

# WILD NEWS

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

## MAY MEETING

### Local Tree Ordinances

MONDAY, MAY 18, 7:30 p.m.

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Diana Weand, Executive Director of the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District, will present a program on Local Tree Ordinances at our May meeting. Diana, who is also a PWWS Charter Member, will discuss the current status of efforts to obtain tree ordinances for both Manassas City and Prince William County. We will also learn about the role of the Conservation District in the conservation and preservation of our natural resources. Come to the meeting (Monday, May 18, 7:30 p.m., Bethel Lutheran Church) and hear from Diana what we, as a group and as individuals, can do to help preserve trees.

### New Membership Directory

Nicky Staunton has prepared a PWWS Membership Directory and copies will be available for members at Monday night's meeting. If you can't make the meeting but would like a copy, call Nicky at 368-9803.



### Lady's-slipper Walk

Join Jean Chitren for a look at Conway Robinson Memorial Forest's yellow lady's-slippers and late spring and early summer wildflowers on Sunday, June 7, 1 p.m. Meet Jean in the parking lot near the picnic shelter. Call him for info, 221-4489.

### Wetlands Walk

Elaine Haug will lead a walk to observe wildflowers growing in the wetlands of Leesylvania State Park on Sunday, May 17 at 2 p.m. Expect to see sweetflag, yellow iris, and other aquatics. Meet Elaine at the Pilot House Restaurant parking lot at the end of Neabsco Rd. Call her for more information and directions, 670-2347.

### COMING

Mark your calendar for our next two meetings:

**Mon., July 20 - Wildflowers for Woodland Gardens, 7:30 p.m., Bethel Lutheran Ch.**

**Sat., Sept. 12, Annual Meeting, 11 a.m. at the Bradfords home**

Details in future newsletters.

## AHS Spring Festival

The American Horticultural Society will hold its Spring Festival, Sunday, May 31, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Dr., Alexandria.

Visitors can stroll through the gardens and purchase plants, gardening books, and other items. Arts and crafts and plant societies' displays will be among the attractions. Plant experts will be available to answer gardening questions. Refreshments can be purchased. Admission \$2 for members and \$3 for non-members. Call 703-768-5700 for info.

## Wildflowers & Native Shrubs

Monday, May 18, 10 a.m., Cole Burrell, Curator of the Native Plant Collections at the National Arboretum, will conduct an outdoor walk and discuss some of the many spring wildflowers and native shrubs found in Fern Valley, a natural wooded area planted with ferns, wildflowers, and native trees and shrubs in several varied habitats. Call 202-475-4815 for information. Meet Cole at the entrance to Fern Valley.



## Fern Frolic

A Northern Virginia Regional Park naturalist will lead a fern walk at Potomac Overlook Regional Park on Saturday, June 27, at 2 p.m. Participants should meet at the nature center and wear good walking shoes.

Reservations are required; call 703-528-5406. The park is located at the end of Marcey Rd., off Military Rd., in north Arlington.

## 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

Artist: Nicky Staunton  
368-9803

### CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: Nicky Staunton    Vice president: Sandi Mueller  
368-9803    791-5671

Secretary: Frances Louer    Treasurer: Marie Davis  
754-2824    361-1626

FROM THE 

## PRESIDENT

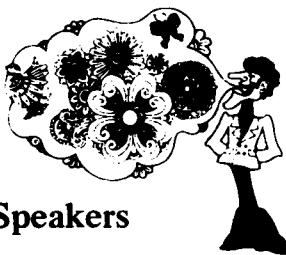
Nicky Staunton

Our wildflower expectations for Spring '87 have been fulfilled . . . a delight! Forests have been carpeted with spring flowers. First, blooming beautifully for several months was Spring Beauty. Next, Bull Run Bluebells took our breath away. Folks who took Piedmont Chapter's trip to nearby Blue Mountain, Linden, Va., saw a tremendous display of Trillium mixed with Mayapple and smooth yellow violets. Awesome.

From the wild to the cultivated . . . three of our gardeners, Nancy Arrington, Jeanne Fowler, and Sandi Mueller, opened their wildflower gardens and 100-plus visitors enjoyed wood poppies, woodland phlox, iris cristata, wild geraniums, and wild azaleas. Humongous appreciation to them and to helpers who spruced gardens and/or served as hostesses: Marie Davis, Roxetta Wyer, Jennifer and Brad Bradford, Jean Morgan, Kitty Arrington, and Kathy Ehrenberger. Thanks also to Roxetta Wyer and Mary LeKander who baked cookies for the tour.

Immediately afterward, these same members brought together our most successful wildflower plant sale. Roxetta Wyer, Chair of the sale, organized the potting during the past weeks and brought together healthy, showy specimens (some from the garden of member Alice Johnson of Clover Hill whose wildflowers will soon be replaced by new houses). Help and plants for the sale came from Nancy Arrington, Marie Davis, Frances Louer, Jean Chitren, Joyce Andrew, Donna Krubel, Pauline Mesier, Lenore Winfield, Kathy Ehrenberger, Jeanne Fowler, Jeannette Garrison and Mary LeKander.

We have seen what Nature has displayed and enjoyed the beauty of it. We have seen how our competent landscapers have propagated plants and developed wildflower gardens. We have made our own wildflower garden plans. We have purchased plants from PWWS (proceeds will fund our various education and preservation efforts). We will now be surveying land in the county and learning . . . and, looking forward to enjoying the late spring and summer wildings. These wildflowers go all year long. There is much to enjoy and to do on behalf of preserving their habitats. Join us Monday night and find out how you can help.



## PWWS Speakers

This spring Marie Davis and Nancy Arrington have presented PWWS's "Wildflowers for Woodland Gardens" slide program to three garden clubs, a naturalist organization, and a church group.

Elaine Haug has done her slide show, "Spring Wildflowers", for a teachers' sorority, and for the third graders at Elizabeth Vaughan Elementary School. After seeing the slides the children were able to identify 12 wildflowers growing on the school's property. Elaine is scheduled to give her program for the Cat-harpin Homemakers Club later.

## Suitland Bog Walk

The Maryland Native Plant Society has scheduled a bog walk on Saturday, June 13 at 10 a.m. A park naturalist will lead participants through the Suitland Bog and surrounding areas. This date is usually peak blooming time for many unique species. Call Lynette or Rick Scaffidi, 301-236-4124, in the evenings for directions.



## Another Successful Plant Sale

Roxetta Wyer, Chairman of the plant sale, reports that our chapter sold over four hundred plants for a gross income of over \$1,000. Prices started at \$1, several choice species were priced at \$3.50 and a few exceptional beauties sold for \$4.00.

Among the most popular plants were crested dwarf iris, woodland poppies, jacks-in-the-pulpit, woodland phlox, black cohosh, wild yellow iris, white violets, and ferns. Nicky Staunton furnished drawings of hummingbirds and butterflies and these were put on their favorite plants.

Start to think about next year's sale — if you can propagate any of the above plants or butterfly-weed and blue star, call Nancy Arrington, 368-8431, for seeds.

## Canoe Trips

Prince William Park Authority has scheduled several canoe trips through the wetlands of two local parks for this spring and summer. PWWS member Elaine Haug has learned to operate a canoe and will lead the trips. Time for all excursions is 6–8 p.m., fee is \$5 for individuals and \$8 for couples, and reservations must be made through the individual park. Canoes and operating instructions will be furnished; no prior experience is necessary.

Dates are:

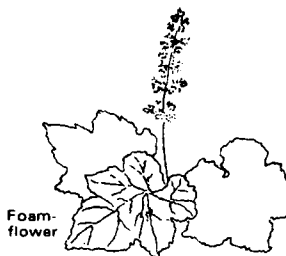
**Veterans Memorial Park, Featherstone Rd., 491-2183**

May 27, June 6, June 27, July 11, July 25

**Lake Ridge Park, Cotton Mill Dr., 494-2958**

May 31, June 10, June 21

Call the parks or Elaine, 670-2347, for more info.



## Prince William Forest Park Events

Among the many events scheduled for the month of May at Prince William Forest Park, Triangle are:

**Snakes Alive!, Saturday, 23rd, Nature Center, 1-2 p.m.**

Meet a Ranger and some of the nature center's other "special characters" for a talk on the myths, folklore and natural history surrounding these fascinating creatures.

**Sketching the 3 W's: Wildlife, Woods & Water, Saturday, 30th, 1-2:30 p.m., Parking Area A**

Meet the artist for a session on sketching some of the Park's specialties. Bring your own supplies if you like. Some paper and charcoal pencils will be provided.

**Waterfall Hike, Sunday, 31st, Parking Area E, 12-2 p.m.**

See the "falls" in the park and climb on some of the rocks if you are adventurous. Bring lunch.

All events are free. Call the park, 221-2104, for more information or a copy of their monthly calendar.



## False Solomon's Seal

*Smilacina racemosa*

**MARION BLOIS**

Associate Professor, Biology, NVCC

False Solomon's seal (*Smilacina racemosa*) is one of May's wildflower treats. The leaves of this member of the Lily family are often confused with leaves of another Lily family member, true Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*) until the flowers of both appear. A cluster of small white flowers adorn the terminal stem of false Solomon's seal while true Solomon's seal bears pairs of small green flowers at the leaf axils along the entire stem. Also, the stem of "false" is more zigzag than "true" and the leaves have a more delicate appearance in true Solomon's seal.

Both plants are perennials with an underground rhizome with stem scars or "seals" that resemble a wax seal supposedly attributed to King Solomon and testifying to the value of true Solomon's seal as a medicine.

False Solomon's seal, also known as spikenard or false spikenard, zig-zag Solomon's seal, Solomon plume, scurvy berry, and plumelily, has a wide distribution in moist, shady woods from Maine to South Carolina and west to Minnesota up to Michigan.

The genus name, *Smilacina*, refers to a supposed resemblance to another Lily family genus, *Smilax*, the cat or green briars. The species name, *racemosa*, refers to the raceme arrangement of flowers.

The 8-24 small greenish- to yellowish-white flowers that make up the raceme have sepals and petals that are the same color forming a six-parted perianth. Each flower has three stamens and one pistil. The flowers are pollinated by bees and flies with the pistil maturing before the stamens to insure cross-pollination. The fruit is a berry that is first green and red speckled and later turning red when mature in late summer. The

berries are edible by humans as well as wildlife and a good source of Vitamin C, thus the name "scurvy berry".

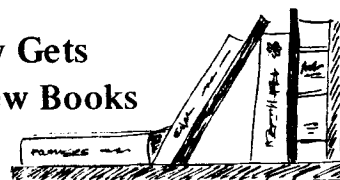
The two-foot tall, zig-zag stem of false Solomon's seal is lined with alternate pointed oval leaves with pronounced parallel veins that are smooth compared to the more delicate and slightly hairy leaves of true Solomon's seal. The stems, leaves, and flower buds appear in April. The rhizome is more slender than that of "true" but both have the "scars" or "seals" that show the positions of previous years' growth.

As mentioned earlier, the berries are edible by humans as are the rhizomes if soaked in a weak lye solution and boiled with several water changes. The young shoots can also be parboiled and eaten. This is information only; please do not collect and eat wildflower parts of any kind unless the species is very abundant and in absolutely no danger of becoming rare. Various Indian tribes not only ate berries and vegetative parts of false Solomon's seal but also crushed the rhizome into a poultice to treat wounds. It was also used to treat "female disorders".

Another species, starry false Solomon's seal, (*Smilacina stellata*) is much rarer but is located in Northern Virginia. (No county record for this species has been established for Prince William County.) The larger flowers of starry false Solomon's seal are in a more compact raceme than those of false Solomon's seal.

False Solomon's seal can be seen in many local parks. Enjoy its beauty and that of its woodland companions on your late spring wildflower walks.

## Library Gets New Books



Two new books have been added to our Chapter library: **The Butterfly Garden** by Mathew Tekulsky and **Grow Native Shrubs in Your Garden** by F.M. Mooberry and Jane H. Scott.

Librarians, Jennifer and Brad Bradford, bring our extensive (it does take two people!) collection of books and other materials to each meeting. Members who check out books are asked to please return them at the next meeting.

## Spring Wildflower Walk

Discover the buttercups, violets, squirrel corn and other spring wildflowers of Red Rock Wilderness Overlook Regional Park on Sunday, May 31, 2 p.m. Hikers should wear sturdy walking shoes and make reservations, 703-528-5406.

Red Rock Park is located near Leesburg. To reach the park, drive west on Rt. 7 and turn right onto the Rt. 14 North Bypass. Turn right on Edwards Ferry Rd. and continue 1½ miles to the park entrance. Parking is available, there are no other facilities.



## Birds of Bull Run

Warblers, tanagers, thrushes and other late migrant and early spring resident birds in the floodplain woods of Bull Run Regional Park will be the focus of a hike, Saturday, May 23, 7:30 a.m. Hikers should bring binoculars, and call 703-528-5406 for reservations. The park is located near Centreville. Take I-66 west, exit at Centreville and follow the signs to the park.



## Meadow Landscaping Seminar

If you've ever thought about establishing a wildflower meadow — large or small — and didn't know where to start, here's your chance. "Meadow Landscapes: The Aesthetics and Management of Open Space", a one-day seminar, will be held Saturday, May 30, 9:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. at the National Wildlife Federation's Education Center, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. An optional tour of three local meadow projects will be held on Sunday, May 31, 10 a.m.—2 p.m.

Program topics include Backyard Meadows, The Habitat Value of Meadows, and Meadows as a Landscaping Alternative. Speakers include PWWS members Ed Milhous and Claudia Thompson-Deahl.

Fee is \$20 and registration is required. Brochures will be available at Monday night's meeting or call Nancy Arrington, 368-8431 for a copy. Walk-in registrations will be accepted only if space permits.

### 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 \_\_\_\_\_

- |                   |  |  |
|-------------------|--|--|
| <b>Check</b>      | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$10         | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$15             |
| <b>Membership</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$25             | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$50         |
| <b>Category</b>   | <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



### False Solomon's Seal (*Smilacina racemosa*)

Under favorable conditions in the garden false Solomon's seal grows to a luxuriant 2-3 feet, blooms profusely, and the bright green foliage remains attractive through summer and fall. It's an easy-care, long-lived perennial that grows in shade or with half a day of full sun, and doesn't require dividing, staking, pinching, spraying or fertilizing.

What it does require is a deeply-prepared, slightly-acid soil enriched with organic matter such as compost, well-rotted manure or peat moss. Soil should retain moisture but drain well. A new planting will need to be watered through the first summer until plants are well-established and mulched with 2-3" of chopped leaves or shredded bark. Continue to add mulch each year and water during dry spells.

False Solomon's seal brightens the shade garden in mid- to late-May when little else is blooming. It's

tall arching stems are a striking accent for low growing plants such as wild ginger, green and gold, and foamflower. The medium texture of false Solomon's seal contrasts nicely with the fine foliage of bleeding heart and ferns and with the bold leaves of hostas. Planted in large masses it makes a stunning groundcover among azaleas and other shrubs in an open woodland.

In a partially shaded perennial border false Solomon's seal's airy plumes are a good companion for Siberian iris, and the native irises, *I. pseudacorus* and *I. versicolor*.

Berries add interest through the summer and food for wildlife, but a heavy crop can cause plants to lie flat on the ground by late summer. The gardener may want to remove spent blossoms from some plants so energy can go toward keeping the foliage attractive instead of berry production.

Plants are best propagated by division of the rhizome in early spring or fall since seed takes two years to germinate and plants take another five years to bloom. Each rhizome section should contain one or more of the newly formed eyes from which new shoots will emerge. Plant rhizomes horizontally, 2" deep, with tip just below soil level, space about 12" apart.

#### PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

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



### False Solomon's Seal

*Smilacina racemosa*

MAY MEETING: Monday, May 18, 7:30 p.m.

Bethel Lutheran Church, Sudley Rd. & Plantation Ln.