

Riverbend Naturalist



Riverbend Naturalist is the newsletter from the Friends of Riverbend Park (FORB). Riverbend Park is located at 8700 Potomac Hills Street, Great Falls VA 22066. Phone: 703-759-9018

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FORB's Annual Native Plant Sale on Saturday, May 5th

The Friends of Riverbend Park (FORB) will be sponsoring its annual **Native Plant Sale** at the Great Falls Grange Picnic Pavilion, 9818 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, VA 22066, on **Saturday, May 5th starting at 8 AM**. The Grange Pavilion is located right next to the Great Falls Library with plenty of parking available, both at the Grange and at the Library. This annual fundraising event is a major one for the benefit of Riverbend Park, and enables FORB to support the many programs and activities at Riverbend Park.

The Native Plant Sale is a wonderful opportunity to bring the park right into your own garden or back yard. These plants thrive naturally in this area, help fight invasive plants species, attract hummingbirds and butterflies, and are a joy to behold from early spring through fall. Over

30 different species of native plants will be available for sale. A complete list of the plants available with their prices, light and soil conditions for growth, and tolerance for deer and drought will be provided. FORB plant experts will also be on hand to answer your questions and help with your selections. A complete description of the native plants available, mostly priced at \$7 or \$8 per plant, is available at the FORB website, www.forb.wildapricot.org, click on "Native Plant Sale." Be sure to come early to obtain the best selections as popular plants such as bluebells, wood poppies, wild blue phlox, and cardinal flowers sell out fast.



Native Tree Giveaway on May 5th

On the same day, Saturday May 5th, Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA) will give away free native tree saplings to residents of Great Falls, starting at 10:00 AM at the Farmer's Market in the parking lot across from Safeway. Six saplings per family will be given away on a first come, first serve basis until they are gone. The available saplings will include a variety of large and small native trees and shrubs with varying sunlight and soil moisture requirements. GFCA's tree giveaway is being held in conjunction with Fairfax ReLeaf, an independent non-profit volunteer organization that conserves, restores and promotes sustainable urban forests in Northern Virginia.

New Pavilion for Riverbend

Recently the Fairfax County Park Authority unveiled a design for the new pavilion which will be built at Riverbend Park along with adjacent additional parking. The pavilion will be sited on Potomac Hills Street near the meadow.

Riverbend Park Summer Programs

Thanks to your generous support of FORB, we are able, this year, to provide \$15,000 for Riverbend's very popular summer programs. Some of these programs, such as the Primitive Camps, fill within a short time of registration going on-line. This year Riverbend will be hiring six college-level students to support the summer programs, including one student focusing primarily on the Primitive Camps and the Fishing Program.



Bluebells at the Bend Festival Saturday, April 14th 10am-2pm

A great event for the whole family! See the first signs of spring's arrival - the carpet of Virginia Bluebells throughout the forest - by attending the *Bluebells at the Bend* festival Saturday, April 14 from 10:00am to 2:00pm at Riverbend



Park in Great Falls! These breathtaking beauties usher in springtime by carpeting the park's floodplain with their magnificent blooms, and the bluebells are so abundant in some areas you can't see an end! FORB will have bluebells for purchase at the Festival! Enjoy wildflower walks, face painting, live animals, moon bounce, and music. There will also be food vendors, crafts, our longhouse to explore, puppet shows and wagon rides. The cost is \$7 per person in advance; \$9 at the door. For more information, call 703-759-9018 or register online.

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend/bluebells>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1576982322356837/>

Kayak, Canoe and Rowboat rentals start in mid-May and run through early October (weather dependent).

Rental Prices:

Canoe:	Half Day \$20	Full Day \$30
Single Kayak:	Half Day \$18	Full Day \$30
Tandem Kayak:	Half Day \$25	Full Day \$35
Rowboat:	Half Day \$18	Full Day \$30



Rita Peralta Recognized with Outstanding Performance Award

Riverbend Park Senior Interpreter, Rita Peralta, was recognized with an Outstanding Performance Award (OPA) at a ceremony on

Friday, March 23 in the Government Center forum.

OPA's recognize Fairfax County employees who perform the duties and responsibilities of their positions in an outstanding manner, and whose work is generally well above expectations.

Rita was recognized for her exceptional customer service and commitment to serve diverse audiences. She participated in a Naturally Latino conference with community leaders to reach underserved Latino communities and developed Spanish language camps for Riverbend Park. Women Unplugged and adaptive recreation programs illustrate her creativity and ability to attract and serve new audiences.

Congratulations Rita!