

THANKS FOR
VISITING.
DONATIONS KEEP
OUR TRAILS
MAINTAINED AND
FREE FOR THE
COMMUNITY



Howard
County
Conservancy
connecting people to nature

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*Image credits: fox & oriole; Bonnie Ott,
monarch; Richard Orr, running children; Brian Roache*



WOODLAND HIKE

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This easy, 0.8 mile, family
friendly hike, explores wooded,
reforested areas of the 232 acre
historic Mt. Pleasant Farmstead
and the East Branch stream.

Remember that you are a visitor in the
home of many plants and animals. Please
be respectful of them on your journey,
stay on the trail and leave no trace.

OTHER PLACES TO VISIT:

- CHICKENS & GOATS IN THE ORCHARD AREA
- NATURAL PLAY AREA NEAR MONTJOY BARN
- COMMUNITY GARDEN
- NATIVE PLANT HONORS GARDEN

Start this hike at the last bank barn at the end of the parking lot. You will see a hikers welcome sign and begin your descent downhill.

Stop #1: Ranger the Owl

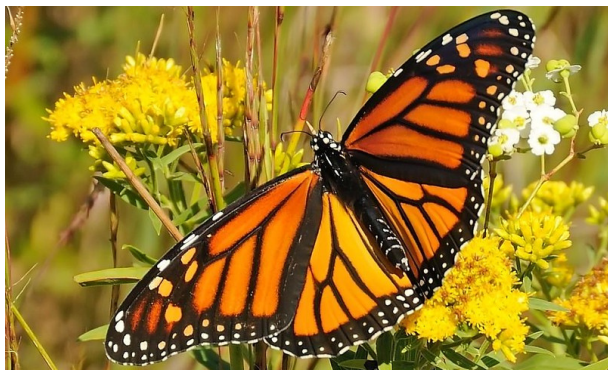
Barred Owls are one of the most common species in Maryland and can be found in many wooded habitats. If you hear a sound like "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you-all?" you may just be near a barred owl!

Across the trail find the Conservancy's beehives.

Stop #2: Beehives

Beehives provide a home for European Honey Bees—did you know the common Honey Bee is not native? 1,000s of bees are in each hive. Bee species come in all shapes and sizes. 400+ species can be found in MD. Down the trail on your left, notice a small insect hotel for native solitary bees. Over 70% of MD bees are non-aggressive solitary bees. Their numbers are declining due to the increased use of pesticides and habitat loss.

Continue down the trail, and stop at the fenced butterfly garden on your left.



Stop #3: Butterfly Garden

Find a variety of butterflies' favorite native flowers in the garden. What flowers can you spot? Look for coneflower, black-eyed susan, mountain mint and more!

Proceed to the bottom of the hill, and take the Old Oak Trail on the right. Continue until you reach Hodgepodge Lodge on your left.



Stop #4: Hodgepodge Lodge

Hodgepodge Lodge was a 1970's Maryland Public Television children's show. Each program had a different environmental topic such as animals, plants, and the outdoors. The Lodge was relocated here in 2008 and is now used for education programs.

Immediately across from the Lodge, find a hillside with a native forest stream buffer.

Stop #5: Hillside Forest Restoration

A field overgrown with invasive species was cleared so a new forest of native trees could grow. Historically, the Brown family farmed this area. The new native trees and plants help absorb and purify storm water protecting the stream and providing vital wildlife habitat.

Cross the bridge (careful, it can be slick when wet).

Stop #6: East Branch Stream

The East Branch Stream is fed by an underground spring (which you will see just up the hill). This stream eventually joins the Davis Branch Stream (which runs on the other side of the Conservancy's property). Together, their waters flow into the Patapsco River, then the Chesapeake Bay and ultimately, the Atlantic Ocean. It is important to keep the waters clean all along their route so pollution does not foul the streams and end up in the bay.

Take the first path that veers to your left (the Beech Trail), and follow along the stream.

Stop#7: American Beech Tree

In warm months, the leaves are papery smooth. All year, its bark is smooth and steel-grey. Unfortunately, people have carved names into the tree, seriously harming its ability to transport nutrients between the roots and branches. Beech trees produce beech nuts, a spiny cased nut, that are a favorite food of many forest dwellers including squirrels, raccoons and birds.

Continue up hill, keep to left until the wetland.

Stop #8: Wetland

A wetland is a moisture-saturated, low-lying area. Cattail, jewelweed, & skunk cabbage thrive here, and the area is a water and food source for animals. Carefully keep your eyes peeled for frogs and salamanders who rely on this habitat. Sadly, many natural wetlands have been filled in to create farmland, housing developments, shopping malls, and industrial parks.

Follow the Old Oak Trail to the stream's other side. Turn left twice, & you are on the Deer Trail.

Stop #9: Old Oak Tree

This tree is the oldest plant at the Conservancy. Oaks grow slowly, and this tree is probably 200+ years old since it began as an acorn. Hundreds of birds have been born in nests in this grand tree.

Continue onto the Old Oak Trail, stopping at the wooden structure on your right.

Stop #10: Bird Blind

Quietly stand at the bird blind to see what you can spot! If you are quiet and still, you just might see cardinals, gold finches, woodpeckers, & more!

At the Tulip Poplar trail again, turn left to return to the parking area, or right to extend your hike!

