

# WILD NEWS

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

## MARCH MEETING

### Lawn Care and Water Quality

Monday, March 21, 1994, 7:30 p.m.

Bethel Lutheran Church, Plantation Lane & Sudley Road, Manassas, Va.

Just in time for spring lawn care, Ludwig Hartung from the Prince William County Cooperative Extension Office will tell us how we can have a quality lawn while preserving the quality of our streams and drinking water. He will discuss proper use of fertilizers and pesticides and explain that lawns cared for in an environmentally conscious way can also look good. The Extension Office won the 1993 Governor's Environmental Excellence Award in recognition of its efforts to protect Virginia's natural resources through its Chesapeake Bay Residential Watershed Water Quality Program.

### Wildflower Celebration

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. Celebrate Spring and wildflowers -- participate in our walks, programs and other activities.

### PWWS Spring Wildflower Walks

Our chapter has scheduled the following walks this spring:

- Saturday, April 16, 3-4:30 p.m., Wildflowers at Riverbend Park.
- Sunday, April 17, 2:30-4:30 p.m., Wildflowers at Balls Bluff.
- Friday, May 6, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Trilliums at the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area (Linden).

Leader for all walks is Marion Lobstein. All walks are free and open to the public, but reservations are required, and can be made by calling PWWS President Nancy Vehrs, 703-368-2898, or Marion, 703-536-7150.

### April Board of Directors Meeting

The April board of directors meeting will be held the third Monday, April 18, 7:30 p.m., at the home of President Nancy Vehrs, 8318 Highland St., Manassas.

### P. W. Natural Resources Council

The Prince William Natural Resources Council will hold its April meeting on Tuesday, April 26, 7:30 p.m. at Chinn Library. Call Chairman Jim Waggener, 703-497-0506, for information.

### Next Meeting

The May membership meeting will be on the third Monday, May 16, 7:30 p.m., at Bethel Lutheran Church. Jocelyn Sladen, Piedmont Chapter member, will present a program on American hedgerows. Details in the next newsletter.

## Annual Bluebell Walk

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's 26th annual Bluebell Walk will be Sunday, April 17, 2 p.m. at Bull Run Regional Park, Centreville.

Guided walks can be scheduled for groups throughout "Bluebell Week," April 17-22, by calling 703-528-5406 at least two weeks in advance. Self-guiding pamphlets are available at the park if you can't make the guided tours.

Bull Run's one-and-a-half-mile Bluebell Trail is the largest stand of bluebells on the east coast, and the annual walk is one of the area's oldest established nature walks.

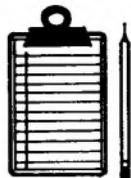
Prince William residents are reminded that they must pay a \$4 entrance fee for passenger cars and \$8 for 10-passenger and larger vehicles because the county is not a NVRPA member.

## Great Falls Wildflower Walks

Marion Lobstein continues her third Sunday wildflower walks at Great Falls Park through the spring. Dates are March 20, April 17, and May 15, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Meet at the Virginia side visitors center. Call Marion for more information, 703-536-7150.

## Wintergreen Wildflower Symposium

Wintergreen's annual Wildflower Symposium will be May 13-15. The weekend consists of wildflower and bird walks, lectures and slide programs on a variety of wildflower-related topics. Several VNPS members serve as hike leaders and speakers. For a brochure, call 804-325-2200, or write to Wintergreen, P.O. Box 706, Wintergreen, VA 22958.



## From the President NANCY VEHR'S

After such a nasty, cold winter we're all ready for SPRING. I keep scratching around in my yard to find some signs of life under the leaf cover. There's no sign of my bloodroot yet, though my non-native snowdrops and winter aconite are in cheery bloom. The first flowers of spring can really rejuvenate the spirit.

As usual, we have several events planned for the 1994 Wildflower Celebration in April and May. Make plans now to tour our gardens, come to the plant sale and join a wildflower walk. If you can volunteer at the garden tours or plant sale, that's even better! The schedule of events can be found elsewhere in this issue. Volunteers can sign up at our meeting on the 21st.

After your enthusiastic reception of Ken Bass's talk on Gardening for Birds at our November meeting, I hope that many of you will be attending the VNPS Winter Workshop in Richmond on Gardening for Wildlife. I enjoy feeding seeds and suet to the birds (and squirrels) throughout the winter, but it's even more gratifying to find native plants that can satisfy all our wild friends throughout the year.

As your chapter representative on the VNPS board, I attended a weekend retreat in Virginia Beach on March 5-6. While the sun was bright and the ocean sparkled, the air was quite chilly with a cold breeze. However, it's a lovely time of year to visit the ocean if you don't like crowds and don't mind the chill. One of the major topics of discussion for the group was the relationship between the VNPS and its chapters. Having one of our own, Nicky Staunton, as VNPS President certainly contributes to a cordial relationship between the VNPS and PWWS. The VNPS is a wonderful resource for us and it is responsible for the creation of diverse programs and publications such as the *Bulletin*, *Wildflower of the Year*, information on Invasive Exotics, slide shows, Site Registry, and others. Our mutual relationship results in a strong Society at both the state and chapter levels, and all through volunteer efforts.

## 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, 1994.

## Garden Fair at Blandy

The Friends of The State Arboretum of Virginia at Blandy Experimental Farm will hold their annual Garden Fair on Saturday and Sunday May 7 and 8, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., rain or shine. Lectures on medicinal plants, vegetable gardening, garden design, and the history and wildlife of Shenandoah National Park are scheduled.

Over 30 growers from Virginia and surrounding states will sell plants including natives.

A children's activity center, tours of the display gardens, and advice from Master Gardeners are also included in the weekend activities. Admission is free. For more information, call the Arboretum, 703-837-1758 or the Friends, 703-837-1458.

## Wildflower Walk at Arboretum

Discover a variety of early blooming wildflowers including Duchmans breeches, wild ginger, and oconee bells during a leisurely walk through the National Arboretum's Fern Valley Native Plant Collection. Curator Joan Feely will lead the walk on Friday, April 15 and again on Saturday, April 16, beginning at 1 p.m. each day at the entrance to Fern Valley. For information, call 202-475-4857.

## Potowmack Chapter Plant Sale

Potowmack Chapter's spring wildflower sale will be Saturday, May 14, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Green Spring Gardens Park near Annandale. Info: Gerry Pratt, 703-323-1094.

## Mother's Day Wildflower Walk

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority is sponsoring a walk on Sunday, May 8, 2 p.m. at Potomac Overlook Regional Park, Arlington. The walk is free but reservations are required, 703-528-5406.

## Open House at Hemlock Overlook

Hemlock Overlook Regional Park, Clifton, will be open 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday, April 2. Visitors are invited to learn about the adventures and opportunities at the Center for Outdoor Education operated with George Mason University. For information, call 703-993-2059 or 933-3754.

## Roosevelt Island Weekend

A VNPS-sponsored project, spearheaded by Piedmont Chapter member Mary Ann Gibbons, is underway to remove invasive non-indigenous plants from Theodore Roosevelt Island, an 88-acre national park located in the Potomac River. Work begun last fall will continue with the weekend of April 9 and 10 devoted to restoring the island to a more natural state.

On Saturday morning, Marion Lobstein, PWWS botany chair and NVCC biology professor, will lead a walk to survey the site's present plants, and after a picnic lunch, participants will attack the ubiquitous English ivy. An evening of supper and speakers is planned, and on Sunday Potowmack chapter Cris Fleming will lead a walk through Turkey Run Park, a nearby area that hasn't been overrun with alien plants.

PWWS chapter members are urged to participate, and to offer bed and breakfast to VNPS members who will be coming from other areas of the state. Call Nicky Staunton, 368-9803, if you can help and so you will be counted for Saturday's meals (cost \$10).

## PWWS Garden Tour

This year's annual garden tour will be held, rain or shine, Saturday, April 30, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, May 1, 1-5 p.m. Marie Davis is lining up the gardens and will announce the three gardens at Monday night's meeting.

As in years past, we need help with refreshments and with hosts/hostesses at the gardens during the hours they're open. Call Marie, 361-1626 or Nancy Vehrs, 368-2898, if you can 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 plant sale. A brochure with directions to the gardens will be mailed at a later date.

## Fort Belvoir Wildlife Show

May 1 is the entry deadline for the Fort Belvoir Outdoor Recreation's September 17 Wildlife and Nature Arts and Crafts Show. The \$75 entry fee is refundable if the artist is not selected by the jury. For more information, call 703-805-3781.



## Rue Anemone

(*Anemonella thalictroides*)

MARION LOBSTEIN

Associate Professor, Biology, NVCC

One of the most common early spring wildflowers is the delicate rue anemone or windflower (*Anemonella thalictroides*). This lovely member of the buttercup family (*Ranunculaceae*) can be found blooming in woodlands, often in thin rocky soil, from mid to late March into May. The range of this species is from Maine to Florida and west to Arkansas, Oklahoma and Minnesota. The genus name of *Anemonellae* means "small anemone" referring to the resemblance to true anemone and the species name *thalictroides* means "Thalictrum-like," because of the similarity of the leaves to that of members of the *Thalictrum* or meadowrue genus. It is called *Thalictrum thalictroides* in the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora*.

The white to pink one-half to almost one inch disk-shaped flowers are borne in groups of three with the center flower blooming first. The 5-10 "petals" are actually petaloid sepals. There are numerous stamens with yellow anthers arranged in a spiral pattern as are the 4-15 separate female parts, the carpels. The flowers are scentless and nectarless, but are insect pollinated. The disk-shape of the flowers is very common in many spring wildflowers such as spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) and the attraction of insects may be a type of mimicry of species that are good nectar producers such

as the spring beauty. The fruits that develop from each carpel are small achenes. At maturity the achenes fall to the forest floor and, like *Hepatica americana* and other similar members of the buttercup family, may have the seed secondarily dispersed by ants.

The delicate four to eight inch tall wiry stems quiver in even a gentle breeze, thus the name windflower. Below each group of flowers there are 2-3 opposite or whorled leaves that are ternately (three times divided) compound. The delicate leaflets each have three rounded lobes. Fibrous root systems have tuberous structures developing below the origin of the stem or stems. Basal leaves which may or may not be compounded are often present on older plants.

There have been few herbal and edible uses of rue anemone. Teas from the roots were used by some Indian tribes to treat diarrhea and vomiting, and some herbalists have recommended root preparation to treat piles or hemorrhoids. Some Indian tribes apparently did consider the tuberous structures of the roots edible.

The NVCC-Manassas Campus Nature Trail is an excellent place to see this delicate woodland wildflower blooming along with hepatica (*Hepatica americana*) which blooms a little earlier, spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), early saxifrage (*Saxifraga virginiana*), and plantain-leaved pussytoes (*Antennaria plantaginifolia*). In 1992 I had one of my photographs of rue anemones taken on the Nature Trail included in the Postal Services book that accompanied the wildflower stamps issued that year. Enjoy this lovely spring wildflower, but if you want to photograph it, be sure it is a still day or you too will be calling this delicate-stemmed species the windflower!

### Spring Wildflower Class

Marion Lobstein, associate professor of biology, will offer Bio 295-71M Special Topics in Spring Wildflowers (1 credit) April 4-16 at NVCC-Manassas Campus. Lectures will be 4:30-6 p.m. on April 4, 6, 11, & 13 and fieldtrips on April 9 and 16 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Marion will teach a wetland plants class July 18-27 with a weekend trip to Chincoteague July 30-31, and a summer wildflower class, August 2-5, both at NVCC-Manassas Campus and both 2 credits. Her 3-credit Field Botany class at Blandly will be June 28-July 15. Details in later newsletters or call Marion at the Manassas Campus, 703-257-6643.

### New Hospitality Chair

A big "thank you" to Joanne Krumviede who has agreed to be our hospitality chair. If you can help with refreshments - providing, setting up, cleaning up - call Joanne at 703-938-4378.

### Spring Activities at Reston

Saturday, April 16, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Earth Day Celebration at Worldgate, Herndon. Info: Nancy Herwig, 703-435-6518.

Thursday, May 5, 7-9 p.m., Wildflower Slide Show, Reston Nature Center. Info: 703-435-6510.

Saturday, May 7, 2 p.m., Wildflower Walk, Reston Nature Center. Info 703-435-6510.

### Wildflower Garden at Linton Hall

Linton Hall School's centennial celebration will include dedication of their new wildflower garden on May 1. PWWS members Marie Davis and Nancy Arrington have helped with plan suggestions and plants. For info, call the school located on Linton Hall Rd., Bristow, 703-368-3157.

## PWWS Plant Sale

This year's plant sale will be held Saturday, May 7, 9 a.m. to noon, in the parking lot of Bethel Lutheran Church (same location as our membership meetings). Nancy Vehrs will chair this important fundraising event again this year.

Call Nancy, 703-368-2898, if you can donate plants but need someone to pot them up. Call also if you need labels (plants should be labeled with common and botanical names) or pots or potting soil. Be sure all plants are potted up three weeks in advance so they will look good for the sale.

Bring your plants to the church by 7:30 a.m. on the day of the sale, or make arrangements with Nancy to drop them off at her house the week before the sale.

On the day of the sale we need many helping hands to unload and set up plants, to serve as tellers during the sale, and to clean up afterwards. Call Nancy and let her know how you can help. Encourage your friends to come and purchase plants, and remember that members get a 10% discount on plants.

## Plant ID Workshop at Blandy

Marion Lobstein will conduct a one-day workshop on Introduction to Plant Identification on Saturday, March 19, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., at Blandy Experimental Farm. The workshop will offer hands-on activities to help participants learn to identify plants using plant structures, identification keys, and field guides. Fee is \$25 for FOSA members and \$30 for non-members. Call the Friends of the State Arboretum, 703-837-1758, to register.

## Conway Robinson Study Underway

The Virginia Department of Forestry is considering the 400-acre Conway Robinson Memorial Forest near Gainesville for use as a forestry education center. PWWS members Nicky Staunton, Claudia Deahl, Nancy Vehrs and Elaine Haug are working with planners to protect the Conway's native plants. Other chapter members are invited to participate in this project; call Nancy Vehrs, 703-368-2898, if you're interested.

The Prince William Natural Resources Council has scheduled a special meeting to hear different points of view on plans for the education center. This meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 29, 7:30 p.m., at Chinn Library. Call Council Chairman Jim Waggener, 703-497-0506, for information.

## 1994 PWWS Membership Meetings

Mark your 1994 calendar for our bi-monthly chapter membership meetings on the third Monday, 7:30 p.m., at Bethel Lutheran Church. Education Chair Nancy Herwig has scheduled the following speakers and programs.

•May 16 -- Jocelyn Sladen, Piedmont Chapter, "American Hedgerows."

•July 18 -- Keith Hawkins, Virginia Department of Forestry, "Prince William's Big Trees."

•September -- PWWS Annual Meeting, date and location TBA.

•November 21 -- Martha Slover, PWWS Conservation Chair, "Endangered Plants of Prince William & Fairfax Counties."

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## VNPS Membership/Renewal Form

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Individual \$15                       Family \$25                       Student \$10

Patron \$50                               Sustaining \$100                       Life \$400

Associate (group) \$40; delegate \_\_\_\_\_

To give a gift membership: Enclose dues, name and address.

I wish to make an additional contribution to \_\_\_\_\_ VNPS \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter  
in the amount of  \$10  \$25  \$50  \$100  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you do not wish your name  
to be exchanged with similar organizations

Check here if you do not wish  
to be listed in a chapter directory

Make check payable to VNPS and mail to:

VNPS Membership Chair, Route 1, Box 381, Delaplane, VA 22025

## NATIVES FOR THE GARDEN

NANCY ARRINGTON  
Propagation Chairman



### Rue anemone

(*Anemonella thalictroides*)

The lovely, fragile looking rue anemone is actually one of the easiest plants we can grow in our woodland gardens. An exceptionally long blooming season adds to its desirability.

It grows naturally in the humus-rich, often stony soil of deciduous woodlands from Maine to Florida and west to Minnesota and Oklahoma. It is sometimes listed as *Thalictrum thalictroides* because its foliage resembles that of the meadowrues. It is grouped with the *Thalictrums* in the *Atlas of the Virginia Flora* where it appears in almost all counties.

Plants are six to ten inches tall with clusters of half-inch white flowers above a whorl of small three-lobed stem leaves. Slender wiry stems allow flowers to move with the slightest breeze giving it the common name windflower. In this respect, rue anemone resembles the true anemones which are also called windflowers. Flowering begins in late April along with the early spring ephemerals including bloodroot, toothwort, and spring

beauty, but unlike these which bloom for two to three weeks before going dormant, rue anemone continues blooming into early June.

In the garden, as in its native habitats, rue anemone will be happy in a slightly acid, humus-rich soil that drains well. Plant it under deciduous trees where it will get full sun in early spring and filtered shade or at least afternoon shade after the trees leaf out. A site that dries out in summer when plants are dormant will be fine as long as the soil stays slightly moist through the blooming period. A single plant will soon increase into a sizeable clump and self-sown seedlings will form nice colonies.

Rue anemone should be carefully located so it isn't lost among larger and more robust wildflowers. Give it highly visible spots at the edges of woodland beds or beside paths. It's very effective planted among small rocks or nestled against stumps or tree trunks. Combine it with other wildflowers of similar stature including bloodroot, hepatica, partridgeberry, and spring beauty.

Propagate rue anemone by careful separation of the tuberous roots while plants are dormant. Be sure each division has an eye. Collect seed in early summer just before plants go dormant and sow in flats or pots and leave outdoors through the winter.

Several selections of this cheerful native perennial are available including "Schoaf's Double Pink" with tiny, deep pink, long lasting pompoms, and "Flora Plena" a rare white double.

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**Rue Anemone**  
(*Anemonella thalictroides*)

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