



# News from Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus

*An urban wildlife refuge partnership*

A Monthly Newsletter

FEBRUARY MARCH 2018

Volume 6 Issue 2&3

## MARCH Open Hours

The Conservation Area is open to the public:

Mon-Fri  
9am-4pm

Sat  
9am-1pm

Closed on  
Sundays & for Easter  
3/30-31



## FREE Programming & Opportunities to Connect with Nature

[events@masonvillecove.org](mailto:events@masonvillecove.org) for more information or to pre-register; or call 410-246-0669, x100. Se habla español.

**Tue, 3/13 2-3pm**, Guided Nature Walk ~ Signs of Spring

**Fri, 3/16 10:30am-12pm, Stewardship** ~Starting Native Plants in MC Greenhouse, tidy and set up the greenhouse

**Sat, 3/17 9:30-11am, Stewardship** ~Starting Native Plants in MC Greenhouse, sowing seeds of native plants

**Wed, 3/21 9:30am-11:30am, Citizen Science- Scientific Monitoring-** hands on learning about wildlife and water quality

**Sat, 3/24 10-11am**, Green Living with Cleaning Products, DIY activity

## MCEEC Contact Information

1000 Frankfurst Avenue,  
Baltimore MD 21226

Phone: 410-246-0669, ext.100  
Website: [www.masonvillecove.org](http://www.masonvillecove.org)

Email:  
For inquiries related to educational programs,  
[info@masonvillecove.org](mailto:info@masonvillecove.org)

For inquiries related to volunteering,  
[friends@masonvillecove.org](mailto:friends@masonvillecove.org)

## Think Spring

There is a variety of programs on the calendar (above) for March. Any will get you launched into spring thinking. The monthly Scientific Monitoring resumed in February and will continue barring violent storms. This is a great opportunity to learn about the project, learn water quality testing and observe wildlife.

If thoughts go to spring cleaning, we have a free Saturday program to learn how to make cleaning products that are inexpensive and non-toxic. Bring some small bottles to take home your cleaning solutions.

Mid-month there is a stewardship event to get your green thumb going. Volunteers and staff will work in the greenhouse to organize germination flats and plant seeds collected from native plants growing at Masonville Cove and in the Baltimore area. The plants grown in the greenhouse will be given away to community members to plant out in local yards and gardens to attract and support pollinators.



## Plants and Pollinators~a bit on the connection

For flowering plants the transfer of pollen from male plant parts to female parts has to happen, if the plant is to develop fruits and seeds. While some plants can transfer pollen within in the same plant or in the wind, close to three-quarters of plant species rely on animal pollinators to transfer their pollen. Many plants and their pollinators live in a close relationship that has developed over time. The plant attracts its pollinator with showy flower petals or scent. Pollinators benefit nutritionally from sugary nectar and protein-rich pollen. Since plants cannot move on their own, the pollinator animal becomes the vehicle for moving pollen to another plant to carry out fertilization.

**MCEEC staff take a field day (to Arlington Echo):** In the yearly cycle at Masonville Cove, it is relatively quiet during January and February. This offered an opportunity for MC educators to visit with environmental educators at Arlington Echo in Anne Arundel County. It was a great exchange of ideas and teaching techniques at this wooded facility on the banks of the Severn River.





**Scenes at Masonville Cove:** Wellesley College volunteers; Educator Julian Whitley wrapping up a school field trip; Exploring the watershed model at a Saturday program; Painted Bunting at deck feeder(photo by Wendy Alexander).

**Volunteer News**

We held a great volunteer orientation and training in January. Five people attended and learned about the project at Masonville Cove and how they can contribute to the mission of the project. One other person could not attend but received individual training last Saturday. So we have 6 new volunteers.

Aleyda Santiago and Elia Franco who are youth and Sunday School leaders in a Brooklyn congregation. We hope they will help with programming in Spanish and inspire other Latinas and Latinos to get more involved with our programs. Priscila Andrade who is a freshwater ecologist who wants to get involved with educational programs. Carla Parish Ward who works in a community college setting, came to MCEEC through a National Aquarium program last fall and promised herself to come back to MCEEC. Next is Steve Thompson who heard about us through an LCF volunteer event and has been volunteering at nature walks, citizen science programming and other MCEEC programs since September. Last is Leigh Rudner who volunteered at Oyster Games and Ornament Making events and completed training after the recent



Watersheds program for the community. A big 'Thank You!' to these folks who reached out to volunteer.

Ten students and their chaperone from Wellesley College volunteered at Masonville Cove in late January. The group pitched in to take care of the critters in our tanks. Others helped prepare materials for field trip activities. Still others worked on preparing brochures about field trips at MCEEC. After lunch they wrapped up indoor tasks and went out to the conservation area to remove debris from the living shoreline. Thanks Wellesley College!

**Painted Bunting sighting at Education Center causes surge in human visitors**

This small sparrow-sized, green bird, either a female or juvenile male, was recorded at MCEEC on Saturday 2/10 by Claire Wayner and Keith Costley during an Audubon bird walk. The individual was spotted at a bird feeder near the Education Building. According to Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Painted Buntings breed in the Deep South and overwinters in Florida, the Caribbean and Mexico([https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Painted\\_Bunting/maps-range](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Painted_Bunting/maps-range)). As such seeing a painted bunting in winter in Baltimore is unusual and caused quite a stir among area birders. In the 10 days following the initial sighting over 80 people visited the campus! The bird has moved on and things have been quieter.

**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