



Natural Resource Quarterly | Summer 2024



Nortrup, Megan

4 min read

Newsletter of Natural Resources in the National Capital Region

In This Issue

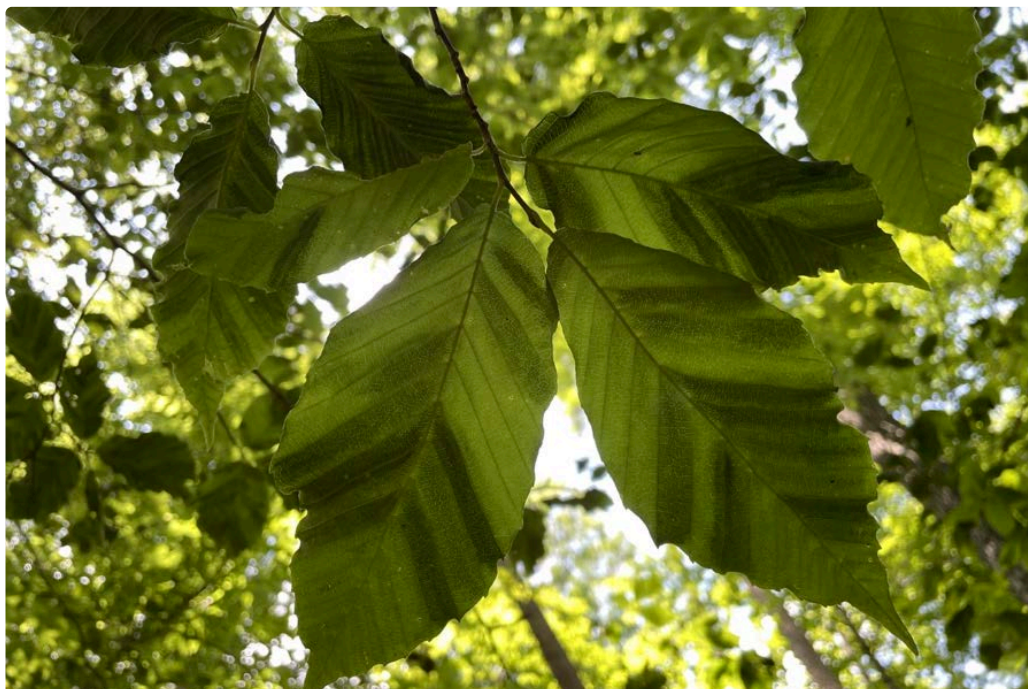
- At-Risk Turtle Study
- Beech Leaf Disease Mistaken Identity
- Christmas berry: Invasive Species Spotlight
- Flying Squirrels Field Note
- Spotted Lanternfly in NCR
- Amphibian Species Lists Updated
- Nature News, ICYMI
- Calendar



Christmas berry flowers. Credit: Tosakah (CC BY-NC).

Christmas berry - Invasive Species Spotlight

Learn about Christmas berry (*Photinia villosa*), an invasive shrub considered an early detection rapid response species in the greater Washington, DC region in 2024. Read more: [Christmas berry \(Photinia villosa\) \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#).



Beech leaf disease. Credit: NPS/Andrejs Brolis.

Beech Leaf Disease Mistaken Identity

Beech leaf disease is a growing concern in the National Capital Region and beyond, but it can be difficult to distinguish from other pests. Learn more about how to recognize this disease and avoid falling for look-alikes!

Read more: [Beech Leaf Disease: Mistaken Identity \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#).

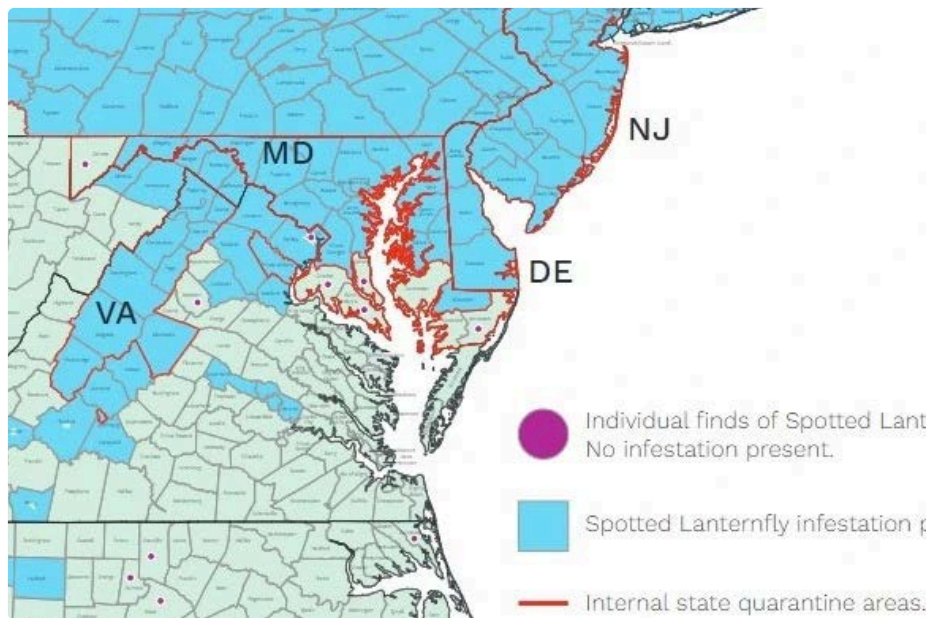


Spotted turtle. Credit: Max Jones

At-Risk Turtle Study

Parks are good places to escape the hectic pace of our day-to-day lives, slow down a bit, and consider the natural world. Perhaps, to enjoy observing turtles in their natural habitat!

Turtles are susceptible to stressors including habitat loss, illegal collecting, and rapid changes in climate to name a few. That's why NPS is now studying them to help ensure they can survive into the future. Read more at: [At-Risk Turtles - Ongoing Research Spotlight \(U.S. National Park Service\)](https://www.nps.gov/learn/research/at-risk-turtles) (nps.gov).



2024 Spotted lanternfly distribution map. Credit: Cornell University.

Spotted Lanternfly in NCR

As of January 2024, spotted lanternfly (SLF) infestations have been documented throughout the National Capital Region (NCR) and beyond. In our region, **it is no longer necessary to report SLF sightings.**

The Spotted Lanternfly Reported Distribution Map from Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences shows several state quarantine areas outlined in red as well as SLF infested areas including:

- Most counties of Maryland (except Garrett and several southeastern counties)
- Washington, DC
- Virginia counties of Frederick, Winchester, Clark, Loudoun, Fairfax, Prince William, Stafford, Fauquier, Culpeper, and many others
- West Virginia panhandle counties including Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, Hampshire, and Mineral.



Flying Squirrel Field Note

Southern flying squirrels are common in eastern forests, but are rarely seen by humans because they are nocturnal. Learn more about these unique animals!

Read more: [Flying Squirrels: A Field Note \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/flying-squirrels/).



Leopard frog at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. Credit:
NPS/Charles Shafer.

Amphibian Species Lists Updated

Amphibian species lists for 292 national parks recently got a clean up– including parks in the National Capital Region.

NPSpecies, the platform used to document information on the occurrence and status of species on NPS lands, contains observations about amphibians and other species for many park units. But prior to this update, many amphibian observations were unverified and the lists were often outdated.

That's why Inventory & Monitoring collaborators from the US Geological Survey's, Amphibian Research Monitoring Initiative (ARMI) conducted a national-scale synthesis of amphibian species occurrence in national parks. Their updates included:

- updated taxonomy
- international and state conservation rankings
- hyperlinks to a supporting reference for each record
- specific notes
- related fields that can be used to better understand and manage amphibian biodiversity within a single park or group of parks.

[Documentation of this project from January 2024](#) describes the update process this way:

As of March 1, 2021, NPSpecies had 4,198 records of amphibian species across all park units.

Although NPSpecies is internally validated, over 1,000 of the records were still listed as unconfirmed or unverified. We used available nomenclature in the Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS) to provide a common taxonomy for consistency and comparability. We also cleaned the NPSpecies list by removing 836 unverifiable park-level species occurrences and adding 115 new occurrences, changing occurrence status or taxonomy on over 1,000 records, and had regional subject matter experts verify the updated records.

Read [more about the project on ResearchGate](#).

Nature News ICYMI

[Creek restoration project expected to begin this fall at Fort Dupont Park](#) (NPS News Release: 5/16/24)

[Introducing Conservation.gov: A Game-Changing Tool to Protect Parks and Nature](#) (NPS Sharepoint: 5/7/24)

[President Biden celebrated Earth Day 2024 at Prince William Forest Park](#) (NPS Sharepoint: 5/1/24)

[National Park Service to improve turf at Lincoln Park this spring](#) (NPS News Release: 4/24/24)

[NRSS Launches New Series for Science Reports](#) (NPS Sharepoint: 4/23/24)

[White-tailed deer test positive for Chronic Wasting Disease at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park](#) (NPS News Release: 4/23/24)

[NPS and American Bird Conservancy Agreement Supports Bird Conservation in Parks](#) (NPS Sharepoint: 4/18/24)

[Rehabilitation of Rock Creek Park Golf Course to begin in 2024](#) (NPS News Release: 4/17/24)

[First prescribed fire in C&O Canal aims to protect threatened plant habitat](#) (NPS Sharepoint: 4/9/24)

[National Park Service prepares for \\$113 million multi-year repair to Tidal Basin and West Potomac seawalls](#) (NPS News Release: 3/13/24)

[\\$13 million to national parks in national capital region, \\$195 million across US from Inflation Reduction Act](#) (NPS News Release: 3/8/24)

[Three white-tailed deer test positive for Chronic Wasting Disease in Antietam and Monocacy national battlefields](#) (NPS News Release: 3/5/24)

[Inflation Reduction Act Funds Will Support Gettysburg National Military Park Resilient Forest Initiative and Climate Change Impacts](#) (NPS News Release: 3/5/24)

[National Park Service to begin \\$12.7 million project on historic C&O Canal in Georgetown](#) (NPS News Release: 3/4/24)

Calendar

June

11. NCR 106: NEPA Programmatic Categorical Exclusions and 106. 10:30 – 11:30 am. [Click here to join the meeting](#)

13. NCR 106: Commercial Use Authorizations/Special Use. 3:30 – 4:30 pm. [Click here to join the meeting](#)

July

23. NCR 106: Agreement Documents – MOA v. PA. 3:30 – 4:30 pm. [Click here to join the meeting](#)

25. NCR 106: PEPC Best Practices. 10:30 – 11:30 am. [Click here to join the meeting](#)

25. Natural Resource Advisory Group (NAT) Meeting. 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. Mather Training Center/HAFE (51 Mather Place, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425). Contact Sarah Brown at NPS email for more information.

Future

NPS CRAG (Cultural Resources Advisory Group) will meet in-person in NCR in fall 2024.

The Natural Resource Quarterly provides updates on the status of natural resources and science in National Capital Region parks.

[NCR Natural Resources](#) | [Previous Issues](#) | [NCR Inventory & Monitoring](#)