



April 2023 Newsletter

Join Us for a Special Free Program Today at 2PM: Beavers and Why They Matter



Photo by Randy Streufert

If you have walked Mason Neck State Park's Bayview Trail, you have noticed the vibrant wetlands about halfway along the trail. The wetlands have been improved by a colony of beavers, whose lodge you can see toward the far end of the wetland. Would you like to learn more about

beavers and their impact on the environment? Join us at 2 PM on today for a free online program, *Beavers and Why They Matter*.

Alison Zak, the Executive Director of the Human-Beaver Coexistence Fund, will present a brief history of human interactions with beavers over time, an overview of beaver ecology and behavior, and an exploration of the benefits that beavers and the wetlands they create provide to the health of our watersheds, landscapes, and communities. Park Staff will present a brief overview of how the beavers in the wetland along the Park's Bayview Trail have changed the ecology of the wetland.



Alison studied anthropology and human-wildlife conflict in graduate school, then worked for six years in environmental education and outreach before founding HBCF. She is particularly intrigued, inspired, and challenged by human-beaver coexistence work, because few other animals have such an impact on the world around them. Alison is also the author of *Wild Asana: Animals, Yoga, and Connecting Our Practice to the Natural World*, which comes out in June.

You can register for the program [here](#).

Come to the Eagle Festival Saturday, May 13 10 AM to 6 PM



Come to Mason Neck State Park on Saturday May 13 for the Eagle Festival -- a day filled with special presentations, shows, and interactive exhibits by environmental organizations. **Parking and admission are free!**





Secret Garden Birds and Bees, a long-time park favorite, will have two programs with live raptors. There will also be puppet shows for young and old, and programs on reptiles and amphibians.



You'll be entertained by two live bands, and costumed characters will roam the festival grounds. And if you get hungry, the Lions Club will have food and drinks for sale and the Scoops2U food truck will be there with ice cream and sweets.



We'll have more information and a complete schedule of events in the May 1 newsletter. Be sure to mark the festival on your calendar!

Wanted: Volunteers for the Eagle Festival

The Eagle Festival is a wonderful opportunity to showcase Mason Neck State Park, but it can't happen without a lot of volunteers. The park needs people to help with parking, greet guests, coordinate with exhibitors, dress up as costumed characters and more. Can you help out for a couple of hours either before or after you enjoy the festival? You can learn what volunteer positions are available and sign up for them [here](#).

Friends of Mason Neck State Park 2022 Annual Report



The Friends have released their Annual Report for 2022. Read it and learn what we've done in the past year and our plans for 2023. You can read the report [here](#).

Help Clean Up the Park on Earth Day April 22



Every day, trash floats down the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers, and some of it washes up on the shore of the park. Careless guests sometimes leave trash behind instead of taking it home or putting it in proper receptacles.

You can “give back” to the park on April 22 by helping to clean up the trash and beautify the park. The cleanup is from 11 to 3 PM. This is a self-led activity. Staff will supply gloves and trash bags and suggest areas on which you can work.

April Programs at Mason Neck State Park



Photo: Randy Streufert

Each month, the park staff offers multiple programs on the park’s wildlife and nature. You can find the calendar of events on the Park’s [website](#). Just scroll down until you see the list of upcoming events and click on “More events at this park.”