



Adkins Arboretum

Location: Ridgely, Maryland

Address: 12610 Eveland Road, Ridgely, MD 21660

Phone: 410-634-2847

URL: <http://www.adkinsarboretum.org>



SITE DESCRIPTION:

Adkins Arboretum is a 400 acre native plant arboretum. Unlike other arboretums which feature cultivated gardens and exotic plants, Adkins includes only native plants in their natural settings. The arboretum was established in 1980 and promotes the conservation and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay region. It includes 5 miles of walking trails through meadows and native woodlands.

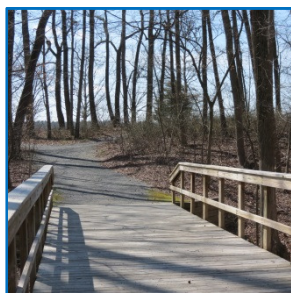
The Arboretum Visitor's Center is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. (except Thanksgiving and Christmas). Grounds are open daily from dawn to dusk.

Rating: 

Upside: Beautiful natural setting; large walking paths; nice visitor center with indoor restrooms; nice native plant nursery and children's garden. Location next to Tuckahoe State Park offers additional birding and recreational activities.

Downside: No paved pathways; additional programs for birders would be good; a bit remote but easy to locate using GPS.

REVIEW: Adkins Arboretum is mainly about native trees and plants. We visited the arboretum twice in spring 2013, both times to participate in the "Soup & Walk" activities. Both times, we were quite pleased with the outing and our experience at the arboretum.



The soup & walk programs are held throughout the spring and consist of a one hour walk with a guide followed by lunch (consisting of soup, salad, and desert) at the visitor center. The walks generally have a theme such as a search for early spring ephemerals which was the theme of the walks we attended. Most of the walks related to native trees and wildflowers and not particularly to spotting birds although the guides would point out a bird or two if spotted or heard during the walk. Walks specifically for birding would be a good addition to the arboretum soup & walk programs. The soup/lunch was all healthy and very delicious. There is a fee for the soup & walks but it is well worth the price to attend one or more throughout the season.



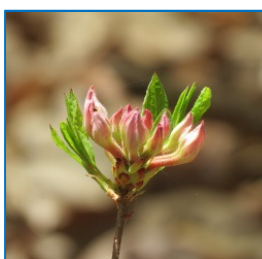
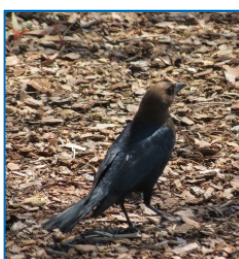
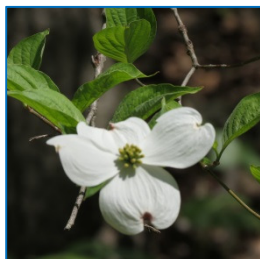
The paths through the woods and meadows are wide and graveled or natural (leaves/mulch) and easily to transverse. There are creeks that meander through the area and make the walking trails ever more pleasant. There are some hilly areas and the trails can be rather steep in some places. While the gravel and the steepness of the trails might make them difficult for those who have joint problems or who may have difficulty with the trails, the arboretum does have a golf cart available to make some of the activities more accessible. There are quite a few benches throughout the arboretum that allow for resting or quiet contemplation along the way. Additionally, the trails are well marked and include very informative placards/signs identifying the native plants along the way. There is a boardwalk area near the visitor center but this is the one area that could use a bench to allow you to sit and observe the birds at the feeder and enjoy the symphony of frogs living in the wetlands there.



There is an annual membership fee with various contribution levels. Individual membership is \$50 with family memberships for \$75. Both are tax deductible. Regular admission is minimal - \$5 for adults but members are admitted free and receive reduced fees for the various programs and events. The arboretum hosts a variety of programs throughout the year to include guided walks, demonstrations, lectures, children's programs, art exhibitions, and community events. There is a very nice visitor



center and souvenir shop. As noted, there are indoor restroom facilities (very clean and well maintained) although I did not see any facilities or porta potties along the trails or in the more remote areas.



This is a beautiful preserve and well worth your taking the time to visit and to explore. The website for the arboretum is excellent – very user friendly and filled with information about the arboretum, when to visit, how to best enjoy the area, and where to find local amenities such as nearby restaurants and local attractions. The arboretum is a bit remote though and the best way to enjoy it might be to bring along your lunch and find a nice peaceful spot in the woodlands to enjoy it. This is a preserve that I am sure to visit again in the coming months and have every intention of participating in another “Soup & Walk” in the next year.

- Birds Spotted:***
- | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Eastern Bluebirds | Yellow-Rumped Warbler | Cowbirds | Sparrows |
| Robins | Blue Jays | Cardinals | Titmice |
| Chickadees | Red-Winged Blackbirds | Hawk | White-Chinned Sparrow |



Visitor Center



Boardwalk



Parking



Hiking Trails



Restrooms