

NOV.—DEC. 1983

# WILD NEWS

PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY, A Chapter of the Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society

## NATIVE PLANT LANDSCAPING WORKSHOP

Since we won't be having a membership meeting this month we hope our members will attend the native plant landscaping program (article reprinted from V.W.P.S. Fall Bulletin). This promises to be an excellent program, and we will form carpools to make it easy for our members to attend.

"The National Wildlife Federation and V.W.P.S. are co-sponsoring a talk and workshop on landscaping with native plants.

"David Kopitzke, owner and operator of Little Valley Farm Wildflower Nursery in Wisconsin, will speak at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 22, in the auditorium of the NWF Laurel Ridge Center, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. Mr. Kopitzke raises a wide variety of prairie, woodland and wetland plants. He has also rendered landscape designs for homes, parks, and businesses using these same plants.

"The program will begin with a slide presentation illustrating the landscaping possibilities of native

plants. Among the topics covered will be paths, patios, attracting wildlife, and visual variety throughout the seasons. Mr. Kopitzke will then introduce participants to more than 30 species of wild plants suited to various sites and soil types. Following the talk, participants will design a landscape for a typical home site. Questions and discussion will be encouraged."

**Fee: 3.50 for P.W.W.S. members, 5.00 others.**

**We are forming carpools at 6:00 p.m. as follows:**

**Bethel Lutheran Church parking lot  
Plantation Ln. & Sudley Rd., Manassas**

**K-Mart parking lot  
Dale Blvd., Dale City**

If you'd like to attend but can't get to carpooling locations, call Roxetta—361-8615, Elaine—670-2347, or Nancy—368-8431, and we'll work out arrangements. If you plan to attend call one of the numbers above and we will phone in all our reservations.

## CONTEST WINNERS

P.W.W.S. members were responsible for the bulk of entries in the V.W.P.S. Photography Contest and for the three top honors:

**1st prize - Doris Booth, yellow lady's-slipper**

**2nd prize - Judy Mayeux, pink lady's-slipper**

**3rd prize - Elaine Haug, chickory**

We are very proud of everyone who entered the contest and especially proud of our winners.



### WILDFLOWER-OF-THE-MONTH

Blossoms in November? "No way," you say. Well, look again at a most unusual small native tree.



*We wish everyone a happy holiday season. You'll receive Jan.-Feb. newsletter before our Jan. meeting.*

### DUES RENEWAL REMINDER

A separate membership form with your your newsletter this month means it's time to renew your dues. In accordance with V.W.P.S. and Chapter by-laws, our membership year runs from Nov. 1 through Oct. 31. If you joined after Aug. 15, 1983, your dues are paid through Oct. 31, 1984. If you joined before Aug. 15 you must renew now at the full amount. If you're unsure about your status call Roxetta Wyer, 361-8615.

## ANNUAL MEETING NOTES

- Around 30 members, new members and guests attended.
- By-laws were approved and will be printed and distributed to members with a future newsletter.
- Tom Carrig, Blythe Salamonowicz and Duane York were elected At-Large Members of the 1984 Nominating Committee.
- Our Chapter volunteers worked a total of 2259 hours and traveled 2619 miles during 1983.
- Auction items — wildflower garden plant collections, T-Shirt, photographs, pressed flower pictures — netted over \$100.



## SPECIALTY BOOKS

Local bookstores normally stock just a few titles in the specialized areas of botany, conservation, and wildflowers that many of us are interested in. Some treasures are out-of-print and available only from used book dealers. With the coming of long winter evenings by the fire here's a list of sources for the books you'll want. Some of the firms listed here carry only used books, some only new, and some carry both.

Dover Publications, Inc.  
180 Varick St., New York, NY 10014  
Complete Dover Nature Catalog, free.

Elizabeth Woodburn,  
Booknoll Farm, Hopewell, NJ 08525  
Catalogs featuring specific topics (herbs, wildflowers, landscape design, etc.) are available for \$1 each.

Gary Wayner  
Rt. 3, Box 18, Fort Payne, AL 35967.  
Catalog specializing in natural history and science, \$1.

Pomona Book Exchange  
Hwy. 52, Rockton, Ontario, Canada L0R1X0  
Botany, horticulture, free catalog.

Timber Press  
P.O. Box 1632, Beaverton, OR 97075  
Limited list, free catalog.

Warren F. Broderick  
P.O. Box 124, Lansingburg, NY 12182  
Extensive list of horticulture books including native plant section, catalog \$1.

From the Volunteer Questionnaire mailed in by two new members:

"We are novices, just beginning to learn."  
Dorritt & Ardath Green, ages 75 & 76

## AUTHOR SEEKS INPUT

The letter that follows was received by Mary Painter and passed along for use in our newsletter with the comment, "Many of our members' expertise and gardens would enhance any such publication. Please contact Mr. Wilson directly if you're interested."

"I am a free-lance writer researching a book on landscaping with native plants, to be published by Ortho Books. I am interested in gathering as much information as possible on garden use of native plants in different areas of the country, their propagation and culture, and the mechanics of designing and building a successful native plant garden based on the different plant communities native to each region.

"Can you direct me to members of your organization who are particularly expert at landscaping with native plants; or who have beautiful gardens of native plants which we might visit or photograph? We want to make the book as complete as possible, and will value any help you can give us.

"I can be reached either by mail, or by telephone (collect) at 415-934-1014. Thank you."

Sincerely,  
William Wilson

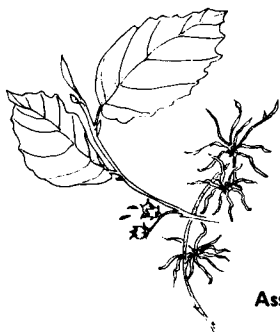
2869 Kinney Dr.  
Walnut Creek, CA 94595

## HELP WANTED!



Our Chapter needs help in the following areas, and we really hope more members will get involved. Call us (Nancy Arrington, 368-8431) before we call you!

- ☐ Person(s) to help develop educational programs, assemble slide library, write narrations to accompany slide presentations, etc.
- ☐ Publicity person(s) to help with publicity including writing articles for our newsletter, local papers, radio stations, etc.
- ☐ Propagation Committee Chairman to develop and implement a propagation program.
- ☐ Program Committee Chairman and members to schedule meeting dates, places, and programs (speakers, etc.) for our membership meetings for the coming year.



## WITCH-HAZEL

*Hamamelis virginiana*

MARION BLOIS  
Ass't. Professor of Biology, NVCC

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 some 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 fruit (from last year's flowers) at the same time!

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. Two shining black seeds form in a two-celled wood capsule that has a prominent beak. These fruits ripen one 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 two to three inches wide. The leaf is ovate and variably lobed with an uneven base. Mature leaves have a waxy surface. Twigs have a unique zig-zag appearance. The thin smooth outer bark is light brown with purple inner bark. Leaves, twigs and bark are used for medicinal purposes. Individual trees can be as tall as 30 feet and attain a diameter of 12-14".

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, *Hamamelis virginiana*, was assigned to this handsome plant by the famous Swedish taxonomist Linneaus. *Hamamelis* is an ancient Greek plant name and *virginiana* means it was first collected in Virginia. Other common names are

snapping hazel, snapping hazlenut, tobacco wood, white hazel, and winterbloom. It is not a true hazel but rather is in the Hamamelidaceae family. Sweetgum is the only other local member of the family.

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!

Other uses of witch-hazel are primarily medicinal. Indians developed a variety of uses including a poultice from the inner bark to treat inflamed eyes and skin problems such as tumors. An extract of bark and leaves was rubbed on the legs of Indian athletes to keep the muscles limber. Branches were used in a "sauna" to ease sore muscles. Twigs were chewed to freshen the mouth. Powdered dried leaves were used to stop bleeding.

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. Purportedly the extract has some value in treating hemorrhoids. Most of these preparations are now synthetically made, but there is at least one small company in New England that still prepares "real" witch-hazel extract.

As we move into late autumn and our wildflowers disappear once again, keep your eyes and ears open for the sight and sound of the unusual witch-hazel.

### CULTIVATION AND PROPAGATION

Nancy Arrington

Under cultivation witch hazel will grow in deep shade as it does naturally but attains a more compact shape in the open growing to 15' in height and width. It is used as a large shrub or can be pruned into a multi-stemmed small tree.

Witch hazel is very effective used along woodland borders where adequate light promotes heavy flowering and flowers are highlighted against the dark background of the woods. The same effect can be achieved by using it against a dark house wall. When planted near a well travelled path or under a window the flowers which have an elusive sweet, musty fragrance that fills the air (but hardly detectable by sniffing) can be enjoyed at close range.

The hardy witch hazel is not particular about soil but prefers a moist well-drained area. Flowering is heavier and slightly earlier in full sun though it will flower in shade. Pruning, if necessary to shape or restrict size should be done in winter or

*Continued on pg. 4*

*Witch hazel, continued*

very early spring to avoid removing flower buds. Most sources describe the shrub as pest and disease free; however, Gupton and Swope in Trees and Shrubs of Virginia, mention an insect gall with a "conical shape like the crown of a witch's hat" which I have noticed on the leaves of my plants.

Propagation is best done by cuttings or layering as seeds take two years to germinate (after the year it has taken for them to form).

The native Chinese witch hazel *H. mollis*, blooming in Feb. or Mar. and growing to 20', is widely available commercially along with a few hybrids. Sources for our *H. virginiana*, usually called common witch hazel, are limited, but it is available from Conley's Garden Center, Boothbay Harbor, Maine 04538 (Cat. 1.50). Woodlanders in Aiken, S.C. carries *H. macrophylla* (Southern witch hazel) and *H. vernalis* (Vernal or Ozark) which grows to 6' and blooms in the early spring.

Along with so many other natives, witch hazel has been neglected and is rarely seen in cultivated gardens. In How To Grow Wildflowers and Wild Shrubs in Your Own Garden, Hal Bruce praises it highly and suggests an underplanting of late-flowering gentians, a combination he calls "spectacular." Harrison L. Flint in the Country Journal Book of Hardy Trees and Shrubs states, "Witch hazel will enhance any landscape with its quiet but distinctive autumnal flowering and its neutral but pleasing foliage that turns bright yellow in fall. Add freedom from maintenance to these attributes, and the result is a shrub that deserves wider consideration for landscape use."

#### V.W.P.S. BY-LAWS CORRECTION

Please insert in your copy.

On page 12, Section (1) 7. after line 2 insert following line which was omitted:

horizontalized by these by-laws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver

## CERTIFICATES A HIT

Our Charter Certificates were mailed to members after the annual meeting. Nicky Staunton designed the certificate and she and Elaine Haug hand painted each one. We have received many comments including:

"... just received the gorgeous Charter Certificate Monday." —Mimi Sant

"A special thank you for the lovely Charter Certificate. Such a pleasant surprise on a rainy afternoon."

—Linda Dawes

## CLUB ADOPTS A PARK

The Quantico Officers Wives Garden Club is participating in the Adopt-A-Park program and will work with park areas on the Marine base. They participated in a rescue, and with the help of Elaine Haug and Marie Davis, are developing a wildflower garden. A special welcome to the Club as an Associate member of the Wildflower Society.

## LIBRARY SAYS THANKS

We have received a thank-you card from the Prince William Co. Library for the two copies each of two books we donated to the library this past summer.



## FERN VALLEY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

Workers at Fern Valley at the National Arboretum are involved in a much needed renovation program involving habitat re-creation and planting. Funds are limited and volunteers are desperately needed. If you can help (you'll learn a lot in the process) call Sherry McNatt at the Arboretum, 202-475-4864, Mon.-Fri., 7 am to 3 pm.

## PHOTOS PUBLISHED

Our Staff Photographer, Sharon Jones, had two photos published in a recent issue of Virginia Forests magazine.

Sharon urges fellow members to use their special talents to further the aims of the Wildflower Society and says, "This is a good example of the possible side benefits of working with such a volunteer organization."

## TWO RESCUES IN OCT.

Elaine Haug and Marie Davis organized and conducted rescues at Fern Brook and at the Cloverdale construction site in Dale City. Other volunteers included Maggie Deola, Duane York, and members of the Quantico Officers Wives Garden Club.

Plants were relocated to Locust Shade Park and our display area at Prince William Forest Park.

Endangered Wild Flower Calendars are available for \$5.95 (includes postage) or \$4.95 ea in orders of 3 or \$4.25 in orders of 10 from:

Endangered Wild Flower Calendar  
c/o Brooklyn College Biology Dept.  
Brooklyn, NY 11210



## WILDFLOWER DISPLAY AT PR. WM. FOREST PARK

Our newest, and possibly our most exciting project to date, is a wildflower display area at Prince William Forest Park's Nature Center. Marie Davis, Elaine Haug and Nicky Staunton began planning sessions with Ranger Fred Doyle in late summer. The display, using only plants indigenous to the Park, is part of the Nature Center's educational program. Plants will be labeled with botanical and common names, and a descriptive brochure will be available to spring visitors.

The area, consisting of sunny and shady sections, is outlined in logs with woodchip paths affording access to planted areas. The Park has furnished materials and Society members are furnishing plants and labor. After several fall work sessions, Marie reports that the shady section is almost completely planted with over 100 rescued or propagated (no plants are being removed from other areas of the park) wildflowers, ferns and shrubs. Helping Marie were husband Paul, John Swaby and Duane York. Nicky Staunton captured the project's birth on film.

Nicky moved the display used at the Fair to the Nature Center. Fred Doyle has given us a permanent display area inside the Center and Nicky plans to change the material periodically.

We are very excited about the exposure our Chapter will receive from both the inside and outside display areas. Thousands of visitors from all over the country come to the Park which is part of the National Park system. It is open year-round, but the Nature Center is open only on weekends during winter months. The Center conducts hikes, wildflower walks, tree and animal identification programs, photography classes, and many other educational programs for both adults and children throughout the year. Contact the Nature Center, P.O. Box 208, Triangle, Va. 22172, if you'd like to receive their monthly newsletter, Turkey Caller, which contains the schedule of activities. For folks unfamiliar with the area, Prince William Forest Park is located on Joplin Rd. near Triangle, easily accessible from I-95.

We plan a grand opening in the spring, complete with press coverage and ribbon cutting.

Work for this fall is completed; however, Marie will need volunteers for a heavy spring work schedule. Call her at 361-1626 if you'd like to get involved in this exciting project. Also visit the Park for a first-hand look at the display.

**Now at the beginning of our membership year is a good time to join the Wildflower Society as a new member. If you are one of those people who receive complimentary issues (2) of "Wild News" we hope you will take advantage of this opportunity and remain on our mailing list.**



Prince William Wildflower Society  
A CHAPTER OF THE  
Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s): Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Membership and fiscal year is Nov. 1 – Oct. 31 and dues are renewable by Oct. 15 **each year**. Dues submitted during September and October will apply toward membership for the coming full membership & fiscal year.

Please check membership category:

☐ Student/Senior 5.00 ☐ Individual 7.50 ☐ Family 10.00 ☐ Patron 20.00 ☐ Associate (group) 25.

Gift Membership. Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Greeting: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make check payable to V.W.P.S. and mail to: Roxetta Wyer, Membership Chairman, 9125 Peabody St., Manassas, Va. 22110.**

# NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to new members who have recently joined our Chapter:

Marion Brigham  
3223 Riverview Dr.  
Friangle, Va. 22172  
221-7548

Richard & Mary Ellen  
Cunningham  
17023 Waterfall Rd.  
Haymarket, Va. 22069  
754-8310

Mrs. John B. Drake  
Box 209  
Warrenton, Va. 22186  
347-3849

\*William Edens  
9214 Prescott Ave.  
Manassas, Va. 22110  
368-0121 — Work

Dorritt & Ardath Green  
8536 Stonewall Rd.  
Manassas, Va. 22110  
368-2816

Nancy J. Halloway  
Qtrs. 4711-B MCDEC  
Quantico, Va. 22134  
221-5582

Mr & Mrs. Frank  
Higginbottom  
4231 Misty Ridge Dr.  
Haymarket, Va. 22069  
754-9573

Beverly J. Pierzchala  
Rt. 1, Box 456-O  
Stafford, Va. 22554  
752-0607

Karen Wier  
11591 Purse Dr.  
Manassas, Va. 22111  
361-1297

Suzanne Wybraniec  
11405 Great Meadow Dr.  
Reston, Va. 22091

\*After Jan. 1: 12124 Cardaman Dr.  
Woodbridge, Va. 22192

Associate member:

Quantico Officers Wives  
Garden Club  
MCDEC

P.O. Box 129  
Quantico, Va. 22134

## SUCCESSFUL C.R.M.F. WALKS

Our October 8th walk which was part of V.W.P.S.'s Wildflower Weekend was attended by around 20 walkers, including members from the Potowmack Chapter. The Fall Foliage Walk, combined with a photography workshop arranged by Elaine Haug, attracted around 15 participants.

## FAIR DISPLAY A WINNER

Our Fair display won second place again this year. And again this year, Jeanette Garrison, a Wildflower Society member, was responsible for the first place booth — for her garden club.

Perhaps our display committee can get with Jeanette before next year and . . .



**PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY**  
A CHAPTER OF THE  
**Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society**  
P. O. BOX 462, MANASSAS, VA 22110



**WITCH-HAZEL**  
(*Hamamelis virginiana*)

**NO NOVEMBER MEETING**