

## What is the Fighting Creek Native Plant Trail?

Our hope is that by learning about native plants here in the park, you will be able to identify and appreciate them in your landscape at home. While all of the plants identified by signs are native to Virginia, some are nursery or garden propagated and are presented as suggestions for your shady landscape. Certain plants or flowers are only visible during specific seasons, especially spring. If you don't see one of these "ephemerals", please come back in another season.

\*\* Please do not collect plants from the wild. Purchase nursery propagated plant material from reputable sources. Please help us maintain the exhibits by standing on the designated pathways, even tiny feet can trample tender foliage.

### Useful Web Sites

<https://www.allianceforthebay.org/native-plant-center/>

- Native Plants for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

<https://vaplantatlas.org> - Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora

<https://pubs.ext.vt.edu/index.html> - VA Tech online publications

<https://www.vnps.org/> - Virginia Native Plant Society

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/nativeplants> - Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

<https://www.gpmga.org> - Goochland Powhatan Master Gardener Association

<https://www.plantvirginiannatives.org/> - Information on native plants and where to buy them.

<https://floraofvirginia.org> - Available as an APP for your Smartphone too.

### Books

**Newcomb's Wildflower Guide**, *Newcomb, Lawrence*, 1989. (ISBN 978-0-316-60442-0)

**Common Native Shrubs and Woody Vines of Virginia**, 2022, *VA Department of Forestry*,

[www.dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/Common-Native-Shrubs-and-Woody-Vines-ID\\_pub.pdf](http://www.dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/Common-Native-Shrubs-and-Woody-Vines-ID_pub.pdf)

**Common Native Trees of Virginia**, 2022, *VA Department of Forestry*,

[www.dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/Common-Native-Trees-ID\\_pub.pdf](http://www.dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/Common-Native-Trees-ID_pub.pdf)

**Flora of Virginia**, 2012, *Weakley, A.S., J.C. Ludwig, J.F. Townsend*. (ISBN 978-1889878-38-6)

### Botanical Gardens

**Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden**, 1800 Lakeside Avenue, Richmond, VA (804.262.9887)

Native plants and experts!

**Virginia Native Plant Society Boyce Gardens**, 400 Blandly Farm Lane, Boyce, VA 22620

Be sure to visit our Native Plant Trail project page  
at <https://www.gpmga.org/native-plant-trail>



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# Fighting Creek Park Native Plant Exhibit

2200 Mann Road, Powhatan, VA

*A Cooperative effort of Powhatan County,  
Virginia Cooperative Extension,  
and VCE Master Gardeners*



**Spiderwort**  
*(Tradescantia virginiana)*



Powhatan Office: (804) 598-5640  
Goochland Office: (804) 556-5841  
[www.gpmga.org](http://www.gpmga.org)



**Welcome to Fighting Creek Park.** The park is established in a typical Piedmont Virginia upland mixed hardwood forest. The tallest part of a forest is the **canopy**. The canopy here is dominated by white oak, red oak, red maple, tulip poplar, sweet gum and black gum. Loblolly pines prevail in one section between the library and the YMCA. The layer of trees below the canopy is called the **understory**. Here you can find trees such as dogwood and holly along with young canopy trees. The canopy and understory provide a wide variety of benefits to the forest. For example, each White Oak can be used by over 300 other species. These uses range from nesting habit to food for fungi, caterpillars, squirrels and deer.



White Oak



Tulip Poplar Flower



Loblolly Pine

**Shrubs** form the third layer of forest. The pinxter azalea is abundant here as are numerous species of blueberry. Also look for three types of Viburnum, Carolina Allspice, Sweet Pepper Bush, and Winterberry. Shrubs are important sources of food and shelter for birds year-round. Winterberry has fruit in January and February for overwintering birds.



Pinxter Azalea



Sweet Pepper Bush



Winterberry

There are many types of vines in the forest. Some climb trees while others run along the ground. Look for Virginia Creeper, Blackberry, Grapes, Poison Ivy, Running Cedar, Greenbrier and Catbrier.



Virginia Creeper



Running Cedar



Catbrier

The herbaceous layer of the forest is closest to the ground and these plants are adapted to the shade of the forest floor. They vary in height from 1 inch to 24 inches. Herbaceous plants account for the greatest number of species in the exhibit and can occur in wet or dry locations. They have a wide range of bloom times from early spring to the killing frost in late fall. Among them you can find four species of native orchid: Crane-fly Orchid, Rattlesnake Plantain, Autumn Coralroot and Pink Lady's Slipper. Some herbaceous plants produce seeds and others spread by root-like rhizomes. While a few are evergreen, most of these plants are only visible in warmer months (ephemeral). They produce their flowers seasonally; some are only seen for a few weeks in the spring. There are many birds and insects that utilize the flowers while they are in bloom.



Cardinal Flower



Perfoliate Bellwort



Crane-fly Orchid

**Ferns** are the most abundant members of the herbaceous layer. Most of them are deciduous but Christmas Fern and Ebony Spleenwort are evergreen. Ferns produce their spores (like seeds) in different ways. Some carry spores on the underside of the entire green frond (leaf). Others bear spores only on a certain part of the frond and some even have a separate fruiting frond just for the spores. Look for the spores of the ferns you see on the trail.



Cinnamon Fern



Lady Fern



New York Fern Spores

### What are Native Plants?

Native plants are species that have evolved in a particular region over an extended period of time. Factors that govern their success or demise include: climate, soil, geographical and topographical characteristics of the area, as well as interactions with other species in that same area. Typically, native plants are more disease resistant, drought resistant, pest resistant and most are deer resistant.