



## February Newsletter 2023

### Director's Notes



#### *A Note from the Director*

#### **Need Some Exercise – Pull a Weed**

Having suffered from a few bouts of Lyme's disease over the years and having been "chiggered up" more times than I care to remember, I generally like to tromp the forest of the Shore in the colder months of the year. The pine, oak, hickory and beech forests are beautiful this time of year as are the nuthatches, chickadees, bluebirds and woodpeckers flitting about the branches and trunks.

But as I walk these forest tracts, one thing that I find unsettling is the amount of invasive, non-native weeds that are slowly creeping into nearly every pocket of woodland from here to the Bay Bridge. Bittersweet, wisteria, privet, porcelainberry, honeysuckle, multiflora rose... the list goes on and on. There doesn't seem to be any end to it and the damage to the biodiversity of our native vegetation is remarkable.

Why is this important? Here's just one small example; according to Doug Tallamy (Entomologist at Delaware State University), it takes 350 to 570 caterpillars a day to feed a clutch of chickadee hatchlings. Where are these caterpillars found? Not on the nonnative species that have been invading our forests. The caterpillars are in the oaks and the hickories and the other native species that are endemic to our area. If we want to keep chickadees, we need to keep our native trees and shrubs.

This is a problem that has clearly gotten out-of-hand and quite frankly, in some cases, there's not much that can be done. Grasses like Japanese stiltgrass and common reed (phragmites) are so ubiquitous and difficult to control that we probably have to learn to live with them. At least to some degree. But other species, particularly the vines, can wreck so much damage that they can singlehandedly take out whole stands of forest. Bittersweet is one of the worst. It grows fast as it wraps itself around the tree trunk and climbs into the canopy, eventually smothering the tree. The tree tends to become weak and the weight of the vine eventually pulls the whole tree down. And it can happen in a matter of years. Most of these plant invaders tend to exist on the margins of woodlands where the sunlight can penetrate and provide solar fuel for these botanical bullies.

Here's what I would like to ask of you. Number one; become familiar with these invasives. Learn what they look like and how they grow. Number two; learn how to control them. If you own property on the edge of a forest, that's where you're likely to find many of these dogged marauders. Most of the viny species like the bittersweet, English ivy and wisteria can be snipped with pruners or loppers. That can help free up the tree and give it a little breathing room. But in order to really stop these tenacious little fellows, you need to kill them. And that is best done by pulling out the root. Which isn't always easy. But it is possible. And it is effective. Chemical applications can be effective too. But herbicides can be species specific and probably best applied by a knowledgeable professional.

So, if you are out walking along the wooded edge of your yard, take a pair of pruners and your work gloves. Maybe even a little spade. Clip, snip and pull. February is a great time to get this done. You can easily see the invasive culprits, it's great exercise and will keep you well-heated on these chilly February days.

Here are some great resources to help you get started.

[1. University of Maryland Extension Service](#)

[2. The Lower Shore Land Trust - Program for Invasive Species Management \(PRISM\)](#)

[3. Check out Doug Tallamy's website at Homegrown National Park](#)

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## MCBP Receives Major New Funding Stream

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The Maryland Coastal Bays Program (MCBP) will be the recipient of more than \$1.8 million through a major new funding stream from the federal government. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) signed into law in November 2021 provides for a total of \$132 million for the 28 longstanding National Estuary Programs (NEPs), including MCBP, for fiscal years 2022 through

2026. This funding will be evenly distributed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the NEPs, annually providing each with \$909,800 in BIL funds. The first allocation for MCBP included two years of funding for (FY22 and FY23).

A core emphasis of the BIL funding is the acceleration of environmental and community restoration goals within MCBP's ten-year strategic plan, or Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP). The substantial increase provided in the BIL funding is expected to significantly [MORE](#)

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## Backyard Bird Count

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Join Maryland Coastal Bays Program for the annual Great Backyard Bird Count, February 20th, from 9am-11:30am, at Heron Park.

Each February, data collected from participants of the Great Backyard Bird Count are utilized by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society to better understand global populations prior to Spring migration.

MCBP's Dr. Archer Larned and Kim Abplanalp will lead a group at the park.

So, grab your cold weather gear, some sturdy boots, and your binoculars!

To learn more about the Great Backyard Bird Count, click [here](#).

We will have fresh hot coffee on site. To save on disposables, please remember to bring a personal mug.

Contact [Archer Larned](#) at for additional information

Space is limited so please Register [here](#)



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## Annual Horseshoe Crab Survey

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The 2022 Annual Horseshoe Crab Survey Report is now available!

Follow this link [here](#) to learn more about the importance of horseshoe crabs in the Coastal Bays, how this year's results compare to previous years, and horseshoe crab volunteer opportunities!

If you have any questions about the report, please email Environmental Scientist, [Carly Toulan](#).

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## Coastal Bays Trivia is Back

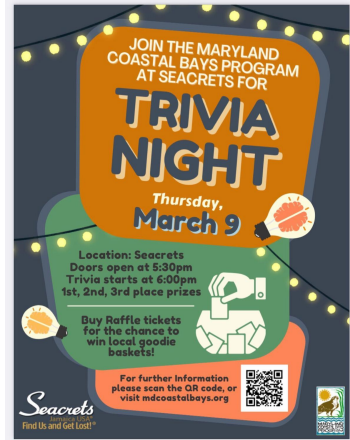
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Mark your calendars now for this epic event.

Join MCBP for our annual Trivia Night on Thursday, March 9! This year

trivia will take place in Morley Hall at Seacrets in Ocean City. Doors will open at 5:30 pm and trivia will start at 6:00 pm. Teams of any size are welcome.

We will also be having a bucket raffle! Come buy raffle tickets for your chance at winning gift baskets and gift cards from amazing local businesses. The raffle winners will be picked at 7:45 pm. You do not need to be present to win. If you are a local business and want to donate, please reach out to [Chandler](#).



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## Discover Your Watershed

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Come join the Maryland Coastal Bays Program for our first Discover Your Watershed (DYW) event of 2023!



In addition to removing the notorious invasive species, wisteria, we will be having Victoria Spice, a member of the MD Department of Agriculture, come out to give an educational talk about what an invasive species is, prominent invasive species in our watershed, ways to prevent the spread of invasives and tools available to educate the public on species IDing.

The DYW will take place on Saturday, March 11th from 9:30 am - 11:00 am at the Lewis Rd Kayak Launch located at 8913 Lewis Road Berlin, Maryland 21811. To find out more information and register for this event, click the link [here!](#)

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## Funding Opportunities!

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### Maryland Coastal Bays Currently has Two Funding Opportunities:

#### Research Grant Program:

MCBP is accepting grant proposals for the 2023 Research Grant Program. These grants are being offered to MCBP's partners to assist in responding to research needs identified in the Maryland Coastal Bays Program Comprehensive [Conservation Management Plan \(CCMP\)](#). The CCMP represents a consensus of the best means needed to preserve the economic and ecological prosperity of the Coastal Bays for the future. The strategies in the plan include reachable scientific goals and the most effective means for implementing them. Applicants with questions or requiring technical assistance, please contact Science Coordinator [Roman Jesien](#).

#### [Research Grant RFP](#)

#### Mini Grant Program:

The MCBP Mini Grant Program seeks to support watershed-based community, science, and educational initiatives that align with CCMP action items. Through this funding opportunity, MCBP is seeking to engage new applicants and organizations from diverse communities in small-scale projects that enhance communities, engage residents, and, ultimately, improve natural resources.

#### [Mini Grant RFP](#)

Applicants for the Mini Grant Program must submit a completed [Budget Management Spreadsheet](#). Please download the spreadsheet and save as Applicant Name Budget Submission. Applicants with questions or requiring technical assistance, please contact Education Program Manager [Chandler Joiner](#).

MCBP Research and Mini Grant Program funds are provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding. With BIL funding, the EPA will be making significant investments in the health, equity, and resilience of American communities and taking significant strides to tackle the climate crisis.