



## NEWS ITEMS

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### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Saturday, August 7 at 10:00 a.m. Dedication of American Elm Park**

Come join us in a celebration of American Elm Park, home to four young, disease resistant Valley Forge American Elms and a Raingarden, now blooming with moisture-loving native flowers and sporting native shrubs. The American Elm project and the Raingarden are the result of a collaborative effort by *Friends of Sligo Creek*, two neighborhood civic associations (Upper Sligo CA and Sligo Headwaters CA), the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection and the Izaak Walton League's Wildlife Achievement Chapter. We hope the trees will be just the vanguard in the reintroduction of this beloved shade tree to our roadsides and landscapes. The Raingarden adds beauty to the Park while it helps control and absorb stormwater run-off and enhances habitat for birds and other creatures. The park is at the corner of Ladd St. and Luttrell

Lane, near Sligo Creek's headwaters.

We'll have bagels, juices and doughnuts, so come hungry and thirsty.

**Directions:** Drive upstream on Sligo Creek Parkway to University and turn left. In just a few blocks turn right on Inwood. Continue straight as far as possible to Ladd. Left on Ladd a few blocks to Luttrell.

**Questions:** contact Ann Hoffnar at 301 585 8891 or [ahoffnar@earthlink.net](mailto:ahoffnar@earthlink.net).

### **Sunday August 15, 3:00 p.m. Walk with John Parrish. A Special Treat!**

Botanist John Parrish leads a look at the north-most section of Sligo Creek: discover how much there is to appreciate so close to home. Meet on the path near the Giant parking lot at the Kemp Mill Shopping Center on Arcola Ave.

John recently completed walking through nooks and crannies of the park in search of non-woody plants. Among plants that still exist in Sligo he found wild strawberry, wild ginger, and in the sections below Piney Branch, saprophytic Indian pipes. A few more plants may inevitably appear, but John's list—now on the website—marks the formal close of a magnificent achievement. Already it has been useful by informing whether a questionable plant is actually native to Sligo, and by narrowing down the choices when we identify plants. We are most grateful! The inventory is at <http://www.fosc.org/PIHerb2.htm> Have a look at the inventory before the walk.

**Questions or directions:** contact Laura Mol at (301) 681-9686.

## **News**

### **From the Trenches: *Friends'* invasives battle rages on.**

- Eight adults and two helpful boys worked for about two hours Saturday June 12 to wage an attack on Kudzu on Long Branch at Wayne Ave. We cleared kudzu from trees and readied the area for MNCPPC's application of herbicide to kudzu stems. This area is the worst Kudzu infestation in Sligo Creek and we are pleased that we may soon have it under control. In addition to feeling pleased about the kudzu we were rewarded with a Baltimore Oriole sighting. The funds for ridding kudzu and Japanese knotweed, also present at the Long Branch site, are part of the Long Branch Restoration project. We're grateful to Carole Bergmann and Andy Frank for taking on this formidable task.

- Clair Garman, the *Friends of Sligo Creek* steward for section 3 (Piney Branch to Maple), has declared victory over a 30 foot long patch of kudzu. He has worked for a year whittling away at the runners and roots to eliminate this smothering non-native invasive. The kudzu-free patch is located just downstream from the second hiker/biker bridge down from Piney Branch on the right bank, facing downstream. (Meanwhile, Clair, John Brill and others are continuing the battle against Japanese Knotweed. See Clair's write-up, including a novel new approach to Knotweed control at <http://www.fosc.org/AL-Knotweed.htm>.) When Park & Planning grants a team from FoSC the right to use chemicals against the roots and runners of kudzu, a work party is planned against the larger patches that are on both sides of the first hiker/biker bridge upstream from Park Valley Road on the left bank (facing downstream).
- Keep an eye on Parkside Woods! As many as sixteen employees at Parkside Headquarters expect to start working next week to remove invasives on the slope beneath their building. They will start with English ivy on trees. With cooler fall weather they will uproot wineberry and multiflora rose, and weed out Japanese honeysuckle and English ivy on the ground. The goal is to completely clean out the woods between Dallas and the stairs on the Parkway - an exciting project!
- The Board of *Friends of Sligo Creek* has just agreed to make invasives control our number one priority for the foreseeable future. Stay tuned for work events and other features of a major campaign. We are going to need all hands on deck!

### On June 19<sup>th</sup> *Friends of Sligo Creek* and members of the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS) worked to Clean Takoma Branch

With boots and waders, *Friends* and AWS members worked to collect trash from Takoma Branch. This poor little stream is an often neglected part of our Creek and it collects massive amounts of trash. It not only gets the usual stormwater trash flows but it is subject to "midnight dumping." One trophy we hauled out was a leather recliner! We had to leave other items too big to remove. Not only is the trash situation daunting, the streambank erosion is severe too. And, in addition, there are several sewer pipes crossing the stream. Masaya Maeda, a scientist working with the Anacostia Watershed Society who talked to us at our program meeting in May, showed attendees the sewer lines and connections he discussed at that meeting. We hope public awareness about sewer leaks and potential breaks will encourage WSSC to take action. We want WSSC to develop an internal monitoring system so they can find problems and fix them, rather than waiting for us to call them about spills and leaks. For more information about this clean up and pictures see <http://www.fosc.org/TakomaBrCleanup2004.htm>.

## All-Member Picnic: A Play Day

Many *Friends of Sligo Creek* came to relax and just enjoy each other at our June 20<sup>th</sup> picnic at the Dennis Avenue Recreation Center. We celebrated the solstice, Fathers' Day and each other. All who came agreed that we should make the all-member picnic an annual event. The music was a big hit. And the food was spectacular. We didn't know we had such great chefs in the membership. Jim Baird won the cookie prize—don't ask. The children were the judges! We had lots of green and blue *Friends of Sligo Creek* frisbies left over, so you will be seeing them at future events. Thanks to the planning committee for a great time!

## Stormwater Committee Chair reports on Center for Watershed Protection Presentation to Planning Board

On June 10<sup>th</sup>, Tom Schueler, the Director of Watershed Research & Practice at the Center for Watershed Protection, gave a presentation to the MNCPPC Planning Board about Impervious Cover as an Indicator and Tool of Watershed Protection. Ed Murtagh attended the presentation and obtained a copy of the remarks, which he posted on our web site at <http://www.fosc.org/StormwaterCommittee.htm>. Several points are of interest to us in our stormwater outreach work. For example, impervious cover is not static over time; it tends to drift upwards. Data from the U.S. Census indicates that 20% of American households add impervious cover each decade. And—why are we not surprised—65% of our impervious cover is for “car habitat.”

## Cardinal Flowers to Bloom Again in Sligo

Arlene Ripley, a naturalist and birder from Calvert County, dug and brought to Sally Gagne over fifty cardinal flower plants from her yard, where they grow so profusely she had to “weed them out.” The plants are derived from the Lower Marlboro Nursery in Calvert County, which specializes in native plants. In the 1960s a couple of cardinal flower plants grew in a field near Giant in Kemp Mill, but they have disappeared, and Sally has only found one remaining plant from the past. The donated plants are being placed near some stormwater management ponds and in other wet areas (with the permission of Carole Bergmann). Our thanks to Arlene and also to member Patricia Wood, who called the plants to our attention.

## ***Announcements***

### Many new items on the Web Site Home Page

Go to our home page at <http://www.fosc.org/fosc.htm> frequently for current lists of interesting new items. Some items are covered in the newsletter, but many

are not. This month, for example, we added a collection of past newsletters, in case you missed something or want to remember when an event took place.

### **Web Sites for Native Plant Lovers**

*Friends* member Martha Collins passed on these web sites. The Green Spring Garden in Alexandria demonstrates uses of natives.

<http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/parks/gsgp/gardening.htm>

Some of you probably know about the Maryland Native Plant Society web site, <http://www.mdflora.org/> Great reference site.

News Items collected and edited by Ann Hoffnar