

WILD NEWS



Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2005-03

May-June 2005

MAY 16 MEETING—*MARK YOUR CALENDARS*

Martin Ogle, Chief Naturalist for the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority will present a program on the **Wildlife of the Bull Run - Occoquan**. This program will include slides, live animals(!) and anecdotes from one of the region's best naturalists. Martin, who has spent the last 20 years studying the area's wildlife and educating others about it, will show us how the plants, animals, other organisms, and geology make this region unique.

The meeting is open to the general public and will be held on the third Monday of the month, **May 16, at 7:30 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church**, located at the corner of Sudley Road (Rte. 234) and Plantation Lane in Manassas.

For more information, contact chapter president *Charles Smith* at 703/361-5125.

2005 GARDEN TOUR

Despite cool temperatures and the threat of rain, the spring garden tour brought out blooms and nearly one hundred and fifty visitors per garden. The publicity in the *Potomac News* and *Manassas Journal Messenger* must have boosted the turnout for the event. Many thanks go to our gardeners, Marie and Paul Davis; Bonnie Fulford-Nahas; and Deanna, Lily, and Jack High for so generously sharing their gardens with the public. Thanks also

go to the following volunteers who hosted, baked goodies, prepared the brochure, and/or provided illustrations: Nancy Arrington, Tiana Camfiord, Charlotte Cochard, Jeanne Endrikat, Joann Krumviede, June Najjum, Nicky Staunton, Linda and Leo Stoltz, Nancy Vehrs, and Janet Wheatcraft.

--*Nancy Vehrs*

MARCH MEETING

The Prince William Wildflower Society (PWWS) met on March 21, 2005 at Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas, Virginia. Chapter treasurer Diane Flaherty welcomed all in attendance and introduced the program presenters, Beekeepers John Strecker and Tom Berry, who kicked off an information-packed program about honeybees.

Strecker and Berry are local beekeepers and members of the Prince William-Stafford Beekeepers Association, a group dedicated to promoting the health and vitality of honeybee strains that thrive locally. The association teaches beekeeping classes and recruits hobby beekeepers. John and Tom gave a complete run-down on the life cycle and social strata of the honeybee and threw in all kinds of tidbits from "beekeepers do get stung" to "bees don't see red." They explained how difficult it is to be successful at beekeeping in this area due to the harsh winters and the impact of diseases.

The program concluded with a comprehensive list of plants in our area that are important to

honeybees. Following the meeting, members had the opportunity to taste different honeys and sample honey products brought by John and Tom.

Following the presentation, Diane announced the current chapter balance is \$6,402.33. She also announced that helpers are needed for the Spring Garden Tours on April 24th and for the annual Plant Sale on May 7th. Sign-up sheets for both events were available after the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9 pm. Joann treated us to delicious refreshments, including a honey cake in keeping with the theme of the evening. Linda Stoltz, Diane Flaherty, and Nancy Vehrs were the lucky winners of the door prizes. *Attendance:* Karen Waltman, William Hendrickson, Laura Farron, Charlotte Cochard, Jeanne Endrikat, Sandra Sheriff, Helen Walter, John Strecker, Nancy Arrington, Joann Krumviede, Leo Stoltz, Linda Stoltz, Nicky Staunton, Nancy Vehrs, Diane Flaherty, Deanna High, Bonnie Nahas, Marion Lobstein.

--Charlotte Cochard, Secretary

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Charles Smith

It is that time of year when you are reminded constantly of why you are a member of a native plant society. A morning dog walk reveals rattlesnake weed not yet opened but with its purple veined leaves and its ebony pre-bloom stem. You may come across a patch of the native wild strawberry rather than the false strawberry that plagues most of our yards and gardens. Pink azalea beckons from a bank where the blossoms seem to float in the air due to the sparse flowers on a spreading stem. A patch of common fleabane shows its disk-shaped flowers with the pinkish tinge. Young fern fronds are bright green in patchy morning sunlight on a wooded bank.

Each of us has our encounters that renew us and bring us joy. They can come to us at any time and

in any place where the earth breaths a bit and concrete hasn't entirely replaced soil. They occur more often in places where wildness still has the upper hand, but as a person who spent their childhood in vacant lots in Arlington, I can assure you that even where human disturbance and invasive species are prevalent, you can come across natural occurrences that bring a smile and defy full description.

I am happy to be part of an organization that tries to share some of these encounters with other people through garden tours, guided walks, programs and plant sales. I want to thank Bonnie, Deanna, Marie, Nancy and everyone else who made the spring garden tours possible; Charlotte, June, Diane and others who are organizers and participants in the County's Spring Fling event; and Nancy, Joanne, Martha and everyone else who make the plant sale such a success. I would also encourage all of you to get out and see what is happening in the world around you. Make sure that you come to the May program on the Wildlife of the Bull Run -Occoquan Corridor and bring a friend!

--Charles Smith

FROM ALL OVER

FIELD BOTANY COURSE AT BLANDY

Have you ever wanted to know how to identify a wildflower, shrub, tree, or even a weed growing in the wild or in your garden? Do you learn best by hands-on and fieldtrip experiences? If the answer is "yes," Field Botany at Blandy Experimental Farm may be the course for you! PWWS Botany Chair Marion Lobstein will be teaching her field botany course at Blandy Experimental Farm and State Arboretum this summer. The three-credit course covers basic principles of botany with emphasis on the classification, identification, and evolution of flowering plants. Classes are 9 a.m.—4 p.m. the three weeks of June 27-30, July 5-8, and July 11-14. Call 703/257-6643 or email Marion at mblobstein@earthlink.net for more information.

DIGITAL ATLAS

Check it out online—PWWS Advisor and VNPS 2nd VP Nicky Staunton notes (VNPS Bulletin 24, no.2, April 2005) that www.biol.vt.edu/digital_atlas leads to the most up-to-date checklist of plants in Virginia and their host counties.

CLUBMOSES "Primitive is Beautiful"

"Prehistoric plants give the gardener much fodder for conversation, and some of them are useful in the most modern garden," writes Thomas Powell, editor & publisher of the *Avant Gardener*, a monthly Horticultural News Service. In particular, he cites the clubmosses (*Lycopodium*) as "unusually distinctive groundcovers for shade and moist, humusy acid soils. Dating back at least 300 million years, clubmosses are allied to the ferns and mosses that covered much of the temperate earth before flowering plants appeared." Powell singles out ground pine (*Lycopodium elavatum*) and princess pine (*Lycopodium obscurum*) as especially suitable for woodland and rock gardens. He also notes that "lycopodium have a long history of use in herbal medicine and for making fish nets, baskets, dye fixatives, and upholstery stuffing...[and] some species produce spores so inflammable they were used in early fireworks." If kept moist, "a transplanted clump from an area that is being developed should establish in a year." A mail-order source is Orchid Gardens (2232 139th Avenue, N.W., Andover, MN 55304; catalog \$1.)

EVENTS OF NOTE

PLANT SALES

Saturday, May 14, 9 a.m. to noon. The 21st Annual Spring Wildflower Sale, Blue Ridge Wildflower Society with Community Arboretum at Virginia Western Community College. Contact Cindy Burks at 540/977-0868 for details.

Saturday, May 21, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.—Native Plant Sale at Parkfairfax, 3601 Valley Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22302. Nurseries from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia will feature uncommon native perennials, shrubs, and trees. Staffed by volunteers—information tables at the sale will offer brochures about native plants and watershed management from VNPS and the Potomac Conservancy. Directions to the sale and a downloadable flyer can be found at

http://www.parkfairfax.info/content/NativePlantSale_May21.pdf.

WALKS, TALKS, & TOURS

May 22—Maryland "Wildflower Walk." National Park Service, Catocin Mountain Park, Thurmont, MD, 11 a.m. Call 301/663-9388 for more information.

May 15, May 29, June 11, June 25—**Weekend** foray New Discovery Walks, 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. These free programs are for all ages. For more information, call 703-528-5406. To reach NVRPA's Potomac Overlook Regional Park, take I-66 to the Lee Highway-Spout Run exit; turn left on Lee Highway, right on Military Rd., continue on Military and turn left when it divides; turn right on Marcey Rd. and park at the end of the cul-de-sac in the Potomac Overlook Regional Park lot.

May 21—**Spring on Sugarloaf Mountain** 10 to 3 with author Melanie Choukas-Bradley and illustrator Tina Brown. Audubon Naturalist Society. \$38 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16.

June 9 & 11—**Field trip, Suitland Bog** with Cris Fleming. Thurs, June 9, 7:30-9:30 pm and Sat. June 11, morning. Audubon Naturalist Society. \$38 for non-members. For information call 301-652-9188 x16.

June 11—**Prince William Conservation Alliance** "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: What Citizens Need to Know about Erosion and Sediment Controls." A regional workshop for citizens, starting at 9:00 a.m. To reserve a seat, please contact Katherine Mull, Northern Virginia Regional Commission at 703/642-4625 or kmull@novaregion.org.

June 12—**Introduction to Chesapeake Bay Ecology**, Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. Free. Reservations are required; call 703-528-5406.

June 18—**An Introduction to Edible Wild Plants**, 2 p.m. Potomac Overlook Regional Park, 2845 N. Marcey Rd., Arlington. Free. Reservations are required; call 703-528-5406.

June 23 & June 25—**Ferns and Fern Allies**, with Cris Fleming. 7:30-9:30 class/ Sat. June 25 field trip to Turkey Run. Audubon Naturalist Society \$38 for non-members. For Information call: 301-652-9188 x16.

CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

May 20—Adkins Arboretum's Spring Native Plant Symposium. Chesapeake College in Wye Mills, Maryland, 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. This year's symposium

will inspire both the novice and experienced gardener to include native plants in garden design. Garden writers, lecturers, and landscape designers *Nancy Ross Hugo* and *Colston Burrell* will present along with *Connie Toops*, popular nature writer and contributing editor for *Birder's World*.

May 21—Green Springs Park. Workshop: Propagation by Cuttings. 10–11:30 a.m. Increase the number of your cherished plants without visiting a nursery. Work alongside Nancy Olney, staff horticulturist, and learn the importance and advantages of propagation by cuttings. Cuttings are the most important means of propagating ornamental shrubs and many tender perennials. For more information, visit www.greenspring.org or call 703-642-5173 for reservations. Fee: \$15

June 4—Explore Bull Run and Popes Head Creek. Free Conservation Forum, 9am -2pm. Sponsored by Audubon Naturalist Society, the Northern Virginia Conservation District and Fairfax County Watershed Planning. Call ANS for details: 301-652-9188

May 13-15—Wintergreen Nature Foundation annual Spring Wildflower Symposium. Contact Jen Jenkins, Marketing and Development, Wintergreen Nature Foundation at info@twnf.org or www.twnf.org.

June 2-4, 2005—Native Plants in the Landscape Conference and Plant Sale, held at Millersville University in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Featured speakers include Scott Weidensaul, author of *Mountains of the Heart: Exploring the Ancient Appalachians*; Rich Pais, certified wildlife biologist and author of *Natives in the Mainstream, Maybe Someday*; Steven Handel, professor of ecology and evolution at Rutgers, author of *Dreams and Nightmares of Urban Restoration Ecology*; and Julie Moir-Messervy, landscape designer and author of *Creating Inspired Gardens*. The conference features a tour of Mt. Cuba and several workshops and field trips. See www.millersvillenativeplants.org or call 717/872-2022.

August 16-17—Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council Conference and annual meeting, University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Theme is "Invasive Plants: Perspectives, Prescriptions, and Partnerships." For brochure, contact Jan McFarlan at the Morris Arboretum at 215/247-5777 x156 or email jlmc@pobox.upenn.edu.

OTHER EVENTS

May 17—Glen Burnie Historic House and Gardens and the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. 8:30am – 6pm. Tour Glen Burnie Historic House, which was built in

the 18th century, stroll through the six acres of formal gardens, and bring a picnic lunch to enjoy on the grounds. After lunch visit the brand new Museum of the Shenandoah Valley featuring the art, history and culture of the Shenandoah Valley. Wear comfortable walking shoes and dress for the weather. Fee includes transportation, admission and driver tip. Non-refundable advanced reservations are required. For more information, visit www.greenspring.org or call 703-642-5173 for reservations. Fee: \$70

June 4 and 11—Landscape Design Workshop for Homeowners, 9 a.m. – noon, Greenspring Park. Designing a new garden or polishing the look of a mature garden? Decisions about design, appropriate hardscaping, and plant selection must be addressed for all new and revised gardens. Accompany Cindy Brown, staff horticulturist, into the gardens to take a close look at the designs, plants and structures that provide solutions to special problems. These sessions explore the design process, show you how to conduct a site inventory and analysis, and help you develop your garden's framework and produce a conceptual plan. Homework assigned before each session. For more information, visit www.greenspring.org or call 703-642-5173 for reservations. Fee: \$130

Monday, June 20—Celebrate the beginning of summer with Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment. Please join us for a Solstice Celebration and Volunteer WorkParty on Monday, June 20, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 N. Military Road, Arlington. The event will include two volunteer service projects to remove invasive plants and to help mark neighborhood storm drains with a "Don't Dump" message. More information: volunteer@arlingtonenvironment.org or 703-228-6427.

uly ee ing

July Meeting

When & Where: July 18, 7:30 pm at Bethel Lutheran Church, 8712 Plantation Lane, Manassas.

What & Who: Naturalist and horticulturist Theresa DeFluri will discuss and demonstrate the use of native plants in decoration. The program will include a demonstration and discussion on flower arranging using both native and cultivated species.

NATIVE TREE PROFILE

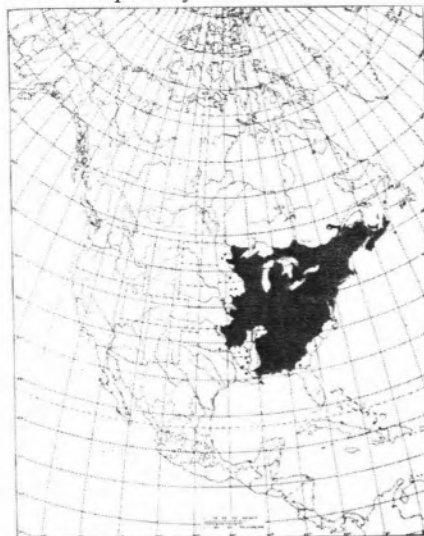
Amelanchier arborea (F. Michaux)**Family:** Rosaceae

Type: woody plant; in its southern range, it's a small tree or large shrub, but in its western and northern range may grow to 60 or 70 feet. It is a member of a rather messy genus: *Amelanchier canadensis* (picture) and *A. arborea* are, according to Dirr, sold interchangeably in the trade. *Amelanchier laevis* and *A. x grandiflora*, a hybrid, are just two of its cousins. Dirr distinguishes between *A. arborea* and *A. Canadensis* thus: *A. canadensis*, "a shrub with erect stems, spreading by means of...suckers, 6' to 20' tall, occurring in bogs and swamps from Maine to S.C. along the coast," while *A. arborea* is "a multistemmed large shrub or small tree with a rounded crown of many small branches...15' to 25' in height."

Range: See map (below) Common to all native regions of Virginia. Hardy to zone 4.

Common names: *Amelanchier arborea* is variably known as downy serviceberry, shadblow, Juneberry, Shadbush, Sarvis-tree, Saskatoon, with amelanchier from the French, *amelanche*. Several stories circulate about the origins of *A. arborea*'s common names: shadbush or shadblow is said to refer to the bloom time of the tree coinciding with the spawning of shad along the North Atlantic coast; serviceberry, or sarvissberry, to the bloom time corresponding to the spring burial of those in early American communities who died in the winter when the ground was frozen too hard to dig; the name, Saskatoon comes from the Cree names for the berries (the city by the same name in Saskatchewan was named after the

berry, which frequently was sold on the original town's



streets.

History According to Peattie, John Clayton made note of amelanchier in his 1736 *Flora Virginica* and perhaps was responsible for its being grown by Archibald Campbell, third Duke of Argyll, at Hounslow. The Duke's... "famous collection of exotic plants was ultimately removed to become the nucleus of Kew Gardens." George Washington, too, reportedly was fond of it and planted it on the grounds of Mount Vernon.

Description

Leaves: Simple, alternate, 1.5-3 inches long; obovate to ovate with small, sharply pointed teeth. Young leaves are pubescent, but become more glabrous with maturity.

Bark: "Shallowly fissured on old trunks, with broad ridges covered with fine scales." (Peattie) Grey or grayish brown, sometimes described as silvery.

Flowers: Showy, long, white, with five thin petals; appearing while leaves are still folded. Blooms in early spring; bloom often lasts only a short time but is quite spectacular.

Fruit: June-August. Small, round, red, purple, or blackish. Birds love them, but there is sharp disagreement from the experts on the taste. Dirr claims that "serviceberry pie...ranks in the first order of desserts," but other descriptions range from "dry and tasteless" to "delectable...much like a blueberry only sweeter."

Fall color: One of the best reasons to cultivate and cherish this outstanding native. Varies from yellow to apricot-orange to bronze-red to dusty red.

Local Occurrences: Fern Valley, National Arboretum; Virginia Arboretum (Native Plant Trail), area woodlands, Mount Vernon.

Suggested Uses: Natural settings, near ponds or streams, building corners, small groves. Looks stunning against dark backgrounds such as *Tsuga canadensis* (Canadian hemlock). Serviceberry is perhaps an attractive, native alternative to the ubiquitous (and invasive) Bradford pear.

Last thoughts on this beautiful but underused and often overlooked native tree are memorably expressed by Peattie: "In early spring, 'when the shad run,' according to tradition, Shadblow bursts into flower upon the naked wood, before the leaves appear or when the foliage is still just budding out and covered with silvery down. The contrast, then, of the long, delicate white petals with the bright red of the scales that hang from the flower stalks is vivid, and no daintier flowers than these in their season, star the forest aisles."

References

Donald Culross Peattie, *A Natural History of Trees of Eastern and Central North America*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964.
Michael A. Dirr, *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*. Fifth ed. Champaign, Ill: Stipes Publishing LLC, rev. 1998
www.dcr.state.va.us/dnh/natvtree.htm. Chart.

www.hort.uconn.edu

www.hort.net

William Needham, *Hiker's Notebook: Serviceberry*,

www.mwrop.org/W_Needham/Serviceberry

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

President	Charles Smith, 703/361-5125 chrissmith@juno.com
Vice President	Martha Slover, 571/238-5713
Secretary	Charlotte Cochard, 703/330-6960
Treasurer	Diane Flaherty, 703/330-9862
Botany	Marion Lobstein, 703/536-7150
Conservation	OPEN
Education	Bonnie Fulford Nahas, 703/361-7409
Flora Liaison	Regina Yurkonis
Membership	Nancy Vehrs, 703/368-8431
Programs	Charles Smith, 703/361-5125
Plant Sale	Nancy Arrington, 703/368-8431
Publicity	Leo Stoltz, 703/791-6175
Refreshments	Joann Krumviede, 703/938-4378
Registry	Claudia Thompson-Deahl, 703/754-9235
Editor	Deanna LaValle High, 703/392-3505
Advisor/VNPS 2nd VP	Nicky Staunton, 703/368-9803

Original Artwork by Nicky Staunton,

Deadline for the July-August issue is July 1, 2005.

Please send information to Deanna High, 9613 Heather Green Drive, Manassas, VA 20112 or to deannah@agb.org.

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

exp. 10/05
Nancy Arrington
8388 Briarmont Lane
Manassas, VA 20112-2755



Next Meeting: 7:30 p.m., Monday, May 16, Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas "Wildlife of the Bull Run—Occoquan"