

Smithsonian Associates May 2024 Nature Hikes, Sugarloaf Mountain

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Author of *Sugarloaf: The Mountain's History, Geology & Natural Lore*
and
An Illustrated Guide to Eastern Woodland Wildflowers & Trees: 350 Plants Observed at Sugarloaf Mountain, Maryland

Sugarloaf Mountain, rising some 800 feet above a rural landscape to a height of 1,282 feet, has been designated a Registered National Landmark because of its geological interest and natural beauty. Geologically, Sugarloaf is known as a monadnock, a mountain that stands alone after the erosion of the surrounding land. The rugged and scenic cliffs at the summit are composed primarily of quartzite, an erosion-resistant metamorphic rock. The mountain's upland forests feature oaks, hickories, black birch, mountain laurel and the intriguing table mountain pine, among many other woody plant species. Sugarloaf Mountain mammals include white-tailed deer, flying squirrel, red fox, eastern cottontail, raccoon and the occasional black bear. Coyotes reside in the surrounding countryside. Birds include the common raven, great horned owl, pileated woodpecker, and red-tailed hawk. During the spring, numerous migratory species of songbirds, including wood-warblers, visit Sugarloaf, and wood thrushes, eastern wood-pewees, and ovenbirds are among the many songbirds who nest on the mountain. The mountain trails offer wonderful views of the Monocacy and Potomac River valleys. This rural mountain treasure crowning a pastoral patchwork of farms and villages is an hour's drive northwest of Washington, DC. In the mid-20th century a man named Gordon Strong created the private nonprofit corporation Stronghold, with the mission to administer the mountain as a place of public enjoyment and education in "out-of-door beauty." Strong thwarted the mountain plans of two of the century's most prominent and forceful personalities: Frank Lloyd Wright and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Our study leader will share some of this fascinating history during our hike.

Common Plants of Sugarloaf Mountain

West View, Green Trail, Red Trail, Blue Trail & Summit

***Mid to late May-Blooming Plants**

Woody Plants (Trees unless identified as shrubs or vines)

Red Maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>)	<i>Aceraceae</i> (Maple Family or Soapberry Family <i>Sapindaceae</i>)
Poison Ivy (<i>Toxicodendron radicans</i>) vine*	<i>Anacardiaceae</i> (Cashew Family)
Black Birch (<i>Betula lenta</i>)	<i>Betulaceae</i> (Birch Family)
Flowering Dogwood (<i>Cornus florida</i>)*	<i>Cornaceae</i> (Dogwood Family)
Persimmon, Common (<i>Diospyros virginiana</i>)*	<i>Ebenaceae</i> (Ebony Family)
Mountain Laurel (<i>Kalmia latifolia</i>)* shrubs	<i>Ericaceae</i> (Heath Family)
Pinxter Flower (<i>Rhododendron periclymenoides</i>)*	
Blueberry, Lowbush (<i>Vaccinium pallidum</i> or <i>V. vacillans</i>)*	

Deerberry (<i>Vaccinium stamineum</i>)*	
Black Huckleberry (<i>Gaylussacia baccata</i>)*	
Wintergreen or Teaberry (<i>Gaultheria procumbens</i>) “sub-shrub”	
Striped or Spotted Wintergreen (<i>Chimaphila maculata</i>)* (in bud) “sub-shrub”	(<i>Ericaceae</i> or <i>Pyrolaceae</i> Pyrola Family)
Trailing Arbutus (<i>Epigaea repens</i>) “sub-shrub”	
Black Locust (<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>)*	<i>Fabaceae</i> (Pea Family)
Redbud (<i>Cercis canadensis</i>)*	
Back Jack Oak (<i>Quercus marilandica</i>)	<i>Fagaceae</i> (Beech Family)
Chestnut Oak (<i>Quercus montana</i> ; <i>Q. prinus</i>)	
Northern Red Oak (<i>Quercus rubra</i>)	
Black Oak (<i>Quercus velutina</i>)	
White Oak (<i>Quercus alba</i>)	
American Chestnut (<i>Castanea dentata</i>)	
American Beech (<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>)	
Witch-Hazel (<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>)	<i>Hamamelidaceae</i> (Witch-Hazel Family)
Hickories: Mockernut (<i>Carya tomentosa</i>); Pignut (<i>C. glabra</i>)	<i>Juglandaceae</i> (Walnut Family)
Sassafras (<i>Sassafras albidum</i>)	<i>Lauraceae</i> (Laurel Family)
Spicebush (<i>Lindera benzoin</i>)	
Tulip-Tree (<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>)*	<i>Magnoliaceae</i> (Magnolia Family)
Red Mulberry (<i>Morus rubra</i>)	<i>Moraceae</i> (Mulberry Family)
Tupelo (Black Gum) (<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>)*	<i>Nyssaceae</i> (Tupelo Family)
Fringe-Tree (<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>)*	<i>Oleaceae</i> (Olive Family)
White Ash (<i>Fraxinus americana</i>)	
Pine, Table-Mountain (<i>Pinus pungens</i>); Scrub (<i>P. virginiana</i>); Pitch (<i>P. rigida</i>); White (<i>P. strobus</i>)	<i>Pinaceae</i> (Pine Family)
Common Blackberry (<i>Rubus allegheniensis</i>)*	<i>Rosaceae</i> (Rose Family)
& other <i>Rubus</i> spp. shrubs	
Black Cherry (<i>Prunus serotina</i>)*	
Pasture Rose (Carolina Rose) (<i>Rosa carolina</i>)* shrub	
Wineberry (<i>Rubus phoenicolasius</i>)* shrub (in bud)	
Paulownia (<i>Paulownia tomentosa</i>)*	<i>Scrophulariaceae</i> (Snapdragon or Figwort Family) or <i>Paulownia</i> Family <i>Paulowniaceae</i>)
Virginia Creeper (<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>)* vine	<i>Vitaceae</i> (Grape Family)
Wild Grapes (<i>Vitis</i> spp.)* vines	

Herbaceous Plants

Sweet Cicely (<i>Osmorhiza claytonii</i>)*	<i>Apiaceae</i> (Carrot or Parsley Family)
Periwinkle (<i>Vinca minor</i>)*	<i>Apocynaceae</i> (Dogbane Family)
Jack-in-the-Pulpit (<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>)*	<i>Araceae</i> (Arum Family)
Wild Sarsaparilla (<i>Aralia nudicaulis</i>)*	<i>Araliaceae</i> (Ginseng Family)

- Beggar-Ticks (*Bidens frondosa*) *Asteraceae* (Aster Family)
 Common or Philadelphia Fleabane (*Erigeron philadelphicus*)*
 Rattlesnake Weed (*Hieracium venosum*)*
 Plantain-Leaved Pussytoes (*Antennaria plantaginifolia*)*
 Burdock (*Arctium minus*)
 White Wood Aster (*Aster divaricatus*; *Eurybia divaricata*)
 Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*)* *Berberidaceae* (Barberry Family)
 Common Wintercress (*Barbarea vulgaris*)* *Brassicaceae* (Mustard Family)
 Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*)*
 Mouse-Eared Chickweed (*Cerastium vulgatum*; *C. fontanum*)* *Caryophyllaceae* (Pink Family)
- Common Chickweed (*Stellaria media*)*
 Wild Yam (*Dioscorea quaternata* and *D. villosa*)* *Dioscoreaceae* (Yam Family)
 Yellow Corydalis (fruiting) (*Corydalis flavula*) *Fumariaceae* (Bleeding Heart or Fumitory Family)
 Wild Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*)* *Geraniaceae* (Geranium Family)
 False (or Plumed) Solomon's Seal (*Smilacina racemosa*; *Maianthemum racemosum*)*
Liliaceae (Lily Family) or *Ruscaceae* (Ruscus Family)
- Canada Mayflower (*Maianthemum canadense*)*
 Smooth Solomon's Seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*)*
 Bellwort, Perfoliate and Sessile (*Uvularia perfoliata* & *U. sessilifolia*)** Lily Family or Meadow Saffron Family *Colchicaceae*)
 Enchanter's Nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*; *C. canadensis*) *Onagraceae* (Evening Primrose Family)
- Pink Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*)* *Orchidaceae* (Orchid Family)
 Downy Rattlesnake Plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*) *Orchidaceae* (Orchid Family)
 Black Cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*; *Actaea racemosa*) *Ranunculaceae* (Buttercup Family)
- Columbine (native and Eurasian) (*Aquilegia canadensis* and *A. vulgaris*)**
 Rue Anemone (*Anemonella thalictroides*; *Thalictrum thalictroides*)*
 Kidneyleaf Buttercup (*Ranunculus abortivus*)*
 Common Cinquefoil; Dwarf Cinquefoil (*Potentilla simplex*; *P. canadensis*)** *Rosaceae* (Rose Family)
- Cleavers (*Galium aparine*)* *Rubiaceae* (Madder Family)
 Ovate-Leaved Violet (*Viola fimbriatula*; *V. sagittata* var. *ovata*)* *Violaceae* (Violet Family)
- Southern Wood Violet (*Viola hirsutula*)*
 Common Blue Violet (Woolly Blue Violet) (*Viola sororia*)*
 Three-Lobed Violet (*Viola triloba* or *V. palmata*)*

Ferns

- Hay-scented (*Dennstaedtia punctilobula*), Common Polypody (*Polypodium virginianum*), Christmas (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), Ebony Spleenwort (*Asplenium platyneuron*)