



Wild News

The Bi-monthly Newsletter of the Prince William Wildflower Society
A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

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March - April 2021



school and high school level for 38 years. In 1987 she was a finalist for Teacher of the Year. Once she retired she began in earnest to develop the land around her Lake Jackson home into a native plant shade garden which she delights in sharing with anyone who will come visit. Nancy Arrington has been a valued mentor in Lois' pursuit of a well diversified yet adequately abundant landscape. The other passion for Lois is the teaching of Evolution through Natural Selection, and she presents her PowerPoint originally made for the edification of her Merrimac Farm Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists

President's Column

As I sit down to write this, we have just finished our 9th Annual Author Event with Kim Eierman using Zoom. Thanks to our many co-sponsors, we were able to offer this presentation free of charge. Kim presented an impressive program, and the concurrent online chat was lively as well. We had well over 300 participants, but nearly 600 people registered from as far away places as Calgary, Toronto, and Los Angeles. What a thirst there is for information on native plant and ecological gardening! Unfortunately, for those of you who were unable to attend, we have no recording to offer. Kim's presentation is copyrighted, but don't despair. You can visit www.ecobeneficial.com, Kim's website, and find many short videos and other fascinating information. Karen Waltman wrote a summary of the program, and you can find it elsewhere in this issue.

Thursday, March 4, 7:30, via Zoom Program: Lois Montgomery will present "Evolution for Naturalists"

Come join us for an enlightening program as PWWS education Chair Lois Montgomery introduces us to the amazing relationships between organisms — relationships that only make sense when viewed in the light of natural selection.

Lois has always been a wildflower enthusiast. She took part in a summer biology program after the tenth grade in which her class of other bio nerds travelled all over the Eastern United States visiting colleges and universities with environmental programs and began learning about wild things. She became a biology teacher in Fairfax County in 1974 and taught at the middle



Spring was approaching all-too-quickly by early February, but more recent weather has slowed its progress. We're always anxious for spring to arrive, but so many of our native plants need a cold period to rest. As humans, many of us long for warmth, but our changing climate is threatening biodiversity. The Virginia Native Plant Society is sponsoring a two-part workshop by Zoom this year on the subject of climate change. It's free of charge, but donations are always welcome. Register at <https://vnps.org/events/vnps-annual-workshop-2021-2021-03-02/>. (continued)

(President's column continued) Many of you know that a new road has been approved in the Manassas area of Prince William County to serve as a Rt. 28 bypass to Fairfax County. Beginning at Godwin Road and Sudley Road/Rt. 234, the route follows along the Flat Branch floodplain then continues along Bull Run into Fairfax County. I know that traffic is horrendous along Rt. 28 in the morning; I drove that route to work for years. But it's so hard for me to see an area where I played as a child to be paved over. And the more roads we build, the more people will use them. I still live in the general area, and the Flat Branch corridor is the only "wild" area within walking distance. I hiked there on a sunny, but cold, day recently and was pleasantly surprised to see so many birds in the late afternoon. A Belted Kingfisher, six Eastern Bluebirds, two Red-shouldered Hawks were just a few of the 23 species I identified along my walk—and I neglected to carry binoculars. The area abounds with invasive plants, but there are still natives to be found. Last year I found Virginia Bluebells in an area quite removed from the creekside. With so much development of every last green space, where are today's children able to find nature? They certainly cannot ride their bikes or take a little walk to see creatures in the creek or butterflies ovipositing on their larval host species. So few of the parks in our county have natural elements to commend them, and those that do generally require a car ride to reach them. Creating habitat in one's own garden is admirable, but it cannot substitute for our wild places.

I do have some good news to share! House Joint Resolution HJ 527 passed both state houses and is on its way to the governor's desk for signature. This bill directs a study of invasive plants to recommend ways to reduce or eliminate their sale. Hooray!



See you on Zoom.
Nancy

**Prince William Wildflower Society
Membership Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 7, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
On Zoom**

President Nancy Vehrs opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and asked all to check out the recent *Wild News* newsletter containing articles from Botany Chair Marion Lobstein.

Announcements:

- * The third annual Native Plant Symposium will be on Saturday, February 6, and the Zoom account can hold 300 registrants. Naturalist Alonzo Abugattas will be the keynote speaker.
- * Sunday, February 21 will be the annual author event, on Zoom. Ms. Kim Eierman, author of *The Pollinator Victory Garden* will be the guest speaker.
- * Marion Lobstein reported that the new Flora 2 app is available on the App store — floraofvirginia.org. Sally Anderson and Marion will teach classes on the Flora mobile app update.
- * A public hearing will be held, date TBD, about the Independent Hill Small Area Plan, which includes an area within legislative boundaries of Prince William Forest Park.
- * Conservation groups are asking for state legislation that will call for a study of the sale of invasive plants.

Program:

Judy Gallagher returned with more fantastic, close-up photos of wildlife and the plants they visit. (She was our November 5, 2020, guest speaker.) One example of a non-insect pollinator was a hummingbird which had pollen on the base of its beak while visiting coral honeysuckle. A blueberry digger bee shook an upside down blueberry flower and was covered in pollen.

Marion Lobstein showed pictures of some of the places in Florida that she and her husband George (and the black cat, Inky) have visited during their winter RVing trips to warmer weather. Flamingo Gardens, Fairchild Gardens, Oscar Scherer State Park, Myakka River State Park, Marie Selby Botanical Garden, Cedar Point in Inglewood and sunsets on the beach there.

Nancy Vehrs took us on a month-by-month tour of local places she visited in 2020 and favorite plants that she saw. She also showed some slides from visits to Shenandoah National Park, Dolly Sods in West Virginia, and Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond.



Thank you to Judy, Marion and Nancy for Screen Sharing lovely pictures of nature while we were all snug in our homes on a chilly evening. There were 21 participants on this Zoom meeting.

The program ended at 9:05 p.m.
Karen Waltman, Secretary

UPCOMING EVENTS, 2021

Please note:

For events not scheduled at the time this issue went to press, please continue to visit the PWWS web page: vnps.org/princewilliamwildflowersociety/

March

Webinar Series. Plant Virginia Natives partners are collaborating to offer a series of 12 webinars — six this spring and six this fall. Kickoff is Friday, March 5 at 6:30 pm with a presentation by Dr. Douglas Tallamy, renowned author of *Nature's Best Hope*. The series is just \$10 for all 12 webinars. To register and to see the names of the other presenters, visit this website: <https://www.plantvirginianatives.org/webinars-landscaping-with-virginia-natives>

Tuesday, March 2 (Part 1) and Tuesday, March 9 (Part 2), 5:30 VNPS Annual Workshop — “Earth’s Climate: Present, Past and Future”, Zoom video conference. Both meetings begin with a Zoom Meet & Greet at 5:30 and a Welcome and Introduction by Nancy Vehrs at 5:50. Free but you must register: <https://vnps.org/events/vnps-annual-workshop-2021-2021-03-02/>

March 2:

1. 6 pm: “Global Warming 56 Million Years Ago: What It Means for Plants and Us”, with Dr. Scott Wing
2. 7 pm: “The Pleistocene and Today: Reflections on a Million Years of Past Change and the Future of Our Flora”, with Rodney Bartgis

March 9:

1. 6 pm: “Interaction of Climate Change and Human Land Use in Eastern North America over the last 10,000 Years”, with Dr. Emily Southgate

2. 7 pm: “Climate Change and Coastal Zone Plant Communities: Impact and Opportunities”, with Dr. Molly Mitchell

Thursday, March 11, 7:30 - 9:00 Potowmack Chapter presents “Successional Change at Fraser Preserve” with Margaret Chatham. <https://vnps.org/potowmack/events/successional-change-at-fraser-preserve-with-margaret-chatham-via-zoom/>

April

Tuesday, April 6, 6:30 - 8:00 pm, via Zoom; please register: Plight of the Pollinator: How to Support Pollinating Insects with Celia Vuocolo, Webinar series, in Partnership with Plant Virginia Natives

Thursday, April 8, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm, Wildflower Identification Webinar. Learn how to Identify wildflowers in this interactive Zoom webinar hosted by Marion Lobstein, Sally Anderson and Blandy Experimental Farm (see Page 5 for more info)

April 17-25: Celebrate 2021 National Park Week in Prince William. Prince William Forest Park and Manassas Battlefield Park will be featuring special programs and events on these dates. April 17 will be a ‘free entrance’ day at Pr. William Forest Park. <https://www.visitpwc.com/blog/post/celebrate-2021-national-park-week-in-prince-william-va/>

Tuesday, April 20, 6:30 - 8:00 pm, “Common Invasive Plants in Virginia: Identification, Control and Native Alternatives”, with Beth Mizell. Via Zoom. Also part of the Webinar Series, and you must register.

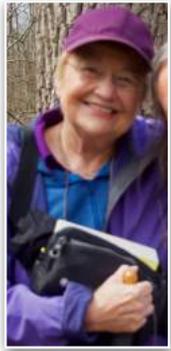
May

Thursday, May 6, 7:30 pm 0 9:00 pm. via Zoom. PWWS’s May membership meeting will feature bee expert Sam Droege. He will present a program on native bees.

GET READY! The local spring floral extravaganza is about to begin as ephemeral wildflowers soon will be emerging in woods, fields and gardens! Make plans for walks outside in March, April and May to find our local spring ephemerals. They don't last long. You won't want to miss them!



HARBINGER-OF-SPRING



By Marion Lobstein,
botany chair,
PWS and professor emeritus,
Northern Virginia Community
College

(Updated from March-April 2016 *Wild
News* article of the same title)

One of the first signs of spring is the appearance of Harbinger-of-Spring (*Erigenia bulbosa*). This diminutive plant flowers as early as mid-February, making it, along with Hepatica (*Hepatica americana*) and Skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*), one of the earliest spring wildflowers to bloom in our area. Its habitat is rich, deciduous woods. This perennial member of Apiaceae or Umbelliferae, the Carrot Family, is not common in Virginia. According to the Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora, this species is found only in Prince William, Loudoun, Fairfax, Arlington, and Clarke counties in Northern Virginia, one county in the southern piedmont, and four counties in the southwestern Virginia. *Erigenia bulbosa* can be found from Ontario Province in Canada and Wisconsin and sporadically south to Georgia and west to Oklahoma. It is more common in West Virginia but less common in Maryland. Its scientific name, *Erigenia*, Greek for early-born, refers to the early appearance of this species in the spring, and *bulbosa*, meaning bulbous, refers to the prominent underground bulb-like storage structure that is actually a tuber, an underground storage stem. The other common name of Harbinger-of-Spring is "Pepper-and-Salt," which refers to the contrast of the maroon to black stamens against the white petals.

The small flowers borne in few-flowered umbels with leafy bracts appear before the leaves in February or early March. The individual flowers, less than 3/8 inch in diameter, have no apparent sepals, five white petals, five maroon to black stamens, and an inferior ovary with a two-parted style. The peduncle or flowering stem is usually from two to four inches and at most nine inches tall. Pollination is primarily by insects such as syrphid flies, solitary bees, honey bees, and other insects that are active in early spring. The fruit is a schizocarp typical of the carrot family and is less than 1/8 inch long and about twice as wide with five prominent ribs on the surface and a two-parted style that persists. The one to two leaves of each plant are two to three times divided into thirds. The finely-divided and smooth leaves resemble the leaves of Sweet cicely

(*Osmorhiza* species) but are not toothed and are much shorter, reaching heights of fewer than six to nine inches, whereas Sweet Cicely leaves may be up to three feet tall by late spring. The leaves of Harbinger-of-Spring appear after the flowers. The underground storage structure is a well-developed tuber with a fairly shallow root system. The medicinal use of this plant is limited but for the Cherokee Indian practice of chewing probably the tuber for toothache. The tuber is edible raw or cooked, but since this species is not common, please do not try this. The Irish potato, also a tuber, is a better choice! Harbinger-of-Spring can be found in parks such as Manassas National Battlefield Park, Great Falls Parks (Virginia and Maryland), and Balls Bluff in Loudoun County.

Seeing this lovely plant emerging from underneath beech or other deciduous hardwood leaves in late February or early March is well worth a trip to one of the parks where it is found. It lives up to its name of Harbinger-of-Spring; once you see it you know the spectacular diversity of other spring wildflowers will soon follow.



Photo: Ryan Hagerty, USFWS

Harbinger-of-Spring (*Erigenia bulbosa*) and Apiaceae Taxonomy Overview

(Updated from March-April 2016 *Wild News* article of the same title)

By Marion Lobstein, botany chair, Prince William Wildflower Society

Worldwide, Apiaceae (Umbelliferae), the Carrot Family, comprises approximately 434 genera and 3,780 species. This family is primarily herbaceous with some shrubs. It was named Umbelliferae by A.L. de Jussieu in 1789, which name was followed by Apiaceae, by John Lindley in 1836. Apiaceae is the preferred name of the family, but Umbelliferae is also a correct name. Apiaceae is based on the genus *Apium*, the celery genus, which dates to 50 AD to the term Pliny the Elder used to refer to a celery-like plant. Umbelliferae is based on the umbel type of inflorescence in this family. References to members of the

Apiaceae go back to Egyptian as well as to Greek and Roman times. In these cultures, Apiaceae members, such as parsley and celery, were used to make garlands for celebration and funeral ceremonies in addition to their medicinal use. The Greek physician Dioscorides, in the first century *De Materia Medica*, grouped members of this family together, which indicates an understanding of these plants as a group.

Sixteenth-century European herbalists, such as Rembert Dodoens and Mathias de l'Obel, also grouped members of this family together in recognition of these as a distinct group, but it was Jacques d'Aleschamp who formally recognized this family in the 1586 *Historia Generalis Plantarum*. In 1672, Robert Morison published a systematic treatment of Umbelliferae, the first such treatment of any plant family. Plant species in these works were often referred to as umbelliferas. John Clayton in the *Flora Virginica* (2nd ed.,



1762) listed a number of species of Apiaceae and some of his herbarium specimen were used by Linnaeus as species type specimens. In the *Flora of Virginia* (2012ed and 2013 reprint) manual, the treatment of Apiaceae includes 32 genera and approximately 50 species and reflects a number of major taxonomic changes in this family. The genus *Hydrocotyle*, or Water-pennywort, with seven species occurring in Virginia, has been moved to the Araliaceae, the Ginseng family. These two families have many similarities of structures, such as flowers borne in umbels, and their respective DNA shows a close relationship.

Other changes in the manual included the movements of the Marsh Parsley binomium, formerly *Apium leptophyllum*, to *Cyclospermum leptophyllum*; Mountain Pimpernel, formerly *Pseudotaenidia montana*, to *Taenidia montana*; and Clustered Snakeroot, formerly *Sanicula gregaria*, to *S. odorata*. Reasons for changes are based on morphological studies (Mountain Pimpernel) or on reassigning an earlier, valid binomium as in the case of the other two changes. These changes were also included in the *Flora of Virginia* Mobile App (<https://floraofvirginia.org/flora-app/>).

In the recent 2020 update of the App, there have been a limited number of changes to the Apiaceae. Two of the nine waifs (a non-native plant species found in an area but only rarely outside of cultivation) but listed in the "Taxa Not Included in This Manual" section of *Flora* are now considered to be naturalized (non-natives that are growing without human assistance) in Virginia. These are Wild Chervil (*Anthriscus sylvestris* ssp. *sylvestris*) that is now naturalized in two southwestern counties of Virginia along with Bristle-fruited Scale-seed

(*Spermolepsis echinata*) which is naturalized in Fairfax County as well as three southern Piedmont counties. A third change involves splitting Black Snakeroot (*Sanicula canadensis* into two varieties-var. *canadensis* that is found in almost every county in Virginia and var. *floridana* where there are still questions regarding its distribution. The fourth change is splitting the Meadow Parsnip (*Thaspis trifolium*) into two varieties based on flower color: the Yellow Meadow Parsnip is now var. *aureum* and the Purple Parsnip is var. *trifolium*.

Harbinger-of-Spring, continued:

Harbinger-of-Spring has been assigned a number of binomia since it was discovered and collected by André Michaux in the late 1700s in what is now probably Tennessee. Michaux named the species *Sison bulbosum* in 1803. In 1818, Nuttall moved the species to a new genus, *Erigenia*, and retained the species epithet *bulbosa* based on Michaux's *bulbosum*. It is the sole species of the genus *Erigenia* and is found only in eastern North America. Other synonyms include *Sium bulbosum*, by Pierre Poiteau (1811); *Ligusticum bulbosum*, by C. Persoon (1803); various species of *Hydrocotyle*, such as *H. ambigua*, by Pursh (1818); *H. bipinnata*, by Constantine Rafinesque, from work of H. Muhlenbeck (1817); *H. bulbosa*, by Amos Eaton and John Wright (1840); and *H. composita*, by Frederick Pursh (1813). In 1937, *Thorella bulbosa* was proposed by Pierre Nicolas Fournie. The binomium of Harbinger-of-Spring is currently recognized as *Erigenia bulbosa*.

* * * *

WILDFLOWER IDENTIFICATION WEBINAR

9 am - 12:30 pm, Thursday, April 8 via Zoom

Learn how to identify wildflowers in this interactive Zoom webinar hosted by Marion Lobstein, Sally Anderson, and Blandly Experimental Farm. Participants will practice using *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide* and the *Flora of Virginia* mobile App to identify wildflowers. Please email Marion if you have questions: mblobstein@earthlink.net. This is an online program through Zoom. The web browser client will download automatically when you start or join your first Zoom meeting, and is also available for manual download at <https://zoom.us/download> Participants should purchase the *Flora of Virginia* mobile app (\$19.99) prior to the program. The cost of this webinar is \$10.

Registration through Blandly is required, and space is limited, and assumes attendance both days. For additional information regarding how to register for activities at Blandly Farm, visit:

<https://blandly.virginia.edu/content/upcoming-events>



Save the Date!! Annual PWWS Plant Sale!!

We are planning to hold our chapter plant sale on the customary Saturday before Mother's Day, May 8 this year. As in the past, the sale will be held on the grounds of Bethel Lutheran Church, 8712 Plantation Lane, Manassas.

Obviously, some adjustments will have to be made in order to adhere to Covid-19 guidelines. Current plans include assigned time slots for customers to shop and a limit on the number of individual species that each customer can purchase.

Additional details will be announced as we get closer to the sale date.

Attention PWWS gardeners: We will be counting on you to contribute plants as you have done in the past. I will be in touch with updates and reminders as we go forward.

Nancy Arrington, Plant Sale Chairman
narrington1@verizon.net



Review: 2021 Author Event

Kim Eierman “Win the War on Pollinator Decline with Ecological Gardening”

Presented on Sunday, February 21, 2021
2 to 3:30 p.m. On Zoom



The ninth annual author event featured Kim Eierman, author of *The Pollinator Victory Garden*. Nancy Vehrs, president of the Virginia Native Plant Society and one of its chapters, Prince William Wildflower Society, welcomed all on Zoom, and she named the generous sponsors of the presentation to the over 300 participants.

Nancy introduced Ms. Eierman as an environmental horticulturist, and if her recommended practices were followed for attracting pollinators, we could help Win the War on Pollinator Decline!

Ms. Eierman shared pictures of huge green lawns, and recommended that ‘islands’ of native pollinator plants — including a combination of trees, bushes, and low- and high-growing, flowering plants — would be a start in attracting animals that need nectar and/or pollen. A lawn is otherwise a wasteland to pollinators and provides no food or habitat for them.

Loss of habitat and flowers and use of pesticides contribute to the declining native pollinators. The non-native honey bees have also had their problems with pesticides, including neonicotinoids. (Honey bees were first brought from England to America in the 1620s by settlers.)

Why are pollinators important? About 80% of all flowering plants on earth depend on pollinators for reproduction. About a third of our food crops are pollinated by various insects, but bees, including but not limited to honey bees, are the most important.

A Parade of Pollinators was introduced, and the following were discussed: beetles, flies, moths, butterflies, birds, wasps, and bees.

Ms. Eierman offered tips for attracting pollinators, and it might require a little homework! Start with finding what pollinators are found in your area.

For butterflies, she recommended a book, *Caterpillars of Eastern North America* by David L. Wagner. Then find out what flowering plants attract your local butterflies and other local pollinators. Consider planting host plants for the caterpillars. Start small, but as you expand, create an ongoing pollinator buffet. When preparing your pollinator garden space, remember — right plant, right place. Use regional straight species of native plants. Ask your nursery to provide native plants if they are not doing so. Ms. Eierman recommended we avoid cultivars and to skip the double-flowered choices. They usually have less pollen and nectar than straight natives.

Other hints on growing and maintaining a pollinator victory garden are in Kim Eierman’s book, *The Pollinator Victory Garden*. Hopefully many at the talk were inspired to start planning a space in their lawn, flower bed or even in containers for plants that attract pollinators. We can contribute to at least slowing the decline!

Please find on the following page the names of the sponsors for the author event and links to their websites.

WATCH SYMPOSIUM VIDEOS!!

Videos (all nine of them!) from the Third Annual Native Plant Symposium held on Zoom on February 6 are now available for viewing at [\(180\) 3rd Annual Native Plant Symposium - YouTube.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kbYKbxix7rDpgKjUFvXYzaWCX)

Alternatively, use this link which will take you there: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLo6XM7_3kbYKbxix7rDpgKjUFvXYzaWCX

Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 83, Manassas, Virginia 20108-0083



Next Meeting: Thursday, March 4, 7:30 pm Via Zoom

“Evolution for Naturalists” with PWWS Education Chair Lois Montgomery

We are grateful to all of our annual author event cosponsors:

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