

Marilandica

Spring 2011

A Publication of the Maryland Native Plant Society

Volume 2, Issue 1



Tina Thieme Brown

Marilandica

A Publication of the
Maryland Native Plant Society



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

CONTACTS

Membership

Karyn Molines, mnps@chesapeake.net

Marilandica Editor

Carolyn Fulton, FultonCarolynO@gmail.com

Webmaster

Iris Mars, info@mdflora.org

General Inquiries

info@mdflora.org

MNPS CHAPTERS

Catoctin

Jim and Teresa Gallion, jimbo21793@aol.com

Joe Metzger, jmetzger50@hotmail.com

Eastern Shore

Leslie Hunter-Cario, horticulture@wetland.org

Greater Baltimore

Ann Lundy, annlundy@verizon.net

Montgomery County

info@mdflora.org

North East

Matthew Bazar, info@mdflora.org

Prince George's/Anne Arundel Counties

Matt T. Salo, mtsalo1@gmail.com

Southern Maryland

Karyn Molines, mnps@chesapeake.net

Washington, DC

Mary Pat Rowan, blair-rowan@starpower.net

Western Mountains

Liz McDowell, boyerandmcdowell@earthlink.net

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Kirsten Johnson, President

kh.johnson@ymail.com

Marney Bruce, Vice President

Linda Keenan, Vice President

Marc Imlay, Vice President

Ginny Yacovissi, Secretary

Matt Cohen, Treasurer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ken Bawer

Karyn Molines

Matthew Bazar

Glenn Rice

Carole Bergmann

Mary Pat Rowan

Melanie Choukas-Bradley

Roderick Simmons

Cris Fleming

Gary Steele

Carolyn Fulton

Lou Aronica, Emeritus

Albert Hartley

Joe Metzger, Emeritus

Brett McMillan

Letter from the President

Dear Members,

Welcome to the second issue of our new Marilandica. You'll notice the focus is on ferns, since we've declared 2010 to be our *Year of the Fern* — see details below. We hope to continue each year with the study a different specific group of plants.

In 2010, the board's emphasis was on updating communications with our members and the public. We started a MeetUp group and a Facebook page, instituted Upcoming Events emails, switched to a new web server and began updating the website, and last but not least, we started this publication. Of course, our regular activities — meetings, field trips, and advocacy — have continued. I've been especially pleased at the steadily increasing attendance at monthly meetings in Silver Spring and can recommend arriving on time if you want to get a seat. This year, starting with the *Year of the Fern* project, we hope to emphasize and expand on those core activities, offering frequent and free opportunities for our members and the public to learn about native plants and native habitats in the company of like-minded friends.

MNPS members don't agree on everything, and we don't all have the same priorities. Some are mostly interested in enhancing their own knowledge of botany. Some derive spiritual solace from the outdoors. We have members devoted to native plant gardening who rarely venture into natural areas. Some of us insist on locally derived species for our gardens; others see nothing wrong with planting cultivars. We have members in the business of restoring meadows, streams, and wetlands, and others who question the value of such efforts. Some members abhor the use of herbicides; others insist they're necessary to eradicate invasive plants. What binds us together as a cohesive group is our shared passion for native plants and habitats, along with our determination to spread that passion and conserve those habitats.

Welcome to new Board members, Brett McMillan and Ken Bawer. Brett is Assistant Professor of Biology at McDaniel College, and teaches Field Botany and Ecology. We got to know Brett when he generously invited MNPS members to join the field trips for his field botany class, and we were immediately taken with his infectious enthusiasm for his subject. Ken Bawer, an IT specialist with a biology education, has had a life-long interest in natural history. We've come to know him from his frequent participation in MNPS field trips and invasive removal efforts. Thanks to both of you for joining our Board!

Kirsten Johnson

“With fronds like these, who needs anemones?”

No, we're not really suggesting that you ignore the wood anemones or the thimbleweeds. But this year we're paying special attention to the fiddleheads — and not just for supper. Maryland Native Plant Society has an in with some intrepid naturalists who are not afraid of fern ID, and they are guiding us during a year-long quest to learn the Maryland native ferns. The good news is that all of us are in this together. With a bit of luck — and perhaps a bead of sweat — we are determined to learn to identify the native ferns of Maryland between the time the first fiddlehead unfurls and the snow flies. Will you accept the challenge and join our “Circle of Fronds?” Start with the easy ones: royal fern (*Osmunda regalis* L. var. *spectabilis*), illustrated on our cover; New York fern (*Thelypteris noveboracensis*), which, like a typical New Yorker, “burns its candle at both ends;” and Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), with its pinnae shaped like Santa's boots. Learn to distinguish the sterile fronds of interrupted fern (*Osmunda claytoniana*) from those of cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*) by looking for tufts of hair at the base of a cinnamon fern's pinnae. By the middle of autumn, you'll even know the woodferns (*Dryopteris* spp.). And you might be lucky enough to have spotted a walking fern (*Asplenium rhizophyllum*) on its march across a limestone boulder.

To help, we're printing in this issue Dwight Johnson's easy-to-use key to 24 common ferns of Maryland and Dwight and Kirsten Johnson's one-page guide to fern structure and terminology. They are also downloadable from our website. Dwight will give us an overview of fern ID at the April monthly meeting in Silver Spring, and we have at least four fern-focused field trips coming up. (See *Coming Events in this issue*.)

Fern in Focus—Royal Fern

Osmunda regalis L. var. *spectabilis* Willd. A. Gray
The Royal Fern Family (*Osmundaceae*)
Melanie Choukas-Bradley



When I call to mind the Royal Fern, I picture a rustic road bordered on one side by a racing woodland creek and on the other by a lush seepage swamp. In the swamp, cinnamon ferns lift their gracefully curved fronds toward the fragrant overhanging boughs of fringe-tree and the wild azalea known as pinxter flower. In their midst are slender, late-blooming Jack-in-the-pulpits. Along the dirt road, at the edge of the cinnamon ferns, small white Canada Mayflowers—also called wild lily-of-the-valley-carpet the ground beneath branchlets of arrowwood *Viburnum*. In the center of it all, as if holding court, are the tall and spreading Royal Ferns.

Although Tina Thieme Brown and I call this ethereal landscape the “fairy land,” it is a very real place on the lower western slopes of Sugarloaf Mountain along the pristine creek called Bear Branch. One of the many things we plant people seem to have in common is the indelible memory we carry of the first place where we have seen and identified a beloved plant. This is my Royal Fern place.

Thoreau described ferns as “tender and delicate, but perfect in all their details, far more than any lace work—the most elaborate leaf we have.” With feathered fronds of tender green and spores as light as fairy dust, ferns have inspired mystics, romantics and poets throughout time, in the Old World and the New. Their ancient lineage seems

*Royal Fern is an interesting plant
...especially when it grows in clusters,
it doesn't look fern-like when you glance at it.
It looks more shrub-like.*

to add to their mythic appeal. According to a University of Massachusetts biology website: “The Royal Fern is one of the most widespread of all living species and is found on every continent except Australia [and Antarctica]. *Osmundas* have witnessed the rise of the reptiles, the flourishing and eventual extinction of the dinosaurs, the origin and adaptive radiation of the mammals, and the rise to dominance of an obscure genus of hominids named *Homo*.” Yet when aesthetic appreciation turns to ID attempt, romance can quickly fade, with serious fern frustration setting in. That is why we, as a native plant society, are vowing to learn more about the native ferns of Maryland during 2011 as a collective project, with some of the botanists among us who really know the ferns sharing their expertise during MNPS monthly meetings and field trips. It is also why Tina and I have chosen a species that is among the more easily identifiable for *Fern in Focus*, a feature usually devoted to wildflowers.

To begin with, the Royal Fern doesn't look like a typical fern. In the words of naturalist Dwight Johnson, who will address our April monthly meeting and lead a Gunpowder Falls field trip in June: “Royal Fern is an interesting plant because, especially when it grows in clusters, it doesn't look fern-like when you glance at it. It looks more shrub-like.” MNPS board member, teacher and author Cris Fleming, who will lead us on a fern walk at Snyders Landing in May, says: “It is easy to identify for those of us who know it is a fern, but I

have had people on walks, who, seeing it without the fertile frond, think it is some kind of shrub. The 2005 Peterson Ferns Guide says it resembles a locust and indeed it does!” When the fertile frond is present, it's easy to understand a more obscure common name for this fern: flowering fern. Tina's art depicts the floral appearance of the Royal Fern's fertile pinnae.

Fronds: Royal Fern fronds may be three feet or more in length and during the growing season they are a fresh pale green, looking like black locust leaves. Fronds are bipinnately divided with suboppositely arranged, widely spaced and ascending *pinnae*, and alternate, nearly entire or just barely toothed *pinnules*. The pinnules are oblong (like black locust leaflets) with blunt apices and rounded or slightly oblique bases. They are very short-stalked, almost sessile. The fertile (sporangia-bearing) pinnae grow from the tops of some of the fronds. They are green at first, turning brown, and they appear tightly clustered and panicle-like. Spores are produced in spring and early summer. The Peterson Field Guides' Ferns notes: “Royal Fern' easily remembered by 'crown' of fertile pinnae at top of fertile fronds.” Resorting to a contemporary image,



the Peterson authors write of the *Osmunda* genus: “The sporangium opens through a long slit on the top, looking like Pac-Man on the attack.” (Special thanks to Cris Fleming for bringing the Peterson descriptions to my attention!)

Rachis: slender and round; pinkish, golden or green.
Stipe: Smooth and 8-24 inches long; pinkish, reddened at the base and slightly winged.
Rhizome: Massive, somewhat erect and partially above ground; old stipe bases woven together.
Height and Growth Habit: Approximately 3-6 feet. Grows in clusters.

Habitat and Range: Swamps, bogs, stream sides and other moist, often acidic soils; eastern U.S. and Canada, and on every continent but Australia and Antarctica.

Locations in Maryland: According to Brown and Brown's *Herbaceous Plants of Maryland*, Royal Fern is found throughout the state. Kirsten and Dwight Johnson see Royal Fern along the Gunpowder River and at North Point Park in Baltimore County, at Pocomoke River State Park in Worcester County, and in Bear Branch Bog in Prince Georges County. Dwight says: “In Maryland, I see Royal Fern more in the coastal plain, obviously hand in hand with Cinnamon Fern.” Wesley M. Knapp, Eastern Region Heritage Ecologist and Botanist with Maryland DNR's Wildlife and Heritage Service also notes: “[Royal Fern] is very common in coastal areas of the state” and MNPS board member Karyn Molines—who will lead us on a Jug Bay fern walk in the fall—says: “it is easily found at the southern end of the marsh boardwalk at Jug Bay Wetlands (continued page 7)

From the Field



R. H. Simmons

2010 Travilah Barrens Winter Solstice Walk participants gathered in Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*) glade.

Forty-one of us from Maryland Native Plant Society, Virginia Native Plant Society, and Arlington Regional Master Naturalists – or members of all three as Cris Fleming pointed out! – met on a cold December 19th for a hike and traditional solstice hooley at the exceptional Travilah Serpentine Barrens in Montgomery County, MD, the mid-Atlantic region's finest example of a globally-rare, forested serpentinite community. Thanks to all who braved the cold and brought good cheer to the walk and toasting ceremony. This year's offerings were the heavily-peated, bog-and-sea coast inspired Ardbeg and Clynelish drams, as well as Knappogue Castle Single Malt Irish Whiskey and a fine French rum (compliments of Tom Raque). We were also glad to have the MNPS and VNPS state and Potowmack Chapter presidents with us.

Much of the vegetation that occurs on the olivine-rich serpentinite (dunite) at the Travilah Serpentine Barrens in Montgomery County is probably most appropriately classified as "Ultramafic Woodlands and Barrens", which is a natural community type within the "Low-Elevation Rock Outcrops and Barrens" group within the "Terrestrial System" category (see http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/ncintro.shtml and http://www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Plants_Wildlife/Md_Veg_Com/toc.asp).

Strong indicators of this community type are the relative abundance and co-dominance of Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*) and Northern Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*), and, in sections, Blackjack Oak (*Quercus marilandica*), Shortleaf Pine (*Pinus echinata*), Virginia Pine (*Pinus virginiana*), and Little Blue Stem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*). Little Blue Stem, when greatly abundant/dominant, is a good indicator of ultramafic soils, like those derived from serpentinite, while the abundance of Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) in places like Manassas Battlefield Park, Hoyles Mill, Gettysburg, etc., is a good indicator of underlying diabase (mafic rock) and Triassic Basin soils. Magnesium is very high in serpentinite soils, but calcium levels are very low. Diabase soils are generally high in both calcium and magnesium. Other distinctive associated plants that frequently occur throughout the Travilah site in woodland glades with the above are: Wild Crabapple (*Malus coronaria*), Hawthorne (*Crataegus spp.*), Deerberry (*Vaccinium stamineum*), Bosc's Panicgrass (*Dichantherium boscii*), and Leonard's Skullcap (*Scutellaria leonardii*), among numerous others.



Kirsten Johnson

MNPS member, Bill Morgante, talks with visitors to the Society's booth at the Baltimore Home & Garden Show in March.

Readers' Comments

Kudos

Yes, keep bucking the trend. I can curl up with Marilandica!

Joann Alexander

Beautiful Publication

What a super super job you all did on the layout. I read every word, and I think the page colors, and color photos really stand out and make this a first class publication.

Carrie Dike

Editor's note: We have our excellent graphic designer, Marjorie Paul, pauldesignworks@me.com, to thank for the look and quality of Marilandica. We agree she is outstanding!

New Subscriber

I have in hand two sheets of the Fall 2010 issue of Marilandica that a friend kindly sent to me. On one sheet "Winterizing your garden" starts, and on the other something about milkweed ends. Both articles caught my attention and I'd love to read them both in their entirety. I wonder if you could forward them to me in digital form. I would greatly appreciate it. It's tormenting to start a story and not find out how it ends.

Nevermind. I just subscribed to Marilandica. Isn't Paypal wonderful!

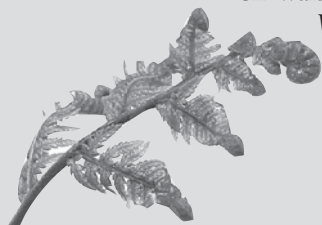
Maryann Whitman, Journal Editor

Wild Ones:

Native Plants, Natural Landscapes
www.wildones.org

Where the copse wood is the greenest,
Where the fountain glistens sheenest,
Where the morning dew lies longest,
There the Lady Fern grows strongest.

Sir Walter Scott
Waverley



Common Blue Violet, *Viola sororia* Willd.

It's the most visible beginning, this low, blue flame in the woods. I think of it as a pilot light that ignites the entire burst of resurrection we call spring. -John Eastman, *The Book of Forest and Thicket*

That so well describes how I think of my native wild violets when they turn my garden and little lawn purple beginning in late March. This lovely plant is actually considered a weed by many gardeners and weed-wary grass lovers surely curse it. But the flowers are some of the first to appear and beckon pollinators in early spring. They stand up tall and straight above the leaves, advertising their pollen and nectar. The flowers have five rounded petals, with the lower one lined with 'nectar guides': stripes or veins which radiate outward and guide pollinators to their reward. They have been used in perfume, poetry, paintings and posies, and can be made into candies and jellies. At our wedding a few years ago, the carrot cake a friend made for us was covered with violet flowers. The leaves are high in vitamins A and C and can be used in salads or cooked as greens. For early settlers, violet leaves were welcome when fresh vegetables were hard to come by. The new growth is the tastiest, so try them before June or when reemerging after being cut.

The former species name, *Viola papilionacea* Pursh p.p., was a reference to the resemblance of the flower to the wings of a butterfly. How appropriate! Violets are the host plant for many of the orange-colored fritillaries, and especially the Great Spangled Fritillary. The eggs these butterflies lay on or near violet plants in the summer hatch in the fall. The caterpillars overwinter and start feasting in the spring when the the leaf litter or mulch around fritillaries hiding there. Various occasionally eat the seed and

These violets certainly spread understand the people who have many ways of reproducing into the fall seed capsules are explode to fling the seed away that are almost ripe will turn with stems lengthened. Put in a paper bag and it will sound hours. It's a fun activity for keep your violet population flowers, violets have a secret fertilizes itself. This flower is probably the most important for it has vast quantities of seed. Ants also play an important part in seed dispersal, as they do with many other plants. There is an oily substance attached to the seed called an eliasome, a protein-rich bribe which ants relish. They take the seed to their nests, eat the eliasome and discard the rest to germinate in their waste piles. If you have a compost pile and regularly throw these plants in, your finished compost could be full of the seeds.



new leaves emerge. So leave violets undisturbed for the birds and small mammals some wildlife eat the foliage.

themselves around, so I can consider them weeds. Violets ing. During the summer and produced which, when ripe, from the mother plant. Pods dark and stand up straight some of these almost ripe pods like popcorn popping for children (of all ages) and it will down. Besides the showy flower which stays shut and (called a cleistogamous flower) for the plant's reproduction,

Violets bloom again in the fall, but the flowers are tucked under the leaves this time. Day length is the key. When the amount of sunlight is the same in the fall as it was in the spring, a hormone is released that triggers flowering. The flowers below the leaves may appeal to ants and other pollinators on the ground that are more numerous then.

Now if these weren't reasons enough to love this attractive, fascinating plant, I have another reason. The wild common blue violet provides me with a lush, attractive ground cover from early spring through fall. Sometimes the leaves may turn a bit brown or yellow late in the season, but I just cut them off and fresh ones grow in their place. But if I see caterpillars or leaves with holes, I leave the plant where it is. It may be a Great Spangled Fritillary! I do hoe many of the seedlings in the spring since I want to have room for other native plants. In many places the violet leaves are intertwined with Virginia creeper or herbs like oregano and thyme. I am so happy violets have made my garden their home.

Marney Bruce

Basic Fern Shapes and Structure



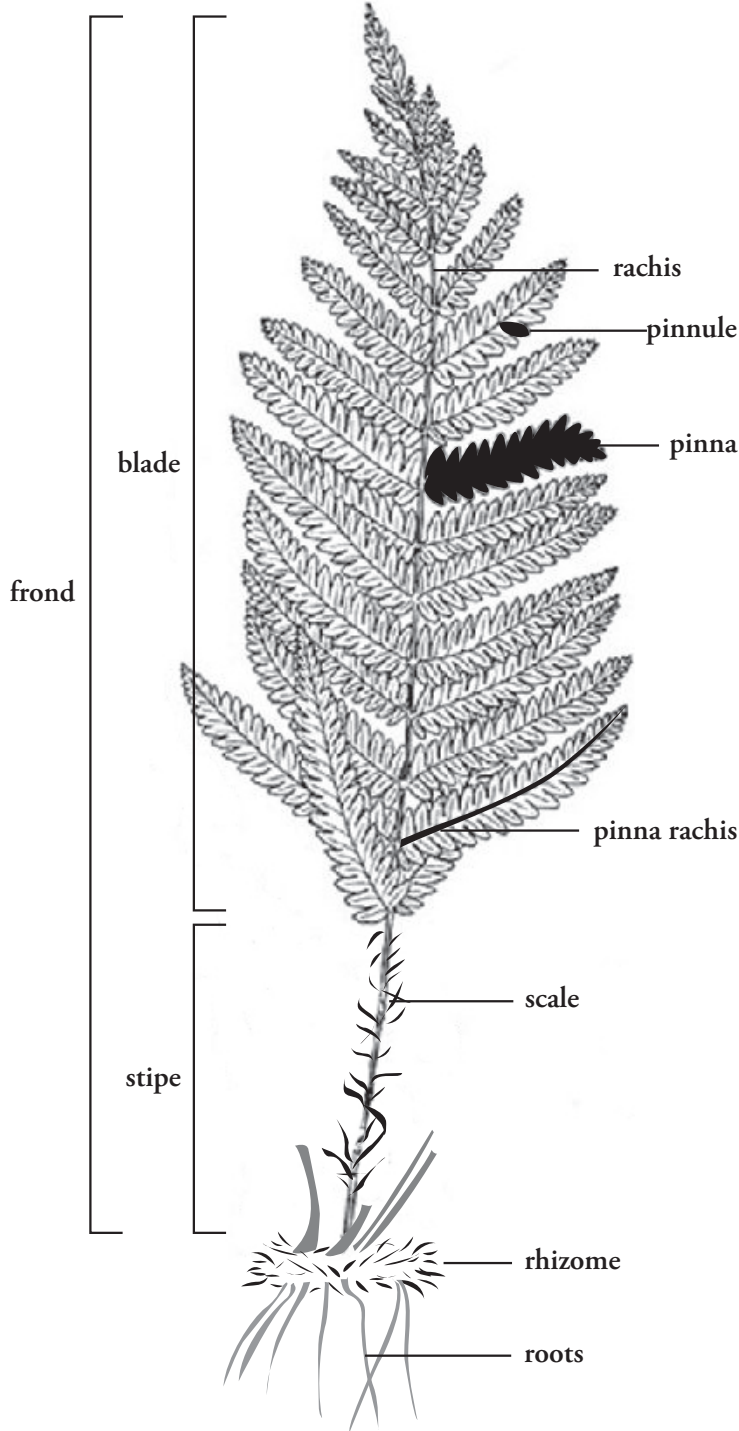
Broadest at Base



Tapering to the Base



Semi-tapering to the Base



Times Cut



Once Cut
(no pinnules)



Twice Cut
(pinnules "cut" into pinnules)



Thrice Cut
(pinnules "cut" into pinnulets)

KEY TO THE COMMON FERNS OF MARYLAND

Prepared by Dwight Johnson, 2011

I. Broadest at Base

- Once cut with wavy pinnae Sensitive Fern
- Twice cut with wiry stipe Broad Beech Fern
- Thrice cut
 - i. Large, coarse; usually more than one plant in area; not lacy Bracken Fern
 - ii. Small and growing singly or in a small group; delicate and lacy
 - A. Fertile stalk arising from center of frond; stipe pink towards base Rattlesnake Fern
 - B. Fertile stalk at or under the ground; stipe green Cut-leaved Grape Fern

II. Fully Tapering to the Base

- Once cut - Small-medium size; very narrow frond; pinnae oblong with “boot” similar to Christmas fern; stipe smooth and dark Ebony Spleenwort
- Twice cut
 - i. Large and growing in a definite crown; fertile frond (if present) in center, found more often in gardens Ostrich Fern
 - ii. Medium size, and growing zig-zag over an area, not in crowns New York Fern

III. Semi-tapering to the Base

- Once cut
 - i. Pinnae two inches or less
 - A. Boot-shaped pinnae attached by a short stalk; Christmas Fern
 - B. Pinnae with no stalk; usually growing on top of rocks Common Polypody
 - ii. Pinnae over two inches long, wavy (resembles Sensitive Fern), found in moist areas east of I-95 Netted Chain Fern
- Twice Cut
 - i. Stipe with brown scales; sori on edge of pinnule Marginal Wood Fern
 - ii. Stipe smooth or slightly hairy
 - A. Large size; woolly tufts at bases (axes) of pinnae Cinnamon Fern
 - B. No tufts at axes
 - 1. Large size; some pinnae apparently missing from middle of fertile fronds (if present); veins in pinnule forked Interrupted Fern
 - 2. Sori and pinnule venation in herringbone pattern; 2 lowest pinnae pointing outward in a V shape Silvery Glade Fern
 - 3. Growing zigzag in patches near wet areas; common east of I-95 Marsh Fern
 - iii. Large and shrubby; leaf-like pinnules with short stems Royal Fern
- Thrice Cut
 - i. Stipe with brown scales at base
 - A. On lowest pinna, the pinnule closest to the stipe is the longest Spinulose Wood Fern
 - B. On lowest pinna, second pinnule from the stipe is the longest Intermediate Wood Fern
 - ii. Stipe smooth
 - A. Growing in a clump; sori slightly curved and in herringbone pattern; rachis smooth, not hairy Lady Fern
 - B. Growing zig-zag over area; hairy rachis; sori small and round Hayscented Fern
 - C. Pinnules lobed (leaf-like); stipe long and slender Fragile Fern
 - iii. Stipe and rachis hairy, pinnules lobed; lower pinnules rounded, small fern found growing in rocks Blunt-lobed Woodsia

IV. Unique Shaped Fern

- Circular-shaped fronds with pinnae on outer rim of stalk; dark wiry stipe Maidenhair Fern

Conservation Watch



In the last issue we described the Society's support for the Smart Growth Alliance in opposing the construction of a new major highway in Charles County. That advocacy continues. Here's what we're doing on other fronts:

Sale of Invasive Plants. Our thanks go to Carol Jelich of our Eastern Shore Chapter, who testified on behalf of MNPS in favor of House Bill 831. If enacted, this bill would require, prior to the sale of certain specified invasive plants, that retail and landscaping customers be notified that the species is invasive and harmful to the environment. Here's the list of 45 covered species: Norway Maple, Tree of Heaven, Sawtooth Oak, Princess Tree, Mimosa, Siberian Elm, Oriental Bittersweet, Russian Olive, Ornamental Cherry, White Mulberry, Multiflora Rose, Bradford Pear, Privet, Bush Honeysuckle, Japanese Spiraea, Winged Euonymus, Japanese Barberry, Kudzu, Porcelain Berry, Asian Wisteria, Periwinkle, English Ivy, Winter Creeper, Crown Vetch, Japanese

Knotweed, Creeping Bugleweed, Spearmint, Ground Ivy, Purple Deadnettle, Indian Strawberry, Common Reed, Giant Reed, Purple Loosestrife, Lesser Celandine, Pampas Grass, Japanese Silvergrass, Reed Canarygrass, Garlic Mustard, Japanese Stiltgrass, Mile-a-Minute, Beefsteak Plant, Spotted Knapweed, Canada Thistle, and Running Bamboo.

PRESS TIME UPDATE: *This legislation has passed both the Maryland House and the Senate.*

Deer Management. A walk at Oregon Ridge Park should be a joy. Instead it's a heart-breaking trek through a non-regenerating forest that almost completely lacks an understory. This winter, a group of citizens including MNPS President Kirsten Johnson, formed the Coalition for Responsible Deer Management to urge the Baltimore County Council to take steps to actively manage deer populations in Baltimore County, including amending the County Code to permit regulated hunting in Baltimore

County parks. This would bring the Baltimore County Code into conformity with that of Montgomery, Howard and other counties.

A number of organizations including local citizens groups, MNPS and others have signed the Coalition's petition to the Council.

Natural Gas Drilling. There's been a lot of publicity recently about the destructive impact of natural gas drilling in Marcellus Shale using a process called "fracking." MNPS co-signed recent testimony of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and others supporting legislation to put a hold on this process in Maryland pending further study. Thanks to Liz McDowell of our Western Mountains Chapter for bringing this to our attention.

MNPS Members: What are you doing to advocate for Maryland's native plants and natural areas? Write to us about your experiences so we can include them here and let other members know.

(*Fern in Focus* continued from page 2) Sanctuary." MNPS board member Carole Bergmann—who will lead a fern walk at the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park in August—observes: "I would say that in Montgomery County, Royal Fern is never found except in shaded to partially shaded, very moist—actually wet—conditions. It is always fun to find in Montgomery County as it is not that common. I have seen it in several nice colonies in our Upper Paint Branch Stream Valley Park, in North Branch of Rock Creek Stream Valley Park, and in McKnew Park." According to MNPS board member Rod Simmons, "Royal Fern is also a nearly constant component of the globally-rare Fall Line Magnolia Bog community: *Nyssa sylvatica* - *Magnolia virginiana* - (*Pinus rigida*) / *Rhododendron viscosum* - *Toxicodendron vernix* / *Smilax pseudochina* Woodland (USNVC CEG006219) – though to a much lesser extent than Cinnamon Fern (*Osmundastrum cinnamomeum*) and usually in muckier, more heavily-saturated areas rich in organic material."

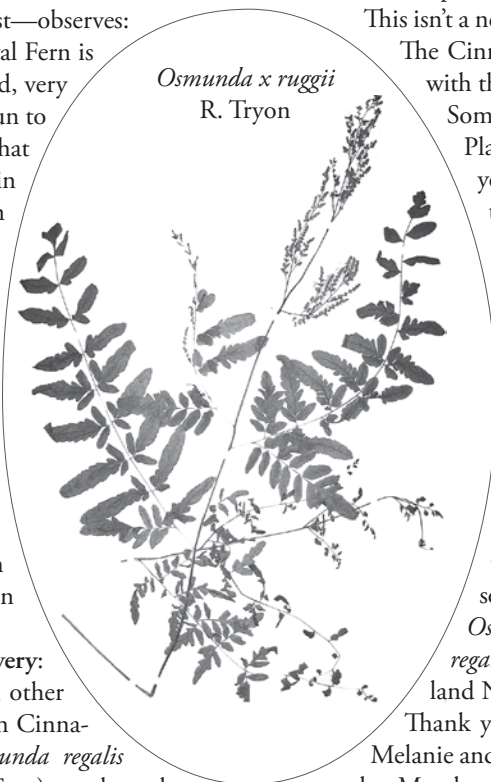
Similar Species and an Exciting MNPS Discovery: The Royal Fern is not apt to be confused with other fern species but it often grows in concert with Cinnamon Fern. According to Wes Knapp: "*Osmunda regalis* (Royal Fern) and *O. claytoniana* (Interrupted Fern) are the only two remaining *Osmunda* species in our area. Recent work shows that

the Cinnamon Fern is in a different and monotypic genus, *Osmundastrum*, and its preferred name is now *Osmundastrum cinnamomeum*. This isn't a new name but a very old one that is being revived."

The Cinnamon Fern remains in the family *Osmundaceae* with the Royal and Interrupted ferns.

Some team work on the part of the Maryland Native Plant Society resulted in an exciting discovery two years ago. MNPS president Kirsten Johnson tells the story: "In the spring of 2009, the Baltimore Chapter's Bill Morgante organized a trip to a magnolia bog in the Laurel area. Leader Rod Simmons spotted an unusual looking fern next to a stream. Ginny Yacovissi suggested it might be *Osmunda x ruggii*, a rare hybrid of Interrupted and Royal Ferns. The next day, my husband Dwight Johnson and I returned to the area and carefully collected a frond, which we preserved and presented to the Smithsonian herbarium on behalf of MNPS. Fern experts at the National Science Foundation and the Smithsonian have confirmed that this is indeed *Osmunda x ruggii* R. Tryon (*O. claytoniana* x *O. regalis*)." This is quite a frond in the cap for the Maryland Native Plant Society!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this article! Melanie and Tina will give a *Wildflower in Focus* presentation to the Maryland Native Plant Society at the May 31, 2011 monthly meeting.





Carol Bergmann

Hayscented Fern, Dennstaedtia punctiloba, is very common in Maryland woods. Because it is not consumed by deer, it has spread invasively in some northeastern forests to the detriment of other understory plants.



Carol Bergmann

Walking Fern, Asplenium rhizophyllum, creeps across calcareous rocks.



Carol Bergmann

The common name of Interrupted Fern, Osmunda claytoniana, describes its fertile fronds, which are "interrupted" by several pairs of fertile pinnae.



Carol Bergmann

Common Polypody, Polypodium virginianum. In the piedmont, this fern is most often found on rocks, but in the coastal plain it is also seen in clumps next to trees. Notice that the pinnae have no stalks.



Carol Bergmann

Ebony Spleenwort, Asplenium platyneuron, can be confused with Christmas Fern, Polystichum acrostichoides, because both have "boot" shaped pinnae. But look for Ebony Spleenwort's narrow frond and smooth black stipe, very different from the scruffy stipe of Christmas Fern



Bob Yacovissi

Silvery Glade Fern, Deparia acrostichoides, has herring-bone shaped sori, similar to those of its close relative, Lady Fern, Athyrium filix-femina.



Denotes fern-oriented events for *Year of the Fern*

Coming Events

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings take place on the last Tuesday of each month *with the exception of the December meeting*. Location: White Oak Library – Large Meeting Room. The Library will be closed; enter from the lower level. *Directions: Exit the Washington Beltway at New Hampshire Avenue (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.*



April 26, 2010 ~ Tuesday, 7:30 PM, doors open at 6:30

Ferns

White Oak Library – Large Meeting Room

Speaker: Dwight Johnson

To support this year's MNPS theme of the *Year of the Fern*, Dwight returns to present his fern identification workshop. A key to the ferns of Maryland will be passed out and explained, and then used to identify some common ferns of Maryland, both in photos and using actual plant material. This talk will help prepare you for the fern field trips that are planned for this year.

May 31, 2010 ~ Tuesday, 7:30 PM, doors open at 6:30

Nature Writing and Illustration

White Oak Library – Large Meeting Room

Speakers: Melanie Choukas-Bradley and Tina Thieme Brown

The speakers, author and artist of two books about Sugarloaf Mountain, Maryland, will talk about their Wildflower in Focus column for Marilandica, formerly the Native News. Over the past few years they have described and illustrated nearly two dozen Maryland wildflowers for MNPS. Their articles and artwork can be viewed on our website.

They will describe their creative process from field work to finished article and art. Melanie and Tina will also talk about their ten year project to document and celebrate the natural history and flora of Sugarloaf.

Melanie teaches the summer wildflower identification course through ANS and the Graduate School, and Tina teaches botanical art at the US Botanic Garden. They are longtime field trip leaders for ANS and other organizations. Melanie is also the author of City of Trees. Tina's art studio in Barnsville, Maryland, is part of the Countryside Artisans open studio tours.

June 28, 2011 ~ Tuesday, 7:30 PM, doors open at 6:30

Deer Management in Maryland's Public Lands

White Oak Library – Large Meeting Room

Speaker: Eugene Meyer, Recently retired Instructor, Loyola University



July 26, 2010 ~ Tuesday, 7:30 PM, doors open at 6:30

Ferns in the Natural Landscape

White Oak Library – Large Meeting Room

Speaker: W. Carl Taylor, Recently retired Botanist at the National Science Foundation

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

September 24, 2011 ~ Saturday 2011 Annual Fall Conference

College of Southern Maryland in LaPlata

Theme and speakers will be announced soon.

September 24th is National Public Lands Day this year, and the conference topics will underscore the critical importance of nurturing and building on our legacy.

July – December 2011 Meeting Dates

August 30, 2011

September 2, 2011

October 25, 2011

November 29, 2011

December 13, 2011

Visit mdflora.org for additional information.

Volunteers Needed

Field Trip Leaders and Co-Leaders

Do you have a favorite place to explore for native plants? Or a place you haven't thoroughly explored but would like to? Consider leading a field trip. You don't have to be an expert field botanist. Just set a date, a time, and a place to meet. And decide on the path for the walk. Send the information for your trip to fieldtrips@mdflora.org, and it will be listed on our website, MeetUp group, Upcoming Events emails, and Marilandica (depending on press time). If you would like a co-leader, or have special requirements for your walk, or any other questions, please contact Kirsten at kh.johnson@ymail.com.

Help Spread the Word about Natives

Especially around Earth Day, MNPS gets invitations to set up a table at various festivals and events. We're always in need of volunteers for those events. It's a lot of fun to talk to members of the public about all aspects of native plants, in nature and in the landscape. If you'd like to be on our list of potential volunteers, please contact Ginny Yacovissi at info@mdflora.org.

Coming Events

SPRING and SUMMER FIELD TRIPS

These are the field trips scheduled at press time. For up to date news of MNPS field trips and activities please visit our website, www.mdflora.org and find us at meetup.com. *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.*

April 23, 2011 Saturday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm **Leakin Park, Baltimore**

Leaders: Dwight and Kirsten Johnson

We'll explore this large urban park in West Baltimore that has quality deciduous forest, especially looking for spring ephemerals. We hope to make this the first of a series of urban park walks in Baltimore.

Directions: Meet at the parking lot on Franklinton Road (not at the nature center). From I-70 East, exit onto Security Blvd. Take the first right onto Franklinton Rd. Drive ½ mile. Parking lot is on the left.

Bring: Lunch, water, field guides if you have them.

Registration: Not required but appreciated. Registrants will be notified in the event of cancellations.

Contact: Dwight Johnson, dwightmjohnson@comcast.net.

April 30, 2011, Saturday, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm **Carderock, Montgomery County**

Leader: Marney Bruce

See lots of spring wildflowers at this natural gem just outside the beltway. This popular recreational area is wedged between the C & O Canal and the Potomac River, abundant with wildflowers, wildlife, and blooming trees. We will be walking in the woods, on the tow path, and occasionally crossing streams and climbing hills.

Directions: Please see the MNPS website for directions.

Bring: Water, lunch, sturdy walking shoes or boots. Note: Light drizzle is fine but cancelled if heavy rain.

Contact: M. Bruce, marney@simplicity-matters.org or 301.652.0492.

May 7 2011, Saturday, 10:30 am – 2:00 pm **Wildflower Tour of Triadelphia Reservoir Area, Pigtail Recreation Area, Dayton, MD**

Leaders: Kimberly Knox and Joe Metzger

This cove provides moisture for beautiful wildflowers and a large variety of native trees, and is home to a large number of songbirds. The Howard County Bird Club will be sponsoring Warbler Day from 8:00 to 10:00 am at this same location on May 7.

Location: See the MNPS website for location.

Contact: Kimberly Knox, kknox@wsscwater.com or 301.206.8233

May 7, 2011 Saturday, 10:00 am – 1:30 pm **Fern Walk at Snyder's Landing**

Leader: Cris Fleming

The high limestone bluffs on the C & O Canal harbor calciphitic ferns, including walking fern, bulblet fern, blunt-lobed woodsia, and maiden-hair spleenwort, not often found in other regions of MD. There will be a few steep places but most ferns can be seen not far off the towpath.

Directions: Please see the MNPS website for directions.

Bring: Water, lunch or snack; field guides.

Registration: REQUIRED. Limited to 15. Registration is not available through the website. To register, contact Cris Fleming.

Contact: Cris Fleming, cjfleming@aol.com.

June 18, 2011 Saturday, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm **Ferns on the Gunpowder – Gunpowder State Park**

Leader: Dwight Johnson

Learn about more than 20 species of common and some less common ferns along the Gun-powder River just north of Perry Hall. We will explore three different areas located along two different paths about one mile long each. Both paths are flat, easy walking with a few small stream crossings but could be muddy if there has been recent rain.

Directions: See MNPS website for directions.

Bring: Water and lunch.

Registration: Not required, but registrants will be contacted in the event of cancellation.

Contact: Dwight Johnson, dwightmjohnson@comcast.net.

August 21, 2011 Sunday, 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM **Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park**

Leader: Carole Bergmann, MNCPPC Forest Ecologist

Join Carole Bergmann for a native plant community hike near Damascus, Maryland. We hope to see approximately a dozen ferns native to the Maryland piedmont on this hike. We will mostly stay on the trail, but we will go off trail at a number of spots.

Bring: Water; snack if desired. No restrooms or water at parking area.

Registration: Required; limited to 17 participants.

Contact: Carole Bergmann, carolebergmann@hotmail.com

Field Trip Plant Lists



MNPS is reinvigorating our project to make plant lists of our field trips through the years. These lists are very helpful for field trip leaders and participants as well as individuals and other groups. A long-range goal of the plant lists of our field trips is to monitor changes in populations of native plants over the years. To see the current lists, look on our web site (www.mdflora.org) under Plant Lists. More lists will be posted in the coming months. This project needs volunteers willing to keep track of plants seen on a field trip. Check the web site under Volunteer to learn the easy way to help with this important activity of your organization.

Look for MNPS Events & News

• on our website
mdflora.org

• on Facebook

• on Meet up



Maryland Native Plant Society

You can also join on-line on our website www.mdflora.org

Member 1 _____
 Member 2 _____
 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ Co _____ Zip _____
 Phone (S) Day _____ Eve _____ Cell _____
 Email _____ I do not wish to receive emails

Annual Membership Dues

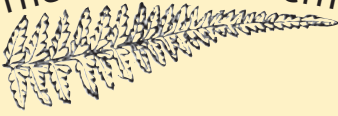
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> Organization \$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Double \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime \$350
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Limited Income \$15	
<input type="checkbox"/> Optional Donation \$	
Total Enclosed \$	

Make checks payable to: Maryland Native Plant Society or MNPS

Maryland Native Plant Society
 PO Box 4877
 Silver Spring, MD 20914
www.mdflora.org

Maryland Native Plant Society, Inc. is a Section 501(c)(3) charitable organization incorporated in Maryland, to which donations are tax deductible.

Celebrating The Year of the Fern



In this Issue

Letter from the President	pg 1
With fronds like these	1
Fern in Focus	2
In the Field	3
Common Blue Violet	4
Fern Shape & Structure	5
Common Ferns of Maryland	6
Conservation Watch	7
Pictorial Essay	8
Coming Events	9
Coming Events	10

Maryland Native Plant Society
 PO Box 4877
 Silver Spring, MD 20914