



News from Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus

An urban wildlife refuge partnership

A Monthly Newsletter **OCTOBER 2017** **Volume 5 Issue 10**

OCTOBER Open Hours **FREE Programming for Families.**

The Conservation Area is open to the public:

Mon-Fri 9am-4pm

Sat 9am-1pm

Closed on Sundays and on Saturday 10/7



To reserve your spot, email events@masonvillecove.org or call 410-246-0669 x100

Sat, 10/14 10-11:30am Family Outing(English & Spanish), Guided Fall Walk in newly opened Zone 2. Please pre-register.

Other [FREE] Opportunities to Connect with Nature

For more information or to pre-register call 410-246-0669, x100.

Tues, 10/10 10am-12pm MC Stewards-Tree Protection Project

Wed, 10/18 9:30am-12pm Citizen Science-Scientific Monitoring

Sat, 10/28 Shoreline Clean up- See article

MCEEC Contact Information

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Website: www.masonvillecove.org

Email:

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

For inquiries related to volunteering, friends@masonvillecove.org

Masonville Cove Osprey Harriet Tracked during her Migration

For local 3rd graders on field trips to Masonville Cove, the character 'Oscar Osprey' features large in the mystery "Who Killed Rocky Rockfish?" During these field trips, students gather evidence about human activities and food web interactions to help solve the mystery. Quite often an osprey carrying a fish flies overhead during their investigations.



Several years ago, US Fish and Wildlife service, a MCEEC partner, set up a stick nest wooden platform to attract these fishing hawks. A mated pair, named after Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman by osprey cam followers, reared two chicks this year(family photo taken in early June). And this year Harriet

was tagged with a light-weight satellite tracker. She left the Cove on 9/7 and headed south to overwintering grounds in South America. The last post showed she had made it to the Florida Keys by 9/16- a trip of over 1,100 miles in 10 days. Check out and keep track Harriet's progress on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FWS.ChesapeakeBay/photos/a.407390045962.180798.51206265962/10154936823030963/?type=3&theater> .

Monarchs at Masonville Cove

In the past several years a major focus has been to develop high quality habitat for pollinators, especially Monarch butterflies and milkweeds. Volunteers have raised milkweed plants in the greenhouse to plant out. We have planted seedlings of species recommended by conservation groups such as the Xerces Society or the Audubon Society. We've done outreach in the community to educate about Monarchs and pollinator plants. In May a group of Ben Franklin High School students put in pollinator plants in new raised beds (see May Newsletter). Two new patches of Swamp Milkweed have established in Access Zone 1.

These planting efforts attracted Monarch butterflies which laid eggs on all those milkweed plants. In late August through mid-September, we observed 1-7 larvae of varying sizes on milkweeds. In short order the very hungry caterpillars left only denuded stems. It's not something typically celebrated by gardeners. New funding from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation allows us to continue educating our community and volunteers as we expand pollinator-friendly habitat in Baltimore.





Scenes at Masonville Cove: Boys enjoying a nature walk; these outings continue in the fall; Common Buckeye (*Junonia coenia*) on an aster seedling; September is spider month ~ a black and yellow garden spider (*Argiope aurantia*) with zigzag silk at web's center; BEE SMART students test the buoys they engineered in an outdoor tank.

MCEEC Partner the National Aquarium to Offer Shoreline Clean Up on 10/28

Do something positive for local waters and this urban wildlife refuge. Join the Aquarium to remove harmful marine debris from the shoreline at the Masonville Cove campus. Learn about sources and effects of marine debris, and what you can do to help! Debris data collected at this event will contribute to the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup.

Pre-registration is required for this event. Volunteers must be at least 10 years old. All volunteers under 18 years old will need to be supervised by an adult. Please contact conserve@aqua.org or (410) 576-1079 if you have questions or would like additional details.



Summer Learning disguised as Fun!

For the third summer, Living Classrooms educators at the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center worked with 60 rising 3rd through 5th grade students from Lakeland and Maree G. Farring Elementary/Middle Schools during BEE SMART, a summer program that uses hands-on STEM activities as a vehicle to



excite students about learning and prevent summer learning loss.

The innovative approach of BEE SMART yielded measurable outcomes. For example, 82% of participants increased their reading level during the program; and 80% of the participants understand and appreciate character traits such as respect and responsibility. Each week had an exciting science theme like "Engineering Week", when students built underwater robots and buoys, and "Plants & Animals Week" when students performed a BioBlitz to study the insect population at Masonville. These STEM activities were paired with intensive literacy instruction led by hired reading specialists and aimed at increasing reading levels during the summer, a time when students typically fall behind.

Parents were highly involved in this summer learning disguised as fun. One had this to say about the program: "Genuinely, thank you so much for everything you have done for my daughter over the last three summers. She used to be so shy and keep to herself, and now she is very outgoing and just all around a happier person – it's definitely because of BEE SMART."

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*