



# WILD NEWS

## Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2008-06

November-December 2008

### Prince William Wildflower Society Welcomes Helen Walter, New President

**G**reetings to all you fellow lovers of wild plants and wild places from your new president!

I joined PWWS way back in the '80s not long after I moved from Reston to Bull Run Mountain, which was still a wild place back then. I used to explore the wild parts of the mountain with Bobbe Krueger who knew far more than I did about the plants we saw. She told me that she learned most of what she knew from Marion Lobstein's spring wildflower class at the community college, and lucky for me, there was a class starting the next week. Marion recruited most of that class for PWWS: me, the Ehrenbergers, the Bradfords, Helen Rawls, and before I knew what hit me, the Bradfords had me on the board. Now I live on the Occoquan River instead of Bull Run Mountain and it's been some time since I was last on the board, so I'm counting on all of you to bring me up to speed and provide me with ideas for projects and programs and alert me to assaults on our local environment.

Special thanks goes to Charles Smith for his wonderful leadership the past six years. I'm looking at his final letter to the membership in the last newsletter and I totally agree with the challenges he describes to protect more natural areas, spread appreciation of nature along with a

sense of stewardship, and get more people involved on the local and state level. I was glad we had our annual meeting at Merrimac Farm, because one of my goals to increase our effectiveness is to join forces with other environmental groups like the Prince William Conservation Alliance.

So again, thanks Charles and the rest of the PWWS board for a job well done. I'm looking forward to the next two years with you.

Your president,

Helen Walter

### "TREE PRESERVATION DURING REZONING"

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17<sup>th</sup>  
PWWS MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
Fellowship Meeting Hall  
Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas  
7:30 p.m.

Join us at the regular member meeting for a presentation by *Julie Flanagan, arborist for Prince William County*. She will discuss tree preservation during the rezoning process. Refreshments will be served; all are welcome. Bethel Lutheran Church is on Plantation Lane right off Sudley Road (Rte 234) opposite Prince William Hospital.

## PWWS 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrated October 4, 2008

On a beautiful fall day PWWS members, spouses, and friends gathered for a potluck luncheon and celebration of our chapter's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We socialized and enjoyed the wide variety of delicious dishes on the expansive front porch of the Stone House at Merrimac Farm in Nokesville.

Outgoing chapter president Charles Smith conducted a short business meeting; charter members were recognized, officers were elected, and the 2009 budget was approved. Kim Hosen and Charlie Grymes were introduced and spoke on the history of Merrimac Farm and the Stone House. Kim is the executive director and Charlie is the chairman of the Prince William



Conservation Alliance, and they were our hosts at Stone House.

Helen Rawls and Charles Smith won the door prizes--

two stunning arrangements of fall flowers, put together and donated for the occasion by member Theresa DeFluri. Theresa used many unusual plants, and the vases of flowers also served as table decorations during the luncheon.

Kim Hosen led a hike in the woods near the Stone House for most of the 30 or so in attendance, and the hardy group visited the site of a stand of spring bluebells and



saw a magnificent swamp chestnut oak, identified by Charles. During the walk, other species were added to the site plant list by Charlie Grymes.

To see the property's working plant list please refer to the Prince William Conservation Alliance Web site:

(<http://pwconserve.org/merrimacfarm/plants/plantlist.htm>).

Speaking of bluebells--as members arrived they were presented a small, silver anniversary gift bag containing the chapter's new 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary pin. The pin displays Nicky Staunton's drawing of a bluebell, along with the words "PWWS 2008, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary." The gift bags also contained silver-wrapped candies. (The bluebell was adopted by Prince William County as the official county flower in 2008.)

The afternoon was a lovely introduction to fall, and we thank Kim and Charlie and the Prince William Conservation Alliance for the opportunity to hold our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and annual meeting at Merrimac Farm.

--Karen Waltman, Secretary

*PWWS extends heartfelt "thank you" to Karen for a great job organizing the meeting and for the lovely presentation of the anniversary pins.*

## Prince William Wildflower Society 2008 Annual Report to the Virginia Native Plant Society

Submitted September 14, 2008 by Charles Smith

### Meetings and Events

#### **PWWS 2007 Annual Meeting Election of Nominating Committee Members:**

On September 30, 2007 PWWS held its annual meeting at Deanna High's house and voted on a slate of three candidates for the nominating committee and the 2008 chapter budget.

The nominating committee members elected were:

- Linda Stolz
- Jeanne Endrikat
- Helen Walter

#### **January 2008 - Annual Membership Slide Show**

Presentation to Woodbine Woods Garden Club

-In February Charles Smith presented a Landscaping for Wildlife program to the members of the Woodbine Woods Garden Club in Independent Hill.

**March 2008 - Stretches for Gardeners - chiropractic presentation as part of membership meeting**

#### **Spring Garden Tour on Sunday**

The annual spring garden tour was held on **April 27, 2008** featuring:

- Charlotte and Gary Cochard's garden - new this year
- Helen and Rob Walter's garden (Occoquan Forest) - last on tour in 2003
- Janet Wheatcraft's garden (Weir Street in the City of Manassas/Point of Woods) - last on tour in 2003 or 2004.



#### **Plant Sale - May 10, 2008**

Total sales for this year were \$3,221.35 with a lower number of buyers on a very rainy day. However, a high percentage of the plants were sold, and the sale was very successful overall.

#### **May 19, 2008 -**

Membership Meeting with presentation from Tony

## Bulmer on Reptiles and Amphibians

### **Prince William Lawn and Garden Show**

Several members represented PWWS/VNPS and the Prince William Master Gardeners at the annual Prince William Lawn and Garden Show in June. PWWS was located with the Master Gardeners at the county teaching garden.

### **Summer Solstice Walk**

On June 22, PWWS co-hosted a walk with Potowmack Chapter at the Sully Woodlands Parkland and the Ellick Woodlands Natural Area Preserve in western Fairfax County. Rod Simmons and Charles Smith were the trip leaders, and over 40 people attended from three chapters of VNPS and the Maryland Native Plant Society --including Sally Anderson and Chris Fleming - the two state organization presidents.

**July 21, 2008** - Membership Meeting with presentation from Lorrie Andrew-Spear on Rain Gardens.

### **Upcoming PWWS 2008 Annual Meeting and 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

On **October 4, 2008**, PWWS will hold its annual meeting at Merrimac Farm and vote on a slate of candidates for the officers positions and the 2009 chapter budget. The officer slate consists of President - Helen Walter, Vice President - Betty Truax, Treasurer - Diane Flaherty, and Secretary - Karen Waltman. The proposed budget for PWWS for 2009 is \$12,125. The chapter will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary at this meeting, and Karen Waltman has arranged for special commemorative pins for members.

## **Local Advocacy and Major Issues**

### **Prince William County Parks, Trails and Open Space:**

Beginning in early 2007, several members of the Prince William Wildflower Society began participation in a work group coordinated by the Prince William Conservation Alliance to re-write the Park, Trails and Open Space chapter of the Prince William Comprehensive Plan. After over a year, three public meetings and meetings with the Prince William Park Authority Staff and Board, County Planning Commission and Board of County Supervisors, amended versions of the chapter drafted in part by PWWS members were adopted by the Prince William Board of County Supervisors.



### **County Flower:**

After receiving a call from a citizen in 2007 asking if there was a county flower and finding out there was none, the membership of PWWS decided to work toward getting Virginia Bluebells adopted as the official county flower of Prince William. We commissioned drawings in ink and water colors from Nicky Staunton to present to the County, and worked with the Prince William Conservation Alliance and Occoquan Supervisor Mike May, and Virginia Bluebells

were officially declared the county flower in April 2008.



**Merrimac Farm Registry and Dedication:**

Bob Duncan, Director of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries contacted Sally Anderson and asked if the soon to be dedicated Merrimac Farm Wildlife Management Area in Prince William County could become a VNPS registry site. PWWS members worked with Rod Simmons and John Dodge as well as Kim Hosen of the Prince William Conservation Alliance to complete the nomination paperwork, conduct an initial site inventory and develop a plant list and characterize the unique plant communities on the site. Rod and John then had a registry plaque prepared that Sally Anderson presented to Bob Duncan at the site dedication ceremony on April 10, 2008.

**Prince William Master Naturalist Program:**

Nancy Vehrs is on the organizing committee for the Prince William Master Naturalist program. The first class is underway, and several PWWS members are participating in training events in late summer and fall 2008. --Charles Smith, *president*

**PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY**

- President Helen Walter, [helenwalt43@verizon.net](mailto:helenwalt43@verizon.net)
- Vice President Betty Truax
- Secretary Karen Waltman, (703) 830-5710 [geraldwaltman@hotmail.com](mailto:geraldwaltman@hotmail.com)
- Treasurer Diane Flaherty, (703) 330-9862
- Botany Marion Lobstein, (703) 536-7150
- Conservation OPEN
- Programs Bonnie Fulford Nahas, (703) 361-7409
- History OPEN
- Membership Nancy Vehrs, (703) 368-2898 [pwws.vnps@yahoo.com](mailto:pwws.vnps@yahoo.com)
- Plant Sale Nancy Vehrs (703) 368-2898
- Publicity OPEN
- Refreshments Joann Krumviede, (703) 938-4378 and Betty Truax
- Editor Deanna LaValle High, (703) 392-3505 [deannah@agb.org](mailto:deannah@agb.org)
- Advisor/VNPS Nicky Staunton, [nstaunton@earthlink.net](mailto:nstaunton@earthlink.net)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> VP Nicky Staunton, [nstaunton@earthlink.net](mailto:nstaunton@earthlink.net)
- Original Artwork by Nicky Staunton

**Deadline for the January-February issue of *Wild News* is January 2, 2009**

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>

**PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY  
FY2009 BUDGET  
November 1, 2008 – October 31, 2009**

	<u><b>FY2008 Projected Actuals</b></u>	<u><b>FY2009 Proposed</b></u>
	<u><b>Income</b></u>	<u><b>Income</b></u>
Plant Sale	\$ 3,009	\$ 3,000
Membership	\$ 1,163 (to date)	\$ 1,200
Approx. Cash On Hand 11/1/08		\$ 7,925
	<u>\$ 4,172 (to date)</u>	<u>\$12,125</u>
	<u><b>Actual Disbursements</b></u>	<u><b>Proposed Disbursements</b></u>
<u><b>Newsletter</b></u>		
Postage/PO Box	\$ 460 (est)	\$ 600
Printing	\$ 790 (est)	\$ 900
<u><b>Member Meetings</b></u>		
Speaker	\$ 75 (1 meeting)	\$ 300
Refreshments (6 meetings)	\$ 0	\$ 150
Meeting Space (Bethel Lutheran)	\$ 250	\$ 250
<u><b>Special Events</b></u>		
Plant Sale		
▪ Plant Labels	\$ 0	\$ 200
▪ Label Machine	\$ 0	\$ 500
▪ State Sales Tax	\$ 160.47	\$ 175
Garden Tour		
▪ Refreshments	\$ 0	\$ 100
▪ Announcement Mailing (Postage/Printing)	\$ 177.57	\$ 200
▪ Brochures (Butterfly, Woodland, etc.)	\$ 0	\$ 175
Annual Meeting		
▪ Announcement Mailing (Postage/Printing)	\$ 250 (est)	\$ 250
▪ Supplies	\$ 40 (est)	\$ 75
<u><b>Grants/Gifts</b></u>		
Meeting or Conference Cost for PWWS members	\$ 0	\$ 500
Student Scholarships	\$ 0	\$ 250
Flora of Virginia	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
CDs bi-monthly)	\$ 0	\$ 5,000 (to be purchased)
<u><b>Misc. &amp; Unanticipated</b></u>		
	\$ 810.88	\$ 500
	<u>\$ 5,013.92</u>	<u>\$12,125</u>

--Diane Flaherty, PWWS treasurer

## EVENTS

**Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, The Mighty Native Oak**, 7:30 pm. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22312, 703-642-5173

The Washington-Baltimore region contains a great diversity of native oaks, including numerous natural hybrids. Plant Ecologist Rod Simmons will discuss the identification of our native oaks and hybrids through the use of live material, including their habitats and distribution, and have acorns available from local native trees for folks to plant. We'll also discuss identification techniques for distinguishing our region's four native hickory species. We expect to have a sample hickory nuts available from all four species as well.

**Saturday, November 22, Powtomack Chapter Field Trip to Glen Carlyn Park**, 10 am - 2 pm. As a follow-up to the November program, Rod Simmons will lead a field trip in Glen Carlyn Park. Meet at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlyn Springs Road, Arlington. If possible, please carpool or ride your bicycle as parking is limited. Bring lunch or a snack. Green Spring Gardens: 4603 Green Spring Rd. Alexandria VA. The park entrance is 1/4 mile north of Little River Turnpike off Braddock Rd.

Powtomack Chapter programs are free and open to the public. No reservations are necessary.

**Sunday, December 14, 2:00-5:00 p.m.** Merrimac Farm, 14712 Deepwood Lane, Nokesville. The **Christmas Bird Count**, a national survey led by the **National Audubon Society**, captures a snapshot of bird populations in early winter and helps focus attention on the plight of wildlife nationwide. The first Christmas Bird Count was held on Christmas Day in 1900, when 27 observers counted birds in 25 locations. Since then, this survey has grown to include more than 50,000 people surveying more than 2,000 locations.

Now in its 108th year, the database (<http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/nr/index.html>) compiled from Christmas Bird Counts provides important information about the long-term trends in bird populations in North America

and is used by scientists, land managers, and conservation agencies. **Wildlife Counts at Merrimac Farm** are scheduled for the second Sunday of every month. Building on preliminary bird and plant lists, you are invited to tour Merrimac property and help record the plants and animals observed. This regularly scheduled tour is open to all and free of charge. For questions and to RSVP, please contact Prince William Conservation Alliance at 703-499-4954 or [alliance@pwconserve.org](mailto:alliance@pwconserve.org). Directions are on the PWCA Web site, [www.pwconserve.org](http://www.pwconserve.org)

### On the Street Where You Live...

Inspired by our recent annual meeting and walking tour at Merrimac Farm and the creation of a comprehensive plant list for that property, I thought I might take a different kind of stroll down the street where I live – and perhaps see if other PWS members would have fun doing the same – to make notes for a listing of all plants – native and nonnative –



growing or emerging there. It could be imagined as a list of local "waste spaces" as they are called. These sides-of-the-street in my neighborhood are pretty much abused in all seasons, being mowed, driven over, whacked

down, and topped off indiscriminately by homeowners, utility workers, and the county.

As I write, there has been very little rain or wind to take the leaves away, and the result is to my mind some of the best fall color in recent years. Because of the season, perhaps, I found myself drifting from the exactness of the task of compiling a plant list to musing about fall color – of the trees and other plants growing along my street and how a rich mosaic of colors, forms, and textures rolls out before my eyes when walking down it.

On the edges of the verge and out of the corners of my eyes flashes a cacophony of leaf and other color: sassafras mittens come in two

hues, golden yellow and salmon-pink; the bright blood-red sumac is almost gone now in early November, but leapt out startlingly from the dark for over a month. Green, purple red, redgreen, redgold, greengold leaves seem to switch out and recombine in our native dogwood (*Cornus florida*), although these seem to be among the first to drop this year. Tulip poplars have dropped much as well, the gold paddles of their leaves lie thickly on the pavement while their straight, grey trunks weave in and out of the landscape following the curves in the road.

At mid-level, with a dancer's slender and muscular limbs, native ironwood trees (*Carpinus caroliniana*) gracefully form leaf-chimes of pale yellowgold. But it's the head-to-toe fluttering golden columns of the pignut hickories (*Carya glabra*)—especially when they are commingled in the woods or in front of a flat-green Virginia pine or cedar—that pulls the vergescape together with a glowing energy and heart-stopping beauty. This tree—I pull out a

hundred seedlings it seems every year in the garden—is so easy to love and so difficult to transplant (because of its huge tap root) that I feel almost ashamed of depriving the landscape of even one. (Douglas Tallamy, in *Bringing Nature Home* [Timber Press 2007]), ranks *Carya* a woody plant family that supports at least 200 Lepidoptera species.) Often holding leaves and branches low on the trunk, its vertical hue unites the street—or at least it does where homeowners have allowed.

Where all has been cleared for lawn down to the street's edge, there is, well, nothing to report, not even a mown-down clump of goldenrod or late fall aster. Even the "waste spaces" of our streets can support wild life and enrich ours, too. Perhaps streets should be redefined.

—Quanna R. Flanagan, *Wild News*

(Image: "Pignut Hickory," from *Illustrations* by Andre Michaux, 1770-1855, *The North American Botanical Society*, Digital Gallery, Digital ID 1263369.)

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



NOV  
12  
2008

MANASSAS VA

exp. 10/08

Nancy Arrington  
8388 Briarmont Lane  
Manassas, VA 20112-2755

**"Tree Preservation During Rezoning" with Julie Flanagan, arborist for PWC**  
Monday, November 17, 2008, 7:30 p.m., Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas