

WILD NEWS

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

MARCH MEETING

Birds of Prey and the Urban Forest: The Connected System

Monday, March 20, 1995, 7:30 p.m.

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

PWWS member Peter Deahl will present a slide show on birds of prey and explain how these birds depend on urban forests for their survival. Peter works professionally as an International Society of Arboriculturists' certified arborist. He has studied birds of prey for the past 20 years and has a master bird bander's license with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

During our brief business meeting we will discuss plans for our many spring activities – come and volunteer your help.

April Board Meeting

The April board of directors meeting will be held on the third Monday, April 17, 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas. All board members are expected to attend and all chapter members are welcome.

PWWS Wildflower Walks

PWWS members are cordially invited to participate in these spring wildflower walks led by Marion Lobstein:

- Sun., March 19, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Great Falls Park
 - Sun., April 16, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Great Falls Park
 - Sun., April 16, 2:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m., Balls Bluff
 - Thurs., April 20, 12:30–1:30 p.m., NVCC-Manassas Campus Nature Trail
 - Fri., May 5, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m., G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area, Linden
 - Sun., May 15, 10 a.m.–12:30 Great Falls Park
- Call Marion, 703-536-7150, for information or reservations.

Also, on Tuesday, May 9, 10 a.m. Claudia Thompson-Deahl is leading a trillium walk for the Reston Garden Club at Linden. Call her, 754-9235, if you'd like to go.

Propagation Workshop Reminder

The VNPS "Conservation Through Propagation" workshop will be held Saturday, April 1, 10 a.m., at Piedmont Virginia Community College, Charlottesville. Details and a reservation form are in the Spring VNPS *Bulletin*. If you'd like to carpool, call Nancy Arrington, 368-8431, or Nicky Staunton, 368-9803.

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.

Next Meeting

The May membership meeting will be on the third Monday, May 15, 7:30 p.m., at Bethel Lutheran Church. Details in the next newsletter.

Wintergreen Symposium

Wintergreen's 14th annual wildflower symposium will be May 12-14. Wildflower walks, lectures, and slide shows will keep participants busy through the weekend. Several VNPS members will be trip leaders. For a brochure, call Stephanie Allen at 804-325-8169, or write to Wintergreen, P.O. Box 706, Wintergreen, VA 22958.

Garden Fair at Blandly

The Friends of the State Arboretum of Virginia at Blandly Experimental Farm will hold their Annual Garden Fair on Saturday and Sunday, May 13 and 14. A variety of plant-related programs and tours are scheduled. Exhibitors and vendors will also be present. Admission is free. For more information, call the Arboretum, 703-837-1758, or the FOSA office, 703-837-1458.

Extension Field Days

The Prince William Unit of the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service has scheduled the following free lawn and garden field days at 9-11 a.m. at Anne Wall Park (AWP) 4450 Waterway Dr., Montclair, and at Ben Lomond Community Center (BLCC), 10300 Sudley Manor Dr., Manassas:

- Mowing & Pruning - March 25 (BLCC)
- Backyard Composting & Landscape Design - April 22 (AWP), April 29, (BLCC)
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) - May 20 (AWP), May 27 (BLCC)
- Plant to Avoid Problems & Recommended Plants - June 17 (AWP), June 24 (BLCC)

Anne Wall Park meets outdoors and Ben Lomond meets indoors. Call the extension office, 792-6285, for more information.



From the President HELEN WALTER

WARNING!! It's that time of year when your president will probably come bearing down on you with a clipboard at the next meeting, unless by some miracle I get flooded with volunteers for the garden tour and plant sale between now and then. Actually, I can think of few better ways to spend a couple of hours on a spring weekend than basking in the reflected glory of somebody else's hard work while some of the nicest people in Prince William County pass by. Then after you've been inspired by the gardens, you can follow it up at the plant sale helping wildflower gardeners with their selections or making a few of your own.

I let my mother talk me into going down to Georgia the first weekend in April for their 26th annual wildflower pilgrimage. This won't be the first time I've gone down there for their annual meeting, but it will be the first time I've gone as the president of the PWWS, so I'm loading up my suitcase with VNPS refrigerator magnets to hand out at the meeting. Let's hope they don't set off alarms at the airport! Like at our own state meetings, it's delicious agony trying to choose one or two field trips out of a list of around a dozen. Then after you've tramped around all day, they feed you an excellent dinner, followed by a terrific speaker that you struggle to stay awake for. Sound familiar?

Then in June, Helen Rawls and I are going up to the Bruce Peninsula to look at Canadian orchids with Ted Scott's group. I've wanted to take that trip ever since Nicky showed us her slides a few years ago, and Elaine's slides in January made up my mind for me. As of this writing, there is still space available if you want to join us. It sounds like the trip of a lifetime.

We have a really super program lined up for our next meeting. Our own Peter Deahl will talk about birds of prey, and I don't ever remember seeing as many hawks as I have this year, so it should be especially interesting. See you then.

Ironweed T-Shirts & Totes

T-Shirts and tote bags printed with an attractive New York ironweed, our 1995 Virginia wildflower of the year, will be available at our March membership meeting. Prices, including tax, are as follows: long sleeve shirt \$15.68, short sleeve shirt \$13.59 and tote bag \$12.54. Our chapter shares the profits with VNPS.

WILD NEWS

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President, Helen Walter, 754-8806

Editor, Nancy Arrington, 368-8431

Artist, Nicky Staunton, 368-9803

Deadline for the May-June issue is May 1, 1995.

Potowmack Chapter Plant Sale

Potowmack Chapter's spring wildflower sale will be Saturday, May 20, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Green Spring Gardens Park near Annandale. Call Gerry Pratt, 323-1094, for information.

PWWS Garden Tour

This year's garden tour, our 10th, will be held, rain or shine, Saturday, April 29, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, April 30, 1 to 5 p.m. The following gardens are on this year's tour:

Kathy and Don Ehrenberger, 8954 Jasmine Ct., Manassas

Janet Melton, 8655 Weir St., Manassas

Connie Wessol, 6835 Gen. Longstreet's Line near Manassas Battlefield.

The Ehrenberger garden was on our 1989 tour, and this will be the first time for the Melton and Wessol gardens.

Refreshments will be served at the Wessol garden. We need members to furnish refreshments, help get the gardens ready, and serve as hosts/hostesses during the tour. Helen Walter is taking care of the scheduling and she'd like to hear from you - call her at 754-8806 and offer to help.

As in past years, our 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 to members; call Nancy Arrington, 368-8431 or 368-9711, if you'd like extra copies.

New Wildflower Book Out

Copies of a new book, *Finding Wildflowers in the Washington-Baltimore Area*, co-authored by PWWS member Marion Lobstein with drawings by PWWS member Nicky Staunton, will be available at our March meeting. The book is a guide to the locations, habitats and blooming periods of wildflowers in Virginia as well as in Washington and Maryland. Detailed information on specific parks, trails, river banks, marshes, and other natural areas is given along with brief descriptions of some 720 species. Cost is \$34.95 for hardback copies and 15.95 for paperbacks. Marion and Nicky have kindly agreed to autograph books our members purchase. If you'd like a book but can't get to the meeting, call Marion at 536-7150, or Nicky at 368-9803.

Rare Plant Monitoring

At the February PWWS board meeting Conservation Chair Nicky Staunton announced requests our chapter has received to monitor rare plants at two sites in Prince William County. Nicky is getting more information about what our responsibility would be. If this sounds like something you'd be interested in helping with, call Nicky, 368-9803.

Fern Valley Wildflowers

Join James Adams, horticulturist and assistant curator of the U.S. National Arboretum's Fern Valley, for a walk at 10 a.m., Saturday, April 29. He will identify many spring wildflowers in a variety of habitats. Meet at the Fern Valley parking lot. For information, call 202-245-2726.

NVCC Guide Available

An attractive brochure, "Take a Walk on our Wild Side," describes NVCC-Manassas Campus's wildflower garden, bluebird trail and the nature trail. For a copy, call the college at 257-6600, or write to Marion Lobstein, NVCC-Manassas Campus, 6901 Sudley Rd., Manassas, VA 22110-2399.

Plant ID at Blandy

Marion Lobstein will conduct a workshop on "Introduction to Plant Identification" at Blandy Experimental Farm on Saturday, April 22, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The workshop will concentrate on hands-on activities to familiarize participants with plant structures, identification keys and field trips as tools for plant identification. A follow-up fieldtrip to the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area and the grounds of Blandy Experimental Farm will be conducted on April 29 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. These activities are sponsored by the Friends of the State Arboretum and a fee will be charged to cover costs of the workshop and/or fieldtrip. For information call Blandy at 703-837-1758.

Gardening With Woodland Wildflowers

PWWS member and garden designer Marie Davis will present a slide program on gardening with native shade loving wildflowers at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, Centreville, at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 26. The program is free but reservations must be made by calling 631-0013.



Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)

MARION LOBSTEIN
Associate Professor, Biology, NVCC

One of the most beautiful flowering tree combinations of spring is the magenta flowers of redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) contrasted with the white bracts of flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*). In early April, before the leaves appear, clusters of redbud flowers develop out of the bark of the branches and even the trunk of the tree. This development of flowers from woody tissues of a tree or shrub is a phenomenon known as cauliflory, a condition more common in the tropics than in temperate zones.

This colorful member of the legume family (Fabaceae) is commonly found in rich moist forest understories and along forest edges. The genus name *Cercis* is from the ancient name for the oriental Judas tree (another common name for redbud) and the species "*canadensis*" means Canadian. Its range is from Connecticut to Florida and northern Mexico and west to eastern Nebraska. It is found in virtually every county in Virginia except those on the Eastern Shore. Redbud refers to the flower buds which are a deep red color, and Judas tree is based on the legend of Judas Iscariot hanging himself on an Asiatic species of this genus.

The pink to magenta flowers are borne on 3/8- to 1/2-inch long pedicels (flowering stalks) in loose clusters of six or more flowers. The 3/8-inch long flowers have

an irregular symmetry and are papilionaceous (pea-shaped). Each flower is composed of a calyx of five deep red sepals, five pink to magenta petals (with the upper petal or standard being the smallest, the two lateral or wings being intermediate in size, and the two lowest petals forming the keel being the largest), ten separate stamens and a pistil with an elongated style. Flowers lack a scent but are pollinated by a variety of insects active in early spring. The fruit that develops is a pod or legume, typical of the pea family. The slender pod that turns reddish brown by fall is two to three inches long and 3/4-inch wide and has up to 10-12 brown flattened seeds. These fruits are eaten by deer and a number of bird species, thus the seeds are dispersed in the droppings of these animals.

The handsome alternate leaves of redbud are broadly heart-shaped and are two to six inches wide and almost as long. Leaf margins are smooth and the leaf surfaces are essentially smooth or only sparsely hairy on the underside. The bark of the slender trunk is dark gray-brown and develops scaly ridges in older trees. The slender zigzag twigs are reddish-brown and the small lateral buds (terminal buds are absent) are deep red to maroon in color. Redbud is an understory tree with a broadly spreading shape that averages 15-20 feet in height but may reach heights of 50 feet with a diameter of 18 inches in some instances.

The historical uses of redbud by American Indian tribes has been somewhat limited: small branches were used to make baskets, Indian children of some tribes ate the flowers, and a tea made from the bark was used to treat whooping cough. As mentioned earlier the fruits of redbud are eaten by wildlife as are the young twigs and flowers. Its primary human use today is as an ornamental species.

This spring look for the burst of color of redbud in bloom in local woods. Enjoy the contrast of this color along with the beauty of flowering dogwood. Later in the season look for the handsome heart-shaped leaves, striking dark bark, and the clusters of redbud fruits. This species is certainly one of our most distinct and eye-catching in the understory of our local woods.

Spring Woodland Hike

Enjoy a colorful array of wildflowers at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, Centreville, on Saturday, April 15, 2-3:30 p.m. Reservations required, 631-0013.

Lilies & Bells

See a lovely display of troutlilies, bluebells, trilliums and much more, Tuesday, April 18, 9-10:30 a.m., Riverbend Park, Great Falls. Reservations, 759-9018.

NVCC Open House

PWWS members are invited to a groundbreaking ceremony for Phase II construction at NVCC-Manassas Campus, Wednesday, March 29 at 4 p.m. behind the cafeteria of the main classroom building. There will be a tour of the wildflower garden that PWWS member Marie Davis designed and installed several years ago, and Marion Lobstein will be signing copies of her new book.

Nursery Source List

Nancy Arrington has updated the VNPS's list of nurseries that sell propagated native plants. We'll have copies at the March 20 membership meeting, or send your request for a copy, along with a SASE, to Nancy Arrington, P.O. Box 462, Manassas, VA 22110.

Rare Plant Auction & Sale

The friends of the National Arboretum are sponsoring the 4th Annual FONA Plant Auction and Gardeners' Plant Sale on Saturday, April 22, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Plant societies have been invited to dispense their information and Nicky Staunton is planning to be there to represent the VNPS. For more information, call the FONA office, 202-544-8733.

PWWS Plant Sale

This year's plant sale will be held Saturday, May 13, 9 a.m. to noon, in the parking lot of Bethel Lutheran Church (same location as our membership meetings). Marie Davis will chair this important fund raising activity.

Call Marie at 361-1626 if you can donate plants or if you need help getting your plants potted up. Call also if you need labels (plants should be labeled with botanical and common names). Marie can also advise you on prices to put on your plants. Be sure plants are potted up three weeks in advance so they'll look good for the sale. Plan to get your plants to the sale site by 7:30 on the morning of the sale, or call Marie if you need to make other arrangements.

On the day of the sale we need many helping hands to unload and arrange the plants, to serve as tellers during the sale, and to clean up afterwards. Call Marie 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.

Prince William Wildflower Society Board of Directors

President	Helen Walter, 754-8806
Vice President	Martha Slover, 818-9517
Secretary	Jeanne Endrikat, H: 361-3695 O: 323-9000
Treasurer	Marie Davis, 361-1626
Botany	Marion Lobstein, 536-7150
Conservation	Nicky Staunton, H: 368-9803 O: 368-3943
Education	Claudia Thompson-Deahl, H: 754-9235, O: 437-7658
Historian	Helen Walter
Hospitality	Joann Krumviede, 938-4378
Landscape	Marie Davis
Librarian	Helen Winn, 369-6514
Membership	Nancy Vehrs, H: 368-2898 O: 324-2351
Plant Sale	Marie Davis Jean Hubler, 369-9435
Programs	Nancy Herwig, 754-2328
Publications	Nancy Arrington, H: 368-8431 O: 368-9711
Propagation	Nancy Arrington
Registry	Elaine Haug, 670-2347

25th Annual Bluebell Walk

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's 25th annual bluebell walk will be Easter Sunday, April 16, 2:30 p.m., at Bull Run Regional Park, Centreville. PWWS members Nicky and Loren Staunton will be tour leaders this year. Weekday tours can be scheduled by calling 528-5406 at least two weeks in advance.

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

Pink Lady's Slipper Walk

Take a leisurely stroll with a naturalist to see one of Northern Virginia's largest displays of nature's beautiful orchids, 2-3 p.m., Sunday, April 30, at Hidden Oaks Nature Center, Annandale. Reservations and information, 941-1065.

NATIVES FOR THE GARDEN

NANCY ARRINGTON
Propagation Chairman



Redbud

(*Cercis canadensis*)

With clusters of bright pea-shaped magenta flowers studding its bare branches, redbud brings a feeling of warmth to the early spring garden. This small tree, a familiar understory species in local forests, is a good choice for both formal and naturalistic gardens.

Redbuds grow quickly and bloom when very young, but they have a tendency to be short-lived. In the mid-Atlantic area they're especially susceptible to Botryosphaeria Canker. The U.S. National Arboretum has begun a breeding program to develop disease resistant cultivars. It's a waste of time to try to save a declining redbud - just cut it down and start over with a healthy young tree.

Under cultivation redbuds grow 20 to 25 feet tall with an almost equal spread. They grow best in a deep, moist, well-drained soil, but will adapt to any soil, acid or alkaline, that isn't permanently wet. In full sun they

develop a dense rounded shape, bloom more profusely, but may decline faster. Dark green, broadly heart-shaped leaves are about five inches across and, in some trees, turn a soft yellow in fall.

In the garden redbuds are very much at home in naturalistic woodland settings similar to their locations in nature. They can also be used in a more formal garden to provide shade for a deck or patio. Be color-conscious when planting redbuds. They're beautiful with white dogwoods but not with pink ones. Also keep them away from coral colored flowering quinces and orange-flowered deciduous azaleas that bloom at the same time.

You can avoid the color dilemma by planting a "whitebud" (*Cercis canadensis* 'alba') or a form that is more pink than magenta. Redbud enthusiast J.C. Raulston has amassed an impressive collection of species and cultivars at the N.C. State University Arboretum in Raleigh. In the arboretum's July 1986 newsletter he described 14 forms of the Eastern redbud that have been found in the wild. Probably the most popular is 'Forest Pansy,' a selection with purple foliage that gradually turns green as the season progresses.

Redbud's hard-coated seeds need a period of moist cold (stratification) for germination, something that may happen too often if you have a redbud in your garden. Share the seedlings but keep at least one in case you need to replace the parent tree.

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Redbud
Cercis canadensis

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