PWWS Annual and Membership Meeting, 
Monday, September 15, 7:30 p.m., Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas, Va. Election of Officers and Program “Ornamental Native Grasses” with Helen Hamilton

PWWS is pleased to have Helen Hamilton, coauthor of Wildflowers and Grasses of Virginia’s Coastal Plain, present the program at our annual meeting this coming Monday evening. Native grasses are important components of wildflower meadows with their tall stems and feathery seedheads furnishing contrast to the home garden. The talk will include discussions of common local grasses, how to identify them, and suitable growing conditions.

Helen Hamilton earned baccalaureate and master’s degrees in biology from Ohio University and Indiana University, respectively. She has taught biology, chemistry, and earth science in Virginia’s public schools and was a plant technician for the U.S. National Park Service. A Master Gardener, she was president of the John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society 2005 to 2012, and is publicity chair of the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. With a continued interest in learning and educating about local native plants, she leads tours and conducts classes about gardening for wildlife using native plants while avoiding introduced invasive species. Bring a friend or two to learn about native grasses, elect PWWS officers, and enjoy refreshments and door prizes!

President’s Column, September 2014

Members of PWWS recently enjoyed some fun field trips – one in our own back yard and one a couple of hours away in Richmond. One of our local treasures, Deep Cut Meadow, is found in Manassas National Battlefield Park (MNBP) and is designated a Registry Site of the Virginia Native Plant Society.

So, just what is a Registry Site, you may ask. As explained on the VNPS website, “The registry is a voluntary program designed by the VNPS to protect the plant treasures residing in natural communities throughout Virginia. Landowners who agree to register their properties as Virginia Native Plant Sites take an important step towards preserving the natural features of the land.” Furthermore, “the primary requirement for eligibility is that a site have regional or state significance because of its native plants. Significant sites may exhibit an exemplary occurrence of a habitat, a plant community, or a plant species. Sites may include an unusual, persisting variation of a plant species, or an assemblage of species. Or the site may exhibit some quality with the unique potential to inspire community awareness.” We have a memorandum of understanding with the MNBP that specifies a mowing schedule that will maintain the diversity of this special area.
As those who have participated in Marion Lobstein’s walks at Deep Cut can attest, that meadow has a rich variety of native grasses and wildflowers that peak in late summer. Some of my favorite species from our walk on August 27 include scaly blazing star (Liatris squarrosa), gaura (G. biennis), and pink wild bean (Strophostyles helvola). Other treasures include the delicate blue curls (Trichostema dichotomum) and an orchid called slender ladies’ tresses (Spiranthes gracilis) that looks like white flowers ascending a spiral staircase. Though I favor showy flowers over grasses, through the years I have developed more of an appreciation for the latter. The feathery seed heads and colorful joints of native grasses are especially lovely in a meadow mixed with flowers such as the late-flowering thoroughworts, goldenrods, and tickseed sunflowers.

Our other special field trip was earlier this month, and we took advantage of two sites in Richmond. Our first stop was the magnificent Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Of special interest to our group was the bog garden with its beautiful collection of pitcher plants. Natives such as Cardinal flower (Lobelia cardinalis), Blue lobelia (L. siphilitica), weed (Eutrochium) and New York ironweed (Vernonia noveboracensis) also enjoyed the moist edges. Another highlight (besides the delightful lunch at the Teahouse) was the butterfly exhibit in the conservatory. Imagine standing amidst a rainbow of tropical fluttering butterflies. Several landed on Tamie Boone’s floral blouse, but alas, it was devoid of nectar. We might have stayed in that room for a long time had it not been even hotter and steamier than the weather outside!

Our last stop was a visit to the Library of Virginia in downtown Richmond where we toured the special Flora Exhibition. Curator Bland Crowder explained the collection and how he managed to borrow so many historical objects just for this show. With the exhibition closing on September 13, this was a last chance to view it. I had the good fortune to visit four times with different groups. The library staff is creating some panel exhibits for a traveling Flora show around the Commonwealth.

Please join us on the 15th for our annual meeting. Helen Hamilton, retired high school biology teacher and past president of the John Clayton Chapter in Williamsburg, will speak about native ornamental grasses and sell copies of her book, Wildflowers and Grasses of Virginia’s Coastal Plain. We will hold elections, adopt a budget, enjoy refreshments, and award door prizes. ~ Nancy

**PWWS Board Adopts Deer Management Resolution**

After much thought and discussion, recently the PWWS board adopted the following management resolution:

**Whereas**, after human land disturbance, over-browsing by white-tailed deer represents the most serious threat to our native flora, the vegetative communities they comprise, and the many species that depend on them; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved**, that the Prince William Wildflower Society:

1. Supports and promotes the reduction of white-tailed deer populations to protect and restore Virginia’s native vegetative communities and the plant and animal species contained therein; and
2. Encourages support for and establishment of programs and organizations that emphasize skill and ethics among hunters and wildlife
management professionals to maximize efficiency and minimize animal suffering.

We know that this is a very sensitive issue and we respect all opinions. However, we believe that we must take a stand based on this serious threat to our ecological systems. Our full resolution includes additional background information. Copies will be available at our annual meeting. —Nancy Vehrs

Prince William Wildflower Society Meeting Monday, July 21, 2014, 7:30 p.m. Bull Run Unitarian Universalist Church

President Nancy Vehrs called the meeting to order and made announcements. The venue was changed from Bethel Lutheran Church to Bull Run Unitarian Universalist Church because Bethel was conducting evening Vacation Bible School.

Program: Nancy introduced the speaker, Janet Davis, who spoke on native ground covers. Janet uses natives in her nursery, Hill House Farm and Nursery, and she brought in and displayed some native ground covers from her nursery and available for purchase. Janet encouraged planting natives that grow well in a community with other natives, and she shared the following about growing natives:

Five First Steps to Growing More Natives: Mow less grass; control exotic invasives; avoid pesticides in general, insecticides specifically, [practice “benign neglect” — save snags, pile brush, leave the leaves; plant “pollinator-powerhouse” natives, such as Liatris, Rudbeckias, Ascelpias, Solidagos, Asters, and Pycnanthemums.

Janet began the discussion on ground covers by listing the “Worst of the Worst,” which included English Ivy and Vinca. She followed with the “Four Categories of Lawns to Consider when Planting Ground Covers:” Full sun; Part sun —moister conditions (Sedges are good in wetter sites); Shade; and Part shade — well drained. Janet showed beautiful examples of native ground covers that grow well in each of the four conditions.

For more information on Janet’s landscaping ideas with natives, contact her at the nursery at (540) 937-1798 or 4cgardeners@copper.net or check her web site at http://hillhousenativeplants.com. The nursery is located in Castleton, Va.

New members and guests: Phyllis Nunley (and son Fred from D.C.), Janis Stone, Judy Schneider, Kathy Steadman, and Lynn Eklund.

Announcements: Nancy announced upcoming walks, field trips, and chapter events. Please review the newsletter or web site for details.

Doorprizes: Glen Macdonald, VNPS shirt; Peggy Thiele, VNPS Wildflower of the Year Coral honeysuckle (Lonicera sempervirens); Veronica Tangiri, PWWS hat; David Lyster, VNPS Wildflower of the Year, Coral honeysuckle (Lonicera sempervirens); Betty Trux, Invaders of the Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas.

In attendance: Nancy Vehrs, Tamie Boone, Harry Glasgow, Frederick Nunley, Linda Stoltz, Janis Stone, Cathy Clifford, Dee Brown, Glen Macdonald, Tom Attamaro, Tom and Joyce Andrew, Rosie Jones, Jeff and Judy Schneider, Betty Trux, Repp Glaetliti, Lynn Eklund, Charles Smith, Pat and Peggy Thiele, David Lyster, Susan Beaverson, Kathy Steadman, Rima Vesilind, Ellen Long, Jeanne Fowler, Mary Sherman, Nell Benton, Helen Walter, Phyllis Nunley, Carol Thompson, Veronica Tangiri, Janet Davis, Karen Waltman.

--Respectively submitted, Karen Waltman, Secretary

EVENTS

SEPTEMBER

Monday, September 15, 3:30 p.m. Pollinator Survey at Merrimac Farm. We’re taking a closer look at butterflies, dragonflies and other cool insects at Merrimac Farm. Please join us for a pleasant walk through the Wildlife Garden and upland areas in search of cool critters close to home, and help build our wildlife information for this great natural area! Everyone is welcome, no previous experience required. Wear sturdy shoes and long pants. Prince William Conservation Alliance, Stone House at Merrimac Farm, 15020 Deepwood Lane, Nokesville. RSVP appreciated. Contact us at (703) 499-4954 or www.pwconserve.org.

Sunday, September 21, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., “Merrimac Farm: Exploring the Flora and Fauna of a Piedmont Wildlife Management Area,” with Charles Smith. The field trip will feature a look at the site’s field complexes, upland depression swamp forest and high-quality shrub wetland. Merrimac Farm hosts an impressive diversity of birds, amphibians and reptiles. This event is sponsored by the Potomack Chapter of VNPS. The program is free and open to other VNPS members and the public, but registration for field trips is required because of limited space. See https://vnps20140921.eventbrite.com to RSVP.
Ask a Master Gardener: Your Gardening Questions
Saturdays, September 27, October 4, October 18, Manassas City Farmers Market, 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Sundays, September 28, October 12, October 26, Dale City Farmers Market, 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Call (703) 792-7747 for more information.

Thursday, September 18, 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Master Naturalist Training at Merrimac Farm. Participating with the Merrimac Farm Master Naturalists is a fun way to learn more about nature nearby, improve your community, and meet new friends. Merrimac Farm Master Naturalists help monitor Bluebirds, plant trees, speak up for environmental protection, and more. Details on the program can be found at www.pwconserve.org or contact naturalist@pwconserve.org or call (703) 490-5200.

Saturday September 20, Merrifield Garden Center, Gainesville, 10:00 a.m., “Ornamental Grasses and Companion Plants,” presented by Suzanne Conway, Merrifield Plant Specialist. Free.

September 25, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. and again on October 2 from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Backyard Woods Workshops: Learning to Create & Enhance Natural Areas Around Your Home. Small woodlots, such as the one you may have in your backyard, are a big deal. The workshops will take participants through the manual exploring planning and implementation of various land management concepts and tools. A Resource CD will also be available. Jean McCoy Conference Room, Sudley North Government Building, 7987 Ashton Avenue, Manassas 20109. For more about and to register go to www.pwconserve.org or call (703) 792-7747.

Saturday, September 27, 9:00 a.m., Volunteer Planting at K9 Gunner Dog Park, K9 Gunner Dog Park parking lot, by the intersection of Minnieville Road and Colby Drive, Woodbridge 22192. This planting day adds to the trees, shrubs, and wildflowers we planted last fall and spring, with the help of nearly 100 volunteers. All ages welcome. Bring a smile and a shovel (if available)! Lunch is provided. Thanks to project sponsors: Prince William Conservation Alliance, Virginia Dept. of Forestry, Dominion Virginia Power, Virginia American Water. Questions and RSVP (appreciated): alliance@pwconserve.org, (703) 490-5200.

Saturday, September 27, Merrifield Garden Center, Gainesville, 10:00 a.m., “Photography and Flowers,” with Karen Rexrode, Merrifield Plant Specialist. Free.

OCTOBER

Saturdays in the Garden, Teaching Garden at St. Benedict Monastery, 9535 Linton Hall Road, Bristow, 20136. Taught by Virginia Prince William Master Gardener Volunteers, All programs are free and run from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. Registration is requested call (703) 792-7747 or email master_gardener@pwc.gov.org

Saturday, October 4, 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Join Arborist Julie Flanagan, for a class on Tree identification.

Saturday, October 4, 11:30 to Noon. Storing homegrown produce; the Cooks’ Garden Volunteers will give you tips for storing your homegrown produce.

Saturday, October 4, Merrifield Garden Center, Gainesville, 10:00 a.m., “Walks, Walls, and Patios,” with Renatta Holt, Merrifield Landscape Designer. Free

Tuesday, October 7, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Charles Smith, a member of the Prince William Wildflower Society and an avid birder, will speak on Birds in our area. At the Old Courthouse on 9248 Lee Ave in Manassas. RSVP to (703) 792-7747, the Virginia County Extension Horticulture Help Desk.

Saturday, October 11, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Earth Fling at Tackett’s Mill Lakeside. Special tours on trees, water protection and purple martins, plus a native plant planting! Enjoy educational displays, games, crafts and meet local organizations working to improve our community and how you can help. See www.pwconserve.org for more information on activities and participating groups. Questions? Call PWCA at (703) 490-5200 or PWC Public Works at (703) 792-6819.

Saturday, October 11, Merrifield Garden Center, Gainesville, 10:00 a.m., “Growing Beautiful Bulbs,” with Suzanne Conway. Free.

Saturday, October 11, 8:00 a.m., Bird Walk and Bagels at Metz Wetlands and Rippon Lodge. The location along the edge of Neabsco Creek and the Potomac River Metz Wetlands and Rippon Lodge are attractive places for birds. Join local birding experts on a guided walk of both properties. Discover our diverse population of song and raptor birds. After the walk join us for bagels at Rippon Lodge. Bring binoculars and guide books and dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes. No pets please. Tours of the house at Rippon Lodge included. Reservations required; $10 per person fee. Julie J. Metz Neabsco Creek Wetlands Preserve, 15875 Neabsco Road, Woodbridge, Va. (703) 499-9812; Rippon Lodge Historic Site, 15520 Blackburn Road, Woodbridge, Va. 22192, (703) 499-9812.

Saturday, October 11, 1:00 p.m., Nature Trail Walk, Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre. Take a guided tour along the nature trails at Brentsville and learn about the plants and animals that call this part of Virginia home. There is a $5 fee per person; children under six are free. Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre, 12229 Bristow Rd., Bristow, Va. (703) 365-7895.

Saturday, October 18, Merrifield Garden Center, Gainesville, 10:00 a.m., “Renovating an Overgrown Landscape,” with Renatta Holt, Merrifield Landscape Designer. Free.

Saturday, October 25, Merrifield Garden Center, Gainesville, 10:00 a.m., “Gardening in Deer Country,” with Larry Shapiro, Merrifield Plant Specialist and Professor Emeritus, NVCC. Free.
JOE-PYE-WEEDS: 
_Eutrochium_ Species

By Marion Lobstein, Botany Chair, Prince William Wildflower Society and Professor Emeritus, Northern Virginia Community College

In late summer and early fall, the handsome mauve purple blooms of Joe-pye-weeds, _Eutrochium_ species, add color to our moist meadows, roadsides, and woodlands. There are four species of the genus _Eutrochium_ ("eu," true; and "trochium," wheel, referring to whorled leaves) found in our general area (with _E. dubium_ being documented only in Fairfax County) and a fifth species, _E. steelei_, found in southwestern Virginia. The four more common species are found in eastern Canada and eastern U.S. and some species into the Midwest. Joe-pye-weed species were once part of the much larger genus _Eupatorium_ (named for Eupator, an ancient king based on "eupatrides," Greek for noble father). In the 1980s, Joe-pye-weed was placed in the genus _Eupatoriadelphus_ (brother of Eupatorium). In 2004, the genus was replaced by _Eutrochium_, a genus first proposed in 1838. (These taxonomic changes are discussed in more detail in the accompanying article on the taxonomy of _Eupatoriums_ in our area). Joe-pye-weed species are members of the Asteraceae or composite family. There are four species of Joe-pye-weed found in our area: Three-nerved or coastal, _Eutrochium dubium_; Hollow-stemmed, _E. fistulosum_ (hollow); Spotted, _E. maculatum_ (spotted); and Sweet scented or purple, _E. purpureum_ (purple).

The primary common name for _Eutrochium_ species, Joe-pye-weed, is based on the legend of the eponymous Indian healer (Joe Pye), who used the herb to treat typhoid fever in colonial Massachusetts (there are other explanations as well). Other common names include Gravel root (used to dissolve gall stones or "gravel"), Kidney root (treating urinary system problems), Queen of the meadow (height of plants and stately appearance), and Trumpet weed (whorled leaves form trumpet shape).

All Joe-pye-weed species are perennials that stand six feet or taller, with _E. maculatum_ and _E. purpureum_ taller than the other species. Stems are a good way to differentiate the four common species: _E. fistulosum_ stems are hollow, purple, and glaucous (whitish bloom); _E. purpureum_ stems are purple at nodes and some purple along stem, partly hollow; _E. maculatum_ stems have solid pith and are speckled or solid purple; and _E. dubium_ stems are solid or hollow and can vary with purple coloration. Leaves in all species are whorled and serrated; the number of leaves in a whorl varies from several to many depending on the species.

Like New York ironweed (Vernonia noveboracensis) (see July-August 2014 issue of Wild News), Joe-pye weeds have only ray florets— but mauve purple instead of dark purple. The florets, less than a half inch long, are perfect (with stamens and pistils) and fertile. Florets occur in heads in groups of 4 to many florets, with cylindrical involucres of five to six rows of leafy bracts or phyllaries. These heads are arranged in a compound inflorescence know as a corymb. Corymbs are variously shaped from domed to flat and are composed of several to many heads. Primary pollinators include wild bees, honey bees, and butterflies (including swallowtails and monarchs). The fruits, known as cypselae, are prismatic (angular, flat sides), with five ribs, subtended by pappi of numerous barbed bristles. The seeds are wind dispersed. Blooming times are July to October. Most species are found in moist to wet habitats, except for E. purpureum, which is found in drier habitats and even forests.

American Indians used Joe-pye-weed to treat many different ailments ranging from dissolving gall stones, treating fevers and urinary tract problems, easing post-partum pain, counteracting nervousness and hysteria to dealing with problems of digestive, respiratory, and muscular and skeletal systems. Joe-pye-weeds were considered a panacea and were highly valued by Indian tribes in areas where species grew. All parts of the plant are edible.

Enjoy the beautiful colors of Joe-pye-weed blooms mixed in with New York Ironweed, goldenrod species, tickseed sunflowers, and asters this time of year. These provide us with a varied palette of colors and vital nectar for pollinators.

~Marion

**Taxonomy Is a Changin’ for Ol’ Joe-pye and the Eupatoriums**

**By Marion Lobstein**, Botany Chair, Prince William Wildflower Society and Professor Emeritus, Northern Virginia Community College

There are five recognized species of Joe-pye-weed: Three-nerved or coastal, *Eutrochium dubium*; Hollow-stemmed, *E. fistulosum* (hollow); Spotted, *E. maculatum* (spotted); Sweet scented or purple, *E. purpureum* (purple); and Steele’s or Appalachian, *E. steelei* in North America. All are found in Virginia—the first four species in our area and *E. steelei* in the southwestern part of the state. Since 2004, all five have been placed in the genus *Eutrochium*. In 1838, Constantine Rafinesque placed the first four species in the genus *Eutrochium* (“eu,” true; and “trochium,” wheel, referring to whorled leaves, but this genus name was not widely used. In the 1980s, these species were placed in the genus *Eupatoriodelphus* (“brother of Eupatorium”) by R. M. King and H. Robinson. Based on genetic studies, botanists later returned the five species to *Eupatorium*, and in 2004, E.E. Lamont recognized the earlier use of *Eutrophium* by Rafinesque and applied
this genus to all Joe-pye-species. Eutrochium are found only in North America, and they all have purple-mauve flowers.

Eutrochium species, along with a considerable number of other species, once were included in the genus Eupatorium (Greek for “noble father”). Eupatorium is based on the surname for Mithridates Eupator who lived roughly from 134 to 63 B.C.E. in Pontus, an area now located in modern Turkey. In Roman times, historian Pliny the Elder used this name for hemp agrimony, Eupatorium cannibinum; and the Greek physician Dioscorides described the medicinal uses of this plant. E. cannibinum is a native of the old world, but is listed in the Flora of Virginia on page 1,367 as a “waif” (a species found only briefly or rarely in Virginia) in the section “Taxa Not Treated in This Manual.” Linnaeus in 1753 assigned 11 Virginia native species to this genus, including Eutrochium maculatum and E. purpureum, to the genus Eupatorium. Common names for species in the genus Eupatorium include Bonesets, Thoroughworts, and Snakeroot. (…article continued on page 8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Eupatorium binomial Common to Our Area of Virginia</th>
<th>Authority and Date Name Assigned</th>
<th>Common Names</th>
<th>Name in Flora of Virginia</th>
<th>Authority and Date Name Assigned</th>
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<td>White thoroughwort</td>
<td>Eupatorium album</td>
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<td>Eupatorium godfreyanum</td>
<td>A. Cronquist (1985)</td>
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</table>
John Clayton’s 1762 *Flora Virginica* lists a number of species of *Eupatorium*, including *E. virginianum* (*E. perfoliatum*, Boneset), *E. cannabinum* (European hemp agrimony), *E. altissimum* (Tall thoroughwort), *Ageratum* (*Conoclinium coelestinum*, Mistflower or *Ageratum*), *E. rugosum* (*Ageratina altissima*, White snakeroot), and perhaps *E. maculatum* (*Eutrochium maculatum*, spotted Joe-pye-weed).

At one time, there were approximately 800 species placed in *Eupatorium*. Currently, the genus includes about 40 species—with primarily white flowers—found in eastern North America and Eurasia. Twenty of these species are included in the *Flora of Virginia*. In addition, a number of Virginia species formerly included in the genus are now placed in other genera, such as *Ageratina* (White snakeroot), *Conoclinium* (Mistflower), *Fleishmannia* (Pink thoroughwort), and *Mikania* (Climbing hempweed).

Information on all of the traditional *Eupatorium* species are summarized in the chart found below.

**More Reading on Joe-pye weed and Eupatorium**


Taxonomic changes of many groups as well as Joe-pye-weed: [http://libotanical.org/newsletters/1601.pdf](http://libotanical.org/newsletters/1601.pdf)

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**Next Meeting**: Monday, September 15, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

“Ornamental Native Grasses,” with Helen Hamilton

Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas, Virginia 20110