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Flowers of the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway

RIVER REPORTER

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Flowers of the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway

One of the pleasures of driving along any scenic road is the bounty of flowering plants that grow on the roadsides. The Upper Delaware Scenic Byway is no exception, as these pages testify. We wandered the reaches of the byway throughout the warmer seasons to give you a sampling of what you can see if you slow down a bit and really pay attention to what's surrounding you.

The towns and hamlets along the byway also take part in the display, with local beautification groups and clubs joining with businesses and homeowners to adorn their streets with nature's splendid decor. You may have to turn down a side road to see some of these displays, but it's well worthwhile—and you'll enjoy stopping and browsing the shops and sites while you're at it.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS by Anne Willard

Cover photo: driving northward along the Scenic Byway just before the road descends the hill into Callicoon, it's worth slowing down to take a look at this magnificent view of the bend in the river through the trees.



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Hancock's Town Square, a center for community events, is visible behind this bouquet of petunias.

Hancock

Hancock sits at the confluence of the East Branch and West Branch of the Upper Delaware River. Bard Parker pool, just below that confluence, is a major river access, and is known for the size and wiliness of the trout that live there.





This glorious display has been planted along the road leading to its school





Long Eddy's Sullivan Renaissance beautification group has decorated the bridge over Hoolihan Brook with flower boxes.

Long Eddy

Long Eddy was once the site of the only city ever located in Sullivan County: Douglas City, formed in 1867 and dissolved in 1978. It retains the quaint feel of that era, but has an entirely bucolic ambiance.





This pot of bee balm outside the Basket Historical Society building has bloomed so abundantly that it hides an informational plaque on bluestone quarries.



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Callicoon

Callicoon was born of the coming of the Erie Railroad in the middle of the 19th century; the railroad tracks and the old station still bisect Upper from Lower Main Street, and the town offers abundant shopping opportunities on streets rich in old-fashioned charm.

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A stone retaining wall separates the railroad station in the middle of downtown Callicoon from the north end of Lower Main Street, brightened by these rustic baskets of annual geraniums (Pelargoniums).

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The Narrowsburg Beautification Group has won a number of awards for their flower displays. This one, outside the post office on Main Street, is probably the most spectacular. Combining perennials and annuals, it changes with the seasons. It is seen here in June.

Narrowsburg

Narrowsburg boasts the most spectacular view of the river available from any of the towns along the Scenic Byway, from an observation deck (complete with viewing scope) overlooking the Big Eddy, where raftsmen used to dock during the heyday of the logging industry. Main Street hosts not only the deck, but a variety of great browsing shops.



Less spectacular than the post office display on Narrowsburg's Main Street, this low-key combination of annuals and native perennials is nevertheless one of our favorites. We love the way muted colors of the flowers and foliage complement the faded wood, brick and native bluestone of the building.

Lackawaxen

Lackawaxen, PA sits at the confluence of the Lackawaxen River and the Main Stem of the Upper Delaware River. It's on the Pennsylvania side of the Roebling Bridge, which National Park Service data show to be the most visited site within the borders of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River.



If you venture across the Roebling Bridge from the Scenic Byway and turn right to wander toward the Zane Grey Museum in Lackawaxen—another interesting destination—you will pass this beautiful garden in front of the Roebling Inn.





This office building in Barryville, right on Route 97, boasts a glorious display of flowers in early fall.

Barryville

Barryville's downtown stretches right along the Scenic Byway itself, so you can see most of the commercial buildings and take advantage of what they have to offer without turning off the main road.





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Shohola

Shohola, PA is right across the Scenic Byway from Barryville, and houses, among other things, the Artists Market Community Center at 114 Richardson Ave., home to the exhibits and events of the ever-busy Barryville Area Arts Alliance; and Rohman's Inn, a historic structure that has been functioning as a hotel, inn or (now) pub/restaurant since 1849.



Venture across the Barryville-Shohola bridge, take the right on Chauncey Thomas Road and turn right again on Richardson Avenue, and you'll see this cheerful mass of marigolds outside Wayne Bank. The Artists Market Community Center is to the left of the intersection.





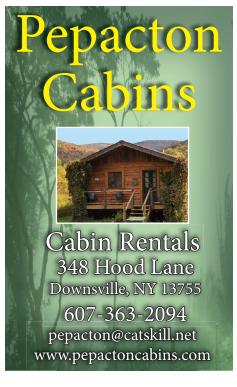


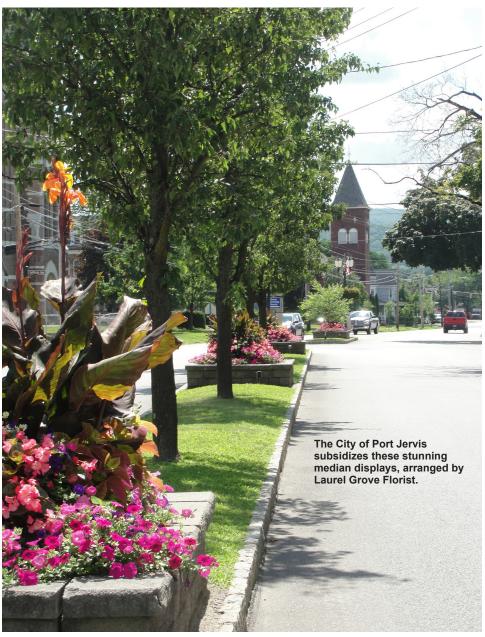




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May

Everybody is familiar with dogwood as an ornamental tree, but not everyone knows that this understory tree is native throughout the woods of the Northeast and as such, ubiquitous in our area even where there are no yards and lawns. Keep your eyes open for these beauties, among the very first of the blooms visible along the road.

Starting in late May and lasting well into June you will see dame's rocketfrequently confused with phlox, which blooms considerably later in the year. Fans of Monet may know that it is these blooms that are the basis of many of the palettes of pastels that appear in his paintings of his garden in Giverny. A garden escapee imported from Europe, it has made itself at home so abundantly in our area that it is hard to view it as anything but a native.



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845-482-2455 Facebook.com/52andVin 4921 NY-52, JEFFERSONVILLE, NY NEXTTO TAVERN ON MAIN Cranesbill geraniums—no relation to the more florid Pelargoniums used as annual bedding plants in our climate—are a wildflower that requires quite a bit of shade; as a result there are not too many places along the byway that you can see them clearly because the trees that provide shade are typically cut back a ways from the road. These geraniums are only one small portion of one extensive exception: the big bend in the road above Narrowsburg, where you can see hundreds of them in late May.





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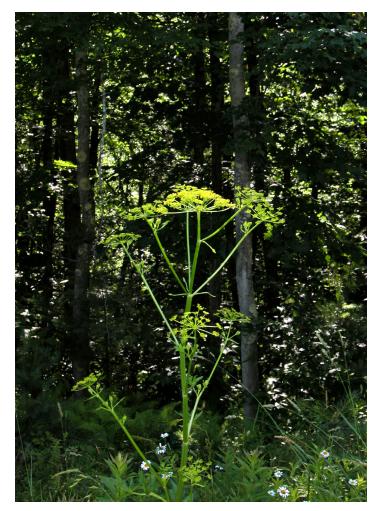
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June

Wild parsnip is a giant, stately plant that appears in some profusion on the side of the byway in a number of areas. Because of the greenish tint in its yellow flowers, it is ordinarily not anything as showy as its stature-as much as six feet in some caseswould suggest. But occasionally, as here, a ray of sun will catch the flowers bringing out their brilliance, and their majesty can be appreciated.

WARNING: though not as toxic as its cousin, giant hogweed, which has been receiving a lot of publicity for its toxic qualities recently, the sap of this plant combined with sunlight can cause burns. AVOID TOUCHING.









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Here, some late geraniums left over from May combine with buttercups for a cheerful show.





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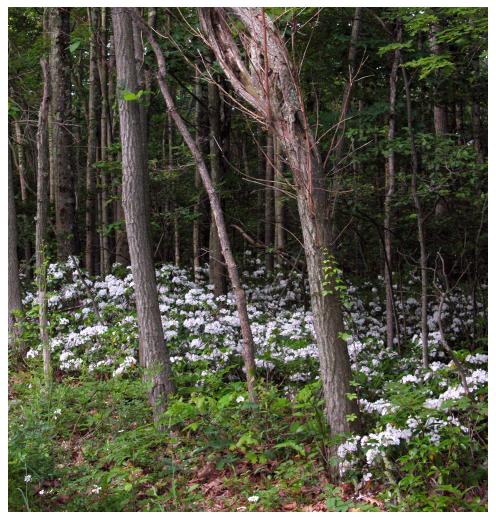
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Mountain laurels love shade, and tend to throng areas where they are surrounded by trees. Thus, you won't see too many of them from the Byway in most places. But when you come to places like this, where the trees come close to the road, you can see them ranging deep into the forest.







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Here, wild flowering raspberries (they belong to the same genus as the edible fruit plants, but are not the same species) mingle with a few daisies to adorn some of the rock faces that loom up on the roadside in places where the Byway has been hewn into the side of the hills.







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July

One of the delightful thing about daisies is the way they can grow out of what appears to be solid rock. Keep your eyes on the rocky escarpments that border the Scenic Byway in many places on the landward side; they look inhospitable, but you'll see them adorned with many bunches of daisies like this.



Daylilies are not a native—they came from Asia, via Europe, during the Colonial period—but they have naturalized extensively in our area. This group nestles on a steep slope going down to one of the Scenic Byway's coverts carrying water down to the river; you can see the creek babbling in the background.

You won't see too much Joe Pye Weed next to the byway because it is attracted to wetlands, of which there are not too many close to the road (a credit to the engineers). But keep your eyes open: there are a few glorious exceptions like these, still partially in bud—you won't see the full bloom until August.



August-September

Here Joe Pye is seen later in the season in full flower. It combines with varrow and what we believe to be helianthus (the vellow flower) for a late technicolor display. We checked the flower ID with a Sullivan County Master Gardener, but are not positive about the helianthus; if you think you know, email us at copyeditor@ riverreporter.com.





The purpley shades of asters combine with turning leaves in early fall.

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