

Delaware Valley Fern and Wildflower Society

JULY 2019

Summer Meeting July 27

Meadowbrook Farm, 1633 Washington Lane, Jenkintown, was the home of J. Liddon and Alice Pennock on 25 acres in Montgomery County. 10 am gathering time.

Mr. Pennock started planning and tending his garden in 1936 after the completion of their English Cotswolds style home. At his bequest, the home and property were given to PHS in 2004. Mr. Pennock was a florist and a constant figure in floral and horticulture design, often displaying at the Philadelphia Flower Show. Information from <https://meadowbrookfarm.org/plan-your-visit/directions-hours>

Directions: From the PA Turnpike to exit 343 Willow Grove, proceed south on Route 611 through Willow Grove for 2.2 miles, turn left onto Welsh Road (Boston Market will be on your right). Follow Welsh Road/Route 63 for 2.5 miles. At the second traffic light, turn right (St. John's Church is on your left) onto Washington Lane. Go about half of a mile to the driveway on the left. Directions from other starting locations on the web site above.

We will start our visit at 10 am by exploring the display and pollinator gardens and Pennock's more formal garden rooms around the house. The plant shop will be open, featuring the more unusual varieties of begonias, succulents and ferns.

Bring your picnic lunch. We'll have a choice of three venues depending on the weather: outside picnic area; inside one of the green houses (probably too hot); or an air-conditioned meeting space. If it's a pleasant day, outside would be nice. Otherwise, we'll go with the air-conditioned space. A large refrigerator to hold your lunches is available. A short business meeting will follow at our picnic site.



**Milkweed
Asclepias**

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Field Trips

We have a wonderful slate of field trips this year, some local, and some very interesting ones at a distance. Take out your calendars and mark these as priorities now! You will receive a reminder email with directions one week before each field trip.

Sunday, July 14, PINE BARRENS, NJ

On July 14 at 10 am, Mark Szutarski will lead us on a tour of three locations in the New Jersey Pine Barrens. Mark is a life-long resident of the area. He is a volunteer, member, and chairperson of the garden and landscape committee for Whitesbog. He is a member of the Torrey Botanical Society and of the Philadelphia Botanical Club. He has led many field trips into the Pine Barrens for a number of different organizations, and enjoys sharing botanical knowledge with others.

We will start at Pakim Pond in the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest where we are likely to see Curley Grass Fern, Pitcher Plants and other carnivorous plants, and a good selection of wetland plants. We will then go to Webb's Mills where we should see Box Asphodel, Gold Crest and more wetland plants. The next stop will be Warren Grove to see the pine plains. If time permits we can go to the FAA radio tower to see some upland plants.

DIRECTIONS:

Drive across the Benjamin Franklin Bridge and proceed east on Route 70.

Go past the Red Lion Circle.

At the next traffic circle (about ten miles on) turn southeast on Route 72.

Keep your eye on the left for the entrance to the Brendan Byrne State Forest. Turn left.

You will pass the park headquarters and soon see a sign for Pakim Pond.

There is a large parking area at the pond.

Michael Brooks cell phone: 610-952-7048

Mbrooks@wcupa.edu

Saturday, July 27, 10 am SUMMER MEETING at MEADOWBROOK FARM

See details and directions on page 1.

Saturday, August 17, TUCQUAN GLEN

On Saturday, August 17th we will meet at 10 am at Tucquan Glen Nature Preserve in Lancaster County, PA to join David Lauer, leader.

Tucquan Glen is only a few miles south of Shenks Ferry Preserve on the eastern banks of the Susquehanna River south of Lancaster. It is a narrow valley (or glen) conveying Tucquan Creek from the higher ground down to the river via a number of scenic pools and waterfalls. It is also home to some very unusual ferns, including *Asplenium pinnatifidum* and *Asplenium montanum*, as well as an abundance of more common species. Bring the usual: sturdy footwear, lunch, water, repellent, snake bite kit (just kidding!) etc. Pre-registration not required, but it would be helpful, David Lauer, DML1000@comcast.net cell phone: 215-357-2646

Directions to Tucquan Glen Preserve from downtown Lancaster, the town of Gap on route 30 and from Shenks Ferry will be attached to your e-mail reminder in August.



Asplenium pinnatifidum, Lobed spleenwort

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Saturday, August 31, arrive at 9:45 am
LONGWOOD GARDENS MEADOW

Join our president and Longwood Meadow's docent, Rick Reynolds to explore the plants of the expansive meadow.

Longwood Gardens has generously granted free admission to DVFWS members so we may tour the meadow and have access to the gardens after the tour. If you are a Longwood member please use your membership card. If you are not a member of Longwood Gardens, you can pick up your free pass at the Visitor Center, then proceed to the main entrance of the meadow. (Must be a DVFWS member, so join now if you want to go!)

You may contact Rick on his cell phone 610-246-1914 Do NOT contact Longwood Gardens directly. Pre-registration is not required but would be helpful.

RickReynolds5@verizon.net



Following the tour, lunch is available to purchase at the Longwood Café. Picnics are not allowed within the gardens. There is a picnic area maintained by Longwood, but you will need to get in your car and drive there. Re-admission by hand stamp.

If you have not seen the recently redone main fountains, you will want to stay for one of the shows at 1:15, or 3:15.

Longwood Gardens is located on Route 1 near Kennett Square. **<https://longwoodgardens.org/visit/directions-parking>**

Saturday, September 28, 10 am
STONELEIGH

We will revisit Natural Land's Stoneleigh to see the rapid growth/improvements that have occurred since our visit last year. Stoneleigh, the 42 acre former estate of the Haas family, is being developed as a native plant demonstration garden that is open to the public free of charge. We were impressed last year, and will be even more impressed this year!

<https://stoneleighgarden.org/garden/home/>

Address: 1829 East County Line Road, Villanova, PA 19085. Gather in the parking area where we will be met by a staff member from Stoneleigh who will guide us and explain the changes and future goals.

If you would like to adjourn to a local establishment for lunch at the conclusion of the tour, please register in advance with David Lauer, so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

DML1000@comcast.net; 215-357-2646

Directions: Exit I 476 at West Conshohocken and proceed west on Matsonford Road for 1.9 miles. Turn left on County Line Road and proceed for 0.9 miles. The entrance will be on the left.

Save the Date

Saturday, November 16, 10 am
MEETING AT MORRIS ARBORETUM

Program by Jenny Rose Carey

More information in the October Newsletter

Trip Reports

SHENKS FERRY, April 27, 2019

Kendra Schieber, Ken Ogden, Doris Fiorentino, and Michael Brooks made an April 27 pilgrimage to the Shenks Ferry Wildflower Preserve in Lancaster County near the Susquehanna River. The Bluebells were past their prime and the Trilliums were starting to fade but the Columbine were magnificent. Among the other standouts: Saxifrage, Spring Beauties, Wild Geranium, Yellow Ragwort, False Solomon's Seal, Phlox, Showy Orchis, Wild Sarsaparilla, May Apple, Bishop's Cap, and at least four kinds of Violets.

--Michael Brooks



Galearis spectabilis

Showy Orchis

GARDENS TOUR, June 29, 2019 **Goodly Gardens**

In spite of the hot weather, 23 members and friends came out to tour two wonderful gardens in Worcester, Montgomery County. Thom Mrazik's Goodly Gardens is certified by Penn State Extension as a Pollinator Garden and he has additionally won two PHS awards.

Five years ago he moved into a new development and had a clean slate on which to build his garden. He brought favorite plants from his former home, but soon realized, he had a lot of work to do before they could be planted. First a design for the gardens,

taking into consideration the space and view, then digging 11 beds, and then the companion plantings. Every window in his home looks out on a garden. He considered plantings that bloom in succession through spring to fall, and some with winter interest. Being a Master Gardener, he knew that a pollinator garden needed a tree, a shrub, and some annuals along with the perennial pollinator plants and wildflowers in each bed. He uses 3-5 inches of compost as mulch which keep the weeds in tow and he plants in clumps, keeping the plantings densely together. He prunes constantly to allow air circulation in the gardens and uses no pesticides.

Some favorites in bloom were Coreopsis (Route 66, a short variety), Joe Pye, Milkweed (pink and white), Bee Balm, Baptisia with interesting seed pods, Rudbeckia, Yarrow, and the top pollinator from Penn State trials, Mountain Mint. We all came away with an extensive plant list and inspiration to upgrade our gardens.



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Gardens Tour: Peter Wentz Farmstead

Following Goodly Gardens, we drove 2 miles up Route 73 to Peter Wentz Farmstead, 89 acres and a historic home preserved by Montgomery County. In the shady breezeway of the home we sat with docents Donna and Pat and learned a bit of the history of the house and garden. Yes, George Washington really slept there, and worked on his plans before and after the Battle of Germantown. Our focus today was the 4 square garden, but the house is open for visitors and colonial events are often held on the property.

green beans, spinach, chard, beets, Jerusalem artichokes, horseradish, Egyptian onion, and gooseberry. We learned interesting facts about Job's tears which grow on plants that resemble corn. The tiny "tears" are often strung as jewelry or ornamentation.

Following the tour, some opted for a tour of the restored, air-conditioned house, others decided to take their picnic lunches home to air conditioning even though there was a lovely picnic area. We thank Thom, Donna and Pat for giving their Saturday morning to make our Saturday morning so interesting.



Before the Bicentennial, Norristown Garden Club was asked to research and build an authentic 18th century German kitchen garden just behind the house. Today 8 volunteers from Wentz tend the garden, which is traditionally enclosed with a wooden fence. We divided into two groups and toured the plantings. The 18th century garden was the grocery store (produce), the drug store (medicinal), and the flower shop. Companion planting and successive planting are important in the relatively small space. Snips of various plants were given to us to crush, smell, and identify. The mystery plant was Lovage, whose leaves were used as a substitute for the flavor of celery in salads and cooking. Mint and Bee Balm were used to make tea. Flourishing right now were



Monarda, Bee Balm

Flower Show

The Philadelphia Flower Show theme for 2020 is **A Riviera Holiday**.

The Flower Show will emphasize the French Riviera and the Mediterranean climate of Monaco as a central focus of the show.

The climate of the French Riviera (Cote d'Azur), is Mediterranean, with mild, relatively rainy winters and warm sunny summers.

But the cool and moist breezes of the Mediterranean climate are found around the world and will also appear in the Flower Show. Our 2020 exhibit will select a location in the world different from the Riviera.

These are some of the ideas gathered so far for next year, but please let us know your ideas for 2020 and your comments about improvements on 2019. Please respond to Leslie Morris Smith.

leslm5791@gmail.com

REFLECTIONS AND FEEDBACK - 2019 EXHIBIT

We would like to get your input on the best and the worst of 2019, and where we can improve for 2020.

Set-up the day before

Starting at 10 am was too early when hardy deliveries did not arrive until afternoon, and resulted in volunteers waiting around for too long.

Tear-down

By waiting until Monday afternoon, the exhibit was dismantled and driven off the floor in under 2 hours.

Fern disposition

Should the ferns be donated to PHS for resale or given to members, as in years past? Should they be offered for sale at the March meeting? Will the owners of the ferns purchased at last March's silent auction consider

entering them in 2020 display if they are in good condition?

Plant labels

Use of label holders and templates from previous flower shows worked well. More labels will need to be printed and mounted for next year.

Booklets

Our booklets were updated only slightly. We need to further rework the two booklets we sell on how to raise Indoor Tropical Ferns, and Hardy Ferns. Should we continue with the black and white format, or print them in color as other plant societies have done, charging \$5 instead of \$1?

Brochures

Our membership brochures should be reviewed and refreshed with current field trips, meetings and plant sources.

Booth Sitters

Keep it up! We cannot say enough about the amazing support and enthusiasm of you, our DVFWS ambassadors. Supplied with aprons, director's chairs, brochures, and water-filled spray bottles, you displayed our unusual ferns and our gold medals proudly to visitors from morning till closing without flagging. This extra effort made all the difference.

Layout

The asymmetrical walkthrough design put the ferns closer to the visitors and encouraged them to linger and to ask questions. Highlighting the new or more unusual plants sparked visitors to search them out. Splitting the exhibit between indoor and outdoor ferns was seen as a smart way to educate the public. Our response to the visitors' interest in our ferns

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Member News

We have several new members: as a result of our presence at plant sales this spring. Thanks to our members who volunteered to be there to talk to the visitors and promote DVFWS. New members' contact information will be in the Membership Directory attached to this mailing.

Lorraine and Joe
Troiano

Honey Wager

Cindy Masiejczyk



(Flower Show Continued from page 6)

provided a chance for us to make comments, exchange ideas and offer the booklets for sale.

Signage, Press Statement, Intent

While our goal is more members, PHS wants us to be part of the educational component of the show. Would more signage aid in that end? Yes? Help is needed in this area.

Horticulture

We used member fern donations as the heart of our hardy fern exhibit. Our goal will be to collect them in September instead of November.

For tropical ferns we relied on our plant designer to suggest a colorful mix of textures and shades of green. This also included potting, grooming and staging, a huge help during setup, but the growing and transportation costs were higher than expected. This will be revisited in 2020.

Both hardy and tropical ferns were supplemented with new or rarely seen ferns as suggested by our experts.

A workshop will be held in the fall to help all those who are interested in understanding PHS Flower Show procedures.

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: Richard Reynolds
RickReynolds5@verizon.net

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.

The Newsletter is published quarterly. Contributions to the Newsletter are welcome and may be e-mailed to:

delvalfernsoc@gmail.com

or e-mailed to Janet Whitefield, editor
jntwhite863@gmail.com

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:

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