



WILD NEWS

Prince William Wildflower Society

A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society

Number 2007-05

September-October 2007

SAVE THE DATE!

Prince William Wildflower Society

Annual Meeting

When: Sunday, September 30, 2007

Where: The home of Deanna and Jack High, 9613 Heather Green Drive, Manassas, Virginia 20112 (703/392-3505)

Schedule:

1:00 p.m. Potluck picnic

2:30 p.m. Chapter business meeting

President's report

Election of Chapter Nominating Committee Vote on proposed 2008 budget

3:00 p.m. Plant and Seed Swap and Woodland Walk

For the picnic: Bring a salad, vegetable, main dish, or dessert. Also bring a lawn chair if you can. PWWS will provide beverages, plates, cups, and utensils.

Election: Voting for the slate of nominating committee members will take place at the Annual Meeting. Absentee ballots (2 for family memberships) were sent in late August for members who are unable to attend. Please return mail-in ballots by **September 24, 2007** to Prince William Wildflower Society, P.O. Box 83, Manassas, VA 20108. Ballots will be provided to members voting at the Annual Meeting.

Setting: Deanna and Jack have 5+ acres of mostly woodland habitat, with a wide variety of native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. They are experiencing an extreme die-back of red oaks and dogwoods and would appreciate any thoughts on the causes. (They also have a fine collection of invasives, such as Japanese stilt-grass, porcelain berry, and Japanese honeysuckle; input on control in a woodland setting is especially

welcome) Enjoy a stroll on the cleared paths and stop and enjoy the woods at the stone patios and rustic benches in the woods.

Directions: From Sudley Road (Rte 234 Bus.), take Grant Street at the split and follow it through town. Turn right at the light onto Hastings Road just past the Wellington Giant shopping center. Turn left onto Lucasville Road (there is no light at this intersection.) Proceed on Lucasville for about 2.5 miles (you will cross over the Prince William Pkwy) and turn right onto Heather Green Drive. The driveway is on the left, about two-thirds down the street. Park on either side of the street, and walk up the driveway. There is also room for three or four cars in the garage area next to the house for those who can't walk far.

Nominees for PWWS Nominating

Committee are: Jeanne Fowler, Betty Truax, and Helen Walter. Brief bios on each nominee follow:

Jeanne Fowler is a charter member of the Prince William Wildflower Society. She was there at the beginning on October 31, 1982, and she seldom misses a chapter meeting. Jeanne previously has served on the nominating committee, and her yard has been featured on the PWWS Wildflower Garden Tour three times in past years. She moved from Fairfax County to Woodbine Woods almost 30 years ago, and she is active in the Woodbine Woods Garden Club and Grace Methodist Church in Wellington. She and her husband celebrated their 60th anniversary this past July 19, so we will definitely excuse Jeanne for missing the meeting that night!

Betty Truax currently assists Joann Krumviede on the PWWS Refreshments Committee. She has volunteered about 1,000 hours as a Master Gardener since 2005. With the Master Gardeners, Betty has installed a woodland garden at Linton Hall in Gainesville, educated residents about good lawn practices and set up plant clinics. Betty is the vice president of membership for the Countryside Garden Club, which is part of the Prince William Area Council of Garden Clubs. Betty is an election official and has volunteered at the Red Cross as well. Betty likes to cook, entertain, and garden with natives as well as other shade-loving plants. She and her husband have a blended family; she had one, he had two, and they adopted one together—all are now grown.

Helen Walter served as president of PWWS from 1994 to 1998 and as vice president from 1984 to 1992. She also has been on the chapter's nominating committee. Helen focuses on growing natives around her home, and the National Wildlife Federation has designated her yards as a certified Backyard Wildlife Habitat. Helen is president of the Occoquan Forests Garden Club, and she is a member of the green sanctuary committee at her church. She has four cats and four wonderful grandchildren, with two grandsons in Charlottesville and two granddaughters in Fairfax.

Proposed 2008 Budget: We will vote on the proposed 2008 annual budget at the meeting. The proposed budget appears on page 3 of this newsletter. A big thank you goes to **Diane Flaherty**, for her conscientious management of PWWS' finances.



Photo:
Helianthus angustifolius,
R. Harrison
Wiegand,
Maryland
Department
of Natural
Resources,
Wildlife and

Heritage Service. <http://www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/chesapeake>

GLANCING BACK, LOOKING AHEAD

From *Nancy Vehrs*, Spring Garden Tour coordinator.

Like many of our members, I missed our hosting of the PWWS spring garden tour. This was the first time in 20 years that we did not hold one. As the recent coordinator of the tour, I need your help. **We need wildflower gardens! Large, small — we need you!** No, your garden does not need to be a pure native plant landscape, but it does need to have plenty of natives, especially spring ephemerals, to capture the attention and enthusiasm of visitors. A focus on creating natural habitats for native creatures from birds and butterflies to small mammals and reptiles is a big plus. Your garden need not look like a garden magazine spread, nor does it need to cover acres of land, so please do not be intimidated by that thought. Generally, I like to group the gardens for the tour geographically so visitors do not have to drive from Woodbridge to Haymarket to view all the gardens in a single afternoon, but that does not always work out. If you have a garden you would like to share on the last weekend in April, or you would like to nominate one, please let me know at nvehrs1@yahoo.com.

--Nancy Vehrs

**PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY
FY2008 BUDGET**

	FY2007 Actuals	FY2008 Proposed
	<u>Income</u>	<u>Income</u>
Plant Sale	\$ 3,077	\$ 4,000
Membership	<u>\$ 1,522</u>	<u>\$ 1,450</u>
	\$ 4,599	\$ 5,450
	<u>Actual Disbursements</u>	<u>Proposed Disbursements</u>
<u>Newsletter</u>		
Postage/PO Box	\$ 742	\$ 800
Printing	\$ 737	\$ 950
<u>Member Meetings</u>		
Speaker (6 meetings)	\$ 150	\$ 500
Refreshments (6 meetings)	\$ 0	\$ 150
Meeting Space (Bethel)	\$ 250	\$ 250
<u>Special Events</u>		
Plant Sale		
▪ Plant Labels	\$ 152	\$ 160
▪ Printing/Postage	\$ 0	\$ 300
▪ State Sales Tax	\$ 155	\$ 275
Garden Tour		
▪ Refreshments	\$ 0	\$ 100
▪ Announcement Mailing (Postage/Printing)	\$ 0	\$ 225
▪ Brochures (Butterfly, Woodland, etc.)	\$ 0	\$ 175
Annual Meeting		
▪ Announcement Mailing (Postage/Printing)	\$ 250 (est)	\$ 250
▪ Drinks	\$ 25 (est)	\$ 35
▪ Plates/eating utensils	\$ 15 (est)	\$ 25
Spring Fling		
▪ Give Aways?	\$ 0	\$ 50
<u>Misc.</u>	\$ 37	\$ 50
<u>Grants/Gifts</u>		
VNPS Annual Meeting Cost to Send PWWS Representatives	\$ 0	\$ 500
Student Scholarships	\$ 0	\$ 250
Flora of Virginia - \$2,000 Not Included in FY07 budget (Paid from funds on hand)		\$ 2,000
	_____	_____
	\$ 2,513	\$ 7,045

CURRENT CHECKBOOK BALANCE - \$8,535.83

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
NOVEMBER 15, 2008
Upcoming PWWS membership meeting
All are welcome!

OH MY BLOOMING BACK!!!

Many people enjoy spending their days outdoors planting bulbs, mowing the lawn, pulling weeds, and caring for their gardens. Gardening can provide a great workout, but with all the bending, twisting, reaching and pulling, your body may not be ready for exercise of the gardening variety. Gardening can be enjoyable, but it is important to stretch your muscles before reaching for your gardening tools.

The back, upper legs, shoulders, and wrists are all major muscle groups affected when using your green thumb. To make gardening as fun and enjoyable as possible, it is important to prepare your body for this type of physical activity.

Join us on November 15th as chiropractor *Dr. Lisa Bochynski Basler* discusses garden fitness stretches and important information on how to reduce pain and improve flexibility in and out of the garden. Contact **Bonnie Fulford-Nahas**, 703/361-7409 or pawsitive.bfn@verizon.net for more information on the program.

Prince William Wildflower Society

2007 Annual Report to the Virginia Native Plant Society

Submitted *September 2007* by Charles Smith and Martha Slover

Prince William County Candidate Forum:

- In September 2006 several members of the Prince William Wildflower Society joined a coalition of citizens to help formulate questions and pole candidate for the Prince William Board of Supervisors candidate forum for environmental issues.

2006 Election of Officers:

- On October 8, 2006 the PWWS membership held its annual meeting at Linda and Leo Stolz's house and elected the officers for the 2007-2008 term is as follows:

President - Charles Smith
Vice President - Martha Slover
Secretary - Karen Waltman
Treasurer - Diane Flaherty

Gaia Conference:

- The PWWS co-sponsored the Gaia Conference in Arlington County on October 14-15, 2006. PWWS members served on the steering committee for the conference and worked the event.

Audubon of Northern Virginia Open House:

- October 21-22, 2006 Ken and Frances Bass held an Open House for the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia.

November 2006 Membership Meeting:

- Dr. Kenneth R. Lawless, professor emeritus of materials science and engineering, University of Virginia presented beautiful slides of Virginia wildflowers in a program entitled "Flowers and Friends Close-Up."

January 2007 - Annual Membership Slide Show

March 2007 - Backyard Habitat presentation as part of membership meeting

Plant Sale - May 12, 2007

- Totals for this year are \$3256.85 with 90 buyers; 2006 was \$4719.50 with 154 buyers and several previous years have been in line with 2006. The biggest reason for this year's downward

trend was a lack of publicity (including that which we have gotten in previous years from our garden tour and Spring Fling).

Membership Meeting – May 17, 2007

- Presentation by Prince William Futures Commission and membership participated in visioning exercise for county future.
- Presentation on Natives in the landscaping and gardening for wildlife.

Presentation at Heritage Hunt

- On May 24 Charles Smith presented a Landscaping for Wildlife program for residents at Heritage Hunt in Gainesville.

Prince William Spring Fling

- Several members represented PWWS/VNPS and the Prince William Master Gardeners at the annual Prince William Lawn and Garden Show. PWWS was located with the Master Gardeners at the county teaching garden.

July 2007 Membership Meeting

- At the July membership meeting past PWWS & VNPS President Nicky Staunton gave a wonderful and well attended presentation on wildlife photography.

Family Fun Night

- PWWS members participated in the first annual Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District Family Fun Night on August 17. The event was held on a farm near Nokesville. PWWS was one of 7 presentation tables focusing on various natural history and environmental education topics. The PWWS

table was on trees and was voted by attendees as one of the two best stations.

Upcoming PWWS 2007 Annual Meeting

- On September 30, 2007 PWWS will hold its annual meeting at Deanna High’s house and vote on a slate of three candidates for the nominating committee and the 2008 chapter budget.

Local Advocacy and Major Issues:

- PWWS members participated in efforts to preserve Merrimac Farm in southern Prince William County near Quantico Marine Corps base. Merrimac Farm will be purchased by the state of Virginia with federal matching funds preserving 300 acres much of which is floodplain forest.
- PWWS members have been active with a coalition of citizens since winter 2007 in efforts to re-write the county Comprehensive Plan chapters on open space, trails and parks. PWWS members attended numerous meetings, work sessions and public meetings and help draft chapter language.

The National Park Service is in the process of clearing 140 acres of basic oak-hickory forest to re-establish historic viewsheds on a portion of the battlefield for Second Manassas. Virginia Natural Heritage staff opposed the clearing, but when it was apparent that the clearing would occur, they worked with NPS on conditions to minimize the impacts and restore native meadow with seed collected on site.

President	Charles Smith, 703/361-5125
Vice President	Martha Slover, 571/238-5713 chrissmith@msn.com
Secretary	Karen Waltman, 703/830-5710 geraldwaltman@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Diane Flaherty, 703/330-9862
Botany	Marion Lobstein, 703/536-7150
Conservation Programs	OPEN Bonnie Fulford Nahas, 703/361-7409
History	OPEN
Membership	Nancy Vehrs, 703/368-2898
Plant Sale	Nancy Arrington, 703/368-8431 narrington1@verizon.net
Publicity	John Pauswinski, 703/791-6175
Refreshments	Joann Krumviede, 703/938-4378 and Betty Truax
Editor	Deanna LaValle High, 703/392-3505 deannah@agb.org

Advisor/VNPS 2nd VP - Nicky Staunton, 703/368-9803
Original Artwork by Nicky Staunton
 nstaunton@earthlink.net
 Deadline for the November-December issue of *Wild News* is **November 1, 2007**
 Please send or email information to Deanna High, 9613 Heather Green Drive, Manassas, VA 20112;
 deannah@agb.org.
VNPS home page: <http://www.vnps.org>

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I had two chance encounters recently that inspired me and increased my knowledge of the natural world. I generally find that the best encounters you have in nature are unintentional – you go out to hike, explore, or observe a particular thing or occurrence, and you come across something totally unexpected.

On July 29, I was out for work at a Park in Annandale called Ossian Hall. Ossian Hall is a 20 acre urban park – surrounded by roads, schools, residences and commercial properties. There is a history at the park of gang and drug activity, teenage partying and even construction of makeshift dwellings by homeless folks. There is erosion around the tot lot, trash back in the woods from partying and people who can't seem to wait to find a trash can while walking through, and invasive plant species along edge areas where humans have disturbed the vegetation and soils in recent times.

Despite all of these things, Ossian Hall has great plants. Some portions of the forest/tree stand have not been disturbed for a very long time – perhaps 80 to 100 years. There is no evidence of deer browse (currently) because there are no other natural areas and few accessible private yards around and too many obstacles for the deer to find their way there. The soils have a thick organic layer and are mature – likely hosting many billions of important microorganisms from several kingdoms of biota.

The first thing that strikes you about a healthy vegetative community is the variety and abundance of healthy native vegetation and the relative lack of invasive plant species. Ossian Hall has a thick understory with hundreds of wild hydrangea, southern arrowwood and maple leaf viburnum, American euonymus of large size, and many young oak, hickory, tulip tree, sassafras, Hercules' club, paw-paw and many others. This intact understory with good tree recruitment speaks volumes about the forest health. The overstory trees are of large size with a younger section almost entirely composed of tulip tree and an older section of oak hickory which includes several uncommon species in the piedmont such as shagbark hickory.

Below all of that big stuff is a collection of forbs, ferns and fern allies that remind you that when we can prevent or remove disturbance by humans, deer and invasives, amazing things can happen anywhere. Before my walk on the 29th I already knew of many plants seen by others or myself including puttyroot, showy orchis, bellwort, Solomon's seal and false Solomon's seal, lopseed, Virginia knotweed, sweet cicely, white avens, shining clubmoss, and grape, Christmas, New York and sensitive fern. On the 29th, I found myself in a section of the park with lower elevation, moister soils, but also trash, invasives and erosion in sections of the woods. I was pleased to find a large stand of horse mint in bloom with hog peanut and white wood aster in bud and about to open.

I saw yellow back in the woods and assumed that it must be woodland sunflower, but as I approached the plant, the petals were pale and the flower shape was different. Then as I stepped up to the first plant I saw the leaves and flowers clearly and realized I was looking at green headed coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*). The *Atlas of Virginia Flora* shows this plant occurring in almost every county in the state. We see it frequently in gardens and at our native plant sales. But I have not encountered this plant frequently in the wild. To come across a cluster of plants in a forest that hosts many native species was like meeting the plant for the first time.

I did not expect to see it. I have not seen it often outside of gardens. I did not have an understanding for where this plant occurs in the wild, what plants it is associated with, what conditions influence its growth habits in which particular way. Suddenly I was seeing the soils it likes, the plants that share its environment, and the fact that growing in full shade it was less than three feet tall while in gardens in full or partial sun it is often over six feet.

What a treat. What a memory.

I have run on too long on my first chance encounter, so I will save my second one for a future installment. My teaser is that the second encounter was a very close observation of a rarely seen but relatively common mammal that prefers to live near water.

I hope this newsletter finds you well. I hope to see many of you at Deanna's house for the annual meeting on September 30.

--Charles Smith

SAD NEWS from the Jefferson Chapter

Nicky Staunton and Charles Smith have passed on this recent notice from the Jefferson Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society. We all remember Ken's lovely presentation at PWWS last winter and his invaluable tips on photographing wild flowers. His joy in pursuing his hobby was inspiring and his enthusiasm contagious.

Jefferson Chapter Members,

One of our most valued members, Ken Lawless, passed away on Friday apparently from a fast-developing pneumonia. Ken will long be remembered by us for his remarkable botanical knowledge, photography, and willingness to share his enthusiasm of the subject. The chapter took great delight in his extraordinary slide presentations, and his masterfully captured floral images left us awestruck. Field trips with Ken were particularly relished. On those we would see the most majestic displays of wildflowers near peak bloom, all of which he was impressively familiar with.

How fortunate we have been to have had Ken's wonderful friendship and selfless generosity over many years. We will miss him!

There is an obit in the *Daily Progress*.
(Charlottesville)

<http://www.legacy.com/dailyprogress/Obituaries.asp?Page=Lifestory&PersonId=93390122>

Phil Stokes, president
Jefferson Chapter

NATIVE 'TOUGH GUYS' IN THE NEWS

The October 2007 issue of *Fine Gardening* includes many region-specific native plants in the feature "41 Plants that Thrive on Neglect." There is room for hope and despair in each regional section, but natives predominate—not surprisingly, given that they are naturally adapted to the conditions! In the "Lower Plains" region, for example, plant profiles include *Helianthus angustifolius* and Arkansas blue star (*Amsonia hubrichtii*); in the Midwest, blackhaw viburnum (*Viburnum prunifolium*) and little

bluestem are touted as great plants to ignore and love at the same time. Yarrow, soapweed, bleeding heart, graythorn, and western sword fern also are featured in the regional profiles. The September 2007 issue of *The Avant Gardener* compares clethras (summersweet) noting several new dwarf cultivars and rating pink-flowered cultivars and those with unusual bloom or foliage. The article points out that clethra "is ignored by deer but loved by butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds." In our region, it makes an attractive alternative to lilacs, which often don't do well here. (Cole Burrell suggests using *clethra alnifolia* as an alternative to buddleia, rosa multiflora, viburnum lantana, and vitex agnus-castus in his *Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants*.)

Purple and Gold (not LSU)

The one-two punch of drought this summer has blasted our fields, woods, and roadsides. It's painful to see so many ordinarily beautiful trees



and shrubs slumped over with gray, washed out leaves literally dying of thirst. In my own yard, it's been a losing struggle to keep

up with watering even the planted garden, much less everything else that needs it, and we've lost much to the dry season.

Some comfort is to be had, though, in the roadside flushes of various species of goldenrod and sunflowers blooming just now. On my long commute into D.C. every day, I spot large, cheerful patches of tickseed, jerusalem artichoke, and goldenrod—all seemingly unaffected by scant water rations.

In the garden, the DYCs (damn yellow composites) are in their glory days, water or not. Ironweed, too, seems pretty much impervious to drought, as it reached its usual 8

to 10 feet or so this year despite infrequent watering from woman or sky. The combination of it and the various golden yellows of the NYCs has been a treat for drought-weary eyes. *Coreopsis verticillata* has kept on blooming and blooming, and even though it is now replaced by more ephemeral, coarser golden-bloomers, one only can feel immensely grateful that it's hung in there for so long, so beautifully. On the purple/pink side of things, New England asters are beginning to join the late-summer song with a distinctively beautiful tenor voice; overgrown clumps of them in my front beds take on a shimmering tone at twilight this time of year.

The corkscrew wackiness of solidago 'Fireworks' spiraling out of beds is a joyful exuberance to behold in an otherwise tired season – its untidiness pretty much captures what it's all about in the rush to produce flowers and seed before the cold sets in.

Late-blooming natives that I've forgotten about for months on end are turning up unexpectedly: a scattering of physostegia, late veronicastrum, boltonia, tall solidago, and turtlehead (*chelone glabra*) to my delight and mild surprise have poked their way through the blasted perennials of the front border.

("Oh, that's where I planted *that*, yes, I sort of remember now...") Undesirable natives (read "real weeds") turn the corner (occasionally) and stun us so with their beauty that it's impossible to deny them. Case in point is a very large pokeweed (*phytolacca americana*) that managed to escape an earlier weeding frenzy. It drapes so gracefully, so...purple over a corner of a rustic bench (to the height of 6 or 7 feet or so) that I can't bring myself to yank it up in usual heartless fashion.

All told, the regrets and disappointments of this summer's season lie relatively fallow for now (I should have planted more milkweed for the Monarchs...) and the urge is to simply surrender to the blowsy beauty and the buzz of overstimulated insects, which combine and crescendo into this end-of-summer mantra: Stop worrying. Open your eyes. And see...

--Deanna High, editor

<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org> Digital ID: 1101774

Barton, William P. C. (William Paul Crillon), 1786-1856 -- Artist

Tanner, Vallance, Kearny & Co. -- Engraver

Phytolacca decandra : **poke** In Vegetable materia medica of the United States; or, Medical botany: containing a botanical, general, and medical history of medicinal plants indigenous to the United States. Illustrated by coloured engravings ... done by the author. (published 1818-25)

PRINCE WILLIAM WILDFLOWER SOCIETY
A Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society
PO Box 83, Manassas, VA 20108-0083

NEXT UP: PWWS ANNUAL MEETING, SEPTEMBER 30, 2007, 1:00 p.m.
Deanna and Jack High's, 9613 Heather Green Drive, Manassas 20112
