history.

Virtually all landscapes have been compromised by human disturbance, virtually all natural histories garbled by human histories. This is the inevitable consequence of human existence. The conservation challenge to present-day keepers of the land is to understand that the natural estate cradles, binds together, and adorns the man-made estate, but that the manmade estate can overwhelm or destroy the natural estate. The ultimate goal is to preserve the integrity of both realms and, above all, to let the natural realm continue to tell its own original story in as unadulterated a state as possible.

A natural ecosystem is more than the sum of its parts, especially in its historical continuity, and it cannot be concocted like a cake from a mix of ingredients. Sowing, transplanting, or releasing plant and animal species indiscriminately across the land is neither sufficient, nor wise as a conservation strategy. The urge to play Johnny Appleseed must be resisted, or else the world will become a botanical garden without a traceable history and the biota will be homogenized from coast to coast. Even a "wild" flower is no longer a native but an introduced exotic if it is purposely planted in the wild.

Surely the most compelling reason for butterfly gardening is to increase public awareness of the critical importance of saving butterflies and other animals and plants by saving their natural habitats. In this context, gardening is a means of preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration. By cultivating plants for butterflies, gardeners will increase their awareness of nature and of the precarious state of the natural environment, and recognize the necessity of preserving as much of the natural habitat as possible.



**WAYSTATIONS HELP MONARCHS**

Creating patches of monarch habitat in your backyard can offset the loss of milkweed and nectar sources from development, herbicides and roadside management practices. Monarch Watch offers "monarch waystation" kits with seeds of native milkweeds and other flowering plants. By creating and maintaining a waystation, you can be part of the monarch conservation movement, helping to ensure continuation of the monarch migration in North America. You will also provide habitat for other species, including many pollinators. Visit [www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org) or call 800-780-9986 for more information or to order a kit.

**FALL FLING BUTTERFLY FEST, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, GREEN SPRING GARDENS INCLUDING LECTURE BY DR. LINCOLN BROWER**

The Potowmack Chapter is sponsoring a special event that we hope you sign up for. All events are separate; to register, call Green Spring Gardens at 703 642 5173. Registration began on July 16th.

--9 a.m. **THE SAGA OF THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY BY DR. LINCOLN BROWER** Illustrated lecture on the annual migration of monarch butterflies from North America to Mexico, one of the most amazing biological phenomena in the world. Dr. Brower has studied monarchs on their wintering grounds in Mexico since they were discovered there in 1975. Research Professor of Biology at Sweet Briar College, Professor Brower is currently collaborating with the World Wildlife Fund-Mexico and the Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary Foundation to implement a new comprehensive model to protect the major over-wintering sites of the monarch butterfly in Mexico. Dr. Brower will regale us with incredible photos and insights into the lives of these fascinating insects and apprise us of conservation issues that affect their survival. Co-sponsored by Potowmack Chapter.

--11 a.m. **Silent Auction** fundraiser

--11 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Monarch Magic:** Family program on the marvels of monarch metamorphosis with each family getting a monarch caterpillar to raise at home.

--11 a.m. to 3 p.m. **Potowmack Chapter Native Plant Sale.** We'll be featuring plants for butterflies and will have plenty of milkweed and nectar plants for sale.

--12 p.m. **Butterfly tagging** demo

--1 p.m. **Butterfly Gardening**---Walk through the gardens with an expert gardener and learn what plants you'll want to attract butterflies to your garden.

For more details and to register: 703-642-5173

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

**FAIRFAX COUNTY'S INVASIVE MANAGEMENT AREA PROGRAM**

Events are scheduled almost every weekend at local and neighborhood parks throughout the county. Please check out the program's website ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/nrp-ima.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/nrp-ima.htm)) for up-to-date information about dates and locations.

Wed. Sept. 6 Lake Accotink (Kudzu)

Wed. Sept. 27 Lake Accotink (Kudzu)

Wed. Sept. 13 Lake Accotink (Kudzu)

Wed. Oct. 4 Lake Accotink (Kudzu)

Sat. Sept. 16 Woodglen Lake (English Ivy)

Wed. Oct. 11 Lake Accotink (Kudzu)

Wed. Sept. 20 Lake Accotink (Kudzu)

Sat. Oct. 14 Woodglen Lake (English Ivy)

Other sites that we will have a workday at include Ellanor C. Lawrence Park (Stiltgrass & Barberry), Americana Park (Burning Bush) and Lake Fairfax (Oriental Bittersweet). RSVP to [Katherine.Frederick@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Katherine.Frederick@fairfaxcounty.gov) or call 703 324 8681.

**FALLS CHURCH INVASIVE PLANT REMOVAL TASK FORCE**

**Sat. Sept. 16 City of Falls Church Fall Festival City Hall** 10am-5pm (pick up a **free Spicebush** from the Invasive Plant Removal Task Force booth).

**Sat. Sept. 30 Invasive Plant Removal Party Crossman Trail Park** 10am to noon. (meet at Van Buren Street entrance)

**ARLINGTON'S RiP PROJECT**

**Sat. Sept 9- Second Saturdays at Bluemont Park** 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 [jhuenn@gwu.edu](mailto:jhuenn@gwu.edu).

**Sat. Sept 16. Nature Day Thrifton Hill Park** 9 am to noon We'll talk about invasive plants and other environmental issues. For more information, see: <http://thriftonhillpark.googlepages.com>

**Sat Sept 30th** - Help keep Arlington parks beautiful! Help remove invasive plants at multiple sites in Arlington on National Public Lands Day. \*\*

**Sat. Sept. 30 Thrifton Hill Park Clean-up/Invasives removal** See: <http://thriftonhillpark.googlepages.com>

**Sat. Oct 14- Second Saturdays at Bluemont Park** 9am - Noon. pm (See above for details)

**Sat Oct 21** - Help remove invasive plants at multiple site in Arlington on National Make a Difference Day. \*\*

\*\* After September 1 check the following for site locations for Sept 30th and Oct 21st volunteer days in Arlington:

<http://www.arlingtonva.us/Departments/ParksRecreation/scripts/parks/ParksRecreationScriptsParksInvasive.aspx>.

*Note: Some training and 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, please contact Jan Ferrigan, Invasive Species Program Coordinator, or Kasey Spriggs at (703) 228 7636 or [jferriga@vt.edu](mailto:jferriga@vt.edu) or [kspriggs@arlingtonva.us](mailto:kspriggs@arlingtonva.us).*

**LOCAL EVENTS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:**

**Sat. Sept. 9 Long Branch Native Plant Sale 1-3pm.** Annual fall plant sale at Long Branch Nature Center. All plants are freshly dug and propagated at the site. Cash or check (sorry, no credit cards). In the event of inclement weather, Sunday, Sept 10, is the rain date. Fee per plant as marked. 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA

**Fri. Sept. 9 Fall Flora at Great Falls with Cris Fleming.** 10am-12:30pm. Audubon Naturalist Society \$22 for non-members (discount for more than one walk). For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

**Wed. Sept. 13-Nov. 1 Fall Woody Plant Identification.** 6:30pm-8:30 with field trips; Instructor: Stan Shetler, Audubon Naturalist Society, Capital Gallery, \$335. Call: 301-652-9188 x16

**Sat. Sept. 16 Fall Wildflower Walk** 9:30am-11:30am. Visitor Center, Riverbend. Free. Reservations required. Sturdy waterproof hiking shoes recommended. Bring lunch and water. Register by phone 703-449-8639 or on line at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes.htm)

**Sat. Sept. 16. Dyke Marsh Invasives removal** Alexandria, 9am to noon Call Jeannine Purdy of the Northern Virginia Senior Environment Corps at 703 -549-1607 Ext. 141 for information. Register near the bathrooms in Belle Haven Park (left of the parking lot). The National Park Service will provide all trash bags and gloves. Wear long pants, sturdy shoes, bug spray, and bring sunscreen. If working with invasive plants, wear a long-sleeve shirt.

**Mon. Sept. 18-Nov. 27 Eastern Forest Ecosystems** 6pm—8 pm with field trips, Instructor: Gary Evans; Audubon Naturalist Society, Capital Gallery, DC \$335. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

**Sun. Sept. 24 Fall Flowers Hike Gulf Branch 3-5pm. Free.** Ages 6 and up. On the Gulf Branch Stream Trail, white wood aster, bluestem goldenrod, and snakeroot are lighting up the forest floor with color, while the leaves are beginning to burst into color above your head. Join a naturalist on a leisurely hike to take in the scenery. Wear sturdy shoes and bring a water bottle. For information call 703-228-3403. **Registration required**, register on-line <https://registration.co.arlington.va.us/> or call 703-228-4747. **Program # 612310D** Meet at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Rd., Arlington, VA 22207.

**Sat. Sept. 30 County Parks Big Tree Tour** 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. Adults. \$15 fee collected at the program. Tour several County parks with a naturalist to view and learn about Arlington's Champion Trees. While most of the walking within each park will be on flat paved trails and non-strenuous, the route is not considered wheelchair accessible For information call 703-228-6535. Registration required, register on-line <https://registration.co.arlington.va.us/> or call 703-228-4747. **Program # 610440C** Our van leaves from the Long Branch Nature Center parking lot, 625 Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA 22204.

**Sat. Sept. 30. Parkfairfax Native Plant Sale** 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., 3601 Valley Drive, Alexandria, Virginia For more information, visit the plant sale website at <http://home.earthlink.net/~sknudsen/> or call 703-671-8416.

**Sat. Oct. 7. Dyke Marsh Invasives removal** Alexandria, 10am to noon Call Jeannine Purdy of the Northern Virginia Senior Environment Corps at 703 -549-1607 Ext. 141 for information. Register near the bathrooms in Belle Haven Park (left of the parking lot). The National Park Service will provide all trash bags and gloves. Wear long pants, sturdy shoes, bug spray, and bring sunscreen. If working with invasive plants, wear a long-sleeve shirt.

**Fri. Oct 13 Huntley Meadows with Stephanie Mason** 10am-2:30pm. \$29 for non-Members. Audubon Naturalist Society. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

**Fri. Oct. 13 Potomac Gorge Hike Turkey Run to Scotts Run** 9am-2pm. Visitor Center, Riverbend. \$29 includes transportation. Reservations required by 10/5. Sturdy waterproof hiking shoes recommended. Bring lunch and water. Register by phone 703-449-8639 or on line at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes.htm)

**Fri. Oct 13 Fall Flora at Great Falls with Cris Fleming. (This session: emphasis on ferns)** 10am-12:30pm. Audubon Naturalist Society \$22 for non-members (discount for more than one walk). For info. call: 301-652-9188 x16

**Sat. Oct. 14 Hike on the Wild Side** 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Adults. \$30 fee collected at the program. Hike two of Arlington's wildest parks with a naturalist as your guide. Hiking will be moderately strenuous and include both on and off trail walking. Observe the signs of active wildlife, champion trees and shrubs, and locally rare plant communities. Buffet lunch at Joe's Pizza included. Wear long pants and sleeves and footwear that can get wet. For information call 703-228-6535. Registration required, register on-line <https://registration.co.arlington.va.us/> or call 703-228-4747. Program # 614400F. Our van leaves from the Long Branch Nature Center parking lot, 625 S. Carlin Springs Rd., Arlington, VA 22204

**Oct. 14-15 Gaia Theory Conference: Model & Metaphor for the 21st Century** Lynn Margulis, George Mason University Law School in Arlington, Virginia. VISIT [www.gaiatheory.org](http://www.gaiatheory.org) for more information and to register.

**Thurs. Oct 19 – Introduction to Tree Identification.** 7:30-9:30pm. Field trip: Sat. Oct 21. Leader: Cris Fleming. Audubon Naturalist Society, Woodend Sanctuary. \$52 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

**Sun. Oct. 22 Collect Native Seeds for the Potomac Conservancy** 2-3:30pm Hidden Oaks Nature Center 703-941-1065 Advance registration required. Free



**Fri. Oct. 27 Fall Flora at Great Falls with Cris Fleming.** 10am-12:30pm. Audubon Naturalist Society \$22 for non-members (discount for more than one walk). For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16

### **FALLS CHURCH CITY HEALTHY HABITAT PROJECT**

The Falls Church Healthy Habitat project is a multi-year effort initiated by the City of Falls Church Environmental Services Council and citizens to gain

certification from the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) as an official Community Wildlife Habitat. Through this program, a select few communities in the United States become certified for providing healthy spaces to wildlife and humans and then managing an ongoing program to sustain and support those healthy spaces. Read about how you can participate in this effort at <http://Habitat.FallsChurchEnvironment.org>

**Monarch on butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*),  
a host plant for the monarch larvae.**

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

This summer and fall theVNPS Potowmack chapter continues its work with The Nature Conservancy to help control invasive plant species on National Park Service lands in the Potomac Gorge at Turkey Run Park off the GW Memorial Parkway. Wear work gloves and boots or sturdy shoes, and bring water, snacks, and hand saws or loppers if you have them. You are always welcome to bring friends. Our schedule for September and October is:

- Thursday, Sep.7 10am-1pm
- Saturday, Sep. 16 10am-1pm
- Thursday, Oct. 5 10am-1pm
- Saturday, Oct. 21 10am-1pm

For information: Alan Ford; cell: 202.213.6196; email: amford@acm.org



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

**Chapter Events Calendar**

- Sept. 9 Potomac Gorge  
Walk with Gary  
Fleming  
9 to noon
- Sept. 16 Fall Plant Sale  
Noon to 3  
Green Spring
- Sept. 30 Chapter Annual  
Meeting with  
Cole Burrell  
Green Spring  
2pm

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

*Printed on recycled paper*