



Cattails



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

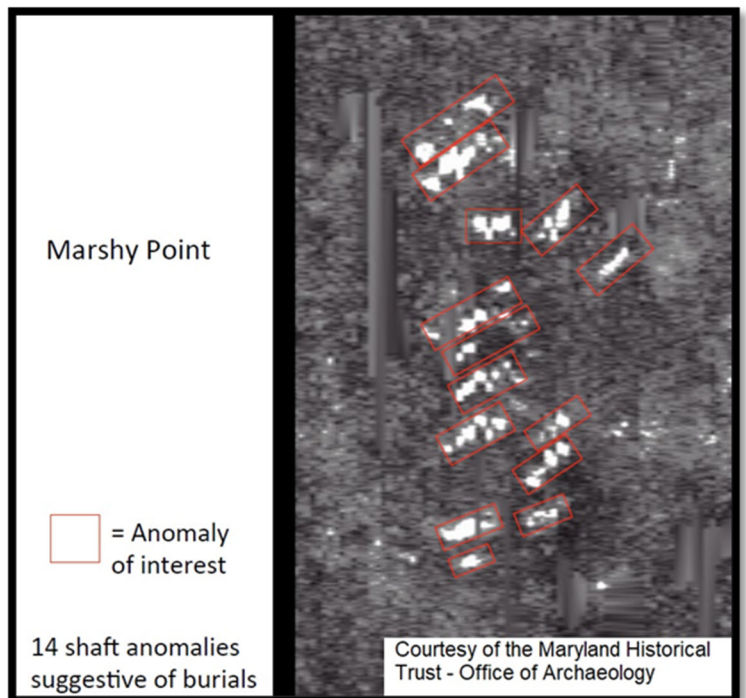
The Marshy Point Nature Center Council Newsletter June - July - August 2021

Reaching the Dead

Daniel Dean

“14 shaft anomalies suggestive of burials.” These were the notes written in the preliminary report from the Maryland Historical Trust’s (MHT) Office of Archaeology. Shadowed under trees and covered in unmoved earth, Marshy Point has a true cemetery to call its own. Voiceless for many decades, while the surroundings changed from homes to park, they waited. We walk alongside the lost, silenced in breath but crying out for remembrance.

In the past couple of years, we have found Cassandra. Lost to either carving typo or nickname, her association was in rubble like her gravestone until last year. In repair of both stone and status, we have pieced together the clues left from the written history of time. Now it is known how many others lie eternally alongside her: thirteen more.



In March, the MHT Office of Archaeology pushed around an important vehicle, sending signals into the crust of earth where speculation neared its end. Ground penetrating radar was able to determine soil disturbances within a perimeter large enough to include the remaining evidence visible to the eye. A few upright pillars, fighting to stand tall after hundreds of years, finally paid their due, as common field stones they were no more. If any rock could attain gravity in importance, it would be these humble protrusions in the soil. Their signal to Marshy Point staff and volunteers instilled questioning the possibility to a neighboring group of unknowns.

As we wait for a final analysis of the area, feel free to visit the site along the *Cassandra Hamilton* (Yellow) trail. Please be respectful and mindful of the area, as you are not alone. Fragile points are beneath the feet, undisturbed for many years. Now is our time to journey into finding who these additional thirteen sleepers may be. We hope they take comfort in the serene atmosphere of the singing birds and resident woodpecker known to this side of Marshy Point.

The Eastern Bluebird—A Backyard Favorite

Valerie Greenhalgh

Many years ago, before I moved to a more densely populated community, my home was nestled in a perfect woodland habitat for the eastern bluebird. Year after year, bluebirds occupied the nest box I provided and raised many broods. I always missed that experience. Fast-forward almost ten years—my new home has similar lightly wooded surroundings, and a pair of beautiful bluebirds raising a brood in a nest box in the front yard.



Bluebirds are cavity nesters, but a carefully designed nest box will serve them well, too. In fact, the once-declining bluebird population is widely believed to have bounced back in recent decades due to the increase in bluebird nest boxes. There are many bluebird houses and kits available from retailers, or you can download your own bluebird house plan from several websites. The nest boxes are specially designed not only to attract bluebirds, but also to prevent competition from other species and deter predators, such as the house sparrow. House sparrows are an aggressive, non-native species introduced to North America around 1850. They will destroy bluebird eggs or even kill the nestlings.

Some fun facts about bluebirds: They are seven inches in length, with the male and female having similar markings and colors—bright blue on top, a rust color on the throat and chest, and a white belly—but the male's colors are much more vibrant. A mated pair of bluebirds will often stay together for life and the prior offspring will typically help feed the next generation of nestlings. The bluebird's diet consists mainly of insects and berries, and on rare occasion, small lizards and tree frogs. The eastern bluebird's range extends all the way south to Nicaragua. It prefers areas of open country, farms, the edges of wooded properties, and even the populated suburbs, provided there are sufficient nest boxes and insects to be found.

But let us get back to the real reasons we love eastern bluebirds. They are beautiful, fun songbirds to watch, listen to, and enjoy. Hopefully, you just might be inspired to install your own bluebird nest box soon.

Monitoring Bluebirds at Marshy Point

Debbie Matusky

When house sparrows were imported from Europe in 1851, they quickly spread throughout the United States. Their aggressive behavior made nesting difficult for many cavity-nesting birds, but especially for bluebirds. By the 1930s, bluebird populations had diminished drastically and an alarm cry for help came from the National Audubon Society. Since then, bluebird trails have gone up all over the country to help restore the dwindling bluebird population.

Marshy Point joined the campaign in 2001, building two trails, one in the Eastern Regional Park and the other near the then-new nature center. The first bluebird trail monitor was Jim Gephardt, who had recently retired and joined the North American Bluebird Society (NABS) after reading an article in *Parade* magazine about the need for bluebird support. Jim was a monitor for the next several years, recording some 150 fledged bluebirds on the two trails. He still works at the park today.



Currently Marshy Point has two bluebird trails on the property, with a total of 47 nest boxes! Along with Brent Byers, I've been a monitor on the Brinkman's trail since 2018, and I look forward with great anticipation each spring for the nesting season. Brent monitors the Biscayne Bay trail. Each trail is monitored at least once a week. We work together to collect data about the birds that utilize the nest boxes on these trails to raise their young. Our data is reported to NestWatch, which is associated with the Cornell Lab in New York, where they collect data from all over the country on bluebirds and many other species. Last year, these two trails fledged 116 birds, mostly bluebirds.

Monitoring continued.

Besides Eastern Bluebirds (EABL), we see other cavity nesters on our trails, such as tree swallows, Carolina wrens, tufted titmice, Carolina chickadees and white-breasted nuthatches. Each bird species builds a distinctive nest that can be easily identified by the trained eye. Bluebirds build neat, tightly woven grass or pine needle nests with a deep cup for their beautiful blue eggs. As a monitor, it's important not only to recognize the different nests but also to know bird behaviors, too. For example, sometimes when a female bird is incubating her eggs, she will remain on the nest when I open her nest box. She looks me right in the eye as if to say, "I'm taking care of my babies, so please leave me alone!" Tree swallows will swoop down close to my head and make a clicking noise when I check their boxes, giving me a warning not to harm their eggs or chicks. Once I had a tufted titmouse sit on a branch right in front of me, making a loud squawking sound when I checked her box. She was rather upset by my intrusion to say the least! Truly, monitoring is different each week and can offer up some surprises. Once I opened a box where I had expected to see four young bluebirds, but instead found a black rat snake!

No matter what we find, we learn that Mother Nature is indeed in charge! We can only do our best to help her.



Beaver Behavior

Bev Wall

Marylanders hold a certain fondness for all critters that reside here, but are beavers among our most cherished? Or, do we feel a certain ambivalence toward them? They are rodents, after all.



With chubby, rotund bodies and unusual leather-like, flat tails, beavers might be considered unique or even cute, but the rodent connection might be more than can be fully embraced. Let's explore a little to learn their benefit and how they function in Maryland's complex ecosystems before deciding their eminence.

The North American beaver (*Castor canadensis*) is a large brown, semi-aquatic mammal. They are the largest rodent in North America and the second largest rodent in the world. Their fur, a thick reddish-brown, is complemented by their small rounded ears, webbed feet, and large chestnut brown incisors that continue to grow throughout their life. Google *Bucky Beaver*, mascot for Ipana toothpaste for over fifty years, for a good visual. Their webbed feet and rudder-like tail enables them to swim about six miles per hour. Beavers are sometimes confused with muskrats and nutria, but their size and distinctive tail definitely sets them apart.

Beavers weigh in at thirty to sixty pounds and grow up to forty inches in length, including their scaly, hairless, paddle-like tail. Beavers have transparent eyelids that help them see while swimming underwater—built-in goggles—and are able to close their ears and nose to prevent water from entering while submerged. Their ability to close their mouth behind their front teeth enables them to carry logs and sticks without ingesting any water. They use their large black claws to groom their coats. A sharp tail-slap against the water warns others of predators—their own version of SimpliSafe.

Beavers live near rivers, streams, ponds, small lakes and marshes—all ideal spots for building their intricate abodes. By using trees and limbs to create a dam, beavers create a smaller, more secure pond ideal for lodge creation. Lodges are well designed and are composed of a feeding den, a resting den, a source for fresh air, and two underwater entrance tunnels for quick escape. As many animals do, beavers mark their territories with musk from their scent glands, called castors, located at the base of their tail.

Beaver continued.

As herbivores, beavers change their diet seasonally. During the winter months, they prefer woody vegetation such as sweet gum, ash, poplar, cottonwood, pine, and fruit trees. Red maples, willows, alders, and dogwoods are some of their favorite treats. With a specialized digestive tract that enables them to consume bark, they rarely run out of dining options. In the spring and summer, beavers feast on lush aquatic plants—bay grasses, pondweeds, and roots. They store branches and stems in their lodges to eat during the winter and while their tails are used mostly for steering as they swim, a beaver can store fat in it for back-up winter nutrition.



Beavers are very social animals among their species and communicate using distinctive whines, grunts, grumbles, and barks. Their sounds have also been described as chirrs, mumbles, snorts, and hisses. They live in colonies (families), consisting of a life-long monogamous pair, and two generations of offspring. Adult beavers begin breeding when they are three years old. Mating occurs in January and February, and they produce one litter per year. Gestation is about four months. On average, two to four kits are born in late May or early June. Weighing about one pound, covered in thick fur, a kit's eyes are open upon birth and their teeth are fully developed. They can swim within one week. At two or three weeks, kits begin to eat vegetation and at six weeks are weaned. Once kits reach two years old, they are driven out of the colony to find their own territory, their own mate, and to build their own lodge.

Some consider beavers to be an important keystone species, meaning that they have a disproportionately large effect on the environment relative to their abundance. Some wildlife coalitions, conservationists, and forestry resource groups consider beavers to be very beneficial to ecosystems because when they build their dams they provide a miscellany of diverse and complex habitats for fish, ducks, shorebirds, amphibians, reptiles, plants, and even insects. The beaver ponds that they create as a result of damming attract a wide variety of other fur-bearing animals such as mink, muskrat, and raccoon. These smaller ponds also serve to stabilize water tables, reduce rapid runoff from heavy rainfall, and reduce soil erosion because of silt deposits. Dams slow the water flow of rivers thus reducing erosion and decreasing flood damage downstream. When beavers fell fast-growing trees and shrubs like aspen and willow, it often encourages bushier regrowth the following spring, resulting in better nesting habitat for songbirds. Beavers are like volunteers—they do a lot of work for free!

Beavers have the capability to gnaw through a massive amount of small- to medium-sized trees (216 in a year), in a matter of minutes. The expression “busy as a beaver” seems appropriate for these assiduous creatures. While they are lauded for their engineering skills, dams conversely cause quite a bit of destruction to forestry, riverbanks, spawning fish, and homes in a relatively short period of time. While beaver dams may create valuable wetland habitats, they can also force roads to flood, thereby destroying nearby crops, septic systems, and trees in low-lying areas. If there becomes a lack of wood, beavers will eat leaves instead, preventing photosynthesis from taking place, causing more trees to die. As beavers engage in one of their favorite pastimes, tree girdling, they chew the bark off at the base of the tree all the way around, causing it to die. Beavers have been known to eat cottonwood, which means losses to farmers. In rare instances, beavers contract rabies and may even attack people while infected. Beavers are mostly nocturnal although they have been seen out and about early in the morning or late in the afternoon. Steer clear if their behavior seems erratic.

So, what do you think about these eager beavers now? Do they deserve to be held in high esteem as industrious and hardworking or are they destructive and detrimental to Maryland's landscape? This writer has her opinion. What is yours?

I start the day very early at Hammerman Beach. Years ago, an agreement was reached to allow long distance swimmers to train outside the ropes before the beaches open for public use. My cure for Nature Deficit Disorder (NDD) begins, however, before I set foot in the water. I glance down and see fern moss near the base of the osprey nest in the parking lot. Emerald cushions with spores ready to explode with new single cell life cover the ground, inches away from asphalt. To the left, a doe drinks from a vernal pool until she is startled by a car door closing.

I quickly swim out to the rope (those first few moments can be chilly especially early in the season), duck under it and head out in the direction of the Bay parallel to the shore. As I swim in the early diffused light from pier to pier, five hundred yards from the first pier to the last, my head turns to the right to catch a breath, and a great blue heron is just a few feet away, patiently waiting for his breakfast to appear. Heading to the next pier and reveling in a good chop that forces me to practice bilateral breathing, a shadow appears on the water and I quickly look up—it's an osprey grasping what looks like a channel catfish in her talons as she heads back to the nest at the parking lot. Submerged aquatic vegetation, a sign of a healthy river, occasionally entangles my arms, but all I have to do is relax my stroke and it slips away. On the return trip heading toward the railroad tracks, I hear beautiful singing in Spanish. It is a church group, ministers dressed in long white, and now soaking-wet, robes, performing baptisms in the river. By now the sky is a cerulean shade and more great blue herons have left their rookery on the far side of the river to salute the newly baptized.

After getting my swim yardage in, I wheel my kayak to the farthest beach, put on my lifejacket and slip into the river, this time on top. Close attention is necessary at the beginning, as there is often a good shore breeze, which creates that glorious chop. Once I get away from the shore, it is easier to paddle, as there is no backwash from the shore. As I head towards Dundee Creek, I sometimes lose count of how many eagles I see. Seemingly stoic and unperturbed by my ripples in the water, they gaze down at me, giving me the gift of getting close enough to see their eyes. If I'm really lucky some red winged blackbirds will pop up from the marsh and yell at me for disturbing them. When the crabs are running, I take care not to foul any trap lines—I'm always impressed how the crabbers keep them from tangling.

This has been a year unlike any other in my six decades. The isolation, the loss of contact with what Jane Brody refers to as "consequential strangers," much less dear friends and family, has been numbing. The sky, the river, the land and their inhabitants have been consistent reminders that not only does life go on, but it must go on. Eastern Baltimore County teems with life seen and unseen. We have an obligation to protect it.

Last summer when COVID-19 locked us all down, the freedom to swim and kayak was sanity-saving. All I had to do was open my eyes to appreciate the beauty all around me. This freedom is not guaranteed to last. If you have ever wondered what you can do to help, I have a modest proposal. Become a Maryland Master Naturalist!

The Maryland Master Naturalist (MMN) program is run by the University of Maryland Extension Service. It provides access to world-class scientists who train participants to be citizen scientists, who can share their love of the natural world with others. It explains exactly why the preservation and protection of our natural resources is so important.

I've wanted to take the MMN classes for years, but they were never offered close enough to home or at workable times. One COVID-19 silver lining was the announcement that virtual classes would be available. I leaped at this opportunity and by the time you read this (assuming I pass the exam), I'll be a Master Naturalist trainee, working hard on stewardship and spreading the word about the need to preserve it for future generations. Those of us fortunate enough to have discovered Eastern Baltimore County should share our love with others. The more folks see this beauty, the more likely we are to recruit people to preserve what we have. Climate change is no longer debatable and sea-level rise is here to stay. I don't know what the future of the C. P. Crane power generating plant is, but I know its future impacts all of Eastern Baltimore County, including Marshy Point and Gunpowder Falls State Park, not to mention the health and safety of all Baltimore county residents. It's truly jarring to round the tip of the marsh, heading from Hammerman to Dundee, and suddenly see the twin barbershop towers of the plant seconds after glimpsing an osprey nest filled with chicks.

I can't wait to get back in and on the water with my newfound knowledge and appreciation of what we have. And if you are in the Methuselah age group like me (actually you only have to be 62), the DNR will sell you a Golden Age Pass for \$10.00 and you get in any state park for free for life. I hope to see you on, in, or around the water.

It's a truly delicious way to help improve the Chesapeake Bay: Go eat some oysters! It seems counter-intuitive, but slurping a dozen raw, serving them steamed or in chowders, or munching them fried with tartar or cocktail sauce actually gives you an opportunity to promote the Bay's health.

As filter feeders, oysters literally clean the Bay's waters. More oysters means a healthier Chesapeake, and the ideal environment for growing more oysters is empty oyster shells. The Oyster Recovery Partnership (ORP) collects used shells from restaurants, seafood markets, and more than 70 public shell collection sites throughout Maryland, Washington DC, and Virginia, and supplies those shells for restoring oyster reefs.

Using a fleet of four trucks covering fifteen routes, ORP is now the nation's largest shell-recycling network, annually collecting 36,000 bushels of shells, some from as far away as Pittsburgh. Many of those shells begin their trip back to the Bay's waters as a "dozen-on-the-half shell" at restaurants, such as True Chesapeake Oyster Company, in Baltimore's Jones Falls Valley.

To trace the journey of the oyster and understand how eating the bivalves can actually increase their numbers, True Chesapeake's Nick Schauman offered a platter of a dozen freshly shucked oysters on the half shell: four each of Skinny Dippers and Huckleberries from St. Jerome Creek in Maryland's St. Mary's County, and four Orchard Points from the Eastern Shore's Chester River.

Shucker Matt Davis did a good job opening the oysters. The presentation was classic: oysters bedded on ice, arrayed around a selection of dipping sauces, including an amazing pickled peach preserve. One shell stood out as larger than the others, and I decided that would be my subject; that would be the shell I followed back to the Bay. I named it "Shell-don."

True Chesapeake raises much of its fare on its own carefully tended restored oyster beds in St. Jerome Creek. Modern aquaculture and St. Jerome's sheltered, brackish water produces full-flavored, moderate-sized, slightly salty oysters. True Chesapeake's Baltimore oyster house is one of three ventures owned by the company.

"We try not to serve wild oysters," said Schauman. "We try to be restorative. It's good for the environment and good for the soul."

True Chesapeake is one of more than 300 restaurants and seafood houses participating in the Shell Recycling Alliance, begun by ORP in 2010, aimed at reclaiming shells, free of charge. The Alliance has helped reclaim 213,000 bushels of shells, equal to 7,400 tons kept out of area landfills, approximately \$350,000 in waste collection fees saved by local businesses, and enough substrate to support planting a billion oysters in local waters.

"Most of the local water counties are involved in the collection," explained ORP's Tommy Price, in charge of the actual pickup efforts. "It can be a part of their recycling program. We also work with nature centers and museums."

Price is the person directing Shell-don's next step on its return journey. Collected from True Chesapeake, the empty shell became part of "serious tonnage" transported to a holding spot in Grasonville, Maryland, to be aged for a year. The haul may include shells from scallops, escargot, and conchs, but mussels are too brittle for reuse.

After its time in Grasonville, Shell-don will travel to the Horn Point Oyster Hatchery, operated by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. On the Choptank River near Cambridge, Maryland, Horn Point is one of the largest oyster hatcheries on the East Coast. In their tanks, oyster larvae—"spat"—are settled onto the recycled oyster shell, creating "spat on shell."

Finally, a spat-encrusted Shell-don will be taken out into the Bay to help restore an existing reef or create a new habitat. Shell-don's spat will grow to join eight billion oysters planted since 1998, on more than 2,460 acres of oyster habitat in the Chesapeake and its tributaries.

Do your part! Help the cause by having some Chesapeake Bay oysters. Just please get your oysters from a restaurant or seafood house that participates in ORP's Shell Recycling Alliance. And, if you see Shell-don's spat, say "hi!" for me.



Garlic Mustard Pesto

Frank Sanford

It's April and time to turn an invasive plant into an gastronomical delight! The tender young leaves of Garlic Mustard are an excellent substitute for basil in this basic pesto recipe. Try to get early young leaves and avoid those plants directly off a walkway or path.

Ingredients

2 cups firmly packed garlic mustard leaves ¼ tsp salt ¼ cup pine nuts or walnuts
3 cloves of garlic ¼ cup olive oil ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Directions

1. Combine the garlic, salt, olive oil, and honey in a food processor until smooth. 2. Add the leaves and pine nuts or walnuts to the mixture, and process till smooth. 3. Put in a small bowl and fold in Parmesan cheese.

You can freeze multiple small containers for use later in the year. Enjoy, knowing you have rid the environment of an invasive plant.

Chad Hanson, a University of California-Davis researcher and Sierra Club board member observes, “We are trapped by an outdated cultural idea that a healthy forest is one with nothing but green trees. An ecologically healthy forest has dead trees, broken tops, and down logs.”

Over the last several years, you may have noticed an increase in dead and dying trees in our watershed, particularly oaks. There are a number of factors at play, including soil compaction from development, old trunk wounds, storm damage, environmental stressors such as heat and drought, opportunistic diseases and insects, and just plain old age. If you think the only response to a dead tree is to cut it down, think again!

It has been estimated that dead trees, called snags when they are still upright, and trees with decaying wood provide important habitat for about twenty-five percent of the forest wildlife species in the northeastern United States. Add aquatic species and that number climbs even higher.

Did you know that more than eighty birds in North America are cavity-nesters, including ten species of owls, seven species of ducks, two species of falcons, all twenty-one species of woodpeckers, and about forty species of songbirds? They raise their young in hollowed out sections of dead and dying trees. In addition to providing a place for birds to nest, cavities also protect birds from predators and offer shelter from the elements. Dead branches serve as a perch from which birds can survey their surroundings, hunt, eat, and dry their wings and rest. If that weren't enough, a dead tree offers a smorgasbord to insect-eating birds and other animals, with holes, depressions and cracks that double as places to store seeds, nuts and other food.

Logs on the ground also provide a bounty of food and shelter for a range of critters. Hollow logs provide cover and protection for small mammals like foxes, rabbits, skunks and raccoons. The wood itself may be home to ants, beetles, and carpenter bees that tunnel into it, while bark beetles build extensive chambers under the bark. These insect residents are, in turn, a good source of protein for turtles, toads, and lizards. No walk in the woods is complete without flipping over a log to see what lies beneath—beetles, worms, centipedes, and if you're lucky, a salamander. Don't forget to roll the log back over gently, lest you destroy someone's happy home.

Dead logs and snags are also the major home for pollinating insects such as wasps and bees. Solitary and colonial bees, of which hundreds of species reside in downed logs and/or snags, are among the major pollinators of flowers and berry-producing shrubs. More food in the making!

Decaying logs retain moisture and nutrients that aid in new plant growth, too. Young trees may sprout from a single downed limb known as a nurse log. The soft wood tissue of a nurse log offers an ideal substrate for many young trees during their initial growth and development. Logs also store energy and fix nitrogen, and dead wood serves as a ground cover, lessening soil erosion and preventing animals such as deer from over-browsing plant seedlings.



It's not just forests that benefit from dead trees; they are important in aquatic ecosystems as well. Logs in a stream cause the stream to meander or braid, and the power of the water's energy is dissipated so the flow becomes less destructive, reducing erosion. Logs are also important in trapping sediment. By slowing the velocity of the water, logs allow sediment to settle out. Dead trees and branches that fall into our creeks and rivers offer sanctuary for molting crabs and small fish, especially in areas where there is no submerged aquatic vegetation to provide a safe haven. It's also a place where insects breed, lay eggs, and hatch into larvae. Those larvae are an important source of food for fish. Some will later

molt into dragonflies and damselflies—predators in their own right. A single dragonfly can devour mosquitoes at the rate of thirty to a hundred per day!

The main problems some property owners have with dead trees and snags are their unattractiveness and the threat to people and property associated with their deterioration. Remember, as a rule, dead trees don't come down in a hurry, particularly hardwoods. As long as safety isn't a concern, consider letting nature take its course. If only the topmost branches pose a risk, you can ask your tree service to remove them, leaving the lower portion of the tree to deteriorate naturally. The tree will become a wildlife magnet and worth its weight in gold to our local critters whose natural habitat has been compromised by development.



This summer season has brought about great changes to Marshy Point. Nature has burst with life, including our Osprey who successfully built their nest, although a little late, and laid eggs. You can watch their journey on our website through our livestream footage. In terms of operational changes, our Nature Center has re-opened to the public, and we are once again able to expand our program offerings. Our kayaking trips begin this June and will continue throughout the summer months, and we will be continuing our seasonal scavenger hunt series, as well. Our Community

Garden is up and running, and gardeners have begun planting their bountiful crops. Life and activity are rapidly returning to our Nature Center and park as COVID restrictions are lifted.

Looking ahead, we are actively planning for our Fall Festival, scheduled for September 25. This festival will bring back family-friendly events including apple cider pressing, hayrides, boat trips, and an obstacle course. We look forward to rejoining visitors in our seasonal celebrations in light of the past two festival cancelations. Fall also brings about another season of Chesapeake Adventurers, our Pre-K program. This season-long program invites young minds to join our Adventure Guides, Lee Sheesley and Courtney Meadows, on an educational adventure throughout our park. Volunteer opportunities still exist for those interested in lending a hand around the Marsh by assisting with programs, performing park maintenance, and joining staff on special projects. We look forward to a year of growth and rebuilding, of finding ourselves once again in a world changed by the pandemic.

COVID-19 Update for Marshy Point Nature Center

- Face masks optional for fully vaccinated visitors and children under 5
- Indoor and portable restrooms available
- Nature Center fully open to public
- Pre-registration required for all programs
- Facemasks necessary for programs if social distancing is not possible
- Programs will be held outdoors
- Birthday parties and special programs available to book

Support Marshy Point Nature Center

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.

Here we are at the eve of summer and past one year of the global pandemic that should have been named a four-letter word. Nevertheless, time has proceeded and we're looking forward to something like a new normal. Cases are down enough that we plan to have our youth summer camps. We had to cancel our Spring Festival and made the difficult decision to cancel the Summer Solstice Faerie Festival for 2021. But that doesn't mean that all we've done is cancel things. Our fantastic staff and volunteers have gotten the trails in shape for the crowds that never really stopped hitting our trails. We've performed some archaeological studies near the Cassandra Bond cemetery (the gravestone reads "Cassandor Hamilton," but Cassandra Bond was her name before marriage) and are planning for additional studies when the grounds dry out. Some fantastic Eagle projects are in the works. Many hours and county dollars were spent preparing our community garden for our first crop hopefully of many. Also, we are hoping that our Fall Festival will be the first time we will be able to have huge crowds back at Marshy Point. I'm on the trails at least a couple of times each week and our community has been so thoughtful in mask-wearing and making room when passing on the trails. We would like to thank you all for your monetary support, your volunteer hours, your patience and your thoughtfulness when you are visiting the park. We look forward to seeing you on the trails.

CHESAPEAKE ADVENTURERS PRE-K

2021 Fall Session Registration Now Open



DATES: September 8 to December 17

Mon/Wed/Fri, 9:30am - 12:30pm

AGES: 3 1/2, 4, 5

(must turn 3 by April 1, 2021 & be potty proficient)

\$100/week (due monthly)

Alongside two Adventure Guides, children will journey through the forests, wetlands, and tidal creeks that make up Marshy Point. We will explore vernal ponds, play in meadows, and climb trees. Along the way, we will discover the flora and fauna that surround us, allowing each child to make their own special connections with nature.

To register, call 410-887-2817

or visit our office Monday through Friday, 9am - 5pm.

Class size is limited to 15 participants, and the first month's tuition is due upon registration.

Trail Guides Needed



We are looking for volunteers to help teach about nature! Trail guides work with group programs, special events, and animal care. Training guides will familiarize you with our most popular programs, the ecology of Marshy Point & Cromwell Valley Parks and techniques to share more and teach less. Dates to be announced.

Marshy Point Newsletter Staff

Editor: Gerry Oshman

Layout and Design: Ginny Elliott



Marshey Point Nature Center
7130 Marshey Point Road
Baltimore, MD 21220



Tick Season: How to Stay Safe

Briana Sanders

Summer is a time of exploration and adventure. While this season provides an excellent opportunity to enjoy the bounties of nature with your family, those choosing to explore need to be aware of ticks. These small arachnids are known for being external parasites, latching onto their hosts and consuming blood. They are also well known for their transmission of diseases, such as Lyme disease. Though they are concerning for avid hikers and explorers, outdoor trips can still be successful and enjoyable with proper preparations.

Before/During your hike:

- treat clothes with a tick repellent, such as permethrin, picaridin, or DEET
- wear a thin baselayer or nylons under pants/shorts and long socks
- wear dark clothing
- wear long-sleeves or pants
- Tuck shirt and pants
- carry tweezers or tick remover (tick key)
- avoid high-grass areas and look up local tick prevalence in the area you are exploring

After your hike:

- check whole body, especially crevices and hair
- check clothes for ticks (drying clothes at high heat for an hour can kill ticks)
- remove any ticks found with 24-36 hours (grasp head and slowly twist to remove)
- contact a health professional for tick-bite care (keep tick in plastic bag or tape for identification)
- watch bite area for signs of infections (redness, swelling, red bullseye, etc.)