

WILD NEWS

Membership Grows

OFFICERS ELECTED AT ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Since our March Charter Meeting, 48 persons from all areas of Prince William County have joined the Wildflower Society. At the May 24th organizational meeting temporary officers were elected to serve until the group is ready to officially become a chapter of the Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society. Elected were Nancy Arrington, president; Elaine Haug, vice-president; Roxetta Wyer, secretary; and Pat Dunlop, treasurer.

The group adopted the name "Prince William Wildflower Society" with geographic area to include Stafford and Fauquier Counties.

Plans for future committee activities are covered elsewhere in the newsletter. Our next meeting will be Monday, July 19, 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas.

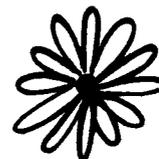
A current membership list is included with members' newsletter. A list of new members will appear in future newsletters and can be added to your original list. The list will be updated periodically.

WILDFLOWER-OF-THE-MONTH

A wildflower will be featured in each issue of the newsletter. Separate articles will deal with the plant's natural habitat, its use in home and commercial landscapes, and its conservation and propagation. Comments about the plant's history, medicinal uses, etc. will be included.

June's choice is Butterfly-Weed, a striking summer-blooming perennial, equally at home in the wild and in home and public gardens.

WILDFLOWERS RESCUED



Under the leadership of Elaine Haug, Society members and friends have rescued Lady's-Slippers, Virginia Bluebells, Trout-Lilies, Jacks-in-the-Pulpit, Azaleas, Solomon's Seal, Bloodroot, Pipsissewa, Shinleaf, and Violets from construction sites throughout Prince William County this spring.

WILDFLOWER LOVERS

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHERS

WILDFLOWER SOCIETY & GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS



Summer Wildflowers

(Biol. 298 Seminar and Project)

A 2-Hour Credit Course
Northern Virginia Community College
Manassas Campus

Registration Begins June 2
Class Runs June 24 - July 29

For further information call:
Marion Blois, Instructor, 368-0184, Ext. 211

FIELD TRIPS

EASY ID TIPS

WILDFLOWER GARDENING INFO

NO PREREQUISITES



A BEGINNER'S
GUIDE TO

SEED COLLECTING

Condensed from North Carolina
Botanical Garden publications.

In you would like information on
collecting and storing seed of speci-
fic species, call Jackie Ralya, Pro-
pagation Committee Chairman at
754-9672.

From now through fall wildflower seed can be collected. Society members are encouraged to try their hand at this fascinating activity. Details regarding individual species are too numerous to go into here, but for starters:

1. After blooming, the fruiting structure which contains the seed will begin to dry out and turn brown.
2. The seed itself will darken and expand. It is important to allow the seed to mature naturally on the plant; mature seed is essential for good germination.
3. Don't over-collect — leave some seed for the plant's natural propagation.
4. A plastic bag or portion of nylon stocking can be tied over a maturing seed pod to insure collection of mature seed.
5. Collected seed pods can be left to dry for a few days in a paper bag at room temperature. If insects were collected, a no-pest strip placed with the seed will take care of them.
6. Within a week or so of collection seeds should be cleaned (remove bits of stem, pod pieces, etc.).
7. After seed is completely dry, separate species can be placed in envelopes labeled with species, date and place collected.
8. Envelopes can be stored in an air-tight jar and refrigerated until planting time.

Instead of saving all your seed, experiment by sowing a portion in an outdoor prepared bed or in flats containing a commercial potting mix and sunk into the ground. Keep careful records of everything you do.

An exception to the steps above: seed of many early blooming wildflowers such as Bloodroot should be collected before completely dry and sown immediately in outdoor beds or flats.

WRITE IT DOWN WRITE IT DOWN

Keep records of the hours & miles you donate to Society activities. Mileage is deductible, and the number of hours we put into projects will be evidence of our hard work and dedication if we apply for funding or ask for donations.




CERTIFICATE FOR CHARTER MEMBERS

Our own talented artist Nicky Staunton, will contribute her wildflower line drawings to a special Charter Member Certificate.

The printed certificates, with name hand-lettered and flowers individually water-colored, will be a work of art you will be proud to frame and display!

A membership card will be prepared for each member, but only Charter Members will receive the certificate. Charter status will continue until fall.

Nicky will need help with all this work — call her, 368-9803, if your talents include calligraphy and water-coloring.

Conway Robinson Memorial Forest is a 400-acre state-owned tract on Rts. 29-211 near Gainesville. We are working with the Forestry Service on a long-range plan to develop nature trails and perhaps other nature related activities in the Forest.

The Forest contains some of the oldest trees in Prince William County, and an impressive variety of wildflowers.

Claudia Thompson, Bobbe Krueger and I have been working with Forester Tom Davidson and retired Forester Joe Kemper on a plan of action for approval by the State before work begins.

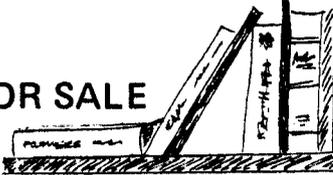
If you can help at Conway Robinson, and haven't already signed up, call me at 221-4489.

EDUCATIONAL LIBRARIES COMPILED

The Education Committee wants to compile libraries of wildflower slides, photographs, and art work to be used for programs and exhibits.

Items can be donated to the committee, or copies can be made of some materials. If you have slides, photographs and drawings that you can lend to the Committee, call Nicky Staunton, 368-9803. Also let Nicky know of any educational materials you can donate.

BOOKS FOR SALE



Books on several wildflower subjects were sold at the May 24th meeting. We hope to have more next time including:

Growing Woodland Plants, Clarence & Eleanor Birdseye

Gardening With Wild Flowers, Brooklyn Botanic Garden Handbook

North Carolina Native Plant Propagation Handbook, N.C. Botanical Garden

Spring Flowers of Dranesville District Park, Fairfax County Park Authority

Flower Finder, Guide to Spring Wildflowers, Nature Study Guild Publishers

Here's our chance to learn from a pro . . . NVCC's Summer Wildflower Class is an excellent opportunity for Society members to learn to use a field guide to aid in identification of native plants. There are no prerequisites and Marion Blois promises to make the learning lots of fun!

At Conway Robinson Memorial Forest . . .

GARDEN CLUB CONSIDERS PRESERVE

An item in the original agreement between the State of Virginia and the Conway Robinson family stated " . . . the party of the second part [State] will . . . cooperate with . . . the National Wildflower Preservation Society, . . . in the use of said land for the preservation and fostering of the growth, maintenance, and propagation of native wildflower[s] . . ."

Coming Events

The following committees plan to meet in June. The meetings are open to all members. You are urged to attend any you are interested in. Call the chairman of each committee for details.

Education: June 29, 10:00 a.m.
Thalia Roland, 368-9792

Propagation: To Be Announced
Jackie Ralya, 754-9672

Survey: To Be Announced
Elaine Haug, 670-2347



Our Secretary, Roxetta Wyer, will also be our Membership Chairman. Roxetta needs help reciting our membership brochures in racks at local parks, the libraries, and other public places. If you can help, let her know at the next meeting.

THINK ABOUT THIS if you are tempted to pick Butterfly-Weed:

As with so many wildflowers, Butterfly-Weed's attractiveness contributes to its scarcity. Its bright color is easily spotted and people pick it, thus preventing the formation of seeds and interrupting the plant's natural propagation.



Ed Milhaus, Co. Extension Agent

Milhaus
↙

A 25-acre portion of the 400 acres was dedicated to the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs for use as a wildflower conservation project in 1939. However little has been done over the years to develop the site.

Town and Country Garden Club, a member of the V.F.G.C. is considering the 25-acre site as a Club conservation project. Possibilities include a wildflower preserve, wildflower gardens, and propagation beds.

Hopefully other local garden clubs, along with the Wildflower Society will be involved.

Butterfly-Weed - Easy to Spot
Along The Trail

MARION BLOIS
Ass't. Professor of Biology, NVCC



Butterfly-Weed, *Asclepias tuberosa*, is a member of the Asclepiadaceae or Milkweed Family. This native perennial grows in dry, sunny fields, at woods edge, along highways, and in gravelly railroad beds from Maine to Florida and west to Ontario and northern Mexico. 42

According to Atlas of the Virginia Flora Butterfly-Weed grows in all but three Virginia Counties. It does not grow abundantly in Prince William County, but small patches have been spotted along highways and at Cloverdale, Prince William Forest, and Manassas Battlefield Parks. 43

Watch for Butterfly-Weed during the summer months beginning in mid-June and continuing into August. The flower cluster at the end of the 1-2' hairy stem ranges from yellow-orange to reddish-orange. Some blossoms are bi-colored giving the plant extra interest. Alternate hairy willow-like leaves are 3-4" long. Some plants grow upright and some grow with the stem arching toward the ground. 66

In addition to attracting the butterflies for which it is named, bees and hummingbirds love it. Another common name is pleurisy root and it is sometimes called chigger-flower. It was used as a tonic and expectorant and commonly prescribed for pleurisy. 42

Though not on the Garden Club's list of Virginia plants needing protection, Butterfly-Weed should definitely be on Prince William's protected list. The few patches we have could be left to multiply. 32

After blooming, the pod with numerous plumed seeds is easy to collect and the seeds germinate readily. Collecting a few seed from roadside plants will not endanger the species. 29

I was accustomed to seeing numerous large clumps of Butterfly-Weed when I lived in North Carolina and was very disappointed to see so little of it when I moved to this area. As people become more aware of our native plants and the need to preserve and propagate them, I am sure I will begin to see more Butterfly-Weed, a long time favorite. 65

WILDFLOWER SURVEY

ELAINE HAUG
Chairman, Survey Committee

The Survey Committee is compiling a list of Prince William Co. Wildflowers. Members are surveying all local parks. Society members are asked to be on the lookout for wildflowers on our list of 12 favorites and on the Garden Club's list of plants needing protection in Virginia. Report locations to me or other members of the Committee.

Garden Clubs, other groups, and individuals are encouraged to join our Adopt-A-Park program. The group will be responsible for surveying the adopted park and noting habitats for future location of rescued wildflowers.

Butterfly-Weed



Cultural Requirements:

- Soil: Sandy loam preferable, but tolerant of driest, poorest, clayey soil
pH: Neutral to slightly acid - pH not important
Moisture: Dry; good drainage essential
Exposure: Full sun, but will survive with sparser blooms in part shade



EDUCATION

THALIA ROLAND
Chairman, Education Committee

85

The Education Committee's purpose is to promote wildflower conservation through increased public awareness and knowledge.

Plans include: a speaker's bureau, slide programs, and exhibit to be used at the County Fair and other places, and printing of educational materials.

The committee will develop programs for Garden Clubs and other community and civic groups, youth and student groups such as scouts, and anyone else who will listen.

If you are not yet a member of the committee and can help with our activities, call me, 368-9792.

LATE NEWS

Woodmar Garden Club of Woodbridge has become our first Associate Member. Special thanks to Olga Bennetti, President and all members of the club for their support.



WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE WILDFLOWER?

A contest to choose the wildflower which will serve as the Society's logo is underway. Members at the May meeting were asked to choose six favorites from a list of 25 to narrow down the list to 12. A "ballot" with line drawings and descriptions of these 12 will be printed. The Education Committee has not finalized plans for the complete voting procedure, but hopefully many local groups and individuals will participate in choosing our logo wildflower.

THE WINNERS

(Ties listed in alphabetical order)

- * 1. Virginia Bluebell (15)
- * 2. Bloodroot (14)
- * 3. Pink Lady's-slipper (13)
- 4. Butterfly-Weed (9)
- * 5. Jack-in-the-Pulpit (9)
- * 6. Trout-Lily (8)
- * 7. Cardinal-Flower (7)
- 8. Columbine (7)
- * 9. Dutchman's-breeches (7)
- * 10. Birdfoot Violet (6)
- 11. Wild Ginger (6)
- * 12. Spring Beauty (5)

*On the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs list of "Native Plants Needing Protection in Virginia"

SAVE CLIPPINGS, PHOTOS FOR HISTORIAN

Blair Christolon will be the Society's historian. She will be collecting news articles, samples of our printed materials, and other items related to Society activities.

MEMBER PARTICIPATES IN SEMINAR

52



Elaine Haug joined members of the V.W.P.S. for an intensive one-day wildflower seminar at the North Carolina Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill.

Elaine brought back tapes and printed information to share with other members of our group. Topics covered included trail design and layout, rescue and relocation procedures, and propagation and cultivation.

TO BE RESCUED

Permission for wildflower surveys and rescues has been obtained from :

New Creations Custom Homes -- an 11-acre home site on Bull Run Mountain

Battlefield Builders -- Riverview Estates and Fern Brook

Rescues at these sites will be scheduled and members notified. If you know of sites that should be investigated call Elaine Haug, 670-2347, or Nancy Arrington, 368-3431.

Gardening

*Butterfly-Weed –
A Natural*



Butterfly-Weed is truly one of our most useful and beautiful native perennials. Its long taproot goes deep into the ground making it an excellent soil-holding plant for dry sunny banks.

A roadside or median-strip planting of Butterfly-Weed is an almost maintenance-free summer color replacement for spring bulbs – and so much more interesting than the over used marigold. Its low growth does not interfere with vision at intersections.

This long-lived plant deserves a prominent spot in the garden. It's attractive planted with blue, white, and yellow flowers, but keep it away from pinks! Natural companions include Queen Anne's Lace, Goldenrod, Chickory and the white, yellow, and blue members of the Aster family.

Cut the plant back after blooming and you will likely be rewarded with a second blooming period.

The plants should be set in a permanent location as the long taproot makes transplanting difficult. Set 1½-2' apart as the plants will reach bushel-basket size in a few years. Mulch well in winter until established. Maintenance is minimal and the plants are relatively pest-free.

REMINDER

WILDFLOWER SOCIETY MEETING
Monday, July 19, 7:30 p.m.
Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas





Butterfly-Weed — An Easy One ²⁴⁰

Propagation

JACKIE RALYA
Chairman, Propagation Committee

Along with being one of my favorite wildflowers, Butterfly-Weed is one of the easiest to grow from seed. The seed pod is similar to other members of the Milkweed Family, with the seed attached to the familiar downy parachutes. Seed can be harvested in late summer when the pods turn brown and begin to split. ³²

Collected pods can be dried indoors until seed can be shaken out. Dry seeds should be stored in an airtight container and refrigerated until sown.

Seed sown in a standard potting mix in February will germinate in about two weeks. Cover the flat

with plastic or glass and keep out of direct light until seeds germinate. Gradually remove covering and move to brighter light (a south facing window is fine.)

A weekly application of liquid fertilizer after germination will speed the seedlings toward transplanting into 3" pots in 4-6 weeks. After hardening off plants can be set in their permanent location in May. ¹⁵⁹

Seeds can be sown outdoors in early spring or late summer. Mulch seedlings first winter and transplant to permanent location the following spring. Seedlings will usually bloom the second summer.

Butterfly-Weed can be propagated by cuttings: 1½-2" stem sections taken in May and set upright in moist sand will root readily.

I hope the efforts of Propagation Committee members and other members of the Wildflower Society will result in more brilliant summer splashes of Butterfly-Weed in Prince William Co.



Your comments, suggestions, criticisms (constructive only, please!) on the newsletter are welcome. Your written contributions will be especially welcomed. Just call me with any items you'd like in the next issue.

Nancy Arrington, 368-8431

Prince William Wildflower Society
P. O. Box 462
Manassas, Virginia 22110



Butterfly-Weed

Asclepias tuberosa