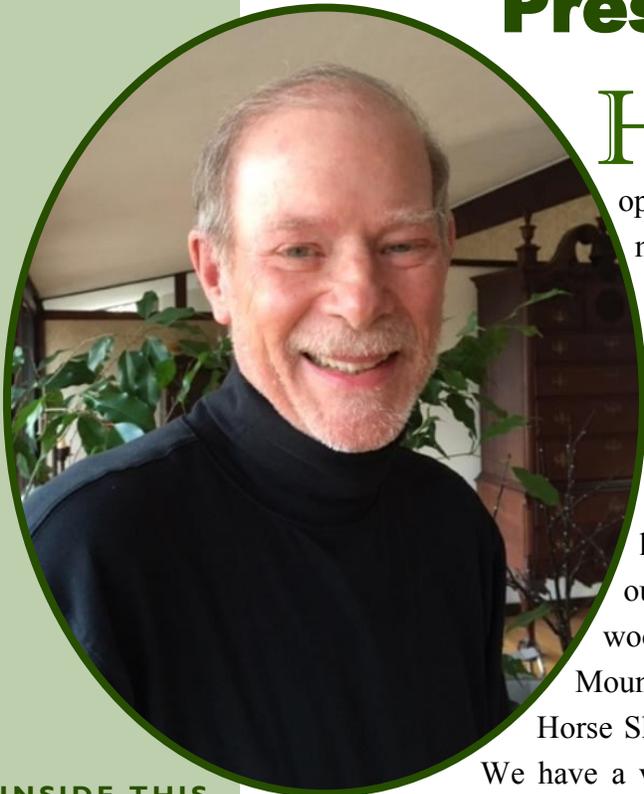


# Delaware Valley Fern and Wildflower Society

FEBRUARY 2019

## President's Message



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Hello everyone and Happy New Year! And, welcome to all new members. This is my first opportunity to introduce myself to the DVFWS membership at-large. I'm truly excited to begin serving this organization as President and hope that my efforts can measure up to those set by John Scott and Karen Mohn.

First off, let me just say that I've gardened for most of my adult life – eight years at our first house located in Drexel Hill and 27 years (and counting) at our Malvern home. Our current property is a 2.3-acre woodland located on the tail-end of Valley Forge Mountain just inside Charlestown Township, with the Horse Shoe Trail just over the border of our property line. We have a very nice mix of hardwoods (beech, birch, maple, tulip poplar and various oaks) with a small mix of understory trees (dogwood, cherry, sassafras and ironwood). So, given the woodland setting, it's understandable that I should have developed some fern-cred, what with the indigenous ferns I inherited: Christmas, Sensitive, Wood, Interrupted, Rattlesnake and Hay-scented. Since a woodland setting means deer browse, ferns are de rigueur in a successful woodland garden. More precisely, ferns, sedges and hellebores are the backbone of my gardens. At the risk of getting overly granular, I also inherited some very cool colonies of moss – in particular, hair-cap and pincushion mosses.

Now, I'd like to share a few real-time observations from the garden.

The first goes to something many of you may be familiar with, that is, the

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oscillating cycle of acorn production. I've been aware of this phenomenon for some time, but the year-over-year change can be rather striking. Last year the acorns fell in abundance – walking in the woods was like walking on ball bearings; this year, nada – not a one. There's definitely a boom-bust cycle that repeats over a variable period. In that sense, oak trees remain a mystery to researchers, in part because they exhibit strange synchronized behavior. Perhaps because of a mix of genetics and climate, trees are able to turn acorn production off and on in nearly perfect rhythm, with no scientific predictability except that it appears to occur every two to seven years.

My second observation pertains to the received wisdom that most ferns are deer-proof. Some of you may already know this, but deer do eat the evergreen fronds of Christmas fern late in the season; they do it every year in my garden. The good news: I get to enjoy the ferns from emergence through early winter, at which point the fronds lay down and the deer go for them. So, it's not a bad proposition. However, this year I noticed a bunch of yearlings(?) eating Hay-scented fern with relish! This was late summer and the fronds were headed for die-back soon anyway, but I was surprised. Maybe the so-called yearlings didn't know any better. On the other hand, Hay-scented fern is aggressive and kind of weedy, so no big deal.

The last item of interest I'd like share actually occurred a couple of years ago. I was in the garden in late spring admiring the almost fully-emerged ferns when I got buzzed by a hummingbird. The hummer proceeded to hover over a Cinnamon fern and methodically pinched the fuzz off of an unfurling fiddlehead. I'd like to think the hummer was putting the finishing touches on its nest.

I look forward to our next meeting this March. Hopefully, we're able to report that our Flower Show exhibit received high honors.

Yours truly,

Rick

# Philadelphia Flower Show

The theme of the 2019 Pennsylvania Horticulture Society Flower Show is **Flower Power**, and the show runs March 2-10 at the PA Convention Center in Philadelphia. Should be a beautiful one!

Delaware Valley Fern and Wildflower Society's display:

**The Ins and Outs of Ferns; Choosing Your Fronds with Care** will showcase a shady, native fern garden, outside a colorful room filled with tropical ferns. Our exhibit will teach people ways to combine native plants and ground covers in a shady, moist fern garden. Indoors, familiar and unusual ferns will set the cozy scene.

Unusual hardy ferns will include an oak log with resurrection ferns from Tennessee and a fern for dry, sunny rock gardens. Familiar and unusual ferns will include the new *X Phlebosia* 'Nicholas Diamond' a hybrid fern which was just introduced in June 2018, and an *Asplenium antiquum* 'Leslie', a curly bird's nest fern.

We are grateful for the nine volunteers who have volunteered for set-up or tear-down. You are welcome to join us February 28th and March 11th. 28 Booth sitters have volunteered so far. Contact Leslie Morris Smith [LESLM5791@gmail.com](mailto:LESLM5791@gmail.com) for a shift if you can help.

The Booth Sitters will watch the exhibit, sign up new members, and sell our booklets during 3 or 4 hour shifts. Booklet sales on "How to Grow Ferns" is our largest fund raiser.

Free Flower Show tickets are a privilege of membership, but also our largest source of new members when we engage visitors in conversation and show them upcoming trips and programs in the brochure handout. Your tickets allow entry at 9 am before the general public; you could see the miniatures without the crowds! You can leave and re-enter with a hand stamp all day. Trains run below the PA Convention Center and allow indoor access to the show.

## Where could you volunteer some help?

Contact Leslie Morris-Smith or Rick Reynolds

We need booth sitters at the show: **IT'S FUN!**

8-11 slot on March 2 and 9

10-2 slot on March 7 and 8

11-3 slot on March 2 and 9

2-6 slot on March 4, 5 and 7

3-6 slot on March 2, 3 and 10

6-9:30 slot on March 3, 7, and 9

Contact Leslie at: [LESLM5791@gmail.com](mailto:LESLM5791@gmail.com)

or 215-805-2591

# Next meeting, March 23, 2019

**Saturday, March 23** - Join us for the Spring meeting to hear a speaker (to be announced in your reminder e-mail and on our web site.) We will also have a recap from the Philadelphia Flower Show. The tropical ferns and plant stands from the Flower Show will be on sale at the meeting.

Meet at Morris Arboretum, 100 E Northwestern Ave, Philadelphia, PA (in the Chestnut Hill area).

**The meeting this time will be across the street from our usual entrance, in the Magnolia Room at Bloomfield Farm.** Doors open at 9:30 AM, the program will begin at 10:00 AM, followed by a break for refreshments, and then a brief business meeting. You are welcome to see the gardens afterwards.

Hope to see you all there!

## Refreshments needed

If you would like to contribute a finger food for the refreshments at the meeting, please notify Mary Carr. 610-933-6352 or [marycarr104@gmail.com](mailto: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.

## Field Trips

**F**ield trips this year are being coordinated by our vice president, Michael Brooks. If you have suggestions or would like to lead a field trip, please contact Michael at 610-293-0693 (cell) or [Mbrooks@wcupa.edu](mailto:Mbrooks@wcupa.edu)

**Events begin at 10 am** at the site unless otherwise noted. Pine Barrens and a private pollinator garden are in the works for the spring. The first event will be **Shenks Ferry Wildflower Preserve April 27, 2019.**

Shenks Ferry is a premier spot for spring wildflowers near Conestoga, southern Lancaster County. If you have never been, it is a must see. Many of us enjoy going every year! The trail is easy walking above a beautiful creek. The road in, however, is rough and the parking is minimal. We will meet at the Conestoga Wagon Restaurant in Conestoga at 10 am. Some may want to arrive early for coffee and pie. We will then car pool to the site. Bring a lunch or eat at Conestoga Wagon after the walk. If using a GPS, put in the town of Conestoga, NOT Shenks Ferry. Detailed directions will be sent in the reminder e-mail a week before the trip. No charge.

For reservations contact Michael Brooks at 610-293-0693 or [mbrooks@wcupa.edu](mailto:mbrooks@wcupa.edu)



# Minutes from November 17, 2018

John Scott, President, opened this meeting 10 am at Morris Arboretum by presenting the Nominating Committee's slate for the Society's officers for the next term, This slate was accepted by acclamation.

President – Rick Reynolds

Vice President - position open, volunteer needed to plan field trips

Secretary - Donna Wilhelm

Treasurer – Alice Blake Simonson

Minutes from the July, 18, 2018 summer meeting were approved as printed in the November 2018 newsletter.

Treasurer Alice Blake Simonson's Report for the DVFWS checking account:

Opening balance 11/17 (from closing balance last report 3/17/18)	\$1726.96
Deposits: Dues, and Pennsylvania Horticulture Society stipend	\$1147.00
Distributions: newsletter, memorial donation (John DeMarrais Morris Arboretum room donation	\$254.52
Closing balance 11/17/2018	\$2619.44

Tom Tomer thanked John Scott for his good work in guiding the society through the last several years.

John Scott thanked the following committee chairs for their work in the past year:

Newsletter: Janet Whitefield

Website: Leslie Morris Smith

Welcoming Committee: Janet Whitefield

Hospitality: Mary Carr (refreshments), Morris Arboretum (coffee and tea)

Outreach: Rick Reynolds and John Scott, with our banner, attended the Hardy Plant Society Plant Sale. At the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education (SCEE) Hope Punnett and Michael Brooks staffed the DVFWS membership table, while helping shoppers choose which natives would work best in their wet or dry garden area.

Publicity: a volunteer is needed for this new committee to publicize dates and places of our meetings and activities in area radio and newspapers.

Janet Whitefield introduced new members: Sally Gendler, Robb Kerr, Don Nigroni, and visitors Pszemek Valchek and Anne Pavelka. Anne then joined at the end of the meeting.

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The business meeting recessed for a short refreshment break, followed by a report from Flower Show co-chair Rick Reynolds, in absence of his co-chair, Leslie Morris Smith. DVFWS has secured a square exhibit space on the Convention Center floor, for display of 12 species each of tropical and native ferns, with educational materials. Rick requested donations of native ferns be given to him for forcing at Meadowbrook Farm which will then deliver them to the Convention Center for the Flower Show. He also asked volunteers to sign up for set up, exhibit sitting, and clean up and to loan plant stands for the Flower Show which runs from March 2 - 10, 2019.

At the conclusion of the business meeting, our member Janet Novak presented a program, Newfoundland Plants: Botany at the Edge of North America. She showed extraordinary photographs of multitudes of mid-July wildflowers and ferns in forests, ponds, marshes, fens, bogs, fields, beaches, a serpentine barren and road sides of this island in the most northeasterly part of North America. At the beginning of her presentation she expressed hopes of convincing audience members to travel to see Newfoundland's unique native flora and terrain. This viewer would like to do so.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna Wilhelm, secretary

### ***Editor's note, Follow up to minutes:***

#### **Flower Show:**

Our thanks go out to four people who donated 28 plants for forcing, John Gyer, Tom Maczko, Rick Reynolds and Leslie Morris-Smith, reducing our order of native ferns by half.

Several wood ferns were donated by Rick and Tom, including Tom's *Dryopteris australis* Hybrid: D. cesla x D. ludoviciana. Meadowbrook Gardens could not locate royal ferns or maidenhair ferns for us, but John, Rick, and Leslie donated four *Adiantum pedatum* and two *Osmunda regalis*.

#### **Outreach:**

We've been invited back to Schuylkill Center to staff a table at their upcoming 2019 Native Plant Festival May 3-5 and May 11. We can also help the shoppers in two hour shifts with selections or with writing up the checkout receipt for payment elsewhere to the cashier.

There is also Collins Wholesale Native Plant Nursery where Leslie Morris Smith had a table that snagged 14 people interested in hearing more about a garden club for native plant fiends. Collins, owner and nursery head has said that DVFWS could have a table one or both weekends in May and in September 11-2 pm. Audubon and the local EAC are the other tables, which are right along the walkway to the nursery in the shady woods.

It was suggested that perhaps we could ask Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy to have a DVFWS promotion table at their Native Plant Sale.

# Member News

## 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.*

**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**  
**215-868-0440**

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

[delvalfernsoc@gmail.com](mailto:delvalfernsoc@gmail.com)

*or to Janet Whitefield, editor*  
**jntwhite863@gmail.com**

**Web site:** [www.dvfws.org](http://www.dvfws.org)  
*will post the current newsletter in color.*

**Webmaster:** Leslie Morris-Smith  
**leslm5791@gmail.com**

### New Members:

**Kerr, Robb** 2021  
 ruser1234567@gmail.com  
 204 Stull Rd.  
 Ridley Park, PA 19078  
 610-521-5381  
 610-513-9019 mobile

**Gendler, Sally** 2019  
 ssgendler@msn.com  
 9489 Meadowbrook Ave.  
 Philadelphia, PA 19118  
 215-514-7299 mobile

**Pavelka, Anne** 2019  
 apavelka59@comcast.net  
 9 Tudor Court  
 Marlton, NJ 08053  
 609-865-1134 mobile

**Bauer, Robert and Dorothy**  
 2019  
 dorothybauer@yahoo.com  
 649 Roxborough Ave.  
 Philadelphia, PA 19128  
 510-260-6603

### New addresses:

**Davis, Link** 2019  
 linkmdavis@gmail.com  
 2461 East High Street G-11  
 Pottstown, PA 19464  
 610-316-0036 - mobile

**Heck, Otto & Kit** 2021  
 Independence Manor Rm 111  
 (Kit)  
 Hunterdon Care Center (Otto)  
 1 Leisure Court  
 Flemington, NJ 08822  
 908-788-4893

**Hoess, Chris**  
 choess@stwing.org  
 61 Capano Dr. Apt 6 C 1  
 Newark, DE 19702  
 267-918-6803



**John Moyer** added **Janet** to his membership

**Valarie Schwarz** new phone numbers  
 610-867-5715  
 215-490-3189 mobile

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Harleysville, PA 19438