

Native News

Newsletter of the Maryland Native Plant Society

January/February 2009

Volume 9 Number 1

Inside This Issue:

President's Letter
Page 2

~

MNPS Contacts
Page 2

~

Winter Field Trips
Page 3

~

Baltimore Chapter Meeting
Page 3

~

Pennsylvania Trip Report
Page 3

Upcoming Monthly Meetings

“Winter Fruits, Berries, Seeds, and Pods”

Tuesday, January 27, 7:30 pm
White Oak Library – Large Meeting Room

Native trees, shrubs, and forbs provide an abundance of fruits, berries, and seeds that support a wide variety of wildlife throughout the winter months. Botany Committee members will give a presentation on the wealth of native plants throughout the state that produce fruits, berries, and seeds that last into winter. Using live material, we will discuss identification techniques, as well as habitat requirements and distribution in the state. We will also discuss their importance to wildlife.

“Winter Evergreens”

Tuesday, February 24, 7:30 pm
White Oak Library – Large Meeting Room

Join members of the Botany Committee for a presentation on native evergreen plants found throughout Maryland, including pines and other gymnosperms, hollies, bayberries, and other shrubs, groundcovers and clubmosses, and numerous others. Some historical evergreens will also be included. Live material will be used, with an emphasis on identification. The natural distribution and habitat of each species will also be discussed.

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.

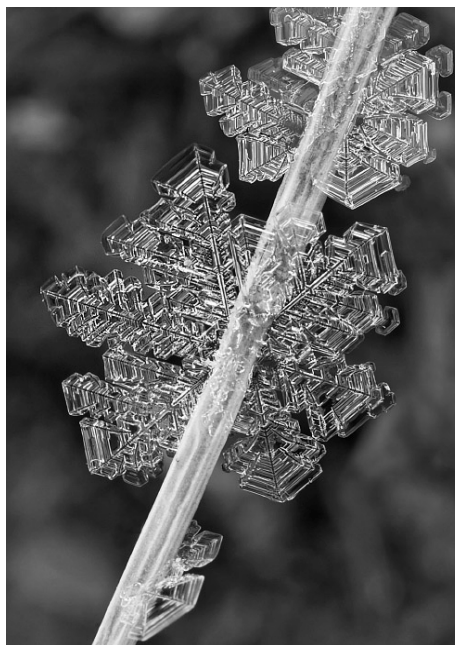


Photo above of frost crystals by Gary Fleming

Photo at right of Hoyle's Mill Diabase Area in Montgomery County by Roderick Simmons





P.O. Box 4877
Silver Spring, MD 20914
www.mdflora.org

Contacts:

Botany..... Rod Simmons
cecropia13@msn.com
Conservation.....John Parrish
info@mdflora.org
Field Trips.....Meghan Tice
cecropia13@msn.com
Flora of Maryland.....Joe Metzger
jmetzger50@hotmail.com
Habitat Stewardship.....Marc Imlay
ialm@erols.com
Membership.....Karyn Molines
kmolines@chesapeake.net
410-286-2928
Monthly Meetings.....Rod Simmons
cecropia13@msn.com
Outreach.....Carolyn Fulton
cofulton@chesapeake.net
President.....Kirsten Johnson
info@mdflora.org
Publications:
Marilandica..... Rod Simmons
cecropia13@msn.com
Native News..... Meghan Tice
cecropia13@msn.com
Website.....Iris Mars
info@mdflora.org

Executive Officers:

Kirsten Johnson, President
Melanie Choukas-Bradley, Vice President
Marc Imlay, Vice President
Linda Keenan, Vice President
Carolyn Fulton, Secretary
Gary Steele, Treasurer

Board of Directors:

Lou Aronica, Emeritus Beth Johnson
Matthew Bazar Robert Mardinay
Carole Bergmann Joe Metzger, Emeritus
Marney Bruce Karyn Molines
Matthew Cohen Glenn Rice
Cris Fleming Mary Pat Rowan
Jim Gallion Roderick Simmons
Albert Hartley Ginny Yakovissi
Brady Hartley

President's Letter

Dear Members,

I'm honored and delighted to have been elected President. And I can't help reflecting on how I first became involved in MNPS. I had recently moved to Maryland from New Jersey and I had always thought plants might be interesting. Unlike birds, they stand still and don't make those mysterious noises that some people claim to recognize. I knew there was such a thing as a native plant society, so I looked on the Internet and discovered that Maryland had one. Not only that, but there was a walk scheduled that very Sunday at a place in D.C. called Fort Totten. That small group, led by Mary Pat Rowan and Lou Aronica, couldn't have been more welcoming. They taught me what a sassafras leaf looks like, and the difference between red and white oaks, and about the shiny little glands on the bottom of the huckleberry leaf — all without a whiff of condescension or impatience. And this for a stranger who barely knew an oak from a maple! I was hooked. Of course I quickly realized I needed a more systematic study than sporadic field trips could provide. Lacking the discipline to do it on my own, I enrolled in Cris Fleming's field botany classes at the USDA where I learned about the importance of recognizing plant families, the basics of plant anatomy, and how to use the keys in Brown & Brown. What pleasure to sit down next to an unknown plant with my lens and a field guide or two. Sometimes I'll conclude that I'm looking at a common plant which for some reason had eluded me. But I still have fun. And I've begun to learn about habitats, and to pay attention to insects and amphibians. I'm even planning to tackle the sedges. So it never stops.

I'm especially honored to follow in the footsteps of my botany teacher, Cris Fleming, as well as the presidents who preceded her, including Carole Bergmann, Karyn Molines, and Rod Simmons, all of whom will continue on the Board. I'll greatly rely on their advice and experience. Other changes on the Board are the election of Melanie Choukas-Bradley as Vice President, and the election of new Board members Matt Cohen, Rob Mardinay, Glenn Rice, and Ginny Yakovissi. Thanks to all of you! We were very sad when John Parrish decided not to continue on the Board. John has made immeasurable contributions over many years to MNPS and to the conservation and knowledge of native plants and their habitats, especially in Montgomery County. We're hopeful that he'll find time to continue to be involved in the Society.

By the time you read this, we will have enjoyed the annual Winter Solstice Walk, this year led by Rod Simmons at beautiful Chapman Forest. During the coming year, I hope to get to know many more MNPS members, ideally on field trips and invasive removal projects. Let's get out outside!

The Board will meet on January 19 for our annual 'retreat' to decide on directions for the coming year. I would love to hear your thoughts and ideas before the retreat. What do you want from MNPS? How can we improve our field trips and meetings? Would you like to see more, or different, advocacy on conservation issues? Can we improve communication with our members? Please email me through the website (info@mdflora.org).

Happy New Year!
Kirsten Johnson

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.

Winter Field Trips

Civil War Fort Site – Bald Eagle Hill

Date: Sunday, January 4 **Time:** 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

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

Winter Tree ID at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, Anne Arundel County

Leader: Karyn Molines

Date: Saturday, February 28 **Time:** 9:30 am

Come learn the fundamentals of winter tree identification using twigs and bark features. We'll spend time indoors learning the basics, and then hike the forests of the Sanctuary.

Directions: Meet at the Visitor Center, 1361 Wrighton Road, Lothian, MD. Visit www.jugbay.org for directions.

Bring: Dress for both indoor and outdoor activities. Bring a snack or lunch, field guides, hand lens, binoculars, camera.

Contact: Karyn Molines kmolines@chesapeake.net or 410-286-2928.

Greater Baltimore Area Chapter Meeting

“The Geology-Soils-Plants Connection: A Baltimore Perspective”

Wednesday, January 21 beginning 7:00 pm at Irvine

Which plants grow where in Baltimore and the surrounding counties? Did you know that plants grow in communities and that the species in each community are quite predictable? Join MNPS' Louisa Thompson for an introduction to the role of geology and soils in determining native plant communities. Our region is exceptionally diverse, with rich soils derived from volcanic rock, limestone-enriched soils in the valleys of Baltimore County, and marine sediments in Anne Arundel County. The serpentine barrens of Soldiers Delight, Robert E. Lee Park, and much of the northwest side of Baltimore City and County are examples of a globally rare environment. We also have a variety of “poor” acidic soils with exceptionally tough plants on rocky Piedmont slopes and clayey plateaus, gravel terraces at the fall line, sandy glacial outwash plains, and ancient beaches now far inland as well as Bay shoreline beaches. Wetlands include upland depression swamps and vernal ponds, beaver marshes, floodplain meadows and swamps, fall line Magnolia Bogs, coastal plain bogs, tidal marshes, and beaches.

“Native” plants are native to their habitat, rather than following state lines or national borders. Knowing the individual tolerance ranges of plants allows you to “read” the underlying geology of a landscape and to plan a successful native plant garden. There's a lot to cover, so plan to stay until 9:00 or later.

Pennsylvania Trip Report

On the weekend of October 18-19, a group of us under the leadership of Lou Aronica continued our exploration of botanically rich sites near Harrisburg, PA. This was our third visit this year. The Box Huckleberry site in Perry County is a mixed oak and white pine forest containing a multi-acre patch of the eponymous rare evergreen shrub (*Gaylussacia brachycera*), which may actually comprise one single plant, possibly thousands of years old. The diverse shrub layer also includes Trailing Arbutus (*Epigaea repens*), Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), Pinxter Flower (*Rhododendron periclymenoides*), and Black Huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*), among others. We continued on to Little Buffalo State Park, where we walked for a pleasant couple of hours, seeing a number of fall composites. Next stop was the restaurant at Doyle's Hotel in Duncannon, where we enjoyed good food, good music and good company.

The next day, Sunday, was the one day in the year when the PA State Game Commission allowed the public to drive the 17-mile road through Stony Valley, in Dauphin County. This is primarily a mixed oak, white pine, and hemlock forest, with an understory that includes Amelanchier (*A. laevis*, *A. arborea*, and possibly *A. sanguinea*) and Sassafras; a shrub layer that includes several *Vaccinium* species and several *Viburnums*; and a ground layer that includes Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), at least 15 species of fern, and many typical woodland herbs. On our June visit, we had been thrilled to find Purple Fringed Orchid (*Habenaria fimbriata*) and Little Club-Spur Orchid (*Habenaria clavellata*). Botanical highlights of our fall trip included Big-leaf Aster (*Aster macrophyllus* or *Eurybia macrophylla*), 2 species of Strawberry Bush (*Euonymus obovatus* and *Euonymus americanus*), Shining Clubmoss (*Huperzia lucidula*), Bluntlobe Cliff Fern (*Woodsia obtusa*), Poison Sumac (*Toxicodendron vernix*), and Silky Dogwood (*Cornus amomum*). This was a stop-and-go journey, and we were fortunate to find a small wetland to explore on one of our stops. Stony Valley contains a number of diverse woodland habitats, relatively free of invasive plants, and is similar in many respects to the forest habitats we explored in Western Maryland during the last year. We hope to revisit Stony Valley again in the coming year. Watch for dates in the *Native News*.

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 24 at 7:00 pm



Maryland Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 4877
Silver Spring, MD 20914

Dated Material:
Please Deliver Promptly

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SILVER SPRING, MD
PERMIT NO. 3567

Membership is for 12 months.
We thank you for your support!

Name 1 _____
Name 2 _____
Street Address _____
City _____
State _____ **Zip Code** _____
(Your county is the basis of your local chapter affiliation. Please include.)
County _____
Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
E-Mail _____

Please do not list me in your membership directory.
 Please do not send me monthly Society announcements by e-mail in addition to post.

If you are a business you can be included on the MNPS providers list.
Please indicate the name of your business and what type of business it is:

Business's name _____
 Native plant propagator or grower
 Native plant supplier
 Native plant landscape professional

Please make checks payable to the Maryland Native Plant Society and mail to:
Maryland Native Plant Society; P.O. Box 4877; Silver Spring, MD 20914

The Maryland Native Plant Society is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible. V9N1J/F09

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 _____

Total Enclosed _____

Please Check: New Renewal