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SUMMER CAMP ISSUE

THE PEEPER



Calvert Nature Society (formerly Battle Creek Nature Education Society) www.calvertparks.org March 2015

American Kestrel Falcon Calls Calvert Home

Although many people know about the hawks and eagles we have in our area, few can name any of the falcons. The American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) is a small falcon that can be found in Maryland.

About the size of a blackbird, these colorful birds may be spotted in our area perched on power lines. Males have blue gray wings with brown backs and a broad brown tail with a single black band on the end. Females have brown wings and backs with a tail with multiple bands. Both sexes will have black moustache and sideburn like marks on their white faces. Scientists believe these black marks under the eyes help to absorb bright sunlight much in the same way athletes wear black smudges on their faces when playing outdoors.

Falcons have notably compact bodies, pointed wings and long tails. These special features help them fly at great speed. Kestrels prefer open fields and edge habitats where they can be found hunting for their prey. Grasshoppers are their preferred food, but Kestrels have been known to feed on small rodents and birds as well.



Banding Kestrels help track population growth and decline. CCNRD will be installing and monitoring American Kestrel nest boxes in the Calvert County. Photo: Charlie Muise.

Kestrels are cavity nesters who do not make their own nests so they rely on old nests from woodpeckers and natural tree cavities. They will also take up residence in old buildings and nest boxes. Kestrels begin breeding in late march in Maryland

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Save the Date: May 3 is Heritage Farm Day Interpreting Nature and History at Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm

This past year significant changes have happened at the Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm on Grays Road in Prince Frederick. Ultimately, all these efforts are to implement the park's Master Plan and provide a tangible means of interpreting the African American history of the site. The Heritage Farm highlights early to mid-20th century small-scale farming, as well as the role of African Americans as land-owners and tenant farmers.

- The public entrance drive was completed.
- Thanks to a generous \$30,000 grant from the Maryland Heritage Area Authority staff created new interpretive signs which will be installed during the

spring. In addition, a new trail map and brochures will soon be available at the Farm and online. This grant also enabled Sid Luskey to earn his Eagle Scout honors—he and his Scout volunteers assembled and installed eight picnic tables and twelve benches purchased through the grant.

- The George E. Rice house was “moth-balled” (that is, closed up temporarily to protect it from the weather as well as secured from vandalism) and the rehabilitation of the outbuildings should be completed this spring.

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WINTER ADVENTURES



WINTER GREENS
Ward Farm Nature Park



Nature Nuts!
at Flag Ponds Nature Park



BUILD A BOX
Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm &
Battle Creek Cypress Swamp



Spring Forward

As I try to banish the winter chill on this bitter cold February day, I am warmed by thoughts of the year past and upcoming activities in 2015.

- In the past year, the CCNRD and the Calvert Nature Society have created many new opportunities to connect with nature at our parks. From educators to trail crews to wildlife and habitat monitors, our amazing volunteers lead by example. Their thoughtful stewardship and willingness to pass their knowledge to our visitors and CHESPAX students benefit all who love the natural world of Calvert County.
- The Society is working with the County on the reconstruction of the Fisherman's shanty at Flag Ponds. We will be working with a builder onsite as soon as the weather warms.
- Thanks to support from the National Environmental Education Foundation, we have a strong foundation to build community activities at the Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm in Prince Frederick. In 2015 we will hold several events at the Farm, including Heritage Farm Day on May 3.
- The Society participated in the Master Plan process for the new Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park in Dunkirk. This was a great opportunity to work at the outset to determine the features of the newest county park.
- We are also working with local landowners to expand county nature park system through land conservation.

In addition, on June 6 we will open the second annual Nature's ARTcade exhibit. If you are looking for artistic inspiration, do join us on one of our Artist Access Days in March and April. See page 9 for details on both.

When thoughts turn to spring, we have much to look forward to, with events at all of our parks. Check our online list of events at www.calvertparks.org/calendar.html.

—Anne Sundermann, Executive Director

Park Update

Science Behind the Scenery

Recently, Anne sent me an email about her fun phrase of the day—"The Science Behind the Scenery." This is an apt description of the citizen science mission of our Calvert Stewards.

The Calvert Stewards is a comprehensive volunteer program that assists the Natural Resources Division and Calvert Nature Society in education and outreach, ecological monitoring, habitat enhancement and maintenance, and administrative projects throughout the nature parks.

For example:

- **Education Volunteers** assist the naturalist with programs for school children, summer camps, and weekend events.
- **Outreach Volunteers** assist with special events and regularly scheduled tabling events, including Green Expo, Nature's ARTcade, and Biscoe Gray Heritage Day.
- **Citizen Science Volunteers** assist with monitoring of bird nest boxes (including Bluebirds, Barn Owls, Kestrels and Prothonotary Warblers), salamander migration, and bee populations.
- **Habitat Volunteers** plant trees, tend to native plant gardens, and maintain trails and boardwalks.
- **Administrative Volunteers** take photographs of the parks and events, write articles for the web site, and serve on the Society board and committees.

If you're willing to share your time, skills, knowledge and enthusiasm, please join us for one of the volunteer programs scheduled for the spring. If you would be interested in the administrative task of coordination volunteers, we could use help with emailing volunteers about projects, writing press releases, and planning specific volunteer events.

When you become a Calvert Steward, you will be contributing to the protection and understanding of Calvert County's natural resources.

Visit <http://calvertparks.org/volunteer.html> for the listing of upcoming projects.

—Karyn Molines, Division Chief

Kestrel *(cont'd from page 1)*

and will usually return to previous nesting sites year after year. Males will try to attract a mate by flying high and diving very fast repeatedly in their nesting territory. Nests will typically contain 4-5 eggs and will be mostly incubated by the female. The male will spend a majority of his time defending the nesting territory and hunting for the female. After hatching the young will be able to leave the nest in 28 to 31 days.

Although the American Kestrel has the widest distribution of any of our North American raptors, their numbers have seen significant declines in certain areas. Scientists believe these declines have been caused by a shortage of nesting cavities due to development and the overuse of insecticides.

To help increase the local population in our area Calvert County Natural Resources is starting a nest box monitoring program. We will be installing nest boxes and monitoring them on local farms and open land in the county. All of our data will be reported to the Kestrel Partnership which is a nationwide research program based on citizen science data. Suitable sites for a nest box include barns and power poles surrounded by open fields. If you would be interested in having a nest box on your property or helping in the monitoring process, call Gene Groshon at Battle Creek at 410-535-5327.

—Gene Groshon, Naturalist

Biscoe Gray *(cont'd from page 1)*

- The Gray Barn was repaired—a decrepit addition was removed and the original barn was re-sided.
- Deer hunting began in October, and although we have not received data on the number of deer taken, over 50 hunters participated.

With all these happenings, it's now time to have a "grand opening" of Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm. All this and more will be showcased in the spring during our first open house on Sunday, May 3 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. Come enjoy naturalist-led nature walks, trace the path of a rolling road, visit several historical sites on the property, including an African American farmstead. Learn more about the agricultural tradition of Calvert County, from Native American times to modern day. We'll have demonstrations and displays from local equestrian clubs, canine search & rescue, Calvert Garden Club, and the Master Naturalists.

Read more about Biscoe Gray, including the Master Plan: www.co.cal.md.us/BiscoeGray.

—Karyn Molines, Division Chief

Critter Corner

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp houses many animals including reptiles and birds of prey in the Nature Center. These animals were either injured and would not survive in the wild or they were domesticated to the point that they could not be released.

One of the oldest residents at the center is the albino Common Snapping Turtle; he was found on the side of the road in 1991 when he was just the size of a quarter. He has spent his life since at the Nature Center.

Because of his coloring and inability to camouflage himself, he most likely would not have survived for much longer in the wild. Because of how rare albinism is in this species, this snapping turtle is only 1 of 8 reported cases.

The Common Snapping Turtle has been known to weigh up to 60 pounds, but most commonly weighs 30-40 pounds. Their top shell (carapace) reaches lengths of up to 20 inches, but they have a surprisingly small bottom shell (plastron) that will only cover the center of their underbelly. Because the plastron is so small their bellies are vulnerable to attacks from other animals. They make up for this by being particularly aggressive or by finding muddy ponds with plenty of coverage where they can hide. If you are lucky enough to see a snapping turtle moving around outside of the water during the day, this means they are either moving from one source of water to the next or it is a female getting ready to lay a clutch of eggs.

If you would like to learn more about the Common Snapping Turtle and the other wildlife at BCCS come by the swamp and speak with the Naturalists available.

—Jennifer Stilley, Nature Center Aide



The albino snapping turtle might be seeing double as his reflection bounces off the Plexiglas tank.

Volunteer

It's a great way to help your parks.

www.calvertparks.org/volunteer.html

Calvert Nature Society is dedicated to the protection and preservation of Calvert County's natural heritage and the creation of an environmentally literate and aware community. We provide opportunities for appreciation and understanding of our natural world through our outreach initiatives and in support of the mission of the Calvert County Natural Resources Division. Calvert Nature Society is a 501(c)3 organization.

Staff & Board of Directors:

Anne Sundermann, Executive Director
John H. Jones, President
Beverly Allyn Izzii, Vice President
Martha Grahame, Treasurer
Franki Coughlin, Secretary
Fred Bumgarner, Director
Bill Chambers, Director
Susan Owens, Director
Dwight Williams, Administrative Agent

Natural Resources Staff

Karyn Molines, Division Chief
Andy Brown, Senior Naturalist
Tania Gale, Naturalist
Gene Groshon, Naturalist
Shannon Steele, Naturalist
Connie Sutton, Park Manager, Flag Ponds Nature Park
Melinda Whicher, Park Manager, Kings Landing Park
Michael Rawlings, Office Assistant II
Jerry King, Building & Grounds Maintenance Worker

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SUMMER CAMPS

Wild About Wildlife

Entering grades 4-5

Monday, July 27–Wednesday, July 29,

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 30, 4:00 p.m. overnight through Friday,

July 31, 10:00 a.m.

Location varies

From the beaches to the forests there are many animals that live in our area. We'll explore our parks to learn about animals big and small. Activities will include habitat exploration, observing wild animals in the field, up close encounters with our exhibit animals and an overnight campout at Flag Ponds Nature Park. Food for the overnight and camping equipment are included.

\$200, members; \$230, nonmembers

Nature Photography Camp

Entering grades 4-6

Monday, August 3–Friday, August 7,

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Photo presentation for families: August 7, 3:00 p.m.

Location varies

Your children will capture the natural wonders of Calvert County Parks on camera. In addition to fun camp activities, they will learn camera basics and picture-taking tips. After camp on Friday, families are invited to a presentation highlighting campers' work. Campers must provide their own digital camera.

\$150, members; \$180, nonmembers

Mountains to the Bay Summer Camp

Entering grades 6-8

Monday–Wednesday, July 6-8, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 9, 7:30 a.m. overnight through Friday,

July 10, 6:00 p.m.

Location varies

This week we will explore all things aquatic while learning the basics of getting around on the water using a variety of watercraft like canoes, kayaks, and river rafts. We'll explore different aquatic habitats as we retrace the path that water takes from the mountains to the Bay-in reverse. The last 2 days will be an overnight adventure to western Maryland-including tubing on Antietam Creek and rafting on the Shenandoah River. Come prepared to get WET and have fun! \$250, members; \$280, nonmembers

Adventure Camp

Entering grades 7-9

Monday, July 13–Wednesday, July 15,

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 16, 4:00 p.m. overnight through Friday,

July 17, 9:00 a.m.

Location varies

Come see the parks like never before as we explore the far reaches of our parks. Be prepared to travel by land and water as we set off on our adventures. We will end our week with a camp out at Flag Ponds Park. Food for the overnight and camping equipment are included.

\$200, members; \$230 nonmembers

Water Watchers

Entering grades 9-11

Monday–Wednesday, August 3–5, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Thursday, August 6, 7:00 a.m. overnight though Friday,

August 7, 6:00 p.m.

Location varies

This week will be an epic adventure that will test our limits as we immerse ourselves in the habitats around us.

Here in Calvert County, we will study fresh and brackish water habitats-including the cypress swamp, the Patuxent River, and the near shore habitats of the Chesapeake Bay. The week will culminate with a two-day overnight trip to Assateague Island National Seashore where we will camp in the dunes and experience the effects of the salty ocean firsthand. Camp activities include plant and animal identification, boat trip, plankton study, water quality testing-as well as hiking, camping, and surfing.

\$360, members; \$390 nonmembers



SUMMER CAMPS & SPRING 2015 PROGRAMS



Calvert County Natural Resources Division
Calvert Nature Society

Program Registration: www.calvertparks.org

Online registration is preferred. Many programs fill quickly; by registering online you will know immediately if you are registered for a program.

For mail in or walk in registration, a registration form must be completed.

You can find the forms on the web site or at Battle Creek Cypress Swamp.

Call 410-535-5327 or email CypressSwamp@co.cal.md.us for additional information.

NATURE PARK INFORMATION

Mailing Address

Calvert County Natural Resources
175 Main Street
Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp Sanctuary

2880 Grays Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
Office & Reservations: 410-535-5327
Hours: Mon.–Fri., 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Memorial Day–Labor Day
Saturday, 10:00 a.m.– 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00–6:00 p.m.
Labor Day–Memorial Day
Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00–4:30 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

1525 Flag Ponds Parkway
Lusby, MD 20657
Park Office: 410-586-1477
Reservations: 410-535-5327
Hours: Memorial Day–Labor Day
Weekdays, 9:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.
Weekends, 9:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.
Labor Day–Memorial Day
Weekends, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Mon. & Fri., 9:00 a.m.– 4:00 p.m.

Hughes Tree Farm

1320 Clay Hammond Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
Hours: Dawn to dusk

Kings Landing Park

3255 Kings Landing Road
Huntingtown, MD 20639
Park Office: 410-535-2661
Reservations: 410-535-5327
Hours: Memorial Day–Labor Day
Daily, 9:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.
Labor Day–Memorial Day,
Daily, 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm

2695 Grays Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
Information: 410-535-5327
Hours: Dawn to dusk

SUPPORT CALVERT'S NATURE PARKS...

JOIN CALVERT NATURE SOCIETY

The name has changed, but our high-quality nature programs and beautiful parks remain the same. Calvert Nature Society is a 501(c) 3 non-profit "friends" organization that supports the quality environmental education programs offered by Calvert County Natural Resources Division. *Join or renew today online at www.calvertparks.org.*

CALVERT NATURE SOCIETY MEMBER BENEFITS:

Most of the programs listed in this program are free to members. Members receive discounted rates on summer nature camps and special events. "Members Only" activities are scheduled throughout the year. In addition members receive the quarterly newsletter and program schedules in advance of the general public.

PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES

Families can experience the fascinating natural world found in our area. These programs incorporate activities to entertain learners of all ages. Most programs spend time outdoors: dress for the weather and wear appropriate footwear.

Reservations required. Adult participation required unless noted. Children must be the age indicated for each program.

Fee per program: Free for Society members. Nonmembers pay \$8 per family.

Time to Nest

3-5 years

Tuesday, March 3

Session A: 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Session B: 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Most of the year, the trees help to hide nests in their branches, but in spring we should be able to find some old nests—and maybe some new. We will begin inside by looking at some of the different nests our swamp animals make and end with an outdoor adventure to see if we can spy any nests!

Seed Bombs!

3-5 years

Thursday, March 12, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Kings Landing Park

Learn about how plants grow as we make some “seed bombs” that you can plant in your garden. Wear clothes that you can get dirty.

Froggy Night Hike

All ages

Friday, March 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Celebrate the first day of spring by hiking through Flag Ponds to look for frogs and other signs of spring. Learn some frog calls and other identifying characteristics too.

Spring Chorus

18 months-5 years

Monday, March 23

Session A: 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Session B: 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Spring is here and the puppets are singing! Children can practice making their best frog calls while they hike to the pond.

The Great Marshmallow Mystery

All ages

Saturday, March 28, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Have you ever wondered where marshmallows come from?

We'll teach you about the origin of marshmallows and we will make some of our own!

Critter Clues

3-5 years

Monday, April 6

Session A: Monday, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Session B: Monday, 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Come explore the clues animals leave behind from tracks in the sand to marks on trees. We will see who has been out and about.

Woodland Tea Party

18 months-5 years

Thursday, April 23

Session A: 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Session B: 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Bring your child's favorite stuffed animal pal for a woodland animals puppet show, then take a hike through the forest and end with a tea party for your child and their pal.

Barn Swallows

All ages

Saturday, April 25, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Ward Farm Nature Park

Barn swallows are wonderful birds that can be found among many farms in Maryland from spring to fall. We will search for swallows at Ward Farm Nature Park and talk about the importance of these birds. Bring a lunch to enjoy while at the park.

Earth Day

6-9 years

Saturday, April 25, 2:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

In celebration of Earth Day we will make a fun gardening craft for you to take home and talk about recycling.

SUMMER CAMPS

Early Explorers

4-5 years of age

Monday, June 29–Thursday, July 2,

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

We will set out on mini adventures throughout the park to explore our natural world. From the creek to the fields who knows what we may find. \$60, members; \$75 non-members

Herpetology Camp

Entering grades 1-2

Monday, July 6–Thursday, July 9, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Your children can explore the fascinating world of reptiles and amphibians as they play games and use seine nets, dip nets and traps to safely view these animals. Students will investigate their differences and learn why herps are important. There will be encounters with live animals every day. \$150, members; \$180, nonmembers

Wild Things

Entering grades 1-2

Monday, July 27–Thursday, July 30,

9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Location varies

You don't need to go on safari to see wildlife—there's a ton of wildlife to be seen here in Calvert County, if you know where to look. During this camp, we will take the time to look closely for life under logs, stones, even in the mud! Using tools like nets, buckets, and shovels, we'll search high and low, on land and in the water for bugs, worms, fish and whatever else we can find. In addition to our outdoor explorations, games and journals will help us learn about Calvert County's “wild things.” \$150, members; \$180, nonmembers

Sons of the Forest

Entering grades 2-4

Monday, July 20–Friday, July 24, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

As Sons of the Forest we will explore Flag Ponds Nature Park. From sloshing in the swamp to hiking through the forest we will leave no stone unturned as we learn about the natural world around us. We'll also do fun crafts, build survival forts and cook over a fire. So bring your sense of adventure and join us for a fun week outside! \$150, members; \$180, nonmembers

Outdoor Adventure Camp for Girls

Entering grades 2-4

Monday, July 20–Friday, July 24, 9:00 a.m.-3:00

p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Send your daughters to Flag Ponds Park for a week of adventure and excitement. They will discover their hidden talents as they learn how to use a compass, identify plants and animals, tie knots, and cook over a fire. Your girls will boost their self-confidence and build new friendships as they face fun new challenges every day. \$150, members; \$180, nonmembers

Wet, Wild, and Wonderful!

Entering grades 3-5

Monday, June 29–Wednesday, July 1,

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 2, 6:00 p.m. overnight through Friday,

July 3, 9:00 a.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

If you like exploring wet places and catching water animals—then this fun camp is for you! This week we will wade into some marvelous wet places like the creek, the swamp, and the Bay. As we go, we will learn firsthand about the animals and plants that depend on water—including ourselves. We'll end the week with an overnight so we can discover some watery places by the light of the stars. Come prepared to get WET and have fun! \$200, members; \$230, non-members

Ornithology Camp

Entering grades 3-5

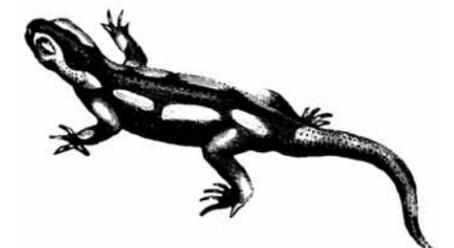
Monday, July 13–Wednesday, July 15,

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 16, 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Location varies

Your children can explore the fascinating world of birds as they bird watch, check nest boxes, dissect owl pellets, and make bird feeders. Thursday evening will be a hoot! After supper over the campfire, the young birders will meet the nature center's live owls and will take a hike to look for birds at night. \$150, members; \$180, nonmembers.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Assisting at the parks is a rewarding way to raise awareness of the importance of our natural lands. Use your experience to help preserve our future in Calvert County by becoming one of our Calvert Stewards. Some projects are appropriate for families, and most qualify for the Junior Rangers Corps. Programs are free, unless noted.

Salamander Study Orientation

Adults and families with older children

(under 16, with adult)

Wednesday, March 4, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

If you're looking to get more involved with the parks here in the county or would just like an excuse to spend some time in the woods, we can always need new volunteers to check our salamander traps. This is a great opportunity for home school students interested in the environment.

Habitat & Plant Survey

16 year to adult

Thursday, March 26, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 23, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Thursday, June 4, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 2, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

We will revisit the plot locations of a vegetation study completed in 1990 to assess changes in the plant communities at Flag Ponds Nature Park. This information will also be used to develop the habitat structure analysis for the bird banding research.

Prothonotary Warbler Volunteer Information Session

15 years-adults, under 18 with an adult

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Monday, March 30, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 11, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

After a short presentation about our new Prothonotary Warbler Study, volunteers will borrow some waders and trek into the swamp to learn the nest box locations and prepare them for the season.

Calvert Stewards Trail Crew

Saturday, April 18, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

For ages 10 year to adult

Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm

Help us get the Farm ready for hikers. We'll clear the trail and put up trail markers. Come dressed to work and get dirty. Snacks will be provided. If you need hours for community service, bring your paperwork along.

Prothonotary Warbler Nest Box Monitoring

15 years-adults, under 18 with an adult

Thursday, May 14, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 27, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Monday, June 15, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Accompany the naturalist as she checks Prothonotary Warbler nest boxes. Have fun trekking through seldom-seen parts of the swamp, and perhaps catch a glimpse of some fuzzy little nestlings. Limited registration.

Kayak Trip to the Heron Rookery for Volunteers

12 and up, under 18 with an adult

Monday, June 29, 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

Current volunteers can paddle with a naturalist to the heron rookery where we will, hopefully, see and hear the Great Blue Herons and their nestlings from the water. Kayaking experience required.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need volunteers to help with Heritage Farm Day on May 3 and Nature's ARTcade (June 6-28). Please contact Anne Sundermann at anne@calvertparks.org if you want to lend a hand. Thanks!

Nature's ARTcade

A Regional Art Exhibit

inspired by the natural world of Southern Maryland

at Flag Ponds Nature Park

JUNE 6 - 28, 2015

OPENING RECEPTION — JUNE 6, 2015 7-9 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park, Lusby, Maryland

Call to Artists. Artists are invited to submit up to 3 original artworks inspired by Southern Maryland nature (wildlife, flora, fauna or nature scapes). Details and registration information is available at www.calvertparks.org/ARTcade.html/. **Deadline for submissions is May 1.**

Artist Access Days

The Division of Natural Resources will offer artists special access to the parks before and after hours so that they may be inspired by the beauty of the parks at sunrise, in different seasons.

Upcoming Artist Access dates at Flag Ponds Nature Park are:

- Sunday, March 15, 6:45-9 a.m. and
- Saturday, April 11, 6:00-9 a.m.

There is no charge for these events, however, registration is required. Artists can register online at www.calvertparks.org/calendar.html.

PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES (cont'd from page 4)

Reservations required. Adult participation required unless noted. Children must be the age indicated for each program.

Fee per program: Free for Society members. Nonmembers pay \$8 per family.

Animal Babies

Ages 3-5 years

Tuesday, April 28

Session A: 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Session B: 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

Some animal babies look just like their parents-some look totally different. We'll look at some local animal adult/baby pairs and see if we can match them up correctly! Includes indoor and outdoor activities.

Bug Hunt

3-5 years

Tuesday, May 5

Session A: 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Session B: 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

Warm weather is here and so are tons of cool bugs. We'll explore the meadows and woods of the park looking for interesting bugs.

Pond Party

3-5 years

Wednesday, May 13

Session A: 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Session B: 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

We will use dip nets to see what is living in the pond. This class promises to be lots of slippery, slimy fun!

Eggs in the Sand

18 months-5 years

Friday, May 29, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

After an outdoor puppet show, head down to the beach to see where animals like terrapins and horseshoe crabs would lay their eggs. Dress your child in clothes that can get wet.

Horseshoe Crab Survey

All ages

Friday, May 29, 10:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Want to see some horseshoe crabs spawning on the beach by starlight? Join us for this unique chance to see Flag Ponds at night! With luck we will see horseshoe crabs spawning at the water's edge or maybe bioluminescent comb jellies in the water!

Nature Art

3-5 years

Thursday, June 11, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

You don't have to look hard to find art supplies in nature. We will go on a short hike to find some beautiful things and then create some natural art of our own.

Creek Critters

3-5 years old

Tuesday, June 16

Session A: 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Session B: 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Learn about the animals that live in our creeks and streams. We'll be wading in the water catching animals so wear clothes and shoes that you can get wet and dirty.

The Lost Ladybug Project

6-9 years

Saturday, June 27, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

Your children will have fun helping the naturalist catch and collect ladybugs for Cornell's Lost Ladybug Project. Learn how you can participate in this citizen science project in your own backyard.

Toads are Terrific

18 months-5 years

Tuesday, June 30

Session A: 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Session B: 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

Following some fun indoor activities and a meet-and-greet with a live frog and toad, take your children on a short walk with the naturalist to look for amphibians.

CAMPFIRES

These are outdoor activities; please dress accordingly. Registration and adult participation are both required.

Fee per program: Free for Society members. Nonmembers pay \$8 per family.

Marvelous Mammals Family Campfire

All ages

Saturday, February 28, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

As we enjoy s'mores around the campfire, we'll learn what all mammals have in common. We'll take an up close look at some bones and skins from our local mammals, and learn what clues these sometimes secretive animals leave behind that we can find.

Campfire: Twilight on the Beach

All ages

Friday, May 8, 6:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Have a relaxing evening with your family at Flag Ponds after hours. Bring a blanket or chairs and a picnic supper, if you'd like. We'll provide the s'mores.

PROGRAMS FOR 10–16 YEAR OLDS (Including Junior Rangers Corps)

These programs encourage developing minds to appreciate and protect the nature around them. Programs identified by the Junior Rangers Corps logo are designed to create a group of young men and women with a strong, long-term commitment to preserving and protecting the landscapes, waterways, and natural resources of Calvert County Maryland.

Adult participation is not required at these programs. Program fees are noted with description

Nature Photography

10-13 years

Saturday March 21, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Saturday, April 11, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp,

Thursday, July 2, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park,

Your teen will have fun exploring the outdoors as they take pictures of amazing landscapes and cool plants and animals. Photography tips, themes and locations will vary every month. Free for members; \$12 per person for nonmembers.

Spotted Safari

10-13 years

Saturday, March 28, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

It's that time of the year for the spotted salamanders to make their move to the swamp. We'll learn more about these awesome animals and head out in search of them in the park. Free for Society members; \$8 per person for nonmembers.

Archery

10-13 years

Tuesday, March 31, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

Come to Kings Landing Park to practice your archery skills! Never shot a bow and arrow? No problem, we'll have a short lesson for beginners before we start. Free for members; \$8 per person for nonmembers.

Spring Bio Blitz — Teen Overnight

12-16 years

Wednesday, April 1, 10:00 a.m. overnight

through Thursday, April 2, 9:00 a.m.,

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Spend part of spring break with friends searching the woods, ponds, and swamps for animals big and small. We will provide dinner, campfire snacks and breakfast. \$25 for members; \$40 per person for nonmembers.

Campfire Safety

Ages 10-13

Thursday, April 2, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

Come to Kings Landing Park to practice your campfire safety skills! Each participant will have the opportunity to make their own mini campfire and practice various fire starting and fire quelling skills. Once we have learned about campfire safety, we'll enjoy roasting some marshmallows over the flames. Bring a refillable water bottle. Program Fee: free for members; \$8 per person for nonmembers.

Kestrel Monitoring Program

12-16 years

Saturday, May 23, 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Come learn about the American Kestrel and the nest box monitoring program. After a talk at the nature center we will drive to some local farms and check the status of some of the nest boxes. Free program.

Pond Survey

12-16 years

Saturday, June 13, 2:00-4:30 p.m.

Ward Farm Nature Park

This pond adventure will get us wet and muddy in the pond at this new property. We will wade in with nets and buckets and do our best to identify what we find. Program Fee: free for members; \$8 per person for nonmembers.

Junior Entomologist

Ages 10-13

Wednesday, June 24, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

For every human in the world, there are 200 million insects! How much do you know about the buggy world around you? Come to Kings Landing Park to learn all about insect anatomy and make a container to use on a bug hunt. We'll search the park for insects, and then learn some techniques for preserving and labeling our collections. Be prepared for a hike on and off the trails! Program Fee: free for members; \$8 per person for nonmembers.



SPECIAL EVENTS & ADULT PROGRAMS

Take time to learn about and appreciate the natural resources found throughout the County. These programs combine hiking through the parks, while learning more about the plants, animals, and other natural wonders. These programs are geared towards adults and older teens. Fees, unless noted: Free for Society members. Nonmembers pay \$8 per person.

Eagle Hike

15 years to adult, under 18 with an adult

Saturday, February 21, 7:30-9:30 a.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

We'll hike down to the Flag Ponds beach in search of these impressive birds.

Stalking the Wild Timberdoodle

13 years to adult, under 16 with an adult

Thursday, March 5, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Ward Road Property

As the full moon rises, we'll stroll along the fields and wetlands listening for the breeding display of the American Woodcock.

Full Moon Hike

16 years to adult

Saturday, April 4, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm

Appreciate the beauty of Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm at night under the light of the Grass Moon. This is a moderately strenuous hike of approximately 2 miles at a brisk pace over hilly and uneven terrain for two hours with minimal stops.

Spring Wildflowers

16 years to adult

Thursday, April 23, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Along a lovely 1-mile trail on the cliffs of Calvert overlooking the Chesapeake Bay, a carpet of wildflowers lay under paw paw, oaks, and other trees and shrubs. Early spring warblers will provide a musical backdrop.

Night Time Stand Up Paddle

Adults only

Saturday, June 6, 7:30-10:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Come explore the bay off Flag Ponds Nature Park with lighted stand up paddle boards. Participants must be at least 18 years of age and must have prior experience stand up paddle boarding. To try out a stand up paddle board check out Patuxent Adventure Center in Solomons or Sup2u Rentals at Kings Landing Park. Program Fee per person: \$75 for members. Nonmembers pay \$85 per person

KAYAK TRIPS

Sunset Kayak Trip

Participants must be at least 9 years of age to accompany an adult in a double kayak, and at least 12 years old to ride in a single kayak. Those under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Saturday, May 23, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Nan's Cove

Enjoy the sunset on the Patuxent River. We'll meet at Nan's Cove kayak launch off Broome's Island Road. Program Fee, per person: \$15 for members. Nonmembers pay \$30 per person; \$5 if you bring your own kayak

Marsh Plant Exploration Kayak Trip

9 years to adult. Participants must be at least 9 years of age to accompany an adult in a double kayak, and at least 12 years old to ride in a single kayak. Those under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Saturday, June 13, 2015, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Kings Landing Park

Come explore the marsh surrounding Cocktown Creek in its early summer glory. We will focus on marsh plant ID and uses. With luck, we will see the marsh hibiscus and the pickerel weed in bloom. Those under 18 years old must be accompanied by an adult. Program Fee per person: \$15 for members. Nonmembers pay \$30 per person. \$5 if you bring your own kayak

Kayak Trip to the Heron Rookery

12 years to adult, under 18 with an adult

Saturday, June 27, 9:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

The naturalist will lead you to the heron rookery where you will, hopefully, see and hear the Great Blue Herons and their nestlings from the water. Kayaking experience required. Program Fee per person: \$15 for members. Nonmembers pay \$30 per person. \$5 if you bring your own kayak

