



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

JANUARY MEETING

MEMBERS' SLIDE PROGRAM

Monday, January 18, 1993, 7:30 p.m.

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

Chapter members are invited to show slides of their native plant related activities over the past year during our traditional January members' slide program. This year Marion Lobstein will show slides of her trip to the Bruce Peninsula, Ontario, and the upper Michigan peninsula. Nicky Staunton will have something interesting to show probably including a look at an exciting caterpillar. Any other members who have slides to show or experiences to relate are encouraged to share. Come and enjoy this informal and fun program.

Winter Workshop for Gardeners

This year's VNPS Winter Workshop, "Landscaping with Native Plants", is co-sponsored by the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. It will be held Saturday, February 13, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the University of Richmond. Fee is \$40 for VNPS members (slightly higher for others) and includes lunch. Four speakers will discuss reasons for using natives, shrubs and trees for framework in the native garden, native perennials for sun, and woodland wildflowers. Chapter members will receive a flyer in the mail. If you don't get one, or if you'd like to carpool, call Nancy Arrington, 368-8431 or 368-9711.

February Board Meeting

The February board meeting will be held the usual third Monday, the 15th, 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas. Meetings are open to all chapter members.

Plant ID Courses

Marion Lobstein is offering two plant identification classes at Manassas Campus of NVCC this winter and spring.

Topics in Winter Botany (BIO 295-71M, 1 Credit) will give students an overview of plants in winter conditions with an emphasis on identification of woody plants and their survival and adaptation techniques. Classes will meet 4:15-6:00 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays Feb. 8-17, and 9:00 a.m.-12:45 p.m. on Saturdays Feb. 13 and 20.

Topics in Spring Wildflowers (BIO 295-72M, 1 Credit) will give students an overview of identification of spring wildflowers, their reproductive strategies and life cycles. Class dates and times are 4:15-6:00 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays April 5-14, and 9:00 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Saturdays April 10 and 17. Call Marion for more information, 536-7150 or at the college, 323-3000, Manassas ext. 6643.

Our March membership meeting will be on the third Monday, March 15, 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church.

Nature Programs

Winter Wandering – Sunday, January 27, 11:00 a.m. till noon, Locust Shade Park, Triangle. Stroll through woods and fields with a naturalist. Fee is \$6; all ages; call 221-8579 to register.

Is It Spring Yet? – Saturday, February 13, 11:00 a.m. till noon, Locust Shade Park, Triangle. Join a naturalist for a stroll through the park in search of signs of spring. Fee is \$6; all ages; call 221-8579 to register.

Animal Tracks – Saturday, February 27, 11:00 a.m. till noon, Locust Shade Park, Triangle. Learn to make plastic cast of animal tracks. Fee is \$3; ages 6-12; call 221-8579 to register.

Library Gets New Book

Our chapter library has acquired a new reference book, *Manual of Vascular Plants of the Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada*, published in 1991 by the New York Botanical Garden. Call Librarian Mary Sigl, 368-5145, if you want to borrow a book or if you'd like a list of the books.

Winter Walks

Marion Lobstein continues to lead walks at Great Falls Park each third Sunday through the winter. Walks are scheduled for 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on January 17 and February 21. Call Marion for more information, 536-7150.

Arboretum Sponsors Workshop

"Native Plants: Creating Natural Landscapes" will be held Saturday, February 27, 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m. Fee of \$60 includes lunch. Topics include native plant conservation, designing native gardens, species variation in nature as a source of garden plants, and formulating an American landscape design style. Concurrent sessions deal with invasive exotics, water gardens, American Indian's use of plants and native shrubs for gardens.

WILD NEWS

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Deadline for the March-April issue is March 1, 1993.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

NANCY VEHR'S

Happy 1993! A lot of changes are in store for us this year with a new federal administration taking office this month. Regardless of one's political affiliation, let's hope that these changes will be positive ones for the wild flowers and wild places that our Society is trying to conserve.

I have been doing a lot of hiking lately with the Northern Virginia Hiking Club. It's a lot of fun and great exercise, too. The woods are lovely even in the wintertime and there are no swarming bugs. The trees show their graceful silhouettes and the evergreens provide a little color. Visibility from the mountains in Shenandoah National Park is also best this time of year. Even so, one longs for the flowers.

Spring cannot be too far away; a little snowdrop bloomed in my garden on New Year's Eve and the seed catalogs are filling my mailbox.

The January membership meeting slide show should be fun and informative. See you there!

Seedlings for Sale

The Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District is offering white pine, Scotch pine and Norway spruce this year. Seedlings will be sold in bundles of 25 of a single species for \$5.00. Orders must be pre-paid and received by February 26, 1993. Seedlings can be picked up on Saturday, March 27, 8:00 a.m. till noon, at either Marsteller Middle School or Coles Elementary School. Call the conservation office, 361-1710, for an order form.

Keith Hawkins, Community Forester, announces that the Virginia Division of Forestry is offering seedlings of loblolly pine, white pine, Norway spruce, Scotch pine, green ash, Chinese chestnut and several oak species. A special wildlife package designed to attract squirrels, deer, song and game birds is also available. Call the forestry office, 368-3741, to request order forms.

New Atlas Available

The third edition of the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora* is available for \$10 from Virginia Botanical Associates, Rt. 6, Box 130, Farmville, VA 23901.

Ferns & Fern Allies of Northern Virginia: A Checklist

MARION BLOIS LOBSTEIN
Associate Professor, Biology, NVCC

The weather this time of year is often mild enough for a brisk walk through the woods. We tend to think of winter as a dreary and colorless season, but if you look closely you will see green foliage or other patterns of color. Lichens, mosses and some fungi such as bracken fungi persist through the winter and are very interesting to observe, especially with a little magnification. The seed pods or berries of many flowering plants also still persist through the winter and are worth trying to identify. Some flowering plants such as hepatica (*H. americana*), winter-green (*Chimaphila maculata*), crane fly orchid (*Tipularia discolor*), rattlesnake weed (*Hieracium venosum*) and some mustard family members retain their leaves through the winter. Of course, skunk cabbage hoods are up in January and open by February. Hepatica may even start to bloom by late February.

Another interesting group of evergreen plants for winter study are the ferns and fern allies such as clubmosses and horsetails. The following is a checklist of these plants documented to occur in the Northern Virginia area (Prince William, Fairfax, Loudoun, Arlington, Stafford and Fauquier Counties) in the third edition of the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora*. Species with an asterisk are evergreen or semi-evergreen and will be visible during the winter months.

Equisetaceae (Horsetail Family)

*Equisetum arvense** - Horsetail, field
*E. hyemale** - Scouring rush

Isoetaceae (Quillwort Family)

Isoetes engelmannii - Quillwort, Englemann's
I. riparia - Quillwort, shore

Lycopodium (Clubmoss Family)

*Lycopodium alopecuroides** - Clubmoss, foxtail
*L. appressum** - Clubmoss, southern
*L. clavatum** - Clubmoss, running
L. digitatum (*L. flabelliforme*)* - Ground cedar
*L. inundatum** - Clubmoss, bog
*L. lucidulum** - Clubmoss, shining
L. obscurum var. *isophyllum** - Ground cedar
*L. tristachyum** - Slender groundpine

Selaginellaceae (Spikemoss Family)

Selaginella apoda - Spikemoss, meadow
S. rupestris - Spikemoss, rock

Ophioglossaceae (Adder's Tongue Family)

Botrychium biternatum - Grape fern, Southern
B. dissectum - Grape fern, dissected

B. matricariaefolium - Grape fern, daisy leaf
B. onidense - Grape fern, bluntlobed
B. virginianum - Rattlesnake fern
Ophioglossum vulgatum (var. *pycnostichum*) -
Adder's tongue, southern

Osmundaceae (Royal Fern Family)

Osmunda cinnamomea - Cinnamon fern
O. claytonia - Interrupted fern
O. regalis - Royal fern

Polypodiaceae (True Fern Family)

Adiantum pedatum - Maidenhair fern
*Asplenium x ebenoides** - Spleenwort, walking
*A. montanum** - Spleenwort, mountain
*A. pinnatifidum** - Spleenwort, lobed
*A. platyneuron** - Spleenwort, ebony
*A. trichomanes** - Spleenwort, maidenhair
Athyrium asplenioides - Lady fern, southern
A. pycnocarpon - Glade fern
A. thelypteroides - Glade fern, silvery
*Camptosorus rhizophyllus** - Walking fern
*Cheilanthes lanosa** - Lipfern, hairy
*Cystopteris bulbifera** - Bulblet fern
*C. protrusa** - Lowland brittle fern
Dennstaedtia punctilobula - Hay-scented fern
*Dryopteris celsa** - Log fern
D. cristata - Wood fern, crested
D. goldiana - Wood fern, Goldie's
*D. intermedia** - Wood fern, intermediate
*D. marginalis** - Wood fern, marginal
D. spinulosa (*D. carthusiana*)* - Wood fern, spinulose
Lorinseria areolata - Net-vein chain fern
Matteuccia pennsylvanica - Ostrich fern
Oncoclea sensibilis - Sensitive fern
*Pellaea atropurpurea** - Cliff brake, purple
Phegopteris hexagonoptera - Beech fern
*Polypodium polypodioides** - Resurrection fern
*P. virginianum** - Rock polypody
*Polystichum acrostichoides** - Christmas fern
Pteridium aquilinum - Bracken
Thelypteris noveboracensis - New York fern
T. thelypteroides (*T. palustris*) Marsh fern
Woodsia obtusa - Woodsia, blunt-lobed

Schizaeaceae (Curly Grass Family)

Lygodium palmatum - Climbing fern

All of these plants are worthy of the effort to find and identify them throughout the year. The species that are evergreen are especially welcomed sights this time of year. We have published articles in past issues of *Wild News* emphasizing the importance of conservation of the clubmosses by not gathering them to use as Christmas decorations. Remember that not only clubmosses but also the ferns and fern allies are an important part of our native flora and should be protected and conserved.

NATIVES FOR THE GARDEN

NANCY ARRINGTON
Propagation Chairman



Christmas Fern

Polystichum acrostichoides

Christmas fern is our most common woodland fern and probably the best all-around garden fern. Fronds that are still green at Christmas give it its common name. It grows naturally on rocky shaded slopes, along wooded streambanks, in ravines, and sometimes in swamps throughout the eastern half of the U.S. including every Virginia county.

In late April silvery green fiddleheads unfurl amidst last year's fronds that are green but lying flat on the ground. The new leaves look so fragile that they appear wilted in the warm spring sun. However, they are very hardy and will expand to 12 to 30 inches long and two to four inches wide. Their fresh light green color soon darkens to a lustrous leathery green.

Christmas fern is extremely easy to grow in slightly acid to neutral soil that has been amended with leaf mold, compost or rotted horse manure. It grows best in the dappled shade of a woodland but will also grow well in deep shade and even in sunny areas if

the soil is moist. New fern plantings should be mulched and kept well watered until they're established, but, after that, Christmas fern is quite drought-tolerant. Fronds remain fresh and cool looking through the heat of summer and are not damaged by early frosts. They do become somewhat bedraggled as winter wears on, but they should be left to protect the new spring fronds. They can be clipped off in early spring for a neat appearance or can be left as a natural mulch.

This adaptable fern is a wonderful all-season foliage plant for the shade garden. It can be massed as a ground cover for a shady bank or used as a filler in a planting of azaleas or other shrubs. Planted beside a rock, a single clump will add interest to a bed of low growing wildflowers. Its cut-leaf appearance is a good contrast for solid leaved plants such as wood poppy, foamflower, wild ginger, mayapple and hostas. It can be planted with Virginia bluebells, Dutchman's breeches and other spring ephemerals to fill in when they go dormant.

Christmas fern is easily propagated by division any time of year. To help actively growing new divisions become established, trim off about a third of the fronds and keep well watered. Propagating from spores is an interesting and challenging hobby that is described in several publications including *Growing and Propagating Wild Flowers* by Harry R. Phillips.

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