



MARYLAND NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
2019 CONFERENCE - Field Trips and Leaders

Saturday, August 24

4-H Camp. Leaders: Zach Fowler & Megan Carr. This out-and-back hike will start and end at Cunningham Lake at the Maryland 4-H Environmental Education and Camping Center. Participants will walk along the lake, then upstream through the woods to a beautiful high-elevation wetland with beaver dams. Along the way, there is lots of botanizing, birding, and opportunities to discuss moss and lichen biology and ecology. *Moderate to difficult due to rough trails & total distance (~ 4 miles); optional walk in wetland.*

Elk Ridge Native Plant Preserve. Leaders: Liz McDowell & Ron Boyer. This forested ridge lies within the Mid-Atlantic Highlands, the largest interior hardwood forest in the world's temperate latitudes. Landowner efforts to preserve regional biodiversity have helped protect several uncommon plants and animals on this conserved land adjacent to the Savage River State Forest. *Easy to moderate walk.*

Fifteen Mile Creek. Leaders: Chris Frye & Kirsten Johnson. Western Maryland's rain shadow effect, eastern Allegany County's hilly topography, and the microclimates of Fifteen Mile Creek combine to produce a variety of different plant species on floodplains, shale beds, and bluffs. Participants will explore a number of habitats including wetland seeps, riparian zones, shale barrens, and deep mesic valleys in Green Ridge State Forest. There will be multiple stops at easy to access sites. *Easy to moderate walk; wear sturdy shoes & bring plenty of water.*

Finzel Swamp. Leaders: Donnelle Keech & Donna Gates. The Nature Conservancy's Finzel Swamp is a biodiversity treasure chest containing more than 30 rare and uncommon species, and five globally and locally significant wetland habitat types. This remnant boreal fen has been left behind from the Pleistocene Epoch and is one of the few remaining refuges in Maryland where boreal species have persisted since the last Ice Age. *Easy to moderate walk.*

FSU Arboretum Exploration. Leaders: Karyn Molines & Austin Persons. Explore the arboretum and practice tree identification skills. This arboretum provides a growing, sustainable, and safe resource for campus and regional communities to engage in education, research, observation, and contemplation while maintaining the natural setting of the mountains of Appalachia. *Easy walk.*

New Germany State Park. Leaders: Joe Metzger & Christine Campe-Price. This mountain gem lies along Meadow Mountain, the eastern Continental Divide. Its many trails pass through a variety of habitats: hemlock and mixed hardwood forests, rhododendron covered streams, old field, and lakeshore. *Easy to moderate walk.*

North Cherry Creek Bog. Leaders: Kevin Dodge & Ed Gates. This mile-long complex of seeps and wetlands contains excellent examples of mountain peatland vegetation communities, including oligotrophic peatland, minerotrophic acidic fen, forested acidic seep, and acidic conifer swamp forest. The high quality open sphagnum bogs are significant plant communities. *Moderate to difficult; wet, muddy, & sketchy bridge crossings.*

(Saturday trips continued next page)

Old-Growth Dedication Site. Leaders: Sunshine Brosi & Joan Maloof.

A 180-acre old-growth forest on Dan's Mountain with trees greater than 30 inches in diameter including chestnut oak, white oak, northern red oak, and black oak will be dedicated as part of the 'Old-Growth Forest Network'. The oldest trees in the surveyed stands were table mountain pines, with individuals established in 1678 and 1750; chestnut oaks, with individuals established in 1718, 1726, 1733, and 1752; and white oak, with one individual established in 1747. The understory is predominantly comprised of chestnut oak and black oak seedlings, with a high dominance of ericaceous vegetation such as great rhododendron, mountain laurel, high-bush blueberry, and deerberry. *Easy walk along access road.*

Paw Paw Tunnel & Hill Trail. Leaders: Champ Zumbrun & Kerry Wixted. Discover the various plants and animals along the Tunnel Hill Trail with outstanding views of Green Ridge State Forest, Paw Paw Bend, and tunnel gorge. Then explore the 3,118 feet long Paw Paw Tunnel, the greatest engineering marvel along the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park. Bring a flashlight to see the weep holes, rope burns, rub rails, and brass plates that bring the tunnel's history to life. *Moderate to difficult walk due to switchbacks and total distance (~ 4 miles).*

Sunday, August 25

Asa Durst Homestead Trails. Leaders: Scott Campbell & Dwight Johnson. This 4.5 mile trail provides an enjoyable hike through rolling forestlands on old logging roads and single track trails. Along the walk, there are homestead remnants, stands of pine, spruce, and larch, vestiges of fruit orchards, stream valleys rimmed in rhododendron, and upland hardwood forests that have reclaimed former pastures and farmlands. *Easy to moderate: two stream crossings & small section of trail crosses a wetland. Trip begins at 10 am & ends at 2 pm at the trailhead.*

C & O Canal at Spring Gap. Leaders: Joe Metzger & Liz Matthews. Before the canal existed, Spring Gap provided a shallow river-crossing of the Potomac River. Long after the canal closed, Spring Gap was the starting point for Chief Justice William Douglas's historic walk to Washington, DC to promote the canal as a national park. Expect giant sycamores and oaks, as well as cut-leaf coneflower, asters, and goldenrods. *Easy walk. Trip begins at 10 am & ends at 2 pm at the trailhead.*

Crabtree Slopes. Leaders: Dan Boone & Sunshine Brosi. This hike is to an old-growth stand on steep slopes along Backbone Mountain in Potomac State Forest. Additional details to follow. *Moderate to difficult due to distance and hill. Trip begins at 9 am & ends at 2 pm at the New Germany State Park headquarters (staging area for carpooling).*

Cranesville Swamp. Leaders: Zach Fowler & Karyn Molines. Cranesville Swamp is a boreal peat bog relic left behind from the Pleistocene Epoch. Nestled in a mountain valley bowl known as a frost pocket, colder conditions still prevail enough for boreal plants to survive. This Nature Conservancy gem is a National Natural Landmark. *Easy to moderate on boardwalk and short loop trails. This trip begins at 10 am & ends at 2 pm at the Cranesville TNC trailhead.*

The Glades. Leaders: Kevin Dodge & Jil Swearingen. One of Maryland's oldest peatlands, dating back 18,000 years, it is also the state's largest and most open peatland, and the central bog area of the largest wetland complex in western Maryland. Several species of sphagnum moss are restricted in Maryland to this and nearby peatlands. Because it is such a vast, undisturbed area, The Glades is home to large mammals such as black bears and bobcats. Its unusual ecology creates the necessary habitat for at least ten other state-rare plant and animal species. *Moderate; wet & muddy areas. This trip begins at 8:45 am & ends at 1 pm at Garrett College (staging area for carpooling to the Glades).*