September Highlights

Common Sneezeweed. *Helenium autumnale*, is an erect perennial that grows 2-5 feet in average, well-drained soil. The winged stem supports yellow fan-shaped, sterile ray flowers that end in three rounded points. The fertile disk flowers are green when closed, turning yellow as they open to hungry pollinators such as bees, wasps, butterflies and flies. The common name ‘sneezeweed’ refers to the historic use of pulverized disk flowers and leaves taken up the nose as snuff. This would cause sneezing intended to rid the body of evil spirits. Look closely at sneezeweed flowers. You’ll notice they open in a concentric circle from the outside, inward. No concern about it making you sneeze though. Sneezeweed pollen is only for insects!

Aromatic Aster. *Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*. One of the last asters to bloom, aromatic aster can often be enjoyed through October. The oblong leaves on stiff branched stems grow in open habitat. Electric, blue-purple ray flowers surround bright yellow disk flowers that turn dark orange after pollination. Attractive to many late summer butterflies as well as bees, flies, beetles and others, this aster is an important native plant for our pollinators. Find aromatic aster in the Visitor Center garden, meadows and Founders’ Pond.

Common Bonnet. *Eupatorium perfoliatum*. Small fluffy white disk flowers bloom in a terminal mound above leaves that are pierced by the stem. The bases of the opposite leaves surround the hairy stem which gives it its species name, perfoliatum, which means ‘through the leaf’. Widely used as a folk medicine for treatment of flu, fever and colds, the genus name is in honor of Mithridates VI Eupator, 132-63 BC, King of Pontus who reportedly discovered the medicinal properties of many *Eupatorium* species. Find bonnet in the Visitor Center garden, Founders’ Pond and the meadows.

Closed Bottle Gentian. *Gentiana andrewsii*. This slow growing, but long-lived perennial grows in moist shady areas of the Preserve. The bright blue tubular flowers remain closed, inviting only bumblebees to visit since they are the only insect strong enough to pry open the corolla. The leaves and the stems of gentian are bitter and therefore not attractive to herbivores, but deer may nip at the young tips before the plant flowers. This may cause the central stem to branch. Find closed gentian at Founders’ Pond and in the meadows.

White Wood Aster. *Eurybia divaricata*. This white wood aster blooms in the shade offering bright white ray flowers surrounding yellow disk flowers. The disk flowers turn dark orange to rusty red after pollination as a signal to visiting bees to move on to fresher flowers. Notice the broad leaves of this woodland plant. Large leaves increase the chance of capturing what little light reaches the forest floor. You can find white wood aster throughout the wooded trails.

Wingstem. *Verbesina alternifolia*, is a tall full sun to partial shade perennial. Its namesake refers to the extra membranous tissue along many of the stems that hold a cluster of bright yellow flowers. The ray flowers droop down offering clear access to the fertile disk flowers in the center. Wingstem is visited by many long-tongued bees, butterflies and moths. It is also a host plant of the silvery checkerspot butterfly and several moth species. Find Wingstem in the Visitor Center garden and along President’s Drive.
**Paths to follow**

**Easy**

- **Penn's Woods to New Pond**
  One of our most gentle trails, past the Moss Garden and magnolias. Good for strollers and most wheelchairs.

- **New Pond Loop**
  View the wonderful native plants and animals that live in this special place. Handicap parking nearby. Some rough paving.

**Moderate**

- **New Pond to Stone Bridge**
  (via President's Dr.)
  Walk down this shady road to the 1934 WPA Stone Bridge to view Pidcock Creek.

- **Stone Bridge to Azaleas at the Bridge**
  Stroll along Pidcock Creek and take a break on a peaceful bench.

- **Gentian to Founders' Pond**
  Visit our secluded pond and experience this natural spring-fed habitat.

- **Cabin Path to Stone Bridge**
  Walk down to the historic American chestnut log cabin. Take care on the stairs down to the Stone Bridge.

- **Azalea to Millrace Dam**
  This gentle wide trail will take you down to the dam on Pidcock Creek.

- **Fern Trail to Gentian to Founders' Pond**
  These trails meander through the forest to bring you to a woodland pond.

- **Stone Bridge to Poconos Laurel**
  A brisk walk uphill from the creek rewards the effort with a visit to the most remote part of the Preserve.

**Difficult**

- **Large sections**
  Rocky sections

Simple Rules

Please follow these rules as a courtesy to other visitors and to protect the Preserve's habitats and native plants:

- Stay on the trails.
- Please do not pick or collect plants, flowers, seeds or animals.
- Be alert for stinging insects and poison ivy.
- Service dogs only. Pets are not allowed (even on leash) in the fenced portion of the Preserve.
- No bicycling, fishing, hunting, swimming, cross-country skiing, horseriding, motorized vehicles, off-road vehicles or drones.
- Picnicking is permitted only in the Moore Pavilion and the adjacent lawn.
- No smoking inside of fence.

**Trail Distances**

- **Aster Path** - .03 mi
- **Audubon** - .12 mi
- **Azalea** - .15 mi
- **Azaleas at the Bridge** - .08 mi
- **Bucks County** - .16 mi
- **Cabin Path** - .07 mi
- **Ecology (one-way)** - .11 mi
- **Evergreen** - .27 mi
- **Fern Trail** - .20 mi
- **Gentian** - .14 mi
- **Marsh-marigold** - .12 mi
- **Meadow Path** - .14 mi
- **Medicinal** - .28 mi
- **Millrace (one-way)** - .31 mi
- **New Pond Loop** - .14 mi
- **Parry Trail** - .08 mi
- **Penn's Woods to New Pond** - .17 mi
- **Poconos Laurel** - .11 mi
- **Violet** - .04 mi
- **Wayside** - .03 mi
- **Visitor Center to Stone Bridge** - .14 mi
- **Stone Bridge to upper gate** - .37 mi
- **Ecology to Stone Bridge** - .3 mi

The Preserve Closes at 4:00 pm. All gates will lock at this time.

No re-entry through pedestrian gates. They will lock behind you.

For Meadow Trails access, please park in the lots outside of the fence.