



Friends of Thacher State Park

Emma T Thacher Nature Center • 87 Nature Center Way • Voorheesville, NY 12186
May—June 2017 • Vol. 21 No. 3

Grand Opening of Thacher Park Center - May 4, 11:00am!

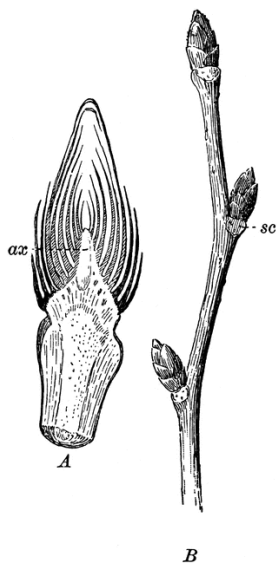
The time is here! Having begun in June 2015, construction of the John Boyd Thacher Park Visitor Center has finally been completed. On **Thursday, May 4, at 11:00am**, the doors of this exciting new facility will be officially opened to the public in a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Come join us for this great opportunity to celebrate, and take some time to explore this wonderful new addition to the park.



Situated next to the trailhead of the popular Indian Ladder trail, the Visitor Center will be the focal point of the park and serve as a gateway to all the new and old attractions the park has to offer. Here you can learn about exciting new opportunities for hiking, mountain biking and rock climbing and learn about educational programs and activities. In addition, with its large meeting rooms, the Visitor Center offers an attractive four-season location for lectures and special events. Exhibits inside the Visitor Center inform about the geology, and natural and cultural histories of Thacher Park. So come on up and explore! Enjoy the stunning view from the terrace, learn what the park looked like 400 million years ago, watch your children explore the kids cave, find out about the soon-to-come new adventure course in the park, or just sit in front of the hearth and relax!



Self-inflating Green



One of the most amazing things about spring is the way that one day, the trees are bare skeletons, and suddenly, the world is green. How do the trees leaf out so fast? The answer lies in the difference between development and growth. Development in plants is cell division and differentiation; growth is enlargement of those cells. In early spring, the buds on deciduous trees and shrubs look as though nothing is

happening. However, inside each bud, at a microscopic level, cells are dividing and re-dividing and taking their final form. They are all set to go. Then the triggers of day length and temperature, plus a good soaking from rain or snow-melt trigger the next step – growth. The cells all expand simultaneously. Imagine several layers of self-inflating camping mattresses all blowing up at once.

Wherever deciduous trees grow in Thacher Park, this can be observed. A good activity for families with children would be to bring a magnifying glass or hand lens on a hike in the park. Carefully observe buds, breaking buds, small leaves and fully expanded leaves. Look for differences among different kinds of trees and shrubs. Help children

understand the difference between development and growth. Then share in a child's excitement at the wonder of self-inflating cells.

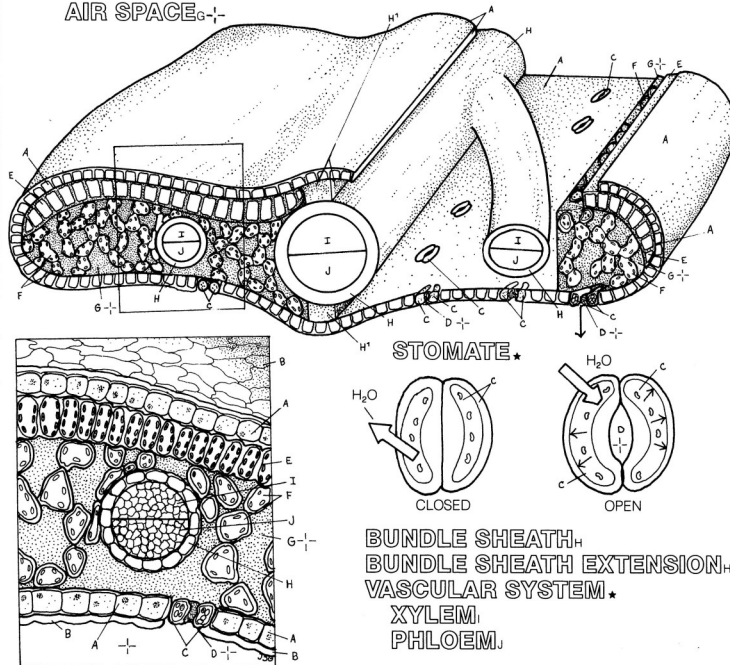
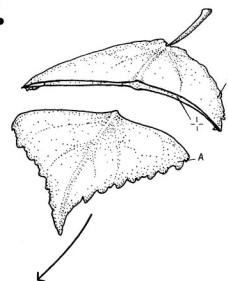
-by Sigrin Newell

Get some colored pencils and color in the leaf below!

GENERAL LEAF ANATOMY.

DERMAL SYSTEM.
EPIDERMIS.
CUTICLE.
STOMATE.
GUARD CELL.
STOMA.

FUNDAMENTAL SYSTEM.
MESOPHYLL.
PALISADE PARENCHYMA.
SPONGY PARENCHYMA.
AIR SPACE.



From "The Botany Coloring Book" by Paul Young

Check for updates at www.friendsofthacherpark.org

Officers of the Friends Board of Trustees

President:	John Kilroy	872-1501
Vice President:	Laure-Jeanne Davignon	578-4718
Treasurer:	Betsey Miller	869-0739
Secretary:	Christine Gervasi	872-1501
	Former President Barbara Flindt	

Other Trustees

Jim Schaller	861-7452	Ethan Willsie	588-4148
Chuck Ver Straeten	872-2223	Bert Schou	221-8693

As always, call 872-0800 or 872-1237 to verify activity times and dates.

Please feel free to call any board member with questions or suggestions.

Many thanks to Sigrin Newell, Bonnie Schaller and Nancy Engel for their contributions to this newsletter. Thanks as well to Laure-Jeanne Davignon, Michelle Johnston and Laurel Tormey-Cole for their photographs.

Want to contribute? Please email me at cgervasi@albany.edu
Christine Gervasi—Editor



Friends of Thacher Park Member Form

Member benefits: Newsletter, Scheduled Events Calendar & 10% Discount at the Nature Center Gift Shop. Renewal date follows name on address label.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Cell _____ Email _____

☐ I'd like to become a member of the Friends of Thacher Park. Enclosed is my check for \$ _____.

☐ I am renewing my membership. Enclosed is my check for \$ _____.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$40 | <input type="checkbox"/> Donation \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (62) \$5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$100 | |

Please make checks payable to the **Friends of Thacher Park** and send to Bonnie Schaller, 6324 Hawes Rd, Altamont, NY 12009. For more info: bschaller@nycap.rr.com



**I Love My Park
Day**

May 6, 2017

9:00am — 1:00pm

It's the time of year to show our beautiful park some love. Pack up the family and join us as we spruce up Thacher for the summer. We will be planting gardens, cleaning up roadsides, clearing winter debris, maintaining trails and more—there are projects for all ages.

Get some fresh air, and enjoy the early green on the trees to boot. Then have a well-deserved BBQ lunch, compliments of Friends of Thacher Park. We are looking forward to seeing you!

This event is co-sponsored by Parks and Trails New York. Please register online at www.ptny.org and contact the park office at 518-872-1237 if you have any questions. Sign-in and lunch will be at Pear Orchard.

"National Trails Day"

June 3, 2017



Time: 9:00am - 12:00pm

Place: Paint Mine Pavilion Thacher Park

Meal: Supplied by Friends of Thacher Park

Registration: Call the Park Office - 518-872-1237

Jim and Bonnie Schaller will have several choices for you to "give back", have a fun time, get outdoors close to home and see the new Visitor Center.



There is still time! If you would like to commemorate a loved one with a paver, or would like to donate, please visit the Visitor Center for more information, or go to www.thacherparkcenter.org.

Friends of Thacher Park Meeting Dates for 2017

May 10, July 12, September 13, and November 8.

7:00 pm at Thacher Nature Center. Come join us!

Friends of Thacher Park
c/o Emma Treadwell Thacher Nature Center
87 Nature Center Way
Voorheesville, New York 12186-2601



Next:

Wednesday, May 10, 2017
Board Meeting
7:00 pm at Thacher Nature Center

It's Better to Plant Natives

Native plants, those that occur naturally in a particular region, are critical to the ecosystem. Together with the animals they have evolved with, they form an intricate web of life. Many of our birds and insects depend on these native plants to survive.

The urban sprawl of recent decades, with its concomitant transformation of the original landscapes into lawns and ornamental gardens, has contributed to the loss of habitat for native plants. In addition, many of the plants available in nurseries have been introduced from different countries. A number of these imports, such as Tatarian Honeysuckle or Multiflora Rose, natives of Asia, have escaped cultivation and become noxious weeds that invade natural habitats and outcompete the native flora. Though beautiful, both shrubs are highly invasive and hard to eradicate from the landscape once established, as I know from painful personal experience.

So what makes some exotic plants such effective invaders? Well, apparently there are several traits that allow a Multiflora Rose, for example, to be invasive: **1)** It self fertilizes so does not need another member of the species to reproduce. **2)** It produces a large number of seeds (up to 500,000 per plant). These seeds are spread far and wide by birds and other berry-eating animals and are viable in the soil for years. **3)** It can reproduce vegetatively; a cane that touches the ground for a time can sprout roots and form a new plant. **4)** It is shade tolerant but also grows well in full

sun, so will thrive in a wide range of conditions. **5)** Virtually no animal actually feeds on a Multiflora Rose. If you ever went near one you may know why. **6)** Leaves appear much earlier in the spring than those of many native shrubs and trees, which gives it a head start on photosynthesis, food production and storage.

These and other similar traits are common to many invasive species and are what makes them such aggressive and successful competitors. Where invasives spread, native species slowly disappear and biodiversity decreases. So if you are planning on doing some planting this spring, consider our native plants. They are adapted to the local climate and soil, so they typically grow well if planted in appropriate locations, and they provide much needed food and shelter for our native insects and birds. Many of these native plants, such as the beautiful Prairie Smoke shown below, can be purchased at the Nature Center's annual Native Plant Sale in May, so come on up to the Overlook, check out the selection, and take home a few native treasures for your garden.

-by Christine Gervasi

12th Annual Native Plant Sale

Saturday, May 20
and Sunday, May 21

10am—3pm

at Thacher Park Overlook



As always, you can find a color version of the newsletter at www.friendsofthacherpark.org