

4th Quarter 2025 Frederick County Master Naturalists and Nature Council Newsletter

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4th Quarter 2025

As we wind down this calendar year, prepare for the holidays, embrace the cooler weather, and look forward to what a new year will bring, it's a great time to consider all of our accomplishments in 2025. What a busy year it has been! Thank you to everyone involved in the Volunteer Appreciation / Master Naturalist Celebration in January, Nature Anthology launch in February, supporting the City Nature Challenge in April, CommuniTyler in May, the Annual Butterfly Count in July, outreach and stewardship projects at Catoctin Creek Park and Fountain Rock Park, the Fourth Annual Native Plant Sale in September, the Frederick County Nature Summit in October, the Fall 2025 Maryland Master Naturalist class, Native Seed Swap in November, Advanced Training programs and supporting nature center programming. We wish you the very best for the holiday season and look forward to seeing you in January at the Volunteer Appreciation and Master Naturalist Celebration – you won't want to miss it!

Another Successful Native Plant Sale in the Books!

The fourth annual Fountain Rock Native Plant Sale was a shining success again this September thanks to the coordination by Master Naturalist Tiffany Winkler and her team. Native Plants sourced from Babikow Nursery in Baltimore were offered via online pre-orders and collected on Saturday, September 20th. Over 35 varieties of plants which were historically found in central Maryland were available for order. Net proceeds from this annual sale go directly to the Frederick County Nature Council in support of programs, projects, and purchases for Fountain Rock Park & Nature Center and Catoctin Creek Park & Nature Center. As the primary fundraiser for this volunteer organization, we greatly appreciate the support from the community! Hope to see you again in September 2026!

Frederick County Nature Summit

We had an absolutely beautiful day for the inaugural Frederick County Nature Summit hosted at Catoctin Creek Park and Nature Center on Wednesday, October 1, 2025. Master Naturalists, community members, and Parks and Rec employees from across the state participated in the all-day event which was coordinated by Maryland Recreation & Parks Association. Keynote speaker Kerry Wixted kicked off the morning with a discussion on Biodiversity in Maryland. Numerous classroom and field sessions were provided with topics ranging from sexy snakes and brook trout to climate change and pollinator/plan coevolution. Participants had opportunities to earn continuing education credits for select sessions. Coffee and morning refreshments were generously donated by the Frederick County Nature Council. Delicious lunches were acquired from the Little Red Barn in Jefferson. This was an excellent opportunity to spend the day with like-minded individuals who enjoy spending time in nature and are passionate about the environmental issues we are facing today. A huge thank you to all of the coordinators and presenters!

Friday Fun at Fountain Rock

A group of dedicated volunteers meets most Fridays at Fountain Rock Nature Center. We remove invasive species – Wintercreeper and Bush Honeysuckle are our favorites! Native plants are cultivated and maintained in cleared areas. We welcome your help! For more information contact Deb Portney at dlportney@yahoo.com.



For more information on wintercreeper: [Invasives in Your Woodland: Winter Creeper \(Updated 2025\) | University of Maryland Extension](#) For more information on bush honeysuckle: [Invasives in Your Woodland: Bush Honeysuckles | University of Maryland Extension](#)



Frederick County Weed Warrior Programs are offered seasonally (2/27 and 3/27 in 2026) at Fountain Rock Nature Center! Come learn about the “Dirty Dozen” of Frederick County.

Recreator.com

Catoctin Creek Butterfly Meadow Garden Renewal Project

Master Naturalists Barbara Kemerer, Jennifer Merriman and Dana Collingwood, coordinators of the Catoctin Creek Butterfly Meadow Garden Renewal Project, were thrilled to have several students from the Catoctin Creek Nature Center home school program assist with the weeding and invasive plant removal at the CCNC Butterfly Meadow Garden in September. Thank you to CCNC Nature Instructors (and Master Naturalists) Carolyn Nair and Margaret Pierre-Nanan for coordinating this. Additionally, we would like to thank several members of the CCNC staff as well as Master Naturalists Don Hambright, Pat Brown, and Mandela Doescher-Harmon for their assistance with transporting and planting over 100 native plants during the September 20th-21st “work weekend”. We are also grateful for the members of the CCNC staff who assisted with the mulching and watering throughout the following weeks. The team will resume work on this pollinator garden and Monarch Way Station in Spring 2026.



Native Seed Swap

The second annual Native Seed Swap, held at Fountain Rock Park on Saturday, November 1st was another big hit. Thank you to Master Naturalist Deb Portney for coordinating the event. Community members had the opportunity to select from a variety of native plant seeds to get a jump start on their winter seed sowing for the 2026 season!



Book Club

Once again eight ladies gathered outside on a lovely first day in autumn for a lively discussion of Chloe Dalton's debut book, Raising Hare: A Memoir. A big thank you to Bernadette for leading the group discussion with a series of intriguing, thought-provoking questions. It was awesome! The last regular meeting of 2025 was held on November 17th to discuss A Woman Among Wolves: My Journey Through Forty Years of Wolf Recovery, by Diane Boyd, facilitated by Linda. Thank you! December 8th will mark the final social meeting of the year. On January 12, 2026 the first regular meeting of the new year will discuss our second book on wolves: American Wolf: A True Story of Survival and Obsession in the West, by Nate Blakeslee. Ann will facilitate. New book suggestions offered by Joyce include: The Lost Trees of Willow Avenue, by Mike Tidwell, Grizzly Confidential, by Kevin Grange, and Fuiss: When Nature Breaks the Law, by Mary Roach. The group is looking for someone willing to volunteer to create a running book list of the club's recommendations in digital format. Interested? Please contact Lynne Marquess at lynne@marq3.net.

Volunteer Appreciation and Master Naturalist Celebration Event



Inclement weather
date is Jan. 24th!

On Saturday, January 10, 2026 from 5 to 7pm in the Browning Building at Pinecliff Park, the Frederick County Nature Council will celebrate all of the dedicated volunteers who support Catoctin Creek and Fountain Rock Parks and Nature Centers. We will recognize each member of the Master Naturalist Class of Fall 2024 as they complete their first year of volunteer hours and complete their Master Naturalist certification. In addition, we welcome the Master Naturalist Class of Fall 2025 as they complete their classroom instruction portion of the program and become Master Naturalist interns for 2026. We hope you will mark your calendars and plan to join us for refreshments and nature trivia!

Nature Council Update



Our Mission: To provide support and advocacy for the Fountain Rock and Catoctin Creek Parks through Stewardship, Volunteerism, Membership and Fundraising Opportunities.

Laurie Vaudreuil has been elected as the new Treasurer for the Frederick County Nature Council, and Dana Collingwood has been elected to the role of Secretary for the remainder of the 2025-2026 fiscal year, replacing outgoing treasurer, Dave Stant, and secretary, Courtney Ward, respectively. We thank Courtney and Dave for their work. The Nature Council purchased numerous native plants for both Fountain Rock and Catoctin Creek Parks during the 3rd quarter of 2025. Our current focus is on the upcoming Volunteer Appreciation event. The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 19th from 7-8 pm via Zoom. All meetings are open! Refer to naturecouncilfc.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

- Assist with set up and clean up for the Volunteer Appreciation Event at the Browning Building at Pinecliff Park on Saturday, January 10th. Contact Laurie Vaudreuil to volunteer: lmvaudreuil@gmail.com. (Inclement weather date is January 24th)
- Assist Frederick County Nature Council with communications – website, mailchimp and/or social media (Facebook), advertising, etc. Contact Amy Duray to volunteer: amy.e.duray@gmail.com.
- Assist Frederick County Nature Council with webinar management – we'll train you! Contact Amy Duray to volunteer: amy.e.duray@gmail.com.

Upcoming Advanced Training Opportunities and Fun Nature Programs

Frederick County Nature Council Zoom Lectures – No cost! Webinar Series, “I’m a Naturalist, Not a Meteorologist!” with Randy Bass. Part 1 Weather, Climate, and the Rhythms of Nature to be held on Thursday, December 4, 2025 at 7:00pm! Part 2 Climate Patterns and Change: Understanding the Long View to be held on Thursday, March 5, 2026 at 7:00pm. Register now at naturecouncilfc.org.

Catoctin Creek Nature Center: (recreater.com)

A Mindful Outdoor Experience: New Year Welcoming 10-11:30am Thursday, January 1st

Fountain Rock Nature Center: (recreater.com)

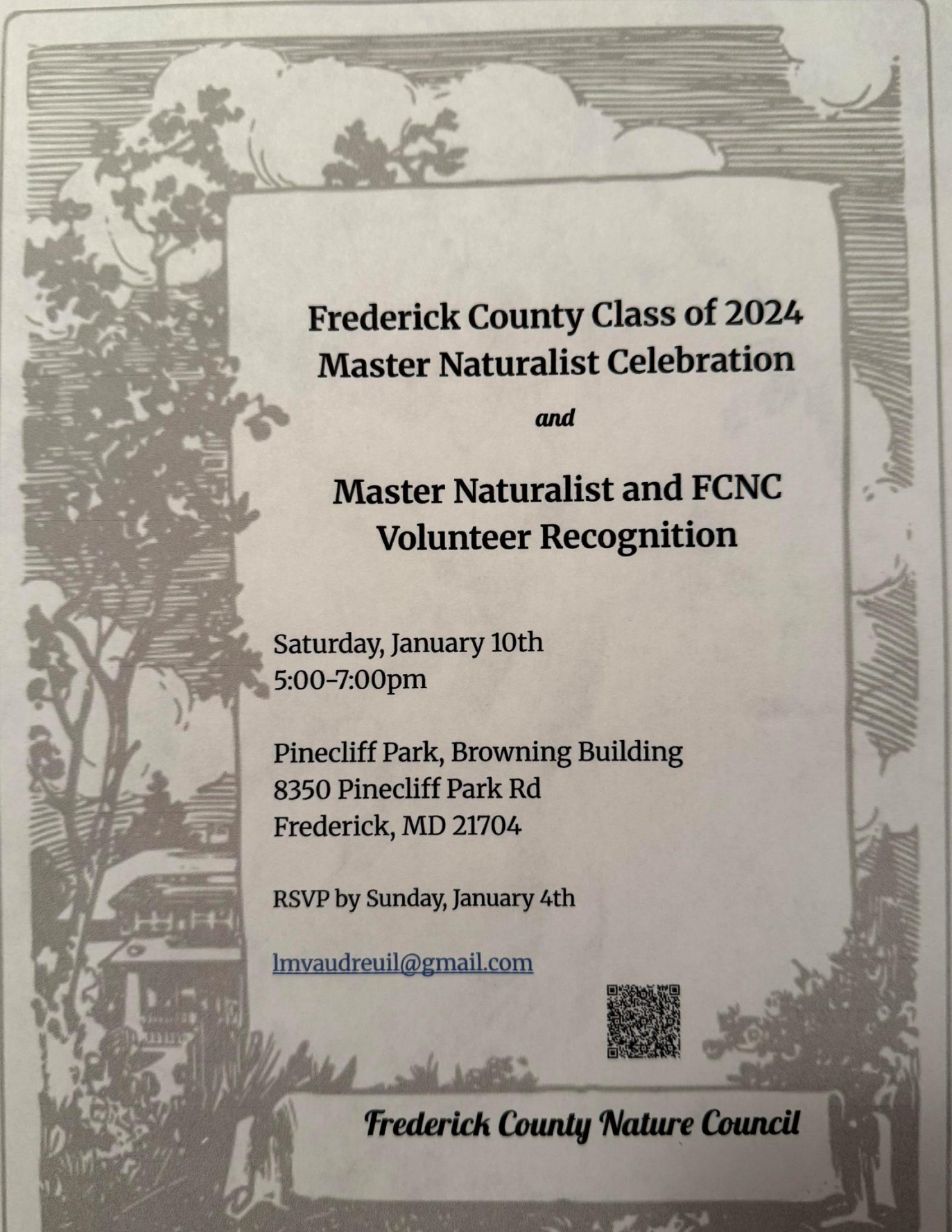
Embracing Winter Outdoor Retreat with Monica 1-2:30pm Sunday, January 18th

Here Comes the Sun – Candlemaking 6-8pm Tuesday, February 3rd

Valentine’s Day Campfire 6-7:30pm or 8-9:30pm Saturday, February 14th

Kempton Park: (recreater.com)

Nature Date for Couples 1-2:30pm Sunday February 15th



**Frederick County Class of 2024
Master Naturalist Celebration**

and

**Master Naturalist and FCNC
Volunteer Recognition**

Saturday, January 10th
5:00-7:00pm

Pinecliff Park, Browning Building
8350 Pinecliff Park Rd
Frederick, MD 21704

RSVP by Sunday, January 4th

lmvaudreuil@gmail.com



Frederick County Nature Council

Announcements – Save the Dates and Mark Your Calendars!

Don't forget... submit your end of year volunteer hours for the Maryland Master Naturalist Program and Frederick County!

Audubon Christmas Bird Count - www.audubon.org/community-science/Christmas-Bird-Count

December 14th through January 5th

January 10, 2026 – Frederick County Nature Council Volunteer Appreciation Event, Master Naturalist Certificate Presentation to Interns (Class of Fall 2025), and Master Naturalist “Graduation” Celebration (Class of Fall 2024) – Browning Building (Inclement weather date is January 24, 2026). See flyer on previous page for more details and rsvp information. Everyone is invited! Come take the Barb Kemerer Trivia Challenge!

Fourth Annual Climate Summit – February 27-28, 2026 at Hood College. Save the dates! Learn more at www.mobilizefrederick.org

Wildlife Habitat Advisors Course at Fountain Rock – Thursday April 16, 2026 at Fountain Rock Park. Save the date!

City Nature Challenge 2026 – April 24-27, 2026. Save the dates!

www.citynaturechallenge.org

Frederick County Master Naturalist Logo Items are available for purchase at mkrdesigns.com. Go to: <https://mkrdesigns.itemorder.com/shop/> On the next screen, where it says "enter store sale code", enter this password: QEQ82MastNat Happy shopping!

“Kindness is like snow—it beautifies everything it covers.” —Kahlil Gibran

Master Naturalist Spotlight – In the News!

Hearty congratulations to all of the winners, but especially Frederick County Master Naturalist Deb Portney on her recognition by Frederick County as one of the 2025 Sustainability Award Winners in the Individual category. Deb was honored as ‘an environmental advocate who has empowered the Frederick community to restore native habitats through education, hands-on volunteerism and the founding of the Wildlife Habitat Advisory Program.’ This program is offered as a service of the Audubon Society of Central Maryland and the Frederick Bird Club. Well done, Deb!

Wildlife Habitat Advisors Program



*Creating Wildlife
Habitat in Your
Outdoor Space*

The next quarterly issue of the Frederick County Master Naturalist and Nature Council newsletter will be issued during the week of January 19, 2026. Please submit any materials you would like to have included by January 16th. Errors, corrections, omissions? Contact Dana Collingwood (dana.collingwood@gmail.com)