



WILD NEWS

Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2018-06

November-December 2018

Thurs., Nov. 1, 2018, 7:30 p.m.
Prince William Wildflower Society
Membership Meeting
Bethel Lutheran Church
8712 Plantation Lane,
Manassas, VA
“Habitat Gardening for Wildlife”
with Charles Smith

Many of us garden to surround ourselves with beauty as well as the joy of working outside. But most also enjoy the benefits of providing habitat for wildlife. Come enjoy a discussion of how to improve your space to provide for the life-cycle needs of animals and the overall condition of the land.

About Charles Smith:

Charles is currently Branch Chief of the Fairfax County Stormwater Planning Division, focusing on stream and natural area restoration. He is a naturalist and ecologist with 26 years of experience working primarily in natural resource management, including over 16 years with the Fairfax County Park Authority and five years with Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. Charles is a US Army veteran, a long time member of Virginia Native Plant Society and Prince William Wildflower Society and

speaks to many groups about ecology and natural resource management.

(photo credit: VNPS)



From the President

Summer rather abruptly turned to fall this month. We had the AC on one day and needed the heat the next, but Harry and I shivered a couple of days before we succumbed. Maybe we will be enjoying Indian Summer by the time you read this. It's mid-October right now and our glorious hickory tree is still green. Usually by this time of year its foliage is bright gold. I hope that our rainy year has not washed out our fall colors.

At our last meeting, you reelected me as your president for another

two-year term. I enjoy leading our chapter and volunteering at events where I get either my hands or shoes dirty. The past two months the chapter participated in several events: the Manassas Latino Festival, a two-day environmental education event for homeschoolers held at the Marine Corps Museum, a native plant presentation at the Woodbridge Senior Center, weeding parties at the I-95 rest area, a mushroom walk, and even a field trip to the Quarry Gardens at Schuyler in Nelson County. With late fall and winter upon us, our activities may be winding down for the year, but the out-of-doors always beckons. Watch Facebook or your email box for short-notice walks or outings.

Back in July, Marion Lobstein led a full house in the training room of the Manassas Battlefield Park's headquarters in mastering the Flora of Virginia app. Did you know that the hardcover *Flora* was published back in 2012 from information current in 2011? Science marches on, and changes to our flora include newly discovered species and the incorporation of previously described waifs that are now considered widespread.

Botanists and other professionals must update the records, and their services are not free.

All changes will be incorporated into the app. In support of this project, "Flora II: Keeping the Science Current," the VNPS is conducting a fall fundraiser with a goal of \$25,000. Please consider donating to this worthy project when you receive our appeal letter.

This month we're pleased to welcome our own preeminent ecologist, Charles Smith, as our speaker. Charles led our chapter as president for several terms and is our current Conservation, Education, and Registry Chair. You are guaranteed to learn something from a "Charles lecture." I hope to see many of you on November 1.

~ Nancy

**Prince William Wildflower
Society Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 6, 2018
7:30 p.m.**

**Bethel Lutheran Church,
Manassas**

President Nancy Vehrs welcomed all to our annual meeting, at which we vote on our slate of officers and the 2019 proposed budget.

Treasurer's Report. We have \$3,768.25 in our checking account. Janis Stone made a motion to accept the 2019 proposed budget. Copies had been given to those present, as well as mailed and emailed to members. Valerie Kenyon

Gafney seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

The slate of officers was presented: President - Nancy Vehrs, Vice-President - William Carronero, Treasurer - Valerie Kenyon Gaffney, and Secretary - Karen Waltman. Jeanne Endrikat made a motion to accept the slate of officers for a two-year term. Joyce Andrew seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Announcements:

Look in *Wild News* for details on walks, events and volunteer opportunities.

Brenda Hallam, Libby Pemberton and Karen Waltman were thanked for providing refreshments. A sign-up sheet to bring refreshments at a future meeting is on the refreshments table.

PWWS is in need of a membership chair and a webmaster. If interested in volunteering, please call Nancy Vehrs, 703-368-2898.

Marion Lobstein reported on the Flora App. Also charter member Helen Rawls's 99th birthday will be September 14, and Marion passed around a birthday card for all to sign.

Program:

Nancy Vehrs introduced Dr. Emily Southgate, who spoke on Vanished Landscapes, which is also the title of a book she has published. Emily researched the vegetation for landscapes from 15,000 years ago, using pollen. In areas that had long ago been covered by glaciers, she and her

assistants bored into the sediment, and from these cores they identified, under microscopes, the different pollen they found. From that they could reconstruct the vegetation that had been present before the glaciers. The cover of glaciers prevented air from seeping into the dirt and decomposing the pollen, Dr. Southgate explained.

Historical records, early maps and aerial photographs help determine the Quantitative Documentary Evidence for more recent centuries of vegetation.

Thank you to Dr. Southgate for explaining this very interesting research.

Door prizes: A white wood aster, a narrow-leaved mountain mint, a butterfly book, and *Thoreau's Animals* were won by the door prize recipients.

Those In Attendance:

Janis Stone, Bob Furst, Joyce Andrew, Tom Andrew, Diane Johnson-Quinn, Barbara Lapham-Zane, Cathy Hindman, Trish Isbell, Jeanne Endrikat, Bert Harris, Andrea Weeks, Libby Pemberton, Brenda Hallam, Beverly Houston, Jeanne Fowler, Carol Thompson, Rose Breece, Brooks Breece, Marion Lobstein, Barbara Deegan, Judith Bugbee, Valerie Neitzey, Janine Lawton, Dee Brown, Glen Macdonald, Tom Attanaro, Mary Sherman, Stella Tarnay, Jennis Tarnay, Charlie Grymes, Frederick Nunley, Phyllis Nunley, Theresa DeFluri, Lois Montgomery, Martha Slover, Valerie Kenyon Gafney, Nancy Vehrs, Harry Glasgow, Karen Waltman, and speaker Dr. Emily Southgate.

Karen Waltman, Secretary

Events

For events not scheduled at the time this issue went to press, please continue to visit the [Prince William Wildflower Society Facebook Page](#) .

November

Saturday, November 3, 1:30 - 3:30 pm Free Lecture: 'Getting Your Garden Ready for Winter'

Potomac Com. Lib., 2201 Opitz Blvd., Woodbridge.

Your yard is a haven for beneficial insects, birds and other creatures during winter. Learn how to prepare it for colder days, while protecting critical habitat.

Dress for weather — a portion of class will be held outside. Please register: 703-792-7747 or master_gardener@pwcgov.org

Saturday, November 3, 10 am - 1 pm

17405 Beverley Mill Drive, Broad Run, VA.

Local photographer, **Jack Kotz**, will help you capture the landscape of the Bull Run Mountains. All skill levels welcome; bring your own camera. Pre-register at info@brmconservancy.org \$15 fee

Sunday, November 4, 1 - 3 pm

"Fire, Floodplains & Forests — Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts Free Walk and Listen", 1551 Trap Road, Vienna, VA.

Get a forester's eye view of the woodlands of Wolf Trap with **Jim McGlone**. Meet at the box office at 1, wear clothes suitable for trail walking.

Sunday, November 11, 1 - 4 pm

"Flora of Virginia App"

A Talk by Marion Lobstein

Green Springs Gardens

4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, VA

Everything you love from the print *Flora of Virginia* can now fit in your pocket. The app, for Android and iOS devices, features an easy-to-use Graphic Key, in addition to the traditional dichotomous keys. Species descriptions include photographs, and many include a botanical illustration. This modern format is revolutionizing the way Virginians learn about native plants.

Tuesday, November 13, 6 - 8 pm, the second of three Open Houses, "Pathway to 2040: Community Conversations on the Comprehensive Plan".

Come share your thoughts, ideas and suggestions with the Planning Office and other County Agencies. **At the GMU Campus, Beacon Hall, 10945 George Mason Circle, Manassas, VA.**

... and ...

on Wednesday, November 14, 6 - 8 pm, at the NVCC Regional Center for Workforce Education & Training, 2675 College Drive, Woodbridge, VA.

The same information will be provided at each meeting.

Saturday, November 17, A Trash Cleanup at

Jefferson Park. This is a 7-acre wooded parcel which includes a segment of Marumsco Creek. For the cleanup, volunteers will gather at the Jefferson Plaza parking area, off Route 1 in Woodbridge.

Address: 13729 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Woodbridge

... and, on the same day ...

Saturday, November 17, A Trash Cleanup at Veteran's Park/Marumsco Creek & Wetlands.

Cleanup opportunities throughout Veteran's Park, both in the developed area and in Marumsco Creek and its wetlands. Be prepared for wet and muddy conditions. Volunteers gather inside the Park near the Rec. Center, and the pavilion across the street.

For more info go to Prince William Trails & Streams Coalition: <http://www.pwtsc.org>

Saturday, November 17, 1 - 3 pm

"Plant Succession", Leopold's Preserve Monthly Naturalist Walks

16290 Thoroughfare Rd, Broad Run, VA. Walks are

free & open to community. Please RSVP:

info@brmconservancy.org

Sunday, November 25, 8 am

Last Sunday Bird Walks at Merrimac Farm

Join us as we look for birds and interesting plants; we will travel through the uplands to the edge of the floodplain, covering a variety of habitats, including open fields and woodland edges.

Everyone welcome. Dress for the weather, bring binoculars and cameras. For more info and to RSVP, reply to PWCA, 703 499-4954 or

alliance@pwconserve.org. For the bird list, visit:

<http://www.pwconserve.org/wildlife/birds/lists/merrimacfarm.htm>

December

Thursday, December 6, 9 - 11 am

A Late-Fall Hike at Bull Run Mountain House, 17405 Beverley Mill Drive, Broad Run, VA, hosted by BRMNAP. Join a professional to discover the flora and fauna of the region. Program is free, and all are welcome.

Sunday, December 30, 8 - 11 am

Last Sunday Bird Walks at Merrimac Farm

We'll look for birds and interesting plants as we travel through the uplands to the edge of the floodplain, covering a variety of habitats, including open fields and woodland edges. Everyone welcome. Dress for the weather, bring binoculars and cameras. More info and RSVP (appreciated though not required): PWCA, 703 499-4954 or alliance@pwconserve.org. View the bird list: <http://www.pwconserve.org/wildlife/birds/lists/merrimacfarm.htm>



Board Position Available

PWWS is in need of a **webmaster**. If you would like to learn more about this volunteer position, please contact Nancy Vehrs at nvehrs1@yahoo.com or 703-368-2898.

Prince William Wildflower Society

Wild News is the bi-monthly newsletter of the Prince William Wildflower Society, P.O. Box 83, Manassas, Virginia 20108, vnps.org/princewilliamwildflowersociety/ Nancy Vehrs, President; Brigitte Hartke, Editor. Original Material in *Wild News* may be reprinted if credit is given to PWWS, to *Wild News* and to the author of the material, if named.

Next submission deadline:
December 15, 2018

Pictured, a native beauty, Virginia Creeper, growing on a fence near Bull Run: one of Virginia's most interesting and colorful vines in fall ~ *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*. Also called Victoria creeper, five-leaved ivy, five-finger and occasionally woodbine, it is in the grape family, Vitaceae. It is native to eastern and central North America.

(photo: B. Hartke)

SAVE the DATE

Thursday, January 3, 2019 - PWWS General meeting. This program is traditionally a member-provided slide show. Please check the PWWS website for upcoming information on this meeting.

The Quarry Gardens at Schuyler

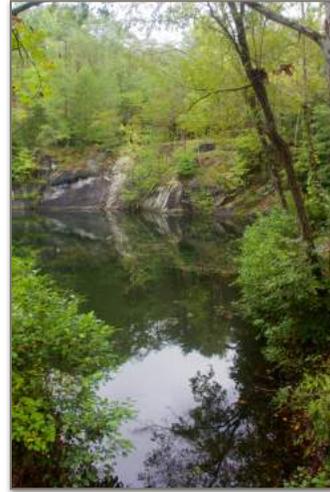
visit quarrygardensatschuyler.org

On September 12 a small group of PWWS members visited Schuyler Quarry Gardens, a unique garden with many native plants, just south of Charlottesville at 1643 Salem Road, Schuyler, VA. The gardens exist on 40 acres of carefully planted and tended private property located at what was once a soapstone quarry, one of only three such quarries in the world. Here the public can come to enjoy and to learn; the \$10 donation is well worth the visit and guided tour.



The Quarry Gardens are nestled in a 600-acre property owned since 1991 by Armand and Bernice Thieblot. Between the 1950s and the 1970s the quarries were actively mined; it was then used as a community dumpsite for about a decade, and there was an ongoing casual site clean-up for some 23 years.

After creating a 400-acre buffer around the gardens in 2015 and having surveys done on the property's biota, in the spring of 2017 the Thieblots opened a two-mile walking trail as well as more than 30 galleries of native plant communities, and a Visitor Center with educational exhibits on native plants and displays of the history of the soapstone industry in Schuyler.



Though there was rain in the forecast on the day we visited, it held off during our guided tour; an earlier light rain had given the trees, ferns and foliage a lush green appearance that only added to their beauty. We delighted in the many natives blooming in September, and were occasionally stumped over the identity of a few; we tried out our

skills with the Flora of Virginia App. The Thieblots had an impressive working knowledge of the extensive plantings on the property and were able to supply identification when needed. This is remarkable as there are currently nearly 36,000 plants in the gardens as of June of this year.

The Thieblots maintain a comprehensive spreadsheet, (which can be accessed on their website) of plantings in their many 'beds' or galleries. At the 'Entrance Corridor' we found redbuds, dogwoods and blackhaws among others; then on to the 'Welcome Bed Barren' where fifteen species thrive, from yarrows, goldenrods, butterflyweed, and hackberry, to dittany, spurge, sweet everlasting, skullcaps, asters and PA panic grass listed as a "volunteer native!" And so began our tour; then it was on to the endless variety of flora that thrive in the Thieblot garden, all beautifully reflected in the deep, dark water that fills the quarry. It was a special day for all of us, and we look forward to organizing another visit in the spring. Stay tuned. *(photos and text, B. Hartke)*



Witch Hazel

(*Hamamelis virginiana*)

by Marion Lobstein, PWWS Chair

Edited by Deanna High,
Former Editor of *Wild News*:
Reprinted from *Wild News*
November-December 2013

While walking through the autumn woods you may have noticed small yellow flowers borne on the ends of twigs of a small tree. Or, you may have heard a popping noise as you walked past the same trees. What you were seeing and hearing are the flowers and "exploding" fruits of witch hazel. This is the only tree (or large shrub) in our area that blooms from September through December. Also, it is the only tree that bears both flowers and fruits (from last year's flowers) at the same time!

Witch hazel is widely distributed, ranging from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to central Georgia and southern Arkansas. It is commonly found along streams and on the banks of ponds, lakes, and swamps or in moist upland forests. It is considered an understory species in our deciduous forests.

The scientific name for witch hazel was assigned to this handsome plant by the famous Swedish taxonomist Linnaeus. *Hamamelis* is an ancient Greek plant name and *virginiana* means it was first collected in the colony of Virginia. Other common names are American witch-hazel, snapping hazel, snapping hazelnut, tobacco

wood, white hazel, and winter bloom. It is not a true hazel but rather is a member of the Hamamelidaceae family. Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), once the only other member of this family in our area, has now been moved to the Altingiaceae (Sweetgum) family (*Flora of Virginia*, 2012). The "witch" part of its common name comes from the use of its branches as divining rods supposedly to find water and even buried treasure and precious metal ores such as gold!



The small yellow flowers develop in clusters of three or four on the tips of mature branches. The four strap-like petals are attached on the margin of a cup-shaped receptacle. Eight stamens are arranged in two rows of four with the outer row usually sterile. With showy flowers, it is insect-pollinated by insects still active in cooler autumn temperatures. Two shining black seeds form in a two-celled wooden capsule

that has a prominent beak. These fruits ripen over the year after flowering. The small half-inch seeds are forcibly expelled from the ripened capsule creating a popping noise.

The leaves, twigs, and bark of witch hazel are distinctive. The alternate simple leaves are about four inches long and up to three inches wide. The leaf is ovate and variably lobed with an uneven base. Mature leaves have a waxy surface. Witch hazel twigs have a unique zigzag appearance. The thin smooth outer bark is light brown with purple inner bark. Individual trees can be as tall as 30 feet and can attain a diameter of 12-14 inches.

Some American Indian tribes used witch hazel to make the wooden part of bows. Other Native American uses of witch hazel were primarily medicinal: poultices, washes, and extracts were made from the inner bark; twigs and leaves were used to treat inflamed eyes, skin irritation, tumors, sore muscles, varicose veins, and even hemorrhoids. Extracts of bark and leaves were rubbed on the legs of Indian athletes to keep the muscles limber. Teas or washes made from the leaves and/or bark were used to treat a variety of ailment from colds, sore throats, and asthma to tuberculosis and other lung ailments, menstrual cramps, cholera, and dysentery. Extracts were also used to stop excessive menstrual flow and a variety of problems involving internal bleeding. Heated and steamed branches were used in a "sauna" to ease sore muscles, while powdered dried leaves were used to stop external bleeding.

Also, twigs were chewed to freshen the mouth as well as to heal and soothe bleeding gums and other mouth or throat problems. Early colonists soon discovered the value of witch hazel. Alcohol extracts, as well as lotions and salves made from twigs, leaves, and bark have long been used and are still used to treat sore muscles and minor

skin irritations, as an astringent, or as a shaving lotion. Most witch hazel preparations are now synthetically made, but there is at least one small company in New England that still prepares "real" witch hazel extract. The astringent and other associated properties are due to tannins in the bark and leaves.

As you walk in the late autumn woods and the wildflowers have disappeared until spring, keep your eyes and ears open for the sight and sound of the unusual witch hazel. Look for its delicate yellow flowers and listen for its fruits exploding!

Photo Credit: R. W. Smith



Photo Credit: WikimediaImages



More views from the I-95 N Cars Only Rest Area Wildlife Way Station! The way station is coming along nicely! An dedicated group of gardeners volunteer their time to maintain this little bit of native habitat at Dale City. You can see a few faces here, but by no means all of us who participate. We enjoy a morning of weeding and chatting at our "Party" — perhaps more will join in the fun at the next party. On my last visit, the garden was beginning to put itself to sleep for the cold months, and I believe there has been another party since then. Thanks to all for your dedication and hard work. (photos, N. Vehrs & B. Hartke)



PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

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



Next Meeting: Thursday, November 1, 2018, 7:30 pm
Charles Smith: "Habitat Gardening for Wildlife"
Bethel Lutheran Church, Plantation Lane, Manassas, Virginia 20110

Trumpet Honeysuckle

Chosen as Fairfax County's Official Flower
at the Suggestion of Nancy Vehrs

From Sharon Bulova in her October issue of Bulova Byline: "The Virginia Native Plant Society selected the Trumpet Honeysuckle as Wildflower of the Year for 2014. At the suggestion of former Clerk to the Board Nancy Vehrs and the Potomac Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, Fairfax County will be adopting this pretty wildflower as our official flower at our next Board Meeting. You can look for it to brighten up publications and grace pages of our web site." (photo: Pixabay)

