



WildfloraRI

Vol. 21 No. 1 BULLETIN OF THE RHODE ISLAND WILD PLANT SOCIETY Spring/Summer 2007



Eastern Tent caterpillar web (Photo by Robert L. Anderson, USDA Forest Service)

What's Eating My Trees? By Russ Bragg

The Chinese calendar may not contain “The Year of the Caterpillar,” but we in southeastern New England certainly experienced it this past year. Four caterpillars—winter moth, gypsy moth, forest tent caterpillar and eastern tent caterpillar—defoliated large portions of our area, with the first three occurring in record populations at some locations. In this article we'll take a brief look at these pests and their history. Space prevents much detail; if you want more information or the latest control strategies please use the university websites listed at the end of the article.

The **Gypsy Moth** (*Lymantria dispar*), like many introduced pests, was brought to the United States with the best of intentions: to breed a tougher, temperate-climate, competitive silk worm. Unfortunately, a few escaped their Medford, Massachusetts lab around 1868 and found the local environment quite to their liking. Since 1890 we have been fighting a losing battle to prevent gypsy moths from expanding their range.

Gypsy moth larvae are voracious feeders on many species of deciduous trees and, in years of peak numbers will even feed on conifers. Those of you who experienced the boom of the 1980s will recall the green frass covering cars and pavement, and a sound like rain beneath heavily infested trees. Luckily, a few introduced parasites, a virus, a pathogenic fungus, deer mice, and shrews have provided some control. Still, gypsy moths have a boom-and-bust cycle. The latest local boom has been spreading outward from the Boston suburbs and is heading south. If you see 1 to 1½-inch, fuzzy, buff- or tan-colored egg masses on the trunks of your trees, they have arrived. The eggs hatch at about 90-100 GDD* (growing degree days, in early May when Shadbush blooms). The emerging larvae are about 1/16 of an inch long. Over the next six weeks they grow to 3 inches before leaving the trees to pupate.

Nobody really knows the local history of the **Winter Moth** (*Operophtera brumata*). It was introduced to the Canadian Maritimes from Europe about 60 years ago, causing massive forest defoliation through the 1950s. It then jumped the continent, appearing in Vancouver, British Columbia, in the 1970s. When winter moth larvae were first encountered in Plymouth County, Massachusetts, in the late 1990s, they were initially mistaken for fall cankerworm. Since their population cycle failed to behave like cankerworm, samples were circulated among entomologists throughout the northeast, and the final identification was made in December of 2003.

The adults ordinarily emerge from the soil in late November, though in 2006 they arrived about three weeks early. They are easy to spot—flights of tan, inch-long moths swarming at night are the males. The wingless females are already climbing the nearest vertical surface, all the while releasing pheromones to attract the males. Eggs are laid on bark and branches, and in crevices scattered throughout the tree. At about 20-50 GDD (late April—early May, when forsythia is in bloom), the eggs hatch.

Newly hatched winter moth larvae are tiny, less than 1 mm. With a strand of silk and a puff of breeze they float upward throughout the canopy. They then wriggle between bud scales to reach the tender growth of unopened buds. Winter moth larvae damage (Continued on page 2)



Gypsy moth caterpillar (Photo courtesy of Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Archives)



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and disfigure leaves before they even emerge. Once the bud opens, the larvae go into feeding overdrive, moving from leaf to leaf, leaving nothing but veins. They feed until late May or early June, then drop to the ground to pupate.

Forest Tent Caterpillar (*Malacosoma disstria*) is a native pest, and therefore the local forest environment has adapted to it. It has co-evolved with its hosts and predators, so populations are ordinarily low, with feeding damage largely unseen. This textbook fact was little solace to the trees or homeowners attacked last year by the worst outbreak in 100 years.

Since the outbreak in southeastern Massachusetts is likely to continue and expand this year, be on the lookout. Forest tent caterpillars hatch at around 190 GDD (mid-May, when flowering dogwoods are in full bloom). The hatch coincides with bud break, causing great damage to new leaves. They don't form noticeable tents; rather, they climb and disperse through the tree.

The final member of the "Most Unwanted" list is **Eastern Tent Caterpillar** (*Malacosoma americanum*). It also is a native species and at this time is not present at outbreak levels. Still, it is out there if you know where to look.

Eastern tent caterpillar larvae hatch at about 90 GDD (early to late April, when forsythia is ending its bloom). Soon after hatching, the gregarious larvae spin a web located in a branch crotch. They leave to feed on the foliage during warm days, returning to the web at night. By the end of the 5- to 6-week larval stage the web can become quite large and unsightly, accentuated by bare branches that have been stripped of foliage.

Now that you know what's coming, the next step is yours. With sharp eyes and a little homework, you will be prepared to choose the control options appropriate for your yard.

References

Fact sheets on various tree and shrub pests:
www.umassgreeninfo.org/fact_sheets/defoliators.html
www.uri.edu/ce/factsheets/indices/0treeinsectindex.html
If you do not have web access, these fact sheets can be downloaded at your local library.

* Growing Degree Days and Phenology:

www.umassgreeninfo.org/fact_sheets/ipmtools/gdd_phenology.html

University of Massachusetts Winter Moth Project:

http://www.umassgreeninfo.org/fact_sheets/defoliators/wm_bio_project_05.pdf

A Message from the President

This year is the 20th Anniversary of the Rhode Island Wild Plant Society, and we have much to celebrate.

RIWPS is a shining star compared to other native plant societies. My counterparts at the New England Wildflower Society look at the number of walks we offer and at the quality of our lectures and other programs and are amazed by our accomplishments. Our newsletter, *WildFloraRI*, is the most attractive and informative of the newsletters I've seen, and I've seen plenty through our newsletter exchange with other plant societies.

Every year we design and execute a spectacular garden at the Rhode Island Spring Flower & Garden Show in Providence. This year we won a Blue Ribbon for "Best Garden by a Non-profit," and we've won the People's Choice Award many times. No other native plant society produces an educational display garden at their local flower show annually.

Our outreach efforts, including the slide show, "Gardening with Wildflowers," and our coloring book, *A Walk Through the Seasons with RI Wild Plants*, have received nothing but accolades. Our plant sales, primarily of plants grown by our three Seed Starter groups, encourage the use of native plants. We have a Garden Tour every other year. Last year's was a two-day tour of both town and country gardens.

Last December we had a highly successful and enjoyable Holiday Party and Auction in Wickford. We've done plant inventories for numerous land trusts and municipalities, and we've provided assistance to schools to help them design and plant educational native gardens.

The quality of everything we do is very high; it makes me proud to be your President. However, there's

An organization such as ours cannot exist without the help of volunteers, and there's work for everyone.

a problem: We're trying to do too much for an organization our size—fewer than 500 members. We have overextended ourselves, expanding our activities beyond our ability to sustain them. We must streamline our organization and put our energy into doing fewer things really well.

I'm proud of the dedication of our members and I'm proud of our accomplishments. But we can't continue without a firm financial foundation and for that we must rely on you. If you haven't paid your membership dues yet, now is a good time to do it. If you meant to donate to our Annual Appeal, but you just never got around to it, it's not too late.

But it's not just your financial support we need. An organization such as ours cannot exist without the help of volunteers, and there's work for everyone. RIWPS has various committees that need new members. If you like writing or editing, sign up for the newsletter committee (contact Pat Cahalan, Editor: pcahalan5@cox.net). If you are a number cruncher, sign up for our finance committee (contact Tina Coutu, Treasurer: rctc27@cox.net). If you are a party animal, join our Harvest Dinner Committee (contact Jules Cohen, Chairman: julesacohen@cox.net). If playing in the dirt is your cup of tea, sign up for the Plant Sale committee (contact Mike Elmer: JME348@yahoo.com). Please, don't wait for someone to call and ask you. Volunteer! If we want to have a wild plant society, it is up to each of us to do our part.

I thank the members of our Board of Trustees who have just stepped down: Thank you to Garry Plunkett, Marilyn Massaro, Heather Meyer, Doug McGrady, Mike Elmer, Sylvia Hampton, and Helen Drew. They have all contributed to advancing the goals of the Wild Plant Society, and we appreciate the time and effort they have put in. Luckily none of them plan to disappear; many are taking on committee responsibilities.

We recently moved our office to North Scituate. Our new location is 1037 Hartford Pike. My thanks to Board member Paul Dolan for providing office space at the DEM Forest Service headquarters. Our new mailing address is P.O. Box 414, Exeter, RI 02822.

This year we will live within our budget and restructure the Society so it is more accountable and more efficient. I look forward to working with all of you.

Sincerely,

Karen Asher, President

Note: Karen presented this message at this year's Annual Meeting. We felt it was important to share it with our entire membership, and so are reprinting it in this issue.

And the Winner is...

“Artistic Impressions in Nature,” RIWPS’ re-creation of the Great Swamp at this year’s RI Spring Flower Show. Walking through the garden, you were surrounded by the sights and sounds of the Great Swamp. In all, about 92 RIWPS members were involved in putting together our award-winning display under the able direction of Jules Cohen, Garden Show Chair, and Judy Ireland, our talented garden designer.

Need photo

RI Spring Flower Show coordinator and designer Chuck Carberry awards the Blue Ribbon: “Best in Show for Nonprofits.” (Photo by Joan Pilson)



Master pond and water feature builder Barney Webster organizes the water plants. (Photo by Joan Pilson)



This year’s Education Booth, under the able direction of Dede Carlsten, Kim Bothello and Erin Frost, looked at keeping a personal Nature Journal as a way to explore nature. (Photo by Kim Botelho)



RIWPS Garden Designer Judy Ireland assembles an easel to display educational information. (Photo by ??)



Indefatigable committee worker Dick Donnelly ties a raccoon to the “picture frame” leading into the garden. (Photo by Joan Pilson)



The Great Stuffed Osprey surveys the scene from a realistic nest ably built by committee member Tish McGrail. (Photo by Joan Pilson)



RIWPS member Gretchen Halpert, one of many participating artists, captures her artistic impressions in water-color. (Photo by Joan Pilson)

RI Wild Plant Society

The Rhode Island Wild Plant Society Inc. is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of Rhode Island’s native plants and their habitats.

Our Goals

- To aid in land preservation so that native plants are protected in their natural habitats;
- To encourage and offer guidance in the cultivation and propagation of wild plants;
- To educate the public on the scientific and aesthetic values of wild plants;
- To provide opportunities for Rhode Islanders to study and enjoy native plants in their natural habitats; and
- To offer our knowledge and skills to governmental, civic, and corporate organizations.

Officers

- President Karen Asher
- First Vice President Russ Bragg
- Second Vice President Cheryl Cadwell
- Secretary Suzanne Lussier
- Treasurer Tina Coutu

Trustees-at-large

- Paul Dolan, Dick Donnelly, Sindy Hempstead, Jean McCormick, Susan Tremby Shuster, Dorothy Swift, Deborah VanDam

Newsletter Editorial Committee

- Russ Bragg, Doug McGrady, Sindy Hempstead, Joan Pilson, Gary Plunkett, Deborah Van Dam
- Editor Pat Calahan
- Design and layout Joyce Hempstead

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The Rhode Island Wild Plant Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions and dues in excess of \$3 (for annual Newsletter subscription) are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

(email, telephone, and website info?)

Certificate Program: NATIVE PLANT STUDIES

The following events are offered in conjunction with the New England Wildflower Society (NEWFS) Certificate Program in Native Plant Studies, a program of courses and field studies in plant identification, ecology, and conservation of New England plants and habitats. RIWPS members who are not NEWFS members may register for these programs, and member fees apply for courses which are cosponsored by RIWPS. Registration is with NEWFS, phone: 508-877-7630 Ext. 3303. More information is available on the NEWFS Web site, www.newfs.org.

Wildflowers of New England

BOT3003

New Dawn Earth Center, Cumberland, RI

Saturdays, May 5, 9 a.m.-12 noon and May 12, 19, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

A great way to begin the study of native plants, this course focuses on learning to identify wild plants and providing field experience across the spectrum of New England flora. Classroom sessions will cover plant identification using *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide*. Students will become familiar with the family characteristics, growth patterns, habitats, and pollination mechanisms of many native wild flowers. We will practice plant identification and study plant habitats in the field. Bring a hand lens to each class. Required text: *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide*.

Instructor: Kathy Barton, award-winning naturalist, Certified Interpretive Guide, and New England Wild Flower Society Plant Conservation Volunteer. Fee: \$120 members / \$150 nonmembers

Tri-Pond Park Self-Guided Nature Trail Loop: RIWPS' Newest Publication

RIWPS member Frances Topping has researched, written, designed, and illustrated our newest publication, a self-guided nature trail brochure for Tri-Pond Park, South Kingstown. The park is located on Asa Pond Road in Peace Dale. The guide follows the trail through several habitats: ponds, streams, wetlands, and woodlands, explaining the value of native plants, open space, and water conservation as well as the problems of invasive plants. It also includes safety tips for outdoor excursions.

This brochure was funded by a DEM trail improvement grant and prepared in cooperation with South Kingstown Parks and Recreation Department. Our goal is to use this brochure as a pilot project and prepare a brochure annually for a different city or town. For more information about Tri-Pond Park, call the South Kingstown Nature Center at 401-284-2836.



Lime Rock Spring Flora

FDT7027

Lincoln, RI

Sunday, May 20, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

The name Lime Rock says it all. Since the mid-1600s, the area has been the site of a number of limestone quarries and kilns. Because of the unusual plant community associated with its sweet soils, one of The Nature Conservancy's first Rhode Island acquisitions was the Lime Rock Preserve, which straddles a section of the abandoned Louisquisset Trolley Line. The preserve covers 130 acres and is home to the largest concentration of rare plants in Rhode Island. Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum pedatum*), Perfoliate Bellwort (*Uvularia perfoliata*), Ebony Spleenwort (*Asplenium platyneuron*) and Rattlesnake Fern (*Botrychium virginianum*) are a few of the little "sweeties" that will be seen.

Leader: Kathy Barton, award-winning naturalist, Certified Interpretive Guide, and New England Wild Flower Society Plant Conservation Volunteer. Fee: \$21M members / \$25 nonmembers

Pruning Fundamentals

HOR3123

North Kingstown, RI

Saturday, June 9, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

This workshop will cover pruning methods for established trees and shrubs in the home landscape. Proper pruning involves understanding how plants grow and how they respond to pruning. The instructor will demonstrate the selection of basic tools, how to make a proper cut, which branches to cut, and when to prune different species. The workshop's focus will be the necessary techniques to improve the plant's health and aesthetics. Bring a hand pruner and pruning saw (if you own one) for a hands-on experience.

Instructor: Russ Bragg, MA-certified horticulturist and arborist, Plant Health Care Coordinator Tree Tech, Inc. Fee: \$30 members / \$36 nonmembers

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members

October 2006-March 2007

Helen Farrell Allen, Wakefield
Gail Davidson, South Dartmouth, MA
John Fish, Cranston
Dick & Marty Fisher, Denver, CO
Erin & Alex Frost, Providence
Sigrid N. Hewitt, Wakefield
Christine Kalina, North Kingstown
Dorothy Kindseth, Narragansett
Annie Miller, Saunderson
Pat Moonan, Cranston
Jan P. Prastek, Wakefield
Cecile Solitro, Cranston
Cynthia Treen & Karen Philippi, Providence

The RIWPS Report: News, Issues, and Items of Interest



At RIWPS' Annual Meeting in March, three of our members received **RIWPS Lifetime Service Awards**: Jules Cohen, Rick Enser, and Lisa Gould. In addition, Mary Lou Upham was awarded **Volunteer of the Year Award**. Above, Jules accepts his award at the Annual Meeting in March. (Photo by Russ Bragg)



RIWPS Holiday Party and Auction held in St. Paul's Parish Hall in Wickford was a great success. About \$5,000 was raised that evening, thanks to the many donors and participants. Above, counting the Auction proceeds are Bonnie Baker, RIWPS Treasurer Tina Coutu, and Ira Asher. (Photo by Joan Pilson)



RIWPS member Kathy Barton receives the **NEWFS RI State Award** at NEWFS' Annual Meeting Nov. 7 at Garden in the Woods. (Photo by Joan Pilson)



Ailene Kane, Coordinator of the **NEWFS Plant Conservation Volunteers**, presents awards to the three outstanding RI rare plant sleuths for 2006: Doug McGrady, Sindy Hempstead, and Garry Plunkett. (Photo by Joan Pilson)

High School Science Fair Awards

RIWPS member Nancy Weiss-Fried judged this year's High School Science Fair projects related to wild plants and selected two for RIWPS awards. Both were in the senior division. John Kashmanian of Smithfield High School studied milkweeds to determine whether a flower growing in the sun had more seeds than one growing in the shade. Helen Smith of La Salle Academy did a project studying the effect of restoration on a salt marsh (she documented the return of the phragmites).

RIWPS Says Farewell

It is with mixed feelings that we announce that Erin Frost, Director of the Rhode Island Wild Plant Society for the past five years, is leaving us and moving to Boston to continue on her career path. We all appreciate the high standards she continually met in her endeavors on behalf of the Society. She was an energetic and effective Director as well as an excellent fundraiser and friendraiser for RIWPS. All of our many programs and events flourished under her direction. We thank her for her tireless efforts, wish her the best of luck in her new endeavors and hope that we will continue to see her as an occasional volunteer.



BioBlitz 2007

Friday & Saturday, June 1 & 2, 2007

Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuge South Kingstown, RI

Spanning 800 acres on the southern coast of Rhode Island, the Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuge protects the state's only undeveloped salt pond. From upland forests to a 1.5-mile barrier beach, the varied habitats in Trustom Pond support more than 300 bird, 40 mammal, and 20 reptile and amphibian species.

A BioBlitz is an effort by volunteers to document as many species of organisms as possible on a parcel of land in 24 hours.

Volunteer Naturalists & just plain helpers are needed. Contact 401-874-5800, info@rinhs.org, or www.rinhs.org. Co-sponsored by USFWS.

Calendar of Events

Spring Wildflowers along the Ben Utter Trail

Arcadia Wildlife Management Area, Exeter, RI
Saturday, May 12, 2007, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

A favorite hiking locale for this walk leader, the Falls River area is picturesque with a rich variety of trees and plants. May is a great time for early woodland wildflowers as they bloom before the trees leaf out. Scattered along the trail are Wood Anemone, Dwarf Ginseng, Rue Anemone, varieties of violets, and in wet areas bright yellow Marsh Marigolds. From the river we'll walk upland looking for Trillium and possibly some Grape Fern. We'll ascend a rocky hillside with a stand of Sugar Maples and unusual ferns. We will return in late summer to see how things have changed. *Moderate to strenuous.*

Walk leader: Doug McGrady. Register with Doug at 401-248-2967 or demcgrady@hotmail.com. Cost \$3 RIWPS members / \$5 non-members.

Hunting for Painted Trillium

West Greenwich, RI
A Thursday morning, mid-May 2007, 10 a.m. - 12:00 noon

The Painted Trillium is a rare sight in Rhode Island and is always a treat. This colony is situated near some unusual variegated Skunk Cabbage on private property. This area is not open to the public. To arrange the visit for a time when the plants are in bloom, we are asking that you sign up in advance and we will notify you of when and where to meet. *Moderate.*

Walk leader: Norm Boyer. Register with Norm at 401-739-5070. Cost \$3 RIWPS members / \$5 non-members.

Pine Top in June

Co-sponsored with the New England Carnivorous Plant Society
Arcadia Wildlife Management Area, West Greenwich, RI
Saturday, June 16, 2007, 12:00 noon - 2:00 p.m.

This former ski area was added to the Arcadia Wildlife Management Area 14 years ago. Since then the forest has been reclaiming the ski trails and gravel parking lot. Some sections are kept

open for wildlife management. Water seeping from the hillside saturates portions of the former parking area. The poor, low-nutrient, acidic soils and the dampness create some unusual growing conditions that are just right for some uncommon plants. Carnivorous Sundews are scattered throughout, as well as Clubmosses and Orchids. Be prepared to get your feet wet. *Moderate.*

Walk leaders: Doug McGrady (RIWPS) and John Phillip (NECPS). Register with Doug at 401-248-2967 or demcgrady@hotmail.com. Free.

Weetamoo Woods

Tiverton, RI
Saturday, June 23, 2007, 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

This 500-acre parcel of maritime hardwoods and wooded swamp is at the heart of preserva-

tion efforts to safeguard an unusually large, unfragmented forest along the southern New England coastline. Its population of oaks and American Holly (*Ilex opaca*) creates its signature natural community, the coastal oak-holly forest. Weetamoo Woods also has a large remnant Atlantic white cedar swamp and a rich collection of colonial archeological remains. While surveying early summer wildflowers we will visit cellar holes along Eight Rod Way, inspect slab bridges and see what's left of a village sawmill on Borden Brook. *Moderate.*

Walk Leader: Garry Plunkett, habitat manager for the Tiverton Open Space Commission. Register with Garry at 401-624-2549. Cost: \$3 RIWPS members / \$5 non-members.

Rhododendron Gardens Open Memorial Day Weekend



Chuck and Cindy Gianfrancesco have generously offered to open their gardens to RIWPS members for the **7th annual Open Gardens at Gleaner Gardens** in North Scituate. Come see more than 300 Rhododendrons and Azaleas in bloom, with over 100 varieties. Stroll the garden and woodland paths. Bring a picnic and your camera. See the restoration-in-progress of these 50 year old gardens!

Gardens will be open Friday, May 26 through Monday, May 29, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Gleaner Gardens, 299 Gleaner Chapel Road, North Scituate. Contact Cindy and Chuck at 401-934-9212 or gleanergardens@cox.net for information. Fee: \$2 members/nonmembers.

Directions: From 295, take Exit 6C onto Rte. 6 west (Hartford Pike). Stay on Rte. 6 for approximately 5 miles, continuing through Johnston and into Scituate, bearing right at the fork just past McDonald's, crossing Rt. 116 and crossing the Scituate Reservoir. Bear right onto Rte. 101 (still Hartford Pike) at by-pass, and continue approximately 1 mile to Gleaner Chapel Road. Take a right onto Gleaner Chapel Road (follow sign to Sunset Orchard), go about 1/4 mile. Gleaner Gardens is on the corner of Quaker Lane (1st intersection, take right). Parking and entrance are on Quaker Lane.

Carnivorous Plant Walk

Co-sponsored with the New England Carnivorous Plant Society
Great Swamp Wildlife Management Area, South Kingstown, RI
Saturday, July 21, 2007, 12:00 noon - 3:00 p.m.

The Great Swamp Management Area is much more than a swamp. There are fields, ponds, bogs, fens and of course, the big swamp. Among the cast of varied wetlands grow a variety of carnivorous plants that tend to thrive in habitats where other plants could not, such as in Sphagnum Moss or in saturated gravel. We'll expect to find Sundew, Pitcher Plants and Bladderworts. We will also look for other mid-summer plants in bloom. *Moderate*.

Walk leaders: Doug McGrady (RIWPS) and John Phillip (NECPS). Register with Doug at 401-248-2967 or demcgrady@hotmail.com. Free.

Hidden Depths at Handy Pond

Handy Pond Preserve, Lincoln, RI
Saturday, July 28, 2007, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

The Handy Pond Preserve is owned by the Town of Lincoln and runs from Old River Road to Route 99. It has a surprising array of habitats, including a split-level pond, mature woodlands and edges, and lime outcrops. Join Kathy Barton as she explores its nooks and crannies and you're sure to see a plant you've never seen before. *Moderate to strenuous*.

Walk leader: Kathy Barton, former RIWPS president. Register with Garry Plunkett at 401-624-2549. Cost \$3 RIWPS members / \$5 non-members.

Ben Utter Trail in Late Summer

Arcadia Wildlife Management Area, Exeter, RI
Saturday, August 11, 2007, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

This trail along the Falls River offers many opportunities for observing local flora. Since our walk in May, many of the early bloomers will have died back and some will be in fruit. Some of the orchids will also have gone by, but some will still be in flower. The ferns, however, will be in their full glory, and we'll search the river's edge for Cardinal Flower. *Moderate to strenuous*.

Walk leader: Doug McGrady. Register with Doug at 401-248-2967 or demcgrady@hotmail.com. Cost \$3 RIWPS members / \$5 non-members.

The Mystery of Galls

Caratunk Wildlife Refuge, Seekonk, MA
Saturday, August 18, 2007, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

What are those lumps, bumps, "bullets" and balls that we notice on stems and leaves of plants as we walk through fields and woods? Many are the result of fascinating arrangements between plants and insects that produce vegetative structures known as galls. Galls have a surprising diversity of form and function, and we will take a close look at some common ones found in Rhode Island and discuss the organisms that cause them. Then we will take a walk to identify galls found along the trails of the Refuge. *Easy*.

Walk leader: Retired science teacher and long time RIWPS member, Nancy Nowak. Register with Doug McGrady at 401-248-2967 or demcgrady@hotmail.com. Cost \$3 RIWPS members / \$5 non-members.

Backyard Biodiversity in the "Burbs"

Tiverton, RI
Sunday, August 26, 2007, 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

This backyard is a demonstration of how landscaping can achieve both beauty and biodiversity. If it were a box of chocolates, it could be called the "New England Sampler" with its broad spectrum of successional habitats and representative southern New England native plants. A walk through this meadow, shrubland, pond, marsh and emergent woodland is Plant Ecology 101 in a nutshell. You'll get the tour along with advice on how to create and manage wild spaces. This is the "real world" of natural landscaping, with 20 years of experience behind the advice on such things as optimum mowing of cool and warm season meadow grasses, choosing and introducing appropriate plants, and invasive plant control. *Easy*.

Walk leader: Garry Plunkett. Register with Garry at 401-624-2549. Cost \$3 RIWPS members / \$5 non-members.

Late summer at Nettie Jones Preserve

URI Alton Jones Campus, West Greenwich, RI
Sunday, September 16, 2007, 2:00 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Explore the mixed hardwood forest, streams and old fields of the Nettie Jones Preserve, West Greenwich. We'll look to see what late summer flowers are there and ID some trees and shrubs at this URI campus property set aside for some of its special features.

Walk leader: Frances Topping. Register with Frances at 401-364-8002 or fntopping@cox.net. Cost \$3 RIWPS members / \$5 non-members.

Fall Coastal Habitats Walk

Conanicut Island, Rhode Island
Saturday, September 29, 2007, 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
(low tide)

Crisp fall air, a moon low tide... what better time to explore Rhode Island's coastal habitats? The Jamestown Saltmarsh is one of the largest in the state, bisected by a tidal river that meanders out to the bay. We'll explore the various habitats, within and along the edge of the marsh, and discuss plant adaptations to the saltwater environment. We'll travel to the southern tip of Conanicut Island and walk along the coastal bluff of Beavertail State Park, looking at plants living at the juxtaposition of freshwater seeps and raging surf. You may want to bring an evening picnic and stay to watch the sun set and the moon rise. Participants should be prepared to walk on a combination of wet mud and sloping rock surfaces.

Walk leader: Hope Leeson. Register with Hope at 401-783-5609 or hleeson@rinhs.org. Cost \$3 RIWPS members / \$5 non-members.

RIWPS Spring Plant Sale 2007

Our annual Spring Plant Sale is shaping up to be one of the best ever, offering an extraordinary selection of native plants, perennials, annuals, and shrubs. Seed Starters East, West, and Central have already begun starting the seeds and potting the plants.



Here are just a few of the many unusual and hard-to-find plants we'll have this year:



Spring woodland flowers, including several varieties of **Trillium** and **Jack-in-the-pulpit** ■ The dainty woodland **Crested Iris**, in both blue and white varieties ■ New England's native **Columbine**, with its red and gold jewel-like blossoms ■ Bold **Mayapple** plants, each with two large, deeply divided umbrella-like leaves sheltering a single nodding white flower, great for heavy shade and hard-to-manage areas ■ The native ground cover, **Wild Ginger**, with its large heart-shaped leaves and single maroon flower shyly crouched beneath them ■ Woodland ferns, including semi-evergreen **Christmas Fern**,



dainty **Maidenhair Fern**, **Leatherleaf Fern**, and **Royal Fern** ■ And for the sunny spots, **Red Butterfly Weed**, actually a lovely deep shade of pink, tall and stately **Joe Pye Weed**, and deep purple **New**



York Ironweed—all proven butterfly magnets for sunny spots



Hours are from **9:30 a.m. to noon** for the public, early admission at **8:30 a.m.** for RIWPS members—bring your card!

This is also your chance to get valuable advice on selecting and growing native plants from RIWPS seed

starters and to bid on the special plants and collections in our **Silent Auction**, which will be held promptly at **10:30 a.m.** And as our regulars know, it's wise to come early to avoid disappointment and get the best selections.



The annual Spring Plant Sale is a tremendous undertaking, and we always need enthusiastic workers. If you would like to help, either at the sale, with preparations, or by donating plants, see the enclosed flyer for volunteer opportunities.



Rhode Island Wild Plant Society
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