



# Friends of Sligo Creek

## Newsletter Oct/Early Nov 2024



*Photo by Xavier Courouble*

### **In this issue:**

**Sweep the Creek**

**New Kiosk at Green Meadows**

**The Joy of Plogging**

**Last Litter Cleanups of the Fall Season**

**Breewood Tributary Adopted**

**Fall Outdoor Cleanup: Do a less than stellar job**

**FOSC + My Organic Market**

**Native Plant Sale**

**Stream Bug Fundanas?**

**Upcoming Events/Volunteer Opps**

**Recent Nature Sightings**

---

### **LITTER/STEWARDSHIP**

## **Sweep the Creek**

From Ed Murtagh, Sweep coordinator:

I want to thank everyone who came out for our Sweep the Creek cleanups. Over 200 volunteers collected 90 bags of trash and hundreds of pounds of oversized items (shopping

carts, pallets, etc.) I also want to especially thank all the Sligo Stewards who were our cleanup site leaders.

The first day of the Sweep was National Public Lands Day. What a great way to celebrate our communities' public lands!

Our Saturday morning cleanup site at Dennis Ave Sligo Local Park had over 60 volunteers! Our cleanup site at the Wheaton Branch stormwater ponds collected the most: 20 bags of trash and 2 bags of recyclable bottles and cans.

In addition to the cleanups, we organized two Weed Warrior workdays in the watershed during the Sweep. The next time you are in the park on Dennis Ave, check out all the trees that were freed from invasive vines.

Our Weed Warriors and ploggers also pick up a lot of litter in our watershed. Community volunteers are making a difference in keeping the litter out of our streams.

Having a great park system just does not happen. It takes many caring individuals working together.

If you want to become more involved with our litter reduction efforts, please contact us at [litter@fosc.org](mailto:litter@fosc.org).



*(Photo by M. Wilpers)*



Expert grabber-wielding by a young Sweeper



A cub scout pack in Section 9 with their haul of trash





FOSC Steward Chris Johnson and volunteer Alan Bowser ready for the Section 4 cleanup



Litter hotspot coordinator Nick Clements and FOSC Steward Jesse Johnson with the haul near East-West Highway in Section 1



Weed Warriors getting ready to pull invasive vines at Sligo Creek Parkway and Dennis Ave. during the Sweep. Thanks to all the WW volunteers and the WW leader, Greg Odegarden (2nd from right)!

## SLIGO STEWARDSHIP

# New Kiosk at Green Meadows park

Through the efforts of Kristin Zimmer, FOSC Steward and Board member, Carol Summers, PG Parks Trails Maintenance manager, and team members Landon Sellers and Jack Flynt, Section 1 now has a third kiosk along Sligo Creek. It's in





Almost there.



The newest of the kiosks in Sligo and Long Branch

Green Meadows park near Roanoke Street. The same team installed the "powerline meadow" kiosk last October.

We are thrilled to expand FOSC's presence in this part of the park. The kiosk is part of our efforts to reach out to PG County residents along the Sligo.

We are also looking forward to more collaborations with PG Parks staff on ways to enhance the park experience. Do you have an idea? Let us know and we'll ask about it!"



Thank you, Carol, Jack, and Landon

*(Photos: Kristen Zimmer)*

## LITTER

# The Joy of Plogging

'Plogging' is the act of collecting litter as you walk or jog, combining the words in Swedish for 'picking up' (*plocka upp*) with 'jogging'. It's a way to get exercise and care for the environment at



the same time.

Ploggers make a big dent in the litter dropped, tossed or washed into the parks and creeks. Plus, litter picked up soon after it is dropped doesn't have much time to shed microplastics or metals, create a hazard, or get eaten by animals or fish. Studies show that people are more mindful about not littering when an area looks clean and cared for. Helping the land and water stay clean and healthy delivers many dividends to the plogger and the park.



*(Potomac Conservancy photo)*

## LITTER

# Last Litter Hotspot Cleanups of the Fall season

This fall, the FOSC litter hotspot program partnered with Anacostia Riverkeeper to sort and weigh trash that our volunteers collected at the monthly hotspot cleanups.

On Nov. 2, the Wheaton Branch stormwater ponds were the scene of intense collecting/sorting/weighing. Have you ever wondered what it's like to participate in a cleanup? Check out this superspeed video:







The dry weather this fall exposed formerly submerged pond edges and volunteers found plenty of trash.



All ages helped out.



This bank was heavily littered before volunteers got to work.



FOSC Vice President Ed Murtagh organizes cleanups and participates.





Trey Sherard, the Anacostia riverkeeper, explained that styrofoam food containers are banned in Maryland.



Under the direction of FOSC partner Anacostia Riverkeeper, volunteers sorted the types of trash they found for pollution reports to public officials.

See more pics on the [Sweep the Creek photos page](#) of the FOSC website.

*(Photos and captions by Susan DeFord)*

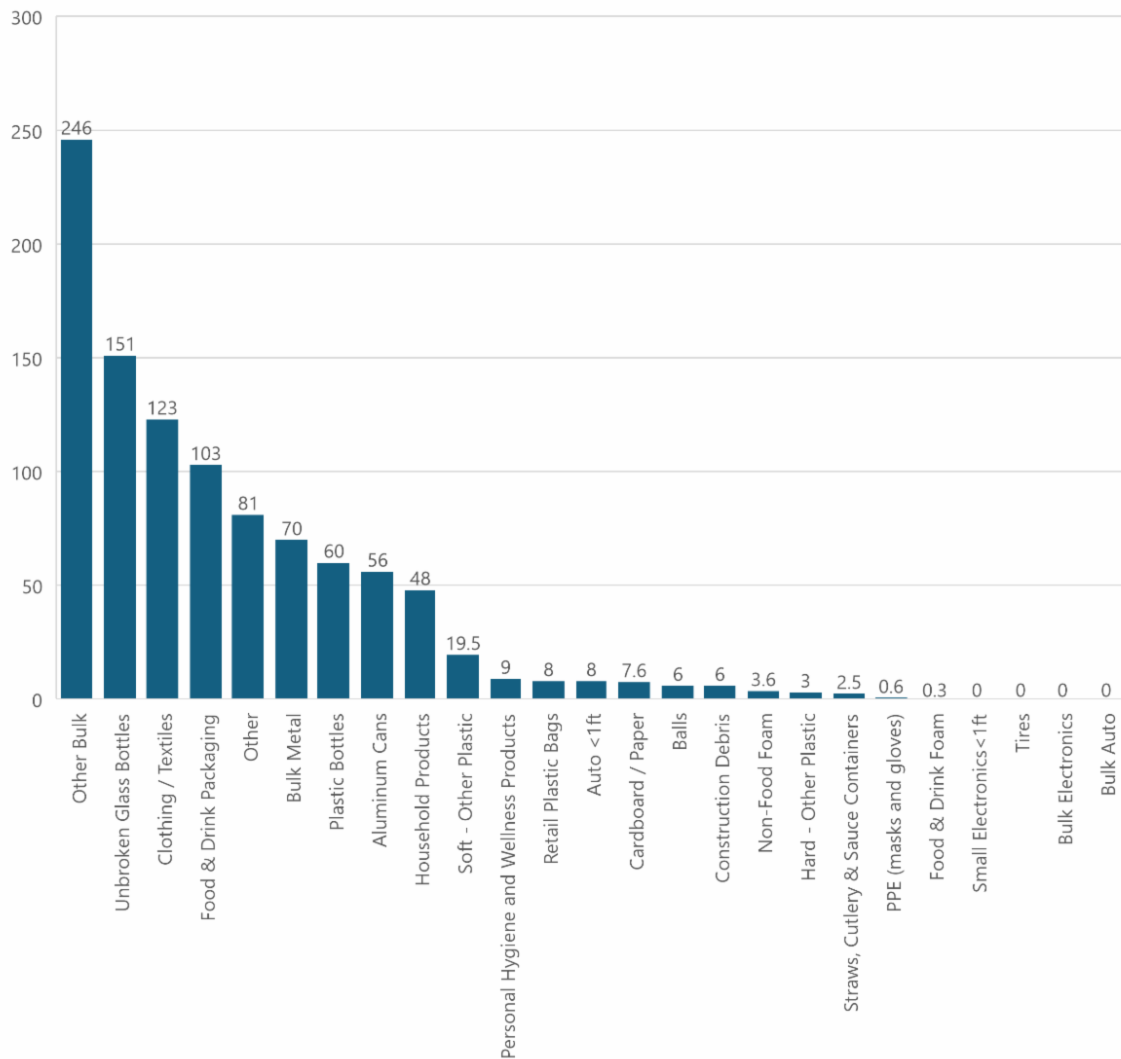
In the afternoon on Nov. 2, the Long Branch cleanup volunteers had a trashfest, collecting 242 pounds of bulk items and 10 bags of trash and recyclables in 2 hours. The preponderance of bulk items suggests that a lot of dumping is going on. We are discussing ways that the situation can be addressed with Parks and other community groups.

### **The sorting and weighing results**

The chart below combines the findings from the four FOSC litter hotspot cleanups (at Long Branch, Wheaton Branch, and Dale Drive Neighborhood Park) this Fall where Anacostia Riverkeeper sorted and weighed the litter that volunteers collected.



Litter Hotspot Cleanups Aug - Nov 2024  
in pounds



*(click the chart to see a larger version)*

*Data reported by Anacostia Riverkeeper*

## INVASIVE PLANTS/WEED WARRIORS/STEWARDSHIP

# Breewood Tributary: Adopted

Good news! A third site, in Sligo Woods neighborhood along the Breewood tributary of Sligo Creek, has been adopted by Weed Warrior Jane Zagajeski.

Breewood tributary originates from two stormwater outfall pipes that convey water underneath University Boulevard from University Towers, Northwood High School, and from University Blvd. itself.



This important stormwater network went through an intensive restoration and Green Streets collaboration in 2015 with Dept. of Environmental Protection, FOSC, Northwood Presbyterian Church, the Sligo Woods community, and the Warwick and University Towers.

Since the 2015 restoration work, non-native invasive plants have started to overrun the trees at the site.



*Breewood tributary runs west from University Boulevard to Sligo Creek*

**[Read about the extensive, multi-site restoration work](#)** in the Breewood Tributary area starting in 2014.

### **Roses and thorns**

Jane, who recently moved into the Sligo Woods community, wanted to free trees being choked by porcelainberry vines. But she found that infestations of large thorny multiflora roses made getting to the porcelainberry nearly impossible. She contacted the Sligo Wednesday Morning Weed Warrior work group to get help.

Over two workdays, Sligo Weed Warriors pulled using weed wrenches and cleared away the multiflora rose bushes and many other non-native invasive plants. Rochelle Bartolomei, Director of the Native Plant program at Parks' Pope Farm nursery, gave Jane seeds to re-establish native plants in the cleared worksites. Great teamwork, everyone!





*Before: "Ack!"*  
One invasive plant  
versus another  
equals an  
overwhelming  
infestation



*After: Done!* A very productive 2 work sessions cleared out the  
invasives. Who knew there were several trees under the tangled,  
thorny scrub?

*(Photos by Webb Smedley)*





Jane Zagajeski spreading native plant seedheads in the area cleared by the Wed. morning Weed Warrior group.

**"Being a weed warrior allows me to spend time outside, in nature, while also making a positive impact on local ecosystems. My favorite part about clearing invasive plants is discovering the amazing native plants that are underneath and giving them a better chance to grow and thrive. At the Breewood site, there is goldenrod, milkweed, cardinal flower, and ferns, and native trees from dogwood to sycamore - all ready to live their lives free from porcelainberry!"**

**--Jane Zagajeski**

Are you a Weed Warrior who might be interested in adopting parkland in our watershed? Friends of Sligo Creek is willing to help! Contact us at [invasives@fosc.org](mailto:invasives@fosc.org). We will provide tools and person-power to help get you started.

---

## **NATURAL HISTORY**

# **Fall Outdoor Cleanup: Do a less than stellar job**

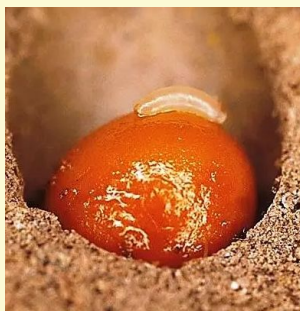




Fall cleanup is traditional chore in households with yards. But consider saving yourself some work and helping the environment at the same time:

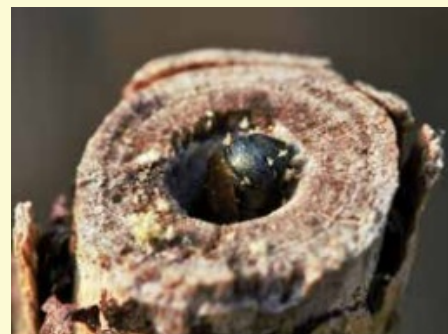
**Leave the leaves!** In a pile in a corner, in your flower beds, in a simple compost bin available from MoCo at no cost. Leaves build the soil, insulate plants, and crucially provide habitat for pollinators and small animals. No leaves means no fireflies, moths, butterflies, toads, and other animals that depend on leaves for habitat. Avoid mowing the leaves, which chops up overwintering caterpillars and eggs that will become next year's pollinators.

**Leave the spent flower stalks!** If the center is hollow or has a soft pithy center, cut them to 1-2' stalks but don't remove them. They are winter housing for bumblebees who use them to deposit an egg attached to a ball of nectar and pollen (sometimes called "bee bread"). Over the winter the egg will hatch and the larva will feed on the nectar/pollen mixture until ready to emerge as an adult in April/May.



A newly hatched bumble bee larva on top of its food source - a ball of nectar and pollen.

The larva stays sealed in the stalk throughout the winter.



A bee in a cavity nest emerging in spring.

About ~90% of native species of bees are solitary; 70% build nests underground, 30%

## OUTREACH

# FOSC at My Organic Market (MOM's)

What was FOSC doing at a grocery store?

Letting people know about FOSC, our programs and volunteer events, and the importance of protecting the creeks and parks in the Sligo watershed!



**Our thanks to MOM's Organic Market in Silver Spring** for including us in the 3-day grand opening event and donating to FOSC, and to our enthusiastic volunteers who talked with shoppers, many of whom were not aware of FOSC: Andrew, Bruce, Carol, Christine, Dave, Ed, Elaine, Judy, Kai, Karen, Kit, Liz, Michael, Pat, Ross, Sarah, and Webb.

## OUTREACH

# FOSC Native Plant Sale

### NATIVE PLANT SALE

#### Friends of Sligo Creek





Seeds of Change nursery is selling native perennials, shrubs, and trees. Check out our reduced cost shrubs and trees, and pollinator packages with discount pricing.



**Ordering:**  
Place your order online on the FOSC form.  
<https://form.jotform.com/242595208669166>



**Delivery**  
All orders must be picked up in Takoma Park. Pick up times & location:  
📍 7010 Woodland Ave, Takoma Park  
📅 Friday, 10/4/24, 5 pm - 7 pm  
Saturday, 10/5/24, 9 am - 5 pm  
Sunday, 10/6/24, 9 am - 5 pm

Thanks to FOSC member Walter Mulbry, chair of the Invasives Committee, for running the FOSC Native Plant sale this fall, again the largest order of the season for the Seeds of Change nursery.

An additional 640 perennial native plants are now beautifying area gardens, increasing the permeability of the soil, and supporting pollinators.

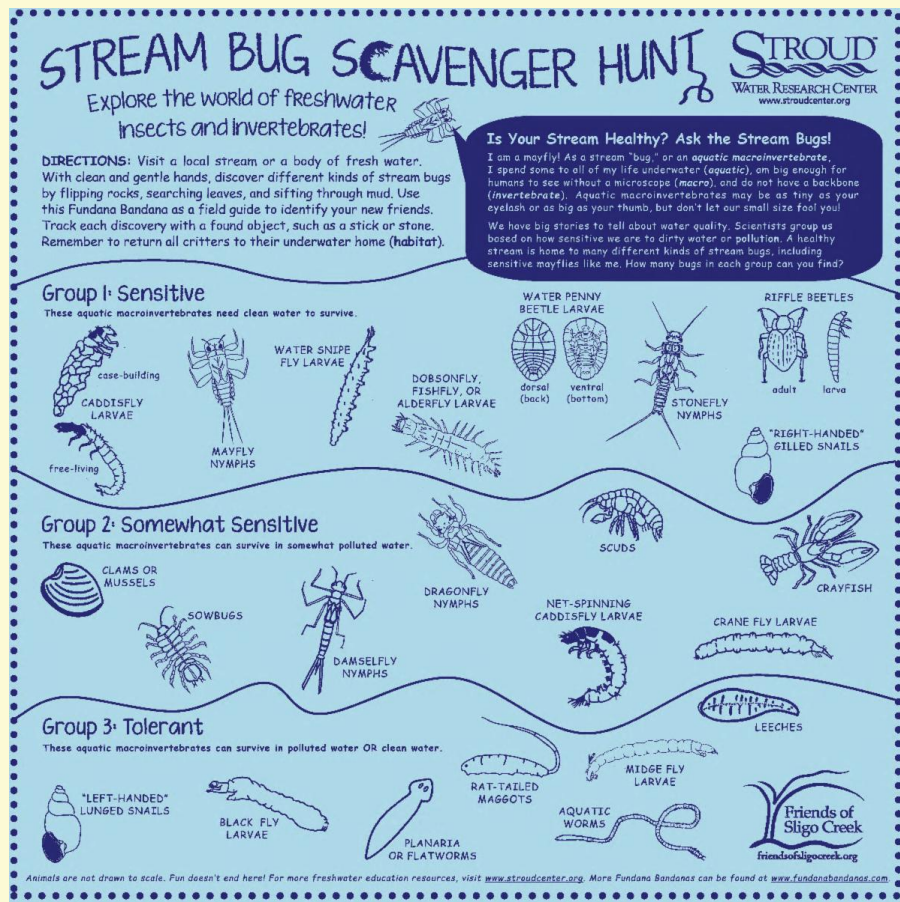
Please be sure to view the entire newsletter including the Recent Nature Sightings by clicking on "View entire message" or similar text at the bottom of your browser.



# What Would You Choose: T-Shirt, Ball Cap, or a Fundana?

For the buggy person in your life...

a Stream Bug Scavenger Hunt Fundana!



Accurate drawings! Bugs that morph into flying creatures! Learn how we know stream health by who is living in the water. Fundanas are 100% cotton, last for years, and have many uses.

Order your fundana from the **FOSC store**. You can have your order mailed to you or opt to pick it up locally. All sales support FOSC programs. Thank you.

**The next drawing for a t-shirt, cap or fundana - your choice- will happen at the FOSC Roundtable on Nov 16. We'll email the lucky winner.**

To enter the drawing:

- If you are already a FOSC member, join the [main FOSC listserv](#) to be automatically entered in the drawing.
  - If you are not yet a FOSC member and are reading this newsletter from your neighbor's copy, please join FOSC [at this link](#)! You will also be entered in the drawing.
- 

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

# Upcoming Events & Volunteer Opportunities

Watch the [FOSC Home page](#) and the [FOSC Calendar of Events page](#) for more upcoming FOSC programs and volunteer events.

---

### **Sunday, November 17 -- Weed Warriors - Long Branch**

**1:00pm - 3:00pm at Haddon and Houston Streets, Takoma Park**

All are welcome to help our oxygen-giving, carbon-fixing trees by removing non-native invasive species (NNI's). We will be focusing on porcelainberry and may get to others as well.

Please register here: <https://montgomeryparks.org/event/weed-warrior-long-branch-svu1/>

- Community service hours are available for students.
- If you are interested in becoming a weed warrior, find out more [here](#).
- Weed warriors always welcome, even if registration is closed. Just show up.
- Bring [loppers](#), [pruners](#) and/or [folding saws](#) if you have them.
- Wear long sleeves, pants, gloves and sturdy shoes. And bring water!
- Plenty of parking on Long Branch Parkway or Prospect. [See this map](#)

Look for the weed warrior sign and the tall man in the WW hat.

-James Gulley

---

### **Sunday, November 17 -- Kestral Meadow/Powerline Walk**

**4:00pm at the metal gate on the 7100 block of 16th Place, Hyattsville**

*Rain or shine*



As the days shorten and the temps cool, we'll continue to search for plants, insects, birds, and the other creatures under the power lines and in Sligo Creek!

Bring binoculars if you have some. It's always good to wear long pants and socks to prevent picking up ticks.

We saw the effects of Pepco's foliar herbicide applied to the invasive Callery pear trees in late August. Will we see fewer grasshoppers, butterflies, birds, and small and large mammals? Will they relocate and return? These are questions we hope to answer as we visit the meadow.

-Kristin Zimmer and John Stith

---

### **Sat, November 23 -- Weed Warrioring event - Mid Sligo**

**9:00am - 11:00am at Acorn Hill School, 9504 Brunett Avenue, Silver Spring**

FOSC Weed Warriors will join with North Hills of Sligo Creek residents and other interested people to help manage non-native invasive vines and shrubs at the Acorn Hill Waldorf Kindergarten and Nursery.

The school is adjacent to the old Parkside Headquarters for Montgomery Parks and to Sligo Creek. We will reduce the threat that invasives pose to the school's woodland and to the park.

FOSC will have tools, gloves, and Weed Warrior Supervisors on hand. We can use your labor and enthusiasm at the first of what may become a series of work events!

Questions? Contact Ross Campbell at [rosscampbell728@gmail.com](mailto:rosscampbell728@gmail.com).

---

### **FOSC GIVING**

**Donating to FOSC keeps our many projects going.  
You can give anytime and in any way that suits you!**

**Make a gift, set up a monthly gift, make a birthday gift,  
a gift in honor of someone, or a gift in memoriam.**

**Just use this link: [Donate here](#) or use the Donate button below.  
It's simple and secure.**



**For those of you who are required to take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD),  
you might consider making a gift to FOSC with part of it.**



If you are at least 59½ years old, you can take a distribution from your IRA and then make a gift from it without penalty.

No matter your age, you can designate FOSC as the beneficiary of a portion of your IRA and it will pass to FOSC after your lifetime.

Consult a tax advisor for these and other tax-advantaged ways to give to FOSC.

FOSC's tax ID number is 52-2345099.

**Your gift is greatly appreciated - thank you!**

**If you prefer to write a check, please send it to:  
FOSC, P.O. Box 11572, Takoma Park, MD 20913**

---

## NATURAL HISTORY

# Recent Nature Sightings in Sligo



Great Blue Heron in Long Branch near Houston on Sept 8 (philipncohen)

---





Common Snapping Turtle submerged (above, just below the leaves) and taking a breath (right) at the Forest Glen wetlands on Oct 23 (Dan Treadwell)



Black Gum near the Parkway & Kennebec on Oct 25 (M. Wilpers)



Above: Lace Bugs in Circle Woods on Sept 29. Each species often feeds on only one type of plant.

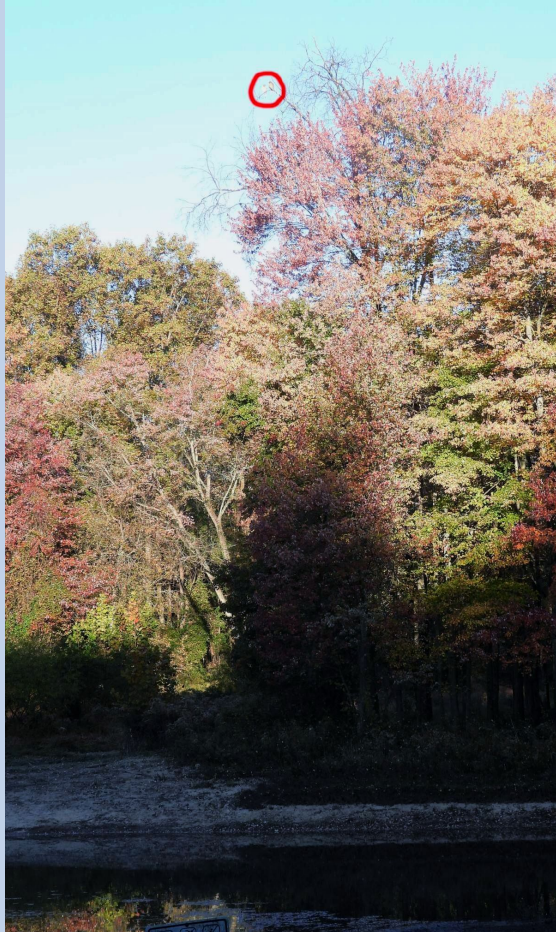
Below: Pale Green Assassin Bug, a predator of lace bugs, along Sligo Creek near Colesville Rd. on Oct 22 (both by Adrienne van den Beemt)



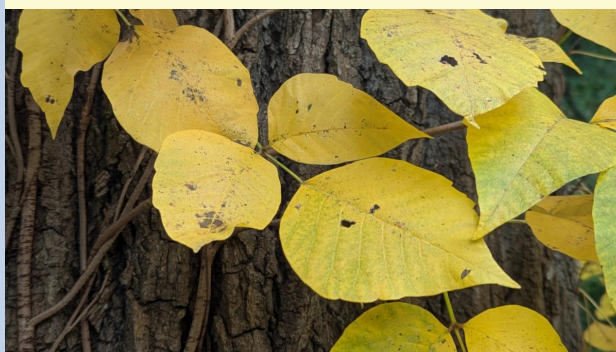


Two treehopper insects (related to cicadas): Keeled Treehopper (left) and Two-marked Treehopper, along Sligo Creek near Colesville Rd. on Oct. 22 (Adrienne van den Beemt)





Red-shouldered Hawks at the Kemp Mill stormwater ponds on Oct 28. At left is their perch. (Dan Treadwell)

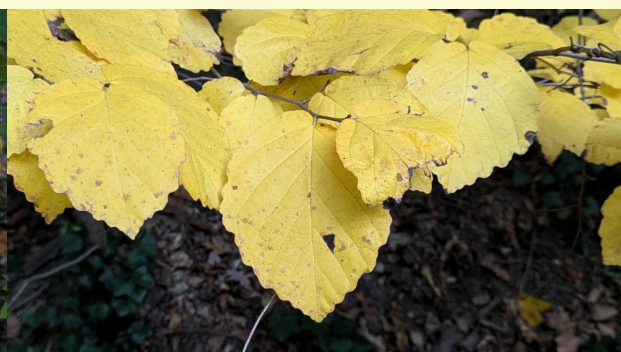


### Fall yellows

Above: Eastern Poison Ivy (left) at Dale Drive Park, and Sassafras (right) near the Parkway and Kennebec

Below: Mockernut Hickory (left) and Witch-hazel (right) along the parkway near Kennebec

All on Oct 25 (M. Wilpers)







Eastern Tiger Swallowtail caterpillar near the Parkway and Kennebec on Oct 20 (Leaf Grabenstetter)



Thread-waisted Sand Wasp near Wayne and Cedar on Oct 23 (maragay)



Two female Wood Ducks (left) and a male at the Beltway stormwater ponds on Oct 20 (Dan Treadwell)

---

Photo selection and captions by Michael Wilpers (questions or comments, [naturalhistory@fosc.org](mailto:naturalhistory@fosc.org)). All photos taken from the iNaturalist project, "Fauna and Flora of the Sligo Creek Watershed" ([Fauna and Flora of the Sligo Creek Watershed · iNaturalist](#)). Photo credits reflect those provided in the iNaturalist system.

---

## Need to Reach Us?

President (Elaine Lamirande): [president@fosc.org](mailto:president@fosc.org)

Invasive Plants/RIP (Walter Mulbry): [invasives@fosc.org](mailto:invasives@fosc.org)

Litter/Sweep the Creek (Ed Murtagh): [litter@fosc.org](mailto:litter@fosc.org)

Advocacy (Kit Gage): [advocacy@fosc.org](mailto:advocacy@fosc.org)

Natural History (Michael Wilpers): [naturalhistory@fosc.org](mailto:naturalhistory@fosc.org)



Stormwater (Elaine Lamirande): [stormwater@fosc.org](mailto:stormwater@fosc.org)

Water Quality (Dean Tousley): [waterquality@fosc.org](mailto:waterquality@fosc.org)

Outreach (Sergio Obadia): [outreach@fosc.org](mailto:outreach@fosc.org)

Treasurer (Tom Walton): [treasurer@fosc.org](mailto:treasurer@fosc.org)

Webmaster (Christine Dunathan): [webmaster@fosc.org](mailto:webmaster@fosc.org)

Newsletter Editors (C. Dunathan & M. Wilpers): [editor@fosc.org](mailto:editor@fosc.org)

---



*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.*



[Join FOSC](#)

Friends of Sligo Creek | P.O. Box 11572 | Takoma Park, MD 20913 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!