

WILD NEWS

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

Number 02-01

March-April 2001

MARCH 19 MEETING - BACKYARD HABITATS

Laurie Liddick from the Education Department of the National Wildlife Federation will speak on the Backyard Wildlife Habitat program at our meeting on March 19. She will show slides and bring materials describing how to landscape for the four essential elements for wildlife: food, cover, water, and places to raise young. She will also tell us the requirements for certification by NWF as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat.

Laurie works at the NWF headquarters in Reston. She also works on the School Yard Habitat and classroom programs. Laurie is originally from Baltimore and received a degree in biology from East Carolina University.

Following the program there will be a short business meeting. Members will have the opportunity to sign up as volunteers for the annual spring events.

The meeting will be held on the usual third Monday of the month, March 19, at 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church, corner of Sudley Road/Rt. 234 and Plantation Lane in Manassas. For further information about the meeting, call President Nancy Vehrs at 703-368-2898.

NEXT MEETING

Mark your calendar for the May 21, 2001, membership meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church. Program information will appear in the next newsletter.

PREPARE NOW FOR MAY 12 PLANT SALE

Our annual plant sale will be on the usual Saturday before Mother's Day, May 13, 9 a.m. to noon on the grounds of Bethel Lutheran Church, Sudley Road and Plantation Lane, Manassas.

② Again this year Karen Rexrode at Windy Hill Plant Farm is allowing us to use her equipment to print out labels with cultivation information for our plants. We've added some species this year and Joann Krumviede is typing those. We'll continue with the pricing system using colored plastic labels (i.e. \$2 will be a red label, \$3 blue, etc.) that we started last year. They will be collected at checkout and reused next year. We plan to have both the pricing and cultivation labels at the March meeting.

Plants should be potted up two weeks before the sale and brought to the church by 7:30 a.m. on the day of the sale. We sold almost every plant we had last year so we're asking everybody to make an extra effort to bring more plants this year. Shade plants, species that attract butterflies, shrubs, and ferns always sell really well. Call one of the members listed below if you need help getting your plants potted. If you need the blank white labels we've used in the past call Nancy Vehrs, 703-368-2898. Marie Davis, 703-361-1626, has pots for anyone who needs them. Call me at 703-368-8431 for labels, horticulture or pricing guidance, or to help out before or during the sale.

③

-Nancy Arrington
Plant Sale Chairman

Coin - water plant 540-937-2312
Charles - gladiolus 703-361-5125
Leo - seeds 703-791-6175



From the President - - Nancy Vehrs

Spring is almost here! We dodged a March snowstorm early this month, but unlike most people, I must admit that I was a bit disappointed. There's been so little snow this winter, though I know it seemed like more because what little we had lasted a long time. I never had the opportunity to cross country ski through the tranquil trails of the woods of Manassas Battlefield Park as I enjoy doing after a decent snowfall. Warren and I did take a memorable winter walk in the battlefield where we saw many deer as well as a red fox in the clearing of a power line easement.

Most of the dead stalks from our garden beds have been cleared away just in time for the spring bulbs to start their succession of blooms. We have no wildflower blooms in the garden yet, but there are so many signs of life as all the perennials start new growth cycles. I expect to see signs of bloodroot soon. They pop up quickly, but their leaves are difficult to spot in the camouflage of the leaf litter. Soon I'll also be impatiently scratching around in that leaf litter for signs of the initially purple growth of my beloved bluebells. Spring is so intoxicating.

I had the opportunity to participate in the VNPS stakeholders meeting at Pocahontas State Park late in February where members from around the state participated in brainstorming and strategizing sessions to set the course of the Society. Chris Ludwig, Chief Biologist with the Commonwealth of Virginia's Natural Heritage Division, led off with an update on the *Flora of Virginia* Project (FVP). Chris presented an inspiring slide show and distributed colorful newly-printed brochures on the project. He has an ambitious schedule with a publication date in late 2007 to coincide with the 400th anniversary of Jamestown. Read more about the FVP and the outcome of the meeting in the next state newsletter.

Our own Marion Lobstein, who really spearheaded the drive for the *Flora* with her fellow Academy of Science members, is featured in the current (Spring 2001) issue of *NVCC Magazine*, a quarterly publication of Northern Virginia Community College. Marion is headlined as *The Flower Lady* and is characterized as a person "who sees beauty everywhere and wants to share her vision with as many people as possible." Her schedule is very busy and we are lucky to have her so involved in our chapter.

PWWS has many wonderful spring activities ahead. I hope you'll plan to attend many of them and volunteer for the society in some capacity too.

- Nancy

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VNPS home page: <http://www.vnps.org>.

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Deadline for the March-April issue is April 28, 2001.
Mail information to Nancy Vehrs at 8318 Highland St., Manassas, VA 20110-3671 or email to nvehrs@attglobal.net.

April Garden Tours

Mark your calendars now for the annual PWWS garden tours on Sunday, April 29 from noon to 5 p.m. Two old favorites are back and one new garden will be featured. All are large woodland gardens.

The Woodbine Woods garden of charter member Jeanne Fowler is back on tour for the first time since 1993. Tiana Camfiord's Clifton garden returns to the tour after being featured in 1996. Marie Davis will debut her garden at her eight-acre spread in the Brentsville area of Manassas where she has lived for the last two years. Members may remember that she was previously limited to a quarter-acre suburban lot in Sudley, so imagine what she's been able to accomplish with some acreage!

Tour brochures with directions will be mailed to all members in early April. For additional copies, contact Nancy Vehrs at 703-368-2898, email nvehrs@attglobal.net.

Native Plant Symposium

15th Annual Lahr Symposium, "Native Plants: A Growing Partnership with Nature," National Arboretum in D.C., Saturday, March 31, with a native plant sale open to the general public from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. For information, call 202-245-4521 or visit www.usna.usda.gov/lahr2.htm.

Photos Requested

Martha Slover needs photos (up to 3x5" size) of the following plants to make signs for the plant sale. Bring them to the March meeting or mail to 11800 Hilltop Dr, Manassas, 20112.

Canada anemone, white wood aster, late purple aster, threadleaf coreopsis, swamp and giant sunflower, jewelweed, monarda "Prairie Knight," horsemint, sundrops, mountain mint, lyreleaf sage showy skullcap, cup plant, blue-stemmed goldenrod, persimmon, and arrowwood.

January Meeting Minutes

The January meeting was held at Bethel Lutheran Church in Manassas on January 15, 2001. Nancy Vehrs, president, opened the meeting. It consisted of nature oriented slides from the vacation collections of willing members, followed by a brief business meeting.

Marion Lobstein began the presentations with her slides from Collier's Seminole Park. The park is situated in the western Everglades of Florida. We saw a wide variety of floras living in and around the mangrove swamps, including bromeliads (air plants), corkscrew ferns, pickerelweeds, and the Royal palm (rarely found as a native). Wildlife sighted on her visit were pintsize alligators and herons.

Nicky Staunton shared her visit to False Cape last March. It is quite a haven for birders, and it is near the Virginia Beach area. One of the organizers "foraged" her garden to add unusual edibles to the salads such as pine seedlings (tasted like pine). Highlights of the trip were laurel growing on the beach, mistletoe in the trees, fragrant yellow jasmine, and lots of blueberries. Nicky commented she would like to come back some time, and forage on those blueberries! Among the dunes and the scrubby pines were old gravestones. She even had a slide of a feral hog - a testimony to the need to leave this remote area undeveloped, so that wildlife will find it a refuge.

Then we traveled by slides to Mt. Cuba, Delaware. Nicky and a few other native plant society members went on the spring tour last year. The slides were bursting with great shots of rhododendrons and azaleas. Nicky emphasized how Mrs. Copeland (of the Dupont fortune) keeps the grounds beautiful. Native plants abound, and wildflower club members are glad to study them gloriously landscaped.

The last presentation was by Joann Krumviede, who traveled to the west - near Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. Her slides (continued next page)

(continued from page 3)
 were peppered with western wildflowers. She commented that she counted 50 to 60 different varieties while hiking in the area. Some of her favorites were the Indian paintbrush, Jacob's ladder, penstemon, and the primrose. She also enjoyed the pigmy bitterroot and western bluebells. She found it interesting that many flowers that were finished blooming in Virginia, were in their full glory in Colorado that July. Talk about late bloomers!

During the business meeting portion of the evening Martha Stover moved to approve the minutes of the November meeting written by Carol Thompson as printed in *Wild News*. Leo Stolz then seconded the motion and it carried by unanimous vote.

Nicky Staunton reminded people about the meeting tomorrow of the Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) about the future of Cherry Hill. Nancy Vehrs handed out names and addresses of the members of the BOCS to contact to save the only 22 miles of shoreline left in the county that is not developed.

Nicky also addressed the issue of a proposed cut in state funding to the Division of Natural Heritage and urged members to contact state elected officials.

Marion Lobstein stated that they would be seeking wider fund raising for the production of the *Flora of Virginia*. They will seek a nonprofit "501" status, and keep the Flora to a two volume size to be able to carry in the field.

Warren Ryder expressed his concern with the incoming president's appointment of Gale Norton as the next Secretary of Interior. He felt she had a bad record of opposing the protection of natural resources on public land.

Nancy Vehrs announced that the March topic would be a presentation by the National Wildlife Federation on Wildlife Habitats. She also reminded everyone to donate pictures to our new scrapbook created by Robyn Thoresen, historian.

Nicky Staunton will be giving a presentation on January 23rd at the first meeting of the newly

created Fredericksburg Area Wildflower Society, the tenth chapter of VNPS.

Door prizes of wildflower books were awarded and the meeting was adjourned.

- June Najjum
 Secretary

Attendees:

Jennifer Shepard	Kathy Ehrenberger	Martha Slover
John Pauswinski	Carol Thompson	June Najjum
Jeanne Fowler	Leo Stoltz	Linda Stoltz
Wendy Pierce	Nicky Staunton	Robyn Thoreson
Joyce Andrew	Helen Rawls	Nancy Vehrs
Warren Ryder	Marion Lobstein	Joanne Krumviede
Nancy Arrington	Volker Imschweiler	

WILDFLOWER WALKS

Marion Lobstein offers the following schedule:

Great Falls Park, VA, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on the third Sunday of the month, March 18, April 15, and May 20.

Balls Bluff on April 15 from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Call her at 703-536-7150 for reservations.

She will teach a botany class to cover basics of botany, stems, roots, leaves, flowers, and fruits, as well as the life cycle of the flowering plant on March 17, at Bland Experimental Farm. For information call 540-837-1758, ext. 30 or Marion at 703-257-6643.

She will conduct the Smithsonian Associates tours at Teddy Roosevelt Island April 1, National Arboretum April 29, Thompson Wildlife Management Area and State Arboretum of Virginia May 5, and the C & O Canal May 6. Call 202-357-3030 for information or access www.residentassociates.org/rap.

On April 21 Marion will conduct a Spring Wildflower Workshop and tour of the grounds of State Arboretum of Virginia to practice identification skills with a followup spring wildflower identification walk at the Thompson Wildlife Management Area on April 28. For information call Bland Experimental Farm at 540-837-1758, ext. 0.

CUTLEAF TOOTHWORT

Marion Lobstein

**Associate Professor of Biology
Northern Virginia Community
College-Manassas Campus**

Cutleaf toothwort (*Dentaria laciniata*) is one of the few showy members of the mustard family (brassicaceae) to be found in our deciduous woods from mid March into May. This perennial species is a spring ephemeral which disappears by late May. The habitat of cutleaf toothwort is rich, moist deciduous woods. They range from eastern Quebec and Vermont south to Florida and Alabama and east to Kansas.

The genus name *Dentaria* is derived from the Latin word dens, meaning tooth, which refers to the rhizomes which have a toothed appearance and *laciniata*, which means slashed, refers to the irregular toothing of the leaves. Other common names for cutleaf toothwort are crinkleroot (referring to the appearance of the rhizome), purple flowered toothwort (referring to the variation in flower color), and pepperrout (referring to the peppery tast of the rhizomes of this and other toothwort species).

The flowers of this species are borne in a loose terminal cluster of 12 or more on flowering stems or peduncles that are 3/4 to one inch long. Each 1/2 to 3/4 inch long flower has four green sepals, four white petals that are usually tinged with pinkish-lavender, six stamens with two being shorter than the other four, and a pistil with an elongated style. The scentless flowers secrete nectar that attracts bees and syrphid flies, the primary pollinators.

The 3/4 to one and 1/2 inch long fruit that develops after fertilization is an elongated, narrow fruit (characteristic of many species of the mustard family) called a silique. There are approximately six small brown seeds within each fruit.

The height of cutleaf toothwort plants is

seven to fifteen inches tall. The three whorled leaves of cutleaf toothwort develop roughly 2/3 up the stem. These leaves are usually deeply divided into three to five segments whose margins may range from sharply toothed to almost entire. There may even be some purple tinge on the young leaves. The petioled leaves are two to four inches wide.

The light-colored, pungent rhizome is five to seven inches long and often has a beaded appearance. Its fibrous roots of the rhizome are shallow. As with other spring ephemerals, the leaves and above ground stem of toothwort generally senesce or die back by late May. A few individual plants may have their leaves persist into the summer.

There is a less common species of toothwort, the slender toothwort (*D. heterophylla*) in the northern Virginia area. Its flowers are very similar to those of cutleaf toothwort, but there are only two (rarely three) opposite toothed leaves halfway up the stem as well as a basal toothed leaf.

Both Native American and modern native plant food enthusiasts have used the peppery rhizome of toothwort in various food preparations. According to some people, it can be substituted for horseradish by native plant food enthusiasts. However, as with other native plants, please leave toothwort plants you find for you and others to enjoy in years to come! Feast on this plant with your eyes only!



Walks for *Flora*

This spring Nicky Staunton will lead wildflower hikes for PWWS to benefit the *Flora of Virginia* Project (FVP). Reservations and a \$10 minimum donation to the FVP are required. PWWS will forward all proceeds to the FVP. Contact Nicky at 703-368-9803, email nstaunton@earthlink.net, by the Wednesday before each walk to register.

March 31, time to be announced - **Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge**, Woodbridge to search for signs of spring along tidal wetlands. Two mile ambling loop trail looking for early blooms and buds, birding along the way. Possibly see trailing arbutus.

April 14, 10 a.m., Stone Bridge loop, **Manassas National Battlefield Park**. See bluebells, spring beauties, and trout lilies along Bull Run. Walk the loop uphill and return through wetlands on the boardwalk.

May 13, 2 p.m. **Conway-Robinson Memorial State Forest**, Gainesville. Three hour Mother's Day loop walk to see forest spring flowers including pink and yellow orchids depending on their blooming cycle.

MEETING NOTICE: The PWWS Board will meet April 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Nancy Vehrs. Call 703-368-2898 for info.

Spring Fling Garden Expo

Join the Virginia Cooperative Extension at Spring Fling 2001 on Saturday, April 28 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Prince William County Fairgrounds for a free lawn and landscape extravaganza. Talks, demonstrations, educational displays, commercial plant vendors, children's activities, and door prizes will all be part of the fun. PWWS will also have a display booth this year. For more information call 703-792-6285.

Upcoming Events of Interest

March 24, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. "Vernal Pools: Mudpuddles or Unique Wetlands?" workshop, Arlington Outdoor Lab in Fauquier County. For information, contact Kim Hosen, 703-367-0069, khosen@pecva.org.

April 15, 2 p.m. 32nd Annual Bluebell Walk in Bull Run Regional Park, Centreville. Over 150 acres of Virginia bluebells! Call the Nature Center at Potomac Overlook Regional Park at 703-538-5406 for more information.

April 26, Washington Area Butterfly Club program on "Butterfly Ecosystems and Gardens" at 7:30 p.m. at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 South Carlin Springs Road, Arlington. For directions or information, call 703-228-6535, 703-354-9668, or visit the WABC website at <http://users.sitestar.net/butterfly>.

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exp. 10/01



 **March Meeting: 7:30 p.m., Monday, March 19, Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas**
"Backyard Habitats"