



Newsletter

Preserving and Protecting the Historic Princeton Nursery Lands

Coming FPNL events! Save the Dates.

Thanksgiving Day Walk - Nuts, Seeds and Whirligigs. Thurs, Nov. 27, 2025 10 - 11:30 am.

Join FPNL president Karen Linder for our annual Thanksgiving morning walk, which focuses on the nuts, seeds and berries of Mapleton Preserve. This easy family-friendly event begins at the Mapleton Preserve/D&R Canal State Park Headquarters, 145 Mapleton Road, Kingston. Suitable for all ages. The walk is 1.5 miles, but you can leave at any time to go baste your turkey. FREE & open to all.

Decorating for the Birds. Sat. Dec. 13, 2025. 2-4 pm. Drop in at Mapleton Preserve to enjoy a cup of hot cider, cookies and fun with FPNL as we trim a tree for the birds. We will make orange and cranberry garlands, peanut butter- and birdseed-coated pinecones, and edible ornaments to share with our feathered friends. Take a moment from your busy holiday schedule to get creative, catch up with friends, and savor the season.

Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Sun, Dec. 14, 2025, 7:30 am to dusk. The Kingston segment of this year's Audubon Christmas Bird Count begins at 7:30 AM to catch the "early birds". We will meet at the Lock Tender's House (near the intersection of Rt. 27 and the D&R Canal State Park in Kingston) and bird until noon, when we take a break for lunch. The group then continues with the count in the afternoon. You can join us for the morning, lunch, afternoon, or all of them. If interested, call Karen Linder (609-683-0483) for more info. We would particularly appreciate help from experienced birders, but novices are welcome. It is a great way to build your skills and get to know the Nursery Lands better. Dress warmly and bring binoculars if you have them!

First Day Hike. Thurs, Jan. 1st, 2026. Noon - 2 pm. Exercise your New Year's resolution to walk more or make new friends on this easy 1.5-mile loop hike through the Mapleton Preserve. It begins and ends at the Mapleton Preserve/D&R Canal State Park Headquarters at 145 Mapleton Road in Kingston. Dress for the weather, whatever it is. The walk is free; all are welcome. Cocoa and conversation after the walk. For more info and to register, visit <https://fpnl.org> closer to the New Year.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. Mon, Jan. 19th, 2026. Noon to 3 pm. If the ground is not frozen, we will pull up privet, wisteria and other invasive plants along the Bamboo Trail, in preparation for installation of native wildflowers and shrubs in the spring. Come spend a winter afternoon outdoors with us, learn some botany, make some new friends and discover the special joys of stewardship! We will have gloves and some tools but bring your favorites if you have them, so there are plenty of tools to go around. All are welcome. Call 609-683-0483 for more information, or to involve a group to help.

Winter Sowing Workshop. Sat. Jan. 31, 2026. 1-3 pm. Itching to get your hands in some soil? Join FPNL for a hands-on workshop on winter sowing, a technique for growing seeds outside in winter, using recycled jugs as mini greenhouses. We will learn the technique, prepare some jugs, and plant seeds for native wildflowers for everyone to take home and grow. Special focus on milkweed varieties this year. Capacity limited. FREE to FPNL MEMBERS, otherwise \$20 fee for supplies (soil, tools, jugs and seeds). Preregistration REQUIRED at karen.e.linder@gmail.com or 609-683-0483. If interested, let us know early so we can include you.

Our Annual Membership Appeal is happening now. Please see p. 4 for details.

FPNL's 2025 in review:

Jan 1: First Day Hike: Some of the 75 participants at this annual walk were treated to views of two handsome foxes running through the dried grasses at the edge of Heathcote Brook.



MLK Day of Service: "De-Vine Interventions" Volunteers cleared honeysuckle, multiflora rose, bittersweet, and wisteria from trees near the Mapleton Preserve exit, extending last season's clearing along both sides of the Bamboo Trail.

Our 2025 Winter Sowing workshop was so popular that we held a second session the next day. Some of the new native plants started with this technique found their way back to the Mapleton Preserve this summer and fall, including young columbine plants, cardinal flower, smooth blue asters and New York Ironweed.

Eagle Scout Projects: Shreeya Nooney of Troop 102G and volunteers planted native shrubs and wildflowers at both ends of the Bamboo Trail and cleared another planting area along the trail near Heathcote Brook. Natives such as clethra, arrowwood viburnum, Virginia sweet spire, spirea alba, turtlehead, blue stemmed goldenrod and wood poppies were planted, and privet, mugwort, wisteria and other invasive plants were removed. Both entrances to the trail are now more attractive.



Kartikeya Yadavalli of Troop 10 completed his Eagle Scout project at Mapleton Preserve this year in a site adjacent to his twin sister's Native Plant garden. His work team built two sturdy garden beds (4' x 8' x 2'), filled them with over 5 tons of nutrient-rich soil and planted them with native shrubs selected to support local pollinators. Bayberry, native ninebark, Virginia Sweetspire and Red Chokeberry are all successfully growing in the planters.



Clearing the Mugwort



Building the Raised Beds



Shoveling the Soil



Planting the Shrubs



Bolting the Signs



Final Beds

Hamsika Yadavalli's of Troop 102G's 'Mind the Mugwort' native plant garden was improved at various work sessions through the summer and fall. It attracted so many pollinators that another area of the field is now being prepared for future planting.



Moth night: In July, Blaine Rothausser, Senior Ecologist with the Environmental Consulting firm GZA, presented a talk on moths of New Jersey, followed by a chance to observe the many types of moths that were attracted to a 1000-watt halogen light after dark. At this link, you can see some of the many types of moths we found <https://photos.app.goo.gl/55DyJyME4Xx3oqCf9>



Birds of Prey event: This November, FPNL hosted Master falconer and educator Gregory Martel from Masters of the Skies [<https://mastersoftheskies.org>] treated 125 lucky visitors to an hour-long talk on raptors and falconry. In the second part of the program, 8 lucky participants got to “fly” an owl after the falconry talk. Fortunately, the rain held off, and the fields looked stunning in their fall colors. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make this event possible!



Membership Renewal Appeal: 2025 is ending. That means that it is again time to renew your membership with the Friends of Princeton Nursery Lands for 2026 (or join us for the first time).

If you are already a member, a renewal form will be sent to you in the mail and/or via email. You can join or **renew by downloading a membership form** <https://fpnl.org/membership> or via our on-line account at the PayPal Giving Fund <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/2295639>. **Please give as generously as you can.** Your donations support community education programs, planting and trail development efforts and support for Eagle Scout projects that represent a commitment to leadership and service.



PS. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to help us plan and carry out next year’s programs – Wouldn’t you like to be more involved? Check out the volunteer registration form on our newly improved website. We are grateful for your willingness to give of your time, energy, and talents.