

MNPS Mailing Procedures

Steps in a mailing:

- 1) Determine the final weight and dimensions of the finished member packet before things are printed. They **MUST** be under 6 1/8 inch x 11.5 inch x 1/4 inch and 2.5 oz. fully assembled or they will have to be sent as flats. Sending them as flats involves much more sorting, labeling, and stacking. Flyers may be included as long as they do not take the packet over these limits.
- 2) Determine the total number of items to be printed by consulting the databases for members, exchanges, information, and distribution totals.
- 3) Get things to the printer in time to be picked up before the mailing party. REMEMBER: The *Native News* should **always** be printed with the return address and "imprint indicia" on the outside so if all else fails they can be tabbed and mailed alone. Every item should always contain the return and web addresses of the Society and a membership application form. The printer should know that the total weight of the assembled materials must remain under 2.5 oz.
- 4) Get all the supplies and the finished printed material (and some food) together with volunteers on the scheduled mailing party day.
- 5) Assemble and sort all packets according to the steps for doing the mailing as outlined below.
- 6) Take the finished packets to the 3rd class post office on the morning following the mailing party.

Doing the Mailing

Remember, the first step is estimating the final weight of the packet. If an individual piece weighs more than 2.5 oz, go to the section on "Distribution Packets." Mailing just *Native News* will be well under the weight maximum, and you can follow the directions for "Regular Member Mailing."

First determine how many pages the *Native News* will be. This will determine how many additional inserts are possible. The items in the member mailing **MUST** be under 2.5 oz if they are to go as "upgradeable letters" and under 1 oz if they go 1st class. This is the final fully assembled weight.

The two mailings are best done all together as a single task.

Collation event supplies:

- newsletter, events brochure, and whatever else is to be included in the member mailing
- tabs for sealing packets
- from post office get 4 long letter trays, 2 short letter trays, (and if mailing packets over 2.5 oz: 4 white (3rd class) mail bags, "3" and "MS" stick on labels)
- Post Office Form 3602-NZ. An exact count of packets is required. Determine this number prior to the mailing.
 - The 208xx; 209xx mailing is considered B10: Basic Letter
 - The rest of the mailing is considered B2: Basic Letter
 - If doing the "Distribution Packets" the exact count will be needed of 208xx and 209xx and the rest. The Postal Clerk can determine which type of mailing it is.

If the mailing requires an envelope you will also need:

- enough **identical** envelopes for the Distribution packets, rubber bands for sorted bundles
- clear packing tape to seal the envelopes
- the MNPS third class postal stamp, MNPS return address stamp, extra ink
- Contact the Treasurer to verify that there are sufficient funds in our bulk mail account. Checks should be made payable to: US Postmaster.

Regular Member Mailings are sent as 3rd class "upgradeable" letters:

- There **must be at least 200 items**.
- They **must be no larger than** 6 1/8 inch x 11.5 inch x 1/4 inch (which is about the size of the newsletter folded in half).
- They must be of identical in size and weight (which **must be under 2.5 oz.**).
- They must have a properly configured machine printed machine readable address label, a lower clear space for the Post Office's bar code application, the MNPS return address in the upper left corner, and the "imprint indica" in upper right corner no less than 1 x 1 inches in size that says:

**Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Rockville, MD
Permit No. {}**

- They **must be** addressed with **machine readable labels**; must be **sealed properly** so they will go through the automatic sorting machines; must be **sorted by zip code**; and must be **delivered in flat postal trays**.

We separate out the mailings for Montgomery and PG counties (208xx and 209xx) and put them in separate short trays sorted in zip code order. The other zip codes are placed, sorted by zip code, in the other long trays and go as "mixed suburban".

- The 208 and 209 zip codes must be sorted by zip code and each placed in separate marked short trays.
- All other zip codes must be placed in zip code order in the long trays

The Exchange (and if Distribution sites are receiving only one *Native News*) packets must be integrated into the membership packets.

After getting the member mailing into zip-code sorted trays, incorporate the Exchange (and Distribution) items into the trays, **maintaining the zip code order**.

Distribution packets: If mailing Distribution sites multiple copies, the packets go as flats.

- This must be a total of **50 lbs. or more**.
- The events brochure should be packaged in identical sets in an envelope (which must be slightly less than one pound) with a machine printed address label and the same "imprint indica".
- They must be **sorted by 3 digit zip code**. That is to say all 3 digit zips with 10 or more total packets must be rubber banded together in bundles of about five and marked with a "3" sticker. The rest are rubber banded as "mixed suburban" with an MS sticker.
- The **208's and 209's must be separated** into their own separate bags after bundling with "3" stickers.

The Distribution and Exchange Database can produce three semi-duplicate sets of distribution labels based on the number of packets each place receives. An easy way to do this is to address all three sets of envelopes. You can then easily find the groups with 10 or more packets to the same 3 digit zip code. Clip these together. Then fill the envelopes and create rubber banded packets with "3" stickers out of the ones that were clipped together.

Our Bulk 3rd Class Permit

Our account is {#}

Our address of record is:

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

We can drop the mailing off at either the Silver Spring or the Shady Grove Post Office Bulk Distribution Center.

Suburban Post Office (Shady Grove)
Bulk Distribution Center

This is located just north of Rockville off 270. Exit 270 at Shady Grove Road, go toward Gaithersburg, turn right at second light after crossing 355.

Their phone number is: 301-670-6008

Schedule

The submission deadlines for both are:

Early Spring March/April

- info due by January 25th
- due at printer Feb 10th
- mailing party date is the February Monthly Meeting

Late Spring May/June

- info due by March 25th
- due at printer May 10th
- mailing party date is the April Monthly Meeting

Summer July/August

- info due by May 25th
- due at printer June 10th
- mailing party date is the June Monthly Meeting

Fall September/October

- info due by July 25th
- due at printer August 10th
- mailing party date is the August Monthly Meeting

Early Winter November/December

- info due by September 25th
- due at printer October 10th
- mailing party date is the October Monthly Meeting

Late Winter January/February

- info due by November 25th
- due at printer December 10th
- mailing party date is the December Monthly Meeting (or in early January)