



WILD NEWS

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

Number 2004-04

July-August 2004

JULY 19 MEETING

This month's PWWS Membership meeting will be held at the **Prince William Hospital, Conference Room A on the 3rd floor** at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, July 19.

Jim Waggener, president of the Fairfax Audubon Society, will deliver a presentation on the Audubon At Home project. Audubon At Home is an outreach program by the National Audubon Society that promotes the protection of rich ecosystems and the creation of healthy habitats in our living and working spaces.

Audubon At Home promotes the use of native plants, removal of invasive species, the reduction of mowed area, and reduction in the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers. Visit its website at www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/.

Jim's presentation will be followed by a slide show by PWWS President Charles Smith, demonstrating ways of creating healthy backyard habitat using the principals of National Audubon Society and other conservation organizations. The talk will also focus on the needs of wildlife.

Please note that this is a new location for the meeting because of a scheduling conflict at Bethel Lutheran Church. For more information, contact President Charles Smith at 703-361-5125.

LOOKING AHEAD

Watch your mailbox later this summer for formal notification of the VNPS annual picnic meeting on Sunday, September 26. Members will elect officers for the next two-year term at this important meeting.

AUDUBON AT HOME GARDEN TOURS

After listening to Jim Waggener's talk and viewing Charles Smith's slides on July 19, you'll want to view the Audubon At Home program for yourself at its first garden tour in Northern Virginia on Saturday, July 24 from 1 - 5 p.m. Homeowners and property managers will showcase how they incorporate native plants in environmentally friendly settings. Private gardens and the National Wildlife Federation headquarters are on tour as well as the gardens of parks, a school, church, and library. The program seeks to inspire visitors to adopt good gardening practices on their own properties. PWWS is not sponsoring a garden tour this summer and recommends this activity as an alternative.

This Audubon At Home program will demonstrate environmentally friendly solutions to garden problems such as coping with storm water run off and soil erosion. It will also show composting methods, rain barrels, water features, and gardens planted specifically for birds and butterflies. Tip sheets and educational materials will be available at each location.

The tours are organized in three geographic areas with one in the McLean, Falls Church, Arlington, and Alexandria area, one in the Great Falls, Reston, Herndon, and Sterling area, and one in the Fairfax Station, Burke, Springfield, and Franconia area. Driving directions are available online at www.fairfaxaudubon.org. For further information, call the Fairfax Audubon Society at 703-256-6895 or send an email to aah@fairfaxaudubon.org.



From the President - Charles Smith

My Two Cents

The recent catches of nine northern snakehead fish in the Potomac River symbolize a significant fact: our landscape is changing dramatically. I was thinking about this recently while walking through woods in Prince William and Fairfax Counties. The number of flowering dogwoods infected with anthracnose is significant. At the same time, the massive increase in area covered by Japanese stilt grass bodes poorly for the future. Within the next decade, we may well lose most of our dogwoods, and the majority of wild space may be mostly covered by Japanese stilt grass.

I was saddened by this thought as I walked across a particularly invasive-free and species-rich wooded hillside where Christmas fern and bottlebrush grass were in abundance. All I could think was: how long? This biological pollution also has a significant effect on animals. The reduction in native plant food sources is compounded by restriction of movement as the abundance of vegetation produced by the invasive plants literally chokes the ground and understory. One affected animal that stands out in my mind is the eastern box turtle.

In the Japanese stilt grass forest during the summer, box turtles push their way through stem densities of from 1,500 to 3,000 stems per square yard. They cannot see anything except what is immediately in front of them and the walls of green towering overhead. They leave obvious trails of trampled stilt grass that gives away their location. Is food less abundant in this situation? Looking around, you think that it must be. I have yet to read a good study which provides any answers.

The turtle is a good animal to focus on for several reasons: it is directly impacted by these changes, but its species or similar ones have survived numerous changes in habitat and dramatic climatic events over almost 300 million years of evolution. Yes, the lowly box turtle possesses the

genetic heritage and successful body plan which may make it one of the most adaptive animals in our part of the world.

So, as our local ecosystems change dramatically over the coming years, we will experience loss, but we also will continue to encounter familiar organisms. Those of us who love wild places will continue to go to them to explore and be enriched.

- Charles

August Board Meeting

The PWWS Board will next meet on August 16. Board meetings are also open to all members. Call President Charles Smith at 703-361-5125 for further information.

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Secretary	Charlotte Cochard, 703-330-6960
Treasurer	Diane Flaherty, 703-330-9862
Botany	Marion Lobstein, 703-536-7150
Conservation	OPEN
Education	OPEN
Flora Liaison	Regina Yurkonis, 540-937-2312
Hospitality	OPEN
Membership	Nancy Vehrs, 703-368-2898
Programs	OPEN
Plant Sale	Nancy Arrington, 703-368-8431
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Deadline for the September-October issue is September 1, 2004. Mail information to Nancy Vehrs at 8318 Highland St., Manassas, VA 20110-3671 or send email to nvehrs@attglobal.net.

May Meeting Minutes

The Prince William Wildflower Society met on May 17, 2004, at Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas, Virginia. Charles Smith, chapter president, convened the meeting at 7:40 p.m. and introduced the guest speaker. Phil Sheridan, founder and Director of the Meadowview Biological Research Station, delivered an information-packed program on the work of the station to protect and restore bogs and their associated plants. Mr. Sheridan gave the audience a virtual tour of the station and a run-down on the restoration work at a number of Virginia bogs. He explained the ecological role of the pitcher plant in the habitat and health of the bog and showed beautiful slides of the plants. The station propagates plants for restoration projects and also sells the plants. There are three endangered species of the pitcher plant: *Sarracenia rubra* ssp. *Jonesii* (Mountain sweet pitcher plant), *Sarracenia oreophila* (Green mountain pitcher plant), and *Sarracenia rubra* ssp. *Alabamensis* (Alabama canebroke pitcher plant). The yellow pitcher plant, *Sarracenia flava*, and the purple pitcher plant, *Sarracenia purpurea*, are native to Virginia.

The work of Meadowview is being extended to the Joseph Pines Preserve. The goal of the preserve is to protect the remaining population of native Virginia yellow pitcher plant and the associated long-leaf pine. A wealth of information and additional resources on the work of the station and on bog plants is available at the website: www.pitcherplant.org.

At the end of the presentation, Charles called for announcements. Treasurer Diane Flaherty reported the annual plant sale yielded a net \$3,528.70.

Botany Chair, Marion Lobstein announced that the *Flora of Virginia* project is beginning work on the educational aspect. She also alerted that the Wildflower Walk at the NOVA Manassas campus is in need of attention and asked for help with weeding and additional plants.

Nancy Vehrs reported that the Spring Garden Tours were a real success. Unfortunately, the

summer tours are "endangered" by lack of volunteered gardens. Nancy added that the VNPS Potowmack Chapter is offering a brochure on "Native Alternatives to English Ivy."

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m. to enjoy Joann Krumviede's delicious strawberry shortcake.

*Respectfully submitted,
Charlotte Cochard, Secretary*

Attendance: Nancy Arrington, Toni Crouch, Kathy Ehrenberger, Jeanne Endrikat, Diane Flaherty, Jeanne Fowler, Joann Krumviede, Margaret Lewis, Marion Lobstein, Frances Louer, Phil Louer, June Najjum, Shane Neitzey, Helen Rawls, Sandra Sheriff, Mary Sherman, Martha Slover, Nicky Staunton, Mickey Sullivan, Kim Valente, Nancy Vehrs, Helen Walter.

Welcome New Members

PWWS welcomes its newest members:

Kathy Adams, Manassas
Mary Jean Campbell, Dumfries
Kristina Ferrell, Manassas Park
Laurie Hughes, Culpeper
June Hwu, Woodbridge
Kathleen Rigden, Manassas
Judy and Jeff Schneider, Dale City
Patrick Waring, Manassas

PWWS also thanks its regular members who renew faithfully each year.

Now Available: Brochure on English Ivy Alternatives

The Potowmack Chapter recently published a brochure offering native plant alternatives to the invasive English ivy for sites with dense shade or steep shady slopes. A pdf version is available under native plant references on the VNPS website, www.vnps.org, or copies are available from the chapter directly: VNPS Potowmack Chapter, PO Box 5311, Arlington, VA 22205.

Events of Interest

July 24, Audubon At Home Garden Tours, 1-5 p.m., 703-256-6895, www.fairfaxaudubon.org.

August 28, 13th Annual Native Plant Seminar and Sale, Irvine Nature Center, Stevenson, Maryland, fee. 410-484-2413, www.explorenature.org.

September 26, PWWS Annual Meeting and Election of Officers, details to be announced.

October 2, VNPS Annual Meeting, Charlottesville, details to be announced, www.vnps.org.

Invasive Plants Wallet Card

Diane Flaherty recommends a clever cut and fold wallet card on invasive plants available from the Nature Conservancy's summer magazine. It lists major garden invasives for the six regions in the United States and is available for downloading at http://nature.org/magazine/summer2004/invasives/files/inv_wallet_card.pdf.

Plant Sale 2004

This year's plant sale income was \$3,528.70, a slight increase over last year. Many thanks to all who supplied plants: Ken and Fran Bass, Tiana Camfiord, Toni Crouch, Charlotte Cochard, Marie Davis, Kathy Ehrenberger, Jeanne Endrikat, Joann Krumviede, Jean Lehman, Frances Louer, June Najjum, Wendy Pierce, Martha Slover, Linda Stoltz, and Nancy Vehrs. Most of these members

helped out at the sale along with Don Ehrenberger, Diane Flaherty, Gary Johnson, Steve Ritter, Charles Smith, John Strecker, Nicky Staunton, and Robyn Thoreson. Thanks to our many helpers and cooperative weather, the sale went very smoothly.

Thanks again to Karen Rexrode, owner of Windy Hill Plant Farm, for letting us use her equipment for printing our labels this year, and thanks to Joann Krumviede for coordinating the project. Karen carries a good selection of native species and cultivars including ferns, shrubs, and trees. The nursery is located at 40413 John Mosby Hwy., Aldie, VA 20105. Phone is 703-327-4211; website is www.windyhill.net.

- Nancy Arrington
Plant Sale Chairman

Nominating Committee News

The PWWS nominating committee, composed of Nancy Arrington, Carol Nelson, Linda Stoltz, Karen Waltman, and a board member to be named later, will soon be meeting to develop a slate of officers for the next two-year term. Anyone interested in serving or nominating someone, can contact Nancy Arrington, 703-368-8431, or any other member of the committee.

PWWS is also seeking members to serve in a number of important board positions including program, conservation, and education chairs, respectively. Contact President Charles Smith at 703-361-5125 for more information.

PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY


A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society
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exp. 10/04

Nancy Arrington
8388 Briarmont Lane
Manassas, VA 20112-2755



 **Next Meeting: 7:30 p.m., Monday, July 19, Prince William Hospital, Manassas**
"Audubon At Home Project"