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THE POTOMAC APPALACHIAN



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President's Logbook

By Jim Fetig



Beavers win!

For one, I'm looking forward to the warmer months. After the winter we enjoyed, I won't even complain until the temperature reaches 80. I've been out on the trails and so are the bugs. The kind of precipitation we had this year is just what the gnats ordered.

Over the winter, I came across some data describing the impact beavers have on ecosystems. As it is with bugs, it's not all positive in some cases.

The reading reminded me of a blog post I wrote on my thru hike about a trail reroute around some high tension line construction in New Jersey. The story was written right there on the ground for all to see. No doubt the beaver had a melt down in the cereal isle. He won too. Hope you enjoy it.

Brink Road Shelter, N.J., AT NOBO mile 1,314.4 Friday May 9, 2014 — Once upon a time a hard-working beaver built a dam and all was good.

It was a strong dam with a very large pond, far away from people. Each day the beaver greeted the other animals when they came to drink. They were happy that the beaver chose their neighborhood to make his living. Everyone was happy.

Then one day the beaver heard strange noises. Heavy construction equipment was making a lot of noise. He learned from passing deer that men were building a power line on the next ridge over.

That same day people with picks, McCleods, Pulaskis and white paint began carving a hiking trail reroute around the power line construction right on the beaver's dam and around the edge of the pond. The Appalachian Trail was being rerouted around the power line construction.

This was sad news for the beaver and the other animals in the forest. People, especially smelly hikers, would be everywhere. Their peace and quiet would be gone forever.

With winter coming, the beaver knew he needed to raise his pond's water level to make sure he would have room under the ice. So, he set out to reinforce his dam and the water rose to the brim of the pond.

Sadly, the trail crews didn't like it when the water rose and covered the trail they had worked so hard to build. The crews installed a drain to lower the water level. The beaver plugged it and the trail crews unplugged it, and so it went.

In time the beaver decided to draw the line. He permanently plugged the drain and then he cut down the trees with white blazes. Finally, he blocked the trail itself. That'll show 'em, he thought ... and it did. The trail crews moved the trail up slope, away from the pond and decided to leave the beaver alone.

When the hikers saw what the beaver had done, they cheered. They like it when nature wins. Life is good and the beaver story is true.

The AT at Bears Den Rocks gets a better view

By Dan and Ellen Feer



by Bill Greenan - Pictured: Edlyn Becton, Alisa Schaefer, Alice DeCarlo, Stacy Furukawa, Don Oellerich, Rob Lamar, Dan Feer, Kate Walker, Mark Wrobel, Maria De La Torre, James Martin, Molly McKinley, Karen Brown, Samuel Rulli, Neil Hopper, Chris Glembo



by Janet Arici - Pictured: Ellen Feer - Tree roots are often in the way and need to be cut.

The crew stayed at Bears Den in February. If you haven't had a chance to look around inside, you should. It's a wonderful place. The views from the rock just down the hill from the hostel are spectacular and this month we made them a little easier to get to from the south.

Heading south from the overlook, the trail went over a root mass and then steeply downward before heading steeply up again. Most hikers went around this section through some loose rocks and up the severely eroded trail. On this beautiful weekend, we wanted to change that. We broke into six teams working on small sections of the trail. Four teams built stairs and grade dips. Another team made gravel to fill in around the stairs and the finish

team found mineral soil to spread over the gravel to complete the tread.

Thirty four people (**Philip Abruzzese, Janet Arici, Edlyn Becton, Nina Blagrove, Karen Brown, Maria De La Torre, Alice DeCarlo, Kirsten Elowsky, Joe Falcone, Dan Feer (co-leader), Ellen Feer (co-leader), Vic Fickes, Stacy Furukawa, Chris Glembocki, Erica Glembocki, Bill Greenan, Neil Hopper, George Jones, Rob Lamar (District Manager), James Martin, Molly McKinley, Brian Napier, Don Oellerich, Cat Randall, Tysha Robinson, Samuel Rulli, Alisa Schaefer, MaryAnn Stetter, Steve Taylor, Steve Thompson, Kate Walker, Dan Wooley, and Mark Wrobel**) worked along 50 yards of trail moving 1000 pound rocks, making gravel, sidehilling, digging drains, digging mineral soil using sharp and heavy tools. While we trained new crew volunteers we were safe and we had fun. We all finished the day tired and ready for happy hour and dinner.



by Bill Greenan - Pictured: Janet Arici - Sometimes when a rock is in the wrong place, the best solution is to break it up instead of digging it out.

Our host at Bears Den, **Glen Breining**, always makes us feel welcome, the Co-District Manager, Rob Lamar, always has interesting and challenging projects for us, and so many other volunteers behind the scenes contribute so much to make these trips successful. We love new volunteers. We train and mentor all ages. If this sounds like a good time to you, send a note to ccrewpatc@gmail.com.



by Bill Greenan - Pictured: Alisa Schaefer, Brian Napier, Nina Blagrove, Molly McKinley, Edlyn Becton

Meet the 2026 Ridgerunners

By Abbie Fine

Every summer, PATC deploys a team of Ridgerunners to patrol our 240-mile section of the Appalachian Trail — from Shenandoah National Park through Maryland to Pine Grove Furnace State Park in Pennsylvania. These passionate, experienced trail ambassadors educate hikers, protect fragile resources, and serve as the human face of stewardship on the trail. We're thrilled to introduce this season's team.

Becky ("Time Crunch") — *Michaux, Regular Season A 2022 AT* thru-hiker who has also paddled the full length of the Mississippi River, Becky looks forward to meeting hikers along the trail and sharing her love of conservation with the community.



Becky

Josh ("Soulslosher") — *Maryland, Early Season (Returning) A* 2011 AT thru-hiker with over 8,000 miles of long trails under his



Sam

belt, Josh returns to Maryland bringing his trademark passion, deep trail knowledge, and collaborative spirit.

Sam ("Lucky") — *Northern Virginia, Regular Season A 2024 AT* thru-hiker

who has led wilderness camps serving at-risk youth and adults, Sam brings formal training



Josh

and a deep enjoyment of working with people to the trail community this season.

Marissa ("Mosey") — *Shenandoah National Park, Early Season (Returning)* Returning for another season in SNP, Marissa looks forward to encouraging and educating people on the trail — and to the onion rings at SNP's Waysides.



Marissa

Karen ("Half Pint") — *Shenandoah National Park, Late Season* An AT and PCT thru-hiker who has led on-the-ground disaster relief efforts following hurricanes, wildfires, and the war in Ukraine, Karen sees Ridgerunning in Shenandoah as her dream job.

Want to get to know the Ridgerunners better?

This season, PATC is launching a new program called **Friends of the Ridgerunners** — an opportunity to personally support the people who make this work possible. Friends receive field updates from the trail, an invitation to the Ridgerunner Welcome Lunch, and the chance to connect directly with the Ridgerunners they sponsor. It's trail stewardship made personal.



Karen

[Learn more and become a Friend of the Ridgerunners](#)

Hike Leaders: Prepare for the 2026 Hiking Season

By Timothy Muzzio



As temperatures climb and days grow longer, the anticipation for hiking season fills the air. Boots emerge from closets, hikers begin checking the PATC website and Meetup for upcoming adventures, and hike leaders get ready to guide their groups onto the trails. For PATC hike leaders,

this time of year brings excitement and responsibility. Thoughtful preparation ensures each hike is enjoyable, safe, and memorable for participants.

This article offers reminders to set you up for success in the months ahead.

Pre-Hiking: Assessing Trail Conditions

This past winter was particularly harsh, leaving many trails altered and potentially hazardous. Even familiar routes may have changed: downed trees, eroded paths, or water-damaged bridges can challenge even seasoned hikers. Before posting a hike, pre-hike it if you have not been on it recently. If the trail is maintained by PATC, inform us of any obstacles, reroutes, or maintenance needs (email Trails@patc.net). If the route has issues but is safe, let participants know ahead of time and, if necessary, adjust the planned route to prioritize safety and enjoyment. Proactive trail assessment demonstrates leadership and fosters trust with your hikers.

First Aid Preparedness: Stocking and Organizing Your Kit

A well-prepared hike leader is always equipped for unexpected incidents. Begin your season by thoroughly checking your first aid kits. Remove expired supplies and replenish essential items. Your “boo-boo bag” (a bag that’s easily accessible with the supplies you are most likely to use) should contain the basics: assorted bandages, steri-strips, latex gloves, alcohol or cleansing pads, an irrigation syringe for wound flushing, tweezers or tick removers, and anything else commonly needed. While many first aid professionals no longer recommend carrying antibiotic ointment, it’s wise to have a small tube available, as some hikers may insist on it. Store specialized and less frequently used supplies deeper in your pack, but verify that everything is current, organized, and ready for use. A well-stocked kit gives you—and your group—peace of mind.

Energy and Hydration: Supporting Hikers on the Move

Long hikes, strenuous climbs, or unexpected weather can quickly sap energy. Even a modest hike can drain the energy of a new hiker. It’s not unusual to have a participant feel unable to continue. When this happens, pause to complete your assessment for dehydration, injury, or illness. Often, simple low energy is the culprit. Carry a few energy bars and single-serving electrolyte powders and provide one to the affected hiker. You can usually get the group going again in a few minutes. Encourage hikers to bring their own nutrition, but be prepared for surprises—your foresight may save the day.

Tick Awareness and Safety Education

Ticks are a year-round concern, but become particularly active as spring progresses. Include a “tick talk” (get it, TikTok?) during your pre-hike briefings. Remind hikers to wear

long sleeves and full-length trousers, use insect repellent, and conduct thorough tick checks after each hike. Share proper removal techniques and stress the importance of seeking medical attention if a telltale “bullseye” rash develops, as this may signal Lyme disease. Providing clear guidance on tick prevention and response not only protects participants, but also reinforces your role as a knowledgeable and conscientious leader.

Administrative Readiness: Sign-In Sheets and Reports

Efficient record-keeping is essential for every hike leader. Well before the hike, download and print sign-in sheets. Collecting sign-ins at the trailhead enhances safety and supports club record-keeping. After each outing, promptly submit your completed sign-in sheets and hike reports to the PATC volunteer reporting system. Remaining up-to-date with these administrative tasks is a requirement for all official hike leaders and supports the broader PATC community in monitoring participation, safety, and trail usage.

Extra Credit

Embrace the role of a hike leader as “docent,” adding a rich dimension to every trail experience. Invest time in researching the history, geology, and local legends of the area you’re exploring. Share these stories and fascinating facts with your group—hikers genuinely appreciate learning about the landscapes they traverse. In my experience, some hikers return to the same route and demand to hear a favorite story again at a familiar stop. Not only does this deepen their connection to the trail, but it also makes leading hikes more engaging and rewarding as you continue discovering new insights about each location.

Pro Tip

Our hikes often have wait lists, and no shows take away valuable slots for those on them. It is unfair. Send firm but friendly reminder messages to all registered hikers a few days before your event, and again the day prior. I use the Meetup comments feature as it is very easy to do. Tell anyone who cannot attend to sign out as soon as possible, which allows wait-listed members to join the hike. After the event, be sure to report any no-shows on the Meetup site. My personal practice is to issue a warning after two no-shows; after three, they will be excluded from my future hikes. These practices have noticeably improved overall attendance rates – my no-show rate is under 10 percent and 100 percent attendance is not unusual. Please note, enforcement of these guidelines may vary depending on the hike leader’s discretion. Some leaders are stricter, some much less so.

With careful planning and attention to detail, you set the tone for a thriving 2026 hiking season. Your leadership ensures participants feel welcome, prepared, and safe—whether they are joining for the first time or are lifelong PATC members. By pre-hiking trails, updating

first aid kits, bringing energy-boosting snacks, educating about ticks, and staying on top of paperwork, you exemplify the best of PATC values. Here's to a season filled with adventure, camaraderie, and unforgettable moments on the trail!



Don Habib and Michael Bucci install a new trail sign for the rerouted Dr. Belt trail while Jim Tomlin supervises

Old Line Trail Crew's Historic Trails in the Monocacy River Natural Resources Management Area (MNRMA)

Article by Jane Thompson, Photos by Eve Proper

Having grown up wandering this beautiful, historic area with my horse and dog, it was nice to find out PATC now maintains the trail in the Monocacy River Natural Resources Management Area (MNRMA). At that time, I did not know that the quartz for the Monocacy Aqueduct came from here, nor did I know that there was an iron furnace. Working on the trails while learning the history of the area has been very enjoyable.

In Frederick County, Md., west of Sugarloaf Mountain along the Monocacy River, the Thomas Johnson family operated a lime kiln

and iron furnace in the 1700s until the 1830s. The furnace was near the Monocacy River where the finished iron was boated to the Urbana area and taken to Baltimore. After the Revolutionary War, roads were constructed to Urbana. Remnants of the furnace are visible along the Furnace Branch Trail by the bridge over Furnace Branch. About one mile away, the lime kiln still stands beside the Dr. Belt Trail. Both trails were roads at that time.

When the C&O Canal was built in the early 1830s, quartz was needed for the Monocacy aqueduct. The builders developed a quarry up the hill from the lime kiln. The quarries are still visible as well as some of the drill marks. The stone was cut, put onto one of the first railroads in the United States, taken down to the Dr. Belt Trail, then hauled to what is now Maryland Route 28, and taken to the aqueduct.

The area was flooded by Hurricane Agnes in 1972. Many places along the Monocacy River were condemned, including Edie's Bar which sat where the current MNRMA parking lot resides on Maryland Route 28. In the 1970s, after the Monocacy



Tori Wenig, Jeff Clyman, and Jim Tomlin dig the French drain

River was designated a Scenic and Wild River, Maryland State Parks started managing and protecting the 1,800 acres. For many years horses have been ridden along the old roads. As well, hunters found game in the renewing forest.



Jim Tomlin and Jeffrey Clyman filling in the French drain

In 2020, the State and PATC came to an agreement for PATC to maintain the trails. With the roads, most trails were easily defined – though rutted and washed out in many places. New trails have been built, and more are planned, providing about 7 miles of trails.

One of the Old Line Trail Crew's tasks has been relocating trails from their old, muddy, roadbeds. Portions of the Furnace Branch Trail, which went from the lime kiln to the furnace, are marked to be relocated. For now, a French drain was put in by **Don Habib, Tori Wenig, Jeffrey Clyman, Eve Proper, Seth Miller, Jane Thompson, and Jim Tomlin**. This included digging a ditch, which was not an easy task

because there were so many loose rocks, likely put in over the years to maintain the road. The group then lined the ditch with geotextile fabric, filled it with rocks, and covered it with more geotextile and the soil that had been dug out. The French drain is currently working fine.

In another project, the crew relocated the south end of Dr. Belt Trail, which had become sunken and muddy. This fall the trail was relocated, raked, trimmed, and blazed, and the old section of trail was closed off. The new trail is being well used. This was accomplished by Tori Wenig, Jeffrey Clyman, Eve Proper, Don Habib, **Michael Bucci**, Ileana Hancu (non-Member), Jane Thompson, and Jim Tomlin.

New trail maintainers are always welcome. If you are looking for an interesting place to work on trails, not far from the DC area, come join us! You can contact Jim Tomlin, jftomlin@gmail.com. With Sugarloaf Mountain closed more often and less parking available, this is a beautiful place to hike. Here is a link to the trail map: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Documents/MonocacyNRMA-trailmap.pdf>.

Volunteers Requested: Konnarock Trail Crew

Article and Photo by Matt Waurio



Looking to do some trail work and meet people outside of the PATC region? Take a volunteer vacation with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's flagship trail crew: The Konnarock Trail Crew! Most of their trips are 4 to 8 days working on critical Appalachian Trail projects from Georgia up to Waynesboro, Virginia. Meals, training, and gear are provided. Fun guaranteed and no experience needed! Learn more [here](#).

<https://appalachiantrail.org/get-involved/volunteer/trail-crews/konnarock-trail-crew/>

"What on Earth?"

Article and Photos by Ray Barbehenn



American Yellow Morel



Half-free Morel

If you love the taste of mushrooms but have never tried morels, you might be in for a treat. It is legal to collect mushrooms along the AT corridor if you stay over 200 feet away

from the trail. Up to a pound of mushrooms may be collected per day per person for personal consumption. (You should be so lucky!) Of course, you have to love bushwacking to find them. However, morels come up before the leaves are out, which makes the search easier.

Two kinds of morels found in our area are the American Yellow Morel (left photo) and the Half-free Morel (right photo). Both were found in Duke Hollow (near the AT in northern Virginia) on April 22, 2025. This is prime time for morel foraging. The American Yellow Morel was about three inches tall, but they range from about two to eight inches tall. By comparison, Half-free Morels are often small and thin; the one pictured above was about the size of your little finger. Notice the gap between the base of the cap and the stem. Beneath this skirt-like edge of the cap, it is attached half way up the stem. By comparison, the base of the cap of the American Yellow Morel is attached at the stem.

Are all morels edible?

- A. Yes, but only after cooking.
- B. No – one species is not.
- C. Usually, but it depends on the person eating them.

The answer is at the bottom of the article!

Fun Facts and Musings

Why do morels look so strange compared to other mushrooms? Morels and gilled mushrooms are in different groups of fungi that are extremely distantly related; they may have split apart from their shared ancestors between 400-500 million years ago! The way that the mushrooms in these two groups of fungi make their spores is fundamentally different. Morels make their spores all over the surfaces of the cup-shaped pits in their caps. Their spores are lined up in microscopic tubes like peas in a pod, and they shoot out their spores like little pea shooters when the wind (or your breath!) passes over them. By comparison, the gills of gilled mushrooms are covered with what look like microscopic clubs, each of which has four spores arranged like a crown on its tip. Comparing such different fungi is like comparing fishes to lizards, which also split apart from their shared ancestors around 400 million years ago.

In our area, there are at least four species that you might find: the American Yellow Morel (*Morchella americana*), the Tulip Morel (*Morchella diminutiva*), the Half-free Morel (*Morchella punctipes*), and the Black Morel (*Morchella angusticeps*). The so-called "Gray Morel" is not recognized as a species; these are probably young American Yellow Morels. Adding to this confusion, the Black Morel is not necessarily black; the cap can range from shades of brown to black.

The tremendous variation in color, shape, and size within morel species continues to be a challenge for taxonomists and morel hunters alike. Some of the newly discovered species can only be identified from their DNA; they can look identical to other species.

False morels (*Gyromitra* species) are the most dangerous of the morel look-alikes; like true morels, they have twisted, misshapen caps but, unlike true morels, their stems are not hollow. To my eyes, their caps look like crumpled balls of paper. Would-be morel hunters should look up images of false morels to learn to avoid them. Unlike true morels, false morels are not made safe by cooking. The toxins in small amounts of false morels can produce serious gastrointestinal symptoms, but may cause dizziness, liver failure, and even death if larger amounts are eaten.

A competent morel hunter should also know the "Early Morel" or "Thimble-cap" (*Verpa bohemica*). This is not a true morel but it looks very similar to the Half-free Morel. However, when sliced in half, you can see that its cap is attached at the very top of the stem like a "normal" mushroom, and it has a cottony substance inside its stem. Descriptions of its edibility are mixed, ranging from "edible with caution" to "causes severe gastrointestinal upset and cerebellar syndrome in susceptible individuals."

A good morel key with photos is found at

<https://www.mushroomexpert.com/morchellaceae.html>. The beautiful diversity of morels around the world can be seen

at https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?subview=map&taxon_id=56831&view=species

At this site, you can also see photos of the tremendous variation in the size and color of various morel species.

Morels, like many species of mushrooms, often form symbiotic associations with the roots of certain species of trees. This makes it advantageous to forage in areas where these trees are prominent. One of the sad impacts of losing our White Ashes to Emerald Ash Borers and many elms to Dutch Elm Disease is that these were some of the morels' favorite partners. There are still dying elms around, and these are good places to hunt morels. Other partner trees for certain morel species include Tulip Trees and hickories, both of which are still common.

Won't picking morels hurt their populations? Harvesting some of the morels each year should be relatively harmless to these fungi. The mushroom is just a short-lived spore-producing structure. The bulk of the fungus lives protected underground as a network of fine rootlike structures. And, a single unpicked mushroom may let loose a billion spores. They are so hard to find in the deep woods that the great majority are unharvested. (I am frustrated every year to find morels that are too old to eat.) Commercial harvesting is another story, and this is illegal on National Park Service land. If you are lucky enough to find morels, cut or break off the stem near the ground to avoid getting any soil on them. Nothing ruins a meal like grinding bits of grit between your teeth.

Mushrooms are often said to be "full of protein" and are touted as alternatives to meat. Thick slices of grilled portabella mushrooms do make tasty sandwiches, but how much protein is really in them? Not much. A variety of mushrooms, including portabellas and morels, contain only about 3% protein (on a fresh weight basis). Instead, they contain over 90% water. For you to get about 50 grams of protein (roughly the amount recommended per day) you would need to eat 25 cups of mushrooms (equal to about 175 buttons).

By comparison, this much protein can be had from a block of extra firm tofu, or seven eggs, or six cups of milk, or a full chicken breast. This is not to disrespect mushrooms; food is much more than macro-nutrients, and the flavors provided by mushrooms are every bit as wonderful as the herbs and spices that have been prized by cooks for millennia. I recommend morels in a buttery cream sauce, scented with fresh tarragon, and served over roast chicken or pasta. :)

Answer: C!

Some people have become seriously ill from eating large amounts of morels, including species that are considered "choice" edibles. Some people have also experienced gastrointestinal upset when eating morels with alcoholic beverages. Although these reactions to morels are uncommon, it is always a good idea to start with a small portion of any wild mushroom species that is eaten for the first time. Always remember that true morels have these key features: (1) a sponge-like cap, (2) a hollow stem and cap, and (3) a cap that is attached to the stem at the base of the cap (or midway down in a Half-free Morel). Slice them in half for examination and make sure they are thoroughly cooked.

Send your photos and ideas for topics to Ray at rvb@umich.edu. Do you have a photo of a Blue Jay, Crow, or Raven?

What's that Flower? Buzzard Rock to Veach Gap in Summer

Article and Photos by Richard Stromberg



Whorled Loosestrife

leaves have no stem or a very short one. The solitary, star-shaped flowers grow on one-to-two-inch stems from the axils of the upper leaf whorls. The petals are yellow with red at the base.

Toothed White-topped Aster (*Sericocarpus asteroides*) has daisy-like flowers except the white rays are sparse, as few as four, and the central disks are white or pinkish rather than yellow. The flowers grow in flat-topped clusters. It has egg-shaped, slightly toothed leaves.

Nodding Wild Onion (*Allium cernuum*) has a nodding cluster of many pink/purplish, bell-shaped flowers on top of a slender stem. It may grow over two feet tall. The skinny leaves may be lost among other vegetation.

This article shows you some of the flowers to look for in Summer on the Buzzard Rock to Veach Gap hike described in the February 2026 issue of the Potomac Appalachian.

Spreading Dogbane (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*) is a bushy perennial with paired, oval leaves. The flowers are quarter-inch, bell-shaped with flaring lobes. They are white with pink stripes or splotches. It blooms in summer.

Whorled Loosestrife (*Lysimachia quadrifolia*) grows up to three feet tall with a series of whorled leaves spaced up the stem. The whorls usually contain four leaves. The



Nodding Wild Onion

Lobelia flowers have an upper lip with two, erect lobes and a lower lip with three, spreading lobes. Two Lobelia species can be seen on this hike. The flowers of both are only about a quarter inch and are light blue to white. **Pale-spike Lobelia** (*Lobelia spicata*) has one or a few spikes of flowers. The structure behind the petals is only slightly inflated. It blooms from late May until August. **Indian Tobacco** (*L. inflata*) branches freely. The structure behind the petals is strongly inflated. It blooms from July until November.



Annual Fleabane

Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) is a succulent, branching plant over three feet high with racemes of ¼ inch white flowers with five, petal-like sepals. The fruits are deep purple berries.

Fleabane (genus *Erigeron*) flowers look like daisies, but the rays are very thin, and there may be up to 400 of them. The central disk is yellow, and the rays are white or tinged pink. **Annual Fleabane** (*Erigeron annuus*) has many stem leaves, and they are toothed. **Daisy Fleabane** (*Erigeron strigosus*) stem leaves are sparse and have smooth edges.

Horseweed (*Erigeron canadensis*) has many flower clusters at the top of the plant, each flower is a tube, less than five millimeters long. If you look closely, you will see the top of each flower is a tiny daisy with white rays 0.5 to 2 millimeters long. The seeds form small Dandelion-like fluff balls to blow in the wind.

A **Pasture Rose** (*Rosa carolina*) flower has five large, round, pink petals, completely separated from each other. A narrow claw that attaches each petal to the center of the flower underneath the stamens and styles. Numerous stamens fill the center of the flower. Fruits are bright red balls that hang on through winter.

The **Yellow Wild Indigo** (*Baptisia tinctoria*) plant is a shrubby perennial up to three feet tall. It grabs your attention by sticking branches out into the trail with racemes of half-inch, bright yellow flowers. The flowers



Pasture Rose

have the typical pea flower form with an upright banner petal, two fused petals forming a keel underneath, and two wing petals at the sides. The leaves consist of three leaflets and have no stems.

St. Andrew's Cross (*Hypericum hypericoides*) is a low-lying plant. The flower stems are short, so the flowers seem to rest on the leaves. It is called St. Andrew's Cross because the pairs of yellow petals are not at right angles to each other but angled like the cross of St. Andrew on the British flag.

Starry campion (*S. stellata*) blooms in late summer. Its five petals are fringed (eight to 12 lobes). It is also called widow frills. Its leaves are in whorls of four except, possibly, for a top pair.

Hoary Mountain-mint (*Pycnanthemum incanum*) can grow to over six feet tall. Its light purple flowers sprout irregularly from a circle at the top of the plant and around the stem in the leaf axils. The leaves are egg-shaped with the wide part towards the stem. The term "hoary" is applied because the leaves seem to be sprinkled with a white or grayish powder.

Striped Wintergreen (*Chimaphila maculata*) is only a few inches tall. The leaves are long and toothed with pale yellow along the veins. The flower stalk above the leaves has a few white flowers on top. The flowers hang down from their individual stalks and start out as round balls. Five petals open to about a half inch across and face downward. If you lift one up, you will see a large round stigma in the middle surrounded by ten, two-part stamens. Brown fruit develop and turn upward.

Dwarf Spiraea (*Spiraea corymbosa*) is a shrub up to one meter tall. Leaves are ovate with toothed edges. The white or pinkish, tightly packed, quarter-inch, five-petal flowers grow in a flat or slightly rounded form called a corymb.

The upper stems of **Bristly Sarsaparilla** (*Aralia hispida*) can be smooth and only the lower stems, bristly. It is a northern plant categorized as rare in the PATC area. Its tiny white flowers are in a rounded umbel. It grows in rocky places like The Point Overlook that looks



Striped Wintergreen

down on several bends of the South Fork of the Shenandoah.

Also growing around the rocky Point Overlook are **Quaking Aspen** (*Populus tremuloides*) trees, another plant that is rare in our area. Its leaves are up to four inches long and three inches wide. They have fine, regularly spaced teeth on the edges, 15 to 70 per side.

Bigtooth Aspen (*P. grandidentata*) also grows here. It is more common in our area than Quaking Aspen. Its leaves are up to six inches long and four inches wide. They have five to 15 unequal, triangular teeth per side.

Purple-flowering Raspberry (*Rubus odorata*) has a simple leaf (not compound) looking like a maple leaf over a foot wide, and the flower is spectacular: rose-purple and over an inch in diameter, reminiscent of a rose. The ripe fruit is a red raspberry.



Downy Rattlesnake

Plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*) is most noticeable for its evergreen, dark green leaves with a network of white veins at the base of the plant. The flower raceme is about a foot tall. The flowers look like little ($\frac{1}{4}$ "), white balls, densely packed on the stalk and never open very much.

New PATC Online Store Launches just in time for spring!

We're excited to share that the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club is launching a brand-new online store in the last part of April—and it's better than ever.



The new PATC store has been completely reimagined with you, our members, in mind. It's **easier to navigate, faster to shop, and more user-friendly** across all devices, whether you're browsing from home or on the trail. You'll also find **brand-new**

merchandise alongside your favorite classics—perfect for showing your PATC community spirit, gearing up for your next adventure, or finding a gift for the outdoor enthusiast in your life.

Be on the lookout for news on the grand reopening! We are keeping the [current store page](#) updated with the latest information.

Thank you for being part of the PATC community—we can't wait for you to see what's new!

Help Wanted for March

Wood Sign Maker- contact John Hedrick at C 703-403-1479,

jhedrick@erols.com

Shelter Volunteer

Henry Horn ~ 301/498-8254, shelters@patc.net

Rocky Run Shelter [Original] ~ PATC Map 5-5

Paul Gerhard Shelter ~ PATC map F

District Manager

District Manager ~ SNP South Blue-blaze [Map 11]

James Surdukoski ~ 434-459-1122, buslsurdukowski@gmail.com

Co- District Manager ~ Tuscarora Central [Map L]

Bill Greenan, wpgreenan@yahoo.com

SNP North District Blue blazed ~ Map 9

Tom Moran, (703) 715-0050, twmoran19@gmail.com

Fork Mountain Trail ~ Co ~ Piney Ridge Trail to Hull School Trail (1.1 mi)

Jeremys Run Trail (middle) ~ Co ~ 8th Ford of Jeremys Run to junction Knob Mt. & Neighbor Mt. Trail (2.7mi)

Sugarloaf Trail ~ Co ~ AT (Hogback Mt.) to Pole Bridge Link Trail (1.4 mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ SNP Boundary to Thompson Hollow Trail (1.5 mi)

Thornton River Trail (middle) ~ First Stream Crossing to Hull School Trail (1.4 mi)

SNP Central District Blue blazed [south] ~ Map 10

John Hedrick ~ 540/987-8659, jhedrick@erols.com

Rock Spring Parking/Cabin/Hut ~ Rock Spring Parking to AT/AT to Rock Spring Cabin & Hut (.2mi)

Rock Spring Cabin/Hut Spring Trail ~ Rock Spring Cabin & Hut to spring (.1mi)

SNP South District Appalachian Trail ~ Map 11

Bob Pingry ~ 434-981-5094, bobpingry@gmail.com

AT ~ Co ~ Loft Mtn Camp Store trail to Loft Mountain Amphitheater trail (1.3)

SNP South District Blue blazed ~ Map 11

James Surdukoski ~ 434-459-1122, buslsurdukowski@gmail.com

New District Manager Needed~ SNP South Blue-blaze [Map 11]

Brown Mountain - Brown Mountain Summit to Big Run Portal Trail (3.5 mi)

Gap Run Trail - Junction of Rocky Mount Summit Trail to bottom of Gap Run (1.50mi)

Pennsylvania Tuscarora ~ Maps J & K

Chris Firme ~ 717-794-2855, bncfirme@innernet.net

Dave Trone ~ 717-778-1308, traildavidt@gmail.com

Pete Brown 410-207-2921, trailpete@gmail.com

PA Tuscarora [J] ~ Fowler Hollow shelter to Hemlock Rd (2.2mi)

PA Tuscarora [J] ~ Mountain Rd. to Jct. PA 641 (6.2mi)

PA Tuscarora [K] ~ Alice Trail to Yellow Blazed Trail (4.2mi)

PA Tuscarora [K] ~ Yellow Blazed Trail to PA 456 (6.7mi)

Tuscarora Central ~ Map L

Bill Greenan ~ wpgreenan@yahoo.com

Co-District Manager needed

Tuscarora Trail ~ Burnt Mill Bridge to Lutkins Passage (3.2mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Meadow Branch to Eagles Nest Parking (2.2mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Eagles Nest Mt. Parking Lot to Meadow Branch Trail (3mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Larrick Overlook to Lucas Woods Trail (2mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Sleepy Creek Registration to Hampshire Grade
Road (5.6mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Hampshire Grade Road to High Rock (2.7mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Co ~ Lucas Woods Trail to Powerline (3.5mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Sleepy Creek WMA Border to VA 671 (Shockeyville Road) (4.1mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ US 50 (Back Creek) to Gore Access Trail (1.3mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Co ~ Powerline to Dry Gap (3.5mi)

Devils Nose Connector Trail ~ Devils Nose Parking Area to Tuscarora Trail (.5mi)

Spruce Pine Hollow Trail ~ Tuscarora Trail to Spruce Pine Hollow Park Trailhead (.10mi)

Tuscarora Trail ~ Gore Access Trail to Hunters Cabin (Forest Road Crossing) (2.1mi)

Massanutten South ~ Map H

Paul Boisen, (540) 246-5662, paulboisen@hotmail.com

Massanutten South Trail ~ Pitt Spring to Morgan Run Trail (1.4 m FR 65) (3.3mi)

Roaring Run Trail ~ Catherine Furnace to TV Tower Road (3.8mi)

Pitt Spring Lookout Trail ~ Massanutten South Trail to lookout point (.27mi)

Great North Mountain ~ Map F

Mike Allen ~ 540-333-3994, michaelallen0056@gmail.com

North Mt. Trail ~ Stack Rock Trail to VA 720 (4.3mi)

Stack Rock Trail ~ Forest Rd 252 to North Mt. Trail (1.5mi)

Long Mountain Trail ~ Trout Pond Trail to FR 1621 (4.4mi)

Big Schloss Trail ~ 2.3 Mile Marker of Mill Mt. Trail to Big Schloss View (.3mi)

Mill Mt. Trail ~ Wolf Gap to Big Schloss Cutoff Trail (2.8mi)

Gerhard Shelter Trail ~ Tuscarora Trail to Vances Cove (1.5mi)

Bucktail Cutoff Trail ~ Bucktail Trail to Halfmoon Trail (2.7mi)

Bucktail Trail ~ Trout Run Road to Waites Run Road (5.2mi)

Capon Trail ~ Bucktail trailhead to Waites Run Road (2.9mi)

German Wilson Trail ~ Halfmoon Lookout Trail to Bucktail Trail (1.2mi)

Cedar Creek Trail ~ FR88 to FR1863 (4.4mi)

Old Mailpath [Trail ~ Wilson Cove to TT Three Ponds Trail (2.3mi)

Sulphur Springs Gap Trail ~ SR603 to TT Little North Mountain Trail (2.9mi)

Little Sluice Mountain Trail ~ FR92 to TT Three Ponds Trail (5.3mi)

Trout Pond Trail ~ SR59 to Long Mountain Trail (2.5mi)

Falls Ridge Trail ~FR1318 Laurel Run Spur Trail to North Mountain Trail (2.5mi)

North River Map-National Geographic Trails Illustrated #791

Lynn & Malcolm Cameron, (540) 234-6273, slynncameron@gmail.com

Braley Pond Loop ~ 491, 496, 654 from Braley Pond Parking to Braley Pond Parking (3.6 mi)

MD Montgomery County Parks ~ Map D

Lynn Gallagher ~ (301) 320-4862, or lynn.t.gallagher@gmail.com

Cabin John Trail ~ Seven Locks Rd to Tuckerman Lane

Prince William Forest Park

Dennis Calhoun, 703-583-4386, dennis_calhoun@comcast.net

Carl Nicholson, 703-314-6365, cwnicholson@gmail.com

South Valley from Scenic Drive [3rd Intersection] to North Orenda Road (1.1 mi)

Maryland National Battlefield Parks – Antietam & Monocacy

Mary Ann Lepore ~ H 814-942-0670, C 814-327-8526

shastalepore@msn.com

Monocacy NBP

Junction Trail (1.mi) plus Best Farm Trail (1.5mi)[one maintainer for both trails]

Worthington Farm Trail ~ Worthington House to through [including] Ford Loop (1.6mi)

Brooks Hill Trail ~ Worthington House to High Water Bypass Trail (1.9mi)

Gambrill Mill Trail (.5mi) plus Dam Ruins Trail (.3mi) [one maintainer for both trails]

