



# WILD NEWS

## *Prince William Wildflower Society*

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2007-02

March-April 2007

### **MARCH MEMBERSHIP MEETING: THURSDAY, MARCH 22**

*Please note new day  
for our March meeting*

Due to a scheduling conflict, PWWS will meet **Thursday, March 22**, instead of our usual Monday. The time and place are the same: 7:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall at Bethel Lutheran Church, Plantation Lane in Manassas. The March program will feature the National Wildlife Federation's program on "Backyard Wildlife Habitats." Join us for this fun and informative session. Refreshments will be served.

### **CHAPTER NEWS AND EVENTS**

IT'S TIME! ...To Start Preparing for PWWS ANNUAL PLANT SALE MAY 12!) Get your gloves and boots on and get to work dividing and potting up native plants to donate for this year's annual PWWS native plant sale. The plant sale will be held 9 a.m. – 12 noon May 12 in the lovely space adjacent to the parking lot of Bethel Lutheran Church in Manassas. (Volunteers should arrive at 7:00 a.m. to help set up.) It's our biggest fundraising event of the year, and its success depends on many volunteers and members chipping in to donate and help. (There is even a chance that our plant sale

will be listed in the May issue of *Horticulture!*) *Nancy Arrington* is coordinating the plant sale; please contact Nancy with a list of plants you can donate and /or to volunteer to work at the sale. She will coordinate the labeling. Please make note of a correction in Nancy's email (it was printed wrong in the last directory) It is *narrington1@verizon.net*. Or call her at **703/368-8431** for more information.

Woodland shade plants, shrubs, trees, ferns, and plants for butterflies and wildlife are all popular and good sellers. Plant groups will be divided into shade and sun lovers. If you need help potting up or need pots, please contact Nancy directly.

### **2007 Spring Garden Tour**

At this point in time, no spring gardens have been scheduled. If you would like to organize a tour, or would like to suggest or volunteer special gardens, please contact Charles Smith at 703/xxx-xxxx or email *charlssmith@*

### **President's Corner**

I hope that this edition of the *Wild News* finds all of you well and enjoying the change of seasons.

There are many things happening in the county and in our chapter, two of which are covered elsewhere in this newsletter but I

would like to touch on them nonetheless. Several current and former members of our chapter are involved in efforts to revise the County Comprehensive Plan chapter on Parks, Open Space and Trails. This effort is very important because it likely establishes the priorities in these areas for the next 20 or more years. In that time the county will continue to develop and we need strong policy protecting open space and natural and cultural resources, providing recreation and linking all of these places to each other and to our communities with non-motorized transportation corridors.

The other effort that I am excited about is that our chapter is going to select and nominate a native plant to become the official flower of Prince William County. Despite over 260 years of county history, Prince William has no official flower. This effort is the perfect one for us to take on.

With these projects and many others going on, I have to admit that I have spent very little time outside recently getting what I call dirt time. Dirt time to me is time spent exploring, studying and enjoying nature first hand. For those of us who feel recharged by being out-of-doors there is no substitute for dirt time. And despite reading books and hearing lectures, personal dirt time is the only way to really put the pieces together and build our personal knowledge and appreciation of the natural world.

So Saturday, March 10 ended up being one of my best personal days for many months. The reason was simple: I spent almost the entire day outside in direct contact with and focused on the natural world. I was involved in a training held at Annandale Community Park in Fairfax in the morning.

This training was oriented toward volunteers involved in the Invasives Management Area (IMA) program. This program utilizes volunteer site leaders to plan and coordinate invasive plants control efforts at a park location that they adopt under agreement with the Fairfax County Park Authority. The program was focused on evaluating landscapes for healthy and unhealthy characteristics and on plant identification.

After the program I found myself in the unusual situation of having time on my hands – FREE TIME! I almost didn't know what to do with myself. Luckily I had on hiking boots and a good pair of binoculars. I headed for Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge and spent several hours in solitude observing over-wintering and early migratory birds, plants, insects, animal scat and anything else that I came upon. It was 60 degrees and sunny. Everyone (all 10 of them) that I encountered was smiling and enjoying this incredible late winter day at one our best wild places. I observed courtship behavior by ospreys and red-winged blackbirds, saw hundreds of lesser scaup (a small bay duck) as well as several other waterfowl species, and tallied five sparrow and two wren species. I even saw my first swallow and ground beetle of the season.

With all of the wonderful things around me, I still felt a bit guilty at first. I kept thinking I could be working on one of the many projects that I have waiting unfinished. But rather than taking a short route I pushed on. Eventually I stopped thinking about all of those projects and arrived at that happy frame of mind that is not concerned with

time or commitments. That is a rare occurrence for me these days.

The result was a reconnecting with the natural world, a feeling of being emotionally reinvigorated, and a very overdue sense of fatigue from having walked a lot of miles at the end of the day rather than sitting at desk. I also came away with an important reminder. Nature doesn't stop when I am not there. The song sparrows working the debris piles along the Potomac shore are there virtually everyday regardless of whether any of us show up to witness it. They are not waiting for me. It is up to me to get out there and experience their world. And I am always the richer for it.

## EVENTS

**WHEN:** Sunday, March 18 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** McCoart Government Center, Occoquan Meeting Room

Please join the Community Coalition of Citizen Groups for a working session on our draft proposal for revisions to the **Parks, Trails & Open Space chapter(s) Comprehensive Plan!**

We held a public meeting on February 18 to hear more about community views and goals for the future of parks, trails and open space in Prince William County. This information is posted online at [http://www.pwconserve.org/issues/openspace/publicmeeting\\_070218/index.htm](http://www.pwconserve.org/issues/openspace/publicmeeting_070218/index.htm). Some participants at that meeting as well as other interested citizens volunteered to help draft a proposal to present to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

**The purpose of the March 18 meeting** is to provide an opportunity for everyone to get

together, learn more about what we've been doing and loop into this project.

We have divided the project into three sections, with group leaders for each:

- Parks - **Charles Smith**, Prince William Wildflower Society, and Martin Jeter, MidCounty Civic Association
- Trails - Liz Cronauer, Nokesville Civic Association, and Marilyn Schultz, Prince William Conservation Alliance;
- Open Space - Neil Nelson, Prince William Conservation Alliance, and Bill Olson, Prince William Conservation Alliance

**At the March 18 meeting**, we will briefly share information on the current status and timeline for this project, then break into three working groups. We were fortunate to be able to book three separate meeting rooms at McCoart, so each group will have a quality working space where everyone can discuss the drafts without interruption.

We are extending this invitation to the people who have specifically expressed an interest in volunteering to help with this project. Please let us know if you know others who would also like to help!

**Please RSVP!** We want to make sure we have plenty of handouts and other materials for everyone, so please hit reply to (1) let us know you are coming, and (2) which section you are most interested in working on - parks, trails or open space.

Please feel free to email us at [openspace@pwconserve.org](mailto:openspace@pwconserve.org) or call

703.499.4954 if you have questions. We are looking forward to seeing you on Sunday, March 18, 3:00 p.m. at McCoart!

**Tuesday, March 20. Climate Crisis Action Day.** Join the Audubon Partners and others on Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, in gathering at the U.S. Capitol to tell Congress to tackle global warming head on, with responsible energy decisions and protections for vulnerable places like the Arctic National Wild life Refuge. Go the website, *ClimateCrisisAction.org* for more information on the event and how you can participate.

**Saturday, March 24. Prince William Forest Park.** "Stitches in Time: the Women of Prince William Forest Park," a program commemorating the role of women in the history of the land. See the website for times and more information on the event.

**Sunday, March 25, 2:00 p.m. "Birds of Prey," Potomac Overlook Regional Park.** This program explores the forms and habits of our regional birds of prey – remarkable animals! Participants will have the opportunity to get "up close and personal" with Potomac Overlook Regional Park's resident captive raptors, including a Red-tail Hawk, Barred Owl, and a Great-horned Owl. Adults and children age 6 and older. Space is limited to 20 participants. Reservations required: call Martin Ogle at 703/528-4306, or email at *Potomac@nvrpa.org*. Potomac Overlook Regional Park is located at the 2845 Marcey Road (off Military Road), in north Arlington. Call for more information or directions.

**Saturday, March 31, 8:30 a.m. 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Potomac River Watershed Clean-Up Day.** Join other volunteers and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority to clean trash and debris from the shorelines of Pohick Bay Regional Park. Scheduled for cleanup this year is the removal of an

abandoned car that has been in the marsh for over 30 years. Cleanup will be at high-tide, so participants are urged to bring boots or shoes that they don't mind getting a little wet. A heated bathroom is available for participants to change clothes for the ride home. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. Everyone is welcome; youth groups, church members, and families. Children under the age of 16 must have adult supervision. Location: 6501 Pohick Bay Drive, in Lorton, Va. Meet at shelter 3, by the boat rental building at 8:30 a.m. Please RSVP to 703/339-6104 or *pohick@nvrpa.org*.

**Thursday, April 12, 7:30-8:30 p.m. "Planning the Harvest Vegetable Garden."** Master Gardeners will discuss the essentials to consider in planning a vegetable garden and maximizing the harvest. Free, but registration required: email Anne Seiff at *aseiff@pwcgov.org*. Community Room, Chinn Park Regional Library, 13083 Chinn Park Drive, Prince William, VA.

**Saturdays, April 14-May 15, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Master Gardeners Answer Questions at Local Garden Centers.** Locations include Home Depot on Liberia Avenue; Southern States in Manassas; English Country Gardens on Dumfries Rd.; Lowe's of Woodbridge; and Lowe's of Gainesville. Drop by to get solutions to gardening questions and feel free to in samples.

**Monday, April 16, 7:30 p.m.** at Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy Street, Arlington, VA. Martin Ogle, chief naturalist of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, presents "The Gaia Theory and Its Implications for Energy, Global Warming, and Other Challenges." (The Gaia Theory is the scientific explanation of how our planet functions as a single living and self-regulating system. Rocks, soil, oceans, atmosphere, and living things are all seamlessly connected, for instance, in a manner that allows our planet to maintain stable

temperatures despite the fact that our sun heats up over time.)

**Monday, April 23, 7:30-8:30 p.m.**

**"Transforming Hillside into**

**Gardens."** Master gardeners will provide ideas for design and plants that will help limit erosion and transform a hillside into a colorful, naturalized garden. Community Room, Bull Run Library, 8051 Ashton Avenue, Manassas. Free, registration required: email Anne Seiff at [aseiff@pwcgov.org](mailto:aseiff@pwcgov.org).

**Saturday, April 28, Prince William**

**Forest Park.** "Paws in the Park," a program showcasing working dogs such as police and search dogs. Certified dog trainers will provide leash-walking workshops and other doggie-related information.

**Saturday, May 12, 9:00-12 noon. PWWS**

**CHAPTER PLANT SALE. Bethel Lutheran Church, Plantation Lane, Manassas. (See above for more information)**

**June 7-9, 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference,**

**"Natives in the Landscape,"** Millersville, Pa. Featured topics for this year's conference are: Green architecture and biophilia; Garden Design Inspired by Plant Communities; A Sustainable Residential Property; and Restoring Diversity to Your Garden. Other topics include: Butterflies in the Garden; Invasive Plants and Insects; Plant and Animal Interactions; American Beauties; Grasses, Rushes, and Sedges; Great Natives for the Garden; and Sustainable Landscapes.

Optional pre-conference workshops and field trips are also offered. There also will be a native plant sale. For conference information and registration: Phone, 717/872-3030; email, [profdev@millersville.edu](mailto:profdev@millersville.edu); website, [www.millersvillennativeplants.org](http://www.millersvillennativeplants.org). Financial aid and continuing education credits are available.

## Leaves of Winter

February may not be the cruelest month but paradoxically it felt like the longest one—as if its succession of days and weeks and hours were unfolding at an altered pace, the fault, perhaps, of some small slub in the great warp of time.

As I write in early March, snow is falling softly over all of Prince William County and it is clear that this winter's tale is not yet over. Around us in the garden lie the remains of our treacherously warm January. Bruised daffodil straps stand stiff and gray as if hoping no one will notice they arrived at the party unfashionably early; blooming species crocus that happily danced in early January have fled, discarding in their rush back to bed crumpled little purple and yellow dresses, now frozen in the mud. Leaves of the rhododendron outside the kitchen window are corkscrewed tight and hang like greenish-black cigars; some prematurely happy hellebores have morphed into a squishy mess, and the moss garden has shrunk to a bitter, brown mat.

Out in the woods, though, unfazed by winter's drama swirling above them, native orchids and wintergreens flourish lovely



underfoot, *their* leaves revealing a presence both subtle and surprising. Crane fly orchid (*tipularia discolor*) leaves, mottled green and

bumpy like a toad's back on top and smooth satiny purple underneath, are scattered in loose colonies that rise from the brown leaf litter. Nearby, the wintergreen



Round-Leaved Pyrola's (*Pyrola rotundifolia*) plump mahogany-tinged green disks peek through dead

leaves. In a different part of the woods under an oak stump, the amazing white-striped, seersucker-dreamcoat single leaf of puttyroot (*Aplectrum hymemale*) holds



mutely steadfast to a different order than that of the garden. At the end of the driveway at the edge of the woods sits a snug patch of pyrola's cousin, the always gracefully beautiful spotted or striped wintergreen, *chimaphila maculata*. Soaring above, oaks, tulip poplars, dogwood, ironwood, and hickories that leaf so lush in warmer times stand naked and still, holding their spring secrets close as they pull deep and steady from the warm pulse of their roots below.

Of course, by the time you read this, the snow will have melted, the crocus and daffodils will have regrouped, and other spring ephemerals native and nonnative will have emerged to compete for March's



light and warmth. After all, Punxsutawney Phil and the new daylight savings' time point to an early spring! Overwhelmed by the noisy rush, the sustaining leaves of winter may soon be forgotten as they quietly follow a different piper's tune—one that will lead them merrily on to May and another season of subtle beauty...and then to sleep.

--Deanna High

## NATIVE PICKS FOR PRINCE WILLIAM

Which flower should be the "official" Prince William County flower? Charles Smith, PWWS president, has challenged the chapter to come up with candidates that are both native and frequently occurring in Prince William County. He suggests it would be nice to have a large native



population that everyone can appreciate! Early input has overwhelmingly come down on the side of the flower that fits the

bill on all counts—one that we all love and recognize: the **Virginia bluebell** (*mertensia virginica*). Even better, it's our logo and signature flower for the chapter. Come to the March 22 membership meeting and weigh in on your favorite(s).

## **JANUARY MEMBER SLIDE SHOW MEETING**

### **January 15, 2007. Prince William Wildflower Society Meeting Minutes**

President Charles Smith called the meeting to order at 7:50 p.m. Marion Lobstein announced that an \$80,000 grant had been made to Flora of Virginia and a \$7,000 donation had been given to the project. The Hampton Roads chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society was donating \$1,000.

Charles announced that he and Leo Stolz were participating in a citizens' group to help write a comprehensive plan for parks and open spaces in Prince William County (See summary of this meeting on page x of this newsletter).

Martha Slover showed the February 2007 issue of *Virginia Living*. Members Marion Lobstein and Nicky Staunton were interviewed for an article in the magazine about the Flora of Virginia project. Martha Slover also made "a shameless plug" for the geology course she will be teaching. It is being offered through the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia. Please check out the website, [www.asnv.org](http://www.asnv.org) for more information.

To start off the annual member slideshow, Helen Walter showed beautiful images of the Bruce Peninsula in Canada, northwest of Toronto, breathtaking views of Peru and scenes around Lake Okeechobee, Florida.

Martha Slover showed scenes from a sea kayaking trip in the San Juan Islands and from many hikes in an around North Cascades National Park during August 2005.

Nicky Staunton showed scenes around her new home on 10 acres in Culpeper County in a south facing hollow 15 miles from Old Rag in Reva, Virginia. The acreage includes pines, black birch, tulip poplar, white/red/black oak woods on sandstone with three small springs. She showed images of her native flora neighbors, some of which are: lycopodium, shining club moss, botrychium ferns; orchids: crane fly, puttyroot, goodyera, showy orchis, autumn coralroot, and pink ladyslippers; highbush blueberries, aralia spinosa; blooms, berries, and butterflies; tulip poplar flower with ants, box turtles, tree frog, fence lizards, powerline plants, blunt leaf milkweed, St. Andrews' Cross, Maryland asters, and mountain laurel.

Thank you Helen, Marion, Martha, and Nicky for sharing these very beautiful scenes with us.

**Attendance:** *Jeanne Fowler, Rosemary Luckett, John Pauswinski, Martha Slover, Nicky Staunton, Jeanne Endrikat, Phyllis Boyd, Paul Boyd, Marion Lobstein, Charles Smith, Betty Truax, Helen Walter, Diane Flaherty, Nancy Arrington, Deanna High, Charlotte Cochard, Karen Waltman.*

**Respectively submitted,  
Karen Waltman, secretary**

Nancy Arrington has passed along the sad news that Volker Imschweiler's wife, Rose, passed away February 25 after a long illness. Volker was a longtime member of PWWS before moving to Texas a few years back. His address is: 2101 Deborah St., Edinburg, Texas 78539-8004; Tel: 956/383-7433.

<b>President</b>	Charles Smith, 703/361-5125 <i>chrlsmith@msn.com</i>
<b>Vice President</b>	Martha Slover, 571/238-5713
<b>Secretary</b>	Karen Waltman, 703/830-5710 <i>geraldwaltman@hotmail.com</i>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Diane Flaherty, 703/330-9862
<b>Botany</b>	Marion Lobstein, 703/536-7150
<b>Conservation Programs</b>	OPEN
<b>History</b>	Bonnie Fulford Nahas, 703/361-7409
<b>Membership</b>	OPEN
<b>Plant Sale</b>	Nancy Vehrs, 703/368-2898 Nancy Arrington, 703/368-8431 <i>narrington1@verizon.net</i>
<b>Publicity</b>	Leo Stoltz, 703/791-6175
<b>Refreshments</b>	Joann Krumviede, 703/938-4378 and Betty Truax
<b>Editor</b>	Deanna LaValle High, 703/392-3505 <i>deannah@agb.org</i>
<b>Advisor/VNPS 2<sup>nd</sup> VP</b>	Nicky Staunton, 703/368-9803 <i>nstaunton@earthlink.net</i>
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Deadline for the May-June issue of <i>Wild News</i> is <b>April 15, 2007</b>	
Please send or email information to Deanna High, 9613 Heather Green Drive, Manassas, VA 20112; <i>deannah@agb.org</i> .	
VNPS home page: <a href="http://www.vnps.org">http://www.vnps.org</a>	

**More Good Press for Flora of Virginia.**  
PWWS' Nicky Staunton and Marion Lobstein



are both featured in Nancy Ross Hugo's article, "Cataloguing the Flora of Virginia," in the February 2007 issue of the oversized glossy magazine, *Virginia Living*. Nicky's discovery of

*Bartonia verna* (white screwstem) in Virginia is used in the story to illustrate the compelling need for a "Virginia-specific" Flora.

Photo: Wayne Barger, Coastal Plain Alabama

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



**Renew?**

exp. 10/06

Nancy Arrington  
8388 Briarmont Lane  
Manassas, VA 20112-2755

**NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2007, 7:30 p.m.**  
Fellowship Hall, Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas, Virginia