



GUNPOWDER VALLEY CONSERVANCY

July 2026 E-Newsletter



A Visit To Hart-Miller Island

Last week, Gunpowder Valley Conservancy staff and board members stepped out of the office and onto a boat for an exciting field trip to Hart-Miller Island. Exploring by boat, bus, and foot, our team got an up-close look at this unique local treasure and its thriving ecosystem while spotting everything from monarch butterflies and dragonflies to bald eagles, egrets, herons, and turtles!

Once part of an eroding chain of islands, Hart and Miller islands were rebuilt in the 1980s and combined into one island. The restoration project used sediment dredged from the Port of Baltimore, which in turn allowed larger ships to pass through Baltimore's channels.

Fun Facts from the Field:

- Over 300 different species of birds have been identified on and around Hart-Miller Island since 1977.
- The Port of Baltimore was founded in 1706, and construction on Hart-Miller Island began in 1981 and was completed in 2016.
- Maryland has the most stable population in the Northeast of Great Black Backed Gulls, and you can spot them at Hart-Miller Island!

The experience was deeply educational and gave everyone a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with each other and our shared love for wildlife and conservation.

A huge thank you to the Maryland Environmental Service for the tour! We're coming away from the tour feeling excited to continue our work to support water quality, wildlife habitats, and public spaces in the Gunpowder and Chesapeake Bay watersheds.



In the Garden With Ebram: Tips For Your Summer Garden!

Learn how to utilize wise-watering practices and make sure that your garden gets enough water.

A few easy ways to think about this are *timing*, *type of hose*, and *target areas*!

Timing: Early morning watering is best! Early morning watering will allow your plants to drink throughout the day, and stay hydrated for hours.

Type of hose: Soaker hoses are a great tool. These hoses deliver water directly to the soil and root systems. This reduces water loss from where plants need it most, but also minimizes the risk of leaf burn from direct midday sun.

Target area: If you are watering by hand, always focus on the soil surrounding the root zone rather than spraying the foliage. The roots are what feed the plants, leaves want to stay dry!

ProTip: *Make your life easier!* Install a timer on the spigot, then connect to the soaker hose as usual. Setting it for 15-20 min in the morning during heat waves will go a long way to ensure the garden is buffered from drought stress.

[Learn more from our blogs](#)



Grant Updates

Grant Funding to Reduce Pollution to the Chesapeake Bay

We are proud to announce that we are among the recipients of the **Fiscal Year 2027 Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund** grants, recently announced by Governor Wes Moore. Administered by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), this funding program is awarding a total of **\$31.5 million** to support 25 ecological restoration projects across 188 sites in Maryland to improve statewide water quality and wildlife habitats

This funding addresses a challenge that affects every stream, neighborhood, and resident in the Gunpowder watershed: too much polluted stormwater and not enough natural infrastructure to handle it. Aging communities, expanding impervious surfaces, and shrinking tree canopy have created a perfect storm of erosion, poor water quality, and increased flooding.

Over the next three years, GVC will restore riparian buffers and upland forests within the Gunpowder watershed by planting 5,400 native trees across almost 50 acres. Additionally, we will work with local homeowners and businesses to install 41 rain gardens and 4 micro-bioretenion practices to further reduce excess nutrients from entering our waterways.

We are honored to receive this funding alongside other dedicated Maryland organizations, including the Baltimore Tree Trust, Bowie State University, the City of Frederick, the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, and SilvoCulture.

[Read the Press Release Here](#)

Upcoming Events



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Evening Among the Trees

Save the Date!

Join us on October 17th from 5 - 9pm for Gunpowder Valley Conservancy (GVC)'s signature fundraising event, **Evening Among the Trees**. Your participation will greatly help GVC succeed in our mission to engage, connect, and inspire people to preserve and restore the Gunpowder Watershed.

New! Early bird ticket option: buy your ticket before July 31, 2026, to be entered to win an on-site garden consultation (a \$200 value!) from our friends at **Blue Water Baltimore's Herring Run Nursery!**

[Buy Your Ticket Now!](#)

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Summer Tree Maintenance

Our summer tree maintenance events are live on our website, and we need volunteers! Join us this month and bring your friends, family, or your birthday party- the more the merrier.

GVC volunteers have planted 40,000+ native trees across the Gunpowder Watershed. However, our work isn't done after the trees are planted in the ground.

Tree maintenance is a hands-on way for volunteers to improve the health of our local forests and waterways. These events are also a great way to earn community service hours!

Register for an event now to support your environment and your community this summer.

[Tree Maintenance - July 25](#)

[Tree Maintenance - July 31](#)

[Tree Maintenance - August 8](#)

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