



Natural Resource Quarterly | Fall 2025



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In This Issue

- NCR's Servicewide Award Recipients in Natural Resources and More
- Treating Beech Leaf Disease
- Checkered Sculpin
- Invasive Plants to Look for this Fall
- Celebrating National Public Lands Day 2025
- Nature News ICYMI

NCR's Servicewide Award Recipients in Natural Resources and More



Left to right, Layne Strickler, James Lynch, and Stacy Hill.

Congratulations to our National Capital Region (NCR) award recipients in natural resources for 2025! (Read more at [2025 Director's Awards for Natural and Cultural Resources](#))

Natural Resource Management in a Small Park Award:

- **Layne K. Strickler**, Natural Resource Program Manager at Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park

Natural Resource Research Award:

- **James C. Lynch**, Biologist in the Northeast Region

Natural Resource Management in Maintenance:

- **Stacy A. Hill**, Maintenance Worker at Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park

Also, tip of the hat to other 2025 Servicewide Award winners from NCR including recipients of the Director's Safety, Health, and Wellness Achievement Awards and the Director's Management and Administration Awards—it takes a team to make it all happen!

Director's Safety and Health Achievement Award

- Historic Preservation Training Center Safety Program including: **Lieutenant Rebekah Abangan**, **Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) Adam Mannarino**, **LCDR Stephanie Bridges**, **LCDR Joshua Greenberg**, and **Commander Brian Czarnecki**

Administration Team of the Year

- the joint **National Capital Region (NCR) and Northeast Region (NER) Administrative Planning Committee** including **Ben Helwig**, George McHugh, Thomas Rogers, Kelly Fox, Shelly Stubblefield, Cecily Wood, Deanna Harrison, Kevin Langley, and Dominic Cardea.

Best Practices in Financial Transparency and Accountability Award

- **(Suzanne) Suzy Traut** at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts

Advancement of Business Management Award

- **Allison Horner-Peters** at Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park

Individual — Excellence in Customer Service Award

- **Natalie Craig** at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts

Treating Beech Leaf Disease

Note: A discussion of BLD treatment in the NCR is planned for the September 9, 2025 meeting of the Natural Resource Advisory Team.

Beech leaf disease (BLD) is no longer hard to find. Since 2021, it has been confirmed at Catocin Mountain Park, C&O Canal National Historical Park (near Fort Duncan), George Washington Memorial Parkway, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Monocacy National Battlefield, and Prince William Forest Park. But new experimental treatments are emerging. Read about the latest ways of [Treating Beech Leaf Disease](#).

Checkered Sculpin

For many years, the checkered sculpin went unnoticed. Now, it's getting recognition as a unique species. The fish lives in cold, limestone-influenced streams across four states and is common at Antietam National Battlefield. It is also an indicator of stream health. Check out this small fish with a big story:

<https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/checkered-sculpin.htm>

Invasive Plants to Look for this Fall

This fall, BOLO (be on the lookout) for invasive Japanese chaff flower and black fountaingrass. Unremarkable much of the year, both flower in a more conspicuous way during fall.

Black fountaingrass produces a fuzzy hotdog-like inflorescence and Japanese chaff flower produces a spiky bottlebrush-like inflorescence. Learn more about identifying these problem plants: [article on black fountaingrass](#), [Japanese chaff flower factsheet](#), and observations of [Japanese chaff flower on iNaturalist](#).

Celebrating National Public Lands Day 2025

National Public Lands Day (NPLD), the nation's largest single-day volunteer effort, is held each year on the fourth Saturday of September. This year, parks in the National Capital Region are hosting numerous natural resource-related events. These include (but aren't limited to):

September 26. An invasive shrub and vine removal at Theodore Roosevelt Island, co-sponsored with the NCR Invasive Plant Management Team. Description of [NPLD Event at TRI](#) (also listed on [Volunteer.gov](#)).

September 27. An invasive plant removal at Monocacy National Battlefield, co-sponsored with the NCR Invasive Plant Management Team. [NPLD Event at Monocacy](#).

September 27. A clean up event at Catoctin Mountain Park 's Owens Creek Picnic Area. [NPLD Catoctin Cleanup](#)

September 27. An invasive plant removal event at Manassas National Battlefield Park's Brawner Farm. [NPLD Event at Manassas](#)

September 28. In a private event, the Mid-Atlantic Climbers will do invasive plant removal at Carderock Recreation Area at Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. This event is co-sponsored by the NCR Invasive Plant Management Team.

Nature News ICYMI

In case you missed it...

- [Travis Touchette named as director of Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center](#) (InsideNPS, August 13, 2025)
- [Special Park Uses Basics for Practitioners](#) (NPS SharePoint August 8, 2025)
- [2025 Director's Awards for Natural and Cultural Resources](#) (NPS Article August 6, 2025)
- [Celebrating 30 years of Pokey at Rock Creek Park! - Rock Creek Park](#) (NPS News Release August 6, 2025)
- [Guide to NPS Hydrographic and Impairment Statistics \(HIS\) Database](#) (NPS SharePoint July 30, 2025)
- [National Park Service completes a Great American Outdoors project along the C&O Canal towpath - Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#) (NPS News Release July 11, 2025)
- [New Natural Resource Stewardship and Science Journal Articles: April-June 2025](#) (NPS SharePoint July 10, 2025)
- [2025 National Capital Region Excellence in Volunteerism Awards Recipients](#) (NCR SharePoint July 10, 2025)
- [Georgetown University, National Park Service and District of Columbia announce agreement to increase public waterfront access along the Georgetown Waterfront - Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#) (NPS News Release June 11, 2025)
- [Ideas for the future of Great Falls, Maryland - Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park](#) (NPS News Release Jun 9, 2025)

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](#)

