

NOVEMBER 2013



Think before you print!

This newsletter is optimized for online viewing. The appearance will change if printed.

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Hello MPEA Friends & Volunteers!

This month's edition is briefer than our regular newsletters. As usual, there are still plenty of goings-on in the environmental area but not too much to report that is actually "new". Projects which we told you about in previous months are still taking place and likely to go on for some time: tree fall removal on hunting trails, trail repairs, and shrub shelter maintenance. As for the remainder of recent events, here are a couple of quick updates:

Odds and Ends

Staff gave a tour of the MPEA to one of the newer Park Rangers to increase his familiarity of the area. Even more Rangers have been assisting during the managed hunt dates too. They are also learning more and more about the site on each subsequent visit. With regards to the managed hunt, there are no hunt dates scheduled for the MPEA during December. Our next hunt will occur on January 9th 2014.

The Robinson Nature Center-sponsored "Owl Prowl" hike was reportedly a success. The participants were able to hear and identify the vocalizations of the Eastern screech owl (*Megascops asio*). To hear a sample of the screeching call and to see photographs go here: http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/eastern_screech-owl/id. If you missed this opportunity don't forget that the nature center will be conducting a different hike in the environmental area in February. The "Winter Wonderland" hike will take place on Sunday, February 16th. Check the nature center website for registration information.

Group volunteer events have wound down for the calendar year. We still have individual volunteers contributing on a regular basis though. Also, current Weed Warriors and Trail Maintenance Volunteers should have received a November email update.

If you or someone you know has volunteered with the MPEA this year, please thank them for the great work that they do!

Interesting Link

Last but not least, 'Tis the season for yard waste. Please check out the county's yard waste website for tips on how to deal with it: <http://www.howardcountymd.gov/yardtrim.htm>

Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!

**I hope to see you out in the MPEA,
Jeff**



Upcoming Conservation Stewardship Project Dates:

Last Chance to Attend This Year!

November 26th
Trotter Road entrance
9 — 11:30 AM

MANAGED HUNT
DATES ARE:

Monday, Nov. 25th
Thursday, Jan. 9th, 2014
Thursday, Jan. 23rd, 2014

If you would like to sign up to receive email updates and our monthly newsletter, or if you want to request to stop receiving them, please send a brief email to jclaffy@howardcountymd.gov

Check out the Howard County page for the Maryland Amphibian & Reptile Atlas (MARA) 2010-2014

<http://www.howardbirds.org/herpatlas/index-MARA.htm>

Winter Wonderland Hike at MPEA



February 16, 1:30-3:30 PM

10 yrs + / \$8 per person
Join our Naturalists for a 2.5 mile hike through the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA). Learn about winter wildlife while getting active outdoors. Search for tracks in the snow, look for animal homes and learn about winter adaptations. An adult must be registered with children under 18. Reservations are required and space is limited. There are no restroom facilities at the MPEA and the walk is on uneven terrain. Parking is located at the Trotter Road entrance in a small gravel lot.

Robinson Nature Center logo (James & Anne Robinson) and Howard County Recreation & Parks logo. Robinson Nature Center contact info: 6992 Cedar Lane, Columbia, MD 21044, www.howardcountymd.gov/RobinsonNatureCenter.htm, 410-313-0400. Includes a CAPRA logo.

Howard County GreenFest

Water Quality Begins At Home

SAVE THE DATE

April 5, 2014
10 AM - 4 PM
Howard Community College
www.hcgreenfest.org

Howard County Recreation & Parks logo, Live Green Howard County logo, and Howard County Recycles logo.



The Newsletter of the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area

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The Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA), established in 1996, is 1021 acres in size and contains a diversity of habitat types. There are upland and bottomland hardwood forest, fields, wetlands, ponds, and riparian (riverine) habitats. The primary components of the MPEA's mission are natural resource management, education, research and recreation. **Successfully delivering our mission depends on the efforts of volunteers such as you!**

We're on the Web!

<http://www.howardcountymd.gov/mpea.htm>

AND

www.middlepatuxent.org

Middle Patuxent Environmental Area Conservation Stewardship Project

ONE-TIME VOLUNTEERS ARE WELCOME

No Experience Necessary

Please Carpool!

Meet Monthly on the 4th Tuesday from 9–11:30 AM

November 26th: BARBERRY BONANZA 2

Trotter Road entrance

Japanese barberry is very tolerant of shade and can form dense colonies in a variety of habitats including closed canopy forest. This pesky plant reportedly changes soil pH and nitrogen levels as it displaces native herbs and shrubs. Research has also demonstrated an increased prevalence of Lyme disease in areas densely covered by barberry. For these reasons we are hosting a removal event. Using the same techniques we practiced back in March and June we'll keep digging up and uprooting these unwelcome intruders of natural areas.

The **Conservation Stewardship Project**, a joint program of the **Howard County Master Gardeners** and the **Howard County Recreation & Parks**, targets the problem of controlling invasive, exotic species in the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA). Volunteer work dates occur monthly from March through November, skipping July & August. Each date includes an educational component concerning the target invasive species or work area for the day.

The MPEA, established in 1996, is 1,021 acres in size and contains a diversity of habitat types. There are upland and bottomland hardwood forest, fields, wetlands, ponds, and riparian habitats. The primary components of the MPEA's mission are natural resources management, education, research and recreation.

For more information contact: Master Gardener Aylene Gard at (410) 992-9889 or Jeff Claffy, Assistant Natural Resources Manager, MPEA at (410) 313-6209 or jclaffy@howardcountymd.gov