



WILD NEWS

Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2009-02

March-April 2009

MONDAY, MARCH 16

**PWWS Membership Meeting, 7:30
Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas
Program: "Turn the Mill Around"
with Ellen Percy Miller, executive**



**director of
Turn the
Mill Around
Campaign.** In the autumn of 1998, Chapman's Mill (now known as Beverley's Mill), a historic landmark at Thoroughfare Gap in Prince William

County was gutted by fire. The mid-eighteenth century mill is a key Civil War period landmark and was the scene of significant action during the Second Manassas campaign in August 1862. Pictures from the organization's Web site show the mill a few days before the devastating fire and just after. Join us for this fascinating look at the restoration work on the mill and its surrounding property on Broad Run.

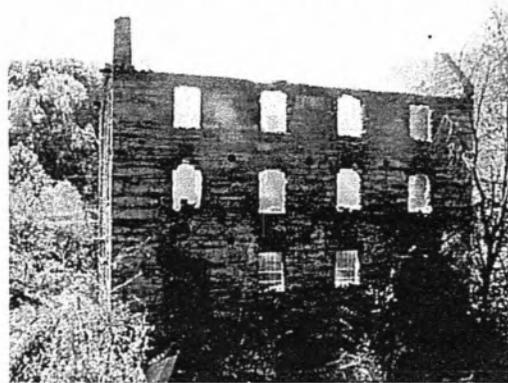
Refreshments will be served. If you need a ride to the meeting, or would like more information, please call or email Helen Walter at 703-330-9614 or helenwalt43@verizon.net

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Back in November, I mentioned my bushwhacking expeditions on Bull Run Mountain during the 1980s with former PWWS member Bobbe Krueger. The third member of those weekly treks was Ellen Percy Miller, who is now executive director of the "Turn the Mill Around Campaign" and the speaker for our March meeting. She'll tell us what they're doing to restore the Chapman/Beverley Mill and its surrounding property, as well as the story behind the two

names. Back in our bushwhacking days, we used to ignore the sign warning, "No trespassing. Property of Rowland Farm," so it's exciting to see how it's changed, with a network of trails maintained by volunteers and open to the public.

Our January meeting was threatened with a snowstorm that didn't happen, but now that it's March and all of nature is gearing up for spring, we're buried in snow, with temps in the teens. But by the time your newsletter arrives, we should be seeing the early spring wildflowers, along with the ubiquitous alien invasives, which we have some opportunities to remove. The Piedmont Chapter has scheduled a garlic mustard pull at the G R Thompson WMA in Linden on Sunday, March 29 from 10:00 to 3:00



or as long as you can come, to eradicate the garlic mustard that is

threatening our beloved trillium. They say this is really working. Then on the statewide invasive removal day on Saturday, May 2, we'll have another chance to pull up garlic mustard closer to home at Merrimac Farm. I'll have a signup sheet at the meeting.

We had a good turnout of PWWS members at the Prince William Conservation Alliance Green Breakfast on Feb. 28. The main speaker was our own **Charles Smith**, whose take home message was "Don't plant trees, kill a deer." Without the deer eating them, the trees will grow back on their own without our help. Sad but true. Then the couple sitting next to me at the breakfast told me about The Village on the Parkway, a new development at the intersection

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

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rev. 2/09 Deadline for the **May-June issue of Wild News** is **April 25, 2009** Please send or email information to Deanna High, 9613 Heather Green Drive, Manassas, VA 20112; deannahigh@gmail.com. **Original Artwork** by Nicky Staunton.



PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY EVENTS | SPRING 2009

SUNDAY, APRIL 19, SPRING GARDEN TOUR, Noon–5 pm. You won't want to miss PWWS' popular annual spring garden tour. The date has been moved up this year so that Virginia bluebells will be in full swing. (Note that Virginia bluebells are now the official wildflower of Prince William County, thanks to the efforts of several PWWS members.) Three local gardens will be featured on the tour; all are conveniently located within short driving distance of each other. A detailed brochure will be mailed to members in early April, but mark the date now to join friends and neighbors to view lovely gardens, learn more about native plants, enjoy delicious refreshments, and spend a pleasant and stimulating afternoon. Free and open to all.

[Bluebell image: Doug Sherman, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, NPIN Image ID 3205, 1995]



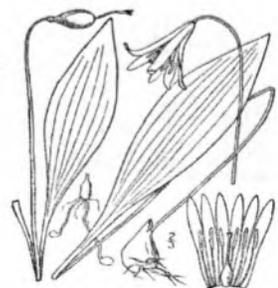
Endrikat garden, 8419 Cabin Branch Ct, Manassas. A planting of bulbs, shrubs and perennials defines the entrance to this large woodland garden. Jack-in-the-pulpit, cardinal flower, turtlehead, and Virginia bluebells grow in a naturally wet area at the beginning of the driveway. Beds beside the driveway and near the house are planted with dwarf crested iris, phlox, violets, bloodroot, and wood poppy. Native shrubs, including azaleas, spicebush, winterberry



holly, fothergilla, and several viburnum species are featured in the garden. Foundation beds are laced with a variety of woody plants, including a specimen serviceberry and a pair of Oregon grape hollies. Woodland beds behind the house contain additional wildflowers and ferns, and a large bed of summer perennials borders the lawn. A small sunny opening near the street is maintained as a wildflower meadow. The owner wants to stress that her woods are mostly DRY woods—and that she does not irrigate!

[Photo: Albert F.W. Vick, photographer, NPIN Image Gallery, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Image ID 3021, 1988]

Vehrs garden, 1838 Highland Street, Manassas. Nancy Vehrs' garden boasts many spring ephemerals in both front and back gardens. The back garden, walled off from the street and the front, transports you into a sylvan oasis of color. For the tour, the back garden will be a sea of blue and gold: bluebells and wood poppies. In the sunny front garden, dogwoods and redbud should be in bloom, layered below with creeping blue phlox and nonnative brunnera. Blue star may also be in bloom here. Woody plants in the back include a good-sized serviceberry, spice bush, azalea (native and non), inkberry holly, itea, oakleaf hydrangea, clethra, and witch hazel. Sloping paths reveal a rich display of natives, including jack-in-the-pulpit, shooting star, trout lily, trillium, cream violets, dutchman's breeches, green dragon, phlox stolonifera, and wild ginger. Plus, there are lots of spring bulbs and native iris cristata, spring beauty, phlox divaricata, golden alexander,



green and gold, Christmas fern, blue-eyed grass, columbine, mayapple, and wild geranium. Trumpet honeysuckle should be in bloom on the deck's lattice. The Vehrs garden was last on the PWWS Spring Garden Tour in 1996.

The Slover Garden, located in the Lake Jackson area at 11800 Hilltop Drive, was last seen on the tour in 2004. It will be exciting to see how this garden has changed and matured over the years. Over the past eight years, this wooded property has evolved from suburban lawn to a naturalistic garden where plants grow as the land, not the gardener, dictates.

The result is a casual mix of many natives, some exotics, and even a few tidy gardener's weeds growing in large beds connected by wood chip paths and small grass areas. Front garden beds contain wild geranium, may apple, Jacob's ladder, to name a few, as well as later-blooming beebalm, columbine, coneflower, and phlox.

More spring-blooming natives—bloodroot, foamflower, and creeping phlox grow in the rear garden. Naturally moist soil keeps Joe pye weed, ironweed, cardinal flower, and several fern species growing happily through dry summers. Native shrubs and small trees include paw paw, spicebush, fringe tree, clethra, devil's walking stick, and bald cypress. [Photo: Stefan Bloodworth, Sarah P. Duke Botanical Gardens, H.L. Blomquist Garden of Native Plants, NPIN Image Id 3494, 1989]



*Remember, many of the spring-blooming natives you will see on the garden tour will be available at the May Plant Sale!

SATURDAY, MAY 9, PWWS 27th * Annual Plant Sale, Grounds of Bethel Lutheran Church, 8712 Plantation Lane, Manassas 9:00 am—noon.



The best native plant bargains in town! Plan to arrive early for best selection. A wide variety of spring-blooming wildflowers, including Virginia bluebells, mayapples, bloodroot, wild ginger, spring and summer phlox, and native geraniums, along with many colorful summer-blooming must-haves, such as purple coneflower, will be on offer at very reasonable prices. The sale is PWWS' only fundraising event of the year. You will get great plants donated by local gardeners who love growing native plants. A selection of native ferns, shrubs, and trees will also be available at the sale. More details and a partial plant list will be forthcoming in the May-June newsletter. [Photo: Itea, Deanna High, Manassas, 2008]

UPCOMING EVENTS

PLANT SALES & FESTIVALS

Saturday, April 11, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Bluebell Festival at Merrimac Farm. Bring your family and friends to Merrimac Farm to welcome spring and view the spectacular display of Virginia Bluebells that carpet the floodplain along Cedar Run for nearly a mile. Events include a nature art show and naturalist-led tours to Cedar Run, where everyone can learn more about the birds, butterflies, frogs, and other wildlife at Merrimac Farm. Participating organizations include the Audubon Naturalist Society, Prince William Art Society, PWWS, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The event is sponsored by the Merrimac Farm WMA Conservation Partners: Prince William Conservation Alliance, Marine Corps Base Quantico, and the Virginia Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries. See www.pwconserve.org for more information and directions.

Saturday, April 25, 1:00-5:00 p.m. Arbor Day Celebration, Blandy Farm at the State Arboretum of Virginia. Bring the family and enjoy an afternoon of workshops, tours, displays, and children's activities—all about trees! Then help plant native trees. Watch for details on the Blandy web site. This is a FREE public event. Schedule: 1:00-3:00 p.m., Workshops and Tours; 3:00–5:00 p.m., Tree Planting.

Saturday, May 2, 9:00-noon. Master Gardeners of Prince William Spring Plant Sale, Teaching Garden at the Benedictine Monastery, 9535 Linton Hall Rd Bristow, VA 20136. See www.osbva.org for directions. The Master Gardeners harvest their favorite plants from their gardens and pot them up to share with you. Come buy some great specimens for your own garden and bring any questions you have about plants. We will be glad to help you with that as well. If you have any questions you can call our Horticulture Helpdesk at 703-792-7747 for assistance.

Saturday, May 9, Bethel Lutheran Church grounds, Manassas, 9:00 – noon. Prince William Wildflower Society Annual Plant Sale. (See insert for more details.) It's time to gear up for our big fundraising event of the year: **plants, pots, and volunteers are needed** to make this year's plant sale a success. We need your help! If you have pots to spare and share, please bring them to the March 16 meeting. If you have native plants to share, it's not too early to start digging and potting. Email your list of plants you are bringing to the sale at pwws-vnps@yahoo.com. Questions? Contact plant sale chair Nancy Velhrs at

nvchrs1@yahoo.com or 703-368-2898 to find out how you can help with the sale.

Saturday and Sunday, May 9-10, Mother's Day Weekend, "Garden Fair," Blandy Experimental Farm and State Arboretum of Virginia. Select vendors with perennials, mall trees, fine tiems for home and garden, children's activities, information, food, and much more.

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, March 21, Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge, 8:00 a.m. Prince William Conservation Alliance Nature Tours. Tours run for approximately 2.5 hours. More info, see www.pwconserve.org.

Saturday, March 28, Subtle Colors of Spring at Merrimac Farm, 10:00 a.m. – noon. Prince William Conservation Alliance Nature Tours. More info, see www.pwconserve.org.

Saturday, April 18, Route 234 Wetland Mitigation Area, 7:30 a.m. Prince William Conservation Alliance Nature Tours. Tours run for approximately 2.5 hours. More info, see www.pwconserve.org.

Sunday, May 3, VNPS Field trip: Crow's Nest. Hal Wiggins will lead a VNPS trip to the new Crow's Nest Natural Area Preserve. Find information about the preserve at:

http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/natural_area_preserves/crownsnest.shtml. Participants will meet at the headquarters of a Fredricksburg river outfitter.

While there, Hal will make a presentation and all will be outfitted with personal floatation devices. From there, we will travel to Potomac Creek for a tidal/flatwater paddle to Crow's Nest. We will walk part of the preserve. The trip will be an all day adventure. We will meet at 9:30 am in Fredericksburg and return there at about 5 pm. Hal Wiggins is a member of VNPS, long time advocate for Crow's Nest and author of Virginia Native Plants and A Field Guide to Crow's Nest. This field trip is a special opportunity to visit the area with a guide who has explored it for many years. The trip cost is \$25, which covers canoes, transport and a donation. Limit 18 people. Rain or shine, except for severe weather. Reservations necessary due to the canoe rental and must be made by April 24. If you must cancel, we will try to arrange to transfer your spot if we have a wait list.

Please reserve by sending your check to: VNPS Field Trips, 400 Blandy Farm Lane #2, Boyce, VA 22620

Saturday May 9, Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge, 8:00 a.m. Prince William Conservation Alliance Nature Tours. Tours run for

approximately 2.5 hours. More info, see www.pwconserve.org.

Saturday May 9, Dove's Landing, 9:00 a.m.
Prince William Conservation Alliance Nature Tours.
Tours run for approximately 2.5 hours. More info,
see www.pwconserve.org.

TALKS, LECTURES, & DEMOS

Saturday, March 21, "10 Steps to a Greener Lawn," 10am-12noon

Master Gardeners will share 10 ways you can keep your grass green and the water clean. Timing of spring lawn tasks and those that can wait until fall will be discussed. McCoy Conference Room, Sudley North Building, 8033 Ashton Avenue, Manassas, 20109. Registration is requested.

Saturday, March 28, "Getting the Garden Ready for Spring," 10-11:30am

Master Gardeners have been working with ACTS to establish an educational and functional landscape around their new Family Services Center using Best Management Practices as a guide. Learn what you need to do in the Spring to prepare a new or established landscape for the seasons to come. ACTS Family Services Center, 3900 ACTS Lane, Dumfries, VA. Registration is requested.

Thursday, April 2, 7:39 p.m., 1st Thursday Nature Tales, Bull Run Unitarian Universalist Church, 9350 Main St., Manassas. "Wild Mammals of Northern Virginia." More info, see www.pwconserve.org.

Thursday, April 16, "Companion Planting," from 7-8:30pm

Companion planting involves planting two or more plant species in close proximity so that some cultural benefit is derived. The results could be better biodiversity, pest control, or a higher yield. Learn from Master Gardeners what plants go well in the veggie garden. Community Room, Bull Run Library, 8051 Ashton Avenue, Manassas. Registration is requested.

Sunday, April 19, Martha Cook Lecture, "Designing Botanical (and Other) Gardens for the 21st Century," with Uva. Professor Emeritus of Landscape Architecture Warren Byrd. See www.virginia.edu/blandy for time and more details.

Monday, April 20, "Perennials, Groundcovers & Vines," and Tuesday, May 5, "Shrubs," 7:00-8:30 pm for both classes. "Right Plant, Right Place" series.

Knowing the growing preferences for the plants in your landscape can help you solve problems and save time and money in the future. Master Gardeners will discuss this concept and provide plant profiles so you can choose the "right plant for the right place" in your landscape. Community Room, Chinn Park Regional Library, 13083 Chinn Park Dr, Prince William, VA. Registration requested.

Thursday, May 7, 7:30 p.m. "1st Thursday Nature Tales," Bull Run Unitarian Universalist Church, 9350 Main St., Manassas. "Coyotes in Northern Virginia." More info, see www.pwconserve.org.

Tuesday, June 2, Pruning Azaleas from 7-8:30pm

The time is NOW for pruning azaleas and other spring blooming shrubs! The Master Gardener Pruning Team is prepared to teach you what you need to know about these beloved landscape plants. Community Room, Chinn Park Regional Library, 13083 Chinn Park Dr, Prince William, VA. Registration requested.

Saturdays in the Garden. Join Master Gardeners at the Teaching Garden at St. Benedict Monastery, 9535 Linton Hall Road, Bristow, 20136. Programs run 9am-10:30am, unless noted. Registration is requested. Please call the Extension Horticulture Help Desk at 703-792-7747 to register, or if you have any questions.

April 4th - Preparing your Garden for Spring
May 2nd - Deer Resistant Plants
June 6th - Attracting Pollinators
July 11th - Building a Living Wall
August 1st - Turf Field Day
September 5th - Dividing Perennials

Master Gardeners Answer Questions at Local Garden Centers

Saturdays, April 4, 18, 25 & May 2, 9, 16, 10:00am-1:00pm at English Country Gardens, Lowe's of Woodbridge, Lowe's of Gainesville, Southern States in Manassas, Merrifield Garden Center, Gainesville. Drop by and get solutions to *your* gardening questions.

WORKSHOPS

Thursday, March 19, 9:30 a.m. – Noon, "Pruning Boxwood & Evergreen Shrubs," with Peter Deahl. Blandy Farm, State Arboretum of Virginia. Learn how and when to prune boxwood and other shrubs in this hands-on workshop on Blandy's grounds. Fee: \$6 FOSA members; \$8 nonmembers. More info, see www.virginia.edu/blandy.

Thursday, March April 2, 10--11:30 a.m., "Green' Lawns & Gardens," with Steve Carroll. Blandly Farm, State Arboretum of Virginia. How can we maintain healthy, robust plants and gardens without using excess water and energy, and an arsenal of chemicals? Learn about sustainable gardening practices, look over recommended products, and share your ideas. Fee: \$6 FOSA members; \$8 nonmembers. More info, see www.virginia.edu/blandly.

Thursday, April 16, 10--11:30 a.m., "CSI: Plants," with Steve Carroll. Blandly Farm, State Arboretum of Virginia. Plants help solve crimes through seeds found at crime scenes, plant toxin analysis, DNA sequencing, and more. Hear about famous cases, modern techniques, and ways in which plants are used in cases ranging from kidnapping to murder. Fee: \$6 FOSA members; \$8 nonmembers. More info, see www.virginia.edu/blandly.

Friday, April 17, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Habitat Partners© Demonstration Garden Workshop at Merrimac Farm Wildlife Management Area. Free of charge and open to the general public. Register by April 8. Are you interested in learning how to improve habitat for wildlife in your community? Join us for hands-on training that will focus on how to design a habitat that attracts butterflies, birds, and other wildlife. Workshop attendees will work in teams to draw a habitat site plan to scale and develop a plant list using native species. Afterwards, there will be an opportunity to sign up for a planting day at Merrimac Farm to install the garden designed during the workshop. Participants will receive a certificate upon completing the training, which can count for six CEUs, depending on your organization. More info, see the Prince William Conservation Alliance Web site, www.pwconservc.org.

Thursday, April 30, 9 am – Noon, "Trilliums of the Thompson Wildlife Management Area," with Marion Lobstein. Join us on a field trip to a sea of trilliums and other spring wildflowers. Meet at Blandly library, and we'll carpool to the site. Fee: \$6 FOSA members; \$8 nonmembers. More info, see www.virginia.edu/blandly.

Friday, May 8, 10-11:30 a.m. "Remarkable Trees of Virginia," with Jeff Kirwan. Virginia is home to many remarkable trees—some are old, some are historic, others are large or distinctive. Learn about the Virginia Remarkable Trees program and its resulting book from one of the program's founders and chroniclers. Copies of the book will be available for purchase. Fee: \$6 FOSA members; \$8

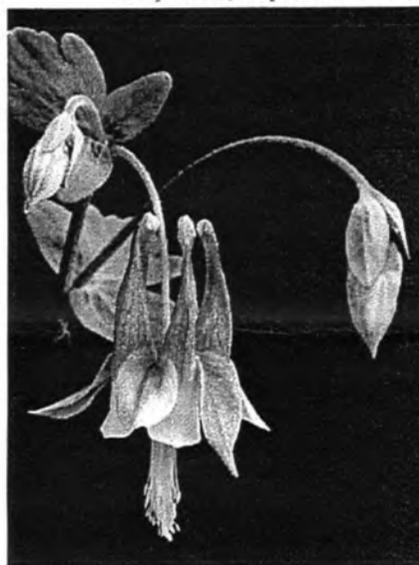
nonmembers. More info, see www.virginia.edu/blandly.

Thursday, May 21, 10-11:30 a.m. "Water Quality Improvement with Rain Gardens," with Jim McGlone, Virginia Dept. of Forestry. Learn how rain gardens improve water quality, provide habitat, mitigate flooding, and reduce erosion. Then examine a rain garden at Blandly. Fee: \$6 FOSA members; \$8 nonmembers. More info, see www.virginia.edu/blandly.

Spring Wildflowers: Pollination

By Marion Lobstein, Professor of Biology, NVCC (from March-April 1998 issue of Wild News.)

Pollination among most deciduous forest spring wildflower species is accomplished primarily by insect groups, which include members of Hymenoptera (for example, native bees, including bumblebees and honey bees); Diptera (for example, syrphid flies,



carion flies, and ground walking flies); and Thysanoptera (such as thrips); and mushroom gnats. Most of the spring-blooming species share or compete for the same pool of pollinators (primarily bee, bumblebee, and syrphid fly species. The plants compete for these pollinators by offering nectar and/or pollen rewards, using

various shapes and colors, different smells, and/or staggered blooming times.

Neither bloodroot nor hepatica produce nectar, but they are capable of self-pollination; cross-pollination does not occur. Mayapple flowers compensate for a lack of nectar by offering a very generous pollen reward. The staggering of blooming dates is also important especially in the same genera, such as *Dicentra*, where *D. cucullaria* (Dutchman's breeches) begins blooming two weeks or so before *D. Canadensis* (squirrel corn).

A common shape of many spring flowers is that of a disk that attracts a range of pollinators. Other species have flower shapes specialized for only a single pollinator species: Dutchman's breeches are accessible to only queen bumblebees and wild columbine are specialized for hummingbirds.

Often color is an important factor in attracting pollinators: yellow and violet often reflect ultraviolet (UV) radiation, while white and green do not. Pollination lines on petals are generally non-reflective

so that they stand out between light-reflecting areas. In some species, only parts of the flower structure are UV reflective, such as the filaments of spring beauty, the petal tips of Dutchman's breeches and squirrel corn, and the outer side of the petals in white trout lily. Also, what we see is not always what a bee sees. "Bee colors" are based on different combinations of yellow, blue-green, blue, and UV. "Bee violet" is 50 percent UV and 50 percent blue light. In yellow flowers with UV reflection, the UV often dominates so that bees see pure UV. Colors of flower parts are determined by the presence of chlorophylls, carotenoids, xanthophylls, flavonoids, and anthocyanins in flower tissue. Bright UV patterns may be due to presence of one or more of these pigments.

In most with-flowered, spring-blooming species, the petals contain flavonoids that absorb UV, which may play a role in altering the flowers' appearance to attract pollinators. Different distribution of flavonoids may serve as nectar lines as well as protecting the flowers against UV radiation and herbivory. These factors are especially important in attracting bee and fly pollinators, since many of these plant species have generalized shapes and share pollinators. The flavonoids of bloodroot, mayapple, spring beauty, Dutchman's breeches, squirrel corn spp. Hepatica (as well as dogwood spp. chickweed spp., Canada violet, and blue cohosh) are all similar. The flavonoids of

large-flowered trillium and apple species are different. The white color also may result in the flowers standing out against a neutral or reflective background.

One point that should be emphasized regarding the sharing of pollinators by so many species is that most individual insects are constant foragers. One researcher followed 109 foraging trips by bee species and found that with each insect, 81 percent of its trips were to a single flower species. Smell also may play a role in attracting pollinators. Many of the species that are pollinated by bees have a sweet odor, such as hepatica, twinleaf, toothwort, and squirrel corn. Other species, such as skunk cabbage, jack-in-the-pulpit, wild ginger, and sessile trillium, have a musty or even carrion smell that attracts a different group of pollinators.

Finally, temperature, too, is an important factor in spring pollination. Only bumblebees can fly at 42 degrees Fahrenheit while most other hymenoptera require a temperature well above 51 degrees F. Fly species often become active at 56 degrees F. This creates a delicate balance that must be struck by the earliest spring bloomers.

[photo: Steven Faucette, Oconee Nuclear Power Station, NPIN Image Id 26252, 2008]

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A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 83, Manassas, Virginia, 20108-0083



exp. 10/09

Nancy Arrington
8388 Briarmont Lane
Manassas, VA 20112-2755

Next meeting: **MONDAY, MARCH 16, 7:30 Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas**
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