



News from Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus

An urban wildlife refuge partnership

A Monthly Newsletter

March 2019

Volume 7 Issue 3

March Open Hours

The Conservation Area is open to the public:

Mon-Fri 9am-4pm

Sat 9am-1pm

**Extended Hours Thurs,
March 7th, 9am-8pm**

Closed on Sundays



FREE Programming & Opportunities to Connect with Nature

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

Sat. 3/2 10:00am-11:00am, Scientific Monitoring

Thurs. 3/7 4:00pm-8:00pm, First Thursday (Movie: The Lorax playing at 6:00pm)

Fri. 3/8 and Sat. 3/9 10:00am-11:00am, Nature Walks

Sat. 3/16 10:00am-11:00am, Nature for Kids Program

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

February Highlights



The campus is well and alive here at Masonville Cove, as we endure the last month of winter and prepare for spring. Come March 20th, we officially enter spring, but until then, many animals have to hunker down and survive the cold. To help these critters withstand the remaining, frigid days of winter, February's [Nature for Kids Program](#) focused on creating pine cone bird feeders. This simple craft is easy to make at home and provides birds (and squirrels) with necessary food and nutrients that are often hard to find in the wintertime. All you need is a pine cone, peanut butter (preferably creamy), bird seed, and yarn to make a sweet snack to hang outside for the birds.

A huge part of February was spent preparing for and teaching "[Who Killed Rocky Rockfish](#)," our spin on an environmental murder mystery. Forty-five, 3rd grade students from Maree G. Farring Elementary put their detective skills to the test to help staff solve the crime. We investigated a list of suspects, including Oscar Osprey, Hot Water Harry, Solvent Sally, Food Chain Frank, and Lindsay Litter. Staff dressed up in costumes to act out the different suspects and led lab activities

demonstrating how each suspect may have played a role in Rocky's death.

Students started the day by diluting food dye with water until the solution became clear, representing how chemicals aren't always visible in our waterways. They also learned how factories release hot water that depletes streams of oxygen and increases the rate at which chemicals dissolve. After lunch, we went outside and each class helped collect clues and looked for evidence of trash and ospreys. At the end of the day, students voted on who they thought was the culprit. Was it harmful trash and pollutants that killed Rocky? Boiling water expelled from manufacturing plants? Depleted oxygen levels or predators? Or maybe it was a combination of the suspects. We may never know. Who do you think killed Rocky Rockfish?





Scenes at Masonville Cove: Evidence of critters on campus, including an opossum, a red-shouldered Hawk, a red fox, a groundhog, and some racoon prints.

Luck of the Irish

Four-leaf clovers have long been considered lucky, mainly due to the fact that they are hard to come by. The chance of finding a four-leaf clover among a patch of three-leaf clovers (shamrocks), is about 1 in 10,000. While they appear different, the four-leaf clover and three-leaf clover are actually the same species of plant, the White Clover. Plants with four leaflets result from a genetic mutation in the White Clover which typically has three leaves, as indicated by its scientific name, *Trifolium repens* (Tri meaning three and folium meaning leaf).

However, while four-leaf clovers and shamrocks are the same species, they hold very different meanings in Irish and Celtic beliefs. Shamrocks are highly regarded in Irish religion. According to Irish legends, St. Patrick used the shamrock as a representation of the Holy Trinity. The three leaflets representing the father, the son, and the holy spirit, while the clover as a whole represents how God is all three at once. On the other hand, Celtic folklore acknowledges the significance of the four-leaf clover, stating each leaflet of the clover represents something different (faith, hope, love, and luck). Sometimes they even used the clover to ward off evil.

If you happen to spot a patch of clovers in your well-kept lawn, don't pull them up! While clovers are non-native, they are actually good alternatives to turf grass and provide many benefits to your yard. White Clovers are nitrogen fixers, meaning they soak up nitrogen in the air and transfer it to the soil. This process supplements the soil with nutrients and prevents the need for extra fertilizers. Additionally, clovers have long roots that create space between dirt particles and help aerate the soil.



White Clover can add value to the landscape in other ways besides soil health. Not only is clover a great pollinator plant, attracting many species of bumble bees, but it is one of the best honey producing plants. It also acts as a wonderful slow growing cover crop, preventing harmful weeds from infiltrating your yard and reducing the need for mowing. While we don't advise letting clovers take over your lawn and always suggest prioritizing native plants over non-native plants, a few spots of clover here and there are extremely beneficial.



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