



Friends of Sligo Creek

Newsletter May-June 2018



Ellen X. Silverberg photo

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Tour Sligo Meadow June 19

Join plant ecologist Carole Bergmann of Montgomery Parks for an evening tour of wildflowers blooming in late spring at our new meadow-grassland on Tuesday, June 19, at 6:30 pm.

The meadow is located between the creek and the parkway just

south of the Beltway and across from the golf course. Parking is available at the golf course and in a small lot next to the soccer fields on the south side of the meadow.

In 2016 and 2017, after removing dense growths of porcelainberry and other non-native invasives, volunteers and Montgomery Parks staff planted nearly 1,000 seedlings representing seventeen species of native grasses, sedges, and wildflowers, all provided by the county-run Pope Farm Nursery.

Native plants put into the meadow that may be blooming in late June or July include Foxglove Beard-tongue, Clustered Mountain-mint, American Germander, Purple Vervain, Black-eyed Susan, and three species of milkweed. Carole will show us what aspects of the meadow are doing well, which need further work, and how FoSC can help with invasives management.



Foxglove Beard-tongue is one the natives planted in the meadow. (G.Fleming photo vaplantatlas.org)

For further information, email naturalhistory@fosc.org.



Art Contest Raises Storm Drain Awareness in Wheaton



Volunteers help paint a winning design by artist Carrie Witkop (upper right). (DEP photo)

Local artists decorated six storm drains in downtown Wheaton in April thanks to a Montgomery County contest designed to raise awareness about the sewers and their connections to our creeks and the Chesapeake Bay.

A panel of judges selected five of winners from 68 applications, with the sixth being chosen by online public voting.

The winners were Diane Perry, Brandon Hsu (in the 16-and-under category), Danielle Levesque, Carrie Witkop, Elizabeth Murphy, and Jules Gross. Two storm drains were

painted on weekends in April in honor of Earth month.

All six newly painted storm drains are located within the Sligo watershed (and sewershed) in downtown Wheaton. Three of them are just east of Georgia Avenue, at the intersection of Fern Street and Reedie Drive and at Reedie and Amherst (on Reedie). Three more are just west of Georgia, at the intersection of Grandview Avenue and Ennalls Avenue (on Ennalls and at 11232 and 11210 Grandview).



Artist Danielle Levesque (center) leads her team toward finished design (below). (DEP photos).



The contest, in its second year, was organized by the county's Department of Environmental Protection. The contest is a partnership among the Mid-County Regional Services Center, the Wheaton Urban District, and the Wheaton Arts and Entertainment District, in collaboration with the county's Department of Transportation, Montgomery Parks, Friends of Sligo Creek, One Montgomery Green, and Rock Creek Conservancy.



Finished artwork designed by Carrie Winkop (Mike Smith photo)

Spring Sweep Draws More than 500 Volunteers



Volunteers get pumped before clearing trash between New Hampshire and Maple Avenues. (L.C. Tipton photo)

This year's spring Sweep the Creek results speak for themselves, so we are keeping our report short and sweet.

We had a wonderful and perhaps record-setting 573 volunteers joining in 14 sections all along the creek.

Due to your efforts, the creek is less about 331 bags of trash and 131 bags of recycling.

We are once again amazed and delighted by the community support for keeping Sligo Creek clean and we welcome your continuing partnership in this effort.

Three cheers for collaboration in the name of environmental stewardship, and perhaps a touch of fun on top!

Patton Stephens, Sweep Coordinator

Help Montgomery Parks Track Fawns in Sligo



If you notice a very young deer (fawn) in Sligo Creek Park or your yard, one that doesn't move from its lying position, consider contacting the Parks' wildlife ecology staff immediately at 301-962-1352 or 301-962-1353 to help with their deer tracking initiative.

Within the first week of life, fawns remain completely still on their bedding site, regardless of approach by humans or predators. It is during this period that the wildlife unit of Parks can tag the fawns. Montgomery Parks is in the second year of a fawn-tagging project that will help them better understand deer movement in the county's many parklands.

Fawns are often left alone by their mothers in order to avoid drawing the attention of predators from the doe's greater visibility and her scent, which the fawns lack. According to Parks staff, the last two weeks of May and first two weeks of June are the peak times for fawns to be found in our area. Parks wildlife specialists say the fawns should not be handled by anyone other than Parks staff or other county wildlife experts.



Deer fawn by Waldo Jaquith via treehugger.com

Fawns are usually very well hidden, most often in grasses about 6-12 inches tall or along fence rows and streams and in a woodland up to about 30 yards from the edge. They can also be found in woodland interiors, along tennis court fences, and just outside a home's front door.

If Parks' wildlife staff can arrive before the fawns leave their beddings and begin walking, they will tag one ear and then leave them alone. The tags will enable the county's wildlife biologists to identify them in future seasons.

A good source of information on deer fawns, their behavior, and what to do if you find one, see this [Department of Natural](#)

[Resources web page.](#)

Track Birds across Sligo on eBird

Follow the comings and goings of



Northern Flicker male reported on eBird by Stephen Davies at the Wheaton Branch ponds on April 14. (S. Davies photo)

birds in Sligo through the exciting website [eBird](#), an international effort that includes seven portions of the Sligo watershed.

Expert volunteer birders frequently post their detailed observations from these Sligo locations, which eBird calls "hotspots." This eBird site is much more comprehensive than the ongoing Friends of Sligo "sightings" [page](#) (which covers plants and animals beyond birds), but it's also a bigger challenge to navigate.

The eBird site allows users to manipulate the data in various ways. Local birder Stephen Davies has created a summary chart showing the combined abundance of Sligo's birds over the course of a year: [here](#).

You can find Sligo's pages through several routes on the eBird website. One is by going to the list of Montgomery County "hotspots" by and selecting one of the Sligo locations. Go here -- [eBird sites in MoCo](#) -- to see the list. Five of Sligo's sites are numbers 26 (Wheaton Branch stormwater ponds), 67 (the Park from Kemp Mill to Wayne), 79 (Wayne to Dennis), 88 (Dennis to New Hampshire), and 92 (LongBranch from Carroll to Piney Branch).

Another way to find the sites in Sligo (including two that are not on the list) is through the [map of eBird hotspots in MoCo](#). Zoom in using the plus-sign in the lower-right. Then click on any tag to access all the data for that location. The map includes Evans Parkway Park and Breewood Park.

The eBird site lists 95 species that have been observed over the last twelve months at the Wheaton Branch stormwater ponds just downstream (south) of Dennis Avenue. Of these, 75 have been spotted since January.

The eBird website can be confusing at first, but, in addition to the hot links above, you can go to the home page, choose "Explore" (second option down), then "Explore a Region" from the next page. In the search box that comes up, type "Montgomery." Our county will be ninth on the list of U. S. counties named "Montgomery," arranged alphabetically by state. Then select "Hotspots" and look at either the list or the map.



Stephen Davies reported this Swamp Sparrow at the Wheaton Branch ponds on

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Need to Reach Us?

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Friends of Sligo Creek is a nonprofit community organization dedicated to protecting, improving, and appreciating the ecological health of Sligo Creek Park and its surrounding watershed.