



News from Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus

An urban wilderness conservation area.

A Monthly Newsletter

February 2014

Volume 2 Issue 2

February Open Hours

The Conservation Area is open

Mon-Fri 11am-4pm

Sat 9am-1pm

Closed Sunday

2/17 Campus Closed for President's Day



Free Saturday Programming for Preschoolers & Families

To reserve your spot, go to www.masonvillecove.org.

2/1 10-11:30 am *Budding Biologists* (ages 5-7)-Woodchucks, Whistle Pigs or Groundhogs?

2/8 10-11am *Science Alive Kids* <5-Bears!; **11:30am-12:30pm** *Family Fun-For the Love of Animals*

2/15 10-11:30am *Habitat Heroes* (ages 8-13): Winter & Birds, Service Project.

2/22 10-11am *Science Alive Kids* <5-Boats!; **11:30am-12:30pm** *Family Fun-Ocean Exploration*

Other Free Programming

2/4 10:30-11:30am Guided Nature Walk with Maryland Master Naturalists.

2/15 10-11:30am Winter Botany

2/19 1-3pm Winter Botany

2/28 1-2pm Guided Nature Walk with Maryland Master Naturalists.



MCEEC Contact Information

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www.masonvillecove.org

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

For inquiries related to volunteering, friends@masonvillecove.org

Enjoy Winter Beauty at Masonville Cove

Imagine encountering winter at Masonville Cove! True, it has been frigid; and noses and toes tingle in the cold as we scurry between heated spaces.

We invite you to come to Masonville Cove to experience some of the joys and serene beauty of winter. A walk in the conservation area reveals a well used landscape. Tracks of deer, fox and rabbits crisscross the landscape. Bird tracks dot the native plant gardens amongst the seed heads of last summer's plants. Rafts of canvasbacks, scaups and buffleheads can be found on the water. Ring-billed gulls reel in the clear blue air above the Cove.



Frozen creek looking north to Baltimore downtown

There are guided nature walks offered [a couple of times per month] or you can walk on your own weekdays and on Saturdays during times the conservation area is open to the public.

Bring your children to Masonville Cove to take part in our hands-on activities geared toward nature and winter. Barring extreme weather, every Saturday in February we offer family friendly programming. New programs for older children include *Habitat Heroes* (ages 8-13) and *Budding Biologists* (ages 5-7). The ever-popular *Science Alive for Kids* <5 and *Family Fun* continue to be offered. It's easy to sign up, and your kids will be delighted! Check the calendar above or visit www.masonvillecove.org for dates and times.

Get acquainted with woody plants in their winter state! Come to a free program on Winter Botany to learn to identify particular plants in winter. You will work indoors in the lab and outdoors in the conservation area.



Winter scenes at Masonville Cove~ Barge depositing sand for substrate improvement project, Bird Nest, View of stream bed looking south to culvert and Bundled Observers at Mid-Winter Bird Count

Other News

- Substrate Improvements in the cove. A barge has been bringing sand into the Cove(photo above). The goal is to distribute a 1-foot thick layer of sand to cover the mucky sediments of the cove and improve water quality.
- MD Environmental Service continues capping in westernmost upland area, aka the 'crab claw'. We've been watching the giant pile of soil disappear as it is spread over the area. In the spring MES will plant a 2-acre non-tidal wetland and will plant another part with native trees to provide dense cover for wildlife in this upland area.
- New faces at the Education Center. We welcome Ben Franklin High School students Kayla and Eswin as interns. They have joined the Masonville Cove team to help with programming

and to welcome visitors on Saturdays. You'll be hearing from them in future newsletters. Another part-time assistant, Isabel McClelland, will help with programming and various building activities. Before MCEEC Isabel worked at DNR as an Aquatic Resources Educator.

- Scientific Monitoring in the Conservation Area. Staff of the National Aquarium coordinate water quality monitoring, wildlife



observations, and track progress in the shoreline restoration. If you want to help as a citizen scientist, email friends@masonvillecove.org for more information.

Local Birders conduct a mid-winter bird count.

On Saturday Jan. 18th, Dave Walbeck, Kevin Graff, Winger West and Frank Morgan carried out bird counts at Harbor Hospital, Middle Branch Park and Masonville Cove(photo above). Nearly 1400 birds distributed among 37 species were counted in the MC conservation area. Waterfowl were the most abundant types (top 3 species were Canvasbacks, Lesser Scaups and Ring-billed Gulls).

In addition, Kevin and Winger have passed along their bird observations at MC from 2009 and the 1990s, respectively. Many thanks to them.

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 Brooklyn and Curtis Bay Coalition (BayBrook), 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**