

THE TURK'S CAP

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DELAWARE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
www.delawarenativeplants.org

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NATURAL QUOTES

Prunus maritima is a true plum
which is one of the most valuable
dune-binders of all.

by Hal Bruce

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.

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.

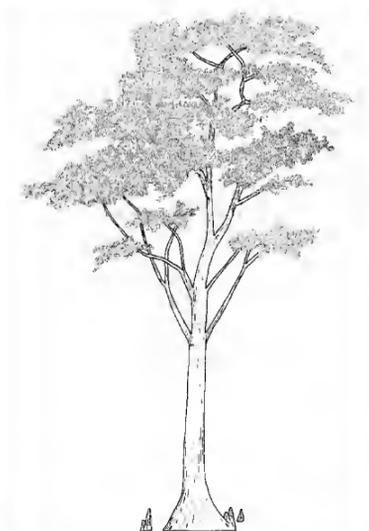
The DNPS is working on some significant projects at this time. We have completed four reforestation projects in the Prime Hook area, at Blackbird Creek in New Castle County and Cedar Creek in Sussex County where we have installed tree tubes around newly sprouted seedlings, and are performing annual management 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. Our very informative, up-to-date 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.



Visit us on Facebook:

[Delaware Native Plant Society](https://www.facebook.com/DelawareNativePlantSociety)



Notes from Newcroft

Beach Plum pie and preserves are discussed in tones of religious reverence by every transplanted New Englander. On a recent trip to the Lewes Farmers' Market, I discovered not only Beach Plum jam but Beach Plum Daiquiri Mix disguised as jam. See below.



When I asked about the froth at the top of the jar, I was informed that it was best to put the whole jar's contents in a blender, add your favorite liquid and then blend. Wonder if those New Englanders ever try that.

On a recent native plant walk at Cape Henlopen State Park with an English couple visiting from Bath, England, we sampled fruit from a bush outside the Nature Center. They were delighted by the tasting as the Farmers' Market had sold out of Beach Plum Jam. Birds had dropped seeds in the flower bed next to the Nature Center, probably from an older bush planted many years ago nearer the entrance door. Several young seedlings are hovering around the nearby rain barrel where we've done some watering during dry spells. (see photo on page 4)

Beach plum is listed in the "[The Flora of Delaware Delaware Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program](#)" - Bill McAvoy's database.

Cindy Albright
cindy@cindyalbright.com

Overfalls Reclamation Update



Photos by Cindy Albright

What a difference a year makes. In July, 2011 a group of 16 people "past their teen years" planted 2,700 grasses (see above) on property near the University of Delaware's College of Earth, Marine and Environment

campus wind turbine. (see below) It replaced 6,013 sq. ft. where the Lightship Overfalls is berthed at the Lewes Canalfront with 7,000 sq. ft.



shown in these photos. The wetland grasses planted last summer are *Spartina alterniflora* (smooth cordgrass). Later that year, members of the Overfalls planted the shrubs *Iva frutescens* (marsh elder) and *Baccharis halimifolia* (Eastern Baccharis, also called groundsel bush) on the sloping bank.*

The plantings have survived this summer's drought and occasional flooding.

* Dr. Evelyn Maurmeyer, CER, Inc.



Jenkins Arboretum
& Gardens

Nearby [Jenkins Arboretum](#) has a Bog Garden, the most recent garden addition and, while it is small, it offers an interesting collection of plants.

Some, like cranberry and sphagnum moss are quite common but others are more exotic. You'll see carnivorous sundews, pitcher plants, butterwort, beautiful grass pink, ladies' tresses orchids, and even the endangered swamp pink. Other bog plants include golden club, marsh marigold, and lizard's tail.

Jenkins is located at: [631 Berwyn Baptist Rd.,
Devon, PA 19333 \(610\) 647-8870](#)

2012 Native Plant Symposium
 September 22, 2012 at Bombay Hook
 The Native Plant Symposium was jointly sponsored
 by the Bombay National Wildlife Refuge "Garden Keepers" group
 and the Delaware Native Plant Society



Bill McAvoy



Quentin Scheidler introducing Jason Austin



Acidic Fen



Interdunal Swale



Yum, yum



Plant specimens for sale



Bog Garden at Warren Grove

Photos by Rick Mickowski

The opening speaker, former DNPS president Bill McAvoy focused on three bog type habitats since Delaware does not have any true bogs. Delaware does have Atlantic White Cedar Swamps, acidic fens, and interdunal swales that support plants that like bog – like conditions. Those conditions include high acidity, low nutrient soils, and soil with high organic content from decaying peat and other vegetation.

The Atlantic White Cedar Swamps are characterized by many hummocks and hollows which are in many cases shady and dark with high humidity. Where there are open sunny gaps in the canopy, there is a wide diversity of plant life. There are 28 species of peat moss in Delaware. The plants absorb calcium and magnesium from the rainwater and release hydrogen into the soil, making it extremely acidic.

The Acidic Fens are seepage wetlands usually found adjacent to upland slopes and the water seeps out at the base with eventual outflow to a nearby stream. They are usually dominated by sedges with trees and shrubs along the edges. There are only four locations known in Delaware that still exist and home to some very rare plants.

The interdunal swales are low depressions behind the primary dunes. They are flooded in the spring and drier in the summer being affected by both groundwater flow and precipitation. There is a layer of peat over firm coarse sand. The dominate plant is bayberry with grasses, sedges and rushes. It is a rare habitat along the Atlantic coastline.

A searchable database of native rare and endangered plants can be accessed via the website www.wra.udel.edu/delawareflora. The database has over 800 photographic images and will have add a photographic directory. There are 2600 species in total. Bill then showed number of slides featuring the plants found in these habitats. Some of these include the northern pitcher plant (*sarracenia purpurea var. purpurea*), southern bladderwort (*utricularia juncea*), cinnamon fern (*Osmundastrum cinnamomeum var. cinnamomeum*), many sedges, roundhead rush (*juncus scirpoides*), yellow-crested orchis (*Platanthera cristata*), cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis* and DNPS 2012 Plant of the Year), swamp pink (*Helonias bullata*), northern star flower, ink-berry holly (*Ilex glabra*), Delmarva alder (*Alnus maritima subsp. Maritime*), marsh cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*), and meadow sweet spiraea (*Spiraea tomentosa*).

Jason Austin, Manager of rareFIND Nursery, Inc. in Jackson, New Jersey gave a colorful presentation about "Carnivores in Captivity" which detailed fellow employee Bill Smith's adventure with creating a large bog garden and container bog gardens. He is a key sales person and chief seed grower for rareFIND Nursery. The Bog at Warren Grove is a 30 foot by 10 foot by 2 foot deep man made bog garden holding a collection of over 600 bog plant species. While there are only eight wild species of pitcher plant there are over 3000 registered hybrids. The garden began in

(cont. on page 5)

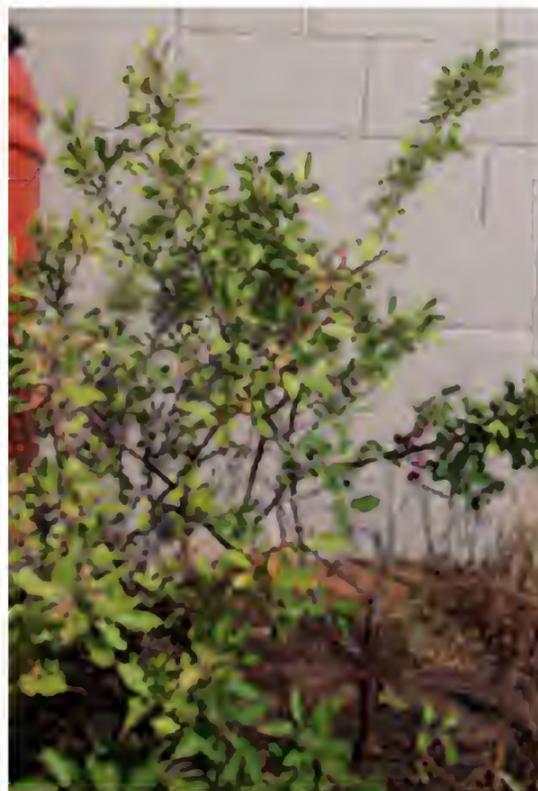
GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

BEACH PLUM (*Prunus maritima*)

by Bob Edelen

NATURAL HISTORY

Take a walk along the beach in late April to early May and you will surely see Beach Plums. It is in the early spring before the leaves appear, that the Beach Plum or *Prunus maritima* smothers itself with clusters of small white mildly fragrant flowers to the



Beach Plum at CHSP Nature Center

delight of coastal visitors. The beach Plum is common among coastal dunes from the coast of New Brunswick to northern coastal Virginia, often appearing in dense, seemingly well-pruned clusters up to 8 feet wide and often reaching 6 feet or more in height. The Beach Plum is perhaps the perfect shrub for attracting wildlife. In spring its early flowers are a magnet for small bees, butterflies and other insects that rely on its nectar. As leaves appear, the dense low growth is a favorite nesting site for numerous birds and in fall as the rich blue-black fruits begin to ripen, grosbeaks, jays, cardinals and other birds, raccoons, rabbits, and foxes relish them for their nourishing pulpy flesh. In winter, though the leaves of the Beach Plum have long disappeared, the dense woody growth is extremely popular for sparrows, cardinals, finches and other birds seeking shelter from the strong coastal winds. Of course human hunter-gatherers also seek out the prized fruits for use in jellies, jams, pies and libations!

WHERE TO GROW

The Beach Plum is a wonderful seaside shrub that is tolerant of both salt spray and sandy soils. So if you live near the beach, the Beach Plum is a natural for your landscape. Not only does it provide year-round interest, it is also valued as a good sand binder and for its erosion preventive qualities. However, you don't need a beachfront home to enjoy the Beach Plum. It will flourish in any landscape that has well drained soils and plenty of sunlight. The beach Plum prefers many types of soil with a pH ranging from acid to alkaline and will thrive with little to moderate amounts of moisture. Give it plenty of room, for it will grow quickly and has a tendency to sucker and thus will spread providing a dense hedge with a springtime floral display that is unmatched for its abundant, showy blossoms.

PROPAGATION AND CARE

Beach Plum plants grown in the wild will transplant very poorly, therefore propagation is best accomplished from either seed or rooted cuttings. From seed, pick fruits as soon as they ripen and clean ripe plums of all pulp. Plant the seed in flats or small community pots, 1/2 inch deep in a mixture of sand and peat moss. Cover the flat/pot with a fine mesh screen to protect from mice, and place in a cold frame out of direct sunlight as soon as possible. During prolonged dry spells, the seeds may require occasional watering. The seeds require a minimum 2 - 3 months cold stratification and can be rather slow to germinate, sometime taking up to 18 months before sprouting. Scarifying the seeds lightly before planting may improve germination. Once the seedlings have developed four leaves, gently pull them out of the flat and plant into individual pots. Grow them in a greenhouse or cold frame for their first winter and plant them out in late spring or early summer of the following year. Mid-July is the best time to take stem cuttings for propagation. Take cutting of half ripe wood and treat with Rootone and place in a mixture of sand and peat moss. Cuttings will do best if placed under mist or in a closed plastic bag placed in a location where it will receive good light but not direct sunlight.

(cont. on page 5)

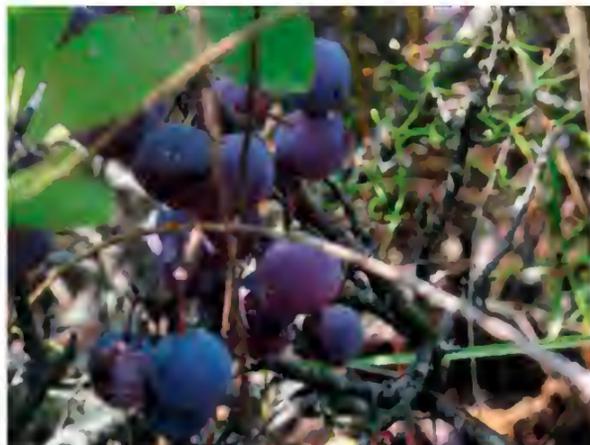
Resources and Reviews

Link to Bog Symposium brochure

https://imageserv.team-logic.com/mediaLibrary/136/symposium_announcement.pdf

Gardening With Native Plants

(cont. from page 4)



The bag should be opened occasionally to allow air circulation. When cuttings have developed a good root system, transplant them into three- to four-inch pots to grow on. The Beach Plum has hermaphrodite flowers, so there is no need for male and female plants to produce fruit.

LORE

The Beach Plum was used by native Americans for its fruit either eaten fresh or dried for later use during the winter months and dyes were made from both the leaves and fruits. Today fruits are collected both from wild and cultivated stocks. The size and quality of fruits may vary widely and people zealously protect their 'secret spots' for collecting this treasured fruit.

Symposium (cont. from page 3)

2008 and has grown and matured into a beautiful and colorful bog garden. The same techniques can be used to create container bog gardens using peat moss with very small holes drilled in the bottom of the container. The catalogue features a "Bog in a Box" kit. Plastic pots are used so they won't crack over the winter. The three key factors to growing pitcher plants are the sandy/peaty soil mix, full sun, and rain water or distilled water. Public water sources usually end up killing the plants. The three don'ts are: don't fertilize the plants, don't ever let them dry out, and don't use tap water. And finally, never, ever collect or dig plants from the wild. Purchase them from reputable growers like rareFIND nursery at www.rarefindnursery.com.

Various bog plants were available for purchase and there were two samples of bog gardens in a pot on display. After the presentation, all enjoyed a wonderful buffet style lunch. In addition, one pitcher plant and two gardening books were raffled off to three lucky winners.

A big thank you to Quentin Scheidler for organizing another outstanding symposium! If you have any suggestions for future symposium topics, please contact Eric Wahl ericwahl@me.com with your suggestions.

Article by: Rick Mickowski (DNREC) Conservation Planner, Information and Education Coordinator, New Castle Conservation District

Rick.Mickowski@state.de.us



Invasive Species Control Efforts Underway at Society's Adopted Wetlands in Big Oak Park

On September 24, DNPS member Rick McCorkle met with Kris Spalding who works for Kent County Parks. Rick and Kris toured Big Oak Park wetlands which were adopted by the Delaware Native Plant Society, assessing the extent of invasion by common reed (*Phragmites australis*). A game plan was mapped out, and Rick provided Kris with a supply of Rodeo, which is a glyphosate herbicide approved for use in wetlands, and a non-ionic sticker/surfactant which will help the herbicide to adhere to, and penetrate, the leaves of the invasive plant. There is a small stand of *Phragmites* growing along the edge of one of the constructed wetlands, and some rather large, dense stands growing both upstream and downstream of the boardwalk trail in the wooded floodplain of the stream which runs along the northwestern edge of the Park. Rick and Kris also discovered a new beaver dam on the downstream side of the boardwalk. Beaver have been active further downstream and in the constructed wetlands on the eastern side of the park, but this expansion upstream is recent. There was some speculation that maybe the beaver were responsible for the spread of *Phragmites* UPSTREAM into a fairly closed canopy woodland environment (not where you typically find *Phragmites*!). Kris is a certified pesticide applicator, and he began treating the *Phragmites* on the 24th. The herbicide and surfactant were purchased by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service who, along with DNPS, also contributed resources toward establishment of a native plant community in the buffer areas surrounding the constructed wetlands.

Richard C. McCorkle, Fish & Wildlife Biologist
[302-653-9152, ext. 117](tel:302-653-9152)

Delaware Native Plant Society Accepting Nominations for 2013 Delaware Native Plant of the Year

Do you have a favorite Delaware native plant that you would like to see promoted for use in landscaping or wildlife habitat restoration?

If so, we'd like to hear from you!

We're looking for nominations for the 2012 Delaware Native Plant of the Year. Because the Delaware Native Plant Society would like to make the chosen plant species available for purchase at the annual Native Plant Sale (1st Saturday in November, 2012), we would prefer that nominations be restricted to species which meet the following criteria:

- 1) Plant species is native to Delaware
- 2) Plant species is common or relatively common throughout both the Coastal Plain and Piedmont in Delaware
- 3) Plant can be easily propagated
- 4) Plant is attractive as a landscape plant and/or valuable for use in wildlife habitat restoration (e.g., provides important food or cover to native wildlife)

The winning species receives the prestigious title of DNPS Plant of the Year, will make appearances at all DNPS events during its winning year, and will be the featured plant species to purchase at the annual Native Plant Sale.

Richard C. McCorkle
 Fish & Wildlife Biologist
Richard_McCorkle@fws.gov
[302-653-9152, ext. 117](tel:302-653-9152)

Upcoming Events

Delaware Coast Day

Sunday, October 7, 2012 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

College of Earth, Ocean and Environment

Lewes, DE

Includes many exhibits related to Native Plants and their environment www.decoastday.org

Fall/Winter 2013—[Mt. Cuba Center](#) *Your pathway to native plants*

Lectures in the Copeland Native Plant Series are:

Attracting Native Pollinators: What to Plant and How to Keep Pollinators Interested

Thursday, November 8, 7 – 8:30 pm

Speaker: Matt Sarver of Sarver Ecological Consulting, Entomologist, and author of Delaware Native Plants for Native Bees booklet

[Visit the website for more details and to register.](#)

Fall 2012—Adkins Arboretum

Register for classes adkinsarboretum.org.

Fall 2012—[Delaware Nature Society](#)

October 6 & 7: Harvest Moon Festival, Saturday and Sunday, 10 am - 5 pm. [Click for more information](#)

October 6 & 7: Farm to Fork, Saturday and Sunday, 1:30 - 4:30 pm. Sat. SOLD OUT

DNPS12th Annual Native Plant Sale

When: Saturday, 3 November 2012, 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,
or on the web at

www.delawarenativeplants.org

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**

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

