

A Year in Rock Creek Park Receives Book Award and Goes Back to Press

A Year in Rock Creek Park: the Wild, Wooded Heart of Washington, DC has received a 2015 Independent Publishers' IPPY award—a silver medal for Mid-Atlantic nonfiction. The award was presented to author Melanie Choukas-Bradley at the Independent Publishers' annual book awards ceremony on May 27th at the Historic Providence in New York City. *A Year in Rock Creek Park* is illustrated with full-page photographs by award-winning photographer and author Susan Austin Roth. The book was published in two editions by George F. Thompson Publishing in November of 2014. The softcover edition (already in its second printing) features 32 color photographs and is distributed by the University of Virginia Press, publisher of three other natural history titles by Ms. Choukas-Bradley, and a signed, slip-cased, hardcover limited edition featuring 89 color photographs is distributed by Casemate-IPM.

Reviewer Nancy Nye Hunt, author of *Aldo Leopold's Shack: Nina's Story*, wrote: “Evocative of Thoreau and grounded in Leopold's land ethic, Melanie Choukas-Bradley in *A Year in Rock Creek Park* invites readers into an unexpected wilderness in the heart of Washington, DC. As a naturalist, her extensive knowledge and keen observations note seasonal changes, and the reader naturally falls in step, as if on one of her walks. Choukas-Bradley paints a sense of place with her poetic descriptions of Nature and the cultural and historical information she imparts about the national park. Drawing on lessons learned from her deep connections to Rock Creek Park, she searches inwardly, reflecting on the interconnectedness of people and the land, realizing that our mutual well-being is dependent on the health of the land, which, in turn, is dependent on our responsible use. I have found another kindred spirit through this engaging book.”

A Year in Rock Creek Park was launched at an Audubon Naturalist Society reception at the Woodend Mansion in Chevy Chase, Maryland, on December 11, 2014, to a standing-room only crowd. The author and photographer have given many book presentations in the Washington, DC, area since that date. On June 6th Ms. Choukas-Bradley and Ms. Roth will lead a Rock Creek Park walking tour for Politics & Prose Bookstore, and on June 12th Ms. Choukas-Bradley will give a lecture titled “A Year in Rock Creek Park” at the U.S. Botanic Garden at the foot of Capitol Hill. Later this month, she will lead walking tours of Rock Creek Park for the Audubon Naturalist Society and Casey Trees. Other upcoming 2015 events will be sponsored by the Rock Creek Conservancy, the Cosmos Club, the Maryland and Virginia Native Plant Societies and many other organizations.

Melanie Choukas-Bradley is the author of *City of Trees*, which has been in continuous print in three separate editions since 1981. In 2014, she was awarded one of four inaugural “Canopy Awards” by Casey Trees for her efforts to educate people about the trees of Washington, DC. Ms. Choukas-Bradley is also author of two other highly

acclaimed natural history books and numerous articles. She teaches and leads field trips in the Washington, DC, area for many organizations. Susan Austin Roth is the author and photographer of ten popular gardening books (Rodale Press, Houghton Mifflin, Home Planners, and Better Homes and Gardens) and was honored with three awards from the Garden Writers Association. She worked for seven years as a field editor and assignment photographer for *Better Homes and Gardens* magazine, and her photographs appear regularly in books, national magazines, and calendars.