August Highlights

Obedient Plant *Physostegia virginiana*. This tall perennial can get aggressive if it likes where it is growing, but the beautiful purple-pink spike of flowers are a real showstopper en masse. Notice the flowers bloom from the bottom of the spike up, offering a great nectar and pollen source for insects for many weeks. The common name refers to the flowers that when nudged to the side, stay put. Try your hand at rearranging the flowers the next time you visit the Meadows.

Swamp Rosemellow *Hibiscus moscheutos*. The flowers of this gorgeous perennial come in white to deep purple, often with a maroon center which acts as a guide to visiting insects. The stems and pistil protrude out from the flower’s center. Though each flower only lasts a day or two, new flowers will open in rapid succession offering a long bloom time. The beautiful display throughout the wet part of the South Meadow is a can’t-miss scene as you pull into the Preserve from River Road.

Garden Phlox *Phlox paniculata*. Phlox is such a recognizable plant many don’t realize there are many native varieties. With bright purple-pink, tubular flowers born on a spreading flower head, phlox is sure to catch your eye, as well as butterflies, hummingbirds and the day-flying snowberry clearwing moth. With colors ranging from white to blue to purple, phlox is a must in any perennial bed. Look for it just as you drive through the gate to the Preserve on the left as well as in the Visitor Center garden.

Northern Sea oats *Chasmanthium latifolium*. This beautiful native grass is a common sight in perennial garden beds not only for its attractive flattened seed heads, but also because it is one of the only warm season grasses to grow happily in partial shade. The blue-green foliage and flowers work well when planted en masse with other flowers, though it can be aggressive if planted in the sun. The seed heads turn golden-brown in the autumn and make attractive arrangement for a vase or in a seed pod arrangement.

Cardinal Flower *Lobelia cardinalis*, is perfectly designed to give and receive pollen when visited by its primary pollinator, the ruby-throated hummingbird. Red flowers born on a spike are dichogamous (pronounced di-cog-am-us), meaning male and female reproductive parts develop at different times therefore reducing the risk of self-pollinating. Cardinal flower can be found at both ponds and in the Visitor Center garden.

Orange Coneflower *Rudbeckia fulgida*. This beautiful late summer bloomer is spectacular in the garden setting. Free-forming clumps of bright orange ray flowers surround brown-black disk flowers. Like many in this genus, orange coneflower is drought and deer resistant. The stems and leaves are covered with fine hairs that give a sandpaper feel when touched. Bees, butterflies and moths will visit during bloom time, while goldfinches and other birds feed on the seeds in the fall. Find this lovely perennial along President’s Drive and throughout the Meadows.
Penn’s Woods to New Pond
One of our most gentle trails, past the Moss Garden and magnolias. Good for strollers and most wheel chairs.

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

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

Aquatong & South Meadows
New Pond
Medicinal Trail
New interpretation!
Visitor Center Garden
Marsh-marigold Trail
Founders’ Pond