

# Delaware Valley Fern and Wildflower Society

OCTOBER 2022



## ANNUAL AUTUMN MEMBER'S MEETING

**Saturday, November 19 at 11:30am**

### *Northview Through the Seasons My Favorite Native Plants in the Garden*

Join us for the Meeting and Luncheon on Sat. Nov. 19th at 11:30am at Charlotte's Restaurant, 3207 West Chester Pike (Route 3), Newtown Square, PA. Check your mailbox soon for the invitation and RSVP with your reservation check for \$25.

Our speaker for the meeting, Jenny Rose Carey is a renowned gardener, educator, historian, and author. She is also the former senior director at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Meadowbrook Farm in Jenkintown. Jenny Rose has been lecturing nationally and internationally for many years. She previously worked at Temple University, first as an adjunct professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Horticulture and then as director of the Ambler Arboretum. Her book, *Glorious Shade: Dazzling Plants, Design Ideas, and Proven Techniques for Your Shady Garden*, is a delight for the fern gardener.

In her book, *The Ultimate Flower Gardener's Guide: How to Combine Shape, Color, and Texture to Create the Garden of Your Dreams*, she proposes a holistic approach to flower gardening with a refreshing twist. Instead of concentrating primarily on color, it brings flower shape and texture to the fore, helping homeowners make plant choices that come together in an aesthetically pleasing way. The featured plants include both perennials and annuals, and all have been chosen for their ease of care, attractiveness to pollinators, and environmental friendliness. Carey also shares information on planning for year-round color and design strategies for a range of spaces.

Her talk with us at the meeting on November 19th will be about her adventures with the native plants in her own garden at Northview.

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# Field Trip Reports

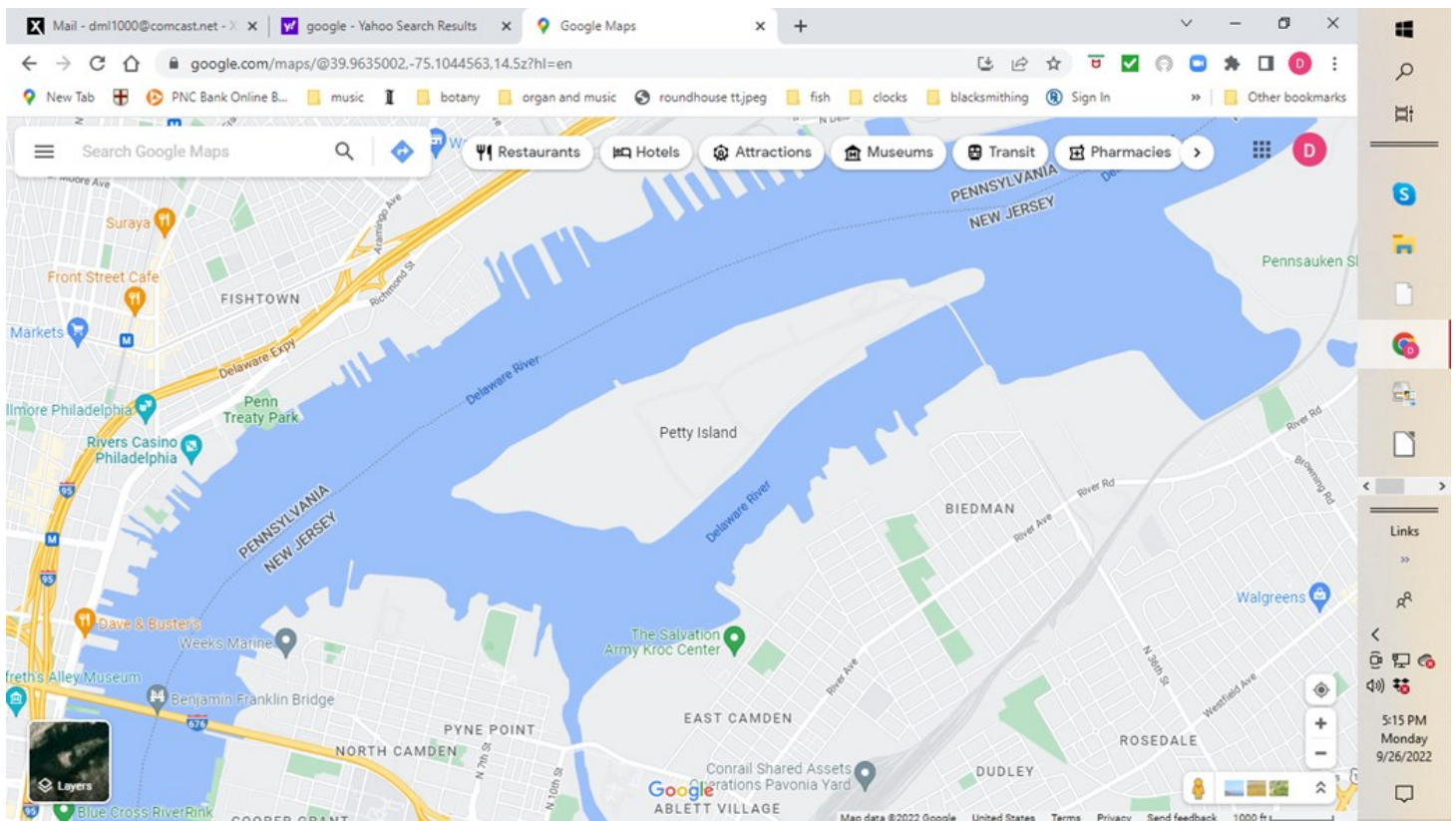
## Joint Field Trip to Petty's Island Preserve with the Philadelphia Botanical Club

**Saturday September 24, 2022**

Fifteen persons attended this trip to the newly emerging Preserve in the Delaware River on the Camden side and just upriver from Penn's Landing, Philadelphia. Previously owned by Citco and used for oil storage and transport, it was under threat of development into an upscale resort, but Citco is donating it to the state of New Jersey and remediation efforts are already in progress to remove prior contamination. Our leaders were Ryan Schmidt, a Rutgers PhD student working on the site (and a PBC member) and Jason Hofstad from the New

Jersey Natural Lands Trust. The island is accessible by a bridge from 36<sup>th</sup> St. separating Camden and Pennsauken, and is certainly one of the largest tracts of open land this close to the cities of Camden and Philadelphia. It is truly an exciting project and worth following over the years. Access at the present is quite restricted, so it was great that we were permitted to visit with Ryan and Jason.

The island has extensive undeveloped shoreline all around its borders. Because it was used for many years as a shipping area, there are a number of interesting foreign species. As soon as a list of plants ID'd becomes available it will be posted on our DVFWS web site.



Above is a screenshot from Google maps that gives an idea of the size of the Preserve-to-be. Education groups will use this location as a way to get inner city Camden children in touch with nature, something that has been difficult up until now. It should also be of use to children and adults, botanists included, from Philadelphia!

- David Lauer

*Field Trip Reports continued on page 4*

# DVFWS Meeting Minutes

## Minutes of the Delaware Valley Fern and Wildflower Society Meeting at the Barnes Foundation Arboretum September 10, 2022

President Rick Reynolds welcomed 14 attendees and then presided over a short business meeting.

- It was reported that we added seven new members since our last meeting on March 26, 2022, six were signed up at the Hardy Plant Society's August 20 Fall Gardener's Sale and one mailed in membership dues from a brochure. We acknowledged one new member, Barbara Tiffany, who was in attendance with her husband and grandson.
- The minutes from our March 26, 2022 Zoom meeting were approved.
- The financial report was not prepared in time for the meeting. In lieu of the report, Rick quoted the bank balance of \$5,145 from the March meeting and estimated the current bank balance to be approximately the same, with new member dues being offset by printing cost for new brochures.
- It was reported that we have two open officers' positions as a result of the resignations of Michael Brooks, Vice President and Donna Wilhelm, Secretary. Leslie Morris-Smith was nominated for the VP position; the nomination was approved and Leslie accepted. The Secretary position remains open at this time.
- With this meeting at Barnes being our first in-person meeting since November 2019, it was recognized that we missed our customary quinquennial dinner party. There was general agreement to consider scheduling a dinner sometime this fall.
- There having been no contact as yet from Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) regarding the 2023 Flower Show, there was nothing to report at this time. Rick asked those who are members of PHS to be on the lookout for the fern article in the September issue of PHS's Grow Magazine. Rick and DVFWS received a mention in the article.

- David Lauer provided an update on the Petty Island field trip – the date is now set for Saturday, September 24, 2022, and those interested must contact David to obtain a necessary waiver of liability document. David also clarified the date of The Laurels Preserve field trip as being on October 21<sup>st</sup> instead of October 14<sup>th</sup> as reported in the summer newsletter.

- Before we began our tour of the fern dell and other sections of the arboretum, Bill Rein, assistant director of the arboretum, introduced himself and proceeded to elaborate on the early history of the arboretum and the role of Laura Barnes and then finished with more recent developments including the role of St. Joseph's University. DVFWS Founder, Dr. Edgar Wherry was consulted by Mrs. Laura Leggett Barnes when she developed the Fern Dell in the 1930s and 1940s. In the last decade, DVFWS member and past president John Scott worked to restore and expand the beds in the Fern Dell. The former Director of the Arboretum Jacob Thomas acquired new ferns that John specified. Bill Rein planted many ferns, made signs, and updated the accession records in the Living Collection.
- Bill also introduced Clint Springer, arboretum director, who discussed his roles at Barnes and St. Joseph's.

Respectfully Submitted -

Rick Reynolds, President



Covered Bridge at The Laurels Preserve

Photo by Kendra Schieber



# Trip Reports (continued from page 2)

A few photos from the Petty's Island Trip:



This is a view of Philadelphia skyline taken from midway along the northern shore. The best views are from the western tip of the island but time prevented visiting there.

Below is *Calibrachoa parviflora* or sand petunia, last seen on the island in 1880, 142 years ago!!



Above is a late blossom of *Verbascum virgatum*, a European species of mullein that was introduced to the island, probably via ship's ballast.

Photos by David Lauer



# Trip Reports

(continued from page 4)

## Field Trip Report – Barnes Arboretum Tour September 10, 2022

Bill Rein, Assistant Director, led us on a tour of the grounds with special emphasis given to the fern dell. We started out across the great lawn and headed to the tree line where we encountered a group of *Stewartias* and a nearby cluster of cinnamon-bark clethra. Personally, I wasn't familiar with this species of clethra (*Clethra acuminata*), also called Mountain Pepperbush, that can reach 20 feet tall and is native to the mountains of Pennsylvania and south to Georgia. The tree has beautiful, exfoliating red/brown bark, hence cinnamon-bark. Although just past peak bloom, one could appreciate how each tree was covered in white flower spikes.



*Stewartia Cinnamon Clethra* - Photos by Rick Reynolds

Fern (*Asplenium scolodendrium*), and Fortune's Holly Fern (*Cyrtomium fortunei*). Back at the entry to the dell near the *Stewartia* we saw a large colony of Upside-Down Fern (*Arachniodes standishii*). This is a large, creeping fern whose fronds appear to be inverted – the upper or facing frond resembles the underside of many common ferns, hence the common name.

After the dell, we made our way back via the Herbaceous Teaching Garden. There the *agastache* and *caryopteris* (Bluebeard) were in full bloom and covered with pollinators. We ran out of time to see the rest of the collection, the European ferns, and the extensive upside down fern collection.

Our own Dr Edgar Wherry was consulted by Laura Barnes when she developed the Fern Dell in the 1930s and 1940s. In the last decade, our John Scott worked to restore and expand the beds in the Fern Dell. The former Director of the Arboretum Jacob Thomas acquired new ferns that John specified. Bill Rein planted many ferns, made signs, and updated the accession records in the Living Collection.

- Rick Reynolds



As we followed the trail to the fern dell, we came upon the picturesque tea house and a large pond. The tea house was built for Laura Barnes as a place for solitude and repose. The pond was formerly fed by a natural spring; today, it is replenished with municipal water. The pond is stocked with tilapia to control the duckweed.

Although we spent most of our time in the fern dell, we only had time to see a limited area. Ferns of note that we encountered were: Eared Lady Fern (*Athyrium otophorum*), Hart's Tongue



# Trip Reports

(Continued from page 5)

## REQUEST FOR FERN EXPERTISE in the Barnes Fern Dell:

In the Plant Records, there are now 431 ferns planted in different beds or locations at the Barnes Arboretum. Some of the ferns are no longer living in the same bed or at all. Bill Rein asked for our experts to help him find these, and point out which tags to remove before winter. If you can help with fern ID like this for even a couple of hours this fall, that would be great. Please email Bill ([wrein@sju.edu](mailto:wrein@sju.edu)) to arrange a visit at your convenience. Bill is in the garden on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays in the fall.

## FRIDAY, October 21st

### The Laurels Preserve, Chester County PA

It was a beautiful day when eleven members visited The Laurels Preserve in Chester County, an approximately 900-acre preserve within the boundaries of the former King Ranch. The land was used by the King Ranch to rest Texas cattle that were being shipped to markets in the East before it was preserved and saved from development. The area also reveals some of the oldest rocks on the continent, remains of a mountain range older than the Appalachians. Run by the Brandywine Conservancy, the preserve is open daily to members. Our trip leader for the Delaware Valley Fern and Wildflower Society was Marice Bezdek who arranged a visit for us. As we began our walk, Marice gave us a brief history of the property and the geology.

From their website: "The Laurels Preserve contains almost 500 acres of hardwood forest including mature red, black, white and chestnut oaks, tulip poplar, beech, white ash, and hickory species. The understory of the forest features the namesake mountain laurel, spicebush, witchhazel, alder and viburnum.

A rich mix of herbaceous plants including black cohosh, Solomon's seal, jewelweed, and several fern species can also be found." We were met at the gate by Clint Mautz, the property manager, who took us for a walk along 18th century roadways through the heart of the preserve along the creeks, including a visit to two covered bridges.

The fall color was glorious, and a variety of



Above - ASTERACEAE *Solidago caesia* Wreath Goldenrod

Below - ASTERACEAE *Lactuca biennis* Blue Lettuce - Photos by Link Davis



Doris Fiorentino, Marice Bezdek, and Clint Mautz at The Laurels Preserve - Photo by K. Schieber

interesting plants were seen. The beautiful, unobstructed pastoral views of the estate meadows contrasted, somewhat jarringly, with the poverty of Coatesville through which we drove as we were leaving. There is a link on page 7 to the preserve.

- Robin Hoy, David Lauer,  
Kendra Schieber



# Member News

# About DVFWS

## In Memoriam

**Joanne Ford**, longtime member of the Delaware Valley Fern and Wildflower Society, died on September 5, 2022. Joanne's connection to the DVFWS began in the 1990's via her friendship with Gertrude (Trude) Fuchs, a lively fern enthusiast and resident of Awbury, the Germantown community whose spacious fields and woods contain a wide variety of ferns. Trude introduced Joanne to the DVFWS. Joanne immediately became a member and was active for over 20 years, attending meetings and forays, and helping with painting, setting up, and "babysitting" our Philadelphia Flower Show exhibits. Another link to Joanne's connection to our Society came three years ago when Joanne moved to Foulkeways at Gwynedd, a retirement community near Ambler. Here, many years ago, Dr. Margaret Anderson, an early member of the DVFWS, lived and created a fern and wildflower garden, which still exists along the woodland Old Oak Trail, where Joanne often enjoyed the ferns planted there long ago. We will miss Joanne's cheerful enthusiasm for our organization and its activities.

- Donna Wilhelm

*The purpose of DVFWS shall be to encourage the enjoyment of ferns and wildflowers by cultivating and propagating them in the home and garden; by studying them in their wild habitats, gardens and conservatories; by promoting their conservation and preservation; and by providing a forum for the exchange of information and expertise.*

## Officers:

**President: Richard Reynolds**

RickReynolds5@verizon.net

**Vice President: Leslie Morris-Smith**

leslm5791@gmail.com

**Secretary: Open Position**

**Treasurer: Alice-Blake Simonson**

asbjj28@yahoo.com

**Field Trips: David Lauer**

DML1000@comcast.net

## Membership

*Membership in DVFWS is open to anyone who is interested in ferns and wildflowers. Three general membership meetings are held each year and a number of field trips are scheduled each year to areas rich in botanical interest. The Newsletter is published quarterly. Contributions to the Newsletter are welcome and may be e-mailed to: Kendra Schieber at kenschieb@yahoo.com*

*Membership is \$10 for individuals or \$14 for two members at the same address per year or \$28 and \$39, respectively for three years. Dues are payable to DVFWS and mailed to:*

**Alice-Blake Simonson**  
24 Bridle Ridge Circle  
Lewes, DE 19958  
215-868-0440

**Web site:** [www.dvfws.org](http://www.dvfws.org)

**Webmaster: Leslie Morris-Smith**  
leslm5791@gmail.com

## DVFWS Secretary Sought

The DVFWS Board is in need of a Secretary to take the minutes at our meetings and officiate in that capacity for the business of the organization. The Executive Board meets for planning purposes a few times other than our general member meetings, and a zoom link could be used as well. Please reach out to Rick Reynolds, DVFWS President if you have an interest in serving the group as Secretary of the Board.

## Links to events

Hardy Plant Society: March into Spring 2023 March 18 at West Chester University [www.hardyplant.org](http://www.hardyplant.org)

Montgomery County Master Gardener Plant sale May 6

[Montgomery County Master Gardener Program — Penn State Extension \(psu.edu\)](http://Montgomery County Master Gardener Program — Penn State Extension (psu.edu))

Philadelphia Flower Show is Mar 2-12. Setup is Mar 2 [PHS Philadelphia Flower Show \(phsonline.org\)](http://PHS Philadelphia Flower Show (phsonline.org))

Plant removal is Sunday 6:30pm

[The Laurels Preserve | Brandywine Conservancy and Museum of Art](http://The Laurels Preserve | Brandywine Conservancy and Museum of Art)





Fern Walk - Willow Grove Avenue - Chestnut Hill - Philadelphia  
Photo by Chrissy Steele