



Natural Resource Quarterly | Fall 2024



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3 min read

Newsletter of Natural Resources in the National Capital Region

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Green heron at Gambrill Mill in Monocacy National Battlefield. Credit: NPS/Scott Bates



I&M water monitoring field team collects data at a stream in National Capital Parks-East. Credit: NPS/Kelsey Graczyk

Freshwater Salinization

Freshwater salinization is a growing threat to aquatic life in streams of the National Capital Region. The land use and development in stream watersheds and the use of road deicing salts play a big role in salinization but parks and other land managers can take action to help reduce salt pollution. [Read More](#)



An old growth remnant grassland in Lower Bolivar at Harpers Ferry NHP that was first identified as a remnant in 2024. Credit: NPS

Old Growth Remnant Grasslands

During 2024 scouting for a large eastern grassland restoration project funded by IRA and BIL, several old growth remnant grasslands were identified in National Capital and Northeast Region parks that were previously unknown. These remnants preserve the genetic integrity of the original grassland flora of the eastern US and are true unexpected treasures that in some cases, were hidden in plain sight. [Read More](#)



Roger Cain, tribal ethnobotanist and United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians member, stands in front of a canebrake in Tahlequah, OK. Credit: US Forest Service/Michelle Baumflek

Rivercane: Our Native Bamboo

Rivercane is a woody grass native to the southeastern United States, with a range extending up into the National Capital Region. Once a common species, rivercane now only occupies 2% of its former extent. Learn more about the ecology and cultural significance of this once abundant native bamboo. [Read More](#)



The freshwater jellyfish *Craspedacusta sowerbii* is typically about the size of a penny. Credit: USGS

Freshwater Jellies

Preliminary results of recent macroinvertebrate monitoring in the National Capital Region (NCR) using environmental DNA revealed that freshwater jellyfish are present in all NCR parks. Learn more about these unique organisms (that don't sting people!) and the role they may play in our freshwater streams. [Read More](#)



Contemplating a conifer at Harpers Ferry. Credit: NPS/Andrejs Brolis

Native Grapes, Oaks, Birches, and Conifers

A series of plant family portraits for NCR parks, previously available only in PDF, have been repackaged as online articles, including:

- [Native Grapes](#)
- [National Capital Region Conifers](#)
- [Birch Family Natives of the National Capital Region](#)
- [Oaks of the National Capital Region](#)

Learn more about where these species can be found and what makes each one unique.



Weed removal volunteers at Carderock in C&O Canal NHP on a previous National Public Lands Day event. Credit: NPS

Wrangling Weeds for National Public Lands Day

The NCR Invasive Plant Management Team (IPMT) is celebrating National Public Lands Day (NPLD) with several volunteer weed removal events.

Coordinated by IPMT Volunteer and Partnerships Coordinator Yvonne Ng, they will take place at:

- RFK Meadow on 9/20
- Prince William Forest Park on 9/21
- Theodore Roosevelt Island on 9/29
- Manassas National Battlefield Park on 9/28
- RFK Meadow on 10/6

See calendar below for times and registration links.

Nature News ICYMI

[Prescribed fire planned for Antietam National Battlefield the week of Sept. 2](#) (NPS News Release 8/21/24)
[National Park Service begins reconstruction of Tidal Basin and West Potomac seawalls](#) (NPS News Release 8/15/24)

[NRSS Water Resources Division hires coastal mapping specialist](#) (NPS SharePoint 8/13/24)

[Dragonfly larvae help scientists find mercury contamination](#) (NPS SharePoint 7/29/24)

[IRA grant helps parks in NER, NCR to restore forests and grasslands](#) (NPS SharePoint 7/21/24)

[National Park Service will dredge Fletchers Cove](#) (NPS News Release 7/13/24)

[Harpers Ferry NHP program series focuses on behind-the-scenes archaeology](#) (NPS News Release 6/18/24)

[Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act aid Resilient Forests Initiative at several parks in and outside of NER](#) (NPS Sharepoint 6/10/24)

[National Parks in Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. provide more than 55,000 meals of donated venison to neighbors](#) (NPS News Release 6/5/24)

Calendar

September

20. Invasive Plant Removal at RFK Meadow. 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. Register at:

<https://www.volunteer.gov/s/volopprecord?listing=a09SJ000000LtSvYAK>

21. Invasive Plant Removal at Prince William Forest Park. 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Register at:

<https://www.volunteer.gov/s/volopprecord?listing=a09SJ000000hHqPYAU>

29. Invasive Plant Removal at Teddy Roosevelt Island. 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Register at:

<https://www.volunteer.gov/s/volopprecord?listing=a09SJ000000NCEzYAO>

28. Autumn Olive Removal and Brush Pile Construction at Manassas. 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Register at:

<https://www.volunteer.gov/s/volopprecord?listing=a09SJ000000IHx3YAO>

October

6. Invasive Plant Removal at RFK Meadow. 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Registration forthcoming 9/20

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](#)