

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information, photos, interviews, etc., contact
Erin Fournier at (401) 453-3777, office@riwps.org

STEP INTO SPRING WITH THE RHODE ISLAND WILD PLANT SOCIETY ... JANUARY -APRIL, 2006

As part of our mission the Rhode Island Wild Plant Society provides opportunities through field trips, walks, workshops, courses, and lectures to learn about native plants and their habitats while enjoying the outdoors. Children are welcome at a number of family-friendly events, so bring the kids along and give them a chance to learn. Pre-registration is necessary for most RIWPS events. For information, or to register, please contact the RIWPS office, (401) 453-3777, or office@riwps.org.

EXPLORE ARCADIA'S BLACK SPRUCE BOG

Sponsored by the RI Wild Plant Society

Exeter, RI

Change of Date: Saturday, January 7, 10:00 a.m.-noon

Pre-Registration Required, (401) 453-3777

Fee: \$3 members; \$5 non-members

Bogs form in kettleholes or depressions created by blocks of ice during the glacial period. Generations of Sphagnum moss gradually fill in the kettlehole and create a quaking mat home to many botanical curiosities. Black Spruce, found in only eight states, is tolerant of the bog's wet, acidic, nutrient-poor soil. Highbush blueberry and mountain holly crowd the bog's under-story; sheep laurel and carnivorous plants often grows just above the moss. URI instructor Chris Nerone will guide us through Arcadia's Black Spruce Bog found right in the middle of a Scrub Oak - Pitch Pine forest. *Moderate.*

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

Sponsored by the RI Wild Plant Society & Blithewold
“Discover Our Vanishing Coastal Wildflowers”

A slide lecture by author and ecologist Mario DiGregorio

Saturday, January 14th

1:00-2:30 Lecture

2:30-3:30 Fellowship & Book Signing

Free & Open to the Public

Audubon Environmental Education Center
1401 Hope Street, Bristol, RI 02809

Mario DiGregorio, author of *Cape Cod Wildflowers, A Vanishing Heritage*, shares his stunning photography and wealth of knowledge on coastal wildflowers. This presentation will be a treat for those who have never experienced an untrammelled coast celebrated by Thoreau, or who have witnessed the more recent and rapid degradation of Rhode Island's coastal moors, sand plain grasslands, and barrens. The lecture is co-sponsored with Blithewold Mansion, Gardens & Arboretum. Book sale and signing will follow.

Mario DiGregorio is a senior wetland scientist and ecologist for a major environmental consulting firm on Cape Cod. He has more than 20 years of experience specializing in botany, soils, and hydrology, rare species and wildlife habitat assessment, and site plan review. He has also served as a municipal conservation administrator on Cape Cod, a park ranger for the National Park Service, and a park resource manager for the Army Corps of Engineers. Mario has numerous publications including the popular books *A Guide to the Natural History of Cape Cod and the Islands*, and *A Vanishing Heritage: Cape Cod's Wildflowers and Wildflowers of the Cape Cod Canal* (with J. Wallner).

Directions: Take I-195 East to Exit 7 in East Providence. Go South on Rte. 114, through East Providence, Barrington, and Warren, to the Bristol town line. Entrance is on right, immediately after the Bristol/Warren town line.

EASTERN OLD GROWTH FORESTS: WHAT WERE THEY? WHERE ARE THEY TODAY?

Sponsored by the Norman Bird Sanctuary
Middletown, RI

Thursday, February 2, 7:00 p.m. (Snowdate: February 9)

Fee: \$3 members of NBS & RIWPS; \$5 non-members

This lecture and slide presentation will reflect on the nature of New England's pre-settlement landscape, discuss the unique characteristics of old growth forests, and glimpse into our wild past through images of remnant old growth stands that survive in the East. Join us in the Studio with naturalist Garry Plunkett who teaches with the New England Wild Flower Society's Certificate Program in Native Plant Studies, and has done a number of well-received programs for the Sanctuary.

NATIVE PLANTS FOR 4-SEASON GARDENING

Co-Sponsored by RI Wild Plant Society, Blithewold & NEWFS
Bristol, RI

Tuesday, February 7, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Pre-Registration Required, (401) 453-3777

Fee: \$15 members; \$20 non-members

By carefully choosing trees, shrubs, and perennials, we can have something of interest even in the coldest winter months! The glossy foliage of wandflower (*Galax urceolata*) and the rich green of American holly (*Ilex opaca*) are just a couple of the plants that brighten the garden throughout the year. Don't underestimate the charms of decorative bark, evergreen foliage, fruits, and dried leaves and flower stalks with a dusting of snow! We will talk about some of the best native species, with an emphasis on fall and winter interest, and talk about design to ensure that your garden framework works well in the "off-season" as well as at the peak of bloom. Instructor: Laura Eisener, owner of Laura D. Eisener Landscape Design, is Massachusetts editor for People Places and Plants, and teaches at the Arnold Arboretum Landscape Design Institute.

TREE ID IN WINTER

Sponsored by the RI Wild Plant Society
Rhode Island College, Fogarty Life Science Building

Saturday, February 18, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Pre-Registration Required, (401) 453-3777

Fee: \$3 members; \$5 non-members

A workshop designed to sharpen your tree identification skills using winter characteristics like twigs, buds, fruit, and bark. We will review selected resources, practice on twig specimens indoors (you are welcome to bring in your own samples), and, weather permitting, spend part of the time honing our skills outdoors. Bring a hand lens and whatever winter identification guides you may have. RIC Professor Jerry Melaragno will be our instructor. *Easy.*

SIGNS OF SPRING

Sponsored by the RI Wild Plant Society
West Greenwich, RI

Sunday, March 5, 1:30-4:00 p.m.

Pre-Registration Required, (401) 453-3777

Fee: \$3 members; \$5 non-members

Will Spring actually come this year? Take a walk at the Nettie Jones Nature Preserve at URI's W. Alton Jones Campus and help us find out. We'll search for Skunk Cabbage and Hazelnut in bloom, and look for other signs that the winter woods are waking up. Habitats include meadow, deciduous forest, White Pine forest, and Red Maple swamp. Naturalist Lisa Gould will lead the walk. *Moderate.*

MARCH ANNUAL MEETING

Sponsored by the RI Wild Plant Society

***“My Secret Woodland Garden”* A lecture by author Sydney Eddison**

**Free & Open to the Public, Corliss Auditorium,
URI Narragansett Bay Campus, Narragansett, RI**

Saturday, March 18th

12:00-1:00 Business Meeting

1:00-2:00 Fellowship & Book Signing

2:00-3:00 Lecture

Type “Sydney Eddison” into a google search engine and prepare to stand back from the screen. The list of citations is impressive, from quotes to published books, Sydney Eddison’s horticultural wisdom touches the entire country. She brings to her popular lectures all the skills gained from more than twenty years of teaching and a

life-long love of gardening. She writes regularly for top consumer magazines, including *Fine Gardening* and *Horticulture* and her books include; The Gardeners Palette: Creating Color in the Garden, The Self Taught Gardener: Lessons from a Country Garden, The Unsung Season: Gardens and Gardeners in Winter, A Passion for Davililies: The Flowers and the People, A Patchwork Garden: Unexpected Pleasures from a Country Garden, and Gardens to Go.

In 1978, Sidney set out to create a woodland garden on her Connecticut property, something that has become dearest to her heart, hidden in a damp hollow behind her old red barn, having as its centerpiece a vernal pool. Starting in March and lasting for three months, a succession of delicate-looking but amazingly hardy wildflowers bloom. She takes great care planting in patches and clumps, all the while experimenting with color, design and cultivation. Sidney never tires of sharing her knowledge and her plants, encouraging others to grow from seed. To quote Sidney, "gardens are a form of autobiography." It's a comment that generates some contemplation. What do our gardens say about ourselves? We look forward to hearing Sidney share her experiences and thoughts about woodland gardening. Recently awarded the Kathryn S. Taylor Award from the New England Wild Flower Society for outstanding design this is a lecture you don't want to miss.

Members with last names ending in A-M are asked to bring snacks to share at fellowship hour.

Directions: From Providence take 95S to Exit 9 and exit in left lane off highway onto Rt. 4S. Continue to the light at the junction of Rt. 1 and Rt. 138W. Take a left at this light at the tower onto Bridgetown Rd. Follow Rd. down a hill and then back up a hill to a traffic light. At this light (there is a Brooks Pharmacy on the right) continue across to South Ferry Rd. Continue past South Ferry Industrial Park on the right and South Ferry Church on the left. Entrance to campus is on the right, follow RIWPS signs to auditorium. **From the South** take Rt. 1 to the junction of Rt. 138W. Take a right at the tower onto Bridgetown Rd. Follow Rd. down a hill and then back up a hill to a traffic light. At this light (there is a Brooks Pharmacy on the right) continue across to South Ferry Rd. Continue past South Ferry Industrial Park on the right and South Ferry Church on the left. Entrance to campus is on the right, follow RIWPS signs to auditorium.

SPRING AT SNAKE DEN STATE PARK

Sponsored by the RI Wild Plant Society

Johnston, RI

Saturday, April 8, 10:00-1:00 p.m.

Pre-Registration Required, (401) 453-3777

Fee: \$3 members; \$5 non-members

We'll look for early bloomers and other botanical happenings in a variety of habitats including wet woodlands, upland forest, ledges, and meadows. Bring your identification guides, hand lenses, and a snack. We'll stop on the ridge to enjoy a marvelous overlook to the west. RIC Professor Jerry Melaragno will guide us, please remember some trails may be wet this time of year. This walk will be a bit longer and more strenuous than a typical RIWPS walk. *Strenuous*.

NEW PETERSON FIELD GUIDE TO FERNS AUTHOR BOOK SIGNING & LECTURE

Sponsored by the RI Wild Plant Society & the New England Wild Flower Society

Jamestown Library, Jamestown, RI

Saturday, April 22, 1:00-4:00

Free! Open to the Public

Since 1956, when the late Boughton Cobb wrote his field guide to ferns, this book, unchanged in all the years since, has become the classic on the subject. The New England Wild Flower Society's Cheryl Lowe and Elizabeth Farnsworth have completely updated this classic text and added 100 color photographs. The incredibly beautiful full-page line drawings by the late Laura Louise Foster have been reproduced from the original art. New subjects include a section on habitats and conservation, a glossary of botanical terms, and a chapter on gardening with ferns.

Directions: Take 138 East over the Jamestown Bridge. Take the first exit which says "Helm Street." Do not turn onto Helm. Proceed through the stop sign. When you get to the next stop sign, turn right onto North Rd. Take North Rd until you see a Cumberland Farms store on your right and a playground on your left. The library is the brick building on the left.

SPRING WALK AT PARKER WOODLAND

Sponsored by the RI Wild Plant Society

Coventry, RI

Sunday, April 30, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Pre-Registration Required, (401) 453-3777

Fee: \$3 members; \$5 non-members

Owned by the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, this beautiful 800-acre wildlife refuge contains fields, streams, swamp, and rich woodlands. Settled in 1750, the property contains several old foundations that have been the site of archeological studies; evidence of charcoal works may still be seen in the Beech groves. With a good diversity of ferns, trees, and herbaceous plants, there will be plenty to observe; we'll look especially for spring wildflowers. Naturalist Lisa Gould will lead the walk. *Moderate.*