

# Wild News

The Bi-monthly Newsletter of the Prince William Wildflower Society  
A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2024-02

March - April 2024

**The Prince William Wildflower Society  
In-person Meeting at  
Bethel Lutheran Church  
Thursday, March 7, 7:30 p.m.**

***“Eastern Bluebirds: Getting Them  
Started, Helping Them Stay”***



Our presenter for the March meeting will be our own Valerie Kenyon Gaffney, a resident of Woodbridge. Retired in 2018 after a 25-year career with The Washington Post, she is currently President of the Virginia Bluebird Society; her activities and responsibilities do not stop there — she is also Treasurer of the Prince William Wildflower Society; Vice President of the Lifelong Learning Institute – Manassas; a Virginia Master Gardener; and a member of Centennial Garden Club.



Valerie’s Program:

The Eastern Bluebird: Getting Them Started, Helping Them Stay — A one hour presentation on the lifecycle of the bluebird, what led to their decline in population, and what role you play in supporting bluebirds and attracting them to your backyard.

<https://www.virginiabluebirds.org>

## *Other Resources:*

North American Bluebird Society:  
<http://www.nabluebirdsociety.org/>

Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail  
<http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/vbwt/>

Virginia Bluebird Connection:  
<http://www.vabluebirdconnection.com/>

Audubon Society of Northern Virginia:  
<https://www.audubonva.org>

VA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation:  
<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/>



## *HELP NEEDED*

PWWS’s editor is looking for a substitute for the upcoming May-June issue. If you have some skill at layouts or some newsletter editing experience, please email me, Brigitte Hartke, here: [brigittehartke@gmail.com](mailto:brigittehartke@gmail.com). Cell phone: 703-585-5504

## President's Column



Signs of spring are everywhere; Red Maple trees are blooming, Virginia Bluebells are emerging from their annual slumber, and delicate Round-leaved Hepatica

flowers can be found among their evergreen leaves. The season of spring wildflower walks, Bluebell festivals, garden tours, and native plant sales is nearly here.

Did you attend the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Prince William Native Plant Symposium on February 10? Once again we had an amazing offering of 18 breakout sessions that followed the inspiring talk of keynote speaker Keith Tomlinson, retired director of Meadowlark Gardens. More than 300 people attended this event that was offered both in person at the Manassas campus of George Mason University and online through Zoom. We were pleased that we reached a large number of “newbies”; about 70 percent of the in-person audience were first timers at the symposium. And roughly 70 percent also indicated that they were Prince William County residents. The only

way we can expand the native plant gardening movement is to widen our audience, and the symposium scored on that front. We are already thinking about next year and connecting with native plant guru Doug Tallamy about serving as the keynote speaker. The success of this event is the result of a partnership between non-profits and government: Prince William Conservation Alliance (Ashley Studholme), Virginia Cooperative Extension (Valerie Huelsman and Paige Thacker), Master Gardeners of Prince William (Janene Cullen), Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District (Nicole Slazinski and Kim Lowther), Virginia Bluebird Society (Valerie Kenyon Gaffney), Prince William County's Environmental Management Division (Clay Morris and Julie Flanagan), Northern Virginia Community College (Rob Johnson), George Mason University (Greg Farley), and VNPS/PWWS Volunteers helped. Other related non-profit organizations had displays at the event. I thank Brigitte Hartke, Karen Waltman, Diane Liga, and Janine Lawton for staffing the PWWS table and selling Plant NOVA Natives guides.

We took the opportunity of the wide audience for the symposium to honor the incomparable Nancy Berlin

with a *Plant NOVA Natives Champion Award* that I had the honor of presenting. Her certificate stated that she was being honored “for programs in Prince William County to educate and inspire the public in sustainable landscaping practices and the value of native plants. As a Natural Resource Specialist for Virginia Cooperative Extension, she led the Master Gardener program, trained volunteers for the Audubon@Home Program, and established and maintained native plant gardens at schools and other public places. Since retiring from VCE in 2023, she continues to work as a native plant gardening consultant.”  
Bravo, Nancy B!

We have lots of events this spring: wildflower walks, the annual Bluebell Festival at Merrimac Farm on April 7, the return of the Spring Wildflower Garden Tour on Sunday, April 28, and our annual plant sale on Saturday, May 11. Join us for our evening meeting on Thursday, March 7, in person at Bethel Lutheran Church. Our remarkable PWWS treasurer Valerie Kenyon Gaffney will present to us wearing her hat as president of the Virginia Bluebird Society.

~ Nancy

*Photos below and on facing page were taken at the VA Native Plant Symposium. Julie Flanagan addresses some of the Symposium attendees; Ashley Studholme at the podium.*



### Prince William Wildflower Society Membership Meeting Minutes, Jan. 4, 2024 on Zoom

President Nancy Vehrs called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. A couple of announcements: Adrian Willing is trying to arrange a native plant sale at his church on April 6th. Claudia Thompson-Dehl will lead an upcoming tree ID walk at James S. Long Park.

The January program was our annual membership slide show. PWWS members presented slides of wildflower gardens and wildflowers from their travels.

Janet Martinet traveled around the US as well as New England this past summer, and shared some of the photos she took on her trip. Janet showed us photos of an adult Elm tree! Gorgeous! Also beautiful

photographs from Acadia National Park in Maine, and she saw Interrupted Fern there.

Nancy Vehrs' beautiful photos of her Virginia botanical travels started in Highland County, Virginia, at Devil's Backbone, where she found and photographed Virginia Heartleaf, Mountain Laurel, Netted Chain Fern, Cinnamon Fern, Sensitive Fern, Lady Slipper (critically imperiled, S1) - in Hickory Hollow. On the way home she stopped in Augusta County where she encountered Swamp Pink which is a federally endangered (S2/S3) exquisite flower. In Shenandoah at Reddish Knob, she photographed Miterwort/Bishop's Cap, Long-Spurred Violet, Canada Mayflower-False Lily-of-the-Valley, Hemlock, Painter Trillium, Bluehead Lily/Yellow Clintonia, and Red Trillium.

Nancy visited Maple Flats, in George Washington/Jefferson National Forest and saw Gentian, Nodding

Ladies Tresses Orchid, Virginia Sneezeweed, Valley Doll's Daisy (imperiled s1). She also saw Red-Spotted and Marbled Salamanders.

Closer to home, at Riverbend Park Nancy found Salt & Pepper/Harbinger-of-Spring, Virginia Bluebells, Bloodroot. Blue Cohosh at Balls Bluff Regional Park. She shared photos of Twin-Leaf, Bear Corn, Wild Azalea, Wild Strawberries, Pink Lady Slipper and Large Whorled Pogonia at Fred Crabtree Park. At Huntley Meadows Park, Nancy photographed beautiful Swamp Azalea and Purple Milkweed (S2/S3), Turk's Cap Lily, Crimson-Eyed Mallow and American Bluehearts (S1).

It was a wonderful evening full of beautiful native plants!

Janine Lawton,  
Secretary



*More Photos from the Symposium: Below Left, Keynote Speaker, Keith Tomlinson, Nancy Berlin with her Plant NOVA Native Champion Award presented by Nancy V., VA Bluebird Society President Valerie Kenyon Gaffney with friend Stephanie Johnson, Adrian Willing carries a flat of native plants and chats with Nancy Vehrs.*



## Finding Wildflowers Locally

### PWWS

#### Chapter Board of Directors

**President:** Nancy Vehrs  
nvehrs1@yahoo.com

**Vice-President/Programs:**  
Valerie Neitzey  
invaluable2@gmail.com

**Secretary:** Janine Lawton  
Lawton.Janine@gmail.com

**Treasurer:** Valerie Kenyon Gaffney  
gaffneyvk@verizon.net

**Botany:** Marion Lobstein  
mblobstein@earthlink.net

**Conservation:**  
Claudia Thompson-Deahl  
cjtnature@yahoo.com

**Education:** Lois Montgomery  
lomonty@yahoo.com

**Membership:** Diane Liga  
dianeliga@gmail.com

**Newsletter Editor:** Brigitte Hartke  
brigittehartke@gmail.com

**Plant Sale:** Nancy Arrington  
narrington1@verizon.net

**Refreshments/Hospitality:**  
Beverly Houston  
bhouston40@yahoo.com  
Carol Thompson  
carol8809@icloud.com

**Advisor:** Nicky Staunton  
nstaunton@earthlink.net

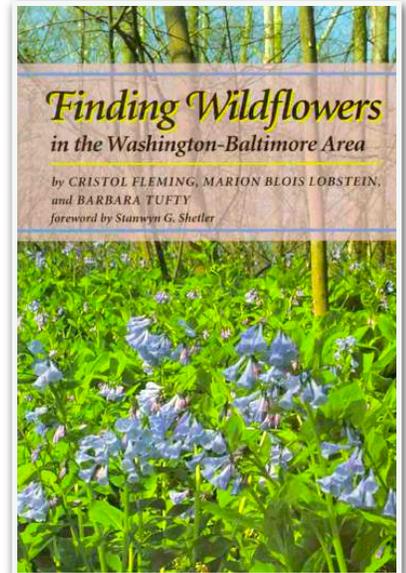
**At-Large:** Deanna High  
deannahigh@gmail.com

**Volunteer Coordinator:** Karen  
Waltman  
waltman5313@gmail.com

**Publicity, Registry & Webmaster:**  
Vacant

When spring arrives and your editor goes in search of spring ephemerals, she regularly turns to a treasured book on her shelves — *Finding Wildflowers in the Washington-Baltimore Area*, co-written by Cristol Fleming, Barbara Tufty, and our own Marion Blois Lobstein, and illustrated by Nicky Staunton, a good friend of many of our members.

The book was published in 1995 but is as relevant now as it was when it was first published. "Illustrated with more than forty line drawings, the book presents a broad representation of local wildflowers, focusing on the showier native and naturalized herbaceous plants of woods, fields, rocky areas, and wetlands. The authors begin with a general description of the geology of the Washington-Baltimore area: the piedmont, the coastal plain to the east, and the mountains to the west. They describe the plants' various habitats and the effects of seasonal changes and topographical variations in climate. Common and scientific names appear throughout." Note: Many scientific names of plants have changed in recent years when advances in botanical knowledge led to reclassifications.



"The heart of the book presents detailed information on specific parks, trails, riverbanks, marshes, and other natural areas where wildflowers thrive. Detailed maps of the locations and directions show readers how to get to each site. A final section lists some 450 wildflower species found in the region, noting each flower's blooming period, its preferred habitat, the locations where it can be found, and whether it is common, uncommon, or rare."



Marion Lobstein is a founding Board and Life Member of the Virginia Native Plant Society and Professor Emeritus at Northern Virginia Community College. She is the botany chair for the Prince William Wildflower Society and has authored articles for *Wild News* for 40 years. She also has offered workshops and field trips for that chapter as well as other VNPS chapters. She is a

founding board member of the Flora of Virginia Project and served on that board for 20 years.

## VIDEO: "Spring Wildflowers of the Mid-Atlantic Region"

<https://vimeo.com/482788557>

In the late 1990s, Marion Lobstein and two of her former students, John DeMary and Suzanne Lohr, developed and produced a beautiful video about spring wildflowers in our area. What began as a class project blossomed into a feature-length video titled "Spring Wildflowers of the Mid-Atlantic Region", which received a 1998 Telly Award for excellence in non-network productions. The 48-minute video was later converted to DVD with sale proceeds supporting the Foundation of the Flora of Virginia Project.

To encourage interest in and appreciation of our local wildflowers, Marion, John, and Suzanne recently agreed to donate the Spring Wildflowers video to the Virginia Native Plant Society for viewing and distribution through the VNPS Website and social media.

"Spring Wildflowers" includes information on nearly 100 species of spring wildflowers found in our Potomac area. The 35mm slides used to develop the wildflower stills provide details for identification as well as enjoyment of the beauty of these wonderful plants. You will also find wildflower life cycle information including ecological influences on vegetative and flower production, pollination, seed and fruit dispersal, underground storage structures, and historical, medicinal and edible uses.

View the Species List as presented in Spring Wildflowers of the Mid-Atlantic at [vnps.org/download/11849/](https://vnps.org/download/11849/).



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### PLEASE NOTE:

For events not scheduled at the time this issue went to press, please continue to visit the VNPS events page:

<https://vnps.org/events/> and on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/p/Prince-William-Wildflower-Society-a-Virginia-Native-Plant-Society-Chapter-100064500530969/>

## MARCH

**Sunday, March 3, 3 - 4:30 pm, Huntley Meadows Visitor Center.** Vegetation Ecologist Nelson DeBarros will give an in-person presentation on the native plants of NoVA's various freshwater tidal marshes. Free. Meet at the Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Center 3701 Lockheed Boulevard, Alex. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park>

**Wednesday, March 13, Via Zoom. 7 - 9 pm. Jefferson Chapter sponsored, "The Policy & Practice of Stream Restoration" with Rod Simmons.** Rod is Research Associate with the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, and is Natural Resource Manager and Plant Ecologist for the City of Alexandria. Jefferson VNPS members will receive a link. If you are not a member and would like to attend the presentation on Zoom, please send an email to Emily Byers at [jeffvnps@gmail.com](mailto:jeffvnps@gmail.com).

**Thursday, March 14, 10 am - 6 pm. Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District Online Native Plant Seedling Sale** will open online. Plants sell out quickly so don't delay. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/soil-water-conservation/native-seedling-sale>

**Sunday, March 17, 12 - 2:30 pm, Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alex. Potowmack Chapter Quarterly Get-Together, Green Spring Gardens Visitor Center auditorium.** An informal discussion of native plant topics, a tour of the Native Plant Trail and the VNPS propagation beds. All chapter members are welcome and anyone interested in the native plants of NoVA. Bring your friends!

**Wednesday, March 27, 1:30, Nancy Vehrs will lead a Botanical Exploration Hike at Conway Robinson State Forest.** We should find Hepatica, Early Saxifrage, Bloodroot, Spring Beauty, and more in bloom. Three hours.

### VNPS ANNUAL WORKSHOP

**Thursday, March 21, and Thursday, March 28, 6:30 - 9 pm, Via Zoom. "Protecting Plants in Virginia Region by Region."** Enjoy two evening workshops, each starting at 6:30 for a meet and greet. Sessions start at 7 pm and 8 pm both evenings. Please register only once for both sessions.

### REGISTER HERE:

<https://vnps.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/vnps/eventRegistration.jsp?event=1388&>

6:30 pm Zoom Meet & Greet

6:50 pm Welcome and Introduction  
Nancy Vehrs, VNPS President  
Joey Thompson, VNPS Education Chair



## VNPS Wildflower of the Year T-Shirt Design Contest



*The Virginia Native Plant Society (VNPS) is accepting submissions for the 2024 VNPS Wildflower of the Year T-Shirt Design Contest which runs from February 12 to March 17. The winning design will be printed on the official VNPS T-shirt, to be released at the virtual online Annual VNPS Workshop, currently scheduled for March 21 and 28.*

*Learn more about the VNPS Wildflower of the Year Contest at*

<https://vnps.org/wildflower-of-the-year-2024-white-turtlehead-chelone-glabra/>.

## APRIL

**Wednesday, April 3, 10 - Noon, Spring Wildflower Walk at Stone Bridge Trail at Manassas National Battlefield. Join Marion Lobstein for a spring wildflower walk on the Stone Bridge Trail at Manassas National Battlefield Park.** Contact Marion Lobstein at [mblobstein@earthlink.net](mailto:mblobstein@earthlink.net) to register since the number of participants is limited. Here are some helpful links from “Botanizing with Marion” [Botanizing with Marion - Virginia Native Plant Society \(vnps.org\)](https://vnps.org) to provide you background information on this site:

Plant checklist for Stone Bridge at Manassas National Battlefield Park: [Plant-Checklist-Stone-Bridge-Manassas-Battlefield-National-Park-Marion-Lobstein-Updated-2023.pdf \(vnps.org\)](https://vnps.org)

Native Violet species: [Native-Plant-Profile-Violets-Marion-Lobstein-5-8-2023-with-large-photos.pdf \(vnps.org\)](https://vnps.org)

Virginia Bluebells, *Mertensia virginica*: see pages 5-7 [2020 MA-in-the-pRCH-APRIL Wild News for website.pages \(vnps.org\)](https://vnps.org)

Spring Beauty, *Claytonia virginica*: see page 8 [WILD-NEWS-March-April-2013.pdf \(vnps.org\)](https://vnps.org)

Cutleaf Toothwort, *Cardamine concatenata* (formerly *Dentaria lacinata*): see pages 5-6 [Wild News March April 2022 \(vnps.org\)](https://vnps.org)

Jack-in-the Pulpit, *Arisaema triphyllum*: [Jack-in-the-Pulpit Preaches Preservation - Virginia Native Plant Society \(vnps.org\)](https://vnps.org)

Dutchman’s Breeches, *Dicentra cucullata*: see pages 6-8 [Wild-News-1986-March-April-~-Squirrel-Corn,-Dutchman's-Breeches,-Bleeding-Hearts-ML-and-NA-Marion-Lobstein.pdf \(vnps.org\)](https://vnps.org)



*Spring Beauty photographed at Stone Bridge, 2022*

**Saturday, April 6, 10 am to 3 pm. “Spring Cleaning Garden and Plant Sale”, Christ Church, 7600 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, VA.** Native plant vendors will include Hill House Nursery, Green Steeze, Ahimsa Native Plants, and Bee American, Plant Native. Bring your documents to be shredded, your pantry food donations for homeless shelter, and your garden plans for the growing season as native and non-native plants will be offered. <https://vnps.org/potowmack/events/21956/>

**Sunday, April 7, Annual Merrimac Farm WMA Bluebell Festival. 10 am to 3 pm.** Please join us as we celebrate nature and view the fabulous Virginia Bluebells that carpet the Cedar Run shoreline for nearly a mile. Meet local organizations working to improve the community. With some of the best NoVA naturalists leading tours and activities all day, it will be a special day at an outstanding natural area. Family friendly, free, but bring cash for the vendors. About the farm: <http://www.pwconserve.org/merrimacfarm/index.htm>

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!** Please contact Karen Waltman at [waltman5313@gmail.com](mailto:waltman5313@gmail.com)

**Thursday, April 11, 7 - 8:30 pm via Zoom, Clifton Institute Grassland Restoration Project with Bert Harris.** The institute received a VNPS Research Grant in 2020 to research “The Composition, Distribution, and Status of Native Grasslands of the Northern Virginia Piedmont.” <https://vnps.org/potowmack/events/clifton-institute-grassland-restoration-project-with-bert-harris-via-zoom/>

**Sunday, April 21, 9 am - 1 pm, Trillium Trek at Thompson WMA with Alonzo Abugattas.** Travel to the [Thompson Wildlife Management Area](https://vnps.org) at Linden, VA to see one of the largest (millions!) Great White Trillium displays in the world! This area is resplendent with many (often rare) wildflowers and trees, including native orchids and a variety of wildlife to observe. On the somewhat rocky two-mile trail we’ll discuss plant folklore, natural history, identification and ethnobotany.

**Sunday, April 28, PWWS Spring Wildflower Garden Tour. 12 Noon to 5 pm.** This year’s tour will feature the Manassas area gardens of Lois Montgomery and Diane Liga; we are seeking a third garden for the event.

# Prince William Wildflower Society

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

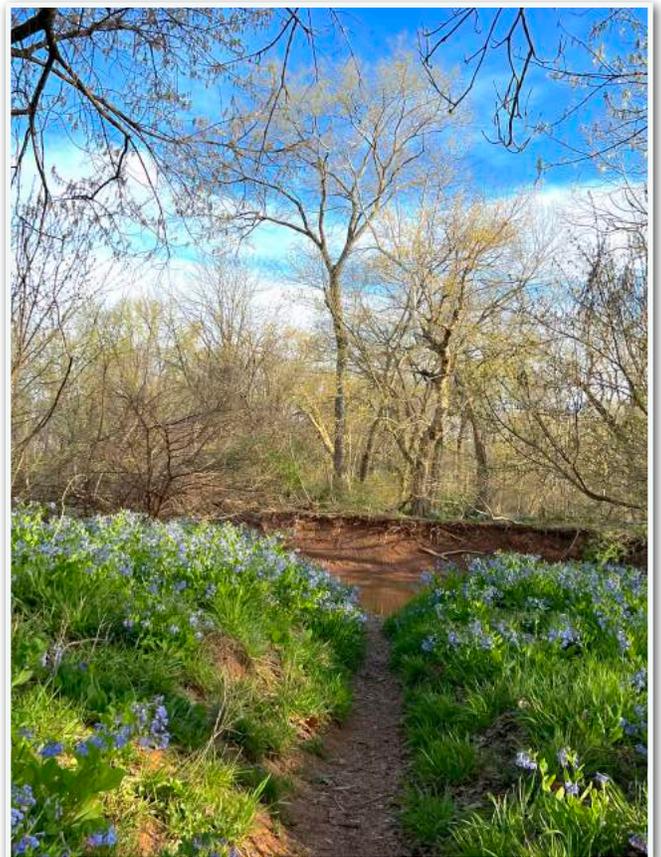


by Melissa Fabien

**Next Meeting: Thursday, March 7, 2024**  
**Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Plantation Lane, Manassas**  
**“Eastern Bluebirds: Getting Them Started, Helping Them Stay”**

## Upcoming PWWS Featured Events for your calendars!

- \* Wednesday, March 27, Botanical Exploration Hike at Conway Robinson, 1:30 to 3:30 pm, led by Nancy Vehrs
- \* Wednesday, April 3, 10 am ~ Noon Wildflower Walk at Stone Bridge, led by Marion Lobstein
- \* Sunday, April 28, PWWS Spring Wildflower Garden Tour 12 Noon to 5 pm
- \* Saturday, May 11, 10 am to 12 Noon PWWS Annual Native Plant Sale



*Virginia Bluebells at Bull Run Regional Park*