

# THE TURK'S CAP

Volume 13, Number 3  
Autumn 2010

*THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DELAWARE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY*

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## HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

The Delaware Native Plant Society is open to everyone ranging from the novice gardener to the professional botanist. One of the primary goals of the society is to involve as many individuals as possible.

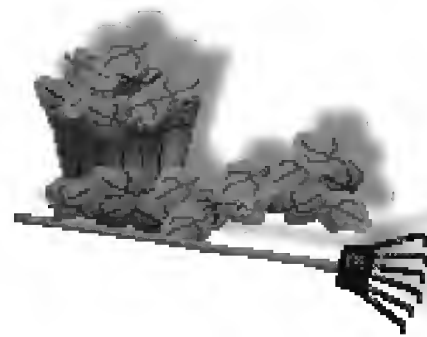
The DNPS is working on some significant projects at this time. We have completed four reforestation projects in the Prime Hook area, at Blackbird Creek in New Castle County and Cedar Creek in Sussex County where we have installed tree tubes around newly sprouted seedlings, and are performing annual management of the sites. Help is also needed at our native plant nursery at the St. Jones Reserve with the monitoring and watering of plants along with many other nursery activities.

For more information, visit our website at [www.delawarenativeplants.org](http://www.delawarenativeplants.org). Our very informative website has all the contact information for the Society, along with a section on native plants, volunteering, and links to other environmental and plant-related organizations.

## NATURAL QUOTES

"Purple asters were at their peak but most roadside plants had reached their seedtime. The beauty of the summer flowers had become the utility of the autumn seeds."

Edwin Way Teale, *Autumn Across America*, 1950



## A Note About Formatting Changes

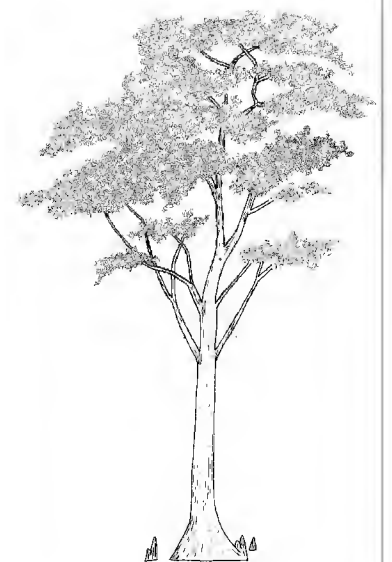
The majority of our members now view this newsletter online. Therefore, with this issue, the primary font has been changed to a sans serif font which is the type of font used on many websites.

Another new feature is the use of the paragraph mark (¶) where space is tight. The Washington Post is utilizing that symbol in such a manner.



## The DNPS Vision

The purpose of the Delaware Native Plant Society (DNPS) is to participate in and encourage the preservation, conservation, restoration, and propagation of Delaware's native plants and plant communities. The Society provides information to government officials, business people, educators, and the general public on the protection, management, and restoration of native plant ecosystems. The DNPS encourages the use of native plants in the landscape by homeowners, businesses, and local and state governments through an on-going distribution of information and knowledge by various means that includes periodic publications, symposia, conferences, workshops, field trips, and a growing statewide membership organized by the DNPS.



## NOTES FROM NEWCROFT

As the new editor of *The Turk's Cap*, I have re-named the editor's column to reflect the location from which I will be publishing the newsletter. Newcroft is my small (one-acre) plot purchased in 1995 just outside of Lewes on the east side of Route One. My brother named it Newcroft because we grew up on a street name *Bancroft*. It is on a small hill – yes, you know we do have hills in Sussex County. It was formerly the Ritter Farm. The derivation of croft is: "*Chiefly British* -- a small enclosed field or pasture near a house or a small farm." The name seemed appropriate.

While mowing occurs around the house and keeps the neighbors moderately happy, the remainder of the property is a meadow – mowed once a year to keep the invasive trees and phragmites at bay. It's a meadow in the broadest sense of the word, because there are eleven trees on the lot. Yard waste accumulates in brush piles which is attractive to birds. The tall grass in the spring is inviting to rabbits' procreation. Black rat snakes come and go – this year they seem to be around as evidenced by the skins I've found twice. I've seen one slither out of the meadow into the grassy driveway that encircles it. When a 60-year old Red maple had to be removed, the snake(s) disappeared. So, I "borrowed" a Black rat snake from a friend who was anxious to get rid of it. His chickens were happier to see it come to my place. It seems to have survived its relocation.

With the above elements on my property, I applied for the National Wildlife Federation's Habitat Certification. There's a [great video](#) about that effort on their website [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org). Now that I'm retired I'm ready to try enhancing my meadow. I hope to learn more about meadows by researching the topic for this issue. Let me know if you have any experience with or knowledge of meadows that you would like to share.

Cindy Albright

## More....about meadows

Meadows are generally acknowledged to be grassy openings in landscapes with trees, often associated with streams or creeks. Meadows can be composed of indigenous species, or they can be mixes of both native and introduced or exotic species. Its plant species are the "hair of the earth" as Karl Foerster a German horticulturist put it.



The meadow garden at River Farm, headquarters of the American Horticulture Society catches light as it passes through their leaves and grasses glow in late or early

light. Similarly, my meadow at Newcroft (above) catches early morning light.

Mowers, blowers, and edgers create tons of air pollution a day. Chemicals used on the average lawn are more often abused by untrained amateurs, not professional lawn services. Most conventional lawn grasses need 30 to 40 mowings a year to maintain their manicured appearance. And, constant cutting requires constant watering and feeding. Natural lawns can function as conventional turf doing what a lawn does. Or, consider converting part of your traditional lawn to a meadow, as I have done.

Meadows, by attracting a diversity of "life," are animated, alive with rhythmic movement, catching both wind and light. No lawn can do that. And—properly designed—meadows require less maintenance and consume significantly less resources than lawn or border. A meadow is a symphony of color, light and texture. Any one plot of meadow may look amorphous but actually it is rich in plant species interwoven to make a living cloth.

## Resources & Reviews

[The American Meadow Garden: Creating a Natural Alternative to the Traditional Lawn](#)

John Greenlee

Timber Press, 2009

Greenlee's dynamic garden designs are paired with Holt's splendid photographs in a beautifully produced, information-packed volume that looks at meadows in the context of garden spaces large or small.

## Resources & Reviews

### *Rain Gardens: Managing Water Sustainably in the Garden and Designed Landscape*

Authored by Nigel Dunnett and Andy Clayden The authors explain the various methods of creating rain-gardening systems. Structures as small as a garden shed and hard surfaces as massive as an arena parking lot each have an environmental effect through the loss of water as uncontained runoff. (2007)

## Lewes Rain Garden - Plant List

### University of DE College of Earth, Ocean and Environment

In the summer of 2010, a new rain garden was installed\* at the base of the parking lot at the college.

Below are the plants used which you might consider if you want to create a rain garden.

It was a brutal summer, heat wise, therefore irrigation was used to get the plants started.

	Common Name	Latin Name	Cultivar	Qty
<b>Trees</b>	Magnolia-Sweetbay	<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>		1
	Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier x grandiflora</i>	' Autumn Brilliance'	1
	Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier lamarckii</i>		1
<b>Shrubs</b>	Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	' Bluecrop'	6
	Blueberry	<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	' Blueray'	6
	Buttonbush	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>		5
	Buttonbush	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	' Sputnik'	17
	Chokeberry	<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>	' Brilliantissima'	13
	Clethra	<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>	' Hummingbird'	25
	Dogwood-Redtwig	<i>Cornus sericea</i>	' Farrow' Arctic Fire™	3
	Holly-Inkberry	<i>Ilex glabra</i>	' Densa'	26
	Holly-Winterberry	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	' Harvest Red'	12
	Holly-Winterberry	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	' Jim Dandy'	1
	Viburnum	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	' Christom' Blue Muffin™	11
<b>Perennials</b>	Amsonia	<i>Amsonia</i>	' Blue Ice'	25
	Aster-Aromatic	<i>Aster oblongifolius</i>	' October Skies'	25
	Aster-Aromatic	<i>Aster oblongifolius</i>	' Raydon's Favorite'	25
	Aster-New England	<i>Aster novae-angliae</i>		25
	Blazing Star	<i>Liatris spicata</i>	' Kobold'	25
	Cardinal Flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>		25
	Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	' Magnus'	15
	Goldenrod	<i>Solidago rugosa</i>	' Fireworks'	75
	Goldenrod	<i>Solidago sphacelata</i>	' Golden Fleece'	25
	Hibiscus	<i>Hibiscus</i>	' Kopper King'	17
	Iris	<i>Iris versicolor</i>		75
	Joe-Pye Weed	<i>Eupatorium</i>	' Little Joe'	23
	Prairie Dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>		50
	Sedge-Tufted	<i>Carex elata</i>		25
	Turtlehead	<i>Chelone lyonii</i>	' Hot Lips'	25

\*Garden created by Tom Taylor  
University of Delaware

## Gardening With Native Plants

### Horsemint *Monarda punctata*

#### NATURAL HISTORY

What do Spotted Horse-mint, Horsemint, Dotted Horsemint, Spotted Bee Balm, and Bee Balm have in common? Yep, you guessed it, they are all common names for *Monarda punctata*, a member of the mint family that is native to eastern North America from



*Monarda punctata*  
Photo: Cindy Albright

Vermont to Minnesota and south to Florida, eastern Texas and Mexico, and depending on where you live you might have grown up referring to *Monarda punctata* by any of these locally familiar names. Regardless, if you are familiar with 'Horsemint' you may have come to admire it for its exceptional attractiveness to butterflies, moths and hummingbirds, or you may remember crushing the leaves for its delightful fragrance reminiscent of fine oregano. The case can also be made for its pale yellow flowers, spotted with purple that rest above colorful palettes of soft pink leaves that your mom might have used as an addition to dried flower arrangements or sachets. In fact the botanical name *punctata* comes from the Latin generally meaning dotted. Regardless, Horsemint makes a fine addition to your perennial flower bed! The plants grow from one to three feet tall and are largely un-branched except for a few short leafy stems that develop from the axils of the leaves along the central stem. It is generally a short-lived perennial, but what it lacks in hardiness it makes up for in its ability to reseed, keeping a bouquet of aromatic one inch flowers blooming for one to two months from mid-summer to early fall. The nectar and pollen of the flowers attract honeybees, bumblebees, Miner bees and Plasterer bees. Butterflies visit the flowers for nectar, including the endangered Karner Blue, which is found in sandy habitats. Horsemint is also a host plant for caterpillars of the Pyralid Moth and the Gray Marvel. Have a deer problem? The oregano-scented foliage is repugnant to mammalian herbivores and rarely consumed by them!

#### WHERE TO GROW

Horsemint grows on road shoulders, in old fields and thin woods, and in disturbed areas. It is partial to sandy soils and is most prevalent in the coastal plain. It is tolerant of deer, pollution, seashore, slope and wind and salt spray. It grows best in full sun to part shade in neutral acidity and is moderately tolerant of drought. It may be used in the landscape as a summer ground cover in a small garden and presents a nice massed display in a perennial border. Provide occasional irrigation in drought if soil drains excessively. Horsemint is perfect for the wild or meadow garden or in the back border. Let it self-seed in a natural area.

#### PROPAGATION AND CARE

To propagate from seed, allow the seed-heads to dry on the plants. Seeds may be stored in a dry cool dark space for later planting. Sow mid to late spring in a cold frame. Germination usually takes place within 10 - 40 days. When large enough to handle, prick the seedlings out into individual pots and plant them out into their permanent positions in early summer. Seeds may also be directly sown in their permanent location in the fall if winters are not extremely harsh! Divisions may be taken in spring or autumn. It is better to pot up the smaller divisions and grow them in light shade in a cold frame until they are well established before planting them out in late spring or early summer. Plant spacing should be 24 to 36 inches.

#### LORE

Native Americans made a tea from the leaves of horsemint to treat flu, colds and fever. It increases sweating. Essential oils from horsemint are high in Thymol, which is an effective fungicide and bactericide and also used to expel hookworms. At one point Thymol was grown from commercially available thyme. In WWI, thyme fields in Europe were destroyed, so Horsemint was grown commercially in the United States as a substitute for Thyme. Traditionally Drs. used the plant as a stimulant and diuretic. Today Thymol is manufactured synthetically. Medicinal uses included treatment of upset stomach, colds, diarrhea, neuralgia, and muscular rheumatism. Horsemint flowers are uniquely attractive and great for cutting and arranging and can be hung in the house as incense!

Bob Edelen, DNPS Member

## Resources & Reviews

[Peterson Flash Guide: Roadside Wildflowers](#)

More than 100 species—all the wildflowers most commonly found along roadsides across the United States and Canada, Houghton Mifflin 1996.

## Resources &amp; Reviews

***Native Plants of Delmarva's Coastal Plain* by Margaret Carter**

*The Wild Gardener Series*, prepared by the Maryland Master Gardeners of Queen Anne's County in cooperation with Adkins Arboretum. This is a brochure that may be obtained from Adkins Arboretum.

**NEWS FROM THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
CONTROL** Sept. 3, 2010

*Amaranthus pumilus Rafinesque*

Seabeach amaranth is listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. Searches of likely amaranth habitat are conducted

in Delaware three times a year: late July, mid-August and late August/early September. ¶ "Early searches for amaranth turned up only three plants, all at Cape Henlopen. However, a survey done at Delaware Seashore State Park on Aug. 26 turned up 25 new seabeach amaranth plants," said Bailey. ¶ All of the known amaranth plants are inside areas that are fenced and posted as being closed to entry. "Since some of the amaranth plants that have been found are only about the size of a dime in diameter, they can be very hard to see – and very easy to step on – so it is important for people to stay outside of any area that has been posted as closed," Bailey added. ¶ "With Hurricane Earl due to arrive today, we will be keeping our fingers crossed that any seabeach amaranth that is out on our beaches will not be swept away before it has a chance to set seed," Bailey said. "Of the amaranth plants that have been found so far in 2010, none have yet progressed past the flower stage, so, viable seeds have not had time to develop yet."

**DELAWARE HIGHWAY MEMORIAL GARDEN  
MARKS 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNIVERSARY**



The Delaware Highway Memorial Garden opened to the public on October 15, 2007. It is the only place in Delaware as a

place of remembrance dedicated solely to those who have lost their lives on Delaware roadways. Memorial bricks are available for purchase for those lost in roadway accidents. ¶ Located on the grounds of the Smyrna Rest Area, the 11,000 square foot garden is a creative blend of native trees, shrubs, and flowering plants. There is a beautiful pond in the middle of the garden. The garden's pathway is outlined with bricks engraved with the names of individuals who give the garden its character and significance. The Delaware Highway Memorial Garden is embodied by the slogan, "Our Garden of Love, Peace, Healing, and Remembrance".



It is a peaceful setting wonderfully landscaped with native plants such as spicebush, dogwood, winterberry, viburnum, joe-pye weed, cone-flower, goldenrod, aster,

Indian pink, and various warm season grasses.

¶ The next time you pass by the Smyrna Rest Stop, make it point to stop in, walk to the rear of the property towards the back parking lot and enjoy this wonderful garden!

Photos and text by Rick Mickowski  
DNREC Conservation Planner

# 10th Annual Native Plant Sale

When: Saturday, 6 November 2010, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Where: DE Native Plant Society's native plant nursery.

Directions: The nursery is located at 818 Kitts Hummock Road, at the St. Jones Research Reserve in Dover. Take Route 113 to the Dover Air Force Base. Kitts Hummock Road is directly at the southern border of the air base at the three way intersection of 113, Route 9, and Kitts Hummock Road. Kitts Hummocks Rd. only goes east, and if you go almost one mile you'll see a large sign for the St. Jones Reserve. Turn right onto the gravel road and the nursery is all the way in the back to the left of the parking lot.

What's for sale: Hundreds of trees, shrubs, herbaceous species, ferns, vines and grasses will be available at very reasonable prices. An inventory list will be posted on our website.

Come early, some quantities are limited!

For more information: Call 302.735.8918, email [ezuelke@juno.com](mailto:ezuelke@juno.com), or on the web at [www.delawarenativeplants.org](http://www.delawarenativeplants.org).

## Leave the Cleanup for Spring: Fall is for Planting and Providing for Wildlife \*

By Sue Wyndham

This year, don't spend the gorgeous fall days on the drudgery of garden cleanup, but instead use the time for planting. Late-blooming perennials add soft shades of blues and pinks to the fall landscape. The blue mist flower (*Eupatorium coelestinum*) reaches only 2", but lavender-flowering Joe-pye weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*) can reach 5' in height. New England and New York asters (*Aster nova-angliae* and *Aster novi-belgii*) attract pollinators. To attract birds and small mammals, consider adding evergreen shrubs or trees that provide year-round seasonal interest to the garden palette while also supplying wildlife with a winter food source and escape cover from predators and freezing winds. Planting that include species like bayberry (*Morella cerifera* and *Morella pensylvanica*), eastern red cedar trees (*Juniperus virginiana*) and Virginia pine trees (*Pinus virginiana*) will provide small birds protection. The Cedar waxwing is partial to the cedar tree's blue berries. ¶ Nothing is more gratifying after a day's hard work in the garden than the knowledge that your property is not only more attractive, but is also serving local wildlife.

\* From the Fall 2009 *Native Seed* Newsletter of Adkins Arboretum

## New Campaign Promotes Regional Rain Gardens: Improves Water Quality in Bays

The *Rain Gardens for the Bays* program hopes to create 1,000 rain gardens in estuarine watersheds throughout DE, southeastern PA and coastal MD. Several campaign partners are working with homeowners, organizations, schools and others to provide assistance with installing rain gardens. Demonstration rain gardens are located at St. Jones Reserve, University of DE Lewes Campus and the DE Agricultural Museum in Dover.

According to the Center for Watershed Protection, typically about 30 percent more water from a rain soaks into the ground in a rain garden than the same size area of lawn. When rainwater from storms comes in contact with buildings, roads, parking lots and other impervious surfaces, the runoff collects pollutants and deposits these pollutants in nearby waterways.

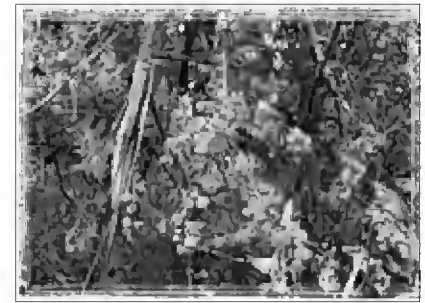
Visit [raingardensforthebays.org](http://raingardensforthebays.org) to register your rain garden or for more information.

# Upcoming Events

## Adkins Arboretum Program

### Is It an Invading Alien? Invasive Plant Identification Workshop - November 18

Learn how to identify common invasive species and how to control them in your backyard. Participants will examine pictures and plant samples to learn to distinguish invasive plants from natives. Control methods covered include mechanical and chemical methods with an emphasis on safety and minimizing the effect of control methods on surrounding plants. Weather permitting, most of the class will be held outdoors. The instructor, Dr. Sylvan Kaufman, is co-author with her father, Wallace Kaufman, of *Invasive Plants: Guide to Identification and the Impacts and Control of Common North American Species*.



*Invasive species* Celastrus orbiculatus fruits

Thursday, November 18, 1-2:30 PM

Fee: \$10 members, \$15 general public

Dr. Sylvan Kaufman will be speaking on what will happen to the Delmarva's plant communities as climates change over time. For more information and to register online go to [adkinsarboretum.org](http://adkinsarboretum.org).

**Wednesday, 17 November 2010**—Collect seed and grow your own native plants. 10:30 AM – Noon  
**Instructors:** Phil Oyerly, Shelby French, *Mt. Cuba Center* For more information call 302.239.4244, or on the web at [mtcubacenter.org](http://mtcubacenter.org).

**Saturday, 4 December 2010**—Adkins Arboretum holiday greens sale from 10 AM to 4 PM. Decorated wreaths, swags, topiaries, roping, and boxwood trees will be for sale, as well as fresh local greens and natural materials to create your own arrangements. More information on the web at <http://www.adkinsarboretum.org>.

**DNPS meetings for 2011**—As part of our organizational restructuring, and as of 1 January 2011, we will no longer be having bi-monthly meetings. One idea that we are pursuing is having up to 4 other types of events per year (so quarterly instead of bi-monthly), such as one workshop, one symposium, and an annual meeting which would include a field trip and lunch, and each one of these meetings would include a short business section (though most day-to-day business is now going to be handled through email among the officers). The annual native plant sale is still going to be held on the same date (the first Saturday of each November). We are still working on this and if anyone is interested in helping us to plan these workshops and symposiums, we could really use the help. Please contact Eric at [ezuelke@juno.com](mailto:ezuelke@juno.com) if interested, and details of each meeting will be on our website: [www.delawarenativeplants.org](http://www.delawarenativeplants.org).

## Website update

On 7 April 2009 we added Google Analytics to the source code of our site to track a myriad of statistics about visitation. Here are the stats through 9 Oct 2010.

Number of total visits: 6,581

Number that were absolute unique visitors: 5,395 (81.9%)\*

New vs. returning visits: 5,376 new (81.6%), 1,205 return (18.3%)\*

Average time spent browsing: 2 min. 29 sec.

Average # of pages browsed: 4.5

Pages with most clicks: Nursery, Plant Talk, Publications

Places: U.S.A. (all 50 states), 64 other countries/territories

How we were located:

62% from a search engine

25% from a referring site

12% from direct traffic

\*Absolute Unique Visitors counts visitors, whereas New vs. Returning counts visits.

# Membership Application

## DELAWARE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

### Member Information

Name:

Business Name or Organization:

Address:

City and Zip Code:

Telephone (home/work):

E-mail address:

" Full-time Student \$10.00

" Individual \$15.00

" Family or Household \$18.00

" Contributing \$50.00

" Business \$100.00

" Lifetime \$500.00

" Donations are also welcome \$\_\_\_\_\_

Membership benefits include:

- \* The DNPS quarterly newsletter, The Turk's Cap
- \* Native plant gardening and landscaping information
- \* Speakers, field trips, native plant nursery and sales

**Total Amount Enclosed: \$**

**Make check payable to:  
DE Native Plant Society  
P.O. Box 369, Dover, DE 19903**

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**DELAWARE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 369  
DOVER, DELAWARE 19903**

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