



Newsletter

Preserving and Protecting the Historic Princeton Nursery Lands

Current status of the warehouses: When the Mapleton Preserve was preserved, the Management and Use Agreement between South Brunswick Township and the State of NJ stipulated that the two large



warehouse complexes on the property would have to be razed if plans for their preservation and use were not implemented in 10 years (by Dec. 2015).

Large warehouse at Mapleton Preserve. Photo by Zeete - <https://commons.wikimedia.org/>

An attempt to find an alternate (adaptive) re-use for the buildings was made by a Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) process for redevelopment of the property. [see www.fpnl.org and click on RFEI/RFP in the header] to see if there were any parties interested in the use and rehabilitation of the warehouses in a manner that is economically viable, sympathetic to the historical character of the Preserve and its cultural landscape (including buildings) and compatible with the public use of the Preserve and adjacent park areas.

A single response was received from Old York Cellars, which also responded to the subsequent Request for Proposal (RFP) with a plan to redevelop the property as an agricultural-based food and/or beverage and events space. They proposed a winery in the Small Warehouse Complex and use of some of the fields to grow grape vines, fruit trees and produce. They also proposed renovation of the Large Warehouse Complex for mixed agricultural-based food and/or beverage use, including a full-service restaurant, café, craft brewery and/or craft distillery, retail shops, a 250-seat event space and parking. A farm market, nursery and construction of multiple new buildings "inside" the fence was also proposed, along with restroom facilities, parking and development of a "streetscape" to make the property more functional and visually appealing.

Although some public support was expressed, there was significant outcry about the scale of the project from many citizens from the Village of Kingston, Kendall Park, Princeton and surrounding areas. They expressed concern that the land had been preserved as open space, and therefore should not be used for "commercial development". In the face of these objections, Old York Cellars revised its plans several times, but was unable to meet all requests and has withdrawn its application. At present, there are no other redevelopment options on the table. Unfortunately, this means that funding for restoration of the Propagation House will likely be lost, and the historic buildings, a key resource of the National Register Princeton Nurseries Historic District, will continue to fall further into disrepair. Now is the time to contribute your ideas for funding sources that could rehabilitate and sustain the buildings in a way that pays tribute to their historical character while preserving the natural open space and wildlife surrounding them.

A talk on the former Princeton Nurseries by William Flemer, IV was featured at FPNL's Annual meeting; a video of Bill's talk can be found on the FPNL website [www.fpnl.org] at https://archive.org/details/fpnl_flemer2019 Our thanks to Bob Barth for doing the recording!

Stay up to date. As always, you can find information about FPNL and the Mapleton Preserve at our website, www.fpnl.org You can also keep up with us on at [@FPNLnj](https://twitter.com/FPNLnj)

Shots from some of our 2019 events



Reading nature books at FPNL's May Day "BookNic"

A big shout-out to South Brunswick Library for

the loan of nature books for the event and to BreeAnne Lemmerling for making the beautiful and festive maypole.

Photo by BreeAnne Lemmerling



May Day Walk led by Rick Henkel. Rick, formerly Sales Manager for Princeton Nurseries (for which he worked 32 years), shared his extraordinary knowledge of trees and the Kingston Site.

Photo of Rick Henkel by Jonathan Michalik



National Public Lands Day: Jason Rand and his crew take on some of the invasive autumn olive shrubs that have been crowding the ginkgo row. Photo courtesy of Jason Rand



Many thanks to students from the Yinghua School, who helped to weed and restore the butterfly garden. The gardeners experienced an exciting moment—observing a praying mantis eating a bee! Photo by Kristin Ohrt



Trustee BreeAnne Lemmerling with two students from the Yinghua School
Photo by Kristin Ohrt



Chrysalis of a monarch butterfly, found in the butterfly garden, just about ready to hatch!

Photo by Kristin Ohrt

Notes from the field - Common Greenshield Lichen (*Flavoparmelia caperata*)

The high winds of Oct 22 knocked many hunks of lichen and bark out of the trees in the Mapleton Preserve. I spent some long moments looking at the incredible detail found in a single specimen of common greenshield lichen and was just amazed at the intricacy of this fungal/algae partnership. Here is what I learned.

Greenshield lichen is a foliose lichen (a fancy way of saying that the lichens that have a lobed, leaflike shape). On its upper surface, it is pale grey when dry and yellow green when wet. It has rounded lobes, measuring 3 to 8 mm wide, and these often have a wrinkled appearance especially in older specimens. The lower surface of this lichen is black except for a brown coloration at the edges of the lichens; rhizoids (small rootlets) attached to the lower surface are black and help secure the lichen to its substrate of choice.

Lichens are a symbiotic relationship between a fungus and a photosynthetic organism, usually an algae or cyanobacterium. In greenshield lichens, if you break the lichen open you can see that the inside is made of white cottony strands of fungal material, wrapped around a layer of single-celled green algae. In this interesting partnership, the photosynthetic algae uses the energy it gets from sunlight to make sugars for the algae and the fungus. The fungus supplies minerals, water and shelter, as the protective covering of fungus keeps the algae from drying out. Lichen fungi aren't usually found growing without their algae, as they depend on the algae for survival and cannot get food any other way. The algae, on the other hand, are perfectly capable of living on their own.



Photo by Jason Hollinger [(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>)]

Bluebird update: Anne Zeman has been monitoring our bluebird trail on the seedbeds side of the Princeton Nursery Lands and is delighted to report that this year, they fledged four broods of young. We are grateful to the D&R Canal State Park for providing the mowing that is essential for Bluebird feeding.

Tool sharpening: Just in time for this year's National Public Lands Day, FPNL had all our loppers and clippers professionally sharpened, as our volunteers give them a workout multiple times a year at our service-related events. Nice and Sharp, a local business [www.niceandsharp.com] did an excellent job on our hard-working tools. A big thank you to Warren Glazer for his efforts!

Annual Meeting – New Trustees: Before Bill Flemer's Talk (see Page 1), two new Board members were elected: Boël Denne-Hinnov and Kirstin Ohrt; Karen Linder and Anne Zeman were re-elected to the Board.

Membership Renewal Appeal: 2019 is drawing to a close - that means that it is again time to **renew your membership with the Friends of Princeton Nursery Lands for 2020** (or join us for the first time). [If you were waiting for someone to ask you to join, please consider this your invitation].

Since we solicit renewals and donations only once a year, we urge you to join or renew your membership in the Friends of Princeton Nursery Lands TODAY. For those who are new to FPNL, our programs are generally free and open to the public. Your donations will be used for speaker and program fees, tree and trail upkeep, as well as the newsletter. If you are a member, a renewal form will be sent to you in the mail. If not, please **visit our website at www.fpnl.org to join, or renew using either PayPal or by downloading a membership form.** Please give as generously as you can.

Thursday, November 28th 10-12 am - Thanksgiving Day Walk "Looking Closely"

We were very pleased to have 31 participants at our annual Thanksgiving morning walk this year. Equipped with magnifying glasses, we took some fascinating close-up looks at nature.

Coming up

Sunday, Dec. 15th, 2019, 7:30 am: Audubon Christmas Bird Count

The Kingston segment of this year's Audubon Christmas Bird Count, sponsored by the Kingston Greenways Association, begins at 7:30 AM to catch the "early birds". We will bird until noon, when we take a break for lunch at the Palace of Asia on Rt 27 in Kingston Center. The group then continues with the count in the afternoon. You can join us for morning, afternoon, or both. If interested, give Karen Linder a call (609-683-0483) for more info. **We would particularly appreciate the help of experienced birders for this event, but novices are also welcome.** It is a great way to build your skills and get to know the Nursery Lands better.



Wednesday, January 1st, 2020, Noon - 2 pm: First Day Hike

Friends of Princeton Nursery Lands invites everyone to a First Day Hike in the Mapleton Preserve on Wednesday, January 1, 2020, at noon. **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.** We know you will want to sleep in a little, so the walk will not start until noon. It will begin and end at the Mapleton Preserve/D&R Canal State Park Headquarters at 145 Mapleton Road in Kingston. Dress for the weather, whatever it is. The event is free and all are welcome. Socialize after the walk over cocoa. For more information, visit www.fpnl.org as we get closer to the New Year.



Monday, January 20th, 2020, Noon to 3 pm: Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service Work Session in the Mapleton Preserve:

We will be clearing small trees, brush, vines, and trash. Come spend a winter afternoon outdoors with us and discover the special joys of stewardship! Bring saws, clippers, loppers and rakes. Work gloves, sturdy shoes, warm clothing and hats are a must. All are welcome. Call 609-683-0483 for more information, or if you would like to involve a group to help.

Saturday Feb. 1st, 2020, 2 – 3:30 pm "Getting By: Survival Strategies for Making it Through the Winter"

This walk in the Mapleton Preserve will focus on how wild animals (including insects, birds and even groundhogs) make it through the winter in New Jersey. We will look for signs of animal activity in the Preserve. Dress for the weather, because it might be cold out there. If it is snowy, we will look for tracks, and try to guess whether the groundhog will see his shadow tomorrow. Free and open to all, but preregistration is requested (609-683-0483). Truly inclement weather cancels, but light snow just adds to the fun.