

News from Masonville Cove Environmental **Education Campus**

An urban wildlife refuge partnership

A Monthly Newsletter

The Conservation Area is open to the public:

Mon-Fri 9am-4pm

Sat 9am-1pm

Closed on Sundays

Campus Closed on 2/18-20 for President's Day Holiday



February Open Hours FREE Programming for Families. To reserve your spot, email programs@masonvillec ove.org or call

410-246-0669 x102

FEBRUARY 2017

Sat, 2/4 9:30-10:30am, 11am-12pm Science Alive for kids <5: Groundhog Day! Fri, 2/17 10-11am Science Alive for kids <5: Chesapeake Bay Day!

Other [FREE] Opportunities to Connect MCEEC Contact Information with Nature

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

Tue, 2/7, 11:30am-12:30pm Guided Nature Website: www.masonvillecove.org Walk- Nest Boxes

Tue, 2/14, 10am-12pm 2nd Tuesdays with Masonville Stewards- Greenhouse Work Wed, 2/22 9:30am-12pm Citizen Science-Scientific Monitoring

Sat, 2/25 10am-11:30am Community Program-Winter Botany

Wed, 3/1 10:30am-12pm Plant Seeds for **Pollinators**

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Phone: 410-246-0669, ext.100

Email:

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

For inquiries related to volunteering, friends@masonvillecove.ora

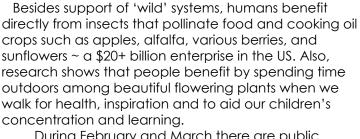
Come to Masonville Cove to explore and to give back to nature

In 2017 the partners at Masonville Cove continue to educate and develop habitat that supports a diversity of creatures in upland and aquatic habitats. We'll offer free public programs about pollinator insects and the plants that attract them by providing them with food and shelter.

What's the big deal about pollinators?

While some plants move their pollen in the wind or water, roughly 70% of living flowering plants rely on insects to transfer their pollen. The plants benefit from successful reproduction of seeds and the insects benefit from a rich food source in pollen and nectar. Four orders of insects are important as

pollinators: Beetles (Coleoptera), Butterflies and Moths (Lepidoptera), Bees, Ants and Wasps (Hymenoptera) and Flies (Diptera). Pollinators' services are elemental in the function of terrestrial ecosystems. Nowadays habitat management better considers how management practices sustain habitat for pollinators.



During February and March there are public programs when you can learn about woody plants during winter. Later we'll look at the same plants as they break dormancy. It's a great opportunity to refresh yourself outdoors and learn a little about the plants at Masonville Cove.

If you are interested in helping with greenhouse planting projects, we'll be organizing the greenhouse on February 14th (Valentine's Day) starting at 10am. We'd love to see you then! There is a follow up program on March 1st to plant seeds of native flowers that support pollinators.

Save the Date: 4th Annual Project Clean Stream at Masonville Cove, Saturday March 25, 9:30am. Join other volunteers and Masonville partners to remove debris from the shoreline at Masonville

Cove. Details to follow.

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Scenes at Masonville Cove: Think spring and pollinators-bumblebee visiting a spotted bee balm flower last summer; MES' John Oltman installing a Nest Box in the Conservation Area; Look what's under a log- 2 slugs and a cluster of eggs (ringed in red); American Coots overwintering in the nearshore area of Masonville Cove.

A variety of waterfowl and Shorebirds make Masonville Cove their winter habitat.

Maryland Environmental Service specialist Tim Carney regularly monitors wild birds at the Masonville Dredged Material Containment Facility (DMCF) and in the mitigated areas of Masonville Cove. His observations document bird species that use the upland and aquatic habitats.

During winter, Masonville Cove provides habitat for migratory waterfowl and other birds that favor aquatic habitats. December's Bird Report from Tim Carney cites rafts of Bufflehead and Ruddy Ducks in the Cove. We see them out on the cove at the end of January, too.

These small diving ducks congregate in quiet tidal estuaries and freshwater wetlands and lakes during winter and migrate to the central plains' wetlands(ruddy ducks) and Canadian forests(bufflehead) to breed. They are a blast to watch

as they disappear below the surface and pop up a short time later. Ruddy ducks are shaped like rubber duckies; males have white cheek patches and hold their tails upright. Buffleheads



are somewhat smaller with a white patch at the nape

of the neck. Outside the breeding season, it is more difficult to distinguish females and males.

Also spotted in our area were red-breasted merganser, lesser scaup, canvasback, gadwall and American coot(pictured at top of



page). You are invited to Masonville Cove to see for yourself. We can loan you binoculars and ID materials. The public hours include weekdays from 9am-4pm or Saturdays from 9am to 1pm.

Did you know that Masonville Cove is a Nest Watch site?

Nancy O'Hara, a member of the Baltimore Bird Club, plus a couple of MC staff participate in this Citizen Science project sponsored by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. When birds are breeding, we make observations 1-2 times every week. There are data entry forms developed by scientists. These help keep observations consistent among observers and among sites. To kick off the season we have a 1-hour Nature Walk slated for Tuesday February 7th at 11:30am, plus NestWatch briefing. We'll be inspecting the nest boxes in the conservation area and recording locations of old nests in trees.

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 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.

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: Maryland Port Administration Living Classrooms Foundation National Aquarium Maryland Environmental Service US Fish & Wildlife Service

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