



Cattails



7130 Marshy Point Road, Middle River, MD 21220
www.marshypoint.org
410-887-2817

The Marshy Point Nature Center Council Newsletter June - July - August 2018

Spring Festival

A sunny Spring day and a crowd over 1,600 added up to another successful Spring Fest. Many thanks to the MPNC staff and the many volunteers who contributed to a great day. Visitors enjoyed critter talks, demonstrations, insect safaris, frog hunts, crafts, games, face painting and live music.



18th Annual, Members Fish Fry - Tuesday, June 19, 2018, 6:00-8:00 p.m.



**Entertainment Featuring Traditional Music from "Will Play for Fish"
(Tom Reedy, Lisa Roberts, Amy Hopkins)**
Free for Members, Join Now! \$25 (Family) \$15 (Individual) Membership & Dinner
Please call the office to R.S.V.P. by June 15th
(Space is Limited, No Walk-ins), 410-887-2817, Bring an appetizer or
dessert to Share! Sponsored by the Marshy Point Nature Center Council

Gardening Nature's Way - Strawberries

Gerry Oshman

You know summer is finally here when you start seeing signs for pick-your-own strawberries. And who can resist a mound of those succulent red beauties, piled high on a flaky biscuit, smothered in whipped cream? Not me! But many of us are trying to make healthier and more sustainable choices. Why not try this plant-based alternative? Plant-based milk products, like soy or almond, and coconut oil are readily available in most stores, and coconut cream whips up just as light and fluffy as dairy. Here's what you need:

Strawberry Shortcake Recipe

1. Preheat oven to 400F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

3 cups of strawberries, sliced and sprinkled with sugar (how much depends on ripeness/sweetness of berries)	1/4 cup sugar
1 can or box of coconut cream, chilled in fridge overnight	1/2 tsp baking powder
2 tbsp sugar	1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp pure vanilla extract	1/4 cup coconut oil, chilled in freezer for about 20 minutes
1 3/4 cup unbleached all-purpose flour	3/4 cup + 1 tbsp vanilla soy or almond milk
	1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract

2. Flip chilled can of coconut cream and open with a can opener. Pour off liquid and scoop out the thick, solid coconut cream.
3. Whisk on high the coconut cream, 2 tbsp sugar, and 1/4 tsp vanilla, until light and thick. Then chill
4. Stir strawberries and blend about 1/2 of them to make a paste. Mix with the rest of the sliced berries.
5. Combine all dry ingredients.
6. Use your hands*, or a pastry cutter, to cut the coconut oil into the dry ingredients. Work until it resembles fine crumbs.
7. Add the soy or almond milk and 1/2 tsp of vanilla, until just combined. Be careful not to over-mix.
8. Once the dough begins to form, transfer to a well-floured surface and roll to thickness of 1 1/2". Use a glass or round cookie cutter to cut out 2" biscuits. Reform and roll out the dough as necessary.
9. Transfer biscuits to lined baking sheet and bake for 10-15 minutes, until they are golden brown.
10. When cool, slice biscuits in half, top with a spoonful of strawberries and then a dollop whipped coconut cream. Then repeat. Finish with a final layer of biscuit and a dollop of whipped coconut cream and top with a strawberry. Enjoy!



A Day in the Life of a Wildlife Rehabilitator

Valerie Greenhalgh

It is 7am when Kathy Woods, a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, opens the door to the Phoenix Wildlife Center and is greeted by the varied sounds of baby birds, crows, owls, raccoons, fox kits, and more. She warms formula for the hungry infant mammals and reaches for mealworms for the nestlings, when the phone rings. The caller has just discovered a disturbed nest of baby bunnies and needs to know what to do next. She advises the caller and hangs up the phone. Ten minutes later, the phone rings again. The DNR has just arrived with an eagle whose damaged wing will need an X-ray. And so begins another normal day at the center.

Soon two of several dedicated volunteers arrive at the clinic to lend a hand with the daily feeding and cleaning. By 11am, a fresh batch of formula is prepared for the infant mammals, and the second feeding begins. In peak season, there are dozens of baby birds and infant mammals in need of multiple feedings per day. As adorable as they are, we are reminded that they are wild animals, not pets, and treating them like pets is not in their best interest.

For Kathy, her work extends beyond the walls of the clinic, whether educating others about wildlife and wildlife rehabilitation or renesting displaced birds, sometimes into manmade nests. In 2016 for example, Marshy Point Nature Center called on Kathy to assist with an osprey chick that was tangled in fishing line in its nest. With help from Ben and Dave of Marshy Point, Kathy climbed a ladder and safely untangled the chick while the osprey parents hovered above.

At any given time, there are dozens of recuperating animals in the center, with new animals arriving every day. Because of dedicated wildlife rehabilitators like Kathy Woods, many orphaned or injured animals are successfully rehabilitated and returned to the wild. The demands are high but the rewards are great, and if you love wildlife the way that we do, then it's all worth it. www.phoenixwildlife.org.



Praying Mantis: Friend or Foe?

Bev Wall



There are many intriguing insects in the world, but for this writer, the praying mantis is a top contender. Highly distinguishable by body shape, they are not unlike most insects that are divided into three parts—abdomen, head, and thorax. But, here lies the difference—mantids possess stereo-vision, meaning that they have the ability to look at the same spot with both eyes at the same time. They can also move their heads an incredible 180 degrees, allowing them to accurately judge distances. This is a big deal in the insect world. Their long, narrow antennae are great for picking up scents, while their color, which varies from brown to green, make it easy for them to blend into their surroundings, protecting themselves while also hiding from their prey. A stealth bunch, indeed. But are mantids friend or foe?

Praying mantis eat almost anything that comes their way and are often thought of as a friend to farmers and backyard gardeners. They prey on many unwanted and destructive pests like aphids, caterpillars, crickets, flies, grubs, moths, small rodents, snakes, and lizards. If you happen to spy one in the wild, it can be magical to watch and study. Many folks think it is grand to have one crawl onto their out-stretched hand. With about twenty species of praying mantis in North America, there is no lack of free pest-control, that's for sure. But of course, for every benefit there is a deficit.

Mantids also prey on small creatures that we humans enjoy, putting our nature-friendly critters and creatures like turtles, frogs, hummingbirds, and hatchlings at risk. They have huge appetites and have been known to prey on creatures three times their size. Bees and butterflies, nature's primary pollinators, don't stand a chance as a praying mantis patiently lies in wait, striking with lightening speed. Their powerful grip and serrated forelegs make escape impossible.

So what do you think? Is the praying mantis a friend or foe?

Fruit Flies

Anna Stoll

It's not unusual during the summer to find a swarm of small flying insects hovering over fresh produce in your kitchen. You might also see them around your sink drains. Those pesky little critters are fruit flies. They may arrive in your home when you buy ripe fruit or vegetables at the grocery store, and they can also come in through small holes in your screens. Although they are tiny, fruit flies have an amazing sense of smell and can detect ripe fruit from a distance.

Fruit flies lay their eggs on the surface of ripe or fermenting fruit and vegetables. The eggs are only half a millimeter in length, so we don't notice them on the produce. When the eggs become larvae, they feed on the surface of the fruit or vegetable until they develop into flies. Because only the surface of the fruit or vegetable is damaged, the rest of it can be eaten after removing the damaged area. Fruit flies lay about 500 eggs at a time, and they develop into full-grown flies within a week. That's why so many of them seem to appear out of nowhere.

Although they are a pest in the kitchen, fruit flies are valuable for scientific research. They have been used in the study of genetics for more than 100 years, and now they are also used in research related to Alzheimer's disease, cancer, obesity, and other human ailments. It's inexpensive to use fruit flies for research, and their rapid reproduction cycle ensures a steady supply.

You may be thinking, it's great that fruit flies have value to scientists, but I still don't want them in my kitchen. So, how do I get rid of them? First of all, it helps to keep ripe produce in covered containers or in the refrigerator. Commercial fruit fly traps are available, but it's easy and much less expensive to make your own. Start with a small container (empty yogurt containers work well). Pour a small amount of cider vinegar in the container and then add a couple drops of liquid dish soap. Put the container where you see the most fruit flies. If you have a big infestation, you can use several containers, scattered around the kitchen. It will take some time for all of the fruit flies to find the vinegar, so don't expect them to disappear overnight. As more flies drown in the vinegar you can empty the container and start again.



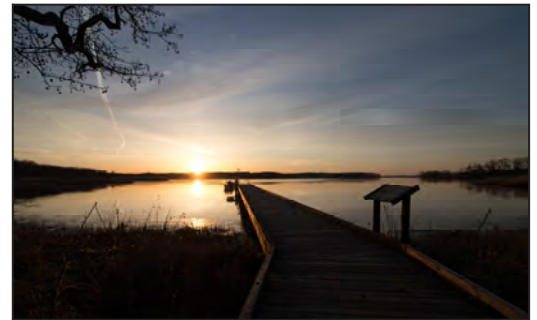
Summer on the Chesapeake is a time to enjoy the many outdoor activities that our region has to offer. While the weather might be hot and humid, the many water related programs available at Marshy Point this season are a sure way to keep cool.

Marshy Point's Summer Camps provide a great opportunity to learn about nature in general and the amazing ecology of the Chesapeake Bay especially. During the summer months many different fish species can be found in the waters of Dundee Creek as ospreys like the ones that nest here raise their chicks and feed on the bounty from the Bay. You can also get familiar with the bounty of the Bay by joining naturalists from Marshy Point on one of our many summer programs such as estuary exploration, fishing the dock, or a canoe trip.

Inside the nature center we are continuing to develop new exhibits. Our most recent addition is a mounted bald eagle courtesy of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The new habitat wall exhibit provides an interactive way to learn about where different animals live.

This fall Marshy Point will again offer the Chesapeake Adventurer's Nature Pre-K three days per week during September, October, and November. After a very successful spring session this program continues to provide our youngest visitors with boundless opportunities in the great classroom without walls.

All the programs, exhibits, and educational fun that we have every day at Marshy Point wouldn't be possible without the many great volunteers and supporters that make it work. Your membership directly supports our mission of environmental education through the Marshy Point Nature Center Council. As we look toward fall and another full season school field trips please consider volunteering to help out with programs, animal care, or special events. Please contact volunteer@marshypoint.org to get involved.



President's Thoughts



Thanks everyone for attending the Spring Fest held in April. Our attendance was around 1600 guests. Everyone seemed to be having a good time. I want to thank the staff and volunteers for putting on a great festival.

Have you had a chance to check out the Osprey Cam? The ospreys returned in late March and are busy preparing for the nesting season. As of this writing, three eggs have been laid. By the time you read this, we may have young birds.

Play Pokémon? We held our first Pokémon night on a cold April evening and are planning on holding additional nights in May, June, and July. I hope you can join us.

Are you getting email updates of center activities? As a member, you should be receiving frequent updates from MPNCCNEWS. If you are not, first check that MPNCCNEWS is a favorite and the emails are not going to your junk folder. Then send mpnccnews@marshypoint.org your current email address to get on the list.

Members are reminded to join us at the nature center in June for our free annual members only fish fry. This is a council member benefit to thank you for your support throughout the year. Are you getting email reminders of Marshy Point events? All members should be.

The staff has a calendar full of activities for the summer. Per usual, there are programs scheduled for each weekend. Camps filled up fast this spring and are wait-listed. The staff also has a list of summer field trips that are available for groups to schedule. The park is open weekdays, daily from 9AM to sunset and open weekends from 7AM to sunset. The center is open 9AM to 5 PM daily.

I sincerely hope everyone gets to visit the center during the summer season. Have an enjoyable, active summer. See you at the Point! Brent Byers (president@marshypoint.org).

Marshy Point College Scholarships



2017 Scholarship Recipient Sarah

The Marshy Point Nature Center scholarships are presented yearly to college-bound seniors and undergraduate college students who have shown a high level of commitment to the health of the environment and who plan to continue their studies in environmental sciences or nature education, and who have shown a strong affiliation with Marshy Point Nature Center. Qualified applicants are college-bound seniors from Baltimore County or undergraduate college students who wish to pursue a career in nature education or environmental sciences. Applications will be available online (www.marshypoint.org) or by calling the Center.



2017 Scholarship Recipient James

Support Marshy Point Nature Center

Your donations allow us to continue programs and activities at Marshy Point Nature Center that are fun and educational for the whole family! You can make your tax-deductible gift in several ways. Donate for scholarships, choose an item from our wish list, make a general donation, or help us maintain animal collections. *Donate online by visiting: www.marshypoint.org and click on "Get Involved" at the top of our home page, then click the "Donate" or "Adopt an Animal" tab. *You can donate by mail by sending your gift payable to: MPNCC to the center: 7130 Marshy Point Road, Middle River, MD 21220.

Trail Guide Training



We are looking for volunteers to help teach about nature! Trail guides work with group programs, special events, and animal care. Training will familiarize you with our most popular programs, the ecology of Marshy Point & Cromwell Valley Parks and techniques to share more and teach less. Each day features new subjects for enjoying the great outdoors. All training sessions are 10am to 1pm, September 12, 13, 14. Breakfast, snacks and coffee provided. New guides pay a tuition fee of \$5 that covers all material handouts. Call 410-887-2817 to register.

Wish List for the Center

- **Black Oil Sunflower Seeds**
- **Gift Certificates to Walmart or Amazon.**
- **Kids nature related books.**
- **New hip waders for kids.**
- **New rain boots or waders for adults.**
- **Ponchos**

Marshy Point Newsletter Staff

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Save the Date - 2018
Fall Festival! September 22



Marshy Point Nature Center
7130 Marshy Point Road
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Wildlife Corner - Osprey Update

Dave Oshman, Chief Osprey Officer



Have you been watching Marshy Point's very own Osprey Cam? It's broadcasting in the Nature Center but also online at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/mY4FjTPkjCn>. If you've been following along, you'll know that the female has laid three eggs total: the first on April 17th, the second on April 20th, and the third on April 23rd. Three is the normal clutch size for a mature female, although a fourth will occasionally be seen. The female does most of the incubation for 35-42 days, which would put the first hatch as early as May 22nd, which would be eight days earlier than previously recorded at Marshy Point. The young will spend the next seven or eight weeks being fed by their parents but will eventual-

ly spread their own wings and fly. At Marshy Point, that should happen mid-July. Keep an eye on the webcam and see if you notice an "orange" fish being brought to the nest. No, they're not from the neighbor's pond: The Department of Natural Resources tells us that they routinely find orange coy in their bay fish samples, likely released during floods or by thoughtless homeowners. I would expect it to be very easy for an osprey to spot an orange fish in the shallow waters of Dundee Creek from 150 feet in the air.