

Sierra Club Natural Places Committee Newsletter March 2020

NATURAL PLACES NEWS



Photo Art by Richard Winston, *Sugarloaf Mountain View*

WELCOME to the March 2020 issue of Natural Places News!

This newsletter is a publication of the Maryland Sierra Club Natural Places Committee. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide information and access to recent articles, publications, outings, and website resources that promote our mission. Our mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect natural areas in Maryland, and support the Natural Places Committee. We value native biological diversity of all plants, animals, and fungi, including native flowers, ferns, mushrooms, birds, mussels, butterflies, frogs, and racoons. We value the diverse native habitats, including forests, meadows, wetlands, rivers, mountains, and coastal areas. Our NEXT MEETING will be Saturday, March 21, 2020, at the College Park office of the Maryland Sierra Club, 7338 Baltimore Ave., Suite 102, 2:30pm -4:30pm. BRING A PIECE OF NATURE ART YOU MADE OR LOVE TO SHARE. Hope you can join us! RSVP [here](https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/calendar) <https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/calendar>.

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Theme of This Issue: Art and Environmentalism



Photo Art by Lola Legard, Maryland Arbor Day
5th Grade Poster Contest First Place Winner

This issue of Natural Place News centers around the role of art in nature preservation. Art played a major part in the development of US national parks. The efforts of the Hudson River School of Art landscape painters 1825-1870 including Thomas Cole, Frederick Law Olmsted and Albert Bierstadt helped to get National Parks established. Lincoln had started legislation to establish national parks but was assassinated and President Grant followed through, and the first national park Yellowstone was established March 1, 1872. Building on the popularity of the image of Yosemite Valley, John Muir successfully lobbied for the establishment of Yosemite National Park, the second national park to be created. Europeans did not believe the Hudson School paintings were depicting real nature until they saw the wonders in person. The National Parks Movement was followed by the Last Great Places Movement. This led to the idea of preserving nature for future generations.

Today, the Hudson River School of Art continues to inspire modern nature artists and nature art appreciators. Millennials and baby boomers join together to remove invasive plants and restore native plants and ecosystems. Sierra Club continues to lead outings to promote these goals. Eco-Art continues to play an important role in today's society. According to Ellen Caldwell, "[In the case of eco-art, the artists have been educators and translators of environmental science and data.](#)" . Issues with single-use plastic is one issue artists have embraced, both through educational exhibits and art pieces using plastic trash. Eco-art educates people to protect nature from threats such as plastic.

Many Maryland art teachers also use nature art as a platform for educating children. Lisa Barry, a local graphic designer and member of Natural Places Committee, set out to find a way to marry her love of art and nature and spend more time outside. She discovered and

pursued a Master's Degree in Expressive Ecopsychology, the study of the human-nature relationship and creative expression as an investigative and connective tool. She developed the podcast and newsletter [Ecopsyched!](#) to bring to light the benefits of collaborating creatively with nature.

She works with elementary school kids during an arts day at a Chevy Chase school. She leads eco art classes and enjoys making fairy homes, and mocking up eco-themed graffiti walls. This year she will lead a "Listen & Draw: Nature" lesson, creating abstract art to her podcast's recorded nature sounds. Read an interview with Lisa about her Ecopsyched! Podcast later in this newsletter.

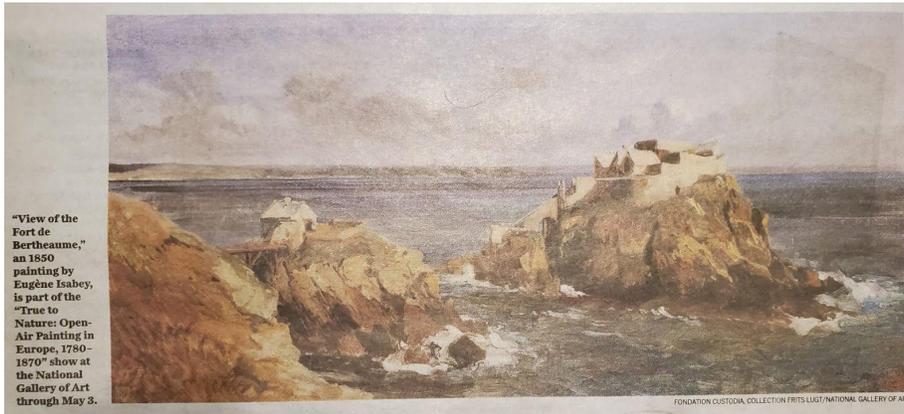
[Triada Samaras and Janis Strasser](#) found that even preschoolers benefit from eco-art. "Eco-art is an interesting blend of science, engineering, math, and temporary, open-ended, creative art. It links STEAM and project-based curriculum to early childhood settings everywhere. Children think about science in terms of the weather, their natural environments, and the materials they find outdoors. Engineering and mathematics come into play as they consider balance, structure, and composition while combining materials in 3-D creations. Children can capture their experiences with digital cameras, tablets, or smartphones so that the temporary nature of their art can be preserved through photos, on film, in books, and on documentation panels."

They recommend that parents and teachers introduce eco-art using the following steps:

- 1) Gather photos and books.
- 2) Involve families.
- 3) Find nearby natural items.
- 4) Discuss children's interest about nature. Talk about nature, seasons, the life cycles and ecosystems of plants.
- 5) Analyze art. Compare the differences and similarities between eco-art and the kinds of art children typically make.
- 6) Make indoor and outdoor sculptures and drawings.

The authors provide [instructions](#) on implementing these steps. These deeply motivating art activities also move adults and children into environmental activism.

Locally, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources sponsored an [Arbor Day Art Contest for local 5th graders](#). The theme was "Trees are Terrific in All Four Seasons." The schools of student winners will receive trees for planting from the Department of Natural Resources. Other exhibits about eco-art in the DC and Maryland area include 1) Baltimore, American Visionary Museum-- The Secret Life of Earth: Alive! Awake! (through Sept.6, 800 Key Hwy., www.baltimore.avam.org) 2) DC, National Gallery of Art-- True to Nature: Open Air painting in Europe, 1780-1870 (through May 3, 6th St. and Constitution Ave., www.nga.gov) and 3) DC, Nat'l Museum of the American Indian--Our Universes: Traditional Knowledge Shapes our World (through Dec. 1, 4th St. and Independence Ave., www.americanindian.si.edu).



Eco-art is also instrumental in getting everyone outside, particularly urban people and those tied to screens all day. [Karen Celedonia and Ann Rosenthal said this about art eco-literacy](#): “Community art programs that incorporate environmental education into their curricula offer a unique opportunity to engage urban neighborhoods with their surrounding green space. One such program implemented in Mount Washington, which overlooks Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, aimed at reconnecting community members with their adjacent parks through a comprehensive blend of art and eco-literacy. Youth learned about their local environment while creating nature-themed artworks, and the community was mobilized to revive neglected green space. In the manner of a case study, the present article describes this arts-based eco-literacy/community program in detail. The theoretical basis for the program and the structure and components of the program are provided. Additionally, the implementation process of the program is described, along with a discussion of the successes and challenges of the program and recommendations for future initiatives.”

What local art exhibits or experiences have influenced YOU? We would welcome hearing about local exhibits and your experiences. Please send your submissions to naturalplacesnews@gmail.com with the subject line eco-art.

No One Left Inside: Upcoming Local Outings by Sierra Club and Friends

See www.sierraclub.org/maryland/calendar for more information.

<p>Mon 3/2/20 6:00 PM</p>	<p>Toward A Sustainable Future: Monthly Film Series Eastern Shore</p>	
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<p>Fri 3/6/20 9:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Tour of the Prince George's County Single-Stream Materials Recycling Facility</u></p>	
<p>Sat 3/7/20 8:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Nature Nurtures: Exploring the Intersection of Trauma-Informed Care, Outdoor Exp</u> Baltimore</p>	<p>This symposium is designed for formal and informal educators, childcare providers, and health professionals.</p>
<p>Sat 3/7/20 11:00 AM And Sat 4/11/20 10:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Invasive Plant Removal Greenbelt Park</u> Call 301-344-3948 to sign up.</p>	
<p>Sat 3/14/20 8:30 AM</p>	<p><u>Wilderness First Aid certification course (Washington, DC)</u></p>	
<p>Sat 3/14/20 10:00 AM Also Sat 5/9/20 10:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Invasive Plant Removal at Ruth B. Swann in Charles County</u></p>	

<p>Sun 3/15/20 1:00 PM</p>	<p><u>Signs of Spring at Cedarville State Forest</u> We'll see a variety of trees and plants of the understory and forest floor.</p>	
<p>Sat 3/21/20 10:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Patapsco State Park Hike on Saw Mill and Buzzards Rock Trails</u></p>	
<p>Sat 3/21/20 2:30 PM</p>	<p><u>Natural Places Committee meeting</u></p>	<p>Does nature inspire you to make art, has nature art inspired you to get outside more, and do you think environmental art is a great activity for kids as well as adults? Then we hope to see you here! If desired, bring a piece of nature art you made or that you admire!</p>
<p>Sun 3/22/20 2:00 PM</p>	<p><u>Dr. Doug Tallamy Networks for Life: Your Role in Stitching the Natural World Together</u></p>	
<p>Wed 3/25/20 10:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Tour of the Blue Plains Wastewater Plant</u></p>	
<p>Fri 3/27/20 11:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Kid-Friendly Hike at ACLT Southern Maryland</u></p>	<p>Come and join us as we Opt Outside for a fun kid-friendly hike!</p>

<p>Sun 3/29/20 11:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Loch Raven Hike</u> <u>-Glen Ellen area</u></p>	
<p>Sun 3/29/20 4:00 PM</p>	<p><u>SAVE the DATE!</u> <u>Women Leaders in Sustainability:</u> <u>A benefit for MD Sierra Club</u></p>	
<p>Sat 4/18/20 3:00 AM</p>	<p><u>47th Annual One Day Hike</u></p>	
<p>Sat 4/18/20 9:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Explore Prince George's: The Forest Floor in April at Watkins Park</u></p>	<p>Get ready for Earth Day with a walk in the woods in Watkins Park. The forest floor is scattered with wildflowers that bloom and grow briefly before the new leaves block the light from above.</p>
<p>Sun 4/19/20 11:00 AM</p>	<p><u>Greenfest 2020</u> Columbia</p>	<p>This free event offers something for all ages, featuring exhibits, demonstrations, workshops, outdoor activities and practical tips for easy ways to "green" your home, workplace and lifestyle.</p>
<p>Sat 4/25/20 5:00 PM</p>	<p><u>Hiking The American Southwest:</u> <u>Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks, Utah</u></p>	<p>Enjoy spring in the amazing American Southwest on a week-long hiking adventure at Bryce Canyon and Zion national parks.</p>
<p>Tue 4/28 1:30 PM</p>	<p>Invasive Plant Pull Savage River State Forest Adult volunteers are needed to continue control efforts of Japanese spiraea and garlic mustard in the Bear Pen Run area of Savage River State Forest. Bear Pen is designated as a Type 1 Wildland and like other natural areas around the State is threatened by a variety of exotic invasive species. For more information on the project or to volunteer, please contact Ron Boyer by phone at 301-895-3686 or by email at rbiodiversity@hughes.net</p>	

Sat 5/2/20 10:00 AM	Emmitsburg Green Fest 2020 Catocin Group	This is the first green fest being held in Emmitsburg MD. There will be several vendors displaying ways to go green.
Sat May 9 10:00 AM	Mountain Maryland Native Plant Festival , New Germany State Park, Garrett County, MD	

Interview with Ecopsyched! Author Lisa Barry

A High Quality New Resource about Natural Places

[NPN] What is Ecopsyched! ?

[Lisa B.] Ecopsyched! is a storytelling project rooted in nature reconnection and appreciation for the benefit of humans and the more-than-human world.

[NPN] What is the purpose of your initiative?

[Lisa B.] It took many years to build and ultimately launch Ecopsyched!, which is now the home of both nature podcasts and ecological art blog posts. Ecopsyched! inspires interest and participation in the natural world for the benefit of both humans and the more-than-human world. Nature Pod episodes bring the calming effects of nature sounds to those with limited access to green spaces and otherwise busy schedules. Blog posts offer creative projects for kids and adults that encourage exploration and collaboration with nature. In the process, we discover the world around us and nurture that which we come to appreciate.

[NPN] What are some of the modalities you discuss for the Eco psyched?

[Lisa B.] Engaging with our natural world enlightens us to our very roots in it - we feel better in it, emotionally and physically, scientifically. We are curious and playful creatures, and for that, the Ecopsyched! blog shares ideas for engaging through photography, solar painting, upcycling, and more. And perhaps we are further stirred to investigate our natural environments in search of the sounds we experience in Ecopsyched! Nature Pod episodes.

[NPN] For what ages are your blog and podcasts recommended?

[Lisa B.] Ecopsyched! blog projects can be enjoyed by toddlers, teenagers, and adults, though some require adult supervision and participation as indicated. Nature Pod episodes are for everyone; it's never too early to instill curiosity about the natural world in children. I often imagine families reading bedtime stories to the sounds of Ecopsyched! episodes, such as nighttime in a tropical forest (<https://ecopsyched.com/kona-night-episode>). Ecopsyched! has a YouTube channel too, and

continues to build a library of video shorts designed to fascinate and inspire kids to explore their amazing planet.

[NPN] What's in the future for Ecopsyched!?

Ecopsyched! is young, and I'm excited about the momentum it's building. This summer promises new ventures at Ecopsyched! with the goal of monetizing so that I may direct all my efforts to the initiative. My ambition for 2021 is to facilitate creative outings in green spaces for people of all ages, locally and across the country.

For more information contact Lisa B. at lisab@ecopsyched.com

Podcast: [Kona Morning](https://ecopsyched.com/kona-morning-episode/) <https://ecopsyched.com/kona-morning-episode/>

Blog: [Macro photography](https://ecopsyched.com/macro-photography/) <https://ecopsyched.com/macro-photography/>

Noteworthy eco artists/professionals recommended by Ecopsyched! Author Lisa Barry:

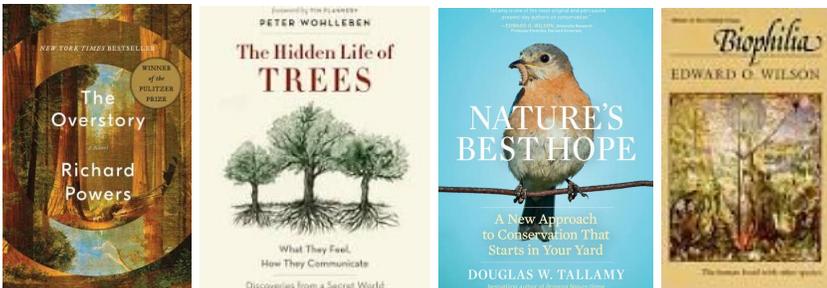
Andy Goldsworthy Books: *Time and Hand to Earth*

Maxine Masterfield Books: *Painting the Spirit of Nature* and *In Harmony With Nature*

Richard Shilling (includes land art for kids)

Linda Weintraub Book: *To Life: Eco Art in Pursuit of a Sustainable Planet*

Other Eco-Art Books:



An award-winning, perspective-changing recent fiction book is *Overstory* by Richard Powers, about eco-activists and communication among trees. The most recent non-fiction is *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben, with extensive insights into trees and nature. *Nature's Best Hope* by Douglas Tallamy about how landscaping with native plants can help reverse habitat and species loss. He recommends each American homeowner contribute to providing habitat for wildlife and native plants thus creating a Homegrown National Park. *Biophilia* is Edward O. Wilson's most personal book, an evocation of his own response to nature and an eloquent statement of the conservation ethic. Wilson argues that our natural affinity for life—biophilia—is the very essence of our humanity and binds us to all other living species.

Resources for Natural Places Information

Washington Posts Article on Reforestation

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/lifestyle/magazine/appalachia-kentucky-reforestation/>



Oh, Deer, A curriculum on the ecology of deer in modern society.

https://www.vanderbilt.edu/cso/Oh_deer.pdf



Striped Wintergreen *Chimaphila maculata*, Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary, seen on Sierra Club hike

Natural Places Committee Legislative Update

Bills currently in the Maryland Legislature:

- HB 279: [Native Plants bill] Homeowners Owners Association Low-Impact Landscaping [Native Plants] Bill HB 279. Most friends of Natural Places Committee will be interested to listen to the testimony in favor of allowing residents to have native plants in areas covered by Homeowners Association agreements (HOAs). [Here](#) is the link to the bill and here is the link to the [Testimony](#) (52 minutes), including testimony by local author and native plant expert Nancy Lawson, a friend of Sierra Club and WildOnes native plant group
- HB 1206: Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency - Investment in Disadvantaged Communities [Here](#) is the text of the bill, and there will be a hearing on March 5 at 1:00 p.m. with the Economic Matters Committee in room 230 of the House Office Building in Annapolis at 6 Bladen Street. This bill addresses environmental justice, requiring the Department of the Environment, in consultation with the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities to designate certain communities as disadvantaged communities in accordance with certain criteria; requiring the Department to publish certain draft criteria and lists before finalizing criteria; requiring the Commission to develop certain policies and recommendations to achieve certain priorities in certain years for directing spending on clean energy and energy efficiency programs; etc.

Every Voice Heard: Natural Places Advocacy Tips

How to find out bills on a certain topic, including bill number:

1. Go to Maryland General Assembly www.mgaleg.maryland.gov
2. On top right, to click the small red square that says  (my general assembly")
3. On left, click Register.
4. Once registered return to main page www.mgaleg.maryland.gov and click Full text
5. Enter search terms, e.g. environment, bottle, plastic, transit, justice.
6. Also Click 2020 Regular Session.
7. List of bills for this term will be generated. Read bill summary, click on bill number to read bill if needed.

How to find the status of a current bill:

1. From Main Page click Legislation on horizontal menu at top.
2. Click House or Senate on dropdown menu.
3. Under Filter box on upper right under bill number, e.g. House bill= HB 1234, Senate bill SB 1234.
4. A table with a column "Status of Bill" will be displayed.
5. For text of bill, Click bill number, and then click the bill number displayed under the push pin.
6. Familiarize yourself with the legislative process, using this General Assembly document: <http://dls.maryland.gov/pubs/prod/NoPbITabLibResDocs/Legislative-Process.pdf>
7. Another resource is Legiscan <https://legiscan.com/about>.

What do about your bill of interest:

1. Contact the Sierra Club Committee, Group, or Campaign chair for the topic area of the bill, e.g. Zero Waste, Conservation, Natural Places, for more information on background for your bill. Ascertain any relevant **SIERRA CLUB POSITION** or testimony on the topic. If it is a priority Sierra Club bill there will be information of the Sierra Club Website under Campaigns/Legislative tab.
2. **CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR** and let her/him know your personal view on the legislation (Favor or Oppose). The most effective mode of communication is a personal appointment with the legislator or her/his aide, the next most effective is a phone call, the third most effective is a handwritten letter, fourth most effective is a personal email, and the least effective but still worthwhile is a canned or mass email.
3. **MONITOR and RESPOND TO BILL PROGRESS** through the legislative process. Your role in this process, both individually and working with Sierra Club, is to 1) develop and propose bills to your legislator, 2) encourage them to introduce or co-sponsor a bill, 3) testify at the hearing (See Witness Guidelines under your [committee](#). House Environment and Transportation Guidelines [here](#). Note that to sign up to testify for a bill on the day of the hearing, you must arrive at the hearing room AT LEAST one hour ahead of time. The bills are in a designated order but the time of the hearing for the bill you are interested in could be EXTREMELY variable. Plan to stay until early evening if you really want to testify). 4) monitor progress including upcoming hearing and floor votes under **How to find the status of a current bill** described above. You may be contacted by Sierra Club for an action alert. Visit, call, or write your legislator as the bill progresses through amendments and votes. Most bills take a few legislative sessions to pass. You might even attend the bill signing when your bill is passed and signed!



SEND US YOUR NEWS ITEMS!

Please send a picture from a hike you take, an article link you want to share, a website or blog you found useful or interesting. We are crowdsourcing our natural places knowledge and inspiration sources! If you find a shareable article, picture, website, blog, etc. that will be of interest to the Natural Places community, please submit your shareable items to: naturalplacesnews@gmail.com

Thanks for submissions and feedback this month from: Lisa Barry, Linda Rieger, Melina Frame, Richard Winston, Janet Gingold, Marney Bruce, Lily Fountain, and Marc Imlay.