



News from Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus

An urban refuge partnership

A Monthly Newsletter

DECEMBER 2015

Volume 3 Issue 12

December Open Hours

The Conservation Area is open to the public:

Mon-Fri
9am-4pm

Sat
9am-1pm

Closed
Sundays,

Closed for
Winter Holiday 12/24-12/27



Free Programming for Young Children & Families

To reserve your spot, go to www.masonvillecove.org then follow the link and instructions in right column under Pre-K programs.

Sat, 12/5 9:30-10:30am, 11-Noon Science Alive Kids Under 5-Animal Tracks!

Sat, 12/12 9:30-10:30am, Science Alive Kids Under 5-Winter Waterfowl!

Other [FREE] Opportunities to Connect with Nature

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

Fri, 12/4 1-2pm Guided Nature Walk

Tues 12/8 5:30-7:30pm Community Program, Holiday Ornament Making. Pre-register please.

Sat, 12/12 7am-9am Breakfast with the Birds ~Guided Walk. Pre-register please.
9:30-10:30am Citizen Science Information Session

Wed, 12/16 11am-2pm MC Stewards, Citizen Science, Scientific Monitoring

MCEEC Contact Information

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

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friends@masonvillecove.org

Living Classrooms' Skipjack Sigsbee came to the Cove for Environmental Education Programs.

In November, families from TAYR, an hispanic congregation in Brooklyn, came to the Cove to learn about the local watershed. After lunch and discussion of watersheds, parents and kids boarded Sigsbee to observe Chesapeake Bay oysters, fish and blue crabs, navigation, estuarine circulation, and take the buoyancy challenge.

Also, 148 students from local schools visited Masonville Cove throughout November, for a Land/Sea field trip. Students participated in a variety of activities both onboard Sigsbee and at Masonville Cove. Students conducted water quality



experiments, marine life exploration, navigation, and took a buoyancy challenge on the boat. On land, students discovered plankton using microscopes, took a plastic voyage to the North Atlantic Gyre, went on a geocaching scavenger hunt, and built their very own terrapin.

3rd Graders Solving the Mystery: Who Killed Rocky Rockfish?

Every year third grade classes from neighborhoods near the MC watershed are invited to campus for a full day field trip to solve the mystery of "Who killed Rocky Rockfish?". Students become "science detectives" using our laboratories and nature trails as part of an investigation to solve the mysterious death of our cove friend Rocky. Suspects include chemicals,

missing oxygen, not enough food, and predators. Later, MC educators visit all the schools to teach students how they can keep Rocky's friends, in the cove and nearby Patapsco River, healthy. By keeping chemicals and litter off the streets, students assure that when water goes down the storm drains it does not carry harmful pollutants into our streams, coves, and rivers. So far this school year 80



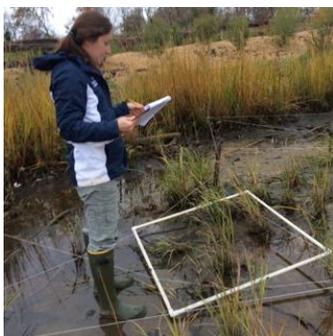
third graders have visited the campus to work on the mystery; and six more field trips are scheduled in December.



Scenes at Masonville Cove: TAYR families learn about blue crabs; Bayberry shrub at shoreline; MC Educator Molly points out a buck rub on a tree trunk; Volunteer observes nesting materials in nest box.

Citizen Science is calling You (Really!)

The Masonville Cove Stewards program was introduced in the August Newsletter. The goal was to build and strengthen a committed group of volunteers that would monitor and would care for the natural environment in the urban refuge here at Masonville Cove. We want to better connect this program to specific Citizen Science initiatives.



Have you heard the buzz about Citizen Science? There is great variety among citizen science projects, from internet-based projects about astronomy to 'boots and gloves' projects in local communities on planet earth. Each empowers educators, students and volunteers to collaborate with scientists on projects by collecting, analyzing and sharing data about the natural world. For MCEEC, these observations help build awareness about wildlife, issues of water quality and increase our capacity to understand the natural world. Volunteers gain training in environmental monitoring and are part of something positive for future generations.

Here are some examples that are great matches for Masonville Cove:

- GLOBE (Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment) uses protocols vetted by scientists. Students and the public gain practical experience about how science works as they contribute observations to a worldwide community of investigators.
- Project Bud Burst is about people getting outside to observe seasonal changes in plants. Shared observations become part of an ecological record (www.budburst.org).
- Nest Watch is sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (www.nestwatch.org). It aims to monitor the reproductive efforts by birds across the nation as changes in climate and habitat quality take place.

As part of the nation's urban wildlife refuges, Masonville Cove inspires people and sustains wildlife in an urban area. It is important to track changes in aquatic and terrestrial communities as the natural area develops.

Next Steps:

- > One Hour Information Session Saturday 12/12 at 9:30am- Come to Masonville Cove to learn more and help plan for these exciting Citizen Science programs.
- > Give it a try: Join MC staff and volunteers in Scientific Monitoring on Wednesday 12/16, 11am-2pm.

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**