Early February and, until the 9th, little to no snow. I often wonder how the spring ephemerals don’t freeze when there is no snow cover. Even just a few inches of snow can make a big difference in the perennial garden’s survival rate. I cut evergreen branches and lay them over windswept areas of my gardens to protect the plants from drying winds. We have no control over the wonders of Mother Nature!

I have been dreaming of where I would like to visit to see wildflowers and ferns. I enjoy the many gardens that our Delaware Valley has to offer: Mt Cuba, Chanticleer, and Jenkins, to name a few. I also love trails close to home where I’m surprised by the variety that awaits each turn. Venturing to see plant communities that I’m not familiar with sounds like the perfect vacation.

This year we are planning some familiar and some new areas to visit on our field trip list. We are starting early with a winter walk in Montgomery County. In the plans is a walk to bring a child, grandchild or young neighbor friend to share the joys of wildflowers, ferns and woods. We can make a picnic day of it. Please make plans to enjoy many of our plant walks with our members.

Since we are not displaying at the Philadelphia Flower Show this March, I’m asking members to be involved by helping at various plant sales. We are also asked to help at the Morris Plant Sale, May 4th-7th, since they graciously allow us to meet on their grounds.

Our next meeting is March 18 at Morris Arboretum and our speaker, Przemek Walczak, from Chanticleer’s woodland garden, sounds very interesting. Make plans to attend!

Glad to be of service.

Karen Mohn
March 18 Meeting 10AM
Morris Arboretum, 100 E. Northwestern Ave., Philadelphia
Come early to pay your dues and socialize. Stay late and enjoy the grounds!

Program:

Przemek Walczak, Horticulturist at Chanticleer who maintains the "Bell’s Woodland Garden".

Chanticleer, a pleasure garden in Wayne, PA, has been the garden and craft workshop for Przemek Walczak for 20 years. He has been the horticulturist for the Woodland and Stream Gardens, most recently developing a new garden that takes advantage of a portion of Chanticleer’s native deciduous forest previously left to little intervention. Bell’s Woods is a native plant garden full of wild flowers, ferns and mosses.

The woodland garden’s main path wanders amidst azaleas, foam flowers and ferns. A sculpted bridge resembling a fallen beech tree crosses Bell’s Run Creek where you will find wetland plants including skunk cabbage, rushes and sedges. DVFWS enjoyed a field trip to Chanticleer in 2015 and discovered this newly developed area to be most restful and charming.

A naturalist at heart and a horticulturist by profession, Przemek finds inspiration from nature for his planting design and garden art.

Przemek holds a Masters degree in Economics and Agriculture from Academy of Life Sciences in Warsaw, Poland.

If anyone would like to bring a finger food to share during refreshment time, please contact Mary Carr  610-933-6352 marycarr104@gmail.com
Election of Officers March 18

Farewell to President Karen Mohn
who has served in that position since November 2013. A member since 2010, Karen has come up with many interesting programs, field trips, and innovative ideas. Karen is now going to focus on field trips for the coming year. Thank you for your years of service, Karen.

We will be voting on the following officers at the March 18th meeting. Nominations from the floor will be accepted with permission from your nominee.

President

We are still looking for someone to fill this position.

Michael Brooks, Vice President

DVFWS has not had a VP since 2010. We would like to nominate Michael to this position.

Michael retired as a Professor of English Literature at West Chester University after 39 years. For many years he has photographed wildflowers and ferns and puts the photos in dozens of white binders.

Since his retirement in 2010, he has been an avid Weed Warrior at the Heinz Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, cutting invasive plants. He also takes MOOC science courses online and through the Wagner Free Institute of Science. (Massive Open Online Courses)

Michael and Lois Brooks joined in 2001 because of their interest in wildflowers, but have been educated in fern identification through courses offered by DVFWS and Janet Novak.

Donna Wilhelm, Secretary

Donna has agreed to continue as secretary. She writes, “I was introduced to DVFWS in the late 1990’s by Trudy Fuchs, a tiny, elderly, dynamo DVFWS member who needed help with establishing a fern garden at Awbury Arboretum in Germantown, Philadelphia. From the beginning I was taken by the beauty of the ferns, the academic rigor and enthusiasm of our fern experts and the incredible friendliness and dedication of our members.” Her one term as President (2004-2005) coincided with the 30th Anniversary Celebration. She was VP before that in ‘04 and again in 2010. She has taken the secretary’s notes since 2014.

Alice Blake Simonson, Treasurer

Alice Blake has agreed to continue as treasurer, and what a great asset she is in keeping records on all members past and present.

She tells us about her history with DVFWS, “At the invitation of my good friends (and Charter Members), Henrietta and Ed Adkins, I joined DVFWS in 1980. I immediately was impressed by the caliber and friendliness of the members and the amazing knowledge and patience of the experts among us. The trips, week-long and short term, were not only marvelous learning experiences, but fun, as well.

A year later, the treasurer of the group was transferred to Paris, and I was asked to fill in, as treasurer. Well, that was in 1981, and I'm still the DVFWS treasurer! And still enjoying it.”

It’s a pleasure to welcome Jess Slade as our Morris Arboretum host Horticulturist for DVFWS meetings and Plant Sale activities. She will work with Leslie Morris Smith until she can take over all responsibilities. Jess especially enjoys field trips, so she has joined the Botanical Club of Philadelphia and looks forward to being a member of DVFS.

Jess joined the Morris Arboretum on July 11th as the Natural Areas Horticulturist in the entrance meadow of wildflowers and wetlands, as well as the native woodlands along the Wissahickon Creek and surrounding the Fernery. She spent the past 10 years working in New York, most recently serving as a gardener of the native meadows at Brooklyn Bridge Park, an 85-acre park built on reclaimed piers along the Brooklyn waterfront. Jess was excited about moving to Philadelphia and especially to work in the more natural setting of her area.
Winter Field Trip

Sunday February 26th, 9:30 am

Evansburg State Park, intersection of Ridge Pike and Fern Avenue

Leader: Link Davis

Please reserve: linkmdavis@gmail.com 610-316-0036 mobile

This area of Evansburg State Park is located less than two miles east of Collegeville off Ridge Pike. There is also a Fern Road that intersects with Germantown Pike so make sure you are on Ridge Pike. There is adequate off-road parking at the intersection. It will be an easy walk - mostly on either macadam or gravel. Link took a group there last July and they saw about 75 wildflowers. We will be looking at the remnants - seed heads, loments, siliques, basal rosettes, and capsules of those plants that bloomed earlier in the year. We may find Virginia Mountain Mint, New England Aster, White Vervain, Curly Dock, Broad-Leaved Dock, Virginia Stickseed, Moth Mullein, Common Mullein, Evening Primrose, Yarrow, Teasel, Pokeweeds, Pilewort, Lesser Burdock, Alum-root, American Pennyroyal, Hollow Joe-Pye Weed, Silverrod, Common Mugwort, Annual Wormwood, Tall Rattlesnake Root and others. Trip should last about two hours. Dress for the weather. Come and be invigorated!

Bonus! Return to Tom and Janet Whitefield’s where a warm fire and hot soup will be waiting.

Invigorating walk, a warm fire, and hot soup waiting. What could be better!

Directions: for GPS either use the intersection or coordinates- N 40.169407 W 75.426952

From Schuylkill Expressway or coming from the south on 202, approaching King of Prussia, take 422 west (Pottstown). Exit at Oaks/Audubon. Right on Egypt Rd. Left on Pinetown Rd. Left on Eagleville Rd. for 2 miles, then left onto Ridge Pike. The parking lot is 1 mile on the left at the bottom of the hill. There is a blue sign that says Burdo Sons Quarry.

From the north: 363 south to Ridge Pike in Trooper. Right onto Ridge Pike continue through Eagleville to the parking lot on the left. OR 113 south. Left on 29 in Rahns to a T in Collegeville. Left onto East Main Street then right at the fork ( almost straight) to Ridge Pike. Parking lot will be on your right just after crossing the Skippack Creek.

Directions to Whitefields, 15 minutes away, will be handed out at the hike.

Left to right:
Virginia Mountain Mint, Pycnanthemum virginianum
Common Mullein, Verbascum thapsus
Evening Primrose, Oenothera biennis
2017 Field Trips

Karen Mohn is passing her presidential responsibilities to new leadership this spring, but she would like to continue to organize field trips. At this date, the field trips are a work in progress. Ideas are listed below, but she is still accepting requests and looking for leaders, so that a more complete list can be handed out at our March 18th meeting, please contact Karen papatrees@aol.com

Sat., April 8th-Mt. Cuba, near Wilmington DE
Take an in-depth look at the gardens with an expert Docent, learn about notable native plants, and receive tips on sustainable gardening practices. Tour content will vary as the gardens are dynamic and ever-changing. Participants will take home a native plant. Tours are two hours in length and include walking over rolling terrain and mulched paths. Tickets include admission, so pack a picnic lunch to enjoy in the gardens after your tour has ended. Groups of 10 or more receive a discounted rate of $12 per person. We need a leader to receive reservations and order tickets.

Midweek, late April-Shenks Ferry, Lancaster Co.
This out of the way beauty is a gem. An easy walking trail takes you through a valley of wildflowers following along a beautiful stream bed. A must for spring ephemerals. Weekends in April are so crowded at Shenks Ferry, it is a challenge to park. We need a leader for this midweek hike.

Saturday, July 8th, 10AM, Green Lane Reservoir
Montgomery County
An intergenerational outing. Bring your children, grandchildren, young neighbor. We will take a casual walk on a shady trail along the Green Lane Reservoir. Age appropriate scavenger hunts will be designed for children, which will help us all appreciate the beauty of this park. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy afterwards. The park has boat rentals if you want to extend your stay. Leader: Karen Wolfe, high school biology teacher, former park naturalist, outdoor enthusiast.

Saturday, April 25 Hardy Plant Society
Symposium for Gardeners at Delaware County Community College, Media, PA. Five interesting speakers, lunch, book sale. See the following link for information and registration form: http://www.hardyplant.org/2017-march-into-spring

June 16-20 Waterton Wildflower Festival
Waterton National Park in Alberta, Canada, is adjacent to Glacier National Park in Montana. Ever since Janet and Tom Whitefield presented a program to DVFWS about their week there in 2010, Karen and Brian Mohn have been trying to schedule a trip. This is the year, and they would be pleased if other members from DVFWS would join them. Details of last year's week can be found on https://mywaterton.ca/events/waterton-wildflower-festival-2017. There is a sign up there to be first to receive the 2017 schedule. Transportation and lodging are on your own. Sign up for classes begins in April. Whitefields would be happy to offer suggestions. See wildflowers up close as you hike, or from horseback, cruise, or canoe. Indulge in an afternoon tea with local experts, or learn about wildflower photography and painting. Waterton is a very walkable little town nestled in the mountains and lakes.

Sept. 16 Weekend Foray in Warren County, PA
Elk viewing in the meadows and a beautiful area among house sized boulders. Karen and Brian Mohn,
Welcome New Members

We would like to welcome new members who joined since our last Newsletter. Their names and addresses have been added to the Membership Directory which you are receiving with this e-mailing. Please remember the information in the directory is to be shared only within the Society. The date following your name is the year your dues are due. 2017 dues are payable ASAP.

Pat Coleman 2017  
patcole@mac.com  
26 Blue Ridge Road  
Titusville, NJ 08560  
609-977-9573 mobile

Ann Gallifent 2017  
gardenerann@gmail.com  
1002 Bancroft Place  
Warminster, PA 18974  
215-491-1607

Peggy Kellar 2017  
peggykellar@yahoo.com  
417 Greene Lane  
Phoenixville, PA 19460  
717-413-0698

Ellen moved !

Ellen Wilen 2019  
owelnj@verizon.net  
642 Medford Leas  
Medford, NJ 08055  
609-654-3642

John, Larry, and Joe rejoined after a short hiatus!

John Gyer 2017  
fernhill@voicenet.com  
PO Box 185  
Clarksboro, NJ 08020  
854-472-1233

Larry Klotz 2017  
larry_klotz@hotmail.com  
27 Colonial Court  
Shippensburg, PA 17257  
717-532-8979  
717-377-2678 mobile

Joseph Slane 2019  
Slanejoe73@gmail.com  
770 North 22nd Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19130  
215-634-6332  
267-228-0272 mobile
The purpose of DVFWS shall be to encourage the enjoyment of ferns and wildflowers by cultivating and propagating them in the home and garden; by studying them in their wild habitats, gardens and conservatories; by promoting their conservation and preservation; and by providing a forum for the exchange of information and expertise.

Membership in DVFWS is open to anyone who is interested in ferns and wildflowers. Three general membership meetings are held each year and a number of field trips are scheduled each year to areas rich in botanical interest.

Officers:
President: Karen Mohn
papatrees@aol.com

Secretary: Donna Wilhelm
donnacwilhelm@gmail.com

Treasurer: Alice-Blake Simonson
asbjj28@yahoo.com

The newsletter is published quarterly. Contributions to the newsletter are welcome and may be e-mailed to
delvalfernsoc@gmail.com
or mailed to Janet Whitefield, editor
863 Store Rd.
Harleysville, PA 19438.

Web site: www.dvfws.org
will post the current newsletter in color.

Webmaster: Leslie Morris-Smith
leslm5791@gmail.com

If you see 2016 after your name in the Membership Directory or on your mailing label, please send your dues as soon as possible to the treasurer.

Membership is $10 for individuals or $14 for two members at the same address per year or $28 and $39, respectively for three years. Dues are payable to DVFWS and mailed to: Alice-Blake Simonson
28 Chancery Court
Souderton, PA 18964