



WILD NEWS

Prince William Wildflower Society, A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2002-04

July-August 2002

JULY 8 MEETING

Deanne Eversmeyer, horticultural specialist for the Washington Golf and Country Club and recently the VNPS Horticulture Chair, will speak on *Creating a Suburban Meadow* at our meeting July 8 at 7 p.m. at Bull Run Library in Manassas. Please note the early start time and change in venue due to scheduling conflicts. Bull Run Library is located at 8051 Ashton Avenue.

Directions to meeting:

From Rt. 66: Exit 47A, onto Route 234 south business (Sudley Road). Go one mile and turn right at the fourth traffic light onto Sudley Manor Drive (There is a huge lighted sign for Bull Run Plaza at this intersection across from Hollywood Video and Taco Bell). *Turn right at the second traffic light onto Ashton Avenue. Bull Run Regional Library is .2 miles down Ashton Avenue on the right.

From City of Manassas: Go north on Rt. 234 toward Rt. 66 and turn left at the light onto Sudley Manor Drive (Bull Run Plaza with huge sign). Follow above *directions.

For further information about the meeting, call Nancy Vehrs at 703-368-2898.

Inside this issue:

Look inside for the goldenrod-colored Summer Garden Tour flyer. This year we feature the gardens of Fran and Ken Bass, Tiana Camfiord, and Marie Davis. Come stroll through their lovely expansive gardens on July 21.

NEW RECORD SET

This year's plant sale was another record setter - almost \$4450 in plant sales and \$315 in memberships. We had many new plants this year, including a good selection of trees and shrubs, several fern species, and some new water plants.

A giant THANK YOU to everyone who helped with the sale and/or furnished plants: Tiana Camfiord, Charlotte Cochard, Marie and Paul Davis, Kathy and Don Ehrenberger, Jeanne and Hans Endrikat, Bonnie Fulford, Joann Krumviede, Kim Lagen, Mary LeKander, Frances Louer, June Najjum, Wendy Pierce, Steve Ritter, Warren Ryder, Charles Smith, Martha Slover, Linda and Leo Stoltz, Nicky Staunton, Robin Thoreson, Nancy Vehrs, Catherine Waterhouse, and Gina Yurkonis.

And thanks to all our loyal customers - we hope you'll be back next year!

-Nancy Arrington
Plant Sale Chair

GOOD NEWS!

At press time, Ken Oristaglio, the Virginia Department of Transportation staffer in charge of collecting applications for the wildflower license plates for Operation Wildflower, is cautiously optimistic that the required 350 orders for the license plates will be met and production can begin shortly thereafter. Hooray! If you haven't ordered yours yet, you still can be one of the first to sport a plate with Virginia bluebells, butterfly weed, and black-eyed Susans. Visit the website www.dmvnow.com or call 804-371-6825.



From the President - Nancy Vehrs

What's that bright blue bird that has suddenly begun to appear at our birdfeeder this last week of June? An indigo bunting! Wow! He (she?) seems to like the finch select mix that Warren uses. Have we actually created a habitat that invites birds like that - or is it that they've been crowded out of their natural environment? Regardless, we're thrilled that he's chosen our garden. Surely all those natives and "weeds" factored into his appearance.

The summer garden is switching into high gear at our place. There's so much *monarda fistulosa* that we'll be reducing its garden space allotment next year. The red *monarda didyma* has been shrinking in proportion to its relative. Since it's such a favorite with the hummingbirds we'll be adding more of it to the garden.

Some new additions to our garden are common and swamp milkweeds which we rescued from the Greg Roy/Great Oaks site in Herndon last summer. In the fall I found some monarda caterpillars on one of the plants and was just thrilled. (Does it sound like I'm easily thrilled? Nature has a way of affecting me that way.) The common milkweed is just now blooming and is attracting many bees and butterflies. The flowers are even fragrant, a wonderful bonus. I wonder why it's not more popular in gardens. I guess we'll find out next year if it starts to take over.

The catbird is raising young in the non-native photinias right now and we've already had chickadees, nuthatches, and wrens raise broods in birdhouses in our garden. The great crested flycatcher didn't nest in the usual birdbox in our yard this year because the pesky squirrels appropriated it for themselves. We do hear the flycatchers, so we know they've found a home nearby. Those squirrels have really overstayed their welcome in our garden. It's not only the usual complaint that they eat all the seed and

prevent the birds from feeding, but they are exceptionally destructive with potted plants this season. Warren took to putting wire over many of the pots only to have those squirrels find any vulnerabilities. It also made them take revenge on our strings of outdoor lights by biting the wires. Maybe they wouldn't have found that so much fun if the lights had been plugged in.

Ah, the trials and tribulations of gardening - and I didn't even mention those horrid Japanese beetles! I look forward to visiting the gardens of Tiana, Ken & Fran, and Marie on July 21 and I hope you do too. Before then, Deanne Eversmeyer will share her garden meadow with us through slides at our early meeting on July 8. Till then,

- Nancy

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

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Deadline for the September-October issue is September 1, 2002. Mail information to Nancy Vehrs at 8318 Highland St., Manassas, VA 20110-3671 or send email to nvehrs@attglobal.net.

Events at Blandy

The following are lectures and walks offered by the State Arboretum at Blandy, east of Winchester off Route 50, 540-837-1758, www.virginia.edu/~blandy/.

June 6: 10 a.m. Expand your knowledge of tree ID during a mini-course and short walk, \$6. Free plant ID, 9 a.m.-noon.

Blandy's Summer Seminar Series:

July 3: Flora and fauna of the Galapagos Islands: Current threats and future prospects.

July 10: The conservation value of habitat corridors: Results from a large-scale experiment.

July 17: Grand saga of the monarch butterfly: An endangered biological phenomenon.

July 24: Gene flow, pollen competition, and introgression between locally differentiated populations of *Lobelia cardinalis*.

July 31: Behavioral barriers to gene flow in two intriguing taxa.

August 7: Ecological responses to habitat alteration by meadow voles (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*)

All seminars take place on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in the Parkfield Learning Center and are presented by visiting university professors. Admission is free, and all seminars are open to the public. A optional potluck dinner follows each seminar; please bring a dish to share.

Donations Still Sought

Please consider donating a nature-themed item for the auction at the VNPS annual meeting to be held in Glen Allen (in the Richmond area) September 13-15. This auction is a major fundraiser for the society at the state level. Contact Nancy Vehrs at 703-368-2898, nvehrs@attglobal.net for more information.

Other Events of Interest

August 15: Potowmack Chapter program on "Grasses: Morphology, Ecology, and Taxonomy" presented by Paul Peterson, 7:30 p.m., Green Spring Gardens Park. 703-534-8179.

August 24: Irvine Nature Center Native Plant Seminar & Sale. Seminar 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. with presentations by Rick Darke, Craig Tufts, and Johnny Randall, \$55. Optional afternoon workshops, \$25. Native plant sale with 13 regional native plant vendors, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., (8 a.m. access for seminar participants), 410-484-2413, www.explorenature.org.

August 24: Meadow Wildflower Walk, Cabell's Mill, EC Lawrence Park, Centreville. Call for free reservations, 703-631-0013.

September 13-15: VNPS Annual Meeting with speakers, field trips, banquet, elections, auction, and more. Theme: *The Flora and Fauna of the Fall Line*. Fee. Glen Allen Cultural Arts Center, Glen Allen, VA. Info: 540-837-1600.

NWF Lists Beneficial Birds

The National Wildlife Federation recently published a list of the following ten birds that help control garden pests: purple martin, red-eyed vireo, chipping sparrow, downy woodpecker, yellow warbler, eastern bluebird, common nighthawk, eastern phoebe, Baltimore oriole, and house wren. Other important birds are swallows, white-eyed vireos, flickers, American redstarts, yellowthroats, orchard orioles, and Carolina wrens. Tina Phillips, project leader of Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Bird House Network, says, "The most important thing to do to attract birds to your yard is to provide an enticing habitat, not just a nest box. Birds choose a nest site based on its surrounding habitat." To read the entire article and learn more about important habitat requirements, click backyard habitat at www.nwf.org/nationalwildlife.

May 20 Meeting Minutes

Call to order 7:40 p.m. by President, Nancy Vehrs. Charles Smith introduced speaker, Mark Richman of the Mycological Association of Washington, DC. Mr. Richman showed slides and spoke on the types of mushrooms and other fungi of our area. He also brought samples of some which are fruiting now and answered questions from the audience.

At the break, members and guests enjoyed Joann Krumviede's homemade strawberry shortcake and other refreshments.

After reconvening, a motion to accept the minutes of the last meeting as printed in the *Wild News* was given by John Pauswinski, seconded by Leo Stoltz, and unanimously accepted.

Treasurer Marie Davis reported the PWWS bank balance of \$5,346.03. Plant Sale Chair Nancy Arrington thanked everyone involved in this year's very successful sale May 11. The Chapter grossed \$4,758.00 of which \$4,443 were proceeds from plants - a new world record.

For the second year, the chapter had a booth at the Prince William "Spring Fling" April 27; volunteers spoke to many visitors and conducted a drawing for a \$10 gift certificate to the plant sale. The certificate was won by Regina Yurkonis who happily spent it on bluebells and wild ginger at the sale.

Our Spring Garden Tours, April 28 were well-attended despite early rain. Thanks went out to hosts: the Milhouses, Louers, and Thompson-Deahls and to the volunteers involved. Summer Garden Tours are scheduled for July 21, 2002, and will show the gardens of Marie Davis, Fran and Ken Bass, and Tiana Camfiord. Tiana suggested the chapter may want to offer plants for sale at the summer tours. Nancy Vehrs offered to discuss the topic at the next Board meeting.

Nicky Staunton updated the group on the progress of the *Flora of Virginia* Project which has received its tax-exempt status. Details are on the website.

Our next membership meeting will be July 15, (*ed. note: subsequently changed to July 8*) 2002, with Deanne Eversmeyer, VNPS Horticulture Chair, speaking at the Bull Run Library.

The Nominating Committee, Jeanne Endrikat, Diane Flaherty, Martha Slover, Charles Smith, and Nancy Arrington, will meet by July to derive a slate of officers to be voted upon at the chapter's Annual Meeting. EC Lawrence Park was suggested as a site for the Annual Meeting.

Nicky Staunton noted the deadline for applying for the Virginia wildflower license plate is June 30. The plate production will be canceled if the minimum number of requests is not received. A partial amount of the fee would be spent on roadside plantings and VDOT should be encouraged by members.

The VNPS Annual Meeting will be held September 13-15 in the Richmond area. Nicky added some plans for the meeting at the Glen Allen Cultural Arts Center include an Aralia specialist, field trips, speaker Cole Burrell, a raffle, and auction.

Other announcements were the Virginia Academy of Science will meet on the *Flora* at Hampton University on Friday, May 24. Any PWWS members would be welcome. PWWS will host the VNPS Annual Meeting in 2003.

The door prize drawing, a book by Penelope Hobhouse donated by Joann Krumviede, was won by Blythe Merritt. The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

*-Respectfully submitted by Regina Yurkonis,
Acting Secretary.*

Attendance:

Nancy Arrington, Tiana Camfiord, Charlotte Cochard, Paul Cook, Marie Davis, Jeanne Fowler, William Hendrickson, Joann Krumviede, Blythe Merritt, Carol Nelson, Ronald Nelson, Julie Newman, John Pauswinski, Wendy Pierce, Bettina Richman, Mark Richman (speaker), Warren Ryder, Martha Slover, Charles Smith, Nicky Staunton, Lou Staunton, Leo Stoltz, Linda Stoltz, Robyn Thoreson, Sally Underwood, Nancy Vehrs, Karen Waltman, Regina Yurkonis

INDIAN PIPE

Marion Lobstein
Associate Professor of Biology
Northern Virginia Community College-
Manassas Campus

Monotropa uniflora, commonly called Indian pipe is a perennial member of the Ericaceae (heath family), but may sometimes be placed in the Pyrolaceae (pyrola) family. This very unusual waxy appearing plant is icy white to light pink and looks more like a fungus than a flowering plant. This species, which usually appears in clusters of individual plants, blooms by pushing up through leaf litter in June and clumps may continue to appear until early autumn. The habitat of Indian pipe is in rich damp woods or in sandy woods in the coastal plain. The range is throughout much of the continental United States north into Canada and Alaska and even in Asia.

The genus name of *Monotropa* is derived from two Greek words, "monos" for one and "tropos" for turn, referring to the single flower on each stem that turns down while blooming; the species name *uniflora* means a single flower. Other common names are corpse plant and death plant, referring to the tendency of the delicate tissue to turn black once it is handled. Ice plant refers to its color and convulsion or fit root refers to one of its medicinal uses.

The individual flower of each Indian pipe is up to an inch long with two or four small sepals that are shed soon after the flower opens, four to five petals that form an elongated bell, ten stamens, and a pistil with a disk-like stigma. The flowers are odorless, but pollination is still most probably by insects. The fruit that develops from each fertilized flower is a capsule up to one-half inch long with many seeds in it. After the release of pollen, the position of the flower becomes upright and that is the position in which the fruit develops.

Each plant has a number of slender waxy flower-bearing stems that are four to ten inches

tall with only small scale-like leaves. The roots are just a mass of fibrous projections. No part of this plant contains chlorophyll and no photosynthesis occurs. Instead, this species, along with other relatives in our area, such as a *M. hypopithys* or pine sap are saprophytes ("sapro" is Greek for death). Fungi are associated with roots of these plants in a symbiotic relationship in which fungus digests nutrients from dead plant material in the soil and the roots of the Indian pipe or pine sap obtain nutrients from these fungi. Other plants such as beechdrops (*Epifagus virginiana*) or cancerroot (*Conopholus americana*) are true parasites living off the roots of other living plants.

There were many medicinal uses of this plant by Native American tribes as well as in folk or herbal medicine. Medicinal uses ranged from treating epilepsy, nervous conditions, female problems (especially those involving childbirth), gonorrhea, bladder ulcerations, stomach problems, cholera, nose bleeds, and hemorrhages. It was also widely used externally as a eyewash as well as a replacement for opium to deal with pain. Extracts from all parts of the plant purportedly have antiseptic and astringent qualities.

This summer keep your eyes open for the ghostly plant; both its unusual icy beauty and its lifestyle are well worth efforts to locate stands of Indian pipe.



Indian Pipe

Monotropa uniflora

Nominations Sought

Here's your chance to take a more active role in the PWWS and guide the organization to new directions by running for one of the offices. At this time, we need a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Have fun at the same time and learn to know the board members better at the monthly board meetings. Names of people for possible nominations can be submitted to the nominating committee, consisting of Nancy Arrington (703-368-8431), Jeanne Endrikat (703-361-3695), Diane Flaherty, (703-330-9862), Martha Slover (703-331-0302), and Charles Smith (703-361-5125). Also, if any of the present officers would like to be considered for next year again, please let us know.

*-Jeanne Endrikat,
on behalf of the nominating committee*

"If every American donated five hours a week, it would equal the labor of 20 million full-time workers." - Whoopi Goldberg

ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendar now for the chapter's annual picnic meeting to be held on Sunday, October 6. It's a great opportunity to socialize with fellow members and explore native plants as well. This will also be an important meeting with an election of officers for the 2002-2004 term. As required by the bylaws, members will receive a meeting notice 30 days in advance.

August Board Meeting


The next PWWS Board meeting will be held August 19 at 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church. All members are welcome to attend. For further information, call Nancy Vehrs at 703-368-2898.

PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY
A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society
PO Box 83, Manassas, VA 20108-0083



exp. 10/02

Nancy Arrington
8388 Briarmont Lane
Manassas, VA 20112-2755

 **Next Meeting: 7 p.m., Monday, July 8, Bull Run Library, Manassas**
Deanne Eversmeyer on "Creating a Suburban Meadow"