



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

## MARCH MEETING

# Plant Management at Mason Neck

Monday, March 15, 1993, 7:30 p.m.

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

At our March 15 membership meeting Yvonne Schultz will present a program on plant management at Mason Neck Wildlife Refuge. She will discuss the relationship between the park's native plant and animal species including plant destruction by deer and other wildlife in the park. Come and enjoy the program – we'll also be discussing plans for our many spring events.

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Our Virginia Wildflower Celebration runs through the months of April and May. Events sponsored by all chapters will be listed in the *Spring Bulletin*. PWWS chapter activities are detailed in this newsletter. Plan to get out and celebrate wildflowers and springs by participating in our various activities.

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## Spring Wildflower Walks

Several walks are planned for our chapter members this spring. Potowmack and Piedmont Chapter members are also invited to attend the free walks.

On Saturday, April 17, Marion Lobstein will lead a walk at Riverbend Park, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

On Sunday, April 18, Marion will lead a walk at Balls Bluff in Loudoun County, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Claudia Thompson-Deahl will lead a walk to see the trilliums and other spring wildflowers at the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area (Linden) on Sunday, May 2, 2-4 p.m.

Potowmack Chapter member Cris Fleming will lead a walk on the Maryland side of Great Falls on Saturday, May 8, 2-4 p.m.

All the walks are free. For more information, call Marion at 536-7150 or Claudia at 754-9235.

## Wildflowers Indoors

Marion Lobstein will show slides of spring wildflowers and give identification tips at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, Centreville, 3-4 p.m., Sunday, March 21. The program is free but reservations are required, 631-0013.

## VNPS Annual Meeting

A committee chaired by Nancy Herwig and Martha Slover is busily making plans for this year's VNPS annual meeting, September 17-19. On Friday evening Marion Lobstein will present a slide program on "Exchange of Plants Between the Old World and the New" at the Manassas Campus NVCC. A variety of field trips is planned for Saturday, and the evening auction and banquet with speaker will be held at the Manassas Holiday Inn (rooms at reduced rates will be available for out of town members).

We need many helping heads and hands to stage this important event – call Nancy Herwig, 754-2328, if you can help or to offer your suggestions.

## NEXT MEETING

The May membership meeting will be on the third Monday, May 17, 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church. Details in next newsletter.

## Walks at Great Falls

Marion Lobstein continues her third Sunday walks at Great Falls through the spring. Dates are March 21, April 18, and May 16, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Participants should meet at the Virginia side visitors center. Call Marion for information, 536-7150.

## EcoFest at River Farm

An environmental festival exploring sustainable practices for homes, yards and gardens will be held Saturday and Sunday, April 3 & 4 at the American Horticulture Society's River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Dr., Alexandria. EcoFest will feature short presentations, demonstrations, displays by over 40 environmental and conservation groups, and numerous "shops" offering eco-products for sale. Hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and 1-4 p.m. on Sunday. Admission and parking are free. Call 703-768-5700 for more information.

## Correction

Librarian Mary Sigl's phone number is 369-5145. Call her if you want to check out a book.

## Members Spread the Word

On February 24 Marie Davis showed our wildflower shade gardening program at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, Centreville, and Marion Lobstein will present a spring wildflower program at Hayfield Garden Club on March 11. Nancy Arrington showed our butterfly gardening program at Countryside Garden Club's February 25 meeting and will show it for garden clubs in Centreville and Stafford later this spring.

## April Board of Directors Meeting

The April board of directors meeting will be held on the third Monday, April 19, 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church. Meetings are open to all members.

## WILD NEWS

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President, Nancy Vehrs, 368-2898  
Editor, Nancy Arrington, 368-8431  
Artist, Nicky Staunton, 368-9803

Deadline for the May-June issue is May 1, 1993.



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

NANCY VEHRS

As I write this, the last of the February snow is nearly melted. Unlike many people in our area, I love the snow and was able to take advantage of our four-inch snowfall by cross country skiing in the Manassas Battlefield Park. It's a great cardiovascular exercise and a delightful way to enjoy the winter wonderland.

Now the wildflower enthusiast's busiest time of year is nearly upon us and the spring ephemerals will soon be in bloom. Spring is such an exciting time of year! When you're dividing some of your wildflower perennials think about adding them to our May 8th Plant Sale. If you need plants for your own wildflower garden, start preparing your beds now for all the great plants you'll be buying at the annual plant sale.

This year's garden tour includes two new ones and one old favorite. Alcina Davis in Montclair and PWS Secretary Jeanne Endrikat off Lake Jackson Dr. will have their gardens on tour for the first time, and Jeanne Fowler's Woodbine Woods garden is on for an encore presentation. Thank you, Alcina, Jeanne, and Jeanne! Your gardens will serve as inspiration to all of us. Members who can serve as hosts/hostesses, bake treats, or offer any other kind of help can call Helen Walter at 754-8806, or me at 368-2898.

Be sure to take advantage of the wildflower walks this spring. You can enjoy the great outdoors and learn so much about nature's treasures that bloom in the spring. Many thanks to Marion Lobstein who coordinated the schedule and will serve as a leader, and thanks also to Claudia Thompson-Deahl and Cris Fleming (Potowmack Chapter) who will also serve as leaders.

I hope to see many of you at the March 15th meeting - please bring a friend.

## Annual Bluebell Walk

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's annual Bluebell Walk will be Sunday, April 18, 2 p.m. at Bull Run Regional Park. If you can't make it for this guided walk, self-guiding pamphlets are available at the park. Weekday tours for groups can be scheduled by calling 528-5406 two weeks in advance. To reach the park, take Rt. 66 to the Centreville exit and follow signs to the entrance.

## PWWS Meeting Programs

Education Chair Nancy Herwig has scheduled the following speakers and topics for programs at our third Monday membership meetings:

May 17 – Ralph McDowell, Wetlands, Wetland Plants & Aquatic Gardens

July 19 – Open

Sept. – Chapter Annual Meeting

Nov. 15 – Ken Bass, Birds

All meetings (except the annual meeting) are at 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church.

## Wildflowers at Arboretum

Curator Joan Feely will lead a walk and discuss techniques employed in maintaining this large public wildflower garden. Tour begins promptly at the Fern Valley parking lot, Saturday, April 3, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, and will be repeated Wednesday, April 7, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Info: 202-475-4857.

## PWWS Garden Tour

This year's tour will be held (rain or shine) Saturday, April 24, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, April 25, 1-5 p.m. We will have two new gardens and one "old favorite" on our tour.

The Fowler garden in Woodbine Woods is on our tour for the third time. The large woodland garden has many azaleas, mountain laurel, and wildflowers in formal and informal settings.

Native beech and holly trees provide year round interest to the Davis garden in Montclair. Rocks define beds and paths in the backyard woodland gardens.

The Endrikatt garden off Lake Jackson Dr. has shady and sunny areas planted with native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. An open area is maintained as a naturalistic meadow.

Coordinator Helen Walter needs members to bake cookies and to serve as hosts/hostesses during the tour. Call her, 754-8806, and offer your help. The tour is free since it serves as an educational project for our chapter and gives visitors a preview of plants offered at our May 8 plant sale. A folder with map showing garden locations will be sent to members and others during April.

## PWWS Plant Sale

This year's plant sale will be held Saturday, May 8, 9 a.m. to 12 noon, parking lot of Bethel Lutheran Church (same location as our meetings).

Please pot up plants from your garden 3 or 4 weeks in advance so they'll look good on sale day. Call Plant Sale Chair, Nancy Vehrs, 368-2898, if you can donate plants but need someone to pot them up. Also call Nancy if you need labels (all plants should be labeled with common and botanical names), pots, or potting soil.

Make arrangements with Nancy to drop your plants off at her house before the sale. If you bring plants on sale day, get them there by 7:30 a.m.

On sale day we need volunteers to unload and arrange plants, help during the sale and with clean-up afterwards. Let Nancy know how you can help. Also encourage your friends to come and buy and remember members get a 10% discount on plants.

## Wildflower Classes

**Topics in Spring Wildflowers (BIO 295-72M)** – April 5-17 at Manassas Campus NVCC. Instructor is Marion Lobstein. Call the college for info, 703-257-6643 (Pr. Wm. Co.) or 703-323-3000, Manassas Ext. 6643 (Metro area).

**Field Identification of Wildflowers (ENVR 919-01W)** – 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, April 24 and Saturday, May 8 (2 sessions), Woodbridge Campus NVCC. Instructor is Yvette Ogle. Info: 703-878-5756.

**Field Botany (EVEV493/793, 3 credits)** – 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Mon.-Thurs., June 28 through July 15 at Blandy Experimental Farm. Instructor is Marion Lobstein. Info: 703-837-1758.

## Fair & Plant Sale at Blandy

Blandy's fourth annual Horticultural Fair and Plant Sale will be held May 8 and 9 at the State Arboretum of Virginia, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

Over 25 vendors will be offering plants – including natives – along with books, tools, and botanical art. Other events include several education programs, lecture and book signing by Allen Lacy, children's activities, and educational displays. For further information, call 703-837-1758.



## VIOLETS

**MARION LOBSTEIN**  
Associate Professor, Biology, NVCC

From late March into late May or early June many species of violets bring simple but elegant beauty and color to our deciduous woods, fields, roadsides and even lawns. Although we usually think of violets as being shades of purple, there are white, cream, and yellow violets as well as combinations of shades of purple and white. The family and genus name *Viola* is based on the classical name for violets. In Gray's *Manual of Botany* there are fifty-one species of violets. These species are primarily spring-blooming as far as their chasmogamous, (showy) flowers are concerned, but plants may bloom again in the fall. The cleistogamous (secret) flowers may bloom throughout the summer.

The typical chasmogamous flower of violets has five green sepals, five colored petals (often with prominent nectar lines) five stamens, and a tricarpelate pistil. The symmetry of the flower is bilateral with two upper petals, two lateral petals (often with "beards" or pollen combs) and a lower petal. A spur is formed by the lower petals. The stamens are often closely surrounding the pistil with a short style and a broad stigma which may be orange. Some species are fragrant, others only minimally so or not at all.

Bees are the primary pollinators, and fruit set begins soon after flowering. The fruit is a small three-chambered capsule that matures in early to mid-May in Northern Virginia. As the fruit matures it begins to dehisce to release an average of 12-15 seeds that are about an eighth of an inch long. These seeds have elaiosomes and are ant-dispersed. The secret flowers are small green flowers formed at the base of the plant. These self-pollinate and are very prolific seed producers.

The presence or absence of a stem associated with leaves is variable in different species. Those with stems that form leaves along the stem length are re-

ferred to as "stemmed" and those that have their leaves formed directly above the ground level, actually above a horizontal stem called a rhizome, are referred to as "stemless". Leaf shapes are variable from one species to another, the most common being cordate or heart-shaped. Leaf margins are usually toothed. Leaves of individual plants often begin to senesce after the fruits mature or may remain photosynthetic on into summer. The underground storage structure for all species is the rhizome. Numerous fibrous roots come off the rhizome.

Violets as a group have had many edible and medicinal uses. Blossoms can be added to salads or candied by dipping into a sugar solution. Medicinal uses include treating the digestive, respiratory, urinary, and circulatory systems. Violets have purported laxative, emetic, expectorant, diuretic, emollient, and anti-coughing properties. They contain salicylic acid (the active ingredient of aspirin) and vitamins C (up to 260 milligrams per 100 grams of leaves compared to 50 milligrams in an orange) and A (up to 20,000 mg per 100 grams of leaves compared to 8100 in spinach). Violets also have antiseptic and fungicidal properties and poultices of the leaves have been used to treat wounds and warts (caused by a virus) and corns.

The following twenty species are found in the Northern Virginia area:

- Viola affinis*, LeConte's violet
- V. blanda*, sweet white violet
- V. canadensis*, Canada violet
- V. conspersa*, American dog violet
- V. cucullata*, marsh blue violet
- V. fimbriatula*, ovate-leaved violet
- V. hirsutula*, southern wood violet
- V. lanceolata*, lance-leaved violet
- V. macloskeyi* var. *pallens* - northern white violet
- V. palmata*, palmate violet
- V. papilionacea*, common blue violet
- V. pedata*, birdfoot violet
- V. pennsylvanica*, smooth yellow violet
- V. primulifolia*, primrose-leaved violet
- V. pubescens*, downy yellow violet
- V. rafinesquii*, field pansy
- V. sagittata*, arrow-leaf violet
- V. sororia*, downy blue violet
- V. striata*, cream violet
- V. triloba*, three-lobed violet.

This spring try to learn to identify at least the more common of these species – you'll find both Peterson's and Newcomb's wildflower guides helpful. And don't forget to just enjoy the sweet beauty of these "simple" wildflowers.

## Refund Will Help Open Spaces

Virginians can help preserve our threatened natural heritage by designating all or part of their state income tax return to the Open Space Recreation and Conservation Fund. Donations will be used to purchase and manage habitats for endangered species and to develop public access to state natural area preserves. Twenty-five percent of the fund is used to provide grants to Virginia localities for open space protection and recreation.

Your contribution can be entered on the bottom of the state income tax form, and can be listed as an itemized deduction on next year's federal return. Direct donations can be sent to the Open Space Recreation and Conservation Fund, Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, P.O. Box 721, Richmond, VA 23206-0721.

## Wintergreen Symposium

Wintergreen's annual Wildflower Symposium will be May 14-16. The weekend consists of outdoor hikes and indoor programs. Several VNPS will serve as speakers and hike leaders. For information and a brochure, call 804-325-2200, or write to Wintergreen P.O. Box 706, Wintergreen, VA 22958.

## Wildflower Propagation

This one-day workshop will focus on the propagation by seeds, cuttings, and division of herbaceous (non-woody) native plants through lecture, slides, demonstrations, and hands on techniques. The morning period will cover seeds and the afternoon session will cover cuttings and division. Participants will start seeds and take home cuttings of selected species. The workshop is scheduled for Friday, March 19 and will be repeated on Saturday, March 20, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. Instructor is Jan Midgley. Fee is \$24 for nonmembers and \$20 for FOSA. Call 703-837-1758 for information and registration forms.

## Potowmack Chapter Plant Sale

Potowmack Chapter's wildflower plant sale will be Saturday, May 15 at Green Spring Gardens Park near Annandale. Tentative time is 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.. Info: Tiana Camfiord, 830-3783.

## West Virginia Flora Available

A good identification reference for our area, *The Flora of West Virginia*, has been reprinted. If you're interested in obtaining a copy, call Marion Lobstein, 536-7150.

HELP SOMEONE ENJOY SPRING – GIVE A GIFT MEMBERSHIP

### PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

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### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NEW  RENEWAL

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s): Home ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Work ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Check Membership Category  
 Individual \$15  
 Patron \$50  
 Sustaining \$100  
 Life \$400  
 Family \$25  
 Student \$10  
 Associate (groups) \$40

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

Make check payable to VNPS and mail to:

Membership Chair  
P.O. Box 83  
Manassas, VA 22110

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



### Violets

The common blue violet (*V. papilionacea*) and its variety, the Confederate violet, are too weedy and invasive for cultivated gardens, but they do have a place in such low maintenance settings as roadside banks, moist meadows, and naturalized woods and lawns.

Three species of violets native to our area are hardy, easy care plants suitable for shade or woodland gardens. All are referred to as "stemmed" violets because of their leafy branching stems. The smooth yellow violet (*V. pensylvanica*), native from Manitoba and Nova Scotia south to Georgia including Virginia's mountain and piedmont areas, is the only yellow species native to Northern Virginia. Cream violet (*V. striata*) grows naturally from Minnesota, Wisconsin, and New York into the southern U.S. and has almost the same range in Virginia as the smooth yellow. White-flowered Canada violet (*V. canadensis*) is native from southern Canada south to the Carolinas

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### Cream Violet

*Viola striata*

in cooler areas including Virginia's mountains and western piedmont.

The smooth yellow violet, so called because of its non-hairy stems, begins blooming in early to mid-April and continues into May. In the wild it often grows with Virginia bluebells and is a good companion for them in the garden. By early summer the twelve-inch-tall clumps of heart shaped foliage are studded with attractive light colored seed pods.

The creamy white flowers of *Viola striata* appear in early spring and combine nicely with the woodland garden's blues, lavenders, pinks, and yellows. Plants become foot-tall leafy clumps that fill in when spring ephemerals such as bluebells go dormant. If the foliage becomes floppy and unattractive, cut it off a few inches above the ground and the new foliage that emerges will look good through the summer.

Flower petals of Canada violet are pure white with a yellow base and a purplish tinge on the back. Stems are purplish with scattered hairs. This species also begins blooming in early spring, and will continue through summer and into fall especially if the weather is cool and rainfall is ample. Probably because it isn't as well adapted to our hot summers, Canada violet has self-sown only sparingly in my garden. This year I hope to have a few seedlings to add to the rather prolific self-seeding smooth yellow and cream violets that we always have at our May sale.

**MARCH MEETING:** Monday, March 15, 1993, 7:30 p.m.  
Bethel Lutheran Church, Plantation Ln. & Sudley Rd., Manassas