

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

MARCH MEETING

Intrinsic & Social Values of Trees

Monday, March 19, 7:30 p.m.

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

Our March speaker is Keith Hawkins, Urban Forester with the Virginia Department of Forestry. His slide presentation is titled "The Intrinsic and Social Values of Trees In An Urban Environment".

Keith has been in Prince William County since July 1, 1989. His purpose here is to educate the public, government officials, and developers on the advantages of preserving trees — a goal we can relate to! In a *Potomac News* interview he said he'd like to develop nature trails at Conway Robinson Memorial Forest, another project our chapter has a special interest in.

At this meeting we'll also be making plans for our spring activities for which volunteers will be needed. Come and bring a potential member and get involved.

Earth Day Celebration

Jenifer Bradford conceived the idea of an Earth Day Church Service (since the 22nd falls on a Sunday); and Carol North, minister of the Brentsville Presbyterian Church and new member of the chapter, agreed to the idea and suggested a native tree planting ceremony to conclude the service. White Oak Nursery has graciously agreed to provide the tree. Peter Deahl and Ed Milhous, PWWS members, are affiliated with the nursery and will select the tree.

We invite everyone to come — and bring your families and friends. The ecumenical service will begin at 11 a.m. at the church, 12305 Bristow Rd., in Brentsville. The entire service will be Earth Day oriented and members will participate in special ways. Fred North, Carol's husband and fellow PWWS member, is organist and choir director, and he will lead the choir with appropriate music. We hope to have a display and ecological handouts in the fellowship hall during coffee afterwards. For more information and directions, call Jenifer, 594-3422.

Wildflower Celebration 1990

This is a busy spring with our own Virginia Wildflower Celebration running through the months of April and May and with many Earth Day and Earth Week Celebrations. Events sponsored by all VNPS Chapters will be featured in the *Spring Bulletin*. Our own chapter activities are detailed inside.

Wildflower Walk

A walk to celebrate Earth Day and spring wildflowers is scheduled for Sunday, April 22, 1:30 p.m. at Balls Bluff in Loudoun County. This is one of leader Marion Blois Lobstein's favorite wildflower spots and participants should see an excellent variety of spring wildflowers. Reservations are required; call Marion, 536-7150 or Jenifer Bradford at 594-3422.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be Monday, May 21, 7:30 pm at Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas.

New Checklist Published

A new checklist, **Summer and Fall Wildflowers of Northern Virginia: A Checklist** will be available by early April. It covers 120 species of monocots in 17 families and 970 species of dicots in 84 families. Price is \$2.50. We are reprinting **Spring Wildflowers of Northern Virginia: A Checklist** at a price of \$2. **Trees, Shrubs & Woody Vines of Northern Virginia** is also available. Contact Marion Lobstein, 536-7150 to obtain copies.

VNPS Registry

Our chapter is participating in the VNPS Registry Program to preserve outstanding examples of native plants and their habitats. Elaine Haug is our chapter registrar.

Land proposed for registry can be privately or publicly owned. The landowner is asked to protect the site as well as possible. No rights are given up and no agreement is signed.

The plants protected must be native to Virginia and, as a general rule, the habitat should be uncultivated, although significant wildflower gardens or plantings could be registered.

If you know of a "special" wildflower site that might be a candidate for registry, get in touch with Elaine, 670-2347, or write to her at 14814 Dillon Ave., Dale City, VA 22193.

Evergreen Seedlings for Sale

The Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District will sell white pine, Scotch pine, shortleaf pine, and Norway spruce seedlings at 20c each in multiples of five. Seedlings will be available on a first-come, first-served basis at Marsteller Middle School and Coles Elementary School on Saturday, March 24, 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

WILD NEWS

is published six times a year by Prince William Wildflower Society, a Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 83, Manassas, VA 22110. Permission is given to use material with credit to source.

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Deadline for the May-June issue is May 5, 1990.

FROM THE 

PRESIDENT

ALDEN B. BRADFORD

Jenifer and I recently spent a long weekend at our new mountain cabin near Monterey in Highland County, VA. It was our second visit as homeowners and a busy one indoors. However, although daytime temperatures were cool and nights were in the teens, the sun shone most of the day. Thus we donned warm clothing and went outdoors to explore our own four acres and the surrounding countryside.

February in Highland County doesn't show much promise of Spring! Tall seedheads from the natural wildflower stands set between the tall white pines, Canadian hemlock, Norway spruce, sugar maples, and oaks, were much in evidence. It was nice to identify milkweed pods, yarrow, Queen Anne's lace, and goldenrod, since we have only seen the property in Fall, or under a thick blanket of snow. We found several small native dogwoods at the boundary line overlooking a pleasant meadow filled with grazing cattle. The soil seems lighter and more fertile than Prince William's heavy clay. The land is covered with rocks of all shaped and sizes — an ideal source for making dry stone walls.

The only signs of green life were wild strawberry leaves and rosettes of mullein.

To complement the foundation of the hand-hewn log cabin we want to plant clumps of easy care, drought resistant rudbeckias, day-lilies, daisies, and similar wildflowers. To soften the edges of the pine forest we intend to introduce native shrubs and other understory bulbs and woodland plants.

What a challenge! A beautiful site, an alpine-like view of Jack mountain, and the sound of a rushing stream. A wonderful opportunity to add color and interest to a natural habitat and a chance to bring a few old friends to a new setting. Keep tuned for further developments.

April Board Meeting

The April PWWS Board of Directors meeting is Mondya, April 16, 7:30 p.m. at the home of President Brad Bradford. Let him know, 594-3422, if you won't be there. Meetings are open to all members.

Canoe Trips

Elaine Haug is leading canoe trips for the Prince William Park Authority again this spring. A fee is charged for all trips which leave from Veterans Park. Call for reservations, 491-2183. Dates are:

Sat., April 28, 4-6 p.m. Trip to Leesylvania State Park

Sat., May 12, 4-6 p.m. Trip to Leesylvania State Park

Sat., May 26, 9 a.m.—3 p.m. Trip to Mason Neck Wildlife Refuge, lunch included.

Wintergreen Wildflowers

Wintergreen's seventh annual Wildflower Symposium will be held May 18-20 this year. The weekend includes walks to see wildflower habitats as well as birds and ferns. Indoor programs include such subjects as native orchids, plant dyes, herbal wreath-making, gardening and sketching. For information and a brochure, call 804-325-2200, Ext. 391 or write to Wintergreen, P.O. Box 706, Wintergreen, VA 22958.

Photography Workshop

Designed for the amateur and recreational photographer, this 4-hour workshop sponsored by Friends of the State Arboretum at Bland, will be held Friday, April 6 and repeated Saturday, April 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Film, processing and lunch are included in the registration fee (members \$30, non-members \$40). Participants are expected to bring a 35-mm camera. For more information and to register call the Arboretum at 703-837-1758.

Southeast Plants for Landscaping

PWWS members are invited to attend a program sponsored by the John Clayton Chapter, "Southeast Native Plants for Landscape Use in Tidewater Virginia", Thursday, April 5, 8 p.m., William Small Hall, College of William & Mary, Williamsburg. The program will be presented by Bob McCartney from Woodlander's Nursery in Aiken, S.C.

Bob has been a pioneer in growing native southeastern plants and has introduced many species into cultivation. The program is designed for Tidewater gardens but most of the plants would be suitable for gardens in our area. For more information call Fan Williams, 229-6252 or Peggy McComb at 642-2449.

5th Annual Garden Tour

This year's tour will be held (rain or shine) Saturday, April 28, 10 a.m.—5 p.m., and Sunday, April 29, 1—5 p.m. Two gardens, Arringtons and Fowlers, were open in 1987, and our third is a woodland garden near Catharpin that PWWS member Marie Davis has designed, planted and maintained. The Fowler garden is in Woodbine Woods and the Arrington garden is near Lake Jackson. All three gardens are rather large but each consists of many small planted areas that should give visitors ideas they can use in their own gardens.

Helen Walter, Garden Tour Chair, needs help from members to get the gardens ready and to serve as hosts during the tour. Call her, 754-8806, and offer your help.

The tour is free since it serves as a preview of our plant sale. A folder with map will be mailed to members, area garden clubs, and visitors at past tours.

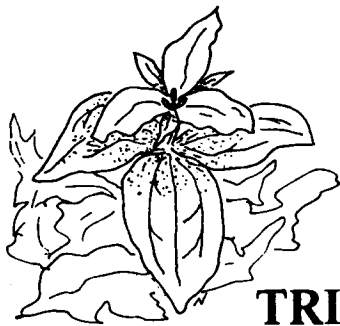
Natural History Field Studies

The following programs, cosponsored by Audubon Naturalist Society and USDA Graduate School, are open to adults. For information call the Graduate School, 447-5885 or 475-4280.

Edible and Useful Wild Plants (ENATH 120) Explores identification and historical uses of many edible, beverage, medicinal and poisonous wild plants with opportunity to prepare and taste. Meets Tuesdays, National Wildlife Federation, 7-9 p.m., April 17 through May 29 with 4 Saturday field trips. Instructor Janet Frick, cost \$84.

Indian Uses of Plants (ENATH 123) Participants will learn the native plants used by eastern North American Indians for food, medicine, housing, dyes, and ceremonies. Classes meet Tuesdays at Capital Gallery (L'Enfant Plaza Metro), 7-9 p.m., beginning April 17 through June 5 with several field trips. Instructor Ruth Smith, cost \$84.

Spring Flower Identification (ENATH 135) Introduces principles of plant taxonomy and techniques of plant identification as illustrated by spring wildflowers. Three sections will be offered — at Woodend on Tuesdays, at Capital Gallery on Mondays, and at Battle Creek Nature Center on Fridays. Check with the Graduate School for dates. Field trips are included in all sections. Instructors Peter Mazzeo and Cris Fleming, cost \$84



Trillium grandiflorum

TRILLIUMS

MARION BLOIS LOBSTEIN
Associate Professor, Biology, NVCC

One of the most beautiful and easily recognizable groups of spring wildflowers are the trilliums in the lily family (Lilaceae). In the Northern Virginia area the more common trillium is the sessile or toadshade trillium *Trillium sessile* and the rarer species is the large-flowered trillium *T. grandiflorum*. Both of these species bloom a bit later than the earlier spring wildflowers with the sessile trillium starting to bloom in mid-April and the large flowered trillium in late April to early May. Both species are found in rich well-drained deciduous woods. The range of sessile trillium is coastal plains, piedmont and mountain geographic provinces from New York state, Ohio, and Minnesota south into Georgia, Mississippi and Arkansas while the range of the large-flowered species is more often mountains from southeastern Canada south into the mountains of Georgia and Arkansas. Several other species of trillium can be found in Fauquier County and/or farther west into the Virginia mountains including *T. erectum* (purple trillium), *T. cernuum* (nodding trillium), and *T. undulatum* (painted trillium).

The genus name *Trillium* is derived from the Latin word "tres" for three and refers to the flower parts as well as the leaves which are in groups of three. The species names *sessile* and *grandiflorum* mean "without a stalk" referring to the flowers of the sessile trillium lacking a pedicel or flower stalk and "large-flowered" referring to the showy large flowers of *T. grandiflorum*. Other common names for the sessile trillium are toad or toadshade trillium, stalkless trillium, and sessile-flowered wake-robin. Another name for the large-flowered trillium is great white trillium. In some botanical manuals and popular wildflower guides, the trilliums are put into a separate family of the Trilliaceae.

In both species a solitary flower bud develops after the leaves emerge from underground rhizomes. Only

mature plants will produce flowers. In other species there are three petals (which will be discussed in more detail), three green sepals, six prominent stamens, and a three-angled pistil. In the sessile trillium the upright petals average one to two inches in length and are usually maroon but can be yellow-green in a subspecies or form "forma viridiflorum". The upright petals of this species surround the stamens and pistil. The spreading white to pink petals of the large-flowered species are one to three inches long. The flowers are borne on a flowering stalk or pedicel that is one to two inches long. The color variation of pink flowers in *T. grandiflorum* seems to be a genetic variation rather than being due to an aging process since flower buds may be white or pink. The fragrance of the sessile trillium can range from musty to faintly "carrion-like" to fruit-like with the main pollinators being carrion flies and beetles which are able to push the petals apart to reach the stamens and pistils. The large-flowered trillium has a more pleasant fragrance that attracts bee species which are the primary pollinators.

The fruit that develops in both species is a six-angled pulpy berry that is approximately one-half to three-quarters of an inch long. Inside the fruit that matures by late June, are 15-20 oblong russet-colored seeds about a quarter of an inch long. They have a fleshy crest or eliosome on the upper end of the seed. The seeds are dispersed by ants. It may take two or more years for seeds to germinate and up to seven years for a plant to bear flowers.

The characteristic broadly oval leaves of all trilliums are in groups of three. The leaves of sessile trillium are mottled and average from one and a half to five inches long while those of the large-flowered trillium are solid green and are two-and-a-half to six inches long. The leaves die back or senesce after the fruit matures and seeds are shed. The stem height of sessile trillium is four to eight inches compared to eight to eighteen inches in the large-flowered species. Both species have well-developed rhizomes with shallow fibrous root systems.

The medicinal and edible uses of trilliums as a group are many. The young leaves are edible raw or parboiled. However, in most areas today, trilliums ARE NOT COMMON enough to collect and eat. The medicinal uses of trillium rhizomes by American Indians and in folk medicine included to induce labor in childbirth, to relieve bleeding following parturition, to relieve sore nipples, to relieve female disorders, as an astringent to stop nosebleeds as well as internal hemorrhaging, as a poultice

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8th Annual Plant Sale

Our eighth annual plant sale will be Saturday, May 12, 9 a.m. till noon in Bethel Lutheran Church's parking lot, Sudley Rd. & Plantation Ln., Manassas. Nancy Vehrs, 368-2898, will chair the sale this year.

We need your help to make this year's sale as successful as the past seven have been. Large and small ways of helping include:

- Potting plants from your own garden
- Potting plants donated by other members
- Setting up tables and arranging plants the morning of the sale
- Assisting customers, serving as cashiers, help with clean-up during the sale
- Buying plants and encouraging your friends to come and buy.

Please keep these guidelines in mind:

- Pot up plants by April 21 so they won't wilt on sale day. Call Nancy Vehrs, 368-2898, or Nancy Arrington, 368-8431, or Marie Davis, 361-1626, if you need pots.

- Let Nancy Vehrs know as soon as possible what plants you'll be bringing so our cultivation sheets will be complete. We can't accept wild-collected plants, difficult species such as lady's-slippers, or invasive species such as thistles.

- Please label your plants before sale day (call Nancy for labels) with common and botanical names. If you need help with labeling, call Nancy so her committee can get the plants labeled.

- Use a good loose potting soil that drains well. Add compost or peat moss to purchased top soil or your own garden soil. We have a good supply of excellent potting soil available from Nancy Vehrs or Nancy Arrington.

- Make arrangements with Nancy to drop off your plants at her house or to take them to a central location or to have them picked up before sale day. If plants are delivered to the church the day of the sale, please get them there by 7:30 a.m.

- Remember that members get a 10% discount on plants purchased.

Bull Run Bluebell Walk

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's annual Bluebell Walk will be held Saturday, April 14, at 2 p.m. at Bull Run Regional Park. Guided walks can be scheduled for groups throughout "Bluebell Week", April 14 through April 20. Groups should make reservations at least two weeks in advance.

Self-guiding pamphlets are available at the park which is open daily, dawn to dusk. Weekday bluebell group tours will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. To schedule a weekday tour, call 528-5406. To reach Bull Run Park, take Rt. 66 to the Centreville exit and follow signs to the park. For information call 352-5908 (weekdays) and 631-0550 (weekends).

Wildflower Course

Northern Virginia Community College is offering a one-credit wildflower course (Bio 195-80M) at the Manassas Campus. Classes are Tuesdays 7-8:50 p.m. from March 27 through May 15. Weekend field trips to nearby parks and to Skyline Drive are scheduled. For additional information, call instructor Marion Lobstein at the college, 368-0184, Ext. 262.

TRILLIUMS, continued

tice to treat skin sores, ulcers, insect stings, and even to treat diarrhea. The Chippewa Indians washed rheumatic joints with an extract of trillium rhizomes then pricked the skin numerous times with a needle to "inject" the fluid into the area. Extracts of trillium rhizomes have purported astringent, expectorant, and even uterine stimulant properties.

The sessile trillium can be found in abundance at Great Falls Park (both Virginia and Maryland), at Riberbend Park, Balls Bluff Park, and other sites especially along the Potomac River. The large-flowered trillium is best seen at G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management area near Linden, Virginia where it is estimated there are 26 million individual plants growing. It is a breath-taking sight to see the large-flowered trillium carpeting the forest floor at the Linden site. Even though the sessile trillium is not as showy, its delicate beauty is well worth the effort to seek out this special wildflower this spring. Both these species are important and beautiful members of the "guild" of early spring wildflowers that carpet our rich deciduous woods.

NATIVES FOR THE GARDEN

NANCY ARRINGTON
Propagation Chairman



Wild Stonecrop

Sedum ternatum

Although it appears delicate our native stonecrop, *Sedum ternatum*, is a tough little plant and an excellent ground cover for a shade or woodland garden. It is evergreen in our area, and plants exposed to winter sun turn a soft brick red.

It occurs throughout most of the eastern U.S. and, according to the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora*, grows in most Virginia counties except those along the coast. It is usually found in rich, often rocky woods and on mossy stream banks and prefers partial shade but will grow in almost complete shade.

This small attractive sedum has very fleshy smooth leaves about 3/4" long and 1/2" wide. Stems grow along the ground and send up 4-6" flowering stalks which bear numerous small white flowers. The five-petaled flowers have five green sepals and ten stamens with prominent dark anthers. Though each flower is less than an inch in diameter plants are usually covered with blossoms giving the effect of a blanket of snow when plants are massed in the garden. Blooming starts in early May and lasts most of the month.

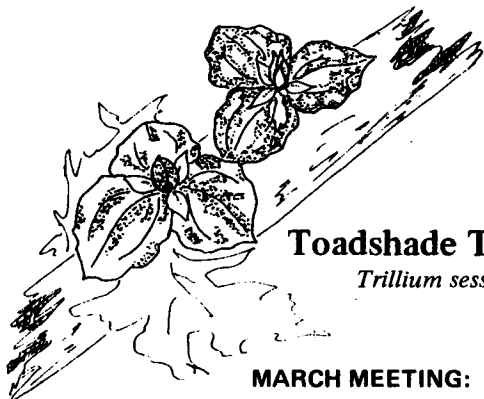
Wild stonecrop's native shady, moist, rocky habitat suggests similar conditions in the garden. It likes moisture but must have good drainage to keep its succulent parts from rotting. It needs shade and the filtered shade of a woodland is ideal. During our hot humid summers some of my plants turned black and appeared to die but recovered with cooler weather. Plants in cooler locations with good air circulation fared better.

This plant is easy to establish in the garden and soon spreads to form a dense cover. It's perfect for the shady rock garden and a good edging beside a woodland path. It's a good weaver or filler among taller plants such as trilliums, Solomon's seal and clumping ferns. Though it spreads and fills in nicely it never crowds out other plants. Since the blossoms are white it combines well with other colors.

Large amounts of seed are produced and can be sown immediately after collection for germination in two to three weeks. Cuttings, made at any time during the growing season, and inserted in sand will root quickly. Division is the easiest propagation method. Plants are shallow-rooted and small clumps can be taken up and re-set in a new area.

We hope to have this sedum for sale at this spring's plant sale. A more uncommon species, *S. nevii*, is very delicate, has attractive light pink flowers in mid-spring; "a tiny gem" according to Bebe Miles and easy to germinate and grow according to the North Carolina Botanical Garden which has seed.

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P.O. BOX 83, MANASSAS, VA 22110



Toadshade Trillium

Trillium sessile

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