



Rock Creek Park Map

- **Western Ridge Trail**
- **Valley Trail**

Smithsonian Associates: Rock Creek Park, June 2022

Nature/History Hikes with Melanie Choukas-Bradley

Books and Other Resources

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 titled “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)

Websites

National Park Service for Rock Creek Park: www.nps.gov/rocr

Rock Creek Conservancy: www.rockcreekconservancy.org

Friends of Peirce Mill: www.friendsofpeircemill.org

Smithsonian Associates Rock Creek Park Walks with Melanie Choukas-Bradley,
June 2022

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, 2022)

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

ROCK CREEK PARK PLANT & WILDLIFE LIST
PEIRCE MILL AREA—Floodplain and Upland Woods

Smithsonian Associates Nature/History Hike
with Melanie Choukas-Bradley,
Author of *A Year in Rock Creek Park*, *City of Trees*,
Finding Solace at Theodore Roosevelt Island & forest bathing books
June 2022

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 Musclemwood
<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>Chionanthus virginicus</i>	Fringe-Tree (small tree or shrub)
<i>Cornus florida</i>	Flowering Dogwood
<i>Diospyros virginiana</i>	Persimmon
<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>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	Southern Magnolia (planted)
<i>Magnolia macrophylla</i>	Bigleaf Magnolia (naturalized from the south)
<i>Magnolia tripetala</i>	Umbrella Magnolia
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Sweetbay Magnolia (planted here)
<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>Rhododendron periclymenoides</i>	Pinxter Flower or Wild Azalea (shrub)
<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 & Shrubs

<i>Ampelopsis brevipedunculata</i>	Porcelain-Berry*
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	Oriental Bittersweet*
<i>Clematis terniflora</i> slightly woody)	Japanese Virgin's Bower* (herbaceous or
<i>Euonymus alatus</i>	Winged Euonymus or Burning Bush* (shrub)
<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>	Climbing Euonymus*
<i>Hedera helix</i>	English Ivy*
<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	Japanese Honeysuckle*
<i>Lonicera maackii</i>	Asian Honeysuckle*
<i>Vinca minor</i>	Periwinkle (slightly woody trailing vine)*

Invasive Herbaceous Plants

<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	Garlic Mustard*
<i>Ficaria verna</i> (<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>)	Lesser Celandine*
<i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i> (<i>Reynoutria japonica</i>)	Japanese Knotweed* (3-angled fruit; shrub-like)
<i>Perilla frutescens</i>	Perilla, Beef-Steak Plant*
<i>Youngia japonica</i>	Asiatic Hawksbeard*

Wildflowers (not all are blooming now)

<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>Erigeron philadelphicus</i>	Philadelphia Fleabane or Common Fleabane
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers, Catchweed (a bedstraw)
<i>Geum canadense</i>	White Avens
<i>Houstonia caerulea</i>	Bluets, Quaker Ladies
<i>Hydrophyllum virginianum</i>	Virginia Waterleaf
<i>Lysimachia ciliata</i>	Fringed Loosestrife
<i>Maianthemum racemosum</i>	Plumed Solomon's-Seal or False Solomon's-Seal
<i>Medeola virginiana</i>	Indian Cucumber-Root
<i>Mitchella repens</i>	Partridgeberry (evergreen)
<i>Osmorhiza claytonii</i>	Sweet Cicely

<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>	Mayapple
<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	Pokeweed or Pokeberry
<i>Ranunculus abortivus</i>	Kidneyleaf Buttercup
<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>	Bulbous Buttercup*
<i>Sanicula odorata</i>	Clustered Snakeroot
<i>Stellaria pubera</i>	Star Chickweed
<i>Tipularia discolor</i>	Cranefly Orchid
<i>Verbesina alternifolia</i> & other <i>Asteraceae</i> spp.	Wingstem (late summer blooms) Asters, Goldenrods, Eupatoriums, Bidens
<i>Viola sororia</i>	Common Blue Violet

Evergreen Ferns

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

Wildlife

Beaver, Muskrat, Red Fox, Gray Fox (uncommon), 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, Pileated Woodpecker and several other 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.