

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

MAY MEETING

Introduction to Wildflower Photography

Monday, May 15, 7:30 p.m.

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

John Brady, a professional photographer and past president of the Manassas-Warrenton Camera Club, will present an introduction to wildflower photography program at our May meeting. John will discuss several technical aspects of photography including proper selection of film and equipment. He will explain inexpensive ways to do macro-photography. This program promises to be very helpful for the beginning as well as the more experienced photographer. Bring any questions or technical problems you've been having and get some help from a pro. Friends, guests, and potential members are always welcome.

Rescue Planned

Tracy Johnson, Rescue chair, is planning rescues at Westridge near Lake Ridge and in the Lake Jackson area. The Westridge location has native azaleas, lady's-slippers and ferns. A variety of spring wildflowers grow at the Lake Jackson site. Tracy will have more information and a date will be set at Monday night's meeting. If you're interested in helping with the rescue but can't attend the meeting, call Tracy at 369-4641.

Education Chair Looking for A Few Good Members

Education chair Simone Fraser is looking for members to help prepare educational programs to be presented in the public schools. Prior experience working with elementary school children would be very beneficial but is not necessary. Please call Simone if you can help, 590-1379.

PWWS Board Meeting

The June PWWS Board of Directors meeting is the third Monday, June 19, 7:30 p.m., at the home of President Brad Bradford. Meetings are open to all members.

COMING

Mark your calendar for our next two meetings:

Mon., July 17 – Wildlife Rescue

7:30 p.m., Behtel Lutheran Church, Manassas

Sat., Sept. 16 – PWWS Annual Meeting

Home of Ken & Fran Bass, Nokesville

Mothers' Day Walk

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority will honor mothers with a park full of wildflowers and a walk on Sunday, May 14, at 2 p.m., at Potomac Overlook Regional Park.

Wild geranium, rose, Venus' looking-glass, and star-of-Bethlehem are among the late spring blossoms featured on this free walk led by a park naturalist. Hikers should wear comfortable walking shoes. For reservations (required) and more information, call 528-5406.

The park is located at the end of Marcey Road, off Military Road in Arlington.

Natural History Classes NVCC Manassas Campus

BIO 195-72M-Topics In Biology: INSECTS

*Correct Dates: Lectures May 23 & 30, June 6
Fieldtrips May 27, June 3 & 10

Instructor: Bobby Krueger

BIO 195-71M-Topics In Biology: SUMMER WILD-
FLOWERS

*Correct Dates: Lectures June 13, 20 & 27,
July 11
Fieldtrips June 17 & 24, July 8

Instructor: Marion Blois Lobstein

BIO 195-73M-Topics In Biology: BIRDS

Dates: Lectures July 6, 13, 20 & 27
Fieldtrips July 15, 22 & 29

Instructor: Hillary Cressy

*Dates in Summer Schedule of classes are incorrect.

For more information about classes call NVCC Manassas Campus, Natural and Applied Sciences Division, Ext 262.

WILD NEWS

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Deadline for the July-August issue is July 3, 1989.

FROM THE 

PRESIDENT

ALDEN B. BRADFORD

"Many are called but few are chosen. . .". With our garden tour and our plant sale the quote could be modified to say, "Many chose and many were called." Many chose to volunteer and many were called to volunteer. Whether chosen or called the results were the same — excellent.

I want to thank all of our volunteer for their help with the garden tour. I also want to thank our members whose gardens were open in particular for their hours of hard work. On Saturday Jennifer and I visited all four gardens and saw for ourselves their design, color, and diversity of plant material. Ken and Fran Bass, Marie Davis, Kathy, Don, and Jennifer Ehrenberger and Bev Scott did an heroic job despite major flooding the night before the tour.

Meanwhile, in recent weeks Roxetta Wyer has been digging and potting plants, and organizing our plant sale. We all thank Roxetta for her hard work. We also appreciate members who have donated plants and who are coming to help on May 13.

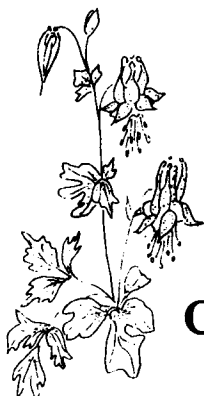
Our next PWWS event is participation in the Prince William County Fair August 11-19. Our display this year will feature "Butterfly Gardening". We need volunteers to develop the display, to provide materials, and a coordinator to solicit members to man the display on weekends and evenings.

We would like to get to know YOU better through YOUR wider participation in PWWS activities and in particular our newer members.

So, I'll see you all on May 15 at our next general meeting. We should all learn a lot from John Brady as he tells us how to photograph wildflowers from a professional's point of view.

PWWS Annual Meeting

Our PWWS Annual Meeting & Picnic will be held Saturday, Sept. 16 starting at approximately 11 a.m. Ken and Fran Bass have offered their lovely and spacious country garden for this occasion. More details later.



COLUMBINE

Aquilegia canadensis

MARION BLOIS LOBSTEIN

Associate Professor, Biology, NVCC

One of the most colorful and unusual wildflowers you will see in the spring is the red and yellow wild columbine, *Aquilegia canadensis*. It grows on rocky ledges, in rich woods or in open fields. This perennial member of the buttercup family (Ranunculaceae) blooms in our area from April to early June. Its natural range is from Nova Scotia to the Northwest Territory of Canada and southward in the United States to the Gulf states and west to the Rocky Mountains.

Linnaeus himself assigned the scientific name of *Aquilegia canadensis*. *Aquilegia* is derived from the Latin word "aquila" for eagle referring to the resemblance of the spurred corolla to the claws of an eagle and *canadensis* means "of Canada".

The spurred red and yellow columbine flowers are 1-2" long. These flowers daintly droop downward which aids its primary pollinator, the ruby-throated hummingbird in its role. The five red petaloid sepals are located between the bases of the spurred petals. The five tubular petals are red

on the outside and yellow on the inside. These petals form the spurred, tubular corolla segments in which nectar glands are located in the knob-like spurred tip of each tube. The numerous yellow stamens cluster around five individual pistils.

Once pollinated and fertilized, each pistil forms a segment of a five-parted $\frac{1}{4}$ -1" long green, papery fruit made of five individual follicles. As the fruit matures, the corolla tubes are shed and the flowering stem or peduncle turns upward so that the fruit is in an upright position. At maturity, each follicle splits open at its top and the numerous tiny shiny black seeds are shed as the slender stalks are blown about in the wind.

The delicate thin leaves of columbine are divided two or three times into blunt-lobed leaflets that are smooth on the surface and often glaucous (covered with a whitish coating) underneath. The smooth, loosely branching stems are usually 1-2' tall. The leaves found clustered at the base of the stem are larger, while those farther up the stem are smaller and may not be compounded. The rootstock is thick and root segments are closely bunched.

Columbine, as are many members of the buttercup family, is potentially poisonous. However, medicinal uses of columbine by American Indians included teas or extracts of plant parts to treat heart trouble, dizziness, intestinal parasitic worms, and head lice. As well, some Indian tribes viewed columbine seeds as a possible love charm used by warriors to win the hearts of their chosen maidens.

This spring enjoy the beauty of columbines growing in our piedmont area. This summer you can continue to enjoy this special plant in the wild by visiting Skyline Drive where it blooms well into the summer on rocky ledges or in meadows such as the one at Big Meadows. Keep an eye out for its pollinator, the ruby-throated hummingbird, and enjoy the beauty of this special bird.

Canoe Great Marsh

Prince William Park Authority is sponsoring a special canoe trip inside the "Great Marsh" of Mason Neck Wildlife Refuge near Lorton, 9 a.m.—2 p.m. on Saturday, May 13. Mason Neck is the first wildlife refuge specifically devoted to the protection of the American Bald Eagle. Previous canoeing experience is necessary. Advance paid (\$12) registration is required and includes lunch. Call 491-2183 for information and reservations.

Uses of Wild Plants

On Sunday, May 28, 1:30—3:30 p.m., a Ranger at Prince William Forest Park, Triangle, will discuss the many uses of wild plants found in the park. Plants have been used for food, fragrance, dyes and medicine. Meet at the Visitor Center; call 221-7181 for more information.

Shrubs & Wildflower Walk

Joan Feely, Curator of the Native Plant Collection at the U.S. National Arboretum will lead a shrub and wildflower walk through Fern Valley on Friday May 19 at 10:30 a.m. The Arboretum is located at 3501 New York Ave., NE in Washington, DC. For more information call 202-475-4815.



Columbine

Aquilegia canadensis

Our native columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) is a much loved and often cultivated wildflower. It has been grown in European gardens since 1640 and is probably a parent of the long-spurred garden hybrids. It is adaptable and easy to grow, thriving in a variety of situations in the garden just as it does in nature; its one cultivation requirement is good drainage. A rich soil and sun will produce large robust plants while a leaner soil in shade produces airy delicate plants.

Familiar yellow and red flowers appear above ferny foliage in mid to late April and last until mid-May. This is one of the first plants in our area that hummingbirds visit each spring. Foliage is sometimes attacked by leaf miners which cause whitish

markings but do no real damage to plants. A recent *Southern Living* article suggests that columbine grown in full sun produces foliage more resistant to leaf miners. Cutting off old foliage after flowering helps control the pest and produces fresh leaves which make a lovely delicate groundcover.

Columbine can be massed in the garden or used in combination with other plants, or a single plant can be used as an accent. Good color combinations can be obtained with many natives including green and gold, golden ragwort, blue star, white violets, and wild blue phlox. The delicate foliage is a good contrast for broad leaved plants such as hostas.

Columbine sets abundant seed and you will probably find all the seedlings you want near the mother plant. Seed can be started anytime in flats indoors or in an outdoor seed bed. Don't cover the seed with soil as it needs light to germinate. Seedlings grow quickly and will bloom the second year.

Also worthy of a spot in the garden are the blue and white Rocky Mountain columbine (*A. caerulea*), the European species (*A. vulgaris*), and *A. chrysantha*, a pretty yellow southern species. Columbine will be available at our spring plant sale and is propagated by many mail order wildflower nurseries.

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P.O. BOX 83, MANASSAS, VA 22110



COLUMBINE

Aquilegia canadensis

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MAY MEETING: Monday, May 15, 7:30 p.m.
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