



News from Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus

An urban wildlife refuge partnership

A Monthly Newsletter

January 2019

Volume 7 Issue 1

January 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 for more information or to pre-register; email or call 410-246-0669, x100.

Sat. 1/5 10:00am-11:00am, Scientific Monitoring

Fri. 1/11 11:00am-12:00pm, Nature Walk

Sat. 1/12 11:00am-12:00pm, Nature Walk

Sat. 1/19 10:00am-11:00am, Nature for Kids (Making birdfeeders: w/ pinecones, peanut butter, and bird seed)

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

A Look Back at December



December was a busy month at Masonville, filled with kids, programs, and holiday plans. The entire 3rd grade from Cherry Hill Elementary visited MCEEC over a 3 day period. In the morning, students participated in a nature walk and investigated objects they found under a microscope. During the second portion of the day, we engaged the class in interactive lessons about erosion and pollution.

The first lesson showed students how trash can cause erosion and sediment buildup that reshape the river. Rivers that were once straight, become curved and jagged, slowing down the flow of water. The students then made their own model rivers out of clay, twigs, and rocks. Then they competed to see who's river had the slowest flow.

In the second activity, we asked students to draw a waterfront property. They could draw whatever they wanted (ie. house, mall, beach, theme park...) with the only requirement being that it was waterfront. At the end, all of the drawings were connected to demonstrate how trash and pollutants from one property flow downstream

and affect all of the other properties. Each property added more trash and pollution, therefore the total pollution kept building up in the waterway. Oh no! We divided into groups to discuss the sources and ways to reduce our pollution.



Other activities at MCEEC included last month's Nature with Kids Program, where families made ornaments to get in the holiday spirit. Visitors decorated oysters, pinecones, and popsicle sticks to look like Santa, reindeer, and many other seasonal items. During the festivities, participants munched on cookies, drank hot chocolate, and listened to Christmas tunes.



Scenes at Masonville Cove: Black Rat Snake; Nature for Kids (ornament making); Examples of some of the ornaments; Students meeting Squirtle, our Diamondback Terrapin

All About Hibernation

While walking through Masonville Cove in the winter, you commonly see birds or deer frolicking around. However, the absence of other species is easily noticed. We know some animals migrate south, but what about those that don't migrate. Where did they go if they didn't leave? The most plausible answer is that they went into hibernation.



Fun fact: Bears do not enter "true" hibernation. Bears can easily be awoken and frequently move around in their dens.

Hibernation is a state of decreased activity that some warm blooded animals (endotherms) endure during the winter. In preparation for winter, animals search for a place to hunker down, choosing dens, tree trunks, or digging underground. Some hibernators, like chipmunks and

groundhogs will also stock up on food. When hibernation begins, animals experience reduced body temperatures, lower heart and metabolism rates, and slowed breathing. This helps them survive through the winter, when food is limited.

More common than hibernation, is a state of dormancy called torpor. Animals that enter torpor also reduce their breathing and body temperature. However, unlike hibernation, torpor only lasts days to weeks at a time. Animals that enter daily torpor are often active during the day when it is warmer, but reduce biological activity during the night. Some examples of animals that experience torpor include hummingbirds, raccoons, skunks, and certain species of bats.

A third form of winter dormancy is brumation, a state of hibernation experienced by cold blooded animals (ectotherms). During brumation, reptiles and amphibians will remain active when it is warm. However on colder days, the ectotherms remain huddled underground, usually in small crevices and burrows. Sometimes, animals of the same species might "hibernate" in the same burrow, known as a hibernaculum.



Fun Fact: Hibernating animals can remain inactive for months on end, without getting up from their shelter for food, water, or urination.



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