



# News from Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus

*An urban wildlife refuge partnership*

**A Monthly Newsletter**

**APRIL 2018**

**Volume 6 Issue 4**

**APRIL Open Hours**

The Conservation Area is open to the public:

Mon-Fri 9am-4pm

Sat 9am-1pm

Closed on Sundays



**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.

**Sat, 4/14 9:30am-12:30pm, Project Clean Stream**-remove debris from shoreline and stream

**Wed, 4/18 9:30am-11:30am, Citizen Science- Scientific Monitoring**-hands on learning about wildlife and water quality

**Sat, 4/21 10am-12pm, Shoreline Clean up** -Eagle Scout Project Troop#302 ~ open to the public

**Tue, 4/24 12:30-1:30pm, Guided Nature Walk** ~ Signs of Spring

**MCEEC Contact Information**

1000 Frankfur 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)

**Volunteers at Masonville Cove**

As we begin the spring field season, a big shout out to the dedicated volunteers who come to work at the site either as individuals or as part of a group. You are a vital part of the MCEEC narrative.

In March a group gathered at the greenhouse to sow seeds of native plant species as we prepare for plant and seed giveaways at community events.

These plants will improve the habitat for native pollinators and nectar feeding insects. Many thanks for your careful work to sort out all those tiny seeds!

A group from [CocaCola Bottling Company](http://CocaColaBottlingCompany.com) was in Baltimore for a conference. They came from many states and took a break from the conference to volunteer at Masonville Cove. Despite the cool and cloudy weather the group was enthusiastic about removing debris from the shoreline. Many bags of recyclables and trash filled up thanks to their efforts. In addition, several volunteers pitched in to



prepare teaching materials for a summer program for kids. Thanks to the team from CocaCola!

Volunteers are beginning to monitor activities of nesting birds in the conservation area. Their observations will be recorded at Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology as part of [NestWatch](http://NestWatch.org). Their work is an important way for citizen scientists to document how birds use the habitat and their success at nesting and raising the next generation.

Volunteers can take part at events each month during the spring and summer. For example, on Saturday April 14th community volunteers will participate in [Project Clean Stream](http://ProjectCleanStream.org). Volunteers will be cleaning the shoreline and stream that connects Brooklyn & Curtis Bay with Masonville Cove. You could join in [Scientific Monitoring](http://ScientificMonitoring.org) and learn about wildlife and water quality in the conservation area. We will do the training with you.

**Contact [friends@masonvillecove](mailto:friends@masonvillecove.org)** if you want to find out more about becoming a volunteer at MCEEC.





**Scenes at Masonville Cove:** Stewardship in action ~Planting seeds of native species in the greenhouse; Volunteer group from CocaCola Bottling Co. after shoreline cleanup; Program participants displaying products for home from Green Cleaners workshop; Captain Trash Wheel at pier(photo credit: Bill McAllen).

**Other News from Masonville Cove**

**Trash Wheel**~ Masonville Cove is the site of a newly installed trash wheel named Captain Trash Wheel. Funded by MDOT Maryland Port Administration, the trash wheel arrived by water the last week of March. The device is positioned to intercept debris from the Masonville Cove watershed before it can enter the Patapsco River.



We anticipate that Captain Trash Wheel will become a powerful teaching tool to augment ongoing environmental education and community programs that focus on impacts of debris on watersheds.

**Nesting Activities**~ Ospreys and Bald Eagles have been spotted at the Cove. Some nesting activity has been reported. There are 8 blue bird nest boxes in the conservation area. In past years tree swallows have occupied these boxes. We've spotted several pairs of tree swallows out 'shopping for real estate' this spring. This is a great time of year to take a walk and look for last year's bird nests in trees ~ no leaves to obscure your view. When you stop by the Education Building to sign in, we can direct you to several old nests to get you started on your explorations.

The Audubon Society evokes a wonderful imagery for a bird's nest, 'a cradle, not a house'. Once the young are raised, the nest is abandoned. Birds make nests from lots of different materials including twigs, grass, moss, feathers, bits of twine, pieces of plastic. The cup nests in trees and shrubs are well-camouflaged to protect the eggs and young from predators. Observe the birds' behaviors to help locate a nest. Male birds will sing to identify their territory or you may see birds carrying nesting materials to a particular spot. If you do find an active nest, Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology recommends that you note the location with a quick drawing or use your smartphone's GPS; please avoid tagging the nest as that could attract predators. Also avoid disturbing the nesting birds, which could cause them to abandon the nest. Gentleness and patience have their rewards. Enjoy spring!

To explore further:

- Baltimore Bird Club, <http://cylburn.org/grounds-plants/trails-wildlife/baltimore-bird-club/>
- Audubon Society, <http://www.audubon.org/magazine/march-april-2008/small-miracles-wonder-birds-nests>
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology, <https://nestwatch.org/learn/how-to-nestwatch/how-to-find-nests/>

**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