



Goldenrod

Delaware Valley Fern and Wildflower Society

NOVEMBER 2018

Fall Meeting November 17

Morris Arboretum. 100 E. Northwestern Ave., Philadelphia
(Chestnut Hill Section)

Gates open at 9:30. Meeting starts at 10 am in the Widener Education Center behind the gift shop at the top of the hill. Attendees at the meeting are not asked to pay admission to Morris Arboretum and are welcome to enjoy the gardens afterwards.

Janet Novak will present an illustrated talk on **Northwestern Newfoundland**. It is a land of high mountains, boreal forests, treeless barrens, and many wetlands. This diversity of the landscape makes for varied and fascinating flora. Northwestern Newfoundland is home to a good number of showy wildflowers, including orchids in exceptional abundance. The region is also home to a few species that grow nowhere else in the world. The talk will cover some of the region's most interesting habitats (including serpentine barrens and limestone barrens) and the plants they host.

This meeting is especially important as we will elect a **new President**.

Leslie Morris Smith with Co-Chairman Rick Reynolds, have coordinated our entrance into the **2019 Philadelphia Flower Show** after a two year hiatus. Bring hardy ferns that you have dug and potted from your gardens to the meeting and they will be forced for the Flower Show. There will be sign ups for hosting spots at the Show with free entrance for the entire day. To that point, your **2019 dues** need to be paid. Please bring your dues to the meeting.

Refreshments needed

If you would like to contribute a finger food for the refreshments for the meeting, please notify Mary Carr. 610-933-6352 or marycarr104@gmail.com
Cheese, crackers, fruit, cookies, cake, donut holes, etc are always welcome.

Coffee and hot water are supplied by Morris Arboretum.

Advance notice appreciated if convenient.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| President's message | 2 |
| Minutes July 21, 2018 | 3 |
| Flower Show | 4-5 |
| Field Trip Reports | 6-8 |
| Member news | 9 |

From President John Scott

This will be my final message as President.

I would like to thank the officers, appointees, and other workers for their splendid work:

VP Michael Brooks for field trips, Alice-Blake Simonson for her many years as treasurer, managing the membership records on index cards, and working with me many years ago to develop a computer database, and often for moral support. Donna Wilhelm has been our recording secretary. Janet Whitefield took over the newsletter from me and has turned it into a first class newsletter. She also, with the help of husband Tom, manages the database, sends out the emails and keeps us all on track for submissions for the newsletter. Janet fulfills several duties of unfilled positions. Leslie Morris Smith took over the web site and redesigned it, and most recently has taken over the chairmanship of the Flower Show Committee. Tom Tomer deserves many thanks for his many years of leadership as Flower Show Chairman and tirelessly seeking a new Flower Show Committee Chair.

As to the November meeting, see the notice of Janet Novak's talk. We will be meeting the usual time in the usual place as noted on page 1.

I am pleased to announce a nominee for president. It is Rick Reynolds. Rick has been the outreach coordinator and seeing to our presence at local plant sales. While we haven't gotten that many new members from this endeavor, we are gaining a good rapport with local vendors and arboretums.

We have no candidate for vice president. Michael may be moving away to be closer to his children. Alice-Blake will continue as treasurer for a year or so as she works with her replacement, which the president can appoint. A few members, often hesitantly, step forward to fill positions. Having been involved in numerous clubs, our problem is not unique. I have been president of the Philadelphia Mineral Club, editor of the Mineralogical Society of Pennsylvania, editor and webmaster of the Delaware Valley Rock Garden Society, and of course editor and webmaster of the DVFWS. I am the last surviving charter member and twice president of our society.

I wish the membership and the Society well as it passes on to the next president. Please consider filling one of the officer, committee, or volunteer positions.

John Scott

Minutes of July 21, 2018 Meeting

The informal summer meeting of DVFWS was held at the home of John and Margaret Scott following a tour of the property and lunch. There were 16 members and 2 guests present.

Flower Show: Leslie Morris Smith has cleared her schedule and is ready to "jump into the fire" as she puts it, to head up the Flower Show for 2019. She has many contacts and ideas for an Educational Display this year. She has enlisted Lynne Cherry formerly of Barnes Arboretum to help her. Rick Reynolds offered to co-chair with her. She will call Ann Vallery at PHS and see if we can still get a space, hopefully a square on the floor and not against the wall since a mural will probably not be feasible this year, since John Albright is sharing his studio with a sculptor. She would like to see a walk through, educating visitors as to fern selection and where they best grow. She will contact Morris Arboretum about educational signage, the Schuylkill Center, and Jenny Rose Carey of PHS for advice. The theme this year is "Flower Power" and all felt that some wildflowers should be included. It was strongly suggested that we not try to force our own, but purchase them from a grower already in bloom. John Gyer was present who enters trillium into the horticulture competition every year. He may be able to force some for us as well.

Plant Sales: Rick Reynolds will contact the Schuylkill Center about having a presence at their September Plant Sale. Also, the Hardy Plant Society Plant Sale at Valley Forge. Rick is custodian of our banner.

New York Chapter of the Fern Society: We have had news that they have disbanded. We have gained one member from them.

DVFWS Presidency: John Scott announced that he will be unable to continue for another term, and asked for a volunteer to be on the nominating committee. No one came forth. He will call Tom Tomer as he thinks he may consent to form a nominating committee. No one volunteered to be President. John does not feel the club can go forth without a president.

Field trips: Next month's field trip along the Perkiomen Creek in Schwenksville was announced. Michael Brooks asked for suggestions for September and October. There is a possibility of touring Villanova University's Arboretum. Tyler Arboretum was also suggested. The Pine Barrens will be put on hold until next year.

Leslie stated that the Barnes Arboretum needs help weeding and planting. John Scott usually goes on Thursday and would like people who are interested in going one or more of the September Thursdays (9/6, 13, 20, and 27th) to call him so that he can present their names in advance for clearance to enter. Leslie has done this in the past with another Society and says it is fun--weed in the morning, take a picnic lunch, tour the arboretum after lunch.

Editor's note: The upcoming merger with St. Joseph's University delayed our work days at Barnes. Stay tuned in the spring.

It was announced that a member wants to give his collection of 500 ferns to someone to be kept intact as a collection and labeled. It was noted that it may be difficult to keep the collection as a whole. John Scott was willing to plant selected ones at Barnes. Tom Maczko was willing to do the same at Chanticleer. Rick Reynolds will go and evaluate the collection and the diversity of habitat needed.

Alice Blake Simonson reported there was \$1969.08 in the treasury and that the 2019 dues will be due at the November meeting. Some people pay for 3 years, others for 1 year. Those needing to pay dues for 2019 will be notified before the meeting by Janet Whitefield, acting membership chair. We have 92 member addresses and have gained 6 new members in 2018.

The meeting was adjourned. Due to the rain, the plant exchange was done in a hurry.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Whitefield, for Donna Wilhelm

Flower Show 2019

The Delaware Valley Fern and Wildflower Society will have an exhibit at the 2019 Philadelphia Flower Show

Leslie Morris-Smith started the process in July with submittals to PHS with support from the executive committee, the previous team members, and a loose committee of folks that volunteered at the summer meeting.

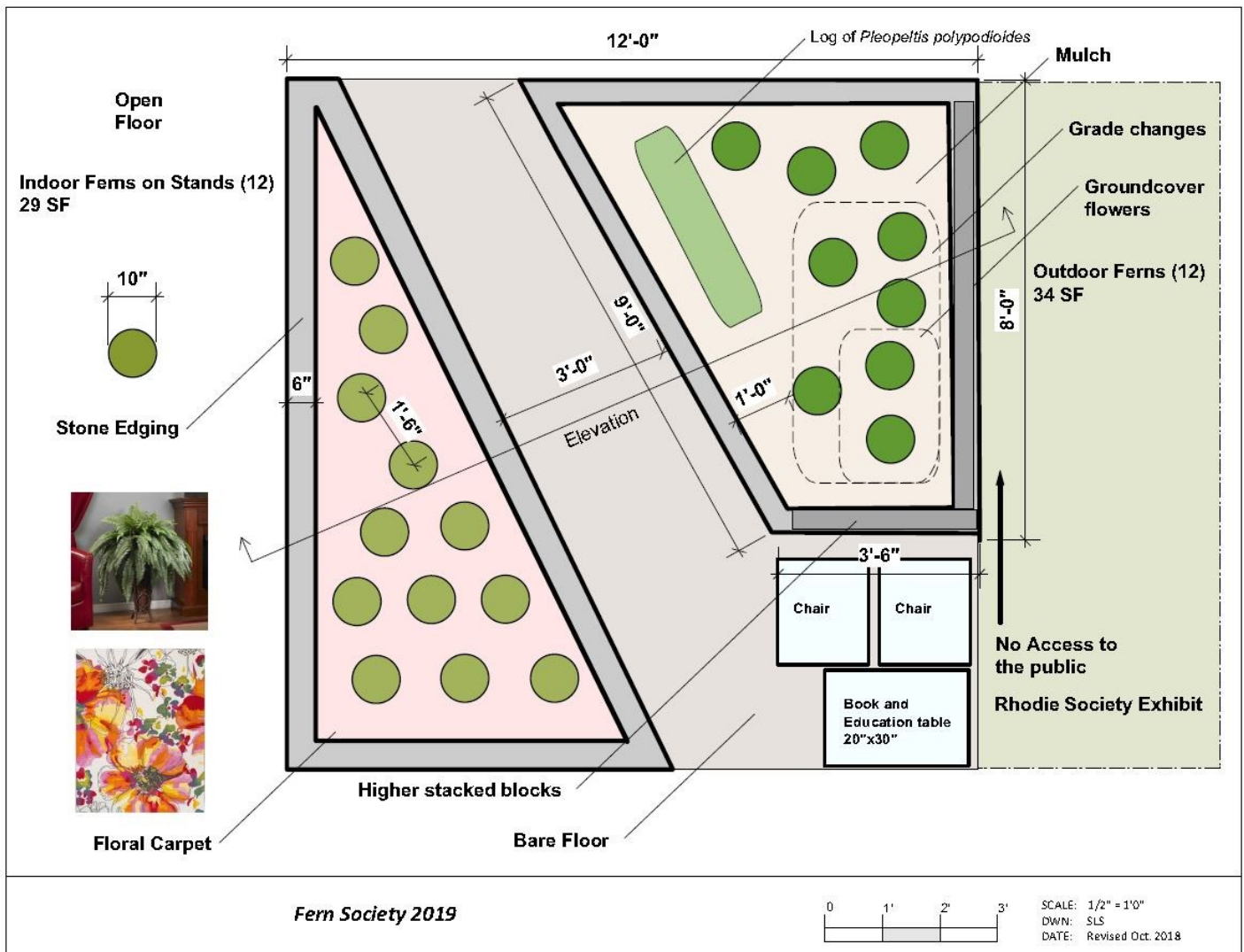
The exhibit, “*The Ins and Outs of Ferns*” will illustrate the placement and use of tropical ferns and hardy ferns.

The indoor side of the exhibit will showcase tropical ferns in colorful pots on Victorian plant stands in a

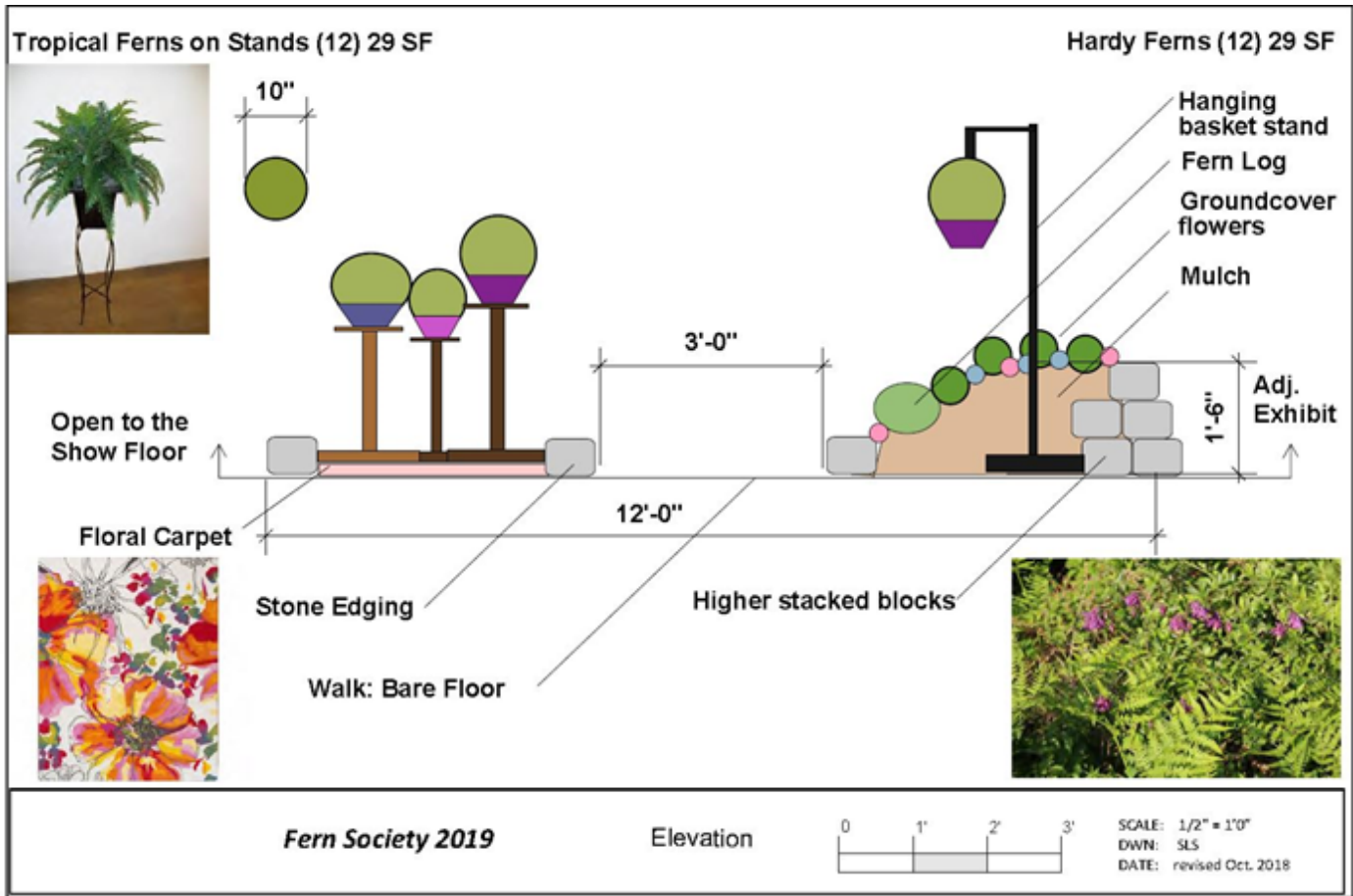
brightly carpeted room. Plant-lovers can walk through the exhibit to see several specimen ferns up close.

The outdoor garden will feature a bed of hardy native ferns among companion plants of heuchera, tierella, and other natives, and will include a sizeable oak log with resurrection ferns (*Pleopeltis Polypodioides*).

On the table will be our two flyers for sale, a binder with sources for buying ferns, and ideas for planting ferns with companion plants in the garden.



(Continued from page 4)



Ground cover plants and a few unusual ferns will be sourced from PHS Meadowbrook Farm & Nursery. Tropical ferns will be forced at a commercial greenhouse in Tennessee. Mulch and stone are provided for us at a nominal cost.

Hardy native ferns are requested from members?

gardens. Please let Rick Reynolds know, RickReynolds5@verizon.net, or bring them to the November 17th meeting, potted and labeled.

The 2019 Philadelphia Flower Show runs from March 1 through March 10. Grab a friend and sign up to sit at the booth in 3 to 4 hour shifts throughout the week.

Sample sign-up

| | Fri, 1st | Sat, 2nd | Sun, 3rd | Mon, 4th | Tues, 5th | Wed, 6th | Thurs, 7th | Fri, 8th | Sat, 9th | Sun, 10th |
|--|---------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | closed | 8:00-11:00 am | 8:00-11:00 am | | | | | | 8:00-11:00 am | 8:00-11:00 am |
| | closed | 11:00-3 pm | 11:00-3 pm | 10:00-2:00 pm | 10:00-2:00 pm | 10:00-2:00 pm | 10:00-2:00 pm | 10:00-2:00 pm | 11:00-3 pm | 11:00-3 pm |
| | 2:00-5:00 pm Leslie | 3:00-6:00 pm | 3:00-6:00 pm | 2:00 - 6:00 pm | 2:00 - 6:00 pm | 2:00 - 6:00 pm | 2:00 - 6:00 pm | 2:00 - 6:00 pm | 3:00-6:00 pm | 3:00-6:00 pm |
| | closed | 6:00-9:00 pm | 6:00-9:00 pm | 6:00-9 pm | 6:00-9 pm | 6:00-9 pm | 6:00-9 pm | 6:00-9 pm | 6:00-9:00 pm | 6:00-9:00 pm |

Rockland Botanical Garden

Mertztown, PA July 21, 2018

Sixteen members gathered at the Rockland Botanical Garden for a guided tour led by John Scott, President of DVFWS. John and Margaret Scott acquired the 13 acre property over 40 years ago. Originally a cornfield, the house sits on 4 acres, surrounded by the garden designed by John. There is a woodland trail of approximately 1 mile weaving through the 9 acre woods.

We started at the front of the house where a circular drive surrounds the front garden. To the right of the driveway John pointed out a magnificent Ginkgo tree surrounded by yews and plum yews. The conifers are laid out in a chronological evolving circle. To the left of these are the arborvitae. Junipers lined the driveway bank. One of the beds had a lovely *Stewartia pseudocamellia*, unfortunately not in bloom, with native geraniums and a very large Jack in the Pulpit.

To the left of the driveway was a lovely wooded area with a variety of conifers planted by John with the large ones in the back and smaller ones to the front, at this point they were all pretty big. A variety of trees were planted here including chamaecyparis, cypress, dawn redwood, cunninghamia, and cryptomeria. Along the road was a huge tulip poplar, which after being cut down, sprouted three large trees. By the road are the cedars and spruces. Under these is the collection of English male ferns and lady ferns interspersed with a variety of hosta and other European ferns. Crossing the circle drive we came upon the firs,



a dwarf white tipped hemlock, larch, psuedolarix and the pines. This is the area of the Asian ferns, including a bed with a lovely display of many forms of painted lady (crested and non-crested) and Japanese upside down fern.

From here we made our way to the back of the house. The yard sloped down to a bank of wildflowers with a

profusion of goldenrod and daylilies. There were black-eyed Susan, many other varieties of the aster family and a showy stand of bergamot. We saw beds of hay scented, Christmas ferns and American Lady Fern. A beautiful study display of northern and southern ferns was laid out in order of the states from Georgia to Maine in which each fern was found. Interspersed with the ferns we saw native pachysandra and royal ferns.

We moved on to the Rock Garden planted with a variety of ferns, including maidenhair, dwarf crested Christmas fern, 'Lady in Red' lady fern, dwarf Spiraea, Ajuga and a raised bed of dwarf hosta.

A light rain had begun to fall and we could not picnic in the garden as planned. We retreated to the house where Margaret, along with their daughter Heather, organized tables and chairs and provided melon, iced tea and lemonade. For dessert Janet had brought her homemade pound cake, fresh berries and whipped cream. Delicious!

Submitted by Jacqueline Mascucchini with additions by John Scott.

Perkiomen Trail at Hollywood Drive

G raterford, PA August 18, 2018

The day dawned hot and steamy, but 18, six from DVFWS and the rest from Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy showed up at 9:30 for a walk with Link Davis. We returned to the site of our winter hike to find what the February remnants look like when in bloom. Due to the extreme rains we had been having, mosquitoes needed to be kept at bay with bug spray which was passed around along with a plant list for the site with a full sheet of plants listed by scientific and common name.

We saw 4 species of nettles, two stinging and two non-stinging. To remember them, Link gave us a mnemonic: **P**eanut **B**utter for *Pilea* and *Bohmeria* for the two genera of non-stinging nettles and **U**nderwriters **L**aboratories for *Urtica* and *Laportea* the two genera that sting. Some of the nettles had very pretty plumes that you might like to have in a dried arrangement, but beware!

We all know that Milkweed has a large umbel of many flowers, but only two or three of those flowers form pods. Common Milkweed - *Asclepias syriaca* had already formed the pods and we learned that there are approximately 226 seeds in each pod. Each seed is connected to a whitish bunch of fluff called pappus. The pappus enables the seed to be caught by the wind and transferred away from the parent plant. Thistles also have pappus, and that is one of the ways to separate two genera of thistles. If an individual piece of fluff has no side-shoots, but is straight like a bristle from a paintbrush, it belongs to the genus *Carduus*. However, if the pappus has side shoots (like a bird's feather) it belongs to the genus

Cirsium.

Not only did we learn about the plants, but a praying mantis hopped on one of our participants, and Link took the insect and showed us that the mantid family are the only insects that can turn their heads to look around. Pennsylvania has several species of mantids. We also noticed whitish trails on the leaves of White Snakeroot. They are made by the larva of a small fly and are often found on the leaves of that plant. We cut open a tiny, green, translucent gall that looked like a small pea on the leaves of *Laportia* to look for the insect inside. That same pen knife came in handy to cut open a berry of Pokeweed—*Phytolacca americana*. Inside the purple/red berry are ten little seeds arranged in a perfect wheel shape. The derivation of *Phytolacca* breaks down to mean "plant" and "red" (perhaps as in the lac bug). The berries were often used as a dye.

Following the hike 9 returned to the nearby home of the Whitefields for a multi-salad luncheon and gallons of iced tea and lemonade.

Submitted by Janet Whitefield and Link Davis

Photo by Link Davis *Urtica dioica* Stinging Nettle



Trees of Villanova University

On Saturday, October 20th four members of the Delaware Fern and Wildflower Society joined members of the Ambler-Keystone Farms and Garden Association for a tour of the Villanova University campus. The campus has a large and extremely impressive collection of trees and gardens. Our guide was Hugh Weldon, the University's Horticultural Supervisor. He showed a loving knowledge of each of the impressive trees that we stopped to examine. Member Rick Ray contributed many interesting horticultural observations during the tour.

“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.”

Chinese proverb

The Tour started with a Burr Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) and included many specimen trees. Doris Fiorentino's personal favorites were the Weeping Beech (*Fagus sylvatica 'Pendula'*), the European Copper Beech (*Fagus sylvatica 'Atropunicea' (Purpurea)*) and the Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*).

Contributions for this report from Michael Brooks, Leslie MorrisSmith, and Doris Fiorentino. Quote taken from Trees of Villanova brochure.

www1.villanova.edu/villanova/sustainability.html



Dawn Redwood,
Metasequoia glyptostroboides

Photo by Doris Fiorentino

Member News

Janice Neven writes:

Sandy G. Bressler passed away 10/19/16 at the age of 67. I don't know any details as we have not communicated in a number of years, the info was in the Philly.com Death Notices.

Even though I haven't been much of an active member (health problems) I enjoy the Newsletters and reading about the trips and outings.

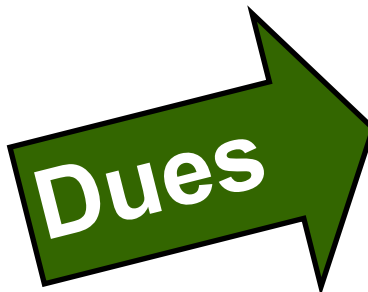
Rick Reynolds writes:

John Scott and I represented DVFWS at the Hardy Plant Society plant sale along with the Rock Garden folks. John brought ferns and wild flowers to give away to new members. I brought some nice ferns donated by Gardner's Landscape Nursery in Chester Springs. One of those ferns was selected for the HPS raffle and received a lot of interest. Unfortunately, we didn't sign up any new members.

At the Schuylkill Center Plant Sale, I thank **Leslie Morris Smith** for taking the lead in coordinating our representation at the sale. Also, thanks to **Michael Brooks** and **Hope Punnett** for volunteering their time on short notice.

Janet and Tom Whitefield have a new e-mail address:
jntwhite863@gmail.com

If you see 2018 after your name in the Membership Directory, please bring your dues to the meeting or mail directly to Alice Blake Simonson.



About DVFWS

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.

Officers

President: John Scott
johndscott302@gmail.com

Vice President: Michael Brooks
Mbrooks@wcupa.edu

Secretary: Donna Wilhelm
donnacwilhelm@gmail.com

Treasurer: Alice-Blake Simonson
asbjj28@yahoo.com

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.

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
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Souderton, PA 18964
215-868-0440

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delvalfernso@gmail.com

or to Janet Whitefield, editor
jntwhite863@gmail.com

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