

Greetings fellow MNPS Members!

Both as an individual and as MNPS President, I'm overjoyed with the success of our Fall Field Trip Weekend September 16-17. I'm grateful to all who made the array of events possible. It was my great pleasure to join trip leaders Kathy Daniel and David Braun at the American Chestnut Land Trust property in Calvert County. The group had a great time exploring the local flora and helping each other identify species using iNaturalist and deductive reasoning. I met some new friends, both plants and people. What fun!

Thank you to all of our members who organized trips for this weekend of events across the state. I hope more of our members will consider hosting a trip in their neck of the woods, it's a great way to connect with other native plant enthusiasts. All that you need to lead a trip is enthusiasm, knowing a fun natural space with good trails, where to park, where to walk, and details such as access to bathrooms. You don't need to be a native plant expert—we are all going out there to learn and each of us have different pockets of knowledge to share. If you are interested in organizing a field trip, please email Sujata Roy at: fieldtrips@MDFlora.org



Continuing with the theme of my prior President's Lens—empowering and inspiring members to take action—I'm excited to share what several of our members are doing to help preserve Maryland's botanical heritage. Please check out the new "**Member Spotlight**" on page 15 to read about the amazing things that members Merikay Smith and Chuck Woolery are doing to support the mission of the Maryland Native Plant Society. Their efforts give me hope and motivate me to step forward and lend a hand where I can.

I hope you too will be inspired by Merikay and Chuck or the many other MNPS members who give their time and talents to protect Maryland's native plants and communities. This work doesn't require a degree in botany or vast knowledge of ecology. What is more important is a commitment to lifelong learning and the time and willingness to step forward as a leader or a participant. Say yes, it may well be the most rewarding experience you ever have!

Lauren Hubbard, PhD

Above: Lauren in her garden. Photo by William Kilgore.

MNPS Field Trips like this Winter Solstice Walk at Travilah Barrens in Montgomery County, bring people and wild places together. Photo by Bob Taylor.

