



News from Masonville Cove Environmental Education Campus

An urban wildlife refuge partnership

A Monthly Newsletter DECEMBER 2016 Volume 4 Issue 12

December Open Hours

The Conservation Area is open to the public:

Mon-Fri 9am-4pm

Sat 9am-1pm

Closed on Sundays

Campus Closed
12/23-26 & 12/31-1/2 for Holidays



FREE Programming for Families. To reserve your spot, email programs@masonvillecove.org or call 410-246-0669 x102

Sat, 12/3 9:30-10:30am, 11am-12pm Science Alive for kids <5: *Animal Tracks*

Thurs, 12/15 4-5:30pm Holiday Ornament Making

Fri, 12/16 10-11am Science Alive for kids <5: *Winter Solstice Celebration*

Sat, 12/17 10-11am Family Outing: *Christmas Bird Count*

Other [FREE] Opportunities to Connect with Nature

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

Sat, 12/3, 7:30-9:30am, Breakfast with the Birds (pre-register)

Thurs, 12/8 10-11am Guided Nature Walk~*Shorebirds at the Pier*

Tues, 12/13, 10am-12pm 2nd Tuesdays with Masonville Stewards-Work on Walking Trails

Wed, 12/21 9:30am-12pm Citizen Science, Scientific Monitoring

MCEEC Contact Information

1000 Frankfurst 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

Citizen Science at Masonville Cove

Are you curious about the water quality in the Patapsco River and the development of the shoreline at Masonville Cove? If the answer is 'yes', you can be part of the team of citizen scientists who contribute significant observations about the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Masonville Cove offers at least one citizen science program every month(see calendar, above, or at www.masonvillecove.org). We will train you to perform tests for turbidity, salinity, temperature, and several chemical species. Other observations include bird and mammal evidence, collections of fish in traps and photographic records at 6 stations in Access Zone 1.

We are keen to develop other Citizen Science projects, but need YOU —the Citizen Scientist — to join in to make these programs a reality. In the spring we'll continue with NestWatch, monitoring bird nests on the property. It is quite fun to see the eggs turn into chicks and then into fledglings.

Preparing for Winter

Winter is upon us~ a vivid reminder occurred on Saturday Nov18. During morning programs, it was 71 degrees, sunny



and calm. By mid-afternoon the temperature dropped by 30 degrees, the sky turned lead gray and the wind turned ferocious.

In our region, plants and some animals are less active now, and migratory birds have flown to warmer climates. How do they sense that it is 'time'? Temperate zone plants and animals prepare for winter through responses to day lengths (particularly longer nights), which usually signify declines in light, food, and temperatures needed to survive.

Reptiles and amphibians find a safe spot to overwinter, burrowing into the ground or into sediments in local waters. Certain frogs spend winter under a bit of tree bark. Some animals prepare for dormancy by elevating glucose levels in their tissues to protect against freeze damage.

Plants move energy reserves out of leaves into seeds and underground parts. In our region, seeds and buds require a cold period of weeks to months before they can break dormancy. This can protect them against sprouting too early when conditions can be hostile to growth.

Among humans and many mammals that stay active during winter, heavier winter coats conserve precious body heat. Feathers and fur fluff up to increase the boundary layer and reduce losses of body heat.



Scenes at Masonville Cove: Volunteer with mantid egg case, but which species is it (there are 3 main mantid species found in MD)?; A tranquil afternoon at the living shoreline and cove; Volunteers from Johns Hopkins' service fraternity, Alpha Phi Omega, clean up the outdoor classroom located near the greenhouse; Bayberry shrub with its waxy fruits along the living shoreline.

So put on your winter coat and come to Masonville Cove to enjoy upcoming events

The Baltimore Bird Club and MD Environmental Service specialists will lead a Saturday early morning bird walk in Access Zone 2 on Saturday, 12/3 (see more at www.masonvillecove.org). Please register for the event by contacting Peter Lev, 410 823-2962 or plev@comcast.net. Space limited to 20 participants.

Check the calendar for fun outdoor events like a nature walk on 12/8 to observe shore birds from the pier or a family outing on 12/17 to do a Christmas Bird Count. Help us work on the walking trails on 12/13. All of these are pleasant ways to connect with nature in Baltimore.

We have fun indoor programs, too!

For young children there's 'Science Alive!' that teaches about the natural world through hands-on activities. Molly Finch, environmental educator, leads this program. Science Alive! is offered on the first Saturday and third Friday of each month. Please pre-register at programs@masonvillecove.org



Holiday Ornament Making is happening on Thursday, 12/15 at 4pm. Join your neighbors to create holiday decorations using mostly natural or recyclable materials. There will be non-toxic paints available, so dress yourself and your children to be 'decorated' too. A suggested donation of \$2/person or \$5/family will help off set costs of supplies.

Welcome Juan Pabón, a new member of the MCEEC team

My name is Juan Pabón, I currently go to Ben Franklin High School in Baltimore City. I plan on having a career in fashion and art, but the reason I decided to do this internship at Masonville Cove is because I enjoy wildlife and the animals that come with it. My favorite animal is a scorpion: they're unique and fearless, which can sometimes be a bad thing. What I am hoping to gain from this internship is to learn more about animal habitats and how they live on a daily basis. I want to gain a feeling of the struggles that they go through developing in their lifetimes.

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**