



## May Newsletter

---

### Notes From the Director

#### *From the Sargasso Sea to Selbyville*



The only thing that is predictable about Maryland weather is that it can be very unpredictable. On May 2nd, I ran into blizzard-like conditions in western Maryland as I was headed to Ohio. We don't usually get that kind of craziness here on the lower shore but after this incredibly warm winter, Mother Nature seems to be vacillating between warm and cold as we slide so confusingly into spring.

But we all know the hot and humid days of summer will be here soon enough, so let's enjoy the rain and low temperatures while they last.

Fortunately, water temperatures aren't so finicky and don't fluctuate as much as the air temperatures. And with the warmer waters, we find the terrapins poking their little heads out of the water and basking in the salt marshes.

The crabbers are setting out their pots looking for those early crabs that have shaken their winter blues. And fish are on the move. Once the water temperature hits the fifties, anadromous (fish that live in saltwater but go to freshwater areas to spawn) and catadromous (fish that live in freshwater but go to saltwater to spawn) fish start moving up the tidal creeks to their ancestral spawning grounds of the tributaries that feed our bays. Or, in the case of eels – our only catadromous fish – to spend the next few years living in the brackish rivers and freshwater streams.

Two weeks ago, I was on Bishopville Prong with renowned environmental writer Tom Horton. We were checking out the former Bishopville Dam site where eels, alewife and white perch are on the move. Now that the dam is gone, these fish have free access to their historical spawning grounds along the Delaware-Maryland border.

The glass eels, which are only 2-3 inches long, are particularly fun to watch. Called

glass eels because they are translucent from a lack of pigment. These young-of-the-year eels begin their journey in the Sargasso Sea (near Bermuda) and then journey to the Atlantic coast where they'll travel up the creeks and spend the next few years (sometimes up to 10 years or more) living in the estuary and in the non-tidal creeks of the Delmarva. After they've matured, they'll head back to the Sargasso Sea to spawn and die. Quite a journey.

A few years ago, our renowned Coastal Bays Scientist, Roman Jesien, took some video footage of glass eels trying to climb up the old metal sheet pile dam in Bishopville before it was removed. Check this video out on our [YouTube channel](#).

That video is endlessly entertaining and now that the dam is gone, these little rascals have free access to the waters all the way up to Selbyville Delaware. From the Sargasso Sea to Selbyville. That's an amazing story and a good one to contemplate as we shake the winter blues ourselves.

---



JOIN MARYLAND COASTAL BAYS PROGRAM FOR  
**EXPLORE THE ESTUARY**  
AN ADULT LEARNING SERIES

---

**BY LAND AND BY WATER:**  
**A ILIA FEHRER NATURE  
PRESERVE TOUR**

Saturday, June 3  
9:00- 12:00  
\$20 per person


Join us on the first Saturday in June for a paddle up Ayers Creek to the Ilia Fehrer Nature Preserve where we will embark on a short hike. This will be the first ever public event on the northern trails at the preserve. We will also enjoy some snacks after our paddle up the creek. Registration is required- click the link!



[Register Here](#)

---

# Ocean Pines Restoration for Resiliency Meeting




**JENKINS POINT RESTORATION FOR RESILIENCY PROJECT**

*Preliminary Jenkins Point Plan*

**Community Meeting**

The primary goal of this project is to restore and reconnect the eroding and fragmented islands once part of the Jenkins Point peninsula to provide a nature-based buffer for the Ocean Pines Yacht Club and Marina and the Osprey Point condominium community while also enhancing wildlife habitat. The proposed Dynamic Living Shoreline design features breakwaters created from materials conducive to tidal marsh growth that will anchor the vegetated dune and beach. This project is being designed to account for projected sea-level rise through 2050, and it will serve as a demonstration site for nature-based climate resilience.



*Photo: Assateague State Park*

**Monday, May 15 at 6pm**  
**Ocean Pines Golf Club**  
100 Clubhouse Drive  
Ocean Pines, MD 21811

*Attend in person, or virtually via the link below.*

[https://teams.microsoft.com/join/19%3ameeting\\_YTg3NDJlNzctNjllNi00MDJkLWEySjA0NGVlZDhUMTYxZjUw%40thread.v202.context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22625a63227b2f40fa94f847d64478153%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%221bbcef0b44e049eb83efc1257cac7f063%22%2d](https://teams.microsoft.com/join/19%3ameeting_YTg3NDJlNzctNjllNi00MDJkLWEySjA0NGVlZDhUMTYxZjUw%40thread.v202.context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22625a63227b2f40fa94f847d64478153%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%221bbcef0b44e049eb83efc1257cac7f063%22%2d)

Virtual Link for this meeting is [here](https://teams.microsoft.com/join/19%3ameeting_YTg3NDJlNzctNjllNi00MDJkLWEySjA0NGVlZDhUMTYxZjUw%40thread.v202.context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22625a63227b2f40fa94f847d64478153%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%221bbcef0b44e049eb83efc1257cac7f063%22%2d)

---

Tern Raft



We're thrilled to share that the Tern Raft is back in action!

The launch date was April 11th and we're happy to say it was a success. We haven't made any structural changes to the raft, it's still 48'x48', but we have added more artificial plants and chick shelters to provide more nesting sites for the Common Terns.

We even had the pleasure of seeing our first returning banded Common Tern (band 0H1) on April 17! We were able to determine that she was female by measuring the bill plus head length.

Last year, she and her mate had one of the first nests on the raft and we're hoping they'll do the same again this year. We didn't have our first tern until April 24th last year, so this is an amazing start! We'd like to thank everyone who was involved - it takes a great team to make something this huge successful!

Every day more and more terns are arriving at the raft. There were at least six terns on the raft on Wednesday April 26!

The males establish territories first, selecting their favorite chick shelter or artificial plant to nest near. Then courtship begins and before we know it.... they will be making nests in the shells and laying eggs!



## Terrapin Survey

This year the annual Terrapin Survey will be held from May 30th - June 10. Help us survey our State reptile! Click [here](#) to learn more about the survey and how you can participate in this community science program.

The Maryland Coastal Bays Program has been collecting a variety of data relating

to diamondback terrapin populations in the Coastal Bays. Organized terrapin headcount surveys began in 2012 in collaboration with Maryland DNR and other members of the diamondback terrapin work group.

Counts take place both on water and on land. From motorboats to kayaks and SUPs, all are encouraged to participate. Terrapins are the only turtle occupying brackish

water, but other turtles, such as snapping turtles, may venture into more brackish water, so it is important that you can identify the correct species. [Terrapin Survey Training Presentation](#)

Locations of surveys depend on the number of crews that are available and may take place in all of Maryland's Coastal Bays.

[Register Here](#)

If you have any questions on this survey, please contact Sandi Smith

---

## MCBP Projects Featured at Conference



Archer, Kim and Roman recently attended the 78th Annual Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference in Hershey, PA.

They presented details of the artificial nesting platforms and the Bishopville fish passage project to enthralled audiences.

Over 700 were in attendance

to hear a variety of talks that ranged from the latest on restoration efforts to effects of climate change on organisms from ticks, songbirds to moose and elk to law enforcement issues.

---

## Join the Nurdle Patrol

At Bay Day 2023, we added a new community science project to the work we do here at MCBP! It's a simple but very impactful project picking up little plastic pellets called nurdles on the shores of our watershed and logging them into a large repository of data. This data will be used to keep plastic companies accountable for the waste that they add to our oceans and wash up on our beaches. If you are looking for a quick and easy way to help your community, come to the office in Berlin and we will have supplies as well as instructions. [Join Nurdle Patrol](#)

---

## Hey! Did You Go to Bay Day?

Our Fourth Annual Bay Day Event at White Horse Park in Ocean Pines was a massive success!

Over 1000 community members came out to the event and were able to engage with 34 exhibitors who did an amazing job informing and educating! Thank you to all!



A huge thank you and shout out to the [Ocean Pines Community](#) and to the 25 volunteers who made the day go smoothly. Looking forward to next year!

---

8219 Stephen Decatur Highway  
Berlin, MD 21811  
US

If you would no longer like to receive email from us, [click here](#) to unsubscribe