

THE PEEPER

Calvert Nature Society

www.calvertparks.org November 2015

Calvert County Parks Inspire Young Nature Lover

by Kristen Springer

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp has always been a Springer family favorite. We have enjoyed hiking the trails, as well as the displays and animals within the Nature Center. My son Ben was particularly taken by fish, bugs, and snakes he saw while visiting at a very young age.

I had no idea when I took my little toddler to explore and learn at the Calvert nature parks that it would spark such a passion for animals. Ben's love of nature has inspired our many vacations though the years to visit aquariums and National Wildlife Refuges.

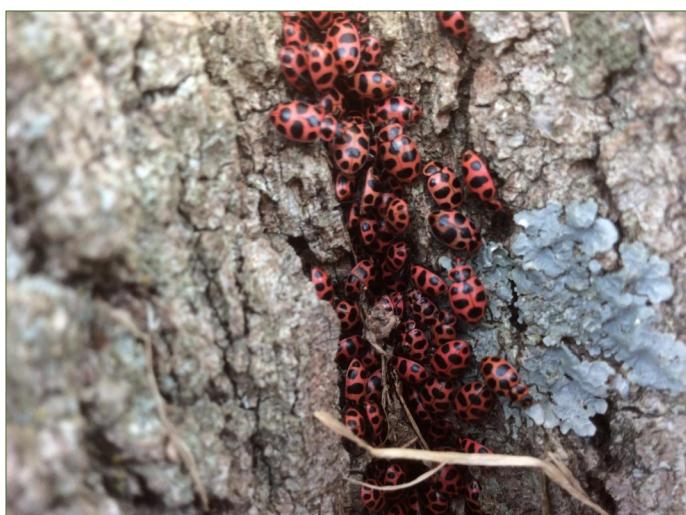
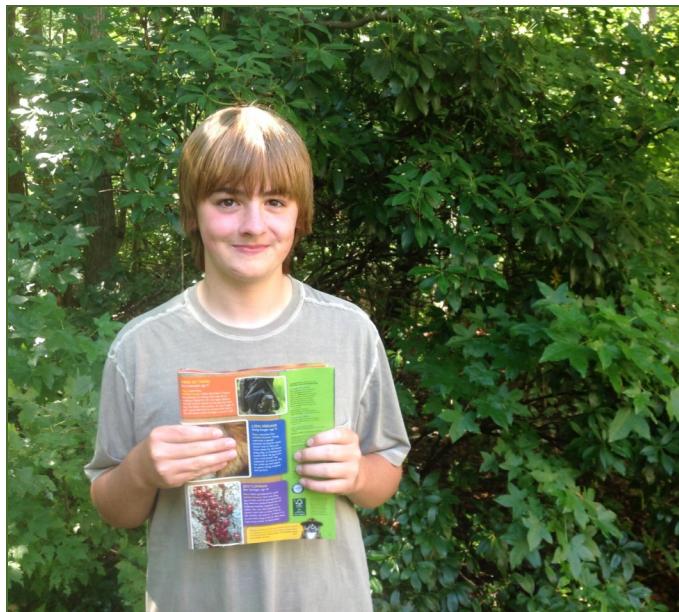
In the summer of 2006, Ben attended his first summer camp, at Battle Creek Cypress Swamp and Flag Ponds Nature Park. This camp inspired both of us to make our own backyard safari. Afterward, Ben began catching all sorts of bugs, frogs, and lizards around our house. Of course Ben would want to keep them all. My solution was to have him take a picture of his amazing finds and then release them to their natural habitat.

A Natural Shutterbug

When we found out about the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas (MARA), Ben was inspired Ben to find species that were missing from the list and submit photographs to the project. Ben continued to attend other programs offered by Calvert Nature Society, including the Sunday afternoons at Flag Ponds Nature Park, the family evening events, and the early morning canoe rides at Kings Landing Park. Ben still has the journals, pins, and bandanas he made during the programs, as well as every t-shirt he received.

Ben made his own pond in the backyard for a frog habitat, he grew his own gourds to make small bird

(Continued on page 9)



Ben Springer, top, submitted his winning photo of hibernating ladybugs on a willow oak tree (bottom) to Ranger Rick magazine. Top photo: Courtesy of Kristin Springer, Bottom photo: Copyright, Ben Springer.

Stewardship in Action

Hallmark's tagline beckons us to "care enough to send the very best." This year at the parks, our volunteers have shown up and given their very best to support many of the park projects that beautify and otherwise enhance the nature parks.

Share What You Know

As you will see on the stories that follow, there have been much effort expended by our volunteers this year. Our stalwart CHESPAX educators spent countless hours with schoolchildren, instilling knowledge about the natural world. We also have expert volunteer monitors who check on nesting boxes for bluebirds, Prothonotary warblers, kestrels and barn owls.

Lend a Helping Hand

The Calvert Stewards volunteer team has undertaken some rewarding projects this year, most recently the rejuvenation of the picnic area at Flag Ponds and the invasives removal and replanting of the drive into Battle Creek Cypress Swamp. Eagle Scouts are rebuilding boardwalks and other park walkways. Our Junior Rangers joined the Kings Landing Park manager create a meadow maze in one of the park fields.

Calvert Countians have always shown immense pride in their heritage and generosity of spirit, and the Flag Ponds Fisherman's Shanty project has been no exception. A hearty thank you to all who donated period items and /or supported this project financially (see page 10).

Calvert Nature Society will also be rebuilding the entry station at Flag Ponds Nature Park in time for the summer crowds. The Society looks to improve the visitor experience and support the activities of the park staff in ways large and small. And we could not be nearly as effective without the contributions of time and expertise from our many volunteers. Thank you!

— Anne Sundermann, Executive Director

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*
Bev Allyn Izzi, *Vice President*
Martha Grahame, *Treasurer*
Franki Coughlin, *Secretary*
Bill Chambers, *Director*
Cassandra Okwumabua, *Director*
Susan Owens, *Director*
Dwight Williams, *Easement Monitor/Land Manager*

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*

The Peeper is a publication of Calvert Nature Society. Copyright 2015. Visit online at www.calvertparks.org.

Park Update

What's there to do in winter?

Often, I am quizzed by friends and relatives who can't figure out what I do to keep busy in the winter. Summer is busy with camps and visitors enjoying the beaches and river. Fall is famous for the changing colors of the leaves. Spring is synonymous with birds and flowers. But winter...dark, dreary, cold, dead. Contrary to popular belief, winter has its own special beauty.

Most winter days, our temperatures are in the 40s and 50s, where a warm coat, hat and gloves are all you need to enjoy a walk in the woods. The winter flocks of chickadees, nuthatches and woodpeckers are easier to find and the evergreen hollies and bayberries provide a striking contrast to the browns, grays and tans of the winter woods. Each of our nature parks have trails that offer an enjoyable hike on a crisp winter day. Come join one of our many programs or explore on your own.

Keep an Eye Out for Eagles

Although springtime is a time for baby birds, many of our large raptors (hawks, owls, eagles) begin their nesting season in the fall and winter. This December, the recently formed Maryland Bird Conservation Initiative (MD BCI), a partnership working to conserve birds and their habitats, is launching a new Citizen Science program, focused on volunteer-based monitoring of Bald Eagle nests throughout Maryland.

Bald Eagles begin nest building in October, a time when they also begin their monogamous courtship. If you find an nesting pair, you can report your sighting to the MD BCI, and sign up for the volunteer trainings. To learn more and to register as an official Eagle Nest Monitor, contact their Science Coordinator Frode Jacobsen at mdeaglenests@gmail.com

— Karyn Molines, *Division Chief*



WINTER 2015 /2016 PROGRAMS



Calvert County Natural Resources Division Calvert Nature Society

We have so many wonderful programs, we can't fit them all here.

See the web site for a full listing of all the upcoming programs: 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 AVAILABLE AT WWW.CALVERTPARKS.ORG

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.

Sleepy Trees

3-5 years old

Wednesday, December 2

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

Session B: 12:30-2:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Winter is a time for trees to take a break. We will talk about how trees survive in the winter while hiking to the Grandfather Tree!

The Christmas Possum

18 months--5 years old

Tuesday, December 8,

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

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

Kings Landing Park

The Christmas Possum has hidden candy canes in the park. After some

possum-themed indoor activities, the naturalist will lead your children on a hike to find them.

National Bird Day

18 months-5 years

Tuesday, January 5

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

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

Kings Landing Park

After some indoor activities and a puppet show about birds in winter, the naturalist will lead you outdoors to look for our little feathered friends.

Everywhere Evergreens

Ages 3-5

Monday, January 11

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

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

Flag Ponds Nature Park

We will use our senses to explore the local evergreens. We will also look to see how different animals use these trees in the winter. Includes both indoor and outdoor activities.

For the full listing of programs, go to

WWW.CALVERTPARKS.ORG

PROGRAMS FOR FAMILIES (cont'd from page 3)

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.

Big Birds

Ages 3-5

Wednesday, January 20

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

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

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Your children will learn about many of the big birds in our area and even get to meet one up close!

Turtles

Ages 6-9

Saturday, January 23, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Your children will have an opportunity to feed live turtles before taking a hike around the swamp boardwalk.

"S" is for Snake

Ages 18 months-5 years

Monday, February 1

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

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

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Puppets will teach your children about snakes and other things that begin with the letter "S."

Great Backyard Bird Count for Kids

Ages 6-9

Sunday, February 14, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Join us for the 19th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count. After a naturalist talk, they will identify and count as many birds as they can find.

Furry Friends

Ages 18 months-5 years

Thursday, February 18,

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

Session B: 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

We will talk about the fur coats different animals have and how it keeps them warm.

Leap Day!

Ages 3-5

Monday, February 29

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

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

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Spring Search

Ages 3-5

Wednesday, March 16

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

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

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Insect Hotels

Ages 6-9

Saturday, March 5, 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Wacky Woodpeckers

Ages 6-9

Saturday, March 19, 9:00-11:30 a.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Hike to the Big Cypress

Ages 8 and older

Saturday, March 5, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Roly Poly Animals

Ages 18 months-5 years

Wednesday, March 30

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

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

Kings Landing Park

Nature Art

Ages 3-5

Tuesday, March 8

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

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

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Full program descriptions are online

at www.calvertparks.org.

SCHOOL'S OUT ADVENTURE

Don't let your child sit home on this day off from school-send them out to play! The day will include indoor and outdoor activities. Adult participation is not required.

Fee is per child.

The Quiet Woods

Ages 8-10

Friday, January 29, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park

Enjoy a day off from school exploring Ward Farm. We'll listen for winter birds, wander the wetlands, and discover the beauty of the winter woods.

\$20 Society members; \$30 Nonmembers

a snow ball fight, make shelters, or cook lunch over a fire-depending on what the weather gives us. \$20 Society members; \$30 Nonmembers

Mud Monsters

Ages 6-9

Monday, March 21,

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

and Tuesday, March 22,

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

Flag Ponds Nature Park

This two-day camp will be full of adventures. We will wade into the swamp, use nets to look for amphibians, and, of course, play in the mud. \$40 Society members; \$60 Non-members

Winter Fun

Ages 8-10

Wednesday, February 10, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

On this day off from school, send your child to discover how much fun being outdoors in winter can be. We may have

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

These programs encourage developing minds to appreciate and protect the nature around them. Programs identified by the Junior Rangers Series 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. Adult participation is not required for these programs. Fee per program, unless noted: Free for members, \$8 per person for nonmembers.

Geminid Meteor Shower

10 years and older

Saturday, December 12, 8:30-10:30 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

Then come to Kings Landing Park to watch one of the best meteor showers of the year. Includes a campfire.



Meteor Shower Campout

Ages 12-16

Saturday, January 2, 4:30 p.m. through

Sunday, January 3 10:00 a.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Campout at Flag Ponds and watch the Quadrantids Meteor Shower. Dinner, snack and breakfast provided.

\$25 Society members; \$40 Nonmembers



Nature Nuts Winter Overnight

Ages 10-12

Saturday, January 16, 9:00 a.m. through

Sunday, January 17, 9:00 a.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

We will search the beach and the woods for animal clues.

After sunset, we will head out into the winter woods for a



night walk, followed by a campfire. Dinner, breakfast, and snacks included. \$25 Society members; \$40 Nonmembers

Harpers Ferry Hiking Trip

Ages 12-16

Saturday, February 20, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Harpers Ferry, WV



We'll learn about the area while hiking to some great views and fort remnants. The hike will be about 5 miles with some steep climbs. Pack a bag lunch to enjoy at the overlook. Meet at Kings Landing Park and we'll provide the ride to Harpers Ferry. \$10 Society members; \$20 Nonmembers

Spring Bio Blitz Teen Overnight

Ages 12-16

Wednesday, March 23, 10:00 a.m. through

Thursday, March 24, 9:00 a.m.



Flag Ponds Nature Park

If you like to search for animals, and you don't mind getting dirty in the process, come on down. Bring lunch and a snack for Wednesday. Dinner and breakfast provided. \$25 Society members; \$40 Nonmembers

Homeschool First Fridays

4-12 years old

Flag Ponds Nature Park

Friday, January 8

Friday, February 12

Friday, March 4

Session A: 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Session B: 1:30-3:30 p.m.



Free for Society members. Nonmembers pay \$8 per family per program. Please select only one session per day.

Our Winter/Spring homeschool series focuses on "phenology," the study of seasonal changes in plant and animal life-cycles, such as date flowers begin to bloom or frogs start singing in the spring. Month to month, we will record our observations, as winter changes to spring.

This series is developed especially for homeschool families. This is a great way to get hands-on science and nature lessons, receive help on projects and research and network with other homeschooling families. Each two-hour program will consist of indoor and outdoor hands-on learning.

Students will be grouped by age to allow for age-appropriate topic exploration. Parents with younger children will stay with the group; parents of older children have the option to stay and participate as mentors and teachers. Siblings younger than 3 are welcome, but must be under the care of a parent/guardian at all times and should not distract other participants.

PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES

Reservations required. Unless otherwise noted: Free for Society members. Nonmembers pay \$8 per family.

Fall Nature Hike

All ages

Sunday, November 15, 9:00-11:30 a.m.

Ward Farm Recreation & Nature Park

We will explore Ward Farm Park and see what exciting things we find.

Frosty Winter Night Hike

All ages

Friday, January 22, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

As you hike around the swamp boardwalk in the moonlight, the naturalist will attempt to call in an owl.

Barking at the Moon: Coyotes in Calvert

All ages

Saturday, March 19, 1:00 -2:30 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

Coyotes have been sighted in Calvert County! We'll discuss the life history of these elusive animals and how to identify them.



WINTER LECTURE



Friday, March 4, 7:00–9:00 pm

*Join us at the Nature Center,
Battle Creek Cypress Swamp*

Bees Are Not Optional

Speaker: Sam Droege

*Biologist, US Geological Survey,
Patuxent Wildlife Research Center*

The decline of honey-bee populations is a well-publicized phenomenon, yet the status of native bees is little known. In 2001, Sam Droege launched a pilot program of the first survey of North America's native bee population. Calvert County Natural Resources staff and volunteers have helped to collect bees from a wide variety of habitats in the nature parks, which has resulted in at least six new state records! Free

This event is supported by
the Cove Point Natural Heritage Trust.

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.

Winter Tree ID

Ages 16 and older

Sunday, December 13, 1:30-4:00 p.m.

Kings Landing Park

All trees do not look alike in winter! We'll learn the basics of plant identification using winter keys and field guides, then take a hike to use our knowledge (so make sure you bring outdoor weather clothes). This program is designed for those with little or no experience and will focus on twigs, buds, and bark. Optional: field guides, binoculars and a hand lens.

Winter Greens

Ages 13 years through adult; under 16 with an adult

Friday, February 5, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm

Learn to identify some of our evergreen plants. We'll explore the forests in search of the ferns, herbaceous plants, and trees that are green in the winter. Co-sponsored with the Maryland Native Plant Society.

Nature Trivia

Must be at least 21 years old

Saturday, February 27, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Location and Fees TBD

Think you are a nature expert well grab your friends and come test out your skills at Nature Trivia! We'll have beverages from some local breweries as well and fun prizes. Check our website for more updates on this event!

Stalking the Wild Timberdoodle

13 years-adult, under 16 with an adult

Wednesday, March 23, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Ward Farm Recreation & Nature Park

We'll stroll along the fields listening for the breeding display of the American Woodcock (also known as a Timberdoodle). Dress for the weather, wear sturdy hiking boots



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you are interested in these, or other volunteer opportunities, please contact **Maya Huchla** by email at huchlam@co.cal.md.us or at the Nature Center on weekends, 410-535-5327.

Amphibian Monitors. Volunteers are needed each day to help monitor amphibian populations at Flag Ponds Nature Park. Volunteers, after a training with the naturalist and trained volunteers, will check our drift fence traps in the morning to identify count, and measure salamanders, frogs and toads captured in our bucket traps. Animals are then released. Volunteers should be willing to commit to 2-4 days per month. We need volunteers for weekdays and weekends. Families can volunteer, but at least one adult must be responsible for data collection and animal safety.

Bird Nest Monitors. We continue to expand our bird nest box monitoring and we need more boxes built! If you are handy with a hammer and screwdriver, you can help build bird boxes and put them up in the parks. We also need volunteers to visit the nests throughout winter to get them ready for the spring nesting. Families are welcome to participate.

CHESPAX Educators. Are you available for a few hours during the week to help teach children about animal diversity, terrapins or oyster populations? We use volunteers to help teach CHESPAX environmental education programs for Calvert County schools. New volunteers will be trained by staff and experienced volunteers. For adults; all volunteers must undergo a background check to work with school children.

Events. Help out at our display table at the County Fair, Patuxent River Appreciation Day, and other outreach events. Volunteers generally work in 2-3 hour shifts.



CALVERT STEWARDS

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 programs. Programs are free, unless noted.

Kestrel Nest Box Project

Ages 15-adult; under 18 with an adult

Wednesday, January 6, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Friday, January 15, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp

The American Kestrel is our smallest falcon and depends on open fields and sparse woods for hunting insects and small rodents. Although populations are declining, installing nest boxes can help boost their numbers. Join us as we install and repair some nest boxes around the county.

Great Backyard Bird Count

All Ages

Friday, February 12, 8:00-10:00 a.m.

Sunday, February 14, 8:00-10:00 a.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

The 19th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count begins! Whether you are a novice or an expert birder, volunteers of all ages are welcome to help identify and count birds. Data will be used by researchers at Cornell and the National Audubon Society.

Terrapin Training

Adults

Monday, March 14, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

If you would like to share your love of the outdoors with children, come to the training session for our 3rd Grade Terrapin Program. Discover why local students are studying terrapins and learn about the activities that you will help lead. Volunteers with this program are subject to a background check.

Prothonotary Warbler Information Session

Ages 10 to adult, under 18 with adult

Tuesday, March 29, 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Flag Ponds Nature Park

After a short presentation, volunteers will trek around the park to learn the nest box locations and prepare them for the season. Volunteers can monitor them as little as once or as many as 12 times between April and July.



Nature Society Annual Meeting

Calvert Nature Society held its annual meeting and Volunteer Appreciation on Sunday, September 6 at the Cypress Swamp Nature Center.

During the business portion of the meeting, President **John H. Jones** and the board of directors recognized the many contributions of **Fred Bumgarner**, who is stepping off the board after many years. Fred devoted much time and energy to the Society over his term of service on the board. We are glad that he will stay on as a CHESPAX volunteer.

Attendees welcomed new board member **Cassandra Okwumabua**. Cassandra is active in the Boys and Girls Clubs of Southern Maryland, the League of Women Voters of Calvert County and the Concerned Black Women of Calvert County, to name a just a few of the organizations for which she volunteers. Cassandra has been a Calvert County resident since 1999 and lives in Huntingtown, MD.

Senior Naturalist **Andy Brown** emceed the Volunteer Dinner, acknowledging the many accomplishments our volunteers.

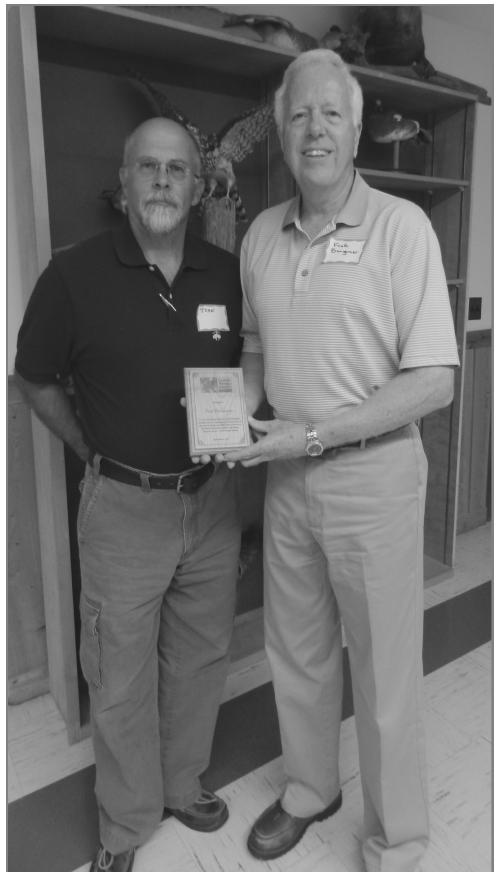
After dinner, **Professor Sara Via**, University of Maryland, spoke about the effects of climate change on native plant communities. You can learn more about this topic by visiting our website at www.calvertparks.org.

In other news, our treasurer and longtime volunteer **Martha Grahame** was honored recently as a part of the county's "Calvert You are Beautiful" program. Martha's volunteer work as a CHESPAX educator introduces schoolchildren to the science behind what they see. Martha is a champion for the things that make Calvert County special!



Cassandra Okwumabua, above, joins the Board of Directors.

Right: President John H. Jones thanks longtime director Fred Bumgarner.



Naturalist Lindsay Hollister



Natural Resources News

The Division of Natural Resources recently hired **Lindsay Hollister** as a part-time Naturalist. Lindsay has many years experience as a naturalist and volunteer coordinator at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary in Lothian, MD. She and her husband live in Lower Marlboro.

Maya Huchla recently switched roles--she was a naturalist helping with school programs. Now she's the Nature Center Aide. With this new position, she has become our Volunteer Coordinator.

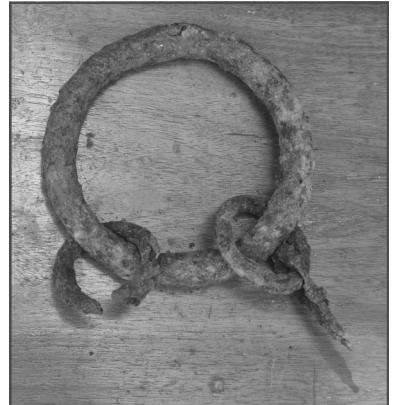
Rice Farm Building Artifacts Found

Outbuildings at the George E. Rice Farmstead at Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm were restored this summer. While the craftsmen were working to straighten and level two of the buildings, they found some unexpected objects. A heavy ring, probably from an ox harness, was found at the corner of one of the buildings which had a corn-crib in one half and may have housed someone or served as storage in the other. Under the pier by the entrance of the same building, they found more iron artifacts including a mule shoe and a wagon or buggy tongue. In a corner and by the entrance to one of the other buildings the workers found more. The workers found a total of eight iron artifacts from around the two buildings.

The objects are solid evidence of the way that farming was conducted when the farmstead was built. The farmer used mules and oxen to plow, and a wagon to transport goods and people. Axe-heads like the one found are still in use, but the flat iron found at the corner of one of the buildings has long been obsolete. The farm family wore clothes pressed with that iron which would have been heated on a stove in the house.

The artifacts may be evidence of more than agricultural practices. The fact that they were found at building entrances and corners is consistent with ritual caches of objects found on African-American sites throughout the southeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. Another African-American domestic site where several such collections were found was excavated within one mile of

This heavy ring was probably used to harness oxen at the Rice Farmstead. Farmers used oxen and mules to plow the fields and for transportation. Photo courtesy of Kirsti Uunila, Calvert County Government.



the George Rice House and outbuildings. Objects made of iron might have been selected for their ability to attract good spirits and repel evil spirits and persons seeking to do harm.

Calvert County was awarded a Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium mini-grant to have the artifacts conserved at the Maryland Archaeological Conservation Laboratory. Conservation of the objects will survive for more study and will allow a richer interpretation of life at the site.

*—Kirsti Uunila, Historic Preservation Planner
Calvert County Community Planning & Building*

Springer (cont'd from page 1)

houses, and has made many owl houses out of plywood. He has even made a flying squirrel house. None of this has ever felt like work to him and each day he seems to have another mission.

Next it was the Barn Owl project, run by the county's senior naturalist, Andy Brown. Ben was thrilled to spot a Barn Owl at Brunswick Family Campground during the Mountains to the Bay camp this past summer.

Throughout, Ben continued with his photography. On a summer trip to Delaware he captured a great picture of a Ruddy Turnstone, which he then emailed to Cornell Lab of Ornithology. He also submitted pictures to *Ranger Rick* magazine's photo contest. This spring Ben was notified that his photo of hibernating ladybugs was selected as a winner (see bottom photo on page 1). This photo appeared in the August edition of *Ranger Rick*.

We are so lucky to have the growing Calvert Nature Parks so close to home continuing to inspire through their quality education programs.

Ladybug, Ladybug, Fly Away Home

Here are some interesting facts about ladybugs

- North America has over 450 native species of ladybug
- The ladybug has four stages of development: egg, larva, pupa and adult.
- The body of a ladybug is around $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch long, usually yellow, orange or red with black spots on wing covers
- The lifespan of a ladybug is about one year.
- Ladybugs do not migrate; they hibernate in warm, dry places.
- Multicoloured Asian lady beetles, native to Japan, were introduced in North America in the 1970s to help native ladybugs control aphids that were damaging crops. These non-natives have caused declines in the populations of native species
- Native ladybugs are beneficial to gardeners; their diet consists largely of aphid species and nectar-sucking insects. The ladybug diet also requires pollen.

Resources: Bugfacts: www.bugfacts.net/ladybug.php
Ladybug 101, Canadian Wildlife Federation: cwf-fcf.org/

Flag Ponds Fisherman's Shanty

~ Rebuilt 2015 ~

Shanty Interior. Photo courtesy of Bill Conway



THANK YOU!

Many thanks to the individuals and organizations that helped us restore the Fisherman's Shanty at Flag Ponds Nature Park, an important piece of Southern Maryland's cultural heritage. Please stop by and visit the Shanty. We will be furnishing the exhibit over the winter and plan a re-opening celebration in 2016.

A&W Insurance
Southern Maryland Heritage Area
Consortium
Calvert County Government
Chesapeake Biological Laboratory
Calvert County Waterman's Association

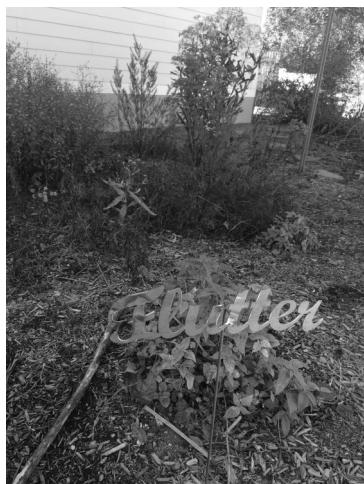
~~

Lisa & Gary Angell
Joyce Stinnett Baki
Dawn Balinski
Fred Bumgarner
Gordon D & Mary A. Burton
Lisa A Carter, Jr.
Bill Conway
Bob Filippi
Carl Fleischhauer & Paula Johnson
Ed Hacskylo
Charles Robert Harrigan
Barbara Harris
In Memory of Louise F. Gilmer

Grace & Bill Jarboe
Stewart Jennings, In Memory of
Anna Jennings
The Jones Family
Sue & Steve Kullen
Culver Ladd
Barbara Stewart Mogel
Karyn Molines & Gary Pendleton
Kent Mountford
Julie Paluda
Stacey & Joe Ruff
Liz & Jim Sanders
The Bruce Shick Family
Mary Stuart Sierra
George Sisson
James Stimpert
Anne Sundermann
Paulette L. & George M. White
Gary & Kathryn Wood

Read all about it! *WORDPLAY in the Butterfly Garden*

Many thanks to Fay Walton of Walton's Welding in Huntingtown for donating these fun metal word sculptures for the butterfly garden at Kings Landing Park. The garden is located in front of Wisner Hall.



New Park Projects

In addition to the wonderful nature programs, there are many projects going on behind the scenes at several of the county nature parks.

Calvert Stewards have started the first phase of the picnic area improvement project at Flag Ponds Nature Park in late October. Earlier in the month the Huntingtown High School Environmental Club worked on the entrance way to Battle Creek Cypress Swamp, helping to lessen the impacts of invasive plants and promoting natives such as dogwood and hollies.

Also, the Society has received a grant from the County to rebuild the entrance station to Flag Ponds. The former station burned in an electrical fire last year.

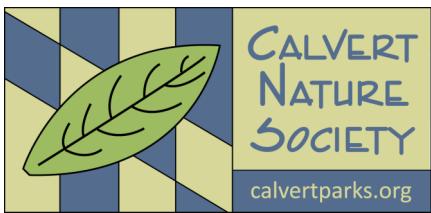
Upcoming Efforts

The Society has been awarded a \$73,000 grant to restore the YMCA cabins at Kings Landing Park. This project will also include ADA access to some of the cabins.

Biscoe Gray Heritage Farm in Prince Frederick will be enhanced by the new Money Crop Trail (thanks to a grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority). The trail will trace the path of the historic rolling road, which farmers used to move hogsheads of tobacco to the river for transport. The Farm will host the second annual Heritage Farm Day on Sunday, May 4.



The Flag Ponds project created a level platform for picnic tables and improved the landscaping around the picnic area. See the back cover for photos of the hardworking Calvert Stewards.



PO Box 122
Port Republic, MD 20676



CALVERT STEWARDS

THANK YOU!

*Fall is cleanup and spruce up time at the Nature Parks.
Many thanks to our volunteers, including the students of Huntingtown High for
their work eradicating invasive plants at Battle Creek Cypress Swamp and Girl
Scout Troop 1960 for assisting with the picnic area at Flag Ponds Nature Park.*

*We could not have undertaken these projects without the support of Calvert
Garden Club, Chaney Foundation/Community Foundation of Southern Maryland,
Dominion Foundation, Dunkirk Supply, and Lusby Motors.*

