



Oyster Newsletter

Image Credit:
Kristy Heilenday

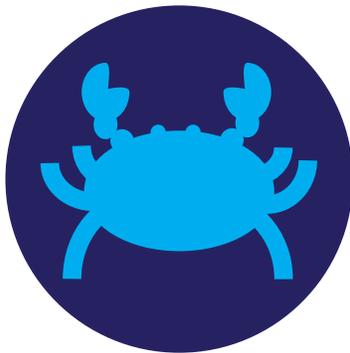
Winter 2018

In this Edition:



A Season of New Growers

ShoreRivers had a record year of new oyster growers as well as the addition of Corsica River growers!



What's in my Cage?

From mud crabs to skillettfish, your cages provides habitat for a range of Bay species.



New MGO Dock Signage Available

Check out the new MGO signage you can purchase to show off your oyster restoration efforts!

+ Winter Maintenance Reminders!

A Season of New Volunteers

This fall, ShoreRivers had a record number of new MGO growers! In total, the program added 53 new growers between the Choptank, Eastern Bay, Chester and Corsica Rivers. Overall, this volunteer growth created an addition of over 130 new cages of oyster spat in our rivers!

Part of this growth is in thanks to local Boy Scout, Josh Newmier. Josh initially contacted ShoreRivers for his Eagle Scout project to improve the local environment. Impressively, over the course of the fall, the 9th-grader from Easton was able to recruit 23 homeowners, including J.M. Clayton Company (pictured). In addition to finding new MGO volunteers, Josh also started recruiting local restaurants to recycle their used oyster shells.

ShoreRivers also expanded its MGO team to now include Corsica River growers. The Corsica MGO program was established in 2009 and previously managed by the Corsica River Conservancy. We're lucky to have this well-established program joining our oyster efforts!

With approximately 250 oysters per cage each capable of filtering 50 gallons of water a day once fully grown, oyster growers are making a positive impact on Eastern Shore rivers. Thank you to all of our volunteers this year, and please encourage your friends and neighbors to join the program!



Josh Newmier delivering oyster cages to J.M. Clayton Company

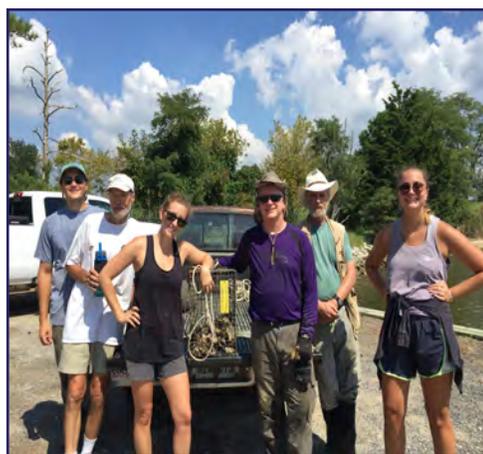
Cages per Watershed in 2018:

Chester: 240

Choptank: 416

Eastern Bay: 294

Total: 950!



Oyster drop offs on the Chester and Corsica!

**Are your neighbors also interested in growing oysters?
Have them contact ShoreRivers for more information!**

What's in my Cage?

What Bay animals have you found in your oyster cage? Many of these oyster reef species are key indicators of reef and water quality health in our rivers. Acting as vital habitat for spawning and shelter, your oyster cage is assisting in the protection of over 300 species!



Photo Credit: Chesapeake Bay Program

Grass Shrimp: Known for the distinctive "horn" over their eyes, these are common prey items for reef predators.



Photo Credit: Chesapeake Bay Program

Mud Crab: There are five species types in the Bay, with the largest being the black-fingered mud crab.



Photo Credit: Chesapeake Bay Program

Blennies: Both the feathered blenny and striped blenny exist in the Bay and lay their eggs in empty oyster shells!



Photo Credit: Harbor School

Skillet Fish: Also known as the oyster cling fish, they will commonly stick to oysters even out of the water.



Photo Credit: Brett Albanese

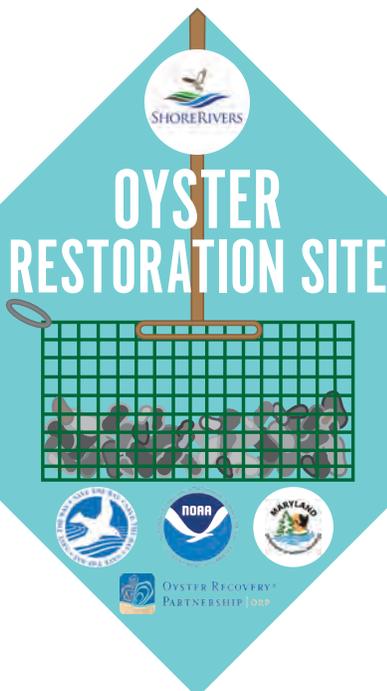
Goby: Three species of goby exist in the Bay: the naked goby (pictured, most abundant), the seaboard goby, and the green goby.



Photo Credit: Texas Parks and Wildlife

Ivory Barnacle: With four species in the Bay, barnacle larvae are a common food source for young fish in the spring.

MGO Signage Now Available



Help spread the word about the Marylanders Grow Oysters program! Beginning in Spring 2019, ShoreRivers will begin offering signage for MGO growers to showcase their restoration efforts! Growers are encouraged to place these signs on their docks in view of passing boats to help promote the program.

These signs are approximately 1x1 ft with 2 1/4" holes to screw into a dock piling. Quantity of signs is limited and availability will be on a first come first serve basis. They will be distributed during oyster drop offs this spring.

If you would like a sign on your pier, please email Rebecca Murphy at rmurphy@shorerivers.org!

Winter Reminders



Mike and Lynn Stewart shaking their cages!

- 1. Shake your cages at least once a month**
- 2. Lower your cages to the bottom if the river becomes icy**
- 3. Share any cool photos with ShoreRivers**
- 4. Look out for an email in early spring for oyster drop-off dates**

More Volunteer Opportunities

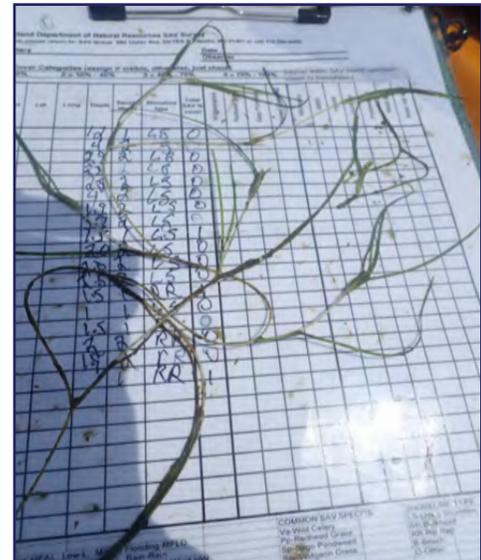
Interested in doing more to protect our rivers? ShoreRivers will be training new volunteers for its Water Quality Monitoring and SAV (Submerged Aquatic Vegetation) Monitoring programs this spring! Motor boats are necessary for water quality monitoring, while volunteers may use kayaks or other small aquatic vessels for SAV monitoring. Volunteer training dates are below:

4/1: Creekwatchers Training @ 5 PM

4/15: SAV Monitoring Training @ 4:30 PM

*Note: Trainings for Choptank and Eastern Bay Rivers only- please contact Zack Kelleher at zkelleher@shorerivers.org for volunteer training opportunities in the Chester River.

Further information concerning these events will be available on ShoreRivers' web and Facebook pages at a closer date. If you are interested, please RSVP to Rebecca at: rmurphy@shorerivers.org or 443 385 0511



SAV Monitoring volunteer Mike Fleagle's grassy data sheet