



Friends of Sligo Creek

Newsletter February 2026



Photo by Xavier Courouble

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FOSC WEED WARRIORS

FOSC Weed Warriors Pull Top Honors in MoCo

Sligo Weed Warriors #1



We want to share the great news and to convey the thanks of the Board of Friends of Sligo Creek on the great year FOSC Weed Warriors had in 2025.

FOSC is again the #1 watershed group in MoCo for the most certified Weed Warrior (WW) hours - 3, 468 or 25% of all WW hours in the County. Remarkably, our WW volunteers held 180 events, or 28% of all WW events for the year. Many WWs also worked individually - thank you! Whether in groups or on your own, we are proud of all you have accomplished.

WW work in Sligo SVU 3 (from Colesville Rd to the Beltway, similar to FOSC Section 6) was also tied for the most Weed Warrior hours with the hours reported for all of Cabin John Park!

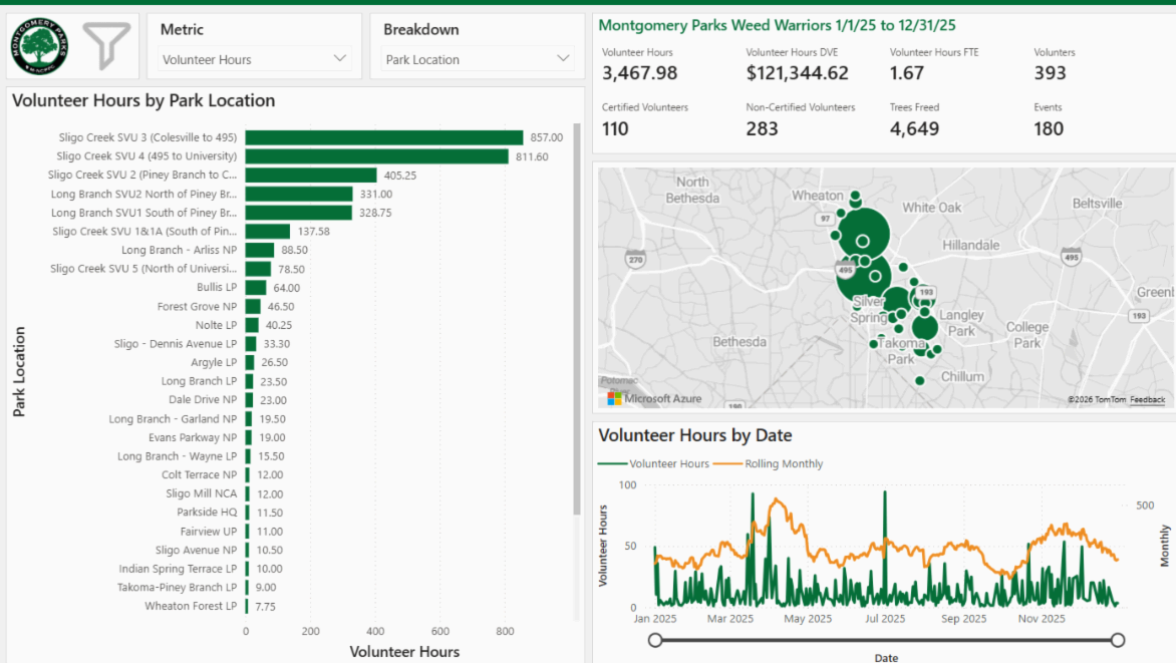
Ed Gertler especially deserves a shout out for again being the WW with the most individual hours, 741 hours, many spent in Sligo SUV 3. Congratulations, Ed! We appreciate all you are doing to rid the park of invasive plants.



Even if you have just an hour, your effort as a Weed Warrior is a meaningful and valued contribution to protecting the health of the creek and parklands.

We hope you will join the 283 other people who were introduced to Weed Warring last year through a FOSC WW event, some of whom went on to become [certified Weed Warriors](#).

~Elaine Lamirande, FOSC President and Ed Murtagh, FOSC Vice President



Click on the image to see a larger version

FOSC WEED WARRIORS

PGCO Weed Warrior Program is Up and Running

The Prince George's County Weed Warrior certification course is now open for registration. The next online training starts Feb. 25. [Register here](#).

MoCo Weed Warriors can do a different expedited certification course to get certified in PGCO. If you are interested, contact invasives@fosc.org. We look forward to being able to do weed warrior work in Sligo parklands in PGCO.

DEPT OF HUMOR

Save for July Viewing



Sligo Creek watershed humor, captured on Feb.1 by Salt Tester Nathalie Peter

NON-NATIVE INVASIVE PLANTS/NNIs

MD Takes Action To Curb Sales of Invasive Plants



Credit: F. D. Richards, *Berberis thunbergii* f. *atropurpurea*
'Rose Glow', 2016, CC BY-SA 2.0

Japanese barberry
(*Berberis thunbergii*)



Nandina bamboo
(*Nandina domestica*)



Incised Fumewort
(*Corydalis incisa*)

(F.D. Richards [barberry photo] and unknown)

The following text is excerpted from "[Maryland Tightens Regulations on Invasive Plants as New Rules Take Effect](#)" in the Baynet.com, Jan 17, 2026 and from the [MD Dept. of Agriculture](#).

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) recently revised and expanded its Prohibited Invasive Plant List, adding 13 non-native species that pose a threat to agriculture and natural systems in Maryland.

These plants were evaluated by the MDA Invasive Plants Advisory Committee, which includes experts from the landscape industry, academia, non-profits, and MD state agencies, using an updated, data-based model.

Plants placed on the prohibited list may no longer be sold or acquired in Maryland after their effective dates. To reduce economic disruption, the state is allowing phase-out periods for existing inventory — one year for potted plants and two years for in-ground plantings — before sales must fully cease.

Maryland Prohibited Invasive Plant List — Now in Effect

Plants listed below may not be acquired or sold in Maryland after the effective date. Existing stock must be phased out by the deadlines shown.

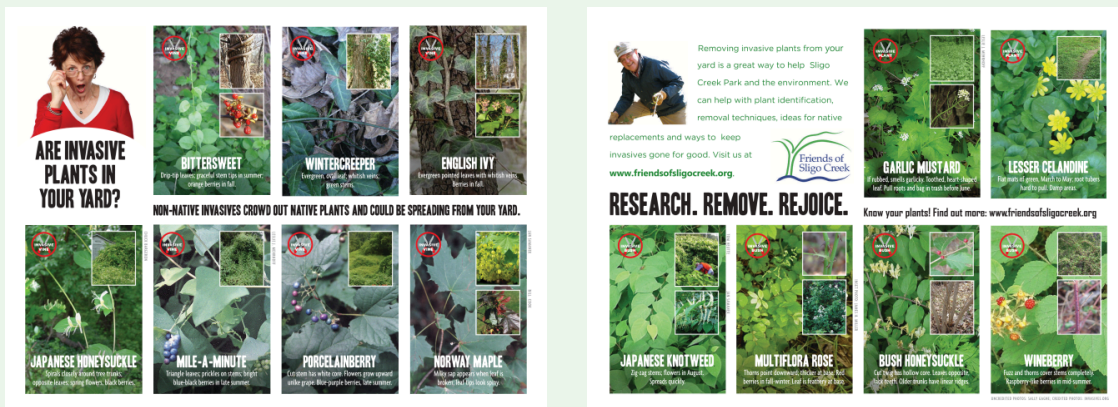
Scientific Name	Common Name	Effective Date	Potted Phase-Out	In-Ground Phase-Out
<i>Aralia elata</i>	Japanese angelica tree	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	Japanese barberry	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Corydalis incisa</i>	Incised fumewort	June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	Scotch broom	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	Burning bush	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>	Wintercreeper	June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024
<i>Ficaria verna</i>	Lesser celandine	June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024	Saturday, June 1, 2024
<i>Geranium lucidum</i>	Shining geranium	June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024	Saturday, June 1, 2024
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow flag iris	June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024	Saturday, June 1, 2024
<i>Ligustrum obtusifolium</i>	Border privet	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Lonicera maackii</i>	Amur honeysuckle	June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024	June 1, 2024
<i>Nandina domestica</i>	Nandina / Sacred bamboo	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Phyllostachys aurea</i>	Golden bamboo	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Phyllostachys aureosulcata</i>	Yellow groove bamboo	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	Callery pear	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Tetradium daniellii</i>	Bee-bee tree	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Wisteria floribunda</i>	Japanese wisteria	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Wisteria sinensis</i>	Chinese wisteria	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028
<i>Wisteria × formosa</i>	Hybrid wisteria	Jan. 15, 2026	Jan. 15, 2027	Jan. 15, 2028

You can also view this list on the [FOSC Invasives/Resources page](#)

Invasive plants can spread aggressively, displace native vegetation, alter wildlife habitat and increasing long-term management costs for landowners and local governments. The updated list is intended to slow that spread while encouraging residents to use native and noninvasive alternatives.

Nurseries, garden centers and landscapers have been preparing for the changes since the regulations were finalized in 2024, adjusting inventories and educating customers ahead of the January 2026 effective dates.

Action item: If you have any of these in your yard, this spring is a great time to prioritize their removal.



Click the images of this Invasives postcard to see a larger version.

Full size versions are available on the [FOSC website under the Invasives/RIP tab](#).

Many people think that because they don't see their invasives spreading in their yard that they aren't spreading. But they are, spread by animals, birds, wind, and rain. Sligo, Long Branch and the other tributaries are overrun with invasives, as Weed Warriors can attest.

Thanks to donors like you, we are able and excited to print another run of the Invasives Postcard, above, to help educate and engage more community members. **We're currently raising funds to print additional copies for wider distribution throughout the watershed.** If you'd like to support this important outreach effort, you can [make a donation to FOSC](#) and note that it's for the Invasives Postcard printing. Your contribution will help us continue protecting and strengthening our watershed together.

The Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Natural Areas Field Guide is also a good resource for identifying invasives as well as native alternatives. It's available for free from [the FOSC store](#) and in local libraries.

Next 10 Plants to be Assessed by MD's Invasive Plant Advisory Committee

MD's Invasive Plant Advisory Committee has chosen the next 10 highest priority species of invasive plants to be assessed in 2026.

The top ten plants prioritized for assessment in 2026:	
Species Name	Common Name
Hedera helix	English ivy
Mahonia bealei	Leatherleaf mahonia
Miscanthus sinensis	Chinese/Japanese silvergrass
Akebia quinata	Chocolate vine
Albizia julibrissin	Mimosa or Silktree
Buddleja davidii	Orange-eye butterfly bush
Cenchrus purpurascens	Chinese fountain grass
Hemerocallis fulva	Orange daylily
Vinca minor	Common periwinkle
Vinca major	Largeleaf periwinkle
Other Invasive plants to be assessed in the future:	
Elaeagnus umbellata	Autumn olive
Glechoma hederacea	Ground ivy
Acer platanoides	Norway maple
Ligustrum ovalifolium	Garden privet
Ligustrum sinense	Chinese privet
Ligustrum vulgare	European privet
Lonicera japonica	Japanese honeysuckle
Paulownia tomentosa	Empress tree, Princess tree
Phyllostachys bissetii	Bisset bamboo
Pseudosasa japonica	Arrow bamboo

STORMWATER

Indian Spring Park Restoration Project to Benefit Long Branch

The mid-January weather was frigid but the FOSC Weed Warriors and other volunteers were undeterred, excited to see the dramatic changes that MoCo Parks' stream restoration project made at the eastern end of Indian Spring Terrace Local Park.

Organized by Ed Murtagh, FOSC's VP, and led by Corinne Stephens, Weed Warrior Program Manager at MoCo Parks, the 11 person group skillfully maneuvered around the edge of the restoration, careful to avoid stepping on any of the 5,000 native perennials planted last September.



A large pipe directs water from the southern edge of the Blair High School baseball diamond and tennis courts underneath the Beltway into Indian Spring Terrace Local Park, which abuts the high stone wall of the beltway.

Images courtesy of MoCo Parks

The project removed 300 feet of old underground pipe (*the blue line in the magenta area, above*) and a large concrete pad and created a set of 5 rock-rimmed stormwater basins to receive the water from the Blair fields. The basins will stabilize the area, which had been badly eroding, slow stormwater, capture sediment and pollutants, and restore ecological functioning to this major part of the headwaters of Long Branch.

Once overrun with English ivy and many other non-native invasives, the project area is now surrounded by extensive plantings of trees, shrubs, grasses and flowering plants: 162 trees, 57 shrubs, 200 Black willow (*Salix nigra*) and Silky dogwood (*Cornus amomum*) livestakes, and over 5,000 herbaceous plugs! The area also has a lot of jewel weed, native grape vines and other natives around the ponds. Many other native species were planted, too numerous to list here. Stop by in the growing season to see for yourself!



Photo by Ed Murtagh

Corinne led the group around the site to strategize how the FOSC Weed Warriors will work with Parks to keep the surrounding NNIs at bay. (See *the English ivy and porcelainberry on the trees above, at left.*)

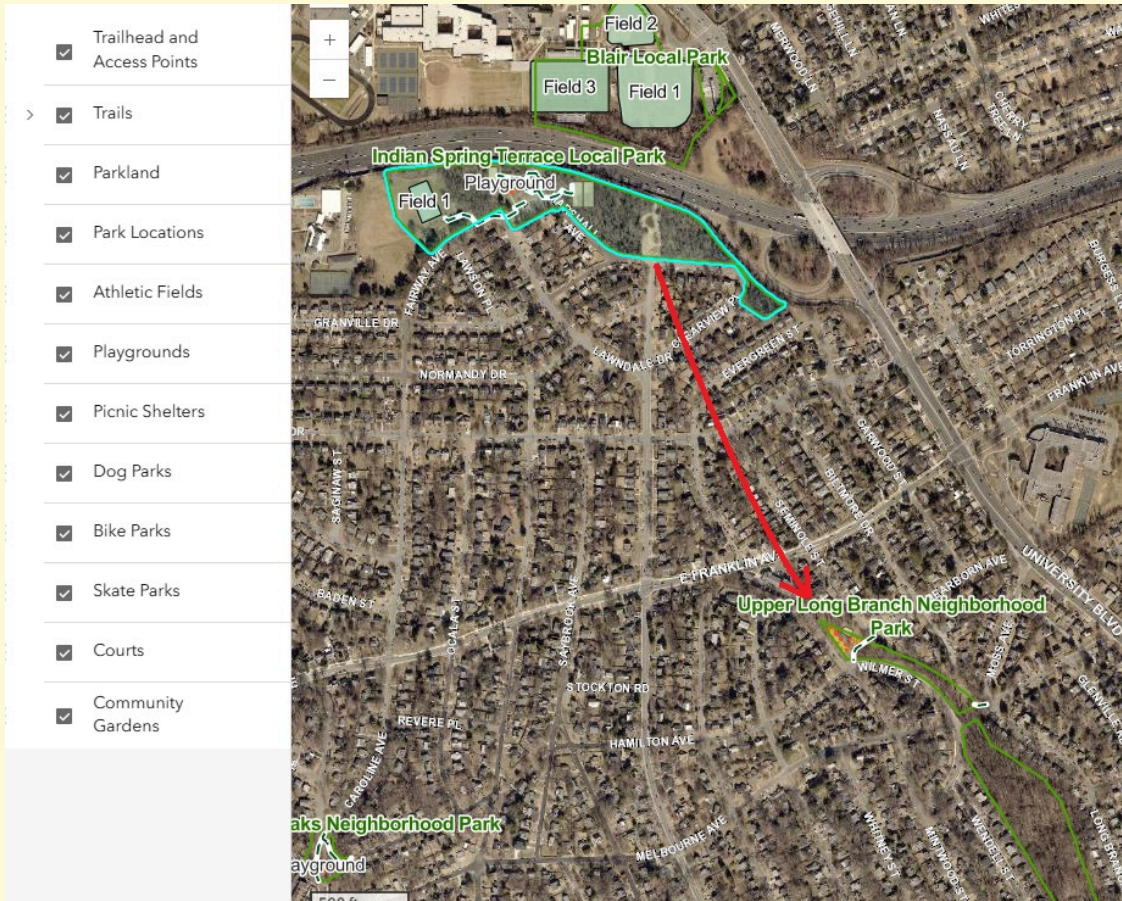
The restoration is an area of significant accomplishment, but extensive future need as well, or, in other words, a great spot for the skills of our FOSC Litter and Weed Warrior teams.

Some of those on the tour could not help themselves and were spotted tackling weeds and gathering trash.

Ed noted, “I am hoping we can adopt the park and engage some of our Litter and Weed Warriors to team up here, as well as have one of our established work groups come here from time to time.”

The FOSC Weed Warriors and Litter Removal teams are eager to partner with Montgomery Parks to ensure the restoration flourishes.

Corinne sent this: “Thanks for exploring Indian Spring Terrace Local Park with me today. The planting for this restoration project (and the trees around the work site) are lucky to have you all.”



Water from the restored area continues southward via an existing underground pipe and "daylights" at Upper Long Branch Neighborhood Park. This view is from MoCo Parks' new interactive GIS map at [Montgomery Parks - Parks and Trails Atlas](#).

What is an Outfall?

An outfall is the discharge point of a storm drain or waste stream into a body of water.



FOSC will be holding a cleanup at the restoration site on Sunday, March 8, from 1:00-3:00pm.

See the details under the **Upcoming Events** section later in this newsletter.

Please be sure to view the entire newsletter!
Click on "View entire message" or similar text at the bottom of your browser.

SLIGO CREEK

Sligo Creek at Chartres

Taking Sligo Creek to France

Entranced by the ephemeral beauties of light and colors reflected on its waters, I have been photographing Sligo Creek up close and personal for over twenty years. Over these years, and in all seasons, I've gone down to the creek, from below New Hampshire Ave. up to University Ave. You may have seen me sitting on a shower stool in the creek with my camera aiming at the water or ice.



Julius says: Here I'm not on a shower stool, but on a three-legged folding stool. I wear rubber boots and always carry a cane because I've fallen into the water a few times on rocks covered in very slippery stuff. So far I've managed to save my cameras. (photo by Melissa Kassovic, 2018)

I've exhibited my photographs in galleries across the country, and even sent a few to Barcelona and Budapest.

This year I was invited to Chartres, to exhibit 30 of my Sligo Creek photographs at the 13th annual Festival International ChARTres - Croisement des Arts. There will be 20 artists exhibiting and I will be the only American. The exhibit is open from March 7-22, 2026.

The efforts of FOSC have made this possible by all the hard work done by its members and the wider community to keep the creek as beautiful as it is.

~ Julius Kassovic, longtime FOSC member and watershed resident

P.S. You can see my photographs at: www.photojulius.com



L'association
ChARTres-Croisement des Arts,
la Villa Fulbert & ETHIEA



vous invitent au

Festival

ChARTres-Croisement des Arts

du 7 au 22 mars 2026

thème « à la Rencontre... »



Sculpture



Tapisserie



Faïence d'art



Photographie



Peinture



Moulage



Photographie



Pastel

Invité d'honneur :
Eden Jung-Wook Park



Collégiale Saint André
2, rue Saint André (entrée libre)



Exposition d'arts

*art textile, aquarelle, dessin, faïence d'art, peinture,
parfum, photographie, sculpture, tapisserie*

Horaires :
Tous les jours de 11 h à 12 h et 15 h à 18 h 30
entrée libre

Vernissage le samedi 7 mars: 15 h

&

à la Villa Fulbert
3, boulevard du Maréchal Foch



Conférences & concert

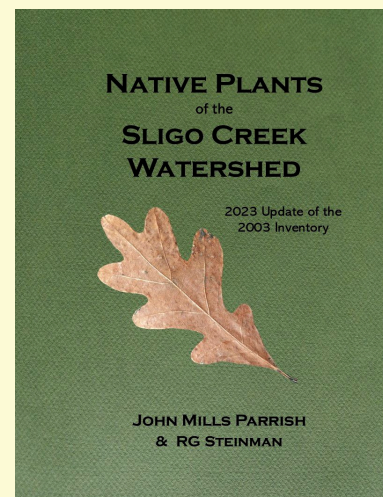
Programme du festival sur le site :
Site web: [chartres-croisementdesarts](http://chartres-croisementdesarts.com)

NATURAL HISTORY

Native Plants of Sligo, Renewed AND Reprinted Soon

We've sold out of the printed book and are getting additional copies printed.

In the meantime, the book is available for reading at Historic Takoma and in the reference section of the Takoma Park, MD Library. You can also check out a copy from the Takoma Park MD Library or the Silver Spring (Charles McGee) Library, as well as through interlibrary loan from any Montgomery County Library.



Updated "Native Plants of Sligo" will again be available for sale in March.

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.

Weed Warriors in mid-Sligo at Sligo and Three Oaks Drive

Fri, Feb. 27 from 9:00am - 11:00am

Meet at the parking area on Sligo Creek Parkway downstream of Three Oaks Drive.

We will focus on freeing trees from English ivy vines. Come out and give a hand to our Weed Warriors who are working wonders at this site. Ages 16+.

Weed Warriors at Nolte Local Park in Silver Spring 20910

Sat, Feb. 28 from 2:30pm - 4:30pm

Meet at the Denver Rd parking lot.

This park has wide open spaces as well as woodlands with a choice array of invasive plants. Please [register here](#). Volunteers must be 16 years or older to join this event.

Clean up at Indian Spring Terrace Local Park

Sunday, March 8 from 1:00pm - 3:00pm

Flower Ave. and Granville Dr, Silver Spring, MD 20901

Come out and help get this newest Sligo watershed restoration, the Long Branch headlands, off to a great growing season this spring! The site was used as a dumping ground and there is still some old furniture, plus bottles and cans that are making their way into the restored ponds and plantings.

Meet at the easterly end of this park at the intersection of Flower Ave and E. Granville Drive, Silver Spring. It's along along the southern edge of the Beltway. The lat/long is: 39.014843, -77.008071 . There is street parking in the area, and a parking lot at the other (western) end of the park at 9717 Lawndale Dr.

[Register here](#). Note the age range for this cleanup is 14+.

Cleanup in mid Sligo

Saturday, March 21 from 10:00am – 12:00pm

Three Oaks Drive and Sligo Creek Parkway, Silver Spring, MD 20901

Join your neighbors at this volunteer park cleanup. Help beautify your community green spaces, keep litter out of our streams, and protect wildlife. Bags, gloves and some grabbers provided.

[Register here](#). All ages welcome.

Weed Warriors in mid-Sligo

Saturday, March 21 from 9:00am – 11:00am

Between Forest Glen Rd. and University Blvd; specific location provided to registrants

Join Weed Warrior Supervisors Greg and Kathryn for a non-native, invasive plant removal workday in Sligo Creek. [Register here](#). All ages welcome.

Weed Warriors at Bullis Local Park

Sat, Mar. 28 from 10:00am -12:00pm

Meet at the bleachers along Easley Street (south side of the park)

We'll start working around the soccer field. Please [register here](#). Open to ages 16 and up. Please bring gloves, and wear long pants, long shirt, and closed toe shoes.

Forest Bathing Walk in mid/lower Sligo

Sunday, March 29 from 1:00 – 3:00pm

Location to be shared with registrants

This forest bathing walk will be led by Patton Stephens, a longtime resident of Sligo Creek. Patton brings a thoughtful blend of experience to her walks, grounded in a deeply felt connection to nature. She is an experienced facilitator, long-time meditator, and certified in restorative yoga. Her approach supports participants' own unique experience of nature and integrating it through reflection. Wear comfortable walking shoes.

[Registration is required](#). Registrants will receive the location and details for the walk.

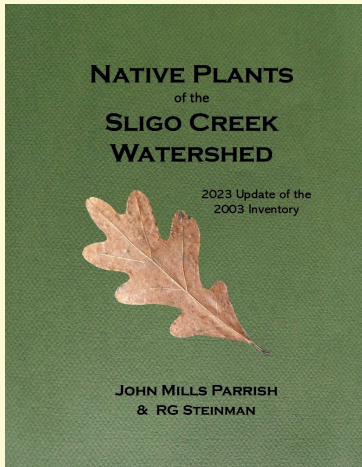
For more info, check the main page and calendar page of the [FOSC website](#).

T-Shirt, Ball Cap, Fundana, Mug or Poster

Order your t-shirt, fundana, ball cap, mug, poster, or books from the

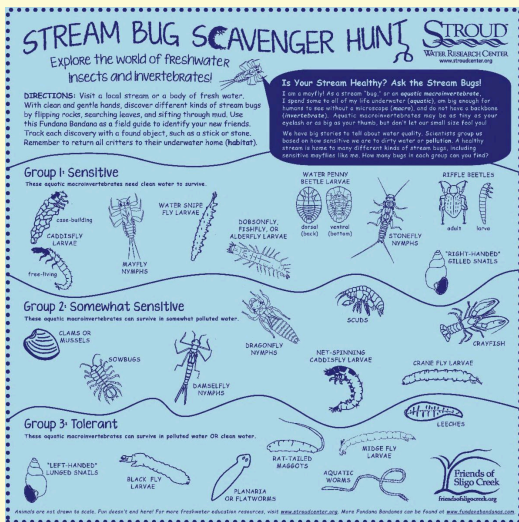
FOSC store

You can have your order mailed to you or opt to pick it up locally.
All sales support FOSC programs. Thank you.



For the buggy person in your life...
a Stream Bug Scavenger Hunt Fundana!

Para la persona que gusta insectos en su vida...
¡Una Fundana para la búsqueda del tesoro de insectos del arroyo!



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

Dibujos precisos de insectos de arroyo que se transforman en criaturas voladoras que alimentan a los peces, pájaros y otros. Descubra cómo sabemos la salud de los arroyos según quién vive en el agua. Las fundas son 100% algodón, duran años y tienen muchos usos.

JOIN FOSC / JOIN THE FOSC LISTSERV

The next drawing for a t-shirt, cap or fundana - your choice- will happen at the FOSC Volunteer Appreciation event in March.

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

FOSC GIVING

FOSC runs on donations! Your gift to FOSC keeps our many projects going.

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.



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

**FOSC is able to accept DAF gifts, gifts of securities, and planned gifts.
Our EIN is #52-2345099**

NATURAL HISTORY

Recent Nature Sightings



Natural sheen created by native bacteria that derive nutrition from chemicals that contain iron and manganese, causing the metals to change from an invisible, dissolved state to a visible, solid one. Near Hilltop and Geneva on Jan.19 (joseph92).

If this were motor oil, it would reconstitute itself after stirring with a stick. Here, the natural sheen dispersed upon being disturbed.



Left: Eastern Cottontails exhibiting mid-winter mating behavior, which includes "dancing" and "boxing," near Garland and Davis on Jan 30.(jimdella).

Right: Eastern Towhee that remained here through the winter rather than migrating south (like most of them do) for the colder months. These birds are considered "partially migratory." This one was seen near Crosby and Highland on Jan. 23 (dylan_stephens).



Eastern Painted Turtle sunning itself on a warm winter day at the Forest Glen wetlands on Jan. 7 (dtread1)



Barred Owl along the Parkway just north of Maple on Jan. 25 (jimdella)



Cooper's Hawk near Biltmore and Dearborn on Feb . 4 (insa)



Red Fox traverses a backyard fence near Park Valley and Park Crest on Jan. 8 (shay92379).

Photo selection by Michael Wilpers, FOSC chair of natural history. 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 & Anne Vorce): [**waterquality@fosc.org**](mailto:waterquality@fosc.org)

Outreach (Mimi Abdu): [**outreach@fosc.org**](mailto:outreach@fosc.org)

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

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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

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