

Native News

Newsletter of the Maryland Native Plant Society

January/February 2010

Volume 10 Number 1

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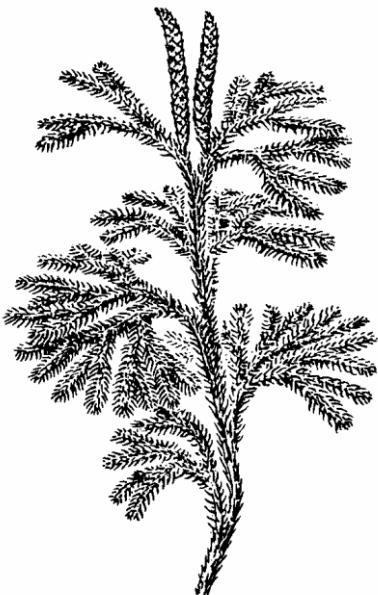
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"Wildflower in Focus" is pausing for deep winter and will return in the next (March-April) issue.



Lycopodium obscurum
Ground Pine or Tree Clubmoss

Upcoming Monthly Meetings

"Rare and Uncommon Native Plants of Maryland's Piedmont"

Tuesday, January 26, 7:30 pm
White Oak Library – Large Meeting Room

Join Cris Fleming, field botanist, USDA Graduate School plant ID instructor, and MNPS board member, for a presentation on rare and uncommon native plants of Maryland's piedmont region. Cris has surveyed sections of the fall line and piedmont in Harford, Baltimore, and Montgomery Counties while working for the Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Program, and has extensively surveyed the Potomac Gorge section of Montgomery County's piedmont as a contractor for the National Park Service. Copies of Cris' paper on the occurrence of rare and uncommon plants in Maryland's piedmont, based, in part, on her field work, will also be available.

"Threatened Lands in Maryland and What MNPS is Doing to Protect Them"

Tuesday, February 23, 7:30 pm
White Oak Library – Large Meeting Room

Join MNPS for a presentation on significant lands in Maryland that are currently threatened by development, roadway expansion, land-use policies, etc., and what the society is doing to protect them. Unique natural features, native plants, including rare species, forests, and water resources will be highlighted. This will be a great opportunity to find out more about land conservation in the state and what contributions one can make. We will have several guest speakers on hand to help cover areas from the Delmarva to Garrett County.

Directions: Exit the Washington Beltway at New Hampshire Ave (exit 28). Go north about 2 miles. The library is the first building on the right, once you have passed under Route 29, just after the Sears store.

Native News

MNPS Announcements

Native News Would Love to Hear From You!

Have you had a memorable time on a MNPS field trip recently? Discovered a new book about native wildflowers? Enjoyed a woodland walk? The *Native News* would love to hear from you! We invite MNPS members to submit short articles and photographs to the *Native News* for publication. Essays about field trip experiences and book reviews are welcome! Please send your submissions to Melanie Choukas-Bradley at choukas@erols.com or 7100 Oakridge Ave, Chevy Chase, MD 20815 and put "Native News" in the subject heading of your email. Be sure to give us your name, phone number, and mailing address. Articles may need to be edited for space. We hope to hear from you!

Not receiving our monthly emails?

Lately, member emails have been bounced back from the monthly email, especially Yahoo, Comcast, and Verizon accounts. Check your spam folders and make sure that mnps@chesapeake.net is in your address book or list of approved emails. You can also send an email to mnps@chesapeake.net to verify that we have your correct email address.

Do you know when your membership expires?

To tell when your membership expires, (and what type of membership you have) take a look at your mailing label. For example, if your label reads 1/1/2010 your membership expires at the end of January. If it's time to renew, please use the form on the back of this newsletter or download one from the website. Mail your dues to MNPS Membership, PO Box 4877, Silver Spring, MD 20914. If your label does not include a date (example E-54) you are receiving a newsletter as part of our exchange program with other native plant (and similar) societies. Memberships or donations to support this service are appreciated.

Native Plant Professionals

One of the Society's many services is providing a list, available on the website, of our current members who have told us that they are native plant professionals. This list is different than the list of nurseries found on the website, since it includes professional gardeners and landscapers as well as native plant propagators and suppliers. If you wish to receive a copy of this list, or if you wish to be included on the list, please contact Karyn Molines, kmolines@chesapeake.net or 410-286-2928.

The Maryland Native Plant Society's mission is to promote awareness, appreciation, and conservation of Maryland's native plants and their habitats. We pursue our mission through education, research, advocacy, and service activities.

Chapter Events and Updates

Eastern Shore Chapter

The Eastern Shore Chapter will hold a planning meeting in Easton in the near future. If you would like to make sure that we have some exciting field trips and great speakers lined up for the coming year, please email Leslie Hunter-Cario with some dates and times you'll be available: horticulture@wetland.org.

General Announcements

Ongoing Moss Study Group

We're a mix of beginners and advanced beginners, and we take our time looking closely at a moss or two each meeting. Led by Charlie and Linda Davis and sponsored by the Natural History Society of Maryland, we meet from 10:00 am until noon on the last Saturday of the month (January 30, February 27, March 27, April 24, May 29, and June 26).

Location: Benjamin Banneker Historical Park and Museum, 300 Oella Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21128 **For a map:** <http://tinyurl.com/6h6dvh> **Bring:** Any moss books, hand lenses, and microscopes that you can. If you have a local specimen you'd like the class to look at, bring that, too. **Contact:** Linda lm.davis@verizon.net or 410-252-4154.

"Plants of Maryland" Course to be taught at McDaniel College Next Spring

The Maryland Native Plant Society has received word of a fascinating course that will be taught in the spring by Dr. Brett A. McMillan at McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland. Dr. McMillan: "I am a relatively new assistant professor of biology at McDaniel College and I teach botany and ecology. I'm writing to let you know about a graduate level course I will be teaching in the spring that I think would be a good continuing ed. opportunity for teachers or anyone interested in plant ID. The course is BIO 566: Plants of Maryland. The course is taught almost entirely outdoors and involves learning to identify trees and other plants. In addition to classic field botany, I will also teach the most recent findings and revisions to plant classification. I make sure to include anecdotes, etymologies and other trivia to make the course fun and accessible to those who don't have a strong biology or botany background—Language Arts and Art teachers have taken the course and enjoyed it. I also include instruction in maintaining my wiki-based field guide and tips on using wikis for course projects. The class will meet on 8 or 9 Saturdays from March 6th through May 8th. I believe you would have to be registered for the course by Jan. 26th. This is my favorite course to teach and it is always well-received." To register for the course contact:

Brett A. McMillan, PhD, Assistant Professor of Biology
McDaniel College, 2 College Hill, Westminster, MD 21157
410-871-3120
bamcmillan@gmail.com

Winter Field Trips

Unless otherwise indicated, MNPS field trips are generally geared to adults. Please see the information provided for individual field trips, some of which may welcome children. If you have questions, feel free to contact the field trip leader.

Civil War Fort Sites in the Washington, D.C. Region (87th in Series) – Fort Slocum

Leaders: Mary Pat Rowan and Lou Aronica

Date: Sunday, January 3 **Time:** 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

We will return to FORT SLOCUM, where we haven't been in a long time, to explore a Terrace Gravel forest in the central part of Washington, D.C.

Directions: Take Military Road NW in Washington, D.C. east to where it becomes Missouri Ave NW (after Georgia Ave NW), travel a few blocks and turn left onto Kansas Ave. Travel north for a few blocks and park on Kansas across from the park at the intersection with Nicholson Street NW.

Bring: Water and lunch. **Note:** Easy to moderate walk. A light drizzle or snow is fine but cancelled if pouring rain.

Contact: Mary Pat Rowan blair-rowan@starpower.net or 202-526-8821.

Civil War Fort Sites in the Washington, D.C. Region (88th in Series) – Bald Eagle Hill and Oxon Run

Leaders: Mary Pat Rowan and Lou Aronica

Date: Sunday, February 7 **Time:** 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

We will return to **Bald Eagle Hill**, located at the extreme southeastern edge of the District of Columbia. Bald Eagle Hill is not a Civil War Fort but is part of the preserved corridor that connects the Fort Circle to Oxon Cove. This site includes both upland forest and streamside vegetation. We will mostly explore along Oxon Run because there are plans to do some restoration work on Oxon Run in the city.

Directions: From the north, take the Anacostia Freeway (I-95) south to the South Capital Street exit. Proceed about one mile to First Street SE and turn right (just after Galveston St). Soon after, make a right onto Joliet Street. Proceed up the hill about 2 blocks and park on the street in front of the Bald Eagle Recreation Center.

Bring: Water and lunch. **Note:** Easy to moderate walk. Cancelled if raining; call to check.

Contact: Mary Pat Rowan blair-rowan@starpower.net or 202-526-8821.

Civil War Fort Sites in the Washington, D.C. Region (89th in Series) – Fort Stanton

Leaders: Mary Pat Rowan and Lou Aronica

Date: Sunday, March 7 **Time:** 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

We will return again to **Fort Stanton** (we were rained out the last time).

Directions: In Southeast Washington, D.C., get onto Martin Luther King Blvd SE traveling south and take Morris Road east. Go 5 or 6 blocks to where the road curves north and changes name to Erie Street. Go 5 blocks and turn right onto 18th Place (a block after 18th St) and park on street alongside park and Anacostia Museum.

Bring: Water and lunch. **Note:** Easy to moderate walk. Cancelled if raining; call to check.

Contact: Mary Pat Rowan blair-rowan@starpower.net or 202-526-8821.

Nature Hike to Greet New Spring in Cheverly, Prince George's County

Leader: Matt T. Salo

Date: Sunday, April 11 **Time:** 10:00 am – 12:00 noon

The PG/AA Chapter has organized a generic nature hike in Euclid Woods in Cheverly to celebrate the arrival of new vegetation and birds back from their wintering lands. We will examine the rich tree and shrub diversity of the area, including some unique flora, and survey the amazing revitalization of a restored area formerly overrun with invasive plants. This green oasis in otherwise urbanized area demonstrates that even the so-called developed tier can have rich biota and thrive if properly safeguarded and maintained. In focusing on ecosystem interactions there is something for everyone to see from stream ecology to unique microhabitats such as the "red desert" with pine barren type terrain.

Children over ten welcome. Animal tracking tips for those interested.

Directions: Approach Cheverly from either south or north on B-W Parkway; take the exit for Cheverly onto Rte 202 (Landover Rd), head east a few hundred feet and turn right onto Cheverly Ave heading south. Continue for six blocks to Forest Rd, opposite a small park on your left. Turn right and continue three blocks until the road splits; stay to the right and continue straight ahead on Greenleaf Rd until you reach a dead end. Park anywhere on street and meet the group at the end of the road.

Bring: Sturdy footwear and jeans recommended; field guides for birds, trees, and spring flora; cameras, and binoculars for birds are optional.

Note: Easy walking in fairly flat terrain, some wet spots possible if there have been recent rains; in that case wear appropriate footwear. May be cancelled for heavy rain and rescheduled for Sunday, April 18 at same hours.

Contact: mtsalo1@gmail.com or 301-341-1261.

Native News Deadlines:

Jan 25	March/April Early Spring Issue
March 25	May/June Late Spring Issue
May 25	July/August Summer Issue
July 25	September/October Early Autumn Issue
Sept 25	November/December Late Autumn/Holidays Issue
Nov 25	January/February Winter Issue

Next Mailing Party Date (White Oak Library):
Tuesday, February 23 at 7:00 pm

MNPS in the News

November 23, 2009. *The Baltimore Sun* reported on a public meeting concerning Baltimore County's plans to upgrade Robert E. Lee Memorial Park. The article quotes MNPS member Dwight Johnson's request that "the serpentine area of the park be made off limits to dogs and bikes because of the fragility of several rare plants and the presence of century-old trees." The serpentine area of this park, like that of Soldier's Delight, hosts a rare plant community including Fame Flower, *Talinum teretifolium*. The park, long neglected under Baltimore City ownership, has recently been transferred to the County, which has ambitious plans for state-funded restoration and improvements.

December 2, 2009. MNPS Board member Marney Bruce was pictured in the *Washington Post* planting a rain garden at a Habit for Humanity townhouse development in Northeast Washington. The project was organized by the Audubon Naturalist Society.

November 18, 2009. The *Current Newspapers* of Washington, D.C. published a Viewpoint article by MNPS President Kirsten Johnson and D.C. Chapter Chair Mary Pat Rowan on the value of urban national parks.

*As published in, The Current Newspapers
(Dupont, Northwest, Georgetown, and Foggy Bottom)
November 18, 2009*

Agency should protect urban wild spots

VIEWPOINT

KIRSTEN JOHNSON AND MARY PAT ROWAN

The recent confirmation of Jon Jarvis as the new director of the National Park Service provides an opportunity to reflect on the value of our national parks and their place in our increasingly congested world. When most of us think of national parks, the great beauty queens like Yellowstone and Yosemite spring to mind. We are less conscious of the value of national parks in urban areas, and especially in the District of Columbia.

Mr. Jarvis will find, however, that urban national parks can be some of his strongest ambassadors. Based on National Park Service statistics, about 30 percent of all visits to national parks are to those in urban areas, many of which are accessible by public transportation. (This estimate does not include monuments and other sites managed by the Park Service solely for cultural or historical reasons rather than for their natural beauty.) These urban enclaves afford unparalleled access to natural landscapes, provide habitat for birds and other wildlife, and act as invitations to the other more dramatic but less accessible national parks.

Here in the District, we are blessed with a number of national park sites, including the much-loved Rock Creek Park, but also the less well-known and equally lovely Fort Circle Parks. Located mostly east of the Anacostia River, the

Fort Circle Parks contain remnants of the timber and earthen fortifications that surrounded and protected the city during the Civil War. These forts were built all around the city on high ground — areas that we now value as geologically significant "terrace-gravel" forests — that supports a unique community of plants and animals. This collection of forts encircling the city catalyzed one of the first urban planning efforts for public recreation when the McMillan Plan of 1902 recognized their potential and called for their preservation.

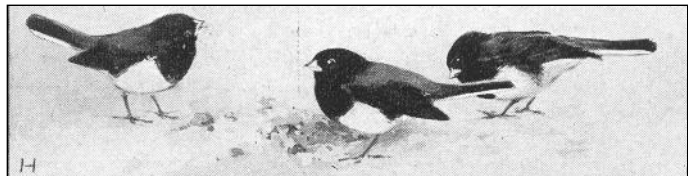
It is a fortunate accident of history that the Fort Circle Parks have remained so undisturbed and well preserved for a century and a half. Because land east of the Anacostia has been perceived as less valuable, it has not been subject to the same development pressures as the rest of the city. But the happy result of Civil War history is that the District now has high quality natural areas within its borders that include mature native hardwood forests and a diversity of native plants, birds and animals.

This richness is very unusual in an urban setting. Bald eagles nest on Shepherd Parkway. Washington's parks provide resting areas for migratory birds along the Atlantic flyway. And parks like Fort Dupont contain still-valuable, high-quality plant communities that are lost elsewhere even though once they covered thousands of square miles along the East Coast. How many realize that blueberries and lady's slippers can be found growing naturally within the District?

Neighborhoods east of the Anacostia are now getting some of the attention from developers and city planners that they have long deserved. In that process, we must not discard the valuable open spaces and natural areas that have been preserved for decades by the quiet and conscientious efforts of the National Park Service. Unfortunately, the Park Service frequently receives pressure from the D.C. government, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and others to transfer these small urban parks out of the national park system to serve immediate development interests. Recent attempts to gnaw away at national parkland have involved Anacostia National Park (Poplar Point), Shepherd Parkway, Oxon Run and Fort Dupont Park. These development projects may seem to be quite worthy, but there is always an alternative site for a construction. Once destroyed by development, the District's natural landscapes will be gone forever.

As conservator of our natural heritage, the National Park Service should zealously protect these urban parks and should keep them "forever wild." Mr. Jarvis will earn the gratitude of the city and the country by energetically defending national parks in urban areas.

Kirsten Johnson is president of the Maryland Native Plant Society Inc., and Mary Pat Rowan is chair of the group's Washington, D.C. chapter.





Maryland Native Plant Society
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Please indicate the name of your business and what type of business it is:

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Please make checks payable to the Maryland Native Plant Society and mail to:
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The Maryland Native Plant Society is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible. V10N1J/F10

Membership Dues:

- Individual: \$25.00/year
- Double: \$35.00/year
- Student/limited income: \$15.00/year
- Lifetime: \$250.00
- Organization: \$50.00/year

Additional Donation _____

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