



WILD NEWS

Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2006-05

September-October 2006

PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1:00 p.m.

We are meeting at the home of LINDA
AND LEO STOLTZ, 12250 Rustic
Wood Court, Manassas, Virginia
703/791-6175

*Directions to the Stoltzes: From Manassas, take
Rte. 234 South, turn right on Morningside Drive,
left on Chinaberry Court, turn left on Rustic Wood
Court to number 12250 on the right.*

SCHEDULE

1:00 Potluck Picnic

Bring a salad, vegetable, main dish, or
dessert. PWWS will provide beverages,
plates, cups, and utensils. (Bring a lawn
chair or two for seating if you can.)

2:30 Chapter Business Meeting

President's report, elect chapter officers,
and vote on the 2007 budget. *For the election:*
The vote for the slate of officers will take
place at the meeting. An absentee ballot (2
for family memberships) has been sent out
to all members. Absentee ballots must be
returned by **October 2, 2006** to Prince
William Wildflower Society, P.O. Box 83,
Manassas, VA 20108. Ballots will be
provided at the meeting for those voting in
person.

3:00 Plant Swap and Garden Walks

This is a good opportunity to see Linda and
Leo's yard, gardens, and woods in various
stages of repair, recovery, and regrowth
following a direct hit by a tornado in
2004. The Stoltzes have been planting and
repairing several large perennial beds that
were damaged by the storm. Bring plants
to swap or share with other PWWS
members.

NOMINEES FOR PWWS OFFICERS

(Current officers are listed in the chart
beginning on page 5)

President—*Charles Smith*

Vice President—*Martha Slover*

Secretary—*Karen Waltman*

Treasurer—*Diane Flaherty*

Prince William Wildflower Society Membership Meeting July 17, 2006

The Prince William Wildflower Society
(PWWS) met on July 17, 2006 at Bethel
Lutheran Church, Manassas, Virginia.
Chapter treasurer, Diane Flaherty, opened
the meeting at 7:40pm and introduced the
presentation team of Kevin Munroe and
Tony Robison from the Audubon Society of
Northern Virginia. They gave an

information-packed slideshow on the dragonfly. They have been photographing and researching this fascinating, colorful, fun creature and documenting the species that occur in our area. There are over 3600 worldwide, 300 in North America, and some 72 in Northern Virginia. Kevin reminded us that the interest in dragonflies is growing for several reasons: besides being beautiful, they are easy to see, fun to watch, and inspire something of a mythical presence. During the evening we learned about the fascinating characteristics and the extensive differences among dragonflies. Highly magnified photos showed the distinguishing features of males and females and they threw in a few "x-rated shots" to peek audience interest! Dragonfly habitats include marshes, ponds, streams, and woodland pools to satisfy their need for water. They also require sunlight and some structure, such as vegetation or rocks. The loss of habitat and the degradation of water quality are threats to the dragonfly. Simple conservation measures include: reducing fertilizer and pesticide use, adding a small back-yard pond and not mowing to the edge of a stream or pond. Some of the locations that Kevin and Tony recommended as good places to observe dragonflies are Huntley Meadows in Alexandria, Riverbend Park in Great Falls and Pautuxent Wildlife Refuge. Following the program Diane opened the meeting for announcements. Marion Lobstein reported that the Flora of Virginia website is up and running and she welcomed suggestions for improving the site. The contract with the University of Virginia Press is being finalized and a grant request was submitted to the Virginia Environmental Endowment. A memorial

donation in the name of Carol Gardner went to the project.

Diane announced that the flood plains along Broad Run are the home of Virginia Blue Bells and approximately 35 other species. Some residents of the Dumbarton Oaks community are trying to maintain the site, but the chapter might consider what further action could be taken. Nicky Staunton suggested that this be an educational opportunity for the chapter. The meeting closed at 9:25pm.

Attendance: John Pauswinski, Tom Attanaro, Lisa Filipy, Frank Filipy, Frances Louer, Phil Louer, Mary Sherman, Joyce Andrew, Marion Lobstein, Nicky Staunton, Tiana Camfiord, Elaine Haug, Blythe Merritt, Nancy Arrington, Linda Stoltz, Leo Stoltz, Karen Waltman, Jean Sagan, Marc Sagan, Helen Walter, Warren Ryder, Nancy Vehrs, Dawn Lewis, Diane Flaherty, Deanna High, Jeanne Fowler, Charlotte Cochard

--Respectfully Submitted, Charlotte Cochard, Secretary

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PWWS Supports Flora of Virginia Project in Matching Grant Effort

Chris Ludwig, president and executive director of the *Flora of Virginia Project*, has formally acknowledged PWWS' contribution of \$2,000 to the Project. In the letter, dated August 1, 2006, Ludwig notes our donation will be matched dollar for dollar by a match challenge grant. *(The letter will be published in the next issue of Wild News.)*

Center for Biological Diversity

Native Plant Conservation Campaign News: The Forest Service and other federal agencies announce 2006 Celebrating Wildflowers Season, a series

of events for people of all ages who love our native plants. Activities include wildflower walks, talks, festivals, slide programs, coloring contests, planting events, and seminars that emphasize the values and conservation of native plants.

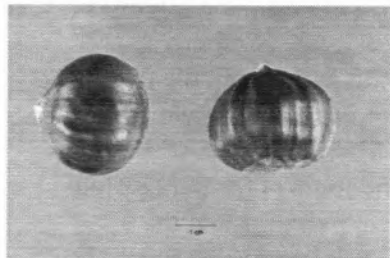
The new **Forest Service Botany: Celebrating Wildflowers** Web site is the gateway to an enormous amount of botanical information available to the public at <http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/>.

PARKING LOT NATIVES? or "Plants That Won't Run Wild in the Woods?"

"Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants," a new guide from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden by Virginia's C. Colston Burrell, is the subject of a recent article by Anne Raver in the *New York Times* (Thursday, September 28 edition.) In the interview and discussion of his new book, Cole cites the damage from nonnatives such as privet, linden viburnum, and Japanese barberry, which have all "gone wild"—especially in flood plains—and offers suggestions of natives to plant in their stead. The book is \$8.95 and is available by mail—call 718/523-7286 or online at www.bbg.org.

NEW HOPE FOR OLD CHESTNUTS?

The *American Gardener* reports in its September-October issue that naturally



occurring American chestnuts (*Castanea dentata*) have been discovered in Alabama

and Georgia last year, with reports of two more wild trees in New Hampshire earlier this year. The excitement is generated by the

size of the trees—they are old enough to flower and fruit. Photo: Steve Hurst @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

Environmental and Natural Resources Program Prince William Cooperative Extension

October 4 (Wednesday) from 7:00—8:30 p.m. "Shady Characters"

Perhaps you live in a wooded area and are daunted by what can grow in low levels of light. Maybe you have trees maturing, shading sun-loving plants and robbing them of nutrients and water. Gardening in the shade need not be a struggle! Join us for a lecture and slide show on the complexities of gardening in the shade and the plants that will sparkle in the dark.

Location: Community Room, Bull Run Library, 8051 Ashton Avenue, Manassas, VA

Cost: Free; registration required - call 703-792-7747

October 10 (Tuesday) from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. How Well is Your Well?

The rains this year have diminished fears about quantities of water in wells, but what can we expect as more construction taps aquifers? What do you know of the quality of water coming through your taps? The experts answer these questions and more. If there are specific questions or issues you'd like addressed, please email them to master_gardener@pwcgov.org or mention them when you call to register by phone.

Location: Community Room, Chinn Park Regional Library, 13083 Chinn Park Drive

Cost: Free; enrollment is limited and registration required – call 703-792-7747

OCTOBER 14-15. The Prince William Wildflower Society and the Virginia Native Plant Society are co-sponsors for the upcoming conference "The Gaia Theory: Model and Metaphor for the 21st Century"

Place: George Mason University Law School, Arlington, VA

Cost: \$130 base rate. See www.gaiatheory.org for all conference details including registration information and costs.

Contact: Martin Ogle – Phone: 703/528-5406, Fax: 703/528-0750 e-mail: potomac@nvrpa.org

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, in conjunction with George Mason University and many other organizations, presents a conference about the Gaia Theory at the George Mason University Law School in Arlington, Virginia. Lynn Margulis, Distinguished University Professor in the Department of Geosciences at the University of Massachusetts, and long-time advocate of the Gaia Theory, is a keynote speaker. Other speakers include Tyler Volk, Co-director of the Program in Earth and Environmental Science at New York University, Dr. Donald Aitken, Principal of Donald Aitken Associates, Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, conservation biologist and President of the Heinz Center for Science, Economics and the Environment, and J. Baird Callicott, a prominent environmental ethicist. Many other speakers will be featured and James Lovelock, the theory's progenitor, will participate via a video prepared for the event. Recording artist Paul Winter will perform an evening concert, and panel discussions, a teacher workshop, a reception and other activities will also be featured.

Gaia Theory posits that organic and inorganic components of Earth operate together as a single

the Prince William Conservation Alliance at 9:00 a.m. for a catch-and-release program, where kids of all ages have the opportunity to discover who lives in local ponds and wetlands. WHERE: Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Meet

living system that is self-generating and self-regulating. This living system automatically controls global temperature, atmospheric content, ocean salinity, and other factors in a manner that enables life to persist. In this respect, the Earth is like an individual organism that regulates body temperature, blood salinity, etc. The Gaia Theory is a compelling way of understanding life on our planet; an interdisciplinary context that is enriching science and society at many levels.

The base fee for the conference is \$130, which includes all conference activities, breakfasts, breaks and reception. Optional box lunches may also be purchased. **Visit www.gaiatheory.org for more information and to register for the conference.**

Questions should be directed to Martin Ogle, Chief Naturalist, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority at 703/528-5406 or potomac@nvrpa.org.

Saturday, October 7, 9:00 to Noon - Prince William County Conservation Alliance. Clean up, invasive removal, and tree pruning, Veteran's Park, 14300 Featherstone Road, east of Route 1 in Woodbridge. Sponsored by the Meet at the parking lot by pond at the end of the park. RSVP is requested. Call 703.367.0069 or email pwca@pwconserve.org. For details on the work, tools, directions, and schedule, see the PWC Website, www.pwconserve.org.

Saturday, October 14, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. FALL WILDLIFE FESTIVAL. The Friends of Potomac River Refuges invite Northern Virginia families to learn more about the plants and animals that live in our own backyard at the Fall Wildlife Festival. Many local groups are providing activities and tours of the Refuge. Join at the Rippon VRE main parking lot at the intersection of Rippon Blvd. and Farm Creek Drive. For more details on the program, see www.pwconserve.org.

Saturday, October 7, 14, 21, and 28, 6:00—7:00 p.m., NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
October Programs in the Park: "TREE-via." A round of campfire programs every Saturday night in Oak Ridge Campground. Join Ranger Ralph for a test of your tree IQ and learn about trees, forests, and everything autumn. Contact Laura Cohen, Chief of Interpretation, Prince William Forest Park, 18100 Park Headquarters Road, Triangle, VA 22172, 703-221-7181 (visitor center) for more information or visit the Web site,
<http://www.nps.gov/prwil/index.htm>.

NOVEMBER

Saturday, November 18, 8:00-10:30 a.m. Prince William Conservation Alliance.
 Tour the Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge and watch wildlife in Woodbridge with the Prince William Conservation Alliance. RSVP is requested as the group size is capped at 25 participants on a first-come basis. Meet at the Rippon VRE main parking lot at the intersection of Rippon Blvd. and Farm Creek Drive. Go to www.pwconserve.org for more details and directions.

PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY
 P.O. Box 83 - Manassas, VA 20108-0083
 Chartered: January 10, 1983
 Logo: *Mertensia virginica* - Virginia Bluebells

OFFICE	NAME & ADDRESS	TELEPHONE NUMBERS
President (also Programs)	Charles Smith, 9990 Bent Tree Lane Manassas, VA 20111-4234. email: chrlssmith@msn.com	H: 703-361-5125 W: 703-324-8555
Vice-President	Martha Slover, 11800 Hilltop Dr. Manassas, VA 20112-3157 email: mslover@gmu.edu	Cell: 571-238-5713
Secretary	Charlotte Cochard, 7997 Knightshayes Dr. Manassas, VA 20111 email: cjcochard@comcast.net	H: 703-330-6960
Treasurer	Diane Flaherty, 11089 Timberview Dr. Manassas, VA 20111-2942 email: talltrees@verizon.net dflaherty@tnc.org	H: 703-330-9862 W: 703-247-3732
Botany	Marion Lobstein, 1815 N. Roosevelt St. Arlington, VA 22205-1971 email: mblobstein@earthlink.net	H: 703-536-7150 W: 703-257-6643
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Plant Sale	Nancy Arrington, 8388 Briarmont Lane Manassas, VA 20112-2755 email: narrington@starpower.net	H: 703-368-8431 W: 703-368-9711 Fax: 703-368-0792
Publicity	VACANT	

Refreshments

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email: jkdk1@verizon.net

H: 703-938-4378

Registry
Advisor/
VNPS 2nd VP

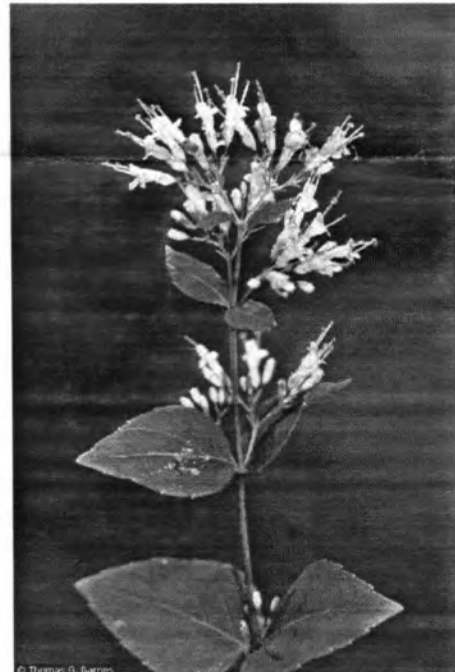
VACANT
Nicky Staunton
Old: 8815 Fort Dr.
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H: 540 -547-2813

Rev. 7/2006

PLANT PROFILE: Dittany (*Cunila organoides*)

Dicot. Family: Lamiaceae (mint family); Genus: *Cunila* D. Royen ex L. Species: *Cunila organoides* (L.) Britt., American dittany, stone mint, sweet horsemint, Maryland dittany, wild oregano. (*Organoides* = "oregano-like.") Growth habit: Subshrub, Forb/herb, Perennial. Native. According to *Hortus Third*, dittany is "Corymbosely branched, 8-16 inches; leaves ovate to lanceolate, 5/2- to 2.5 inches long, acuminate, rounded or cordate, weakly serrate, glabrous gland-dotted, nearly sessile; cymes peduncled; calyx striate, corolla pinkish-purple, about 3/16 in. long." Gupton and Swope in *Wildflowers of Tidewater Virginia* describe dittany thusly: "Blooms in August through October. The tufted



stems are slender and 8 inches to about 1.5 feet tall. The paired leaves are dark-dotted, about an inch to 1.5 inches long, and stalkless or nearly so. The pale purple or pink flowers grow in small clusters from leaf bases or stem ends. Occasionally the flowers are almost white. The plant has been used as a remedy for chills and fever and for making a tealike beverage...Open woods, rocky slopes." Mostly growing in dry hills and woods,

American dittany is found in nearly all parts of the U.S. and has been reported in nearly all counties in Virginia, including Prince William. It is rarely seen in horticultural settings, although the Missouri Botanical Society's Kemper Center for Home Gardening rates it as an "interesting perennial for the herb garden, border front, rock garden, native plant garden, or naturalized area," citing its showy flowers, aromatic foliage, and attractiveness to wildlife. American dittany is easily grown from seed and has no serious disease or insect problems. A down note is that in a garden setting it may be prone to spreading (not surprising for a member of the mint family) and a "straggly appearance."

(Plant profile continued on page 8)

**PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY
FY2007 BUDGET**

	<u>FY2006 Actuals</u>	<u>FY2007 Proposed</u>
	<u>Income</u>	<u>Income</u>
Plant Sale	\$ 4,719.50	\$4,500.00
Membership	\$ 1,218.00	\$1,250.00
	\$ 5,937.50	\$5,750.00
	<u>Actual Disbursements</u>	<u>Proposed Disbursements</u>
<i>Newsletter</i>		
Postage/PO Box	\$ 426.00	\$ 450.00
Printing	\$ 833.22	\$ 950.00
<i>Member Meetings</i>		
Speaker (6 meetings)	\$ 350.00	\$ 600.00
Refreshments (6 meetings)	\$ 16.53	\$ 150.00
Meeting Space (Bethel)	\$ 250.00	\$ 275.00
<i>Special Events</i>		
Plant Sale		
▪ Plant Labels	\$ 23.34	\$ 50.00
▪ Printing/Postage	\$ 87.00	\$ 425.00
▪ State Sales Tax	\$ 249.35	\$ 275.00
<i>Garden Tour</i>		
▪ Refreshments	\$ 87.00	\$ 100.00
▪ Announcement Mailing (Postage/Printing)	\$ 182.44	\$ 225.00
▪ Brochures (Butterfly, Woodland, etc.)	\$ 157.50	\$ 175.00
<i>Annual Meeting</i>		
▪ Announcement Mailing (Postage/Printing)	Not yet incurred	\$ 150.00
▪ Drinks	0(donated)	\$ 50.00
▪ Plates/eating utensils	0(from mtg supplies)	\$ 25.00
<i>Spring Fling</i>		
▪ Give Aways?	\$ 0	\$ 100.00
<i>Misc.</i>		
Various	\$ 668.02	\$ 700.00
Label Maker	\$ 131.20	0
Projector	\$ 981.73	0
<i>Grants/Gifts</i>		
VNPS Annual Meeting Cost to Send PWWS Representative	\$ 750.00	
Student Scholarships	\$ 200.00	\$ 300.00
TOTAL	\$4,643.33	

--Diane Flaherty, Treasurer, PWWS

Dittany (cont.)

Because of the overlap of the common name, *Cunila origanoides* is sometimes confused with the unrelated *origanum dictamnus* and/or *dictamnus albus* (gas plant), both native to Europe. The name comes from Middle English, ditaine, from Old French ditan, from Latin dictamnus, from Greek diktamnon, perhaps after Mount Dhikti, a peak in eastern Crete. (How or why it came to be applied to the American native was not revealed in any of the sources used for this profile.)

Several sources cite the use of dittany in American 19th and early 20th century herbal medicine, especially the use of fresh or dried leaves to make a "pleasant, mint-like tea" for the treating fever and headaches. A bunch of the plant can be used to repel insects and is said to be effective against horseflies. Stone mint also has a curious reputation of being a good host of "frost-flowers" or "ice ribbons," a naturally occurring ice formation on plants.

Dr. James R. Carter, professor emeritus of geography and geology, Illinois State University (Normal). Professor Carter's has documented his inquiries and interest in the subject on the Web at <http://www.ilstu.edu/~jrcarter/ice/>. His photographs include dittany ice formations observed in the Amelia Wildlife Area west of Richmond, just south of the James River. This phenomenon is also noted by the Missouri Botanical Center: "At first frost, a phenomenon known as "frost flowers" may occur on dittany where watery sap pushed out of stem cracks near the base of the plant freezes in ribbon-like, 2" projections." Perhaps PWWS members can check this out?!



--Deanna High

Sources: Photo of dittany flower: Thomas G. Barnes @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Barnes, T.G. & S.W. Francis. 2004. Photo of ice ribbon: Dr. James R. Carter, <http://www.ilstu.edu/~jrcarter/ice/VA05/>. Schematic: *Wildflowers and Ferns of Kentucky*. University Press of Kentucky. USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *Illustrated flora of the northern states and Canada*. Vol. 3: 146. King's American Dispensary. By Harvey Wickes Felter, M.D., and John Uri Lloyd, Phr. M., Ph.D., 1898. Liberty Hyde Bailey Hortorium, *Hortus Third: A Concise Dictionary of Plants Cultivated in the United States and Canada*. Barnes and Noble Books, 2000. *Wildflowers of Tidewater Virginia*, by Oscar W. Gupton and Fred C. Swope. University Press of Virginia: 1982. Missouri Botanical Garden, www.mobot.org.

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



exp. 10/06

Nancy Arrington
8388 Briarmont Lane
Manassas, VA 20112-2755

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, October 8, 2006, 1:00 p.m. PWWS Annual Meeting, 12250 Rustic Wood Court, Manassas, Virginia (Home of Linda and Leo Stoltz.)