

Middle Patuxent Environmental Area Volunteer Program

The mission of the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA) volunteer program is to increase citizen interest and participation in the management of the Area's natural resources. We aim to accomplish this mission by providing opportunities for environmental education and outdoor recreation through volunteer project activities.

Invasive Species Control Programs:

Conservation Stewardship Project

Invasions of non-native, invasive plants are the second greatest threat to native species after direct habitat destruction. A working partnership with the Howard County Master Gardeners was formed to tackle invasive plants in the MPEA. Monthly invasive species control work days will be scheduled for March through November, on the 4th Tuesday of each month and two Saturdays, skipping July & August. See the Get Involved tab under the Park Information section of our website for the complete schedule and link to pre-register.

Weed Warriors

Qualified volunteers are taught about the identification and control methods for non-native, invasive plants. Upon completion of mandatory training classes (date TBD), participants are assigned tasks to complete independently. Weed Warriors must be comfortable working alone or in small groups, and also adhere to guidelines set by MPEA staff.

Trail Maintenance Programs:

There are 5.4 miles of hiking trails in the MPEA. Volunteers are needed to assist with the maintenance of these primitive, foot-traffic only trails. Most of the trail work consists of pruning back vegetation that encroaches upon the trail system. The basis for all of our trail maintenance is found in our trail management protocol. Participants may choose to attend Group Work Sessions supervised by MPEA staff or attend mandatory training classes (date TBD) to become an Independent Trail Maintenance Volunteer.

Nest Box Monitoring

There are currently 24 nest boxes in the MPEA that were installed for use by bluebirds and other native, cavity-nesting birds. We utilize volunteers to monitor and maintain these boxes in our wildlife clearing areas, Clegg's meadow, and other grassland restoration plots. Volunteer Nest Box Monitors must also enter the data they collect into the Cornell Lab of Ornithology NestWatch online database.

Successfully delivering our mission depends on the efforts of volunteers such as you! For more information on any of the volunteer programs described above, contact [Allen Dupre](#), MPEA Natural Resources Specialist.