

ROCK CREEK PARK PLANT & WILDLIFE LIST  
PEIRCE MILL AREA

Smithsonian Associates Nature/History Hike & Virtual Presentation  
with Melanie Choukas-Bradley,  
Author of *A Year in Rock Creek Park*, *City of Trees*,  
*Finding Solace at Theodore Roosevelt Island* & forest bathing books  
July 2021

**Woody Plants (\*Non-Natives)**  
**Trees unless identified as Shrub or Vine**

<i>Acer negundo</i>	Box-Elder or Ash-Leaved Maple
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway Maple*
<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red Maple
<i>Acer saccharum</i>	Sugar Maple
<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	Silver Maple
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Ailanthus or Tree of Heaven*
<i>Albizia julibrissin</i>	Mimosa or Silk-Tree*
<i>Amelanchier</i>	Shadbush or Serviceberry
<i>Asimina triloba</i>	Pawpaw
<i>Betula nigra</i>	River Birch
<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	American Hornbeam, Ironwood or Musclewood
<i>Carya cordiformis</i>	Bitternut Hickory
<i>Carya glabra</i>	Pignut Hickory
<i>Carya illinoensis</i>	Pecan (planted)
<i>Carya ovata</i>	Shagbark Hickory (planted)
<i>Carya laciniosa</i>	Shellbark Hickory (planted)
<i>Carya tomentosa</i> ( <i>C. alba</i> )	Mockernut Hickory
<i>Catalpa speciosa</i>	Northern Catalpa (native to the midwest; naturalized)
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Redbud
<i>Cornus florida</i>	Flowering Dogwood
<i>Diospyros virginiana</i>	Persimmon
<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	Winged Euonymus or Burning Bush* (shrub)
<i>Euonymus americanus</i>	Strawberry Bush (shrub)
<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>	American Beech
<i>Fraxinus americana</i>	White Ash
<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	Green Ash
<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Witch-Hazel (shrub or small tree with yellow late- autumn flowers)
<i>Hydrangea arborescens</i>	Hydrangea, Wild (shrub)
<i>Ilex opaca</i>	American Holly
<i>Juglans nigra</i>	Black Walnut
<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Eastern Red-Cedar, Virginia Juniper

<i>Kalmia latifolia</i>	Mountain Laurel (evergreen shrub)
<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	Spicebush (shrub)
<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Sweetgum (planted near Peirce Mill & Milkhouse Ford)
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip-Tree (Tulip Poplar)
<i>Lonicera maackii</i>	Maack's Honeysuckle* (shrub)
<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	Southern Magnolia (planted)
<i>Magnolia macrophylla</i>	Bigleaf Magnolia (naturalized from the south)
<i>Magnolia tripetala</i>	Umbrella Magnolia
<i>Malus spp.</i>	Apples and Crabapples (young trees in orchard)
<i>Morus alba</i>	White Mulberry*
<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Tupelo (Black or Sour Gum)
<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	Hop-Hornbeam
<i>Paulownia tomentosa</i>	Paulownia, Princess or Empress Tree*
<i>Pinus echinata</i>	Shortleaf Pine
<i>Pinus rigida</i>	Pitch Pine
<i>Pinus strobus</i>	White Pine
<i>Pinus taeda</i>	Loblolly Pine
<i>Pinus virginiana</i>	Scrub or Virginia Pine
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	Sycamore
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Black Cherry
<i>Pyrus communis</i> cultivars	Pears (Bartlett & Anjou)* (young trees in orchard)
<i>Quercus alba</i>	White Oak
<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Swamp White Oak (possibly planted)
<i>Quercus coccinea</i>	Scarlet Oak
<i>Quercus falcata</i>	Southern Red Oak
<i>Quercus lyrata</i>	Overcup Oak (probably planted)
<i>Quercus michauxii</i>	Swamp Chestnut Oak or Basket Oak (planted)
<i>Quercus montana</i>	Chestnut Oak
( <i>Q. prinus</i> )	
<i>Quercus palustris</i>	Pin Oak
<i>Quercus phellos</i>	Willow Oak (possibly planted)
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Northern Red Oak
<i>Quercus stellata</i>	Post Oak
<i>Quercus velutina</i>	Black Oak
<i>Rhodotypos scandens</i>	Jetbead* (shrub)
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Black Locust
<i>Sassafras albidum</i>	Sassafras
<i>Smilax glauca</i>	Glaucous Greenbrier (vine with persistent leaves)
<i>Smilax rotundifolia</i>	Greenbrier, Common
<i>Staphylea trifolia</i>	Bladdernut (large shrub or small tree)
<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	Bald-Cypress (planted)
<i>Tilia americana</i>	American Basswood or Linden
<i>Toxicodendron radicans</i>	Poison-Ivy (vine or shrub)
( <i>Rhus radicans</i> )	
<i>Ulmus americana</i>	American Elm
<i>Vaccinium pallidum</i>	Lowbush Blueberry (shrub)

<i>Viburnum acerifolium</i>	Maple-Leaved Viburnum (shrub)
<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	Arrowwood Viburnum (shrub)
<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>	Blackhaw Viburnum (shrub or small tree)

### Invasive Woody Vines

<i>Ampelopsis brevipedunculata</i>	Porcelain-Berry*
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	Oriental Bittersweet*
<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	Japanese Honeysuckle*
<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>	Climbing Euonymus*
<i>Clematis terniflora</i>	Japanese Virgin's Bower* (herbaceous or slightly woody)

### Invasive Herbaceous Plants

<i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i> ( <i>Reynoutria japonica</i> )	Japanese Knotweed* (3-angled fruit; shrub-like)
<i>Perilla frutescens</i>	Perilla, Beef-Steak Plant*

### Wildflowers

<i>Chimaphila maculata</i>	Striped or Spotted Wintergreen (evergreen half-shrub)
<i>Circaea canadensis</i> ( <i>C. lutetiana</i> )	Enchanter's Nightshade
<i>Conopholis americana</i>	Bear Corn or Squawroot (parasitic wildflower; tree roots)
<i>Cryptotaenia canadensis</i>	Honewort or Wild Chervil
<i>Epifagus virginiana</i>	Beechdrops (parasitic wildflower; beech roots)
<i>Epigaea repens</i>	Trailing Arbutus (evergreen; blooms in early spring)
<i>Geum canadense</i>	White Avens
<i>Lysimachia ciliata</i>	Fringed Loosestrife
<i>Medeola virginiana</i>	Indian Cucumber-Root
<i>Mitchella repens</i>	Partridgeberry (evergreen)
<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	Pokeweed or Pokeberry
<i>Sanicula odorata</i>	Clustered Snakeroot
<i>Tipularia discolor</i>	Cranefly Orchid
<i>Verbesina alternifolia</i> & other <i>Asteraceae</i> spp.	Wingstem (late summer blooms) Asters, Goldenrods, Eupatoriums, Bidens

### Evergreen Ferns

<i>Polypodium virginianum</i>	Common Polypody (Rock Polypody)
<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	Christmas Fern

### Wildlife

Beaver, Muskrat, Red Fox, Coyote, White-Tailed Deer, Raccoon, Opossum. Spring Spawning Fish: Herrings—Alewife, Blue-Back Herring (both anadromous), Gizzard Shad (lives in Potomac), hope for return of Hickory and American Shad (both anadromous). Snapping

Turtle, Box Turtle, Painted Turtle (and other species), Northern Water Snake (and other species), Barred and Screech- Owls, Wood Duck, Mallard Duck, Belted Kingfisher, Wild Turkey, Great Blue Heron, Black-Crowned Night-Heron, Red-Shouldered, Red-Tailed and Cooper's Hawks, Bald Eagle, Woodpeckers, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Ovenbird, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Phoebe, Acadian Flycatcher, Red-Eyed Vireo, Carolina Wren, Carolina Chickadee, Northern Cardinal, Eastern Towhee, White-Breasted Nuthatch and many other birds.

GEOLOGY
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Smithsonian Associates Rock Creek Park Events with Melanie Choukas-Bradley,  
July 2021

Subject: Rock Creek Park Geology—Maryland/DC line to the National Zoo  
From: Joe Marx, Geologist  
To: Melanie Choukas-Bradley  
Date: Email dated November 22, 2010 (shared with permission, July 4, 2021)

*With minor exceptions, any bedrock exposed along Rock Creek north of the zoo and south of the Maryland line is the Laurel Formation. The exposures are places where near verticality has made it impossible for soil to accumulate.*

*The Laurel started more than half a billion years ago as undersea landslide deposits in the vicinity of a mid-ocean volcanic island arc. About 475 million years ago, the arc was pulled by subduction onto the edge of Laurentia (proto-North America). The Laurel deposits were shaved off the sea floor, pushed up onto Laurentia and metamorphosed to schist grade during this tectonic collision. As Earth's continents--including Laurentia--gradually merged into Pangea by about 350 million years ago, further collisions extinguished the ocean in which the Laurel was originally deposited.*

*The appearance of layering in the Laurel, as well as its tendency to weather into flat slabs, is a result of metamorphic foliation. The crystals in the rock were essentially squeezed flat by the immense pressures generated during the tectonic collision. Under the microscope, they look rather like thick piles of old wet leaves on a forest floor, hence the term "foliation".*

*Because the Laurel originated as landslides, the formation is often studded with irregularly shaped bits of miscellaneous rock. They can be seen as slight protrusions or indentations at the outcrop north of Pulpit Rock, and also as blackish (non-lichenous) areas on the surface of Pulpit Rock.*

*Keep in mind that from the time they were metamorphosed until relatively*

*recently, the Laurel rocks were located thousands of feet below the ground. Erosion and compensating uplift have brought them up to where we can see them.*

*--Joe Marx*

BOOKS AND OTHER RESOURCES
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### **Books**

Books by Melanie Choukas-Bradley available at Politics & Prose

*A Year in Rock Creek Park—the Wild, Wooded Heart of Washington, DC*

*City of Trees—The Complete Field Guide to the Trees of Washington, DC*

*Finding Solace at Theodore Roosevelt Island* (includes Rock Creek Park passages)

*The Joy of Forest Bathing—Reconnect with Wild Places & Rejuvenate Your Life*

*Theodore Roosevelt—Naturalist in the Arena*, edited by Char Miller & Clay S. Jenkinson

with a chapter by Choukas-Bradley title “Urban Wild—Theodore Roosevelt’s Explorations of Rock Creek Park” (This book not on shelves; ships in 1-5 days)

Books about Rock Creek Park History

*A History of Rock Creek Park: Wilderness & Washington, DC* by Scott Einberger

*Rock Creek Park A to Z* by David Swerdloff & Lorraine Swerdloff

*Peirce Mill: Two Hundred Years in the Nation’s Capital* by Steve Dryden

*Bold, Rocky, & Picturesque: The Archeology & History of Rock Creek Park* by John Bedell, Stuart Fiedel & Charles LeeDecker

*Rock Creek Park* by Gail Spilsbury

### **Map**

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club Map N: Trails in the Rock Creek Park Area, District of Columbia (Order via [www.patc.net](http://www.patc.net))

### **Websites**

National Park Service for Rock Creek Park: [www.nps.gov/rocr](http://www.nps.gov/rocr)

Rock Creek Conservancy: [www.rockcreekconservancy.org](http://www.rockcreekconservancy.org)

Friends of Peirce Mill: [www.friendsofpeircemill.org](http://www.friendsofpeircemill.org)