

# River Talk

Newsletter of the Carantouan Greenway



Fall 2021

## Plants of Wildwood

### A Never-ending Variety of Fascinating Flora



#### Cattails

Wildwood has two species of cattails; an endemic broad-leaved one shown here (left) and a narrow-leaved one (right). In our native, endemic species, the dense male flowers sit directly on top of the female flowers. In the narrow-leaved cattail there is usually a space of about one inch separating the male from the female. Each dense spike of the female is capable of producing 200,000 seeds. Both reproduce asexually through rhizomes which provide a starchy food for muskrats. Indigenous people used them to construct boats and rafts as well as using the fluffy seed hairs for tinder.



#### Bee Balm

Our native bee balm or Monarda being visited by the hummingbird moth. Monarda serves as a source of nectar for many species of insects and patience will provide an opportunity to see this transparent winged vision.

#### Poison Ivy Or Virginia Creeper

A great comparison of the five-leaflet common Virginia creeper compared to the three-leaflet poison ivy. Both are common at Wildwood and often climb the same tree. The attachment threads of poison ivy are many and thin whereas they are fewer and end in an expanded disc for Virginia creeper. The blue fruits of the creeper and white fruits of the ivy are enjoyed by many birds.



### New Trees for Earth Day

On a cold and blustery Earth Day seven intrepid volunteers and one helpful and friendly Penelec guy, Les Wilber, met at Wildwood to plant trees. Penelec had contacted Marty Borko to offer free trees as a part of celebrating Earth Day, and Marty had suggested river and yellow birches because they would offer good cover and food for many of the birds that inhabit that area.

*Continued on page 3...New Trees*

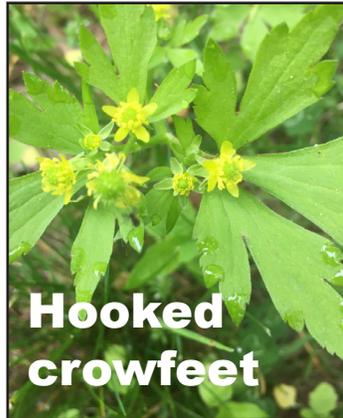
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## Spring Flowers You May Have Missed



**Golden  
ragwort**



**Hooked  
crowfoot**



**Golden  
alexanders**



**Mayapple**



**Mayapple  
blossom**



**Mayapple  
fruit**

**Golden ragwort**, aka *Senecio aureus* where *Senecio* means old man and *aureus* refers to its heart shaped leaves. It prefers moist ground and spreads via rhizomes. Note its core and outer florets as bright yellow hence its common name. It is a perennial of the composite family that blooms in May.

**Hooked crowfoot**, aka *Ranunculus recurvatus*, a buttercup with flowers less than one-third of an inch across. It is a more inconspicuous common flower in wet areas in the spring. It tends to have a three-parted leaf of equal width and length. Both its generic and trivial name refer to the hooked fruits and its association with frogs found in wet environments.

**Mayapple** or Mandrake, aka *Podophyllum peltatum*. *Podophyllum* means foot-leaf and *peltatum* comes from the Greek meaning shield. Both refer to the large single leaf of a young plant and the dual leaves of a flowering plant. The whitish flowers with yellow stamens show up under the umbrella-like leaves. The plant likes rich woods and its yellow fruit is edible and makes a decent jam if you can find enough of them.

**Golden Alexanders**, aka *Zizia aurea* a member of the carrot or parsley family where *aurea*, is in the Latin refers to its golden color. A spring perennial of wet places with distinctive umbels of five-parted flowers displayed in a relatively flat head.

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### New Trees (continued from page 1)

Unfortunately, yellow birches were not available, so river birches were planted, staked, and protected with plastic tubes. The river birch are expected to eventually yield fruiting catkins that in the winter will attract goldfinches, siskins, and redpolls to feed. They will also add to the diversity of already existing black, white and gray birches. Everyone paired off in twos, and in little over an hour 66 trees were snugged into the spots Marty selected, with every expectation that they will flourish and enhance the habitat that Wildwood offers to local wildlife. Volunteers included Laura Hoppe, Marilyn and John Palmer, Jordan Blanding, Duane Wells, Dave Prugh, and Marty Borko.



# A Devilish Invasive at Wildwood

This fall Greenway conducted several individualized group tours at the Wildwood Preserve including home schoolers and The New York Forestry Landowners Association. While on the tour and looking over trees, the Tree of Heaven (TOH) was noted to be growing on the property. Although its name sounds like a divine tree, it is actually an invasive species, and one of the worst kind as it encourages an invasive insect species to join it on its destructive course. The Tree of Heaven came to this country from China for use as a shade tree and horticultural specimen. Identifying this tree can be difficult as it looks very similar to some of our native trees such as black walnut and sumac. Like those trees, the leaves are pinnately compound; however, the leaves are longer. The edges are not serrated and show a characteristic lobe near the bottom of the leaf.

A link provided by Penn State Extension gives a detailed listing on how to differentiate Tree of Heaven from similar-looking trees: <https://extension.psu.edu/tree-of-heaven>. Be aware that seeds can get attached to clothing and shoes and thus spread. The reason it's distressing to see this tree at the preserve is because it releases a toxic chemical into the soil, killing off native plants. More importantly it is the preferred food source of the dreaded spotted lanternfly, an invasive species also from China, which while currently advancing through Pennsylvania and the mid-Atlantic states has not yet reached our area.



Richard Gardner



Leslie J. Merhoff



Joseph M. DiTomasso



Leslie J. Merhoff

## President's Message

In spite of the pandemic Carantouan Greenway's trails have been well maintained and our naturalist, Marty Borko, has led many interesting hikes for visitors of all ages to safely enjoy. Trail use is up considerably, particularly by birders who are attracted by our outstanding E-bird website. We are currently leading an enthusiastic group of community stakeholders to investigate the feasibility of a "Waverly Waterfront Access and Trail Project"; still seeking funding for new trail mowing equipment, trail signage, and benches; and partnering with other local

organizations to build appreciation for and protect our natural resources. None of this would be possible without the financial support of our members and friends. November 30th is "Giving Tuesday". If you haven't already done so, now would be a great time to make a generous tax-deductible contribution to insure that Carantouan Greenway can continue to maintain and protect our properties for the public enjoyment and to sustain all species. Together we will build upon our successful first 25 years!

Sincerely, John Palmer

## Friends of the Carantouan Greenway

**Yes! Count me in! I believe in protecting farm and forestland, wildlife habitat and watersheds in the Penn-York Valley. I want to become a member of Carantouan Greenway!**

- Mighty Oak ..... \$500/year       Trailblazer ..... \$25/year  
 Golden Eagle..... \$75/year       Other ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Stargazer ..... \$50/year       **Renewing member**     **New member**
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 I prefer to receive the newsletter in the mail.  
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Gifts to Carantouan Greenway are fully tax deductible! (Tax ID Number 23-2750872)

Please send all contributions to Carantouan Greenway, P.O. Box 441, Sayre, PA 18840-0441  
or P.O. Box 827, Waverly, NY 14892-0827 or on-line at [carantouangreenway.org/joinonline](http://carantouangreenway.org/joinonline)



## Carantouan Greenway

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Sayre, PA 18840-0441

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

**#GIVING**  
*Tuesday*  
**Nov. 30**

Check out John's message inside to see how your membership and donations have helped the Greenway bring education and enjoyment of the natural world to our community.