



News from Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus

An urban wildlife refuge partnership

A Monthly Newsletter

February 2019

Volume 7 Issue 2

February Open Hours

The Conservation Area is open to the public:

Mon-Fri 9am-4pm

Sat 9am-1pm

Closed on Sundays and for President's Day (2/18)

FREE Programming & Opportunities to Connect with Nature

Email events@masonvillecove.org for more information or to pre-register; or call 410-246-0669, x100.

Sat. 2/2 10:00am-11:30am, Scientific Monitoring

Fri. 2/8 10:00am-11:00am, Nature Walk

Sat. 2/9 10:00am-11:00am, Nature Walk

Sat. 2/16 10:00am-11:30am, Nature for Kids (Making birdfeeders: w/ pinecones, peanut butter, and bird seed; Story time "Ducks Don't Get Wet")

MCEEC Contact Information

1000 Frankfur Avenue,
Baltimore MD 21226

Phone: 410-246-0669, ext.100

Website: www.masonvillecove.org

Email:

For inquiries related to educational programs,
info@masonvillecove.org

For inquiries related to volunteering,
friends@masonvillecove.org

A Look Back at January

After a well-rested holiday break and a lovely snow day, the Masonville education team kicked off our second round of [SLURRP](#) (School Leadership in Urban Runoff Reduction Project) outreaches! January's theme focused on storm drain and runoff pollution!

Our first outreach of the New Year was spent one snowy morning at [Federal Hill Preparatory School](#). Students ventured outdoors and used GPS devices to locate and map storm drains on their schoolyard. When they returned to the classroom, students brainstormed different methods the school could use to reduce runoff pollution from their schoolyard.



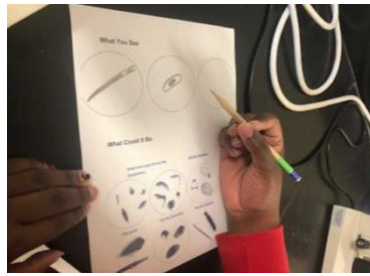
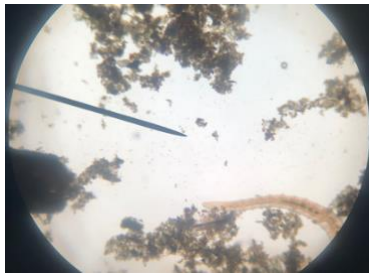
Our second outreach took place at [New Era Academy](#). During this outreach, students took on the role of an environmental/ civil engineer or city planner, and designed Best Management Practices (BMPs) for storm drains. The students used different



filtration materials (such as cotton balls and fabric) to design a storm drain filter that filters out the most pollutants from water while requiring the least amount of money. Every student had a budget of five imaginary dollars for their filters and used a water sample polluted with dirt, oil, food die, and pieces of plastic to test run their designs.

Back at the MC campus, staff kept busy with a variety of [field trips](#). In addition to our usual plankton lab and water quality assessment, this month introduced a new lesson plan focused on plants and pollination. Students from [Benjamin Franklin High School](#) were our first group to explore the world of pollination. The students, acting as pollinators, delved deep inside a paper flower in search of delicious nectar (represented by candy) hidden below a layer of cheese puffs (pollen). In the process, their hands became coated with cheese dust, demonstrating how pollinators assist with transferring pollen from flower to flower. Students also participated in a lima bean dissection, where they learned about the different parts of a seed and the function each plays in the growth of a plant or flower.





Scenes at Masonville Cove: Deer frolicking in the winter snow; Viewpoint of a microscope; Student drawing types of plankton; Our painted turtle basking under her heat lamp in the education center

Friends of Masonville Cove

Last month the Masonville team took a trip to the [Sultana Education Foundation](#) in Chestertown, Maryland. During the visit, SEF hosted a "toddler time" program featuring worms. Activities included a creature feature where youngsters handled live worms and observed worm eggs through a hand lens. Toddlers and their parents also took part in other fun and educational experiences from dissecting gummy worms to navigating an obstacle course using different crawling techniques. While they maneuvered through tunnels, over bean bag hills, and weaved between cones on the "forest" floor, the children had to avoid getting tagged by the hungry "birds". The trip was a wonderful learning experience for LCF staff and we highly recommend checking out our friends at SEF if you're ever on the Eastern Shore!

A Groundhog by Any Other Name...

Is still a groundhog. Yes, this famous furry rodent that emerges to tell us all if spring is coming early or if we are destined to endure 6 more weeks of bitter winter temperatures goes by many names, most common among them woodchuck and whistle pig.

Ground-hog (as the word originally appears) was first used in 1784 and is thought to stem from translation of the Dutch word *aardvarken* meaning "earth pig", which was being named around the same time by Dutch colonists in South Africa.

Woodchuck, a much earlier term for the large ground squirrel, first appeared in print in 1674. Woodchuck comes from Native American origins as the English pronunciation of the Algonquin word "wejack" or "wuchak." It actually has nothing to do with the animal eating or chucking wood.

Whistle-pig, a regional name in the Appalachians and southern U.S., is named for the high-pitched whistle sound it makes to warn the colony of incoming predators or danger.

Groundhog Day originates from Candlemas Day, a celebration of the midpoint between the winter solstice and spring equinox. The tradition was brought to the U.S. in the 1700s by German settlers and by the 1840s, the groundhog was the center of attention at annual celebrations in Pennsylvania, giving way to the replacement of Candlemas Day with the currently celebrated Groundhog Day.

Apparently 18th century Pennsylvanians preferred the term Groundhog and so on [February 2nd](#) we will celebrate the 133rd

[Groundhog Day](#). Punxsutawney Phil, the nation's groundhog, has been predicting the arrival of spring since 1887. We are eagerly awaiting to see whether or not he spots his shadow!



About Masonville Cove and the Campus...

Masonville Cove is located on 70 acres of water and 54 acres of cleaned-up land including wetlands, nature trails, and a protected bird sanctuary. The Masonville project developed from mitigation tied to the creation of a Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) by the MDOT Maryland Port Administration (MPA). This created an opportunity for the local residents and schoolchildren (from Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, and Cherry Hill) to connect with their natural environment and participate in meaningful stewardship projects related to Masonville Cove and their communities.

MDOT MPA worked with the community associations from Brooklyn and Curtis Bay, the Living Classrooms Foundation, and the National Aquarium to create the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus (MCEEC). Maryland Environmental Service coordinates the mitigation project. The MCEEC has been a model for community involvement and environmental awareness from its inception to its opening as a landmark urban environmental education center. The sustainable growth of this urban wilderness conservation area and its wetlands will remind the community that they are a part of something positive for generations to come.



A Partnership among:
MDOT Maryland Port Administration

Living Classrooms Foundation

National Aquarium

Maryland Environmental Service

US Fish & Wildlife Service