

# POTOWMACK NEWS

Volume 28. No. 1 Potowmack Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

January/February 2010

## THE CASE OF THE PROMISCUOUS QUILLWORT Thursday, January 14, 7:30 P.M. Green Spring Gardens

Join Carl Taylor, Program Manager at the National Science Foundation, for his presentation on a fascinating, but little known, group of plants called Quillworts (*Isoetes*). Carl will show how Quillworts are recognized as a genus and identified to species. He will also describe the almost human-like life history of Quillworts and explain how DNA is used to reveal the intriguing evolutionary history of these plants in "The Case of the Promiscuous Quillworts."

Carl was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. He became interested in plants (especially ferns) in his early teens. He completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Missouri and received a Ph.D. in Botany from Southern Illinois University. He spent most of his career at the Milwaukee Public Museum where he was head of the Botany Department. During his years at the Museum he assisted with the development of exhibits, provided public education programs, and conducted botanical research. He has taught courses in general biology, plant taxonomy, molecular systematics, and local flora at the University of Wisconsin and Old Dominion University. Presently, Carl manages the Biological Research Collections Program at the National Science Foundation in Arlington.

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

## THE PLIGHT OF THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT Thursday, February 11 Green Spring Gardens

A century ago, 25% of the trees in the Virginia Piedmont were American chestnut. So valuable was the tree to the economy and ecology of Virginia that when the chestnut blight wiped them out, scientists, politicians, and foresters threw themselves into trying to find a cure. Now we are on the verge of that cure. Cathy Mayes, President of the Virginia Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation will present "The Chestnut Story" at 7:30 pm on February 11. It tells the role of chestnut before the blight, the biology of the blight, the state of chestnut science today, and how citizen scientists can participate in the recovery.

In addition to her role with the American Chestnut Foundation, Ms. Mayes is Treasurer of the Virginia Native Plant Society, and is a certified Master Naturalist.

*Directions to Green Spring Gardens: See above.*



Historical photo of an American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*)

**"The image of a forlorn-looking polar bear on a tiny ice floe has become the public's image of climate change in nature, but the impact reaches species in nearly every habitat in the world's wild places."**  
**Stephen E. Sanderson, president of the Wildlife Conservation Society**

**A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

The days are getting longer. Honest. Winter solstice is just passed and each day will be brighter. Even as much of the natural world hides under the duff and holds its breath through the cold, this increase in sunlight is important to recognize.

It is a time to give thanks and to remember the individuals and organizations who have contributed to our success this past year. We have been blessed with a wonderful group of volunteers who have given their time and their expertise to educate and inform us and our elected leaders on the issues of concern about our natural resources. There are so many, I am reluctant to begin listing them for lack of room to mention them all. A few notable names include Rod Simmons, John Dodge, Laura Beaty, Shirley Gay, Bob Yacovissi, and Margaret Chatham. These members work often and tirelessly and deserve our recognition. I want to also thank Lisa Bright and Earth Sangha for their continued commitment to restoration and education. They and other partner organizations the Falls Church Habitat Restoration Team and Jeremy Edwards, The Nature Conservancy Potomac Gorge Weed Warriors, and The Fairfax County Park Authority IMA, including Arlington RiP with Marty Nielsen and Steve Young, this years recipient of the Armed and Dangerous Award, have been working tirelessly at removing invasive plants from our parks and public lands.

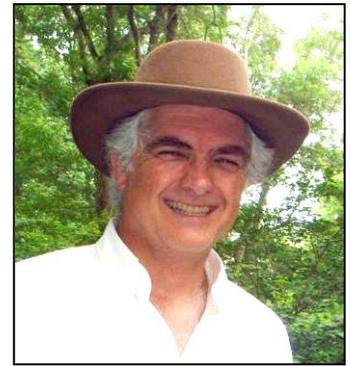
Which leads me to the tremendous support and assistance we receive from the Fairfax County Park Authority and their staff at Green Spring Garden Park. Mary Olien, Chris Daniels, Cindy Gustafson, and Brenda Skarphol, to name just a few, are always helpful and ready to assist and we would not be as successful as we are without their gracious and competent efforts.

They and their colleagues in Fairfax County, Arlington County, and Falls Church need our support now. All three jurisdictions are under considerable pressure to cut expenses as they struggle with budgetary challenges. They have all been asked to make additional deep cuts for the second year and staff positions are on the table. These are positions and people who make a difference each day in our parks with their expertise and dedication to the mission of protecting and preserving the open spaces in our county and making them accessible and available to our fellow citizens to enjoy and appreciate. I urge you to speak up for the parks and the men and women who are responsible for their protection. They have already been working for a year with fewer staff, furloughs in some cases, and greatly increased responsibilities. If we should lose these people to layoff, we lose their experience and their dedication and the natural resources we care about will be under even greater stress.

Please speak out in favor of the funding for the parks, nature centers, and invasive species programs. Contact your local elected officials and let them know we care about the parks and public lands and need them

to make their best effort to preserve this critical and irreplaceable asset. We will keep you informed of events on our list serve and our new website. Meanwhile, those of you in Fairfax County can petition on behalf of parks at: <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/441/petition-to-protect-fairfax-county-parks> and attend the Listening Forum on Thursday, January 21, 2009 at 7 p.m tp held at Cabell’s Mill in the Sully District which presents another opportunity for residents to discuss issues of concern, ideas and general park questions with the director. Cabell’s Mill is located at 5235 Walney Road in Centreville, VA.

May the new year find you healthy and happy, and I look forward to seeing you soon. **Alan Ford**



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<p><i>Potowmack News</i> is published 6 times per year, in January, March, May, July, September, and November. The deadline for submissions is the 15th day of the month prior to publication. Call Mary Ann Lawler for more information or e-mail her at malawler@aol.com or Susan Wexelblat at susanwexelblat@gmail.com</p>		

**Membership: Don't forget to renew your membership.** The chapter is working on getting our membership records up-to-date. Membership information can be found through <http://www.vnps.org> or you can print the form directly at <http://www.vnps.org/membform.pdf>

### **MISTLETOE – A PLANT FOR ALL SEASONS** By Greg Zell

For most city folks, knowledge of the mistletoe plant is confined to the obligatory holiday kiss under the doorframe. The traditional English version of this myth holds that each time a man kisses a woman under the branch, he should remove a berry. If an unmarried woman fails to get kissed before the berries are gone, she is doomed to remain single for yet another year. Other European myths, with roots in the Viking, Greek, and Celtic cultures, have attributed a myriad of mystical powers and medicinal properties to the mistletoe. In North America, the Cherokee collected “OO-TAH-LEE” in early December of each year to make a dry, pulverized herbal remedy to treat various ailments (Caution: mistletoe can be toxic to humans). In addition to the rich human lore and legend surrounding the mistletoe, this seemingly insignificant native plant plays an even more interesting role in the natural environment.

Both the scientific (*Phoradendron leucarpum*) and common name of the mistletoe provides a hint to the plant's relationship in the natural world: In Anglo-Saxon, the word “mistle” means “dung” and “tan” means “twig”. So, mistletoe literally means “dung-on-a-twig”. From the Greek, the name *Phoradendron* can be translated as “thief in the tree”. To make sense of these ancient references, one need only look at the plant's unique lifestyle.

Common throughout Virginia, the oak mistletoe can be found growing high in the branches of hardwood trees, unnoticed until the leaves have fallen. The berries produced by this airborne evergreen subshrub provide food for native birds. After digesting the fruit, the “sticky” seeds are glued to the branch of another tree when left as a deposit. When the new seedling sprouts, the roots will grow and penetrate the bark of the tree branch – thus “stealing” some of the nutrients from the host. As a semi-parasitic plant, mistletoe is capable of living for many years and rarely damages the host tree.

Mistletoe maintains a symbiotic relationship with a number of wildlife species. Birds rely on the winter food produced in the form of berries and in trade, aid in the distribution of new colonies. Several species have been known to use mistletoe as ready-made nests. Also, the caterpillar stage of one locally-rare butterfly, the Great Purple Hairstreak, is largely dependent on the existence of mistletoe as a host food source.

Finding mistletoe in winter is easy. Look high in the top of leafless hardwoods for the telltale “witches’ broom”, a term used to describe the dense, contorted branching of the mistletoe. The green ball of leaves is about the size of a basketball. Often there are multiple clumps or brooms in a single tree.

Next time you take a winter drive and think you've spotted a large “green” squirrel's nest, think again. You may have spotted the legendary mistletoe.

***Want to see native mistletoe this winter in nearby Fairfax County? Try looking along Rt. 50 between Waples Mill Rd. and West Ox Rd. near Fair Oaks Mall, or on either side of Merrifield Garden Center at the intersection of Lee Highway and West Ox Rd.***



## **EVEN PLANTS USE PROTECTIVE COLORATION TO HIDE** By Susan Wexelblat

New studies have shown that even plants can use protective coloration to keep from being eaten. Animal and insect protective coloration is common, from zebras to moths many animals and insects use color and pattern to hide from predators, but plant coloration is normally thought of as functional. Plants are green because of the chlorophyll in their leaves, and flowers are colored to attract pollinators.

Enter *Monotropsis odorata*, called Pygmy Pipes or Sweet Pinesap, a small species of monotropoid that grows in the pine woodlands of the southeastern US, mostly in the Appalachian Mountains. It occurs from Maryland south to Florida and east to Kentucky and Tennessee. *M. odorata* is more common in Virginia and North Carolina; listed as threatened in Kentucky and Tennessee; endangered in Florida and Maryland; and ranked G3, vulnerable, by NatureServe.

*Monotropsis odorata* is a non-photosynthetic plant that gets its food from associated mycorrhizal fungi. Unlike plants that require chlorophyll and are therefore green, *M. odorata* can be any color useful to its survival. The reproductive stems have colorful pinkish to purple flowers and deep-purple stems. However, these structures are uniquely concealed and rendered almost invisible to the human eye by a dense covering of brown bracts, making the reproductive stems appear almost identical to the dry deciduous and pine leaf litter where they grow.

In the *American Journal of Botany*, Matthew Klooster from Harvard University and colleagues report an investigation of whether the dried bracts on *Monotropsis odorata* might play a role in herbivore avoidance by concealing conspicuously colored tissues and reducing the frequency of herbivory, subsequently increasing plant reproduction. Multiple natural populations of *M. odorata* were compared during 2006 and 2007. In the experimental groups all dry, sterile bracts were carefully removed from all stems of each plant to reveal the viable flower petals and stem tissue underneath; control groups were untouched. The plants were observed every two weeks from March to June, flowering through setting seed. Representative stems were then harvested to determine the state of the fruit: maturing fruit, aborted ovary/fruit, damaged via herbivory.

Plants with the bracts removed suffered four times the damage from herbivory compared to the control plants. This increase in herbivory on plants lacking bracts resulted in an overall decrease in the proportion of viable flowers per plant relative to the control. Consequently, fewer flowers were available for successful fertilization resulting in a decline in mature fruit set, a component of plant fitness.

This study supports previous assertions of defensive coloration in plants by demonstrating that dried bracts of *M. odorata* resemble leaf litter and conceal more conspicuously colored floral and stem tissues, thereby reducing the frequency of herbivore attacks and increasing plant fitness.

### **References, retrieved 09 December 09.**

~**American Journal of Botany** (2009, November 29). Rare woodland plant uses 'cryptic coloration' to hide from predators. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved December 9, 2009, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/11/091125145825.htm>

~**Klooster et al.** Cryptic bracts facilitate herbivore avoidance in the mycoheterotrophic plant *Monotropsis odorata* (Ericaceae). *American Journal of Botany*, 2009; DOI: [10.3732/ajb.0900124](https://doi.org/10.3732/ajb.0900124)

~**Thieves from the Heath** - Mycotrophic Wildflowers by U.S. Forest Service Rangeland Management Botany Program on [http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/interesting/mycotrophic/monotropsis\\_odorata.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/interesting/mycotrophic/monotropsis_odorata.shtml)



**FROM THE WILDERNESS CORNER—LICHENS By Mike Lawler**

One of the great rewards of a nature hike is finding something you've never seen before (or noticed). If you've hiked a favorite path dozens of times, you may think there is nothing new to see. Yet you need not travel to new lands. Just look for new things. A great time to do so is autumn after the leaves have fallen. A forest with no leaves reveals a bounty of treasures, waiting to be discovered.

Among nature's many treasures, often overlooked, is the world of lichens. They can be seen growing not only on trees, but also on rocks, buildings—almost any surface that hasn't moved in a while. Lichens are neither plants nor animals, but compound organisms made up of fungi and algae. The fungus provides the bulk and shape of the organism, while the alga supplies food through photosynthesis. Since they make their own food, they are not harmful to trees. Most lichens are flat and crusty, but some have a threadlike structure, and are called beard lichens.

They can proliferate virtually overnight or expand only millimeters over hundreds of years, depending on conditions. If left undisturbed, these organisms can live more than one thousand years. Unfortunately, when the delicate balance of our natural community is disturbed by human "progress," lichens are among the many species to suffer. Lichens are sensitive to air pollution, causing their growth to decline in areas of urban sprawl. Another threat to lichen health is acid rain, which can kill off the algae, causing the fungi to die as well.



In the extremes of outer space, however, they have an amazing ability to survive. On a space shuttle flight, they were brought outside the protective confines of the shuttle and exposed to two weeks of total vacuum, extreme heat and cold, and cosmic radiation. When brought back to earth and returned to sunlight and moisture, they came out of dormancy and continued to grow.

So the next time you decide to take a hike through the woods, or in your own back yard, see if you can discover some of these "new" treasures of nature.

*(Note: Full disclosure. Mike Lawler, who lives in Illinois, is the brother of your newsletter editor.)*

**FAIRFAX COUNTY'S INVASIVE MANAGEMENT AREA (IMA) PROGRAM**

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Wed. Jan. 6, 10:00am – 1:00pm, Lake Accotink  | Wed. Feb. 3, 10:00am – 1:00pm, Lake Accotink |
| Wed. Jan. 13, 10:00am – 1:00pm, Americana     | Wed. Feb. 10, 10:00am – 1:00pm, Americana    |
| Mon. Jan. 18, 9:00 – 12:00, Nottoway Park     | Mon. Feb. 15, 10:00 – 12:00, Holmes Run      |
| Mon. Jan. 18, 10:00 – 12:00, Holmes Run       | Stream Valley                                |
| Stream Valley                                 | Wed. Feb. 17, 10:00am -1:00pm, Lake Accotink |
| Wed. Jan. 20, 10:00am – 1:00pm, Lake Accotink | Wed. Feb. 24, 10:00am- 1:00pm, Lake Accotink |
| Wed. Jan. 27, 10:00am – 1:00pm, Lake Accotink | Sat. Feb. 27, 9:00 – 12:00, Nottoway Park    |

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

**Mon Jan 18 and Sun Feb 21. BARCROFT PARK (1-3 pm)** 4200 S. Four Mile Run Drive.  
**Help preserve Arlington's globally rare magnolia bog, a chapter heritage site.** Meet by the parking garage off Four Mile Run. Wear sturdy footwear and bring pruners, hand saws and heavy gloves, if you have them (limited number available on-site).  
 Contact Marty Nielsen ([mrtynlsn@gmail.com](mailto:mrtynlsn@gmail.com)).

**FALLS CHURCH HABITAT RESTORATION TEAM UPCOMING EVENTS:** Please visit the Falls Church website [www.fallschurchva.gov](http://www.fallschurchva.gov) for updates on this program

**ARLINGTON COUNTY RiP PROGRAM** Free. For ages 9 to adult. Not all plants are good for the environment. Invasive plants crowd native ones out for space and light and some can even grow a "mile-a-minute"! Come learn what these troublesome beasts look like and help rescue our parks from these alien invaders! We meet monthly at the locations listed below. If you have your own garden gloves and tools, please bring them along. Some supplies will be provided. Be sure to come dressed for work, wear sturdy shoes, long pants, long sleeves, and perhaps a hat. You may want to bring along a reusable water bottle. Register at [jttruong@vt.edu](mailto:jttruong@vt.edu) or 703-228-7636.

MLK – National Day of Service. Monday, 01/18/2010, 01:00 PM – 03:00 PM. Adults and teens. Make it a day on... not of a day off! Last year, a record number of people turned out to celebrate and honor Dr. King and show that we truly “have an opportunity to make a better nation.” Help us answer President Obama’s call to service once again by volunteering to help us rescue our parks from invasive plants. Meet at **Gulf Branch Nature Center**, 3608 Military Road, Arlington, VA 22205. To register or find other projects, visit [www.mlkday.gov](http://www.mlkday.gov) or call 703-228-7636.

<p><b>Second Saturdays @ Lacey Woods</b> 1200 N. George Mason Dr., Arlington, VA 22205 Jan. 9, Feb. 13, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM Meet at the N. Frederick St. &amp; 11th St. N. entrance. Site leader: Nora Palmatier</p>	<p><b>Third Saturdays @ Tuckahoe Park</b> 2400 N. Sycamore St., Arlington, VA 22213 Jan. 16, Feb. 20, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Meet in front of Tuckahoe Elementary Site leader: Mary Mclean</p>
<p><b>Second Sundays @ Gulf Branch Nature Center</b> 3608 Military Road, Arlington, VA 22205 Jan. 10, Feb. 14, 1:00 – 3:00 PM Site leader: Jennifer Soles</p>	<p><b>Third Sundays @ Long Branch Nature Center</b> 625 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA 22204 Jan. 17, Feb. 21, 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Site leader: Steve Young</p>
<p><b>First Tuesdays @ Zachary Taylor Park</b> Meet at 2533 N. Utah St., Arlington, VA 22207 Jan. 5, Feb.2, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM Site leader: Marilyn Greene</p>	<p><b>Fourth Saturdays @ Benjamin Banneker Park</b> 1500 N. Sycamore St., Arlington, VA 22205 Jan. 23, Feb. 27, 10:00 Am – 12:00 PM Site leaders: Melanie La Force, Eric &amp; Dawn Sword</p>

**LOCAL EVENTS AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:**

**Sun. Jan. 10 Nature for Beginners – Evergreens 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** Adults. Join us on the second Sunday of each month to learn the 'top ten' items in a different nature category. You'll learn not only names but enough natural history to make you feel like a naturalist superstar. Don't let your kids or grandkids show you up - or have all the fun! Join us to enhance your enjoyment and knowledge of the world around you. For more information: 703-228-3403. Meet at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Rd, Arlington, VA 22207. **Free.** Program #623504-G

**Wed. Jan 13 to Mar. 17: Winter Woody Plant Identification** 6 to 8 pm. Classes at Capital Gallery (L'Enfant Plaza) with Field trips: Jan 23, Feb 6, 20 (two NATH credits). Leader Elizabeth Rives. Field studies will augment class sessions. Audubon Naturalist Society and USDA Graduate School. \$355 tuition. For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form. Or go to: <http://grad.usda.gov>

**Sat., Jan.16 Flying Dragons at Huntley Meadows** 11 yrs. & up 5-6:30 p.m. You won't want to miss this colorful presentation made up of dragonfly photos taken in Fairfax County, while learning how to make a dragonfly pond on your own property. \$6 per person Reservations required Call 703-768-2525.

**Sun. Jan. 17: What's New in Woody Plants?** 1:30-3pm at Green Spring Gardens. Richard Olsen, a research geneticist and lead scientist for the urban tree breeding program at the U.S. National Arboretum presents both his researcher's view and personal view of what woody plants we should be growing in our gardens. Cost \$10.

**Mon. Jan 25 to Mon. Apr. 5: Introduction to Ecology** 6 to 8 pm. Classes at Capital Gallery (L'Enfant Plaza) with Field trips: Mar 13, 27.(two NATH credits). Leader Gary Evans. Field studies will augment class sessions. Audubon Naturalist Society and USDA Graduate School. \$355 tuition. For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form. Or go to: <http://grad.usda.gov>

**Sat., Jan. 30 Milkweeds, Grasshoppers & Box Turtles at Huntley Meadows** 11 yrs. & up 5-6:30 p.m. Discover what makes a Northern Virginia meadow and how to install and manage your own "pocket" meadow in your own backyard. \$6 per person Reservations required Call 703-768-2525.

**Sat. Jan 30: 5th Annual Seed Exchange** 12:30-4pm at Green Spring Gardens. Washington Gardener magazine, the publication for DC area gardening enthusiasts, is hosting the fifth annual Washington Seed Exchange at Green Spring Gardens. This event includes two lectures, a seed swap, and more! You bring your extra viable seeds and swap them. Everyone will leave with a bag full of seeds, new garden friends, and expert planting advice. Fee includes lectures,

goody bag, seed swap and refreshments. Cost \$15/person, \$10 for Washington Gardener subscribers and Friends of Green Spring (FROGS). *Registration and non-refundable prepayment to FCPA required for all programs. Call 703-642-5173.*

**Sat. Jan 30: Native Wildflower Meadows** 5-6:30pm at Huntley Meadows Park (Ages 11 and up). Learn why the native grasses and wildflowers found in Virginia's meadows are so important and discover all the colorful wildlife that calls them home. We'll focus on what makes a Northern Virginia meadow and how to install, manage and enjoy your own "pocket" meadow in modern-day suburbia. Native meadow seed packets will be on sale. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Cost \$6.

**Sun. Jan. 31: Mysteries of Orchid Pollination** 1:30-3pm at Green Spring Gardens. Tom Mirenda, Smithsonian Horticulturalist, demystifies orchid pollination. From mating deceptions to pseudo-copulation, Tom will describe how these beguiling plants manage to "have their way" with insects, birds and man, too. Cost \$10. *Registration and non-refundable prepayment to FCPA required for all programs. Call 703-642-5173.*

**Sat. Feb 6: Drummers and Drillers** 9:30-11:30am at Huntley Meadows Park. As they drum and drill on trees, woodpeckers are ridding our yards and woodlands of ants, wasps, and grubs. Watch a variety of woodpeckers on the park's suet feeders, learn how to attract them to your yard, and hopefully glimpse a flicker on its mission to eat a thousand insects in a day! Reservations required. Cost \$6.

**Sat Feb. 6: Talk and Tour: Conifers: Where in the World Did that Come From?** National Arboretum 1:00-3:00pm. Take a tour of the Gotelli Collection of Dwarf and Slow-Growing Conifers with the arboretum's conifer expert who will focus on the origins of these plants and emphasize those native to North America. The tour will point out those that are particularly well-adapted to our area. Fee \$12. To register: <http://www.usna.usda.gov/Education/index.html>

**Sat. Feb. 6: Winter Hike-Marvelous Meadows** 2-4pm at Huntley Meadows Park (Ages 9 and up). Chase the winter blues away with a two mile hike on the South King's Highway side of the park. Look for winter hawks and ducks, insect galls, and bluebirds and goldfinches, while exploring the park's native meadows. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Cost \$6.

**Sun. Feb. 7: (Moved to March 27) Managing Wildlife Conflict** 1:30-3pm at Green Spring Gardens. Are you having troubles with deer and rabbits feasting on your garden? This is the lecture for you. Victoria Monroe, Wildlife Biologist for Fairfax County will discuss strategies for managing wildlife conflicts in your garden. Cost \$10. *Registration and non-refundable prepayment to FCPA required for all programs. Call 703-642-5173.*

**Sat. Feb 13: Water Wise Landscaping** 11am-12:30pm at Green Spring Gardens. Well designed, installed and maintained landscapes offer years of environmental benefits and beauty. Green Spring horticulturalist Brenda Skarphol discusses these concepts and provides practical information for you to implement in your garden. Instruction takes place inside and outdoors. Dress accordingly. Cost \$16 *Registration and non-refundable prepayment to FCPA required for all programs. Call 703-642-5173.*

**Sat., Feb 20. Winter Tree Identification** 9am to 3pm Audubon Naturalist Society Woodend Sanctuary Leader: **Cris Fleming** Using the clues of bark, fruit, buds, and twigs, we'll practice identifying trees in winter on the grounds after a look indoors at techniques of winter tree identification. Members \$28 Non-Members \$39. . For information or to register call: 301-652-9188 x16 or visit: <http://www.audubonnaturalist.org/> for a registration form.

**Sun. Feb. 21 Trees are Tree-mendous! 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM** Families with children ages 6 to 8. Register children and adults. Does a tree bring joy and excitement to you? After hearing this poem by Harry Behn, you may feel differently about trees. Learn about why trees are necessary to our lives, what you can do to protect them, and how you can tell one tree from another, even when the leaves are missing. For more information: 703-228-3403. Meet at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Road, Arlington, VA 22207. **\$3 fee due upon registration.** Program # 623505-J

**Sun. Feb. 21 Workshop: The Art of Alienweeds,** 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM. Adults and teens. Join Washington Post artist Patterson Clark for an introduction to using invasive plants as an abundant source for art materials. The workshop will include a weed walk, which will identify various plant tissues that can be isolated and made into paper, inks, pens, brushes, printing blocks and cordage. The class will harvest bamboo culms and learn how to make a simple reed pen for dipping in ink. An indoor presentation will focus on several processes used to extract a bounty from exotic weeds. Participants will need to bring their own sharp pocket knife. Meet at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road, Arlington, VA 22204. Call 703-228-6535 for more information. Free. Note: This is in lieu of our usual Third Sunday Invasive Pulls.

**Thurs. Feb. 25 Butterfly Gardening 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM** Adults. Join members of the Washington Area Butterfly Club in their yearly presentation on gardening for butterflies. For information: 703-228-6535. Meet at LBNC. Free. Registration required. **Free** Program #623604

**Sat., February 27 Understanding Your Garden's Life Cycle: The 6th Annual EcoSavvy Gardening Symposium** Presented by Green Spring Master Gardeners. 8:30am-4pm at Green Spring Gardens. Gardeners and homeowners can make a difference on our environment's health and the Master Gardeners are committed to showing them how. This Symposium brings together experts to share practical information on understanding the life cycle of your garden. Learn to work with nature's resources to develop a beautiful, low maintenance urban retreat! To register, please call 703-642-5173. Registration is \$45, a boxed lunch is \$12 additional (please specify meat or vegetarian preference). Sponsored by VA Cooperative Extension, Fairfax County Park Authority & Green Spring Gardens. *Registration and non-refundable prepayment to FCPA required for all programs. Call 703-642-5173.*

**Sun. Feb. 28: Moving Towards Native** 1:30-3pm at Green Spring Gardens. By integrating native plants into the designed landscape you help reduce negative impact on our environment. Sandra Clinton, of Clinton and Associates, discusses the how's and why's of integrating native plants into the designed landscape using examples from landscape architects on the forefront of this movement. Cost \$10 *Registration /non-refundable prepayment to FCPA; call 703-642-5173.*

**VNPS ANNUAL WORKSHOP MARCH 6**

Mark your calendars, "**At Water's Edge, Virginia's Wetland Habitats**" the VNPS 2010 annual workshop will take place at the University of Richmond on March 6. Speakers include Dot Fields, Eastern Shore Region Steward, Virginia Natural Heritage Program, whose presentation is "Plants of the Coastal Edge." She will also include a brief overview of the State Natural Area Preserves under her stewardship. Joe Scalf, Habitat Restoration Specialist with The Nature Conservancy's Virginia Coast Reserve Program, will talk about his "Living Shoreline" project. In his presentation, "Rising Tides", Dr. James Perry of VIMS will address the potential impact of global climate change on the plant communities of our mid-Atlantic wetlands. And, Dr. Randy Chambers, Professor of Biology, William and Mary will introduce the ecology of wetland environments in Virginia and discuss the problem of *Phragmites* in his talk "Wetland Invaders." See VNPS.org for details.

**INVASIVES CONTROL WORK PARTIES AT TURKEY RUN PARK ALONG THE POTOMAC**  
 Join with The Nature Conservancy to help control invasive plant species on National Park Service lands in the Potomac Gorge at Turkey Run Park off the GW Memorial Parkway. Wear work gloves and boots or sturdy shoes, and bring water, snacks, and hand saws or loppers if you have them. Time is 10-1 on each workday. Dates are: **Jan. 14, Feb. 11 and Feb. 20.** Contact Alan Ford: 703.732.5291 or [amford@acm.org](mailto:amford@acm.org) or Mary or Jamie at [potomacgorgevol@tnc.org](mailto:potomacgorgevol@tnc.org).

<p><b><u>Chapter Events Calendar</u></b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><i>Monotropsis odorata</i></p> </div> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%; vertical-align: top;">Jan</td> <td style="width: 10%; vertical-align: top;">14</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Board meeting 6:45</b>  <b><u>Promiscuous Quillworts</u></b>  <b>program 7:30</b>  <b>Green Spring</b></p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Feb</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;">11</td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Board meeting 6:45</b>  <b><u>American Chestnut</u></b>  <b>program 7:30</b>  <b>Green Spring</b></p> </td> </tr> </table>	Jan	14	<p><b>Board meeting 6:45</b>  <b><u>Promiscuous Quillworts</u></b>  <b>program 7:30</b>  <b>Green Spring</b></p>	Feb	11	<p><b>Board meeting 6:45</b>  <b><u>American Chestnut</u></b>  <b>program 7:30</b>  <b>Green Spring</b></p>	<p><b>Potowmack Chapter</b>  <b>Virginia Native Plant Society</b>  <b>P.O. Box 5311</b>  <b>Arlington, VA 22205</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please verify your address information and your renewal date on the mailing label.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Printed on recycled paper</i></p>
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