



WILD NEWS

Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Web site: www.pwws.vnps.org

Number 2012-03

May-June 2012

Prince William Wildflower Society Membership Meeting

"Audubon at Home"

Monday, May 21, 7:30 p.m.

Bethel Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall
8712 Plantation Lane, Manassas, Va. 20110

On Monday evening, May 21, at 7:30p.m., *Leslie Paulson* of the Audubon Society will tell us about the Audubon at Home program. Your yard shouldn't be a "yard" at all, but rather a habitat, a sanctuary for wildlife and for you and your family. We'll learn how a healthy habitat provides a natural haven beneficial to birds, other creatures, and people as well. Leslie will cover the basics of creating native habitat on your property and how to get your habitat certified as a wildlife sanctuary. Audubon at Home stresses:

- Conservation and protection of water
- Removal of invasive plants
- Replacement of non-native plants with native species
- Reduction or elimination of commercial fertilizers and pesticides; and
- Greater preservation of public and private natural areas.

This program is sponsored by the Prince William Wildflower Society and is free and open to the public. The location is the Bethel Lutheran Church at the corner of Sudley Road and Plantation Lane in Manassas. For more information, call Helen Walter at (703) 330-9614. *—Helen Walter*

From the President

Spring! It's my favorite time of year with all its delicate woodland wildflowers and fresh green tree canopy. But it's also a time of frenzy! Don't miss the bluebells at Bull Run and Merrimac Farm before they fade, catch the spectacular trilliums at the Thompson, clean up the garden, pot up plants, attend Earth Day/Arbor Day events, and volunteer for clean ups, plantings, and festivals! It's enough of a whirlwind for a tornado. Hey, I'm retired now; I shouldn't feel pressure like this. Why does spring have to come all at once? And why do most events all have to happen simultaneously on the weekends?

When I retired at the beginning of this year, I had the grand illusion that I could do ALL the

things that I didn't have time for when I was working. Hike Bull Run Mountain on a whim?

Check. Visit the Thompson Wildlife Management Area to see the trilliums and listen to the ethereal songs of wood thrushes and ovenbirds? Check. Clean up my garden and remove the invasive species? Uh, maybe later. Mix in some travel and obligations, and all that free time starts to evaporate. Spring rolls into summer in no time.

A wise person told me that I don't need to do it all *each* spring. The spring ephemerals at Balls Bluff will still be there next year. So will the wildflowers at Shenandoah National Park. We are fortunate to live in an area rich in natural beauty. Let's treasure those wild spots and ensure that they are available for generations to come. *—Nancy Vehrs*



2012 PLANT SALE AND GARDEN TOUR

PWWS 26th Annual Spring Wildflower Garden Tour, April 29, 2012

Despite our wacky Spring weather—a prematurely warm, sometimes even hot March trailed by a decidedly cool April—Prince William Wildflower Society's 26th Annual Spring Garden Tour was a roaring success. A perfect smile of a sunny day following days of heavy rain rewarded us for our efforts. Three very different gardens offered over 100 + visitors a charming and often instructive view of native plants used in the home landscape. Because of the early spring, this year's tour showcased striking foliage and later-blooming natives. *Tiana Camfiord's* garden, reappearing on the tour after a long hiatus sparkled in the sunny light of a perfect spring day. Featuring a soothing mix of sunny, dappled sun/shade, and deep shade areas, the garden was lush with a wide variety of ferns, spring bloomers, and native shrubs and trees. Among many other visual treats was a glimpse of the rare tree, *Franklinia americana*, as well as eye-popping displays of American wisteria, goatsbeard, buckeye, viburnum, silverbell, and other choice natives in this Certified Backyard Habitat.

Jane and Bill Lehman's visually compelling garden, is a relatively new one that comprises a creatively imagined landscape featuring a handsome mixed hardscape of stone and wood. The focal center of the garden is a stone waterfall feature tumbling into a pond replete with golden fish and fanciful garden sculpture. The effect was creatively heightened through a keen use of color employing natives around the pool and in containers. The garden, also a Certified Backyard Habitat, offered 120 visitors a rhythmic visual melding of naturally occurring drifts of native ferns and intentionally planted borders of leucothöe and other natives back-dropped by tall woods half encircling the property—a harmonious interplay that was instructive as well as attractive.



A study in contrast was offered in Mary and Brian Shermeyer's garden. It featured a simple massing of select natives to create a native plant environment in an unlikely place: a small urban lot in a fairly new

housing estate carved out of a former farm. Plantings were simple, yet effective and easy-care. A native hickory tree near the street and a signature river birch at the back of the house provided height to balance that of the house. Massed Green-and-gold served as a cheerfully blooming groundcover flanking the sidewalk leading to the front porch. On the shady side of the house, a border featuring native bleeding heart and geraniums interplanted with ferns was mirrored by a sunny-side

border, where sun-tolerant and bird-attracting natives reign. Garden visitors were treated to a refreshingly different version of the usual suburban garden space: low-maintenance, native plant borders surrounded by a healthy lawn treated with no chemicals instead of the usual dotted landscape of "meatball" shrubs and invasive Bradford pear tree.

PWWS heartily thanks homeowners Tiana Camfiord, Jane and Bill Lehman, and Mary and Brian Shermeyer for generously opening their gardens for the tour.

≈ GARDEN TOUR 2013! We are always seeking new gardens for the tour. How did your garden look this past April? Consider volunteering for next year's tour. Please contact Nancy Vehrs at (703) 368-2898, or nvehrs1@yahoo.com. ≈

≈ Check out the PWWS 2012 Garden Tour photo gallery on our web site:
<http://pwws.vnps.org> ≈

PWWS 30th Annual Wildflower and Native Plant Sale, May 12, 2012

This spring's garden tour featuring the beautiful gardens of members Brian and Mary Shermeyer, Jane and Bill Lehman, and Tiana Camfiord, plus Helen Walter and Nancy Vehrs getting good local publicity in the local papers contributed to our very successful plant sale. The weather was perfect.

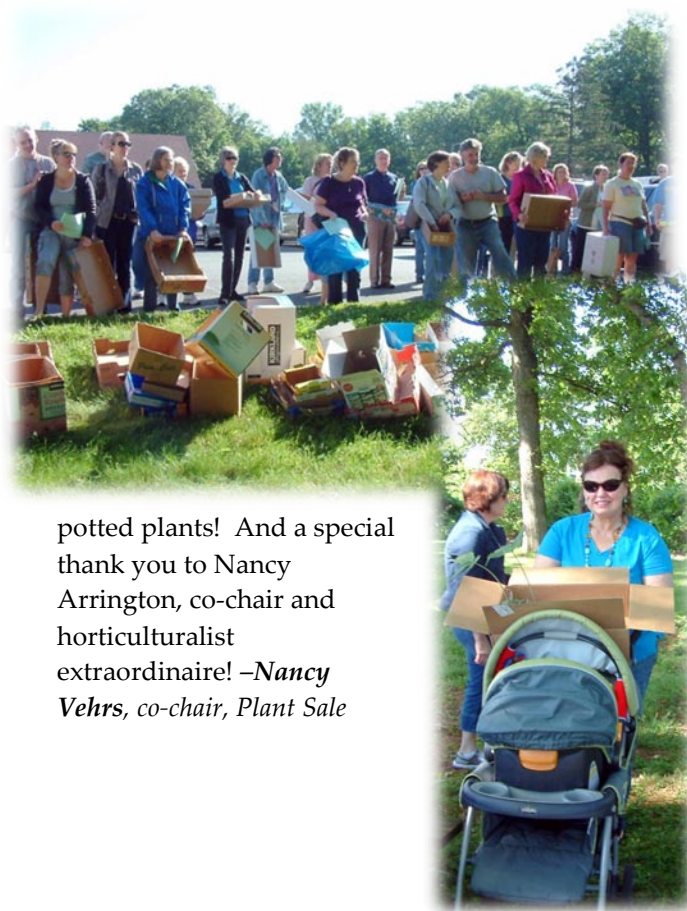
Loads of plants and a great crew of helpers showed up at Bethel Church at 7:00 a.m. and by 8:45 everything was organized and ready for the crowd of customers that had assembled. It is always amazing to see so many people patiently waiting and then when Charles Smith says "Go!" at 9:00 they move like a wave toward the ferns and shade plants. As always, plants that sell well are ferns and other shade plants such as bloodroot, foam flower, wild ginger, may apples, jacks-in-the-pulpit and wood poppies. Plants that are blooming including spiderworts, green and gold, bleeding heart and eared coreopsis are snapped up quickly. Laminated pictures of some of our summer-blooming plants help those to sell. —*Nancy Arrington, co-chair, Plant sale*

Plant sale totals were over \$3,500, about \$500 more than last year. Best news of all is that \$540 of the total was for memberships—13 new ones, a record! All in all, we sold about 809 plants to 110 native plant lovers. The average plant sold cost \$3.73—a bargain by any measure! This is our only fundraiser, and it was a great one. In the past few years, we have supported the *Flora of Virginia* Project and other initiatives with proceeds from our sales. Thank you to everyone who helped at the sale or provided or



PWWS extends a huge thank you to volunteers who made this year's plant sale "happen:"

Joyce Andrew (sale)
Nancy Arrington (plants and sale)
Tiana Camfiord (plants and sale)
Marie and Paul Davis (plants and tent)
Chris Drazdowsky (sale)
Jeanne and Hans Endrikat (plants and sale)
Jeanne Fowler (sale)
Bobbi Frye (plants and sale)
Amy Hamilton and friend (sale)
Deanna High (plants and sale)
Jane and Bill Lehman (plants and sale)
Frances and Phil Louer (plants)
Brian McDougal (sale)
Gordon Olson (sale)
Cindy Patterson (sale)
Mary Sherman (potting)
Mary and Brian Shermeyer (plants)
Charles Smith (plants and sale)
Carol Thompson (sale)
Nancy Vehrs (plants and sale)
Helen Walter (publicity)
Karen Waltman (sale)
Joyce and Mike Wenger (sale)
Janet Wheatcraft (plants)



potted plants! And a special thank you to Nancy Arrington, co-chair and horticulturalist extraordinaire! —*Nancy Vehrs, co-chair, Plant Sale*

Welcome, New Members of PWWS!

Teresa A. Anderson, Manassas
Tamea Boone, Woodbridge
Terri Elwakad, Gainesville
Sharon Figueroa, Manassas (former member)
Jenifer Bracewell, Manassas
Janice Gubrud (Manassas)
Paula and Joe Jackson, Bristow

Janet Martinet, Manassas
Audrey Mascarenhas, Bristow
Marianne McKone, Nokesville
Kathleen Price, Woodbridge
Tracey Shultz, Manassas
Edward Spall, Manassas

Prince William Wildflower Society Membership Meeting, Monday, March 19, 2012, Bethel Lutheran Church

Welcome and Announcements:

President Nancy Vehrs reminded members and guests that the PWWS annual garden tour is Sunday, April 29, and volunteers are needed to bring cookies and serve as hostesses at the gardens. The three gardens on the tour are Tiana Camfiord's, Jane and Bill Lehman's, and Mary and Brian Shermeyer's. The PWWS plant sale is Saturday, May 12 from 9 to Noon at Bethel Lutheran Church. Nancy has pots and labels if anyone needs them.

The Prince William Conservation Alliance is having their annual Bluebell Festival April 14 at Merrimac Farm.

Nancy has arranged for a special guided tour at Mt. Cuba Center in Delaware, and it will be the afternoon of May 17. Other nearby gardens, Winterthur and Longwood can be visited May 18. Arrangements for carpooling and hotel reservations can be made by those who wish to visit these famous gardens with other PWWS members. For more information: nvehrs1@yahoo.com or 703-368-2898.

Program: Marion Lobstein, *The Flora of Virginia: Worth the 250-Year Wait!*

Nancy introduced the speaker, Marion Lobstein, who presented "The Flora of Virginia: Worth the 250-Year Wait!" Her program was a summary of the history of the first Virginia flora and a description of the changes in taxonomy in the new *Flora of Virginia*, which will be published late in the fall of 2012.

Thank you to Marion Lobstein for a very informative presentation!

Door prizes: Jeanne Fowler-Peterson's *Guide to Eastern Birds*; Delores Rooney-bag of coffee; Sharon Jones-Golden Book, *Guide to Wildflowers*; Deanna High-decorated stone.

Attending: Rose Breece, Janet Wheatcraft, Brenda Hallam, MaryAnne Burgess, Leslie Paulson, Charlie Grymes, Tom Andrew, Joyce Andrew, Cathy Sly, Trudy Harsh, Kate McTigue, Scarlett Swan, Donna Heid, Louise Sidley, Theresa DeFluri, Dolores Rooney, Christine Drazdowsky, Jeanne Fowler, Carol Thompson, Sue Flom, Sharon Jones, Val Morgan, Mary LaRoche, Marlies Bjork, Annette Lowe, Deanna High, Diane Flaherty, Jennifer Thorpe, Susan Godfrey, Helen Walter, Peggy Joy Sullivan, Bob Sullivan, Phil Louer, Frances Louer, Brian McDougal, Mariam Hendrikson, Charles Smith, Nancy Arrington, Debbie Hutton, Helen Rawls, Karen Waltman. (I counted 46 people in attendance, and only 40 signed in, so there were 6 more than the list indicates.)

Thank you, Nancy Arrington, Janet Wheatcraft, and Charles Smith for bringing cakes to help celebrate Nancy Vehrs's birthday. --Respectively submitted, Karen Waltman, PWWS Secretary

EVENTS of NOTE

Saturday, May 19, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., "Pyrite Mine Hike," Prince William Forest Park. Learn the history of the park's very own pyrite mine on this moderate, 2.5 mile hike. We will hike to the old mine site, and learn about the reclamation efforts, stroll along the boardwalk, and see several existing foundations and capped off shafts. For more information, see www.nps.gov/prwi or call (703) 221-7181.

Sunday, May 20, 2:00-5:00 p.m., Conservation Landscape Work Day, Merrimac Farm Stone House Center, Nokesville, Va. We're using native plants to expand natural areas and create new habitats. Our plan reduces non-native grasses, enhances vertical structure and increases the variety of food sources to welcome a wider variety of wildlife. We sure could use your help! Workday tasks include planting, weeding, mulching and removing invasive plants that try to sneak their way back. Bring a smile and a shovel. Wheelbarrows and gardening tools are also useful. We appreciate your help! RSVP appreciated: alliance@pwconserve.org, (703) 499-4954. Additional work days this summer are scheduled for Saturday, June 9, 9:00 a.m. to Noon and Saturday, July 14, 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

Monday, May 21, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. "Audubon at Home," PWWS Membership meeting, Bethel Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, Manassas, Va. Leslie Paulson of the Audubon Society will tell us about the Audubon at Home program. See above for more details.

Sunday, May 27, 8:00 a.m., Bird Walk at Merrimac Farm (recurring event on the last Sunday of every month, beginning at 8:00 a.m.) Merrimac Farm, Stone House Visitor Center, 15020 Deepwood Lane, Nokesville, Va. We'll look for birds and other wildlife, especially butterflies and dragonflies, as we travel through the uplands to the edge of the floodplain, covering a variety of habitats, including open fields and woodland edges. Everyone is welcome. Dress for the weather, bring binoculars and cameras. More info and RSVP (not required) to PWCA, (703) 499-4954 or alliance@pwconserve.org.

Thursday, June 7, 7:30-9:00 p.m., Trees with Ed Milhous, 1st Thursday Speaker Series, Bull Run Unitarian Church, Manassas, Va. More info and RSVP (not required) to PWCA, (703) 499-4954 or alliance@pwconserve.org.

Saturday, June 9, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., "Paws in the Park," Prince William Forest Park. Free dog training demos, Best Doggie contest, Off-leash dog area (one day only), working dog demos, kids'

activities, and educational booths. Entrance and parking fee is \$5 per vehicle and is good for 7 days.

For more information, see www.nps.gov.prwi or call (703) 221-7181.

"Like" us on Facebook? You bet!
Prince William Wildflower
Society, A Virginia Native Plant
Society Chapter

Saturdays in the Garden, 9:00 a.m. to Noon. Prince William Master Gardener Volunteers, Teaching Garden at St. Benedict Monastery, 9535 Linton Hall Road, Bristow, Va. All programs are free and run from 9:00am-

Noon. Registration is requested. A children's program is offered concurrently with each Saturday in the Garden program. Space is limited. A registration form is required to complete registration for children's programs. Telephone Virginia Cooperative Extension Prince William office at (703) 792-6285 for registration information.

Saturday, June 9, Attracting Beneficial Insects & Creating Interest during Four Seasons in the Garden. Children's Program: Bee-Friend a Bug!

Saturday July 14 What's Buggin' My Plant & Composting Inside and Out. Children's Program: Eat Your Garden!

August 11, The Good, the Bad, the Tasty & Fall Vegetable Gardening & Extending the Season. Children's Program: Weave It To Me! Weave some grasses!

Thursday, July 5, 7:30-9:00 p.m., Stream Restoration Talk with Tom Dombrowski, Stream Stewards Series, 1st Thursday Speaker Series, Bull Run Unitarian Church, 9350 Main Street, Manassas. Stable streams that meander through wooded areas in and near neighborhoods help create attractive communities, and provide important habitat to various flora and fauna. However, a stable stream is hard to find in developed areas and restoration/stabilization efforts can be complicated. Stream restoration can be expensive and often may take years before the benefits are visible. PWC has completed several significant restorations and more are planned. How are streams selected for restoration? What are the goals? Participants will learn about the basic concepts and techniques of stream restoration projects, including criteria for selecting restoration sites and evaluating goal success. More info and RSVP (not required) to PWCA, (703) 499-4954 or alliance@pwconserve.org.

Saturday, July 7, 9:00 a.m. to Noon, Stream Restoration Tour with Tom Dombrowski, Stream Stewards Series Andrew Leitch Park, 5301 Dale Boulevard, Woodbridge. Following up on Tom Dombrowski's presentation on the County's stream restoration process and goals, we'll visit a stream restoration site where we will examine and discuss the restoration technique and determine the success of the project based on the established project goals. More info and RSVP (not required) to PWCA , (703) 499-4954 or alliance@pwconserve.org.

Volunteer Opportunity

PWWS supports the conservation landscape plan project at Merrimac Farm Wildlife Management Area. It needs volunteers to succeed. The plan will demonstrate how native plants can be used to create new habitats for wildlife. This project expands natural areas to reduce non-native grass, enhances vertical structure, and increases the variety of food sources to welcome a wider variety of wildlife. For more information, visit

<http://www.pwconserve.org/merrimacfarm/habitat/index.htm>. To volunteer, call (703) 499- 4994 or email alliance@pwconserve.org.

MAYAPPLE (*Podophyllum peltatum*)

Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*) is one of the most easily recognizable spring wildflowers by its distinctive foliage. By early to mid-April the unopened, peltate leaves of Mayapple begin to poke through the forest litter resembling a fat green umbrella ready to unfurl. The single-leaved stems will not produce a flower that season. The forked stems bearing two leaves will have a tight flower bud nestled at the base of the two petioles. By the end of April and often the first week of May the lovely white, waxy flowers begin to open.

Found in rich woods, thickets, and even roadsides from Quebec and Ontario south to Florida and Texas, this species is now placed in the *Berberidaceae* or barberry family although it once was included in the *Ranunculaceae* or buttercup family. Linnaeus

assigned the binomium (genus and species) of *Podophyllum* from "podos" meaning foot, "phylum" meaning leaf, and "peltatum" meaning shield. Other common names are mandrake, wild lemon, and raccoon berry.

The flowers of Mayapple are up to two inches in diameter with six sepals that are shed early in blooming, 6-9 white waxy petals, numerous yellow stamens (usually twice the number of petals) with the anthers opening down the side, and a pistil with a large stigma. The flowers lack nectar, but offer the native bees and bumblebees that visit them a rich pollen reward. There is a fragrance to the flower that is a bit pungent or musky. Frequency of successful pollination is often not high in Mayapple flowers, even though there is extended anthesis (shedding of pollen) as well as receptiveness of the stigma if pollination has not been accomplished. Queen bumblebees are especially attracted to Mayapple flowers to collect pollen for rearing workers, and thus may be primary pollinators.

Fruit set rates are often low for individual colonies of plants and mature fruits are even rarer. Mature fruits resemble a small lemon-colored, egg-shaped fruit that is technically a berry one-and-a-half to two inches long. The fruit matures by August, and if the seeds remain in the same area as parent colony, the germination rate is low. If the seed does germinate,

the seedling may be shaded out by other individuals the next spring. The Eastern box turtle is thought to be the primary seed disperser. There is some evidence that the white-footed mouse, the gray squirrel, and the grackle may also serve as seed dispersers along with opossum, raccoon, fox, and even black bear.

To humans, the immature fruit as well as the other plant parts are poisonous, although there are modern medicinal uses of the rhizome.

Mayapple may put up to 40 percent of its energy into its underground rhizome compared to only 8 percent of its energy into sexual reproduction. The rhizome, a horizontal underground stem, is the main method of



producing new plants. A colony of Mayapple plants may all have developed from a single seed. A seed once it germinates will not form a rhizome until it is over five years old and may not produce blooms until a plant is 12 years old. Colonies grow at a rate of 4 to 6 inches per year, and very large colonies may be more than 100 years old. One colony may contain up to 1,000 shoots. If an individual plant has produced mature fruit during a given season, it will have decreased rhizome growth and a decreased chance of being forked the next year and bearing flowers. If a plant does not produce fruit, or if it is a single leafed plant, the leaves usually senesce (die back) by early summer. Leaves persist in plants that have maturing fruits.

As mentioned above, immature fruits as well as the vegetative structures of Mayapple are poisonous. As with many drugs, there is a fine line between poison and effective medicinal use. American Indians ate the ripe fruits and used a number of medicinal Mayapple preparations. The list of uses by American Indian include treatments for rheumatism, as a laxative as well as treatment for diarrhea, ulcers, sores, liver and bile problems, hemorrhoids, headaches, diuretic, whooping cough, cholera, pneumonia, problems of male and female reproductive tracts, as a purgative, and for anthelmintic (worming) purposes.

Reportedly, individuals of some Indian tribes even used rhizomes of this plant to commit suicide.

In the 1800s and early 1900s, Mayapple extract was used as an active ingredient in Carter's Little Liver Pills; today, it is used as an extract called "Podophyllin" to remove genital warts. Drugs derived from the rhizome are being used

in Europe, and are being tested in this country to treat forms of cancer such as cancer of the testes, two forms of lung cancer, Kaposi sarcoma, and some forms of leukemia. It also has been used to treat syphilis. There is some evidence that American Indians used this plant also to treat forms of cancer such as ovarian

and skin cancer. Modern research shows evidence of Mayapple extracts that inhibit cell division, thus blocking new growth of tumors.

Mayapple's ripe fruits are edible and there are recipes for jellies and pies as well as the extraction of its juice to add to lemonade.

This spring, savor the beauty of Mayapple. Be very cautious if you wish to sample the fruit, but do it soon, before the forest animals enjoy it instead!

--**Marion Blois Lobstein**, Botany Chair, Prince William Wildflower Society, Assoc. Professor Biology at NVCC-Manassas Campus, Retired

An overview of the history of the naming and classification of Mayapple

The story of the common and scientific names and classification of Mayapple has been one of many changes. Many American Indian tribes used names that described the physical appearance or medicinal use of Mayapple. The Cherokee name for Mayapple was OO-NEE-SQUA-TOO-KEY ("it wears a hat"), and the Osage Indian name was CHE-SA-NE-PE-SHA ("it pains the bowels"). In 1615 the

French explorer, Samuel de Champlain was the first European to record observing Mayapple cultivated in Canada by the Huron Indians. Some common French names include "ipécacuanha de la Caroline,"



referring to the purgative properties of the plant. In England, the use of Mayapple as a purgative led to the common name of American mandrake (the European mandrake, a different plant, was a commonly used purgative), and it is thought Nicholas Culpeper

included American mandrake in his famous herbal of the late 1600s. In 1700, the French botanist Joseph Pitton de Tournefort gave Mayapple the Latin name of *Anapodophyllum canadense morini* with the genus meaning "duck's foot leaf". In 1789, A.L. de Jussieu proposed the Barberry family (*Berberidaceae*), but placed Mayapple in the Buttercup family (*Ranunculaceae*). Mark Catesby used the name *Anapodophyllum canadense* in 1730 when he sent Mayapple specimens to Linnaeus. By 1753, Linnaeus had shortened the genus name from *Anapodophyllum* to *Podophyllum* and changed the species name (epithet) to *peltatum* but placed Mayapple in family that is now part of the Poppy family (*Papaveraceae*). In the 1762 *Flora Virginica* (second edition), Mayapple appears as *Podophyllum foliis pellatis lobatis*. By the 1800s the American botanist Asa Gray in his famous *Gray's Manual of Botany* had placed Mayapple in its

present barberry family (*Berberidaceae*). Recent DNA analysis has shown Mayapple to be properly placed in *Berberidaceae*. It has been a long and changing road to the present classification of this special plant!

In future issues of *Wild News*, Marion Lobstein will continue to explain and expand on the changes of names (taxonomy) of our Virginia plants that will be reflected in the upcoming *Flora of Virginia*.

Photographs and Illustrations: Lehman garden, and PWWS Plant Sale, Deanna LaValle High; Mayapple, Marion Lobstein; Mayapple illus., William P.C. Barton, Artist, New York Public Digital Gallery I.D. #1101751; Mourning dove and Mayapple, Mark Catesby, *The Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands: Containing the Figures of Birds, Beasts, Fishes, Serpents, Insects and Plants* (1754)



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

Next Meeting: Monday, May 21, 7:30 p.m.

“Audubon at Home” with Leslie Paulson

Bethel Lutheran Church, 8712 Plantation Lane, Manassas, Virginia 20110