

Station 16: Mountain Laurel

Mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), is a native evergreen shrub found in Hayes Woods. Mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) plays a significant role in its ecosystem, contributing to both biodiversity and ecological health. This evergreen shrub forms dense thickets in forested areas, providing shelter and nesting sites for various wildlife species, including birds and small mammals. With its extensive root system, mountain laurel helps prevent soil erosion on steep slopes, contributing to soil stability and water retention. If you visit Hayes Woods in late May or early June, you'll see mountain laurel in full bloom with its showy pale pink flowers.

If you look carefully, you'll see sheep laurel, a smaller relative of mountain laurel, scattered throughout Hayes Woods. Sheep laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*) is easily overlooked most of the year. Look for its vibrant pink flowers that bloom in June.



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