



# WILD NEWS

## Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2007-04

July-August 2007

### **JULY 19 PWWS Membership Meeting**

**"DIGITAL NATURALS: Using Your Digital Camera for Plants and Wildlife."**

*Thursday, July 19, 2007. Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas, Virginia (Located on Plantation Lane, off Rte. 234 Business opposite the Prince William Hospital.)*

Join PWWS members for this terrific opportunity to learn how to use your digital camera in nature photography. **Nicky Staunton** is an artist and photographer (as well as a founding member of the Virginia Native Plant and Prince William Wildflower Societies) who will share techniques and tips on how to use your digital camera more effectively when photographing wildlife and plants. Bring your camera if you like, as this will be a hands-on program. Or just listen and learn and enjoy delicious homemade refreshments and door prizes. All are welcome. You need not be a member to attend meetings; come and find out about the activities PWWS engages in to help heighten awareness of the beauty and utility of our Virginia native plants.

### **New Publicity Director**

Long-time PWWS' member **John Pauswinski** has volunteered to help our chapter in getting the word out about PWWS activities and meetings. Thanks,

John! If you are interested in volunteering to work with PWWS, please contact Charles Smith, president. It's fun and rewarding!

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO LEAD NATURE WALKS FOR FAMILY CONSERVATION NIGHT**

**Friday, August 17, 2007.** Windy Knoll Farm LLC, 11602 Kettle Run Road, Nokesville, Virginia.

PWWS president **Charles Smith** has passed along the following message from Nicole Ethier of the Prince William Soil & Conservation District. She is asking for PWWS volunteers to lead a nature walk at their upcoming event, Family Conservation Night, August 17, 7:00 p.m. The event is being held at Windy Knoll Farm LLC, 11602 Kettle Run Road, Nokesville, Virginia.

"We are planning a family conservation night in our county for about 50-60 people and are interested in having someone from the Prince William Wildflower Society to come out to help us. Our goal is to help motivate families and children to do more activities outside. One of the activities we are planning is a nature walk around the farm we are hosting this event and have the families identify trees and flowers they find. If you or someone else from the Wildflower Society would be interested in bringing some sample plants they could identify and/or host the walk, please let me know."

Call or email Nicole at 703/594-3621 or [nicoleethier@pwsxcd.org](mailto:nicoleethier@pwsxcd.org) to volunteer or to get more information on volunteering and the event.

## EVENTS OF NOTE

### JULY

**Thursday, July 19, 7:30 p.m.** Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas. PWWS July membership meeting. Program (see above for more details) will be Nicky Staunton on digital camera use for nature and wildlife photography.

**Wednesday, July 25, 2007. 7:00 p.m.**  
Prince William County Park  
Authority Headquarters, 14420  
Bristow Rd., PWC.  
**Parks, Trails & Open Space Draft  
Comprehensive Plan Chapters:  
Prince William County Park Authority  
Board Review & Vote** Draft plans for  
Parks, Trails and Open Space produced by  
the Community Coalition of Citizen Groups  
are now being reviewed by the Park  
Authority and are currently scheduled for a  
public hearing and vote at their July 25  
Board meeting. For more details on the  
meeting and the issues, visit the **Prince  
William Conservation Alliance** website,  
[www.pwconserve.org](http://www.pwconserve.org)

### AUGUST

#### First Saturdays in the Garden

##### Series from 9:00 am-10:30 am.

**August 4** - Fall Lawn Care- *Part One* - How to test your soil, measure and apply compost to your lawn. Bring your lawn care questions

**September 8** -Fall Lawn Care-*Part Two*- Get help with interpreting your soil test results, calibrating a spreader for fertilizing and liming and tips on general care for your lawn.

This series will be held at the Teaching Garden at St. Benedict Monastery, 9535

Linton Hall Road, Bristow, Va. 20136.  
**Registration requested; please call  
703/792-7747. .**

**Friday, August 17, 2007, 7:00 p.m.**

#### FAMILY CONSERVATION NIGHT.

Windy Knoll Farm LLC, 11602 Kettle Run Road, Nokesville, Virginia. (See notice above for volunteer information for this event.) The event is sponsored by the **Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District**. Activities include bird watching, star gazing, pond exploring, and crafts. The event is free, but reservations are required by July 31, 2007. For more information, visit [www.pwsxcd.org](http://www.pwsxcd.org) or call 703/594-3621.

**Saturday, August 18, 2007. 16<sup>th</sup>**

#### Annual NATIVE PLANT

#### SEMINAR & SALE. Irvine Nature Center, Stevenson, Maryland.

Full-day seminar, workshops, and native plant sale. The seminar features three dynamic speakers who are noted experts in their field: Rod Simmons, "Habitat Value of Natives: Plant Associations and Cultivars;" Page Dickey, "Gardens in the Spirit of Place;" and Angela Treadwell-Palmer, "Fashionable Natives." In addition, three post-seminar workshops are offered in the afternoon. (Separate registration is required; each workshop is limited to 15 participants.) The workshops are: 1) Mosses for Beginners; 2) Using Natives in a Traditional Suburban Garden; and 3) What Do I Do With That? Early registrants – by August 1, 2007 – will receive a \$5 gift certificate for the native plant sale. Cost of the seminar is \$70 nonmembers; \$60 members. Workshops are an additional \$25 and run concurrently; a box lunch is available for \$12.

If you would like to attend the Irvine event, PWWS is planning to sponsor up to three registrations to the conference. Please contact PWWS president **Charles Smith** for more details on the sponsorships at [chrlssmith@msn.com](mailto:chrlssmith@msn.com) or 703/361-5125.

**Monday, August 21, 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm. When Grass Won't Grow: Groundcover Alternatives.**

Sponsored by the Environmental and Natural Resources Program of the Prince William Cooperative Extension.

Whether it's the shaded space between homes or the wet spot at the bottom of the slope, most of us deal with spots where grass won't grow. Not to worry! There are fantastic options open to you, as you'll see in the slide show and lecture. **Location:** Community Room, Chinn Park Regional Library, 13083 Chinn Park Drive, Prince William, VA. **Free**, but registration required. Call 703/792-7747.

**Saturday, August 26. 10:00 am - 12:00 noon, and repeated from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.**

**Fall Lawn and Garden Field Day.**

Sponsored by the Environmental and Natural Resources Program of the Prince William Cooperative Extension.

With Virginia Tech's Turfgrass Specialist Mike Goatley, discover solutions on tackling your weeds, filling in bare spots, preventing brown patches and combating a thinning lawn. **Location:** Board Chambers, McCoart Government Center, 1 County Complex, Prince William VA.

**Free** class, but registration is required. Call 703/792-7747.

**Monday, August 27, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., Chinn Park Regional Library or Wednesday, August 29, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Bull Run Regional Library: Introduction to the Master Gardener Program**

Find out about becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer with Virginia Cooperative Extension. This popular program is rewarding but involves a commitment. Register for one of these classes, which is required for all wanting to apply for the volunteer training program. The cost for this first

session is free, but registration is necessary. Please call 703-792-7747 to register.

## SEPTEMBER

**September 14-16, 2007. "Where Water Meets the Land."** Virginia Native Plant Society annual meeting and conference. Sponsored by the John Clayton Chapter and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), Gloucester Point, Va. Highlights of the program and registration information are available at [www.claytonvnps.org](http://www.claytonvnps.org) and [www.vnps.org](http://www.vnps.org).

**Saturday, September 22, 2007. 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. HIKE. Dove's Landing Public Land, upstream from Lake Jackson.**

This description of the hike is from Prince William Conservation Alliance's web site: "Dove's Landing is a 235-acre undeveloped property with one mile of frontage along the Occoquan River, upstream from Lake Jackson. The Prince William County Board of Supervisors acquired the property in March 2006 but has not yet opened the site to public uses.

The gently sloping landscape, open forest and scenic appearance create inviting and accessible conditions for residents of all ages. Dove's Landing is a high quality site for walking in the woods on natural trails, wildlife watching and other passive recreation opportunities.

Group size is capped at 30 participants, so register early! Preferred attire includes sturdy hiking shoes, long socks, long pants, hat, and light colors. Bring a bag lunch, water to drink, bug spray, binoculars and cameras."

This program is open to the public and free of charge. For more information and to register, email [alliance@pwconserve.org](mailto:alliance@pwconserve.org) or call 703.499.4954.

**September 29-30, 2007. "Climate Change: Global Effects, Local Impacts. Western Maryland's Flora — at Risk?"**

Maryland Native Plant Society Fall Conference, Frostburg State University, Frostburg, Maryland. The program features field trips throughout the region. Program details and registration are available at [www.mdflora.org](http://www.mdflora.org).

**Antietam Elementary Grows a Jamestown Anniversary Garden**

Stand up flowers, and show your red, white, and blue! Two classes of Lake Ridge's *Antietam Elementary School* students celebrated history with a new garden this spring. It all started when they learned about the Virginia Cooperative Extension's America's Anniversary Garden program to help Virginians mark America's 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ([www.jamestown2007.org](http://www.jamestown2007.org)) with special garden plantings. The special gardens were required to have a red, white, and blue color scheme. All across Virginia, cities and towns have displayed the garden theme in 2006 and 2007. In *Prince William County*, all fourth graders study Virginia history and plants. Mrs. Nichol's class and Ms. Currie's class were especially interested in creating a Jamestown Anniversary Garden at Antietam Elementary School as part of their studies.

They were delighted when the *Dale City Wal-Mart* and the *Manassas Wal-Mart* on Liberia Avenue both donated plants and materials for the project.

*Meadows Farms Nursery* also contributed some red, white, and blue annual flowers which created a colorful front school yard. Along with the seedlings, Mrs. Nichol's class planted numerous flower seeds donated by the *Dale City Pitkin's Hardware* store. The children used eco-friendly practices such as killing weeds with vinegar, using compost as mulch, and fertilizing the flowers with donated Starbucks' coffee grounds. One of the boys suggested removing the dandelion flower heads with his scissors, to eliminate the reseeding of the weeds. To improve the soil, fishing worms were released into an old sandbox that had been recycled into a flower bed. Patriotic picnic plates were used to make a big display in front of the school. In the evening, *Cub Scout Den 1364* helped pull weeds, and add more fertilizer to the budding plants. The boys performed this community service activity for their Cub Scout "Nature Day".

The latest addition to the garden has been over one hundred Virginia native potted plants from the *Prince William Wildflower Society*. The society is a chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society and meets in Manassas. The *Wildflower Society's* president, *Charles Smith*, noted that an important mission of the group is education of the public about the many benefits of *Virginia native plants*. *After their public plant sale in May, several members generously donated leftover potted plants to the school*. A large plant contribution came from *Marie Davis*, a member, who had potted the plants from her home garden. The members never remove wild plants when they are discovered in their native habitat, but may share nursery or home grown

plants. Most of the public appreciates familiar native plants such as blueberries and pumpkins. Children, parents, and staff may be surprised, however, to discover and enjoy some of the lesser-known native species of plants that now are growing in Antietam's school yard. It is even possible that some of these plants greeted the colonists when they arrived in Jamestown in 1607.

The children are aware that their efforts will not only benefit the education of Antietam students, but will also help enhance *Antietam Elementary School Yard Habitats*, which is registered by the *National Wildlife Federation*. The Photo: Deanna LaValle High, Manassas Garden, 2006

native plants in the garden have a good chance of survival, because they don't need fertilizer. The flowers support many times more birds, insects, reptiles, and other wildlife than exotic species of plants. The *Jamestown Anniversary Garden project* has been a rewarding and memorable experience for the students. It will become an outdoor learning resource for the students as well as the community.

Submitted by June Najjum  
 Librarian and School Yard  
 Habitats Coordinator  
 Contact: (703/497-7619)

**PWWS BOARD**

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<b>2<sup>nd</sup> VP</b>	Nicky Staunton	703/368-9803

**Original Artwork** by Nicky Staunton

Deadline for the September-October issue of *Wild News* is **September 1, 2007**

Please send or email information to Deanna High, 9613 Heather Green Drive, Manassas, VA 20112

[deannah@agb.org](mailto:deannah@agb.org). VNPS home page: <http://www.vnps.org>

**July-August REDs for Virginia Gardens**

*Hibiscus coccineus* (Mallow family)

*Nat'l Audubon Society Field Guide*:: "A large plant with big, showy, crimson flowers in the upper leaf axils. *Flowers*: 6-8" wide; petals 5; many yellow stamens forming a tube around the style and its red, disc-like stigmas;



Photo: Deanna High  
Manassas Gardens  
2006

anthers of stamens outside tube; very narrow bracts beneath calyx. *Leaves*: Palmately divided into narrow, pointer, toothed segments, 2-10" long. Height: 3-10'; Fruit: ovoid capsule about 1" long. Flowering: June-September. Habitat: fresh and brackish marshes, swamps. Range: Georgia, Florida, Alabama. This very showy species, typical of the mallow family is sometimes cultivated...and is certainly one of the loveliest of our native flowers."

Following are notes from William Bartram's 1791 *Travels Through North & South Carolina, Georgia, East & West Florida, the*

*Cherokee Country, the Extensive Territories of the Muscogulges, or Creek Confederacy, and the Country of the Choctaws:*

"There are some rich swamps on the shores of the island, and these are verged on the outside with large marshes, covered entirely with tall grass, rushes, and herbaceous plants; amongst these are several species of Hibiscus, particularly the *hibiscus coccineus*. This most stately of all herbaceous plants grows ten or twelve feet high, branching regularly so as to form as sharp cone. These branches also divide again, and are embellished with large, expanded crimson flowers. I have seen this plant of the size and figure of a beautiful little tree, having at once several hundred of these splendid flowers, which may be then seen at a great distance. They continue to flower in succession all summer and autumn, when the stems wither and decay; but the perennial root sends forth new stems the next spring, and so on for many years. Its leaves are large, deeply and elegantly sinuated, having six or seven very narrow dentated segments; the surface of the leaves, and of the whole plants, is smooth and polished."

William Bartram, *Travels* (1791)  
(New York: Penguin Books, 1988)

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



exp. 10/07

Nancy Arrington  
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→Next PWWS Membership Meeting: Thursday, July 19, Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas  
Nicky Staunton, "Digital Naturals"