



In keeping with this year's Board of Governors meeting *The Potomac, Our History – Our Future*, hosted by The Hunting Creek Garden Club, the GCV Horticulture Committee would like to focus our horticulture exhibit on improving the health of our state's waterways and the importance of riparian buffers in that effort.

According to Joe Coleman's article for the Loudon Wildlife Conservancy "Riparian buffers are the single most effective means of protecting water resources. Streams guarded by a healthy forested riparian buffer run far cleaner and cooler and are more stable than a stream without any kind of buffer. Riparian buffers are the strips of grass, shrubs, and, ideally, trees and shrubs along the banks of rivers and streams. They serve as a buffer between our uses of the land nearby and the water itself, and are the last line of defense for water quality. They filter nutrients and other pollutants, lower water temperature and improve aquatic habitat, stabilize stream banks, and enhance the area for recreation and wildlife."*

For your Horticulture exhibit, please research examples of shrubs or trees that could work as part of a riparian buffer in your area's streams or rivers. Then select one to three cuttings or seedlings to be displayed in plain green glass bottles in a space not to exceed a 12" square area with no height restriction. On a 5 x 7" index card please list the botanical and common name of each

plant selection, their growing conditions, and how these plants contribute as a riparian buffer.

Your horticulture exhibit will be displayed at Hilton Alexandria Old Town at [1767 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314](https://www.hilton.com/en/locations/alexandria-old-town/) where the Board of Governors meeting will take place. Please have your exhibit in place before the business meeting begins on October 16. Members of the host club will direct you to the exact location of the exhibit placement.

Please consider the following websites for more information on riparian buffers and their benefits to the various watersheds in Virginia:

<http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/document/riparian-nat-plants.pdf>

The Potomac Conservancy <https://potomac.org/>

The James River Association <https://jrava.org/>

Piedmont Environmental Council <https://www.pecva.org/our-mission/clean-air-and-water/626-riparian-buffers-the-very-best-protection>

***Riparian Buffers - The Very Best Protection by Joe Coleman Vol. 12, Habitat Herald, Fall 2007, Loudon Wildlife Conservancy**