



ANDOVER FLATWOODS, QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY

Andover Flatwoods Natural Area contains an unusually shaped Carolina Bay, reminiscent of a long-eared rabbit. Typically, Carolina Bays are round or oval shaped depressions that hold water for only part of the year. Due to their seasonal nature, these distinctive areas support a variety of rare species as well as hordes of breeding amphibians. At Andover Flatwoods, the "head" of the rabbit is a typical depression, but the "ears" are shallow and gently sloping flatwoods extending from the depression. How the flatwoods "ears" formed is not known, but they increase the biological diversity of the Carolina Bay by providing wetland habitat conditions different from the depression. This diversity of habitats is important for the conservation of two rare plants: the giant sedge (*Carex gigantea*) and the pinwheel-like featherfoil (*Hottonia inflata*).



W. TYNDALL



R.H. WIEGAND

Featherfoil graces the water's surface.

Seasonally flooded wetlands such as those at Andover Flatwoods provide abundant habitat for amphibians, many of which are rare or declining in number. These wetlands also offer nesting and feeding grounds to migratory waterfowl and songbirds. Deer frequent this area to feed and rest. Andover Flatwoods Natural Area was purchased in 1988 by The Nature Conservancy and subsequently sold to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for stewardship.

THE BASICS

- No Facilities
- No Established Trails

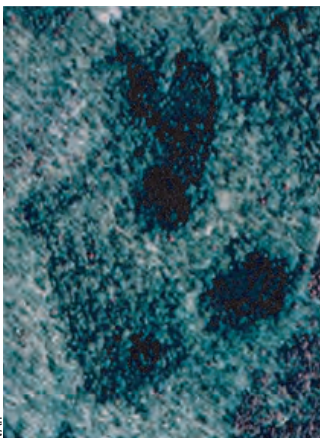
KEY ELEMENTS

- Vernal Pools
- Carolina Bays
- Early Successional Forest
- Featherfoil and Giant Sedge

What's in a Name?

The earliest use of the term "Carolina Bay" in the scientific literature is from 1895. These unusual wetlands are still sometimes referred to as "whale wallows," an old name reflecting the theory that the depressions were created by the death throes of whales left stranded in the recession of a great flood. The term "Delmarva Bay" has become popular to distinguish the much smaller Carolina Bays on the Delmarva Peninsula from Bays in the Carolinas which sometimes exceed 1 km in diameter!

Left: The unusual shape of the Carolina Bay (top, center) at Andover Flatwoods is shown in this aerial photo.



MAP

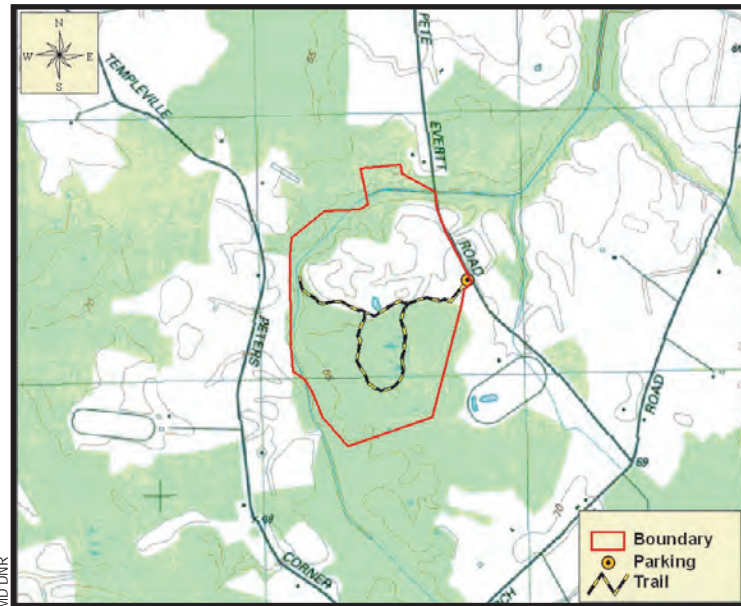


WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Andover Flatwoods is a refuge for migratory waterfowl like this beautiful male hooded merganser.



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Andover Flatwoods Natural Area

Directions

From the Chesapeake Bay Bridge: Travel east 9 miles on US 50/301 and stay straight on US 301 at the split. After 20 miles, turn right (east) onto MD 300 and proceed 3.4 miles to Sudlersville. Continue another 4.5 miles to Everett Road. Turn right and go 1.4 miles until you reach the gate on the right hand side. There is no sign identifying Andover Flatwoods Natural Area. Simply park along the shoulder, off the road, without blocking the gate. Access is on an old forest road, not a maintained trail. Fallen trees often lie across the road, and large pools of water occur on the old road during wet periods.

Special Note: *Andover Flatwoods Natural Area may be used seasonally by hunters.*

Beneficial Burns

When the Department of Natural Resources acquired the Andover Flatwoods property, native red maple and sweetgum were shading out the sun-loving rare species found in the Carolina Bay. Restoration efforts such as prescribed burns have placed these special wetlands on the path to recovery.



Ecologists carefully monitor a prescribed burn.

Far Left: Once nearly wiped out by the encroachment of red maple and sweetgum trees, the rare giant sedge has made an impressive comeback, thanks to restoration efforts like prescribed burns. The sedge produces millions of seeds that are consumed by waterfowl.



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CONTACT

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<https://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/eastern/tuckhoe.aspx>



JOHN WHITE

WATCH OUT FOR!

- Deer Flies
- Mosquitoes
- Ticks and Chiggers

Left: A southern leopard frog and American bullfrog mutually enjoy the sun's warmth.