

Northern Neck Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

NN Native Plant News

Winter 2011, Volume 8, No. 1

2010 in Pictorial Review

Some highlights for those who missed our annual meeting in October.



Potting for the plant sale in the cold.

Potting for the plant sale in the heat.

Planting redbuds on 10/10/10 for CO₂ uptake.



Donating a book to each of our county libraries.



"Helping" Marie identify a species of *Solidago*.



Assembling the outreach materials for a festival.



Potting perennials with children.



Walking in the woods.



Examining trees with a forester.



Admiring native perennials in bloom.

Photos: Carol Hammer, Judy Lang

Message from the President

As of the October, 2010 meeting our members have elected a new board. Marie Minor, our President for the past two years and main botanist for Chilton Woods and several other local areas, will be the new Corresponding Secretary. Marie had her 2nd hip surgery this fall and looks forward to hitting the trail again come spring.

Ted Munns is a new face on our board, but one who many know as he is not only a Master Gardener and Master Naturalist, but also a beekeeper and gives lectures on various subjects including invasive plants. We look forward to having Ted serve on our board.

Patsy Lockman, who served as Corresponding Secretary for two years, is our current Recording Secretary. This is no easy task. We all seem to have opinions and at board meetings she has to write them all down. Thank you Patsy for volunteering!

We were happy to retain Paula Boundy as our Treasurer. She not only handles our funds and balances our budget, but gives so much more. She has been, and remains, our Conservation and Horticulture Chairs. She has worked countless hours to design native plantings for the new Lancaster County courthouse. Paula lectured at our September meeting, leads some of our field trips, and continues to contribute interesting reading material for our newsletter.

At the November meeting, member Tom Teeple explained the Fibonacci Sequence to us in simple terms with diagrams and examples drawn from nature. He also showed a short video illustrating the many instances in which this spiral naturally exists.

As your new President, I will work hard with our board and committee chairs to provide our chapter and community with an active and productive two years for all of our projects with native plants. I do this with pride and in remembrance of Ann Messick, our founder who shared with us her love for native plants and photography.

Carol Hammer



January Speaker

Helen Hamilton

Why Grow Native Plants?

Thursday, Jan. 20, noon

Wicomico Parish Church (Episcopal), Parish Hall



We start off January with a talk by Helen Hamilton, the current president of the John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society. Helen taught biology in local high schools, worked as a plant technician for the National Park Service, and completed her Master Gardening training in 2004. She is also the Publicity Chair of the Williamsburg Botanical Garden, and produces plant guides for local parks in PowerPoint format.

January Field Outing

Skunk Cabbage in Hickory Hollow

Saturday, Jan. 29, 10:00 a.m.

snow date: Sat., Feb. 5, 10:00 a.m.

Public Welcome!

VNPS Quarterly Meeting, Dec., 4, 2010

On Sat. Dec. 4th I attended my first quarterly meeting of the VNPS board, held at the Ivy Creek Natural Area in Charlottesville. I was especially interested to hear what the other chapters had done recently, especially in the areas of speakers and outings.

The VNPS Annual Workshop is set for March 5th at the University of Richmond. This venue fills up quickly, so if you are interested remember to sign up right away when your flier arrives.

Good news this year is that the VNPS Annual Meeting, which the Prince William Chapter is hosting on the weekend of Sept. 16-18, will not conflict with our plant sale fund raiser on Sept. 10!

Our ongoing native plant coloring book project was of interest to other chapter presidents and they are anxious to see what we produce.

For the annual fundraiser, we decided to sponsor *Arabis serotina*, the shale barren rock cress, which is endemic to Virginia and West Virginia. Apparently Tom Wiebolt, Curator of Vascular Plants at Virginia Tech's Massey Herbarium (see also page 3), recently brought attention to this plant. To help promote the fundraiser, Johnny Townsend, Virginia Natural Heritage Program Botanist, will give a talk and lead a walk at a date and place to be determined. Our sponsorship funds will go to the Center for Plant Conservation (<http://www.centerforplantconservation.org/Support/Sponsor/Sponsor.asp>).

I learned that the state has a registry chair, and they oversee 20, publicly- or privately-owned areas at which rare or endangered species have been located by our members. Supposedly the committee visits each area once a year to see if its particular plant community is stable. (To date, 15 areas have been inspected.) None of these sites is located in the Northern Neck, but perhaps we may consider trying to add parts of Hickory Hollow, Chilton Woods or Hughlett Point to the registry.

I also learned that there are positions at the state level that need to be filled. If any of you are interested, please contact me and I will let you know who to contact. We could also carpool to one of the quarterly meetings so you could get to know the board members and obtain more information.

Carol Hammer

2010 VNPS Annual Meeting



THE 2010 VNPS ANNUAL MEETING was held in Shenandoah National Park at Skyland Resort on September 10-12. Sally Caskie, Lolly Riley, Pam Narney, John Narney, guest Susy Rakay and I enjoyed a great setting and wonderful talks and outings. The members of the Piedmont Chapter were fantastic hosts and incredibly well organized.

Lots of information about the local habitats and plant life is always made available to members who come from all over the state. At this meeting, we learned about the ecology of the Shenandoah Mountains.

Wendy Cass, Shenandoah Park Botanist, spoke on Friday evening about the efforts being made to protect some of its threatened plants. One of the areas under stress from hikers is Old Rag Mountain. It is a very popular destination, and various strategies are being used to keep hikers on the trails and off the plants without using signs and artificial looking barriers. She said that protecting native plants from people, invasives and deer is an ongoing struggle.

The keynote speaker, Gary Fleming, Vegetation Ecologist for the Virginia Natural Heritage Program, provided a wonderful slide program and talk. He had some very interesting images that graphically depicted the changes brought by the woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*) which has killed the large hemlock forests that, until very recently, were found in the mountains. A sequence of slides taken at the same spot showed hemlocks when they were healthy, the stark bare trunks of dead trees, and new hardwoods coming up where there was once a hemlock forest.

The outings gave us a chance to experience a completely different terrain from the coastal plain and to observe new plants. The many walks ranged from easy to difficult. When Sally, Susy, Lolly and I chose the "moderate" walk up Stony Man Mountain on Saturday afternoon, we discovered that moderate is a relative term when you are in the mountains! It gave us the opportunity to see yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) and Rand's goldenrod (*Salidago randii*). At the top, we were rewarded with a spectacular view of the Shenandoah Valley and Massanutten Mountain.

On Sunday morning, Marion Lobstein led a walk in Big Meadows where many interesting plants were identified, including leathery grape fern (*Botrychium multifidum*) with spores, and several rare yellow lady tresses (*Spiranthes ochre lucre*) in bloom. This walk provided lots of photo opportunities. At one point, we looked like a group of hikers and contortionists!

I hope that more members can attend next year. The annual meeting is a wonderful opportunity to learn and to meet like-minded members from all over the state.

Patsy Lockman

Editor's note: The VNPS Annual Meeting was held during the same weekend as our chapter's plant sale, precluding any possibility that most of our board could attend. Fortunately these two important annual events will not overlap in 2011.

2010 Vouchers for Massey Herbarium

It has been another good year for the Northern Neck Master Naturalist plant collection team (many of whom are also VNPS members). In December we sent six new vouchers (preserved plant specimens) to Massey Herbarium at Virginia Tech. These plants were new in the sense that the Digital Flora of Virginia botanists (www.bio.vt.edu/digital_atlas) were not aware of their existence in our counties of the Northern Neck. (See page 5 for photos.)

Tom Saunders discovered *Ulmus rubra* (red elm or slippery elm) at the edge of the Hughlett Point NAP parking lot. Its heartwood is a brownish-red and the inner bark has many herbal uses. Our second voucher was the *Trillium pusillum* (the so-called dwarf wakerobin) that some of you have seen at the King Carter Golf Course and which I originally found in March, 2005. Our third, *Listera australis* (southern twayblade orchid) was originally discovered at Hughlett Point by Dorothy Tompkins and me in 2008. (In our early finds, we did not have the equipment for preserving our specimens.) The next collection was a tall order: *Saccharum giganteum* (sugarcane plume grass) is a full 8 feet high! We had previously spotted these plants along the road to Hughlett Point in Northumberland County, but this specimen was collected as a first in Lancaster County, being found near Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury in a ditch. I first noticed these plants in 2009, but some VDOT mowers beat me to them.

I had also found a single *Aplectrum hyemale* (putty root orchid) at Chilton Woods in 2009. When Earline Walker and I saw about three dozen of them this year, all in the same area, we could collect a specimen. (One collection out of twenty plants is the state rule.) And then there's the *Viola* discovered by Tom Saunders and Ellis Squires at Hughlett Point. We called it *Viola pedata* (birdfoot violet) until the Massey Herbarium's Tom Wieboldt told us that the voucher we sent is a *Viola palmata* (early blue violet)—which also happens to be a new plant for Northumberland! We are not professionals and it isn't a sin to mis-identify an unfamiliar plant. Just be sure to study and learn from the experience! *Tom Teeples*

February Speaker

Denise Greene

Creating a Butterfly Garden with Native Plants

Thursday, Feb. 17, noon

Wicomico Parish Church (Episcopal), Parish Hall



Our guest speaker in February owns Sassafras Farm (Hayes, VA) where she grows over 100 species of herbaceous perennials that are natives of the mid-Atlantic US. She also provides "landscape design and consultation specializing in using native plants to create wildlife friendly and natural gardens." A handout to accompany Denise's talk will be available in February.

Privileged to Enjoy Nature's Beauty

Caledon Natural Area



Westmoreland State Park



photos:Joan Hattersley (top right); Carol Hammer (right); Judy Lang (others)

Bush Mill Stream



Dragon Run



Paula's Fall Garden Delight

SOME OF OUR MEMBERS HAVE BEAUTIFUL GARDENS. In late September, a large group gathered at Paula Boundy's house in Hills Quarters to see her accomplished home landscape. Like all gardens it's an effort in constant flux. One glance from a visitor and it is evident that a gardener with a 'loving-plant touch' lives there. She pointed out some special cultivars—*Thuja occidentalis* 'Woodwardii,' *Lonicera sempervirens* 'Major Wheeler,' *Symphytotrichum novaeangliae* 'London Blue'—as well as *Pachysandra procumbens* and a volunteer *Magnolia virginiana*.

While our walks are often on uneven terrain, visiting a garden like Paula's is gentler under foot. If you missed out on this treat, keep it in mind for future delight!

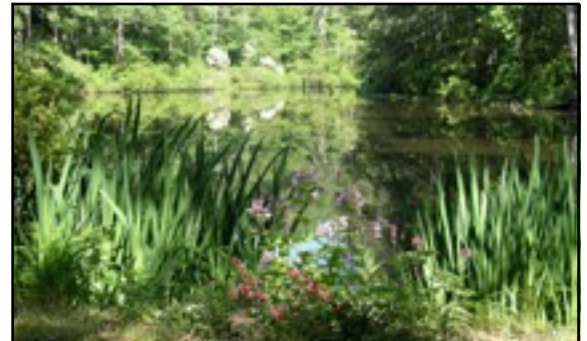
text: Joan Hattersley; photo: Carol Hammer



Twin Oaks Pond in May



As-yet undetermined species of fern that grows near the pond. Judy Lang



Last Botany Walk of 2010 in Chilton Woods



Walkers drift among piles of pilewort, *Erechtites hieracifolia*.



Crownbeard, *Verbesina occidentalis*

Marie Minor, now our Past President, has been botanizing at Chilton Woods this past year. Earline Walker and other members coordinated efforts with the local foresters to create a trail for her use. It's a 'path in progress' after the logging that occurred here in August/September, 2009. Observing how the land recovers after this disturbance will be most interesting! The footing is still tricky in places, with some very rough log bridges covering the muckier patches. Despite these perils, Marie has made a significant start to the botany inventory and will continue in 2011 (see page 8). text: Paula Boundy, photos: Judy Lang

Voorhees Nature Preserve

IT WAS ONE OF THOSE PERFECT OCTOBER DAYS: warm but clear and dry, with azure skies and color tones of yellows and oranges throughout the landscape. Our small but enthusiastic group left the Westmoreland Berry Farm with Paula Boundy as leader. We walked down the gravel road from the farm and followed the signs to the nature walk. As we crossed the field we were treated to the beautiful berries of the devil’s walking stick (*Aralia spinosa*), interspersed, unfortunately, with tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*).

As we walked into the woods, the path wound down toward the water and there we saw several kinds of goldenrod, including the wreath goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*). We continued through the woods and out to the river’s edge where we feasted our eyes on a virtual sea of swamp sunflowers (*Helianthus angustifolius*), bright yellow against the dark blue of the water and clear blue of the sky. It was a memorable scene! Before leaving we crossed over a wooden bridge to the woods where we saw a “mystery plant” with mauve berries that Paula tentatively identified as the silky dogwood (*Cornus amomum*). *text: Tanya Bohlke, photo: Judy Lang*



Tom Teeples with the slightly toxic *Amanita citrina* (above); tiny *Tremella mesenterica* (left)

Autumn Fungi Discoveries

ON AN ABSOLUTELY PERFECT AUTUMN SATURDAY, 17 smiling people thanked Master Naturalist Tom Teeples for a productive, informative walk in Chilton Woods as he sought fungi hiding amongst the fallen leaves and downed decaying trees. We saw small, emerging buttons before they had “mushroomed” into their mature size, large *Amanita citrina* (false death cap), and a couple of desiccated oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus ostreatus*)—a species that is now available in grocery stores. Also discovered was a fresh example of the tiny, golden jelly fungus or witch’s butter (*Tremella mesenterica*). A short way off the trail, proudly erect, was a small group of Indian pipes (*Monotropa uniflora*): while not fungi, these herbaceous perennial plants are parasites on mycorrhizal fungi.

Grouped by the way spores are produced, four of the five groups of mushrooms were found—gilled, pores and polypores, cups and puffballs; only the toothed species eluded us.

text and photos: Joan Hattersley

Four of Our New County Records



Trillium pusillum. Tom Teeples



Southern twayblade, *Listera australis*. Carol Hammer



Putty root orchid, *Aplectrum hyemale* Earline Walker



Early blue violet, *Viola palmata*. Ellis Squires

Living Shoreline Development



Hull Springs Farm in late October of 2006 (top) and 2009 (base), respectively. Bobbie Burton

Fern Gardens

FERNS ARE THE NATIVE PLANT “ANSWER” TO HOSTAS... especially when combined with other largish-leaved foliage such as skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*) and golden ragwort (*Packera aurea*). This combination would require a consistently moist, humusy soil.

Create this type of soil by collecting leaves, preferably oak, and pine needles, then shredding them with a lawn mower or weed whacker for quick results, and mix with native dirt. Let it compost for a year: this environmentally favorable method is slow but avoids noise and fossil fuel use and emissions. (Otherwise, there is peat moss that can be mixed with top soil and sand but its use also has the environmental impacts of harvesting and transportation.)

Meanwhile, locate a partly shaded garden site to which you can have water directed from hardscape, roof run-off, dehumidifier or air conditioner unit. Dig out some dirt to create a shallow basin: the size can be dictated by the available site or your energy and back, whichever is the limiting factor. Combine the compost with the native soil and perhaps some builders' sand. Consider adding a layer of hardwood mulch or some rotten wood, which can act as a sponge, in the very bottom, then fill the basin to even with, or just below, the original level with your soil.



From: USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database, after Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. *An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions*. Vol. 3:544.

Now you're ready for some rest, so plan, order or buy your native ferns and accents. My fern recommendations include the lovely netted chain (*Woodwardia virginica*) and sensitive (*Onoclea sensibilis*) ferns along with the evergreen Christmas (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) fern. Christmas fern also contrasts nicely with lady fern (southern is *Athyrium filix-femina* var. *asplenoides*, the northern is *A. filix-femina* var. *angustum*) as the former is slightly coarse and the latter is lacy. Royal (*Osmunda regalis* var. *spectabilis*) and cinnamon (*Osmunda cinnamomea*) ferns have beautiful spring fiddleheads and then remarkable summer fertile fronds. Each of these species needs part shade to part sun, and constant moisture is best although most ferns will survive some unextended dryness once established.

Accents include flowering plants with large foliage. Golden ragwort (pictured) exhibits year-round interest with evergreen roundish foliage and, in spring, maroon buds that bloom yellow. Remove the seed heads and you're done with maintenance! Skunk cabbage is a plant with multi-season interest and supplies large foliage contrast for ferns. (The reputed odor of its leaves won't be a problem unless they are stomped on.) Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) is another option—although its foliage goes dormant in summer, it is large enough for a contrast while it lasts. (The bluebells' shallow roots are protected by the ferns but would need to be planted on the shallower sides of the basin.) More choices include false hellebore (*Veratrum viride*) and marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*)-if you can find a source. If spiky foliage as an accent is desired, blue flag irises (*Iris versicolor* or *I. prismatica*) would do.

Once your choices are planted, your habitat will provide nectar for butterflies, other pollinators and hummingbirds, cover for wildlife such as frogs and salamanders, a use for extra 'free' water, and a feast for the gardener's and visitors' eyes that, once installed, is fairly low maintenance.

Paula Boundy, Horticulture Chair

Education and Outreach

It's a lot of fun! Look at their faces. To help, please contact:
Tanya Bohlke at tmbohlke@yahoo.com or (804) 435-8824 or
Nancy Garvey at nangarvey@hotmail.com or (804) 436-8401



Photo: Carol Hammer

Virginia's Natural Heritage Program

2010 has been a positive year for protecting Virginia's biological diversity. As one of six biological diversity hotspots in the United States, we have much to celebrate and much to be responsible for. Natural Heritage staff and volunteer cooperators have made many significant biological discoveries this year and assisted in 1000's of information requests and land conservation planning projects.

Thanks to the Wintergreen Property Owner's Association, 40.8 acres have been added to the existing 1,346 acre Crawford's Knob Natural Area Preserve. The added habitat supports the state rare plant tall cinquefoil (*Potentilla arguta*) and a globally rare woodland/barren complex.

The State Natural Area Preserve System now contains 60 Natural Area Preserves protecting 49,942 acres and 587 mapped locations of 375 exemplary natural communities and rare plant and animal species! When surveyed in 2006, visiting our natural areas was rated the fifth most popular outdoor activity in Virginia!

From Thomas Smith, Director VA Natural Heritage Program

March Speaker**Bobbie Burton****Living Shorelines****Thursday, March 17, noon****Wicomico Parish Church (Episcopal), Parish Hall**

Our speaker in March is the Executive Director of Longwood University's Hull Spring Farm. Not only is she a Master Naturalist, but she is also a graduate of the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute. Under her direction, Hull Springs Farm is working to become a model of conservation and sustainable land management with the largest living shoreline demonstration site in Virginia (see page 5 for photos).

Earth Resources of Lancaster County won the Soil and Water Conservation Society of Virginia's 2008 Ecological Excellence Award for Construction, and the Tidewater Resource Conservation and Development Council's 2009 Sustainable Development Award, for this project. Her lecture will be followed on April 9th with an outing to visit Hull Springs Farm.

March Field Outing**Bloodroots in Lucy's Woods****Date to be Announced, 10:00 a.m.****VNPS Members and Guests Only****Early April Field Outings****Living Shorelines at Hull Spring Farm****Saturday, April 9, 10:00 a.m.****Public Welcome!****Dragon Run Kayak****Thursday, April 14, 9:00 a.m. (Saluda)****VNPS Members and Guests Only****Northern Neck Master Gardeners:****Douglas Tallamy, Laurie Fox,****Peggy Singlemann****Gardening in the Northern Neck Seminar****Saturday, April 2, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.****Church of the Nazarene, White Stone****A Warm Welcome to Our Newest Members!**

Sue Ambrose, Walter and Kathey Brodtman, Neil Brothers, Susanne Gallaher,
Kari Garell, Janet Pawlukiewicz, Nina Turney, Margaret Welsh

Officers

President.....Carol Hammer 453-5500 caroljhammer@aol.com
Vice President.....Ted Munns 453-3621 tedmunns@kaballero.com
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Recording.....Patsy Lockman
Corresponding...Marie Minor
Treasurer.....Paula Boundy 435-3685 paula.boundy@va.metrocast.net

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Education.....Tanya Bohlke 435-8824 tmbohlke@yahoo.com,
.....Nancy Garvey 436-8401 nangarvey@hotmail.com
Horticulture.....Paula Boundy
Hospitality.....Pam Collins, Jane Peterson
Membership.....John Krainock 472-3051 jkrainock@usa.net
Newsletter.....Judy Lang jlang@riposi.net 453-6605
Nominating.....Jane Peterson, Nick Ferriter, Tanya Bohlke
Programs:
Speakers.....Carol Hammer
Outings.....Joan Hattersley 529-5467 hattersley4@gmail.com
Special.....Earline Walker, Nick Ferriter
Publicity.....Kari Garell 493-1316 garellk@aol.com,
.....Susan Christopher (also Boy Scout and Church liasons)
Ways & Means.....Judy Lang

Other Board Members

Ex-President.....Marie Minor
Members at Large..Bette Gruben, Jeff Wainscot

Membership Fees

Individual: \$30
Family: \$40
Secondary: \$5 (goes to another chapter)

Send your check to:

VNPS Membership Chair
Blandy Experimental Farm
400 Blandy Lane, Unit 2
Boyce, VA 22602

In the lower left hand corner of your check add:

"Membership, Northern Neck Chapter"

All memberships are good for one year from the month you join.

The state office of VNPS will send you a renewal reminder.

See address label for renewal date.**Please advise us if our records are incorrect.**

All but \$5.00 of any membership is tax deductible.

Please Help Us Keep in Touch with You!

Whenever your email address, phone number or
postal address changes, please contact
John Krainock at jkrainock@usa.net or (804) 472-3051

**Whenever you can, please carpool to
our meetings, field outings and other activities.**

NN Chapter of the VNPS Outings and Meetings Calendar
All Saturday Field Outings are open to the public.

Jan. 20, Thur..	Noon. Wicomico Parish Church (Episcopal) Chapter Meeting— <i>Why Grow Native Plants?</i> Helen Hamilton, President, John Clayton VNPS.
Jan. 29, Sat. <i>Snow date:</i> Feb. 5	10:00 a.m. <i>Skunk Cabbage Walk.</i> Hickory Hollow Natural Area Preserve. Nick Ferriter (leader), <i>weather permitting.</i>
Feb. 17, Thur.	Noon. Wicomico Parish Church (Episcopal) Chapter Meeting— <i>Creating a Butterfly Garden with Native Plants.</i> Denise Greene, Sassafras Farm.
Mar. 17, Thur.	Noon. Wicomico Parish Church (Episcopal) Chapter Meeting— <i>Living Shorelines.</i> Bobbie Burton, Executive Director, Hull Spring Farm
March, TBA	10:00 a.m. <i>Bloodroot Walk.</i> Lucy Martin’s Woods. Lucy Martin (leader).
Apr. 9, Sat.	10:00 a.m. <i>Living Shorelines Walk.</i> Hull Springs Farm. Bobbie Burton (leader).
Apr. 14, Thur.	9:00 a.m. <i>Dragon Run Kayak Trip.</i> Meet at Food Lion parking lot in Saluda. Joan Hattersley (local contact); Teta Kane (leader).

Marie Minor’s Botanical Surveys in Chilton Woods

All VNPS members are welcome to walk with Marie as she botanizes the Doghouse Trail at Chilton Woods State Forest.

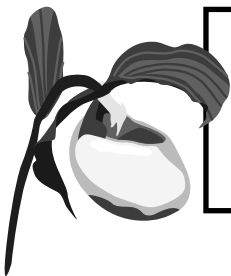
Bring water, bug spray when needed; if you wish, binoculars and camera.

Dates: March 2, 16
April 6, 20
Time: 10:00 a.m.
All rain dates will be on the following Wednesdays.

For information on where to meet, contact Marie at:
(804) 925-5950 or
mfminor@verizon.net

Expect more! Additional outings will be announced to our members via email. Driving directions will be emailed to members in the week before each outing.
For more information, contact:
 Joan Hattersley at hattersley4@gmail.com or (804) 529-5467

Newsletter: three issues annually.
Send ideas, articles, photos, etc.
by March 1st to jlang@riposi.net



Northern Neck Chapter
 Virginia Native Plant Society
 P.O. Box 339
 Ophelia, VA 22530

Note expiration date.
 Please renew as needed if record is correct, or contact us if incorrect.