

WILD FLOWERS

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

JANUARY MEETING

Wildflowers & Scenic Views of Western Ireland

MONDAY, JAN. 19, 7:30 P.M. BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

At our January meeting Marion Blois will present a slide show entitled "Wildflowers and Scenic Views of Western Ireland". Marion and her camera spent two weeks in Western Ireland this past summer and she would like to share the beauty of this area with our members, friends, and guests.

In the summer of 1987 Marion is planning to lead an eight-day wildflower-oriented tour to Western Ireland which is sponsored through Vantage Travel. Information on this tour will be available at the January 19th meeting.

Winter Native Plant Workshop



Prince William Wildflower Society has scheduled a new activity for this winter. The Winter Native Plant Workshop will be held Saturday, February 21, 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at NVCC-Manassas Campus. Marion Blois, Associate Professor of Biology, will lead the workshop and Jean Chitren will assist with fieldwork.

The session will begin in Lab 305 with an introduction to anatomy of twigs and leaf scars of trees and shrubs. Winter evidence of wildflowers will also be discussed. Actual identification of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers will take place on the nature trail.

There is no charge for the workshop which is also open to non-members. For further information, call Marion Blois at NVCC, 368-0184, ext. 262, or Nicky Staunton, 368-9803.

Membership Reminder

Thank you to all members who have renewed their membership and thanks and welcome to all our new members. A reminder to members who have not renewed: **DO IT NOW** so you don't miss out on all the fun coming up this spring. If you're unsure about your status, call Tom or Elaine Carrig, Membership Chairmen, 791-3378.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be Monday, March 16, 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church. As usual, Program Chairman Claudia Deahl will have a great evening planned. Mark your calendar now and plan to be there.

November Meeting

A large group of members and guests enjoyed Chris Kenney's program on using the right plant in the right place at our November meeting.

Chris is responsible for landscaping Reston Home Owner Association's community recreational facilities. She uses many native plants in her designs because, in addition to being very attractive, they're adapted to local growing conditions and, therefore, have a better survival rate and are easier to maintain than many exotics. Since natives aren't "overused" like so many standard landscaping plants their use makes a planting different and very special.

Thanks to Chris for a great program!

Winter Weed Walk

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority is sponsoring a Winter Weed Walk on Sunday, February 8, at 2:00 p.m. along the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park Trail.

This free hike to locate hardy wintertime weeds such as mullein, teasel, and milkweed will begin at Reston Station and will cover three to four miles.

The W&OD Reston Station is a small white building just off Old Reston Ave. near the pond at Bowman's Distillery.

Call 703-528-5406 for reservations and more information.

START SEEDS NOW

If you're planning to start seeds indoors NOW is the time to get going. If you need seeds or instructions, call Propagation Chairman Nancy Arrington, 368-8431 or 368-9711

WILD NEWS

is published six times a year by Prince William Wildflower Society, a Chapter of the Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society, P.O. Box 83, Manassas, VA 22110

Editor: Nancy Arrington 368-8431
Production: Janine Chrysler 221-5084

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: Nicky Staunton 368-9803
Vice president: Sandi Mueller 791-5671
Secretary: Frances Louer 754-2824
Treasurer: Marie Davis 361-1626

FROM THE 

PRESIDENT

Nicky Staunton

These short-on-light days of winter, some mild enough to bring to life urges for 1987 wildflowers, don't stymie our wildflower activities one whit! We focus on seed catalogs, planning landscapes, trips, seminars, books, and photographs. Looking around we see bare trees—but, with swelling buds. Check maples. Time to force some native shrubs into bloom. Some of us even find *Taraxacum* blooming, wide open at 28 degrees in a sunny spot. We find it exciting!

Take time to enjoy winter rosettes of the thistle families, new leaves of dead nettle, bitter cress; and, if you have water on your property, look for that early bloomer, skunk cabbage.

For our part, Prince William Wildflower Society is planning a Winter Native Plant Workshop led by Marion Blois, Associate Professor of Biology at NVCC-Manassas Campus. There is an article elsewhere about this new PWWS event.

Whenever you "do wildflowers", involve a friend. They are always welcome at our meetings and other activities and their membership in the VWPS is "hoped for".

VWPS Winter Workshop

VWPS's 1987 Winter Workshop will be held Saturday, January 24, at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond. Workshops are designed to help chapters coordinate procedures and activities with the State Society and with each other.

This year's topics are Publications & Publicity, Membership, and Presidents and Vice Presidents. Participants from PWWS are Nancy Arrington, Tom or Elaine Carrig, Nicky Staunton, and Sandi Mueller.

Blois Elected

In December Marion Blois was elected vice president of the Botanical Society of Washington. She will become president of the group in December, 1987. The Society is made up of professional and interested amateur botanists from the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland.

Please Help Preserve Virginia's Native Plants

Your support is urgently needed to encourage the House of Delegates of the Virginia General Assembly to amend an appropriation bill to provide \$40,000 per year to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to carry out research on preserving endangered plant species in Virginia. Representative John Watkins will propose this amendment to the appropriate subcommittee and committee when the General Assembly convenes on January 14, 1987.

It is important that you contact your district representative (see list below) as soon as possible to encourage his support of this amendment. Please write your own letter based on the sample at right. Your support counts. Please write NOW!

If you are confused about who your representative is, or if you'd like more information, Marion Blois is coordinating this project with the VWPS Conservation Committee and will be happy to help, 361-1450.

HOUSE OF DELEGATE DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES FOR PRINCE WILLIAM CO.:

District 50, Harry Parrish, Manassas City and Manassas Park area

District 51, David Brickley, area along eastern side of Prince William Co.

District 52, John Rollison, III, Woodbridge/Dale City area

District 40, Robert Harris (very important as a member of the subcommittee that will review the amendment) northern corner of Prince William Co.

SAMPLE LETTER

The Honorable _____
Virginia House of Delegates
P.O. Box 406
Richmond, VA 23203

Dear Honorable _____ :

As a member of the Prince William Wildflower Society, a chapter of the Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society, I am concerned about the future of Virginia's native flora.

I urge you to support the budget amendment proposed by the Honorable John Watkins to appropriate \$40,000 to the Virginia Endangered Plant and Insect Species Act to support research on preserving our native flora.

Thank you for your support.

Yours truly,



Wildflower of the Year

North Carolina Botanical Garden has chosen Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) as its Wildflower of the Year for 1987.

Each year the Garden promotes an attractive, easy-to-grow wildflower for private and public gardens. Past choices have been butterfly-weed, cardinal flower, and foamflower.

The Propagation Committee has columbine seeds to share and plants will be available at our plant sale.





Spicebush

Lindera benzoin

MARION BLOIS
Associate Professor, Biology, NVCC

Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) provides one of the first touches of color in our deciduous woods in early spring usually blooming in late March. This 3-15' shrub produces lovely clusters of small bright greenish-yellow flowers before the leaves appear. Spicebush grows in damp deciduous woods or along streams from New England and southern Ontario to Texas and Florida.

Spicebush, along with sassafras (*S. albidum*), is in the Lauraceae family. Its genus name, *Lindera*, is in honor of J. Linder, a Swedish physician, and the species

name, *benzoin*, suggests the shrub's fragrance which is similar to Benzoin gum.

Other common names for spicebush are Benjamin bush, allspice bush or wild allspice, feverbush, and spiceberry. Most of these names reflect the use of the berries as a spice and the aromatic nature of all parts of this shrub.

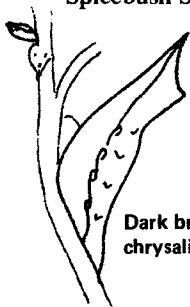
The bark of spicebush is smooth and its wood is brittle. The 3-5" alternate leaves are entire, elliptical, pointed at both ends, thin, and smooth. Bark, twigs, and leaves are aromatic when crushed or even in a soft spring rain. The twigs are eaten by deer and rabbits.

The small greenish-yellow flowers are also aromatic. Each flower has six colored sepals (no petal) and male and female flowers are separate. Male flowers have nine stamens in three rows. Female flowers have 15-18 rudimentary stamens in addition to the pistil. The flowers resemble those of sassafras but are smaller. The fruits are bright red 3/8" drupes with one seed. They mature in August and September and are eaten by squirrels and many different birds.

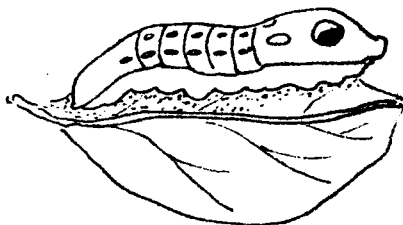
The uses of spicebush are mainly as a substitute for allspice and as a tea. As a substitute for allspice the fruits are dried and powdered. Colonists as well as some American Indians used this "spice" to add flavor to stews and other foods. A tea can be made from twigs, bark, and leaves. The tea has been used to treat fevers, stimulate circulation, increase perspiration, and treat intestinal worms, dysentery, coughs, and colds. Early land surveyors regarded spicebush as an indicator of good agricultural land.

The bright color and delightful fragrance of spicebush is a sure sign spring is close at hand. This early spring keep an eye out for the lovely spicebush and enjoy its treat to the senses of sight and smell.

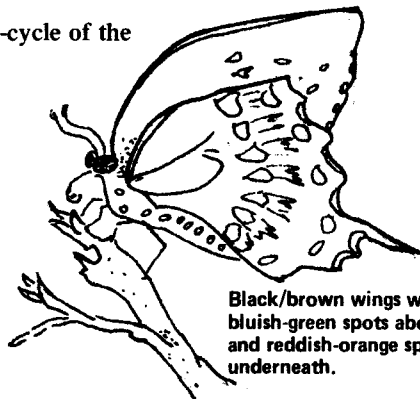
Thanks to Nicky Staunton for drawings and information about the life-cycle of the Spicebush Swallowtail.



Dark brown winter chrysalis



Dark green caterpillar with yellowish eyespots on front and rear of hump feeds on summer spicebush foliage.



Black/brown wings with bluish-green spots above and reddish-orange spots underneath.



Looking Forward To Spring



Wildflower Course

NVCC's Spring Wildflower course will be offered by Marion Blois again this spring. Thursday night lectures will be 7:00-8:50 p.m., from April 2 through June 11.

A choice of weekend fieldtrips will be part of the course. For more information, call Marion at the Manassas Campus, 368-0184, ext. 262.

Garden Tours and Plant Sale

During Wildflower Week (April 20-26) we plan to have two or three wildflower gardens open to visitors. Dates are Saturday, April 25, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, April 26, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Our chapter plant sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 9, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Complete details will be in the next newsletter.

Spring Walks Scheduled

We have scheduled several walks for this spring. Times and locations will be announced in the March-April newsletter. Dates are:

- Sunday, April 5 Sunday, May 17
- Saturday, April 18 Sunday, June 7
- Saturday, May 2 Saturday, June 20

Native Plant Design Symposium

The U.S. National Arboretum and Friends of the National Arboretum will present Designing With Native Plants, A Symposium, Saturday, March 21, 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Arboretum.

The symposium will examine the many facets of native plant gardening with emphasis on using plants in particular garden settings from formal borders to naturalistic landscapes.

Speakers include Cole Burrell, U.S. National Arboretum; Neil Diboll, Prarie Nursery; Thomas Buchter, New England Wildflower Society; and Edith Eddleman, North Carolina State University Arboretum.

For registration brochure, write to Designing With Native Plants, U.S. National Arboretum, 3501 New York Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20002, or call (202) 475-4857. Registration deadline is March 1.

Fern Valley Tour

On Sunday, May 3, Marion Blois will lead a tour of the National Arboretum's Fern Valley especially for members of our Chapter. Time will be announced in the March-April newsletter.

Thank You

Thanks to Tom Carrig and Wayne Kline who provide refreshments for our meetings.

PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

A Chapter of The Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society

Membership Application

NEW RENEWAL

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Address _____

Phone(s): Home () _____ Work () _____

I wish to participate in the following:

- Promotion of legislation aimed at plant protection
- Development of programs, displays, literature
- Producing member publications Photography
- Stewardship of wildflower plantings/preserves
- Native plant landscaping Botanical surveys
- Public speaking Youth programs Art
- Plant rescue Typing Telephoning
- Other _____

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (60 or over) \$5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Family \$10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Associate (groups) \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Sponsor \$125 | |

Make check payable to V.W.P.S. and mail to :

Tom & Elaine Carrig, Membership Co-Chairmen
13305 Kahns Rd., Manassas, VA 22111

Membership and fiscal year is Nov. 1 through Oct. 31 and dues are renewable by Oct. 15 EACH YEAR.

I give I do not give permission for my (our name(s), address and telephone number to be published in a chapter directory or exchanged with other related organizations.

NATIVES FOR THE GARDEN

NANCY ARRINGTON
Propagation Chairman



Spicebush

Like many other natives, spicebush responds well to cultivation, and becomes more beautiful in the garden than in its natural setting. Though never spectacular it is attractive and interesting through the year and adaptable to many gardening situations.

Spicebush is very much at home in a shady woodland garden blooming in late March and early April with bloodroot, hepatica, toothwort and other early wildflowers. In this setting, similar to its native habitat, growth will be graceful, thin, and open.

In a more open garden setting with half a day of sun or full sun growth becomes quite dense, rounded, and very attractive. It will add a lovely mass of spring color (up to four weeks in cool weather) when several plants are used in a bulb-groundcover area. Or include it in a butterfly garden where it will provide food for the spicebush swallowtail whose range is most of the U.S.

east of the Rockies. Spicebush adapts to average soil moisture and some summer dryness is not harmful.

In late spring and through the summer spicebush is a good background shrub in a moist garden with a half-day of sun. Companions here could be *Iris versicolor* and *I. pseudacorus*, cardinal flower, the turtle-heads, and New York, cinnamon, and royal ferns.

Spicebush is one of the few plants which will grow well in wet, poorly-drained soil in deep shade and is often found growing with skunk cabbage.

Propagation by softwood and semi-hardwood cuttings is marginally successful; seed propagation is more reliable. Sow seed in an outdoor bed immediately after collection for spring germination.

Pruning after spring blooming will encourage more dense growth and will provide new growth which will bloom next spring. A mulch of shredded leaves will conserve moisture and increase soil acidity.

Along with such early-blooming shrubs as pussywillow and forsythia, spicebush branches can be forced into bloom indoors in late winter. However, only spicebush can be counted on for a delicious, spicy fragrance.

Spicebush is available from Woodlanders, 1128 Colleton Ave., Aiken, SC 29801 (send 39c postage for a price list).

PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY
A CHAPTER OF THE
Virginia Wildflower Preservation Society
P.O. BOX 83, MANASSAS, VA 22110



Spicebush

Lindera benzoin

JANUARY MEETING:

Monday, January 19, 7:30 p.m.
Bethel Lutheran Church, Plantation Ln. & Sudley Rd., Manassas