



WILD NEWS

Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2018-02

March-April 2018

Ashley Egan, Research scientist and assistant curator at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, will present "A Tale of Two Vines: the Far-Reaching and Few Between"



Thursday, March 1, 7:30
Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church,
8712 Plantation Lane, Manassas, Virginia 20110

Kudzu, one of the most notorious invasive species in the U.S., now occupies most of the southeast, and continues to make headway. Introduced from Asia about 140 years ago, it is still not understood how many times it's been introduced or from what genetic source(s). Dr. Egan's lab focuses on answering these questions. Kudzu impacts native species, including other native legume vines such as the wild thicket bean or North American wild kidney bean (*Phaseolus polystachios*). The wild kidney bean is an important crop and wild relative to the cultivated Lima bean, serving as a critical genetic resource for plant breeding efforts, yet its range is in decline where Kudzu is advancing. Dr. Egan's collaborative work has made significant efforts to characterize the conservation status of this Virginia native species.

Dr. Ashley N. Egan completed her undergraduate degree at Utah State University studying the

population genetics of the trout lily, *Erythronium grandiflorum*. She then completed her PhD in Molecular and Evolutionary Biology at Brigham Young University in 2006, studying the Evolutionary History of North American members of Tribe Psoraleae. She then took a position at Cornell University doing a postdoc in the evolutionary genetics and genomics of soybean and allies, and has continued much of this work to this day. She taught as an assistant professor at East Carolina University for three years where she began her work studying the evolutionary genetics and introduction history of Kudzu, part of which she will share with us. After moving to the Smithsonian, Dr. Egan has continued her work with Kudzu and established a broadly inclusive research program on the evolutionary history of legumes, with interests in phylogenetics, systematics, population biology, conservation genetics, and evolutionary genomics. <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/document/fspulo.pdf>

From the President

It's mid-February as I write this, and we just experienced a 75° day! Unseasonably warm days like this tease us into thinking that spring has arrived. We're not fooled for long. March often has snowstorms, and cold, biting winds that can nip tender buds. Nevertheless, we revel in the swelling buds and emerging leaves of our flora and dream of a colorful Spring. With April comes our exquisite spring ephemerals, and we must divide our time between gardening and visiting local wildflower hotspots. Be sure to add the April 8 Bluebell Festival at Merrimac Farm to your spring calendar.

We had a chance to think about the upcoming growing season recently as 150 of us enjoyed the presentation by landscape designer Larry Weaner on February 11. I plan to follow his lead and try my hand at clipping, rather than pulling, weeds in my garden. As he asserts, soil disturbance invites more weeds. As I look toward the coming maintenance season of public plantings such as the I-95 rest area pollinator planting and the Merrimac Farm habitat garden, maybe this method is less labor-intensive. It's worth a try!

Our March program is "A Tale of Two Vines." Join us for an educational presentation, food and drink, and networking with fellow native plant enthusiasts.
~ Nancy

Prince William Wildflower Society
Membership Minutes
Thursday, January 4, 2018
Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas

On a cold and snowy night we had a small showing for our annual members' slide show, but all who attended enjoyed pictures of the flowers and scenery from Janis Stone and Nancy Vehrs, and the beautiful scenery of Peru from Charles Smith. Not much of predicted snow came our way, but the eastern and southern areas in Virginia received more snow than we did.

Announcements: President Nancy V. thanked Dee Brown and Karen Waltman for bringing refreshments.

All were invited to attend the Sunday, February 11, 2018 author event at the Manassas Park Community Center. The title of the program is "Living in a Liberated Landscape"; and the speaker, Larry Weaner, is the author of *Garden Revolution*. His book will be available for purchase, and he will sign copies after his talk.

Nancy V. reported that the Virginia Native Plant Society's workshop will be about trees and forests in Virginia and will be held at the University of Richmond on March 10. (Nancy is also the president of VNPS.) Brochures from VNPS had

been mailed to VNPS members with registration information.

Upcoming spring events and field trips are listed in the PWWS newsletter, *Wild News*, so announcements of those events will not be repeated here.

The program: Nancy Vehrs began the program by showing pictures of plants seen on the VNPS 3-day trip to Virginia's Northern Neck, and Janis Stone showed pictures of the Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area, the Everglades in Florida, Manassas National Battlefield Park, Phoenix, Arizona and Bull Run Mountain — in chronological order. It was a fun tour of plants and scenery from many areas in the United States.

Charles Smith took us to Peru to end the program. Charles' daughter graduated from University of Virginia in the spring of 2017, and she was treated to a trip to Peru in June. She speaks fluent Spanish and majored in Spanish and International Relations. She and Charles traveled to a variety of areas including Cusco, Machu Picchu, Rainbow Mountain and the Peruvian Amazon. Pictures of the scenery, people, towns, plants and animals were all so interesting. A beautiful country.

Charles, Janis and Nancy V. — Thank you for sharing these wonderful pictures! Through these photos we dreamed of spring on a snowy January evening!

If a VNPS member wants to share pictures of native plants and/or scenery from their travels or even their back yard next January, please notify PWWS vice president and program chair, William Carromero at wcarromero@yahoo.com or cell phone 479-280-3242.

Door prizes: A variety of door prizes were won by Christine Drazdowsky, Valerie Kenyon Gaffney, Louise Edsall, Margaret Smith, and Nancy Arrington.

In attendance: Brigitte Hartke, Valerie Kenyon Gaffney, Janet Wheatcraft, Dee Brown, Glen MacDonald, Karen Waltman, Louise Edsall, Charles Smith, Janis Stone, Val Neitzey, Christine Drazdowsky, Nancy Arrington, Margaret Smith, Nancy Vehrs, Harry Glasgow.

Karen Waltman, Secretary

Events 2018

Spring Walks

Friday, March 2, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

**Monthly Naturalist Walks at Leopold's Preserve:
Woodcock Watch, Sponsored by Bull Run
Mountain Conservancy**

16290 Thoroughfare Road, Broad Run, VA
7 miles of nature trails. Each month focuses on a
different natural history theme. Free.

Wednesday, March 7, 7 pm - 9 pm

Amphibians of Spring

Look for spring peepers, upland chorus frogs, wood
frogs and spotted salamanders. Grab your red lights
and boots. \$15 for non-members. Contact Bull Run
Mountains Conservancy for more details and
confirmation.

Sunday, March 25, 8 am

Last Sunday Bird Walk

Merrimac Farm Wildlife Management Area

14712 Deepwood Lane, Nokesville, VA
Please join us as we look for and observe the
behaviors of our spring birds. Dress for the weather,
bring binoculars and cameras. More info and RSVP
— appreciated but not required — 703 499 4954 or
alliance@pwconserve.org

Sunday, March 25, 9 am - 12 noon

"Taste of Spring, a Walk with Carrie Blair"

Scotts Run Nature Preserve
7400 Georgetown Pike, McLean. More information
will be provided by the Potomac Chapter as the
event nears.

Saturday, March 3, 9 am

Saturday, April 28, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

**Trillium Walk at Thompson Wildlife Management
Area, Freezeland Road, Linden, led by Alonzo
Abuggatas. For information please contact the
Potomack Chapter of VNPS as this event
approaches.**

March

9th Annual Clean-up of the Upper Occoquan

River. On Saturday, March 3, 2018, 9:00 am, Prince
William Trails and Streams Coalition will partner
with the PW Soil and Water Conservation District
and sponsor a cleanup on Neabsco Creek in
Woodbridge. Trash accumulates after being swept
downstream during rainstorms. The cleanup area is
PW County park property, upstream from the Metz
Wetlands. Parking for the event is at Neabsco
Eagles Park, 15801 Neabsco Road, Woodbridge.

Wednesday, March 7, 7:30-9:30

**"How to Protect and Preserve Trees in Our Yards
and Neighborhoods"** Potomack Chapter of
VNPS, Kings Park Library Conference Room, Burke.
Presenters: Jim McGlone, Keith Cline, Joan Allen,
Rachel Griesmer-Zakhar, Alan Ford

Thursday, March 8, 7 - 9 pm

**"Last Defense for Local Forests: Edges of
Woodlands", a talk with Rod Simmons**

Dolley Madison Library
1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean

Saturday, March 10, VNPS Workshop on trees and
forest of Virginia, in Richmond, VA,

April

Wednesday, April 4, 10 am - 12 noon

First Wednesday Plant Sale

Green Spring Gardens
4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria

Thursday, April 12, 7:30 - 9:00 pm

**"Natural Discoveries, a First-hand Account of
Citizen Science", a Talk by Jim Waggener, Green
Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Rd., Alexandria**

*Do continue to watch for announcements on our
FaceBook page or in your email box for spring events
of interest. <https://www.facebook.com/Prince-William-Wildflower-Society-a-Virginia-Native-Plant-Society-Chapter-142292732540373/>*

A Look Back at Larry Weaner's Lecture — 'Living in a Liberated Landscape', on February 11, 2018

In his lecture, renowned horticulturist Larry Weaner asked, "How do we change our horticultural efforts so that they work with ecological processes rather than against them?"

"All too often in our gardens and landscapes we think of static compositions of carefully placed and managed plants.

But our approach can be more dynamic than that — and arguably more rewarding — by taking advantage of plants' natural abilities to reproduce and proliferate."



"What goes on in Nature — how we can make that work for us? Making it work is not only about using native plants but about the processes that affect native plants in Nature. The more you understand those processes, the more you can work with landscapes and have them move in the way you want. If by 'Nature' we mean doing nothing and letting vegetation do what it wants, we all know that it's probably not going to end up as something that we want in our yards." Weaner said he has come to see that, ideally, we should strive for a partnership with Nature, rather than being at odds.

He spoke about the fact that landscapes are not static, and plants will move from their original locations and spring up in other places that are more suited to their needs. He also discussed the effect of disturbing soil, which often results in the

emergence of plants that one does not recollect ever planting. Many plants, such as the cardinal flower, take advantage of disturbed soil, the seeds lying in the earth for years, decades, even a century, suddenly sprouting when the soil is disturbed by raking, tilling or plowing.

Weaner spoke about the downside of using mulch, and the upside of planting low-growing living plants instead, which will retain moisture and keep the plants cool. He suggested that snipping off weeds is preferable to pulling them out and disturbing the soil, thereby providing a space for other weeds to jump in.

Did you miss the lecture? The social interactions, the displays and brochures, the good food, the chance to meet and ask questions of Larry Weaner in person, to buy his book, "*Garden Revolution: How Our Landscapes Can Be a Source of Environmental Change*" and have it signed? Sorry you missed all that, but you're in luck — we were able to locate a video of the lecture online, and you can watch it by following the web link below. "Living in a Liberated Landscape":

<http://grownativemass.org/programs/expertsvideos/lweaner>



photo used in lecture taken by noted photographer, Rob Cardillo

SPRING WILDFLOWER LIFE CYCLE INFORMATION

Marion Lobstein
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BLOODROOT: *Sanguinaria canadensis*

The glistening white petals and the deep yellow of the numerous stamens of bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) provide one of the earliest and loveliest touches of color to rocky slopes of rich deciduous woods. Bloodroot begins blooming in late March and continues into mid-April. Its range is from Nova Scotia south to Florida and westward to Nebraska.



Bloodroot flower and leaf

This perennial member of the poppy family Papaveraceae derives its genus name *Sanguinaria* (bleeding) from the red juice that is released when the stems, leaves, or rhizomes are broken or bruised. This exudate was used by American Indians to color their faces, weapons, and basketry. Other common names reflect these uses: red Indian paint, redroot, sweet slumber, snakebite, and puccoon (an Indian word for dye).

The striking solitary flower of bloodroot is typically two to three inches across and has two green sepals, eight to twelve fragile petals, 24 showy stamens, and a pistil with a short style and a stigma with two grooves. The primary

pollinators are bees and syrphid flies. The flower remains receptive to cross-pollination for two days after which time self-fertilization may occur. The fruit is a slender capsule up to two to three inches long. At maturity the capsule splits open lengthwise along two sutures to release 20-25 numerous chestnut brown seeds each with a prominent elaiosome that attracts ants that disperse the seed.

To observe the stages of bloodroot emerging from the damp spring soil is fascinating. The single leaf is wrapped around the single flower bud. Both leaf and bud are enveloped in a papery bract that protects the emerging leaf and flower bud. Bloodroot's distinctive leaf is a prominently veined, five to nine lobed kidney-shaped fleshy leaf. The upper surface is yellow-green and the underside is a lighter silvery green. After unfurling from around the flower bud it may reach six inches across and a petiole height of 412 inches. Later a total of two to three leaves may develop and the leaves remain until early summer or late fall depending on moisture.

The thick rhizome may be several inches long. Numerous fibrous roots develop off these rhizomes. As do many spring wildflower perennials native to deciduous woods, bloodroot stores energy in the rhizome during the relatively brief period the plant has to photosynthesize before the trees leaf out. The root is usually the part of the plant collected for the red-orange juice since it is most concentrated there. However, in most areas this plant is not common enough to be collected.



Bloodroot rhizome (cut in half lengthwise)

Many Indian tribes developed a variety of uses for bloodroot as recorded in the writings of Captain John Smith and Colonel William Byrd in Colonial times. The Cherokees still use the juice to dye basket splints. In many Indian tribes the red extract was used a war paint. Bloodroot extract can also be used a vegetable dye for wool and other fabrics.



Bloodroot Seeds with Elaisomes

Bloodroot extract is a powerful stimulant and narcotic, and has antimicrobial properties.

Medicinal uses of bloodroot juice or extract have included expectorant for coughs, fever reducer, emetic (vomiting inducer), rheumatism and poison ivy treatment, and a remedy for digestive organs and liver ailments. In powdered form it has been used to treat ringworm, warts, and other fungal infections, and as a snuff it has been used to treat nasal polyps. The bloodroot dried rhizome was officially listed in the U.S. Pharmacopeia from 1820 until 1926. Now the alkaloid is recognized as a stimulant or strong narcotic which can be quite harmful if taken in any but the smallest doses.

In the mid-1980's, Viadent toothpaste and mouthwash with sanguinaria, an alkaloid from bloodroot extract with antimicrobial activity, was introduced to the marketplace to fight buildup of dental plaque and gum diseases. These products were widely used until the early 2000s when dentists began to find white lesions know as leukoplakia in the mouth of Viadent product users. In some cases these lesions became cancerous. Viadent dental care products are still on the market

but no longer have sanguinarine. Native Americans also used bloodroot extract to treat skin and other cancers. Bloodroot salve is still available to use to treat cancer but research has not proven the effectiveness or safety of this use; this salve is not approved by FDA, and its use is discouraged.

Bloodroot can be found at many sites in our area, and this species has been documented in the *Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora* for virtually every Virginia county. Just watch your step on the steep, rocky slopes it prefers. At some sites you need a bit of mountain goat in you to enjoy a lovely clump of bloodroot! Enjoy the delicate beauty of this early spring wildflower, and be on the lookout for ants carryings bloodroot seeds.

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Route 28 Corridor Feasibility Study

The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority commissioned the Route 28 Corridor Feasibility Study to "identify infrastructure improvements that will improve travel times and network reliability within the Route 28 Corridor through Prince William County, the City of Manassas and City of Manassas Park and develop a plan to implement these improvement project(s)." Several alternatives have been identified, including the "preferred" alternative 2B, Godwin Drive Extended to North of Bull Run. This route would follow Flat Branch and Bull Run in Prince William County then cross into Fairfax County at Ordway Drive and run along Northern Virginia Regional Park land north of Bull Run into Route 28. Fairfax County has plans to widen Rt. 28 on its side of Bull Run. PWWS is concerned about the potential environmental ramifications of all of the proposed Rt. 28 alternatives and continues to monitor them. We encourage you to review them as well and voice any concerns you have. For more information, see www.route28study.com.

~ Nancy

PWWS Annual Native Plant Sale

Saturday, May 12, 2018, 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Grounds of Bethel Lutheran Church, 8712 Plantation Lane, Manassas

Sun- and shade-loving native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees; great prices, lots of variety!

PWWS members: We need your plants! It's time to start planning for our **May 12** plant sale. Think about what natives you can contribute as your plants begin emerging this spring. I have compiled some suggestions and instructions for potting, which I can email to you. We have name labels and the plastic pricing labels, and, as in years past, they will be available for pickup from Nancy Vehrs. We also have pots for you if you need them to pot up your plants. Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks in advance for helping with the sale. Even if you don't have plants to contribute, there are many ways you can help out and we need all the help we can get!

Please let me know if you'll be contributing plants or helping on sale day:

(703) 408-7446 or narrington1@verizon.net. ~Nancy Arrington



WEBMASTER NEEDED

Help Wanted! PWWS is in need of a webmaster. If you would like to learn more about this volunteer position, please contact Nancy Vehrs at nvehrs1@yahoo.com or 703-368-2898.

SAVE the DATES

Thursday, March 1, 7:30 pm — PWWS Membership Meeting — Ashley Egan: "A Tale of Two Vines: the Far-reaching and Few Between", Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas VA

Saturday, March 10, all day — VNPS Winter Workshop 2018, Univ. of Richmond

Sunday, April 8, 10 - 4 — Bluebell Festival at Merrimac Farm, Nokesville

Sat., May 12, 9 - 12 noon — PWWS Annual Native Plant Sale, Bethel Lutheran Church, Manassas

PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

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



Next Meeting: Thurs, March 1, 7:30 pm, Ashley Egan: "A Tale of Two Vines: the Far-reaching and Few Between"
Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Plantation Lane, Manassas, Virginia 20110

The Native Plants for Conservation, Restoration, and Landscaping Project

This project is the result of a collaboration between the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Virginia Native Plant Society, and was made possible by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Department of Environmental Quality's VA Coastal Program. Funds were also contributed by the Virginia Nurserymen's Association, the Virginia Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, and the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden.

In addition to those three organizations, the sponsors extend their considerable appreciation to the other collaborators who provided valuable advice and assistance throughout the life of the project:

- The Nature Conservancy -- Virginia Chapter
- Virginia Polytechnic and State University, Department of Horticulture
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Virginia Department of Forestry
- Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
- Virginia Department of Transportation

Project participants share a commitment to protect native plant habitats, especially those that support rare, threatened, or endangered species. The use of native plant species--especially plants propagated from local populations — in land management, conservation, restoration, and horticultural projects will help maintain the ecological integrity of natural areas and preserve native biodiversity.