

## ***A Natural History of the Mid-Atlantic: Stories of Calvert County, Maryland***

### All-Day Tour

Saturday, August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024 - 8:15 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Greetings Calvert Tour Participants:

I am looking forward to sharing time with you on Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup> on the tour of Calvert County as we explore and experience four marvelous sites that include trees with knees, a house on legs, a beach with teeth and art with heart (aka, 'faces in the forest'). While each of the four sites can speak eloquently enough of their special merits, I will be providing what I hope you will find to be value-added interpretive context that will add to your enjoyment and appreciation of each.

Speaking of which, I wanted to pass along a few suggestions for things to bring along that will enhance your enjoyment and comfort on the final stop at Flag Ponds Beach:

- **Sunscreen:** When we are out on the beach at Flag Ponds, we will be under full sun and thus having high SPF sunscreen and a hat to shade your face would be a worthwhile ounce of prevention.
- A **Zip Lock bag or small capped container** in which to save any fossils you might find on the beach would be helpful to keep hold of any finds you may collect (including lovely shells, beach glass, and smooth stones).
- **Beach shoes or hiking sandals.** For those who wish to walk on the Flag Ponds beach, having a pair of beach shoes that can get wet and keep out sand and pebbles would be a real asset since a shallow saltwater area must be crossed to reach the beach and these will protect your feet if you choose to go wading. **NOTE:** There is an outdoor shower outside the beach rest rooms where you can wash off your feet and change back into dry shoes before heading back up to the bus and the ride back to DC. I would also recommend a **small towel** to dry your feet and remove the last bits of sand before changing back to dry shoes.
- **Shorts or zip-off/convertible, fast dry hiking pants** would likewise be advisable if you want to wade in the shallows looking for fossils. You can search for fossils on the dry portion of the beach or simply find a spot to sit down and enjoy the sun and scenery (if so perhaps bring a towel or ground cloth in a tote). I will come prepared to wade and be glad to assist those who want to stay dry. For those who wish to, you may elect to hike the trails in woods that lead back to several of the ponds behind the dunes to botanize and bird-watch and then meet up with the group at the beachfront shower/rest room to walk back to the bus. The bird watching is EXCELLENT and there are observation blinds for you to use.
- Insect Repellent would be helpful for those who chose to hike the trails.
- And lastly, a pair of **binoculars**. There is excellent bird watching at both Battle Creek Cypress Swamp and along the Flag Ponds trails and ponds. Osprey, herons, eagles, and warblers are among the many bird species that can be seen in these locations.

If you have any particular interests about which I might be able to provide added interpretation please feel free to let me know during the tour, and I will do my best to address them.

I am looking forward to meeting you in person on the tour.

Warm Regards,  
Hayden Mathews  
Study Leader