



PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY, A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

NOVEMBER MEETING

Life Cycles of Spring Wildflowers

Monday, November 21, 7:30 p.m.

Bethel Lutheran Church, Plantation Ln. & Sudley Rd., Manassas

Our November program will focus on the complete life cycles of some familiar spring wildflowers. Marion Blois, Associate Professor of biology at NVCC and our own Botany Chairman, will show slides and discuss the plants as they emerge in early spring, as buds form, the plant in bloom, fruit setting and seed dispersal, and finally the maturing foliage as plants enter their dormant stage. Pollination and reproduction strategies will also be discussed. Plants will include skunk cabbage, bloodroot, spring beauty, Jack-in-the-pulpit, wild ginger and other favorites.

As always, our meetings are open to the public and members are encouraged to bring guests and prospective members. This first meeting of our membership year is an ideal time to bring prospective members who will have the benefits of a full membership year by joining now.

PWWS Participates in Fall Festival

On Saturday, October 15, Nicky and Loren Staunton and Jenifer Bradford represented PWWS and took our educational display featuring "Wildflower Conservation Through A Gardener's Eyes" to the Fall Festival at Prince William Forest Park.

We were among many educational and conservation groups represented on a glorious, hot, sunny day – just perfect for talking with passers-by, taking photographs, eating the delicious fall fare, viewing the exhibits, and listening to a medley of music and song on the outdoor stage.

New Conservation Folder

Our Chapter Wildflower Conservation folder has been updated and includes VNPS's Wildflower Conservation Guidelines. Copies are available at membership meetings, or a copy can be mailed to you if you call Nancy Arrington, 368-8431 or 368-9711.

Membership Renewal Time

A renewal form is included in this issue for members who haven't yet renewed. If you're unsure about your status, watch for the Fall-Winter issue of the VNPS **Bulletin** which will have a dot on the label of members who **have renewed**, or call PWWS Membership Chairman, Marie Davis, at 361-1626 and inquire about your status. Last year we had the highest renewal rate of all VNPS chapters. Let's have a repeat performance!

NEXT MEETING

Monday, January 16, 7:30 p.m.

Bethel Lutheran Church

Program: Wildflower Propagation

Upcoming Programs

Wildflowers Through Art

On March 20, 1989, Sharon Morris-Kinchelo, a notable Virginia artist now living in Millboro in the Blue Ridge Mountains, will be our speaker. Sharon makes colored pencil illustrations, chiefly of wildflowers and birds. She is a member of the Blue Ridge Chapter of VNPS.

Sharon will bring samples of her work, prints and original drawings, and will talk about her art, but she is also interested in seeing and discussing the art of our members.

This is advance notice that we would like of of you who have art (oil, watercolor, pen and ink, photographs, silk painting, woodcarving, jewelry, ceramics) to bring it in to display at the March membership meeting. We are interested in the broad spectrum, modern or traditional, and the objects can be produced by yourself or others. Be thinking now of what you might like to bring in.

Wildflowers Through Photography

On May 15 we will continue in an artistic mode with a program on Photographing Wildflowers by John Brady, past president of the Manassas/Warrenton Camera Club. Plan to come to both programs!

Fraser Preserve Hike

A Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority naturalist will lead a hike through the Nature Conservancy's Fraser Preserve on the Potomac River on Sunday, November 27, at 2 p.m.

Hikers will explore the upland forests and floodplains of this 200-acre nature sanctuary. Participants should wear warm clothing and good walking shoes.

Fraser Preserve is located at the end of Springvale Rd. north of Georgetown Pike. Call 528-5406 for directions, reservations, and more information.

WILD NEWS

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President, Alden B. Bradford, 594-3422
Editor, Nancy Arrington, 368-8431
Artist, Nicky Staunton, 368-9803

Deadline for the January-February issue is January 4.

FROM THE 

PRESIDENT

ALDEN B. BRADFORD

As your new president, I want to thank Nicky Staunton and the previous board members for guiding us through these last two years. We do appreciate the excellent job they have done.

We have decided to emphasize the importance of trees this upcoming year, with particular reference to saving trees within the County. Habitat will also be stressed, in keeping with the new VNPS policy statement. Habitat: the place where plants and animals live, whether on a mountain crag, a damp bog, or an open field.

We should become aware of the fragileness of habitats because they can be flooded, dried up, buried, or even poisoned. Realizing these frailties, we should assume a stewardship role beginning in our own backyards. We can do this, for instance, by finding a way to keep a small grove of trees what shelter a group of shade plants, or to keep a stand of wildflowers intact in an area that was scheduled to become a lawn.

We can expand our role by persuading developers to leave natural areas, and by influencing legislators to recognize the importance of preserving natural habitats.

I hope to see you on November 21 at the first meeting of our new year. I look forward to it.

Winter Tree I.D.

Learn to identify local trees without their leaves! Join a Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority naturalist for a winter tree identification hike on Sunday, December 4 at 2:00 p.m. at the Potomac Overlook Regional Park Nature Center.

Hikers will learn to recognize local trees by their bark, buds and other characteristics. Wear warm clothes and good walking shoes. This free program is suitable for adults and children age 10 and older.

For reservations and more information, call 528-5406. Potomac Overlook Regional Park is located at the end of Marcey Road, off Military Road, in north Arlington.



Pawpaw

(*Asimina triloba*)

MARION BLOIS

Associate Professor, Biology, NVCC

"Pickin' up pawpaws, puttin' 'em in my pocket, way down yonder in the pawpaw patch" is a rhyme that many of us remember from childhood. Pawpaw, *Asimina triloba*, is one of our loveliest native fruit-bearing trees. It is the only genus in non-tropical North America of the Annonaceae or custard apple family which has 70 genera and more than 600 species that are mainly tropical (such as the cherimoya fruit of Peru and Ecuador). *Asimina*, the genus name, is derived from a French name, "asimin, which was taken from an Indian name for the plant. The species, *triloba*, refers to the arrangement of the six petals of the flower that are arranged in two whorls of three. One other species of this genus, *A. parviflora*, is found in southern Virginia and south to Florida.

Asimina triloba is found in moist, rich woods from Michigan and New York south to Florida and Texas and as far west as Nebraska. It is usually an understory tree averaging 8-12' but can reach 40-50' in optimum growth conditions. As an understory species, pawpaw develops a spreading shape, and when grown in the open it takes on a pyramidal shape. Other common names for the pawpaw (or papaw) are false banana, Michigan banana, and custard apple referring to the tropical banana-like smell and taste of the fruit and to its custard-like consistency.

The handsome, first green and later maroon or wine-colored, flowers of pawpaw bloom in the Northern Virginia area from mid-April to early May. The one and a half-inch flowers are composed of a calyx of 3 green sepals, a corolla of 6 petals arranged in 2 layers (with the 3 inner smaller petals standing up to form a pointed "crown"), numerous stamens arranged in a spiral, and 1-15 separate ovaries (carpels) each containing 7-18 ovules which will become seeds if each ovule is fertilized. The stigma of each carpel becomes shiny after 5-10 days indicating that it is receptive to being pollinated and remains receptive for 4-6 days before turning brown. After carpels are no longer receptive to pollen, the stamens then release their pollen. This prevents self-fertilization within the same flower. Pollinators are thought to be mainly beetles and flies.

As the flower matures, the petals darken from green to pinkish to maroon and begin to emit an odor of fermenting grapes. One tree can produce up to 500 flowers but often only about 15% of the trees develop fruit and less than 1-2% of the flowers develop fruit. One flower can produce 1-4 fruits that are the largest native North American fruits.

The kidney-shaped fruit ranges from 3-5" long and turns a brownish-yellow when it is ripe by late September. The fruits may ripen on the tree or after they fall or one can take them home to ripen in a few days. Unlike the persimmon, the fruit does not require frost to ripen. The large, rich brown seeds of the fruit number 5-7 and may be up to 1" long. Small mammals such as raccoons, opossums, and gray squirrels are attracted to the mature fruits and will eat them thus acting as seed dispersers.

The opposite, obovate leaves of pawpaw have entire margins and may be up to a foot long. The leaf's upper surface is smooth and dark green while the under surface is lighter in color and is often covered with rust-colored down. The bark of the slender trunk (even if a tree is tall, its trunk seldom exceeds 6" in diameter) is dark brown with ashen blotches in shallow, irregular fissures. The buds of twigs are not covered by bud scales but rather by rust-covered hairs. Stolens (underground horizontal stems) are sent out from older stems and form separate trees that are genetically identical (a type of cloning) and remain connected.

Pawpaw's fruits were highly favored by many tribes of American Indians and there is evidence that some tribes even planted seeds. The fibrous inner bark was used by Indians to make rope, string, fish nets, even fiber for cloth. Early pioneers used

Continued on page 4

Free Wildflower Seeds

Discover the thrill of growing wildflowers from seed! PWWS members have seed of the following attractive, hardy species to share. They are suitable for perennial beds, roadside or meadow plantings, or most any where you choose to grow them. Because quantities are small we don't recommend scattering seed outdoors where plants are to grow. Instead, treat them as you would vegetable or flower garden seed and transplant seedlings to permanent locations. Seed can be sown now in a well-prepared outdoor seed bed (or in deep flats or plastic pots and sunk into the ground) or in flats indoors in late winter. For more information on dealing with individual species, consult books such as **Growing and Propagating Wild Flowers** by Harry Phillips or call PWWS Propagation Chairman, Nancy Arrington at 368-8431 or 368-9711. Seed will be available at Monday night's meeting or send your request (up to 5 per return envelope) along with a SASE to PWWS Seeds, P.O. Box 462, Manassas, VA 22110.

Amsonia tabernaemontana, Blue Star
Aquilegia canadensis, Columbine
Asclepias incarnata, Swamp Milkweed
Asclepias tuberosa, Butterfly-weed
Aster cordifolius, Heartleaf Aster
Aster divaricata, White Wood Aster
Aster novae-angliae, New England Aster
Aster patens, Late Purple Aster
Aster undulatus, Wavy-leaf Aster
Campanula americana, Tall Bellflower
Chelone glabra, White Turtlehead
Cimicifuga racemosa, Black Cohosh
Echinacea purpurea, Purple Coneflower
Eupatorium rugosum, White Snakeroot
Helianthus angustifolius, Fall Sunflower
Heterotheca mariana, Md. Golden Aster
Iris versicolor, Blue Iris
Kosteletskys virginica, Seashore Mallow
Liatris squarossa, Scaly Blazing-star
Lobelia cardinalis, Cardinal Flower
Lobelia siphilitica, Blue Lobelia
Penstemon digitalis, Smooth White Beardtongue
Penstemon grandiflorus, Large-flowered Beardtongue
Penstemon smallii, Beardtongue

Phlox paniculata, Summer Phlox
Ruellia carolinensis, Wild Petunia
Rudbeckia fulgida, Black-eyed Susan
Rudbeckia fulgida 'Sullivanti', Black-eyed Susan
Rudbeckia hirta, Black-eyed Susan
Rudbeckia laciniata, Green-headed Coneflower
Solidago caesia, Blue-stemmed Goldenrod
Solidago rugosa, Rough-leaved Goldenrod
Stokesia laevis, Stokes Aster
Thermopsis villosa, Carolina Bush Pea
Tiarelli cordifolia Var. *collina* or *T. wherryi*, Foamflower
Vernonia noveboracensis, N.Y. Ironweed
Zizi aurea, Golden Alexanders

NON-NATIVES

Belamcanda chinensis, Blackberry Lily
Chrysanthemum parthenium, Feverfew
Digitalis purpurea, Foxglove
Hesperis matronalis, Dame's Rocket
Iris pseudacorus, Yellow Iris
Lychnis flos-cuculi, Ragged Robin
Nigella damascena, Love-in-a-mist



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

PAWPAW, continued from page 3

the bark to make fish stringers. Pioneers and modern day natural food enthusiasts also prized the fruit. Pioneers often stored the fruit in oats to extend its edibility range. The fruit can be eaten as is or made into custard, pudding, marmalade, pies, or even ice cream.

Even though the pawpaw fruit season has passed for this year, next spring look for a "pawpaw patch" and enjoy the beauty of the unusual flowers, and in early fall check for ripening fruit. The delightful flavor will be worth the effort!

All New VNPS Bulletin

In addition to the new name of the Society, the fall-winter issue of the **Bulletin** will have a new look. Jenifer Bradford became Publications chair and Editor of the **Bulletin** as of November 1, and she is introducing a full 8-page issue packed with articles from all viewpoints, a new method of producing camera-ready copy, different paper, a new printer, and a local team of collators (from PWWS).

Take time to read and study this totally fresh approach, which the Society hopes will appeal to all readers and in turn be much more readable. Jenifer thanks in particular Nicky Staunton and Nancy Arrington who have given her a great deal of help and encouragement these past couple of months. The typesetters (publisher) and printer are all local people too, so this issue is a combined effort of time and talent.

Jenifer has written a brief report in the **Bulletin** about the VNPS annual meeting so it is not reported here.

Let her have your reactions please, written or spoken. VNPS wants the **Bulletin** to be a real means of communication among member chapters and to fill your needs on a different level from our own **Wild News**.

New PWWS Board of Directors

These members have been elected or appointed to serve for the coming two years. Call an officer or board member with any questions, comments, or suggestions you have, and to volunteer your help on any committee you'd like to help with.

Officers

President, Alden B. Bradford, 594-3422
Vice President, Helen Walter, 754-8806
Secretary, Nancy Vehrs, 368-2898
Treasurer, Jocile D. Johnson, 369-0821

Board of Directors

Botany, Marion Blois Lobstein, 536-7150
Botanical Records, Elaine Haug, 670-2347
Education, Simone Fraser, 590-1379
Historian/Year Book, Helen Walter, 754-8806
Hospitality, Nancy Vehrs, 368-2898
Landscape/Membership, Marie Davis, 361-1626
Librarian, Jenifer M. Bradford, 594-3422
Plant Sale, Roxetta Wyer, 361-8615
Program, Claudia Thompson-Deahl, 754-9235
Propagation/Newsletter, Nancy Arrington, 368-8431
Rescue/Conservation, Tracy Johnson, 369-4641

BIRD WATCHING & FEEDING TIPS

Tips on where to find birds during the winter months and how to attract them to your backyard with proper feeding techniques will be discussed Sunday, November 27, 1:30-3:00 p.m. at Prince William Forest Park's Visitor Center.

To PWWS members –

Thank you! Said in many ways . . . vocally, with a handclasp, with eyes, a smile. Thanks for all of your support and for the beautiful pewter plate to remind me of happy times past.

Nicky

Regional Flora Coming Early

Marion Blois Lobstein will be teaching her "spring" wildflower class (Regional Flora, Biol 280) at NVCC Manassas Campus. Because the college is now on a semester system the class will begin in mid-February and will include some winter botany. The course consists of lectures and field work. For more information, call Marion at the college, 368-0184, ext. 262, or check the Jan.-Feb. issue of **Wild News**.

FRIENDS GROUP FORMS AT PRINCE WILLIAM FOREST PARK

A private group of citizens, independent of the National Park Service, is forming at Prince William Forest Park, Triangle. If you'd like more information about "Friends of the Park", call Marcia Keener at 703-221-4706.

Winter Bird Walk

Join a Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority naturalist in a search for Juncos, Kinglets, Cardinals, and other feathered friends on a walk at Pohick Bay Regional Park on Saturday, December 3, at 8:00 a.m. Bird-watchers should wear warm clothing, good walking shoes and bring binoculars. This free program is suitable for adults and children age 10 and older.

For reservations and more information, call 528-5406. To reach Pohick Park, take I-95 south to exit 55 (Lorton exit), and follow signs to the park. The hike will begin at the Nature Trail.

NATIVES FOR THE GARDEN

NANCY ARRINGTON
Propagation Chairman



Maryland Golden Aster

(*Heterotheca mariana*)

Maryland golden aster (often called *Chrysopsis mariana*) is a valuable garden plant for its late blooming period and its adaptability to poor dry soil. Native to dry sandy and clay soils of the eastern U.S. it is recorded in all but four southwestern Virginia counties in the Atlas of the Virginia Flora.

In late summer 1-2' blooming stems arise from attractive clumps of lance-shaped basal leaves. Stems are encircled by twisted gray-green leaves that get smaller toward the top. The 1" flower heads, consisting of yellow ray and disk flowers which resemble miniature chrysanthemums, open in mid-September. The color is actually a cool yellow that clashes with

the gold of black-eyed Susans and goldenrods and better color schemes are obtained using the many late-blooming blue and lavender asters. Plants are not affected by early frosts and continue to bloom into November.

Despite its toughness Maryland golden aster appears fragile and delicate and lends a light airy texture to the garden. It's a good filler among early flowering plants or at the front of a sunny perennial bed or border. It is also a good choice for a dry sunny bank, along a path for close-up viewing, or at the edge of a woodland. Basal foliage makes an attractive ground cover during summer and stays evergreen through mild winters.

Since seed of most members of the aster family germinates better after a cold wet period seed can be sown outdoors in late fall for spring germination. When potting seedlings mound the soil so water drains away from the hairy leaves which can rot if they stay too wet. Plants can also be propagated by division of mature clumps in spring.

Seed will be available through our Chapter seed exchange and plants can be purchased at our spring sale.

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P.O. BOX 83, MANASSAS, VA 22110



Maryland Golden Aster

(*Heterotheca mariana*)

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