

Bugs In The Garden! Notes from AWS An AWS Summer

by AWS Horticulturist Steve McKindley-Ward

Two recent garden observations and a new book have me rethinking my attitude about bugs—especially the bugs that eat our flowers at the AWS office.

In July, while examining the native perennial bed I installed last fall under our pin oak, I noticed aphids all over the black-eyed Susan's (*Rudbeckia hirta*). "Damn bugs," I muttered. Then, catching myself: "No. Native bugs—just trying to make a living."

The next day, I noticed three goldfinches, two males and a female, swaying on the same black-eyed stems, pecking off the aphids like crazy. I'd never before seen goldfinches forage in



A photo of the beautifully-striped monarch butterfly caterpillar (*Danaus plexippus*) Steve McKindley-Ward found munching on a milkweed plant this summer. This milkweed seedling is just one of several native plants residing in AWS's new rain gardens at the George Washington House.

our garden.

Then, in late August, while examining plant progress in one of our new rain gardens, I winced seeing one of the seedling marsh milkweeds (*Asclepias incarnata*) being devoured by an unknown bug. Only a bare stem with a couple of leaves at the top remained. Two weeks earlier, the little milkweeds had been donated by a Mount Rainier neighbor, Jodi Beder, another native plant enthusiast. When I spotted the culprit, a finely striped yellow, black, and white caterpillar with antennae at both ends, I checked my field guide and found it was a larval monarch butterfly. Wow! I'd heard of a connection between milkweeds and monarchs, but I'd never

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Education In The Spotlight: After School Kids Wade In

This summer, AWS partnered with Georgetown University's After School Kids (ASK) program, a D.C. Superior Court-funded program in which university students serve as tutors and mentors for court-supervised youth. AWS engaged the group in its Watershed Explorers program, visited Georgetown University, and used experiments and interactive demonstrations to teach the kids and their mentors how rivers like the Anacostia get so polluted. It was a hard sell until the group came out on the Anacostia River to plant wetland plants in Kingman Marsh. Fourteen students and their 12 mentors pulled on hip waders and followed AWS staff out into the mud. After that, the kids were hooked on environmental stewardship. By the end of the day they had planted more than 250 native arrow arum plants and added a little more life to the river bank.



In July, 26 students and mentors from Georgetown University's ASK program planted more than 250 new Arrow arum (*Peltandra virginica*) seedlings in a wetland bed like this one at Kingman Marsh in Washington, D.C.

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President's Corner: Fall 2009 Happenings



We had a terrific Anacostia River cleanup September 12 in response to President Obama's call to service in commemoration of 9/11. EPA and NOAA cosponsored the event at Bladensburg Waterfront Park, and their staff members set up exhibits, handed out brochures, and spoke about the river's history. We took the opportunity to celebrate AWS's 20th birthday at the same time with cake, music, and lunch for all. In true AWS fashion, volunteers and staff worked all morning removing 2.5 tons of trash, including tires and 3 shopping carts. Afterwards we gathered for lunch while a great local band, Proverbs, performed. Several of our favorite representatives then spoke. U.S. Senator Ben Cardin presented AWS with a proclamation in honor of our 20th birthday. U.S. Representative Chris Van Hollen commended AWS's work, and Maryland State Senator David Harrington praised the achievements of AWS Board Chair Robert Boone. Many supporters from the community came to help out, including the Port Towns Youth Council. The river and shores were in great condition for the next Saturday, Port Towns Day!

That evening we held a fundraiser on Capital Yacht Charter's boat *Celebrity*. More than 80 people joined us for a moonlight cruise on the Potomac River and the Anacostia Rivers. A silent auction was held aboard; donated items included a Colorado ski trip package, a long weekend at the beach, dinners at local restaurants, and beautiful holiday stockings knitted by one of our best fans! Our sponsors included Capital Yacht Charters,

CH2M Hill, Turner Construction, and Grunley Construction. Capital Yachts and BlackFinn Saloon donated food. Thanks so much to our sponsors and all who donated to the auction!

But that's not all! Our new branding and Web site are taking the watershed by storm!! If you have not been to the site recently, please visit www.anacostiaws.org today; it is vastly improved and is getting better daily. One of the most significant site improvements has been the creation of a new AWS Blog where our staff will post the most current environmental information and commentary available to us. We also plan to develop a larger watershed community calendar where events held by all environmental groups across the Anacostia region can be posted.

Lastly, I want to ask you—our members, our community, our supporters—how we can better serve you and engage others to help. I hope to hear from you soon.

—Sincerely,
James R. Foster, President
Anacostia Watershed Society



U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (center left) and U.S. Congressman Chris Van Hollen (center right) helped AWS celebrate its 20th anniversary year at our September 12 river cleanup and celebration at Bladensburg Waterfront Park. Senator Cardin presented the organization with a Certificate of Special Recognition for two decades of service to the Anacostia and its surrounding communities. Also shown: AWS's Executive Director Jim Connolly (left) and President Jim Foster (right).

Anacostia Watershed Society, Inc.

PRESIDENT

James R. Foster

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

James F. Connolly

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert E. Boone, *Chair*

Charles Evans, *Treasurer*

John W. Lyon, *Secretary*

Charles Agle	James Rosapepe
Sadara Barrow	Anya Schoolman
Elissa Feldman	Michael Tilchin
Adam Ortiz	Jack Wennersten

STAFF

Jorge Bogantes Montero
Conservation Biologist

Lee Cain
Manager, Education Programs

Erin Castelli
Associate Development Director

Pat Gladding
Director of Development

Dr. Marc Imlay
Conservation Biologist

Masaya Maeda
Water Quality Specialist

Steve McKindley-Ward
Horticulturist

Steven F. Reynolds
Director of Communication & Outreach

Bryant Stukes
Office Manager

Tracey Toscano
Development Coordinator

Ariel Trahan
Environmental Educator

This publication could not have been produced without the expert assistance of AWS volunteer Jennie Reinhardt.

AWS is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization seeking to return the Anacostia River and its tributaries to a swimmable and fishable condition through the development and implementation of high quality environmental advocacy, education, and stewardship programs.

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AWS Conservation Biologist Jorge Bogantes Montero teaches D.C. Green Summer Jobs Corps participants about the invasive Mile-a-minute vine (*Polygonal perfoliatum*).

AWS Bacteria Source Tracking Project Concludes

AWS has finished the Bacteria Source Tracking (BST) project it conducted alongside Dr. Charles Hagedorn of Virginia Tech University between June 2008 and March 2009. The testing regime differentiated between human, canine, waterfowl, and deer sources of fecal coliforms. AWS undertook the project to determine whether or not there has been a reduction of human-derived fecal contamination in the Anacostia River, as recently reported by officials at the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC).

“It is hard to believe that there are no human fecal bacteria in the Anacostia River water in Maryland,” said Jim Connolly, AWS Executive Director. “WSSC takes samples only during dry weather conditions. This is an interesting approach, but the data may be biased,” he continued. WSSC takes only 2–4 samples per sampling station a year. AWS took 2 samples each month, totaling 18 tests per sampling station throughout the course of the project.

“The results are confusing to me,” said Masaya Maeda, water quality specialist at AWS. “Different laboratories seem to produce very different BST test results for the same river. However, provided that Dr. Hagedorn’s laboratory,

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A Bad Year For Invasives at Ft. Dupont Park

AWS Conservation Biologist Jorge Bogantes Montero had a busy summer at Fort Dupont Park with a group of youths and college students from Mayor Adrian Fenty’s Green Summer Jobs Corps. The group, which worked from June to August, was assigned in the park mostly to pull invasive plants but also helped the National Park Service (which runs the park) in other maintenance duties. In spite of the steamy summer weather and the yellow jackets, the group removed invasive plant cover from 1.33 acres of parkland! The cleared areas contained 13 non-native invasive plant species like English ivy (*Hedera helix*), Mile-a-Minute vine (*Polygonal perfoliatum*), Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), and Chinese wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*). Most of the plants were eliminated by hand-pulling, digging with spading forks, and pruning.

To help things along, AWS staff and the Maryland Native Plant Society’s Joe Metzger created a checklist of native and nonnative plants occurring in the park. The list includes 109 species of which 77 are native, 30 are non-native, and 2 are of unknown origin. All of the plants are determined to the genus level of their taxonomy and are displayed



D.C. Green Summer Jobs youth employees pull invasive plants from a site at Ft. Dupont Park in July 2009.



Lee Cain, AWS’s Manager of Education Programs, leads D.C. Green Summer Jobs Corps staff in a special watershed training workshop.

with comprehensive information on common names, scientific names, family, status (native or nonnative), and plant habit. If you are interested in this list, please contact Jorge Bogantes Montero at jorge@anacostiaws.org.

The Green Summer Jobs Corps also played an important role in AWS’s educational activities. Lee Cain and Vera Figueiredo trained the 38 college student supervisors at a special watershed workshop and another 56 youth participating in a special Watershed Explorers program. Throughout the summer, the students and supervisors became very well-acquainted with the region’s environmental health and invasive plant problems.

Removing invasive plants is imperative for natural habitats because the process keeps harmful species from further dispersal. It also keeps the mature deciduous forests of Ft. Dupont relatively free of damaging invasive monocultures and allows native plants their proper place in the local ecosystem. This will become noticeable in years to come when dormant seeds increase and spread native plant populations. The removal of some species—like Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium vimineum*) and Mile-a-minute—that were not widespread at Ft. Dupont this summer were beneficial for the park’s woodland habitats as a preventive control measure. When left uncontrolled, these species can spread rapidly and damage habitat for wildlife.

Meet the Anacostia Watershed Society's Board of Directors!

Please let us introduce you to the AWS Board of Directors and talk about how important their work is to AWS.

AWS is set up as an IRS-defined 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. As such, we are required to have Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. Those regulations also require us to have a Board of Directors whose members are not compensated and have oversight of the organization's finances and governance. Each AWS Board member may serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms.

AWS's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws clearly define the Board and its responsibilities. For instance, our Board "shall be nine (9) or such other number not less than three (3) nor more than twenty-five (25). ..." There's specificity! Currently, the Board has 11 members, including several distinguished members of the local community. AWS Founder Robert Boone remains Board Chair until the end of this year. He will be succeeded by current Vice Chair Michael Tilchin in January. Charles Evans currently serves as Board Treasurer, and former attorney John Lyon serves as Secretary.

Our Board of Directors provides the organization with financial oversight and governance. In our case, financial oversight means making sure that AWS meets its IRS requirements, uses best accounting practices, and adheres to an annual budget. Routine Board tasks in this capacity include overseeing AWS bank accounts, monitoring contracts and audits, and reviewing reports from the organization's Certified Public Accountant.



Michael Tilchin (left), current Vice Chair of the AWS Board of Directors, helps Water Quality Specialist Masaya Maeda lift a derelict shopping cart out of the Anacostia and into a waiting truck for proper disposal.

2009 AWS Board Committees

The Board's governance work takes place primarily within committees, including member-chaired groups addressing financial, legal, programming, and technical issues. Some of those larger committees receive input from several subcommittees led by Board members and consisting of expert volunteers from surrounding communities. With this structure in place, subcommittee volunteers share the workload and help ease the multiple governance burdens of full Board members.

As Board Chair, Robert Boone is an ex-officio member of each committee.

Governance (Executive Committee)

Serves an executive function regarding personnel matters, compensation, Board recruiting and development, leadership transition, and strategic planning and monitoring. Restricted to members of the Board. Staffed by Board Chair Robert Boone, Vice Chair Mike Tilchin, Secretary John Lyon, and Elissa Feldman

Fundraising Committee

Develops fundraising events and initiatives, provides fiscal oversight and cash forecasting. Restricted to members of the Board and other

...Committees, continued, pg. 5

CURRENT AWS BOARD

The names of all the Anacostia Watershed Society Board members are listed in alphabetical order below.

CHARLES AGLE

Washington, DC

E-mail: chagle@washpathfind.com
(Technology Trainer, self-employed)

SADARA BARROW

Colmar Manor, MD

E-mail: sbarrow@ptcdc.org
(Executive Director, Port Towns Community Development Corporation)

ROBERT BOONE, Board Chair

College Park, MD

E-mail: robert@anacostiaws.org
(Founder of AWS)

CHARLES EVANS, Treasurer

Alexandria, VA

E-mail: evans.charles@epa.gov
(U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)

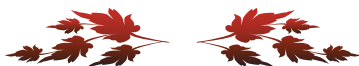
ELISSA FELDMAN

Washington, DC

E-mail: joeandelissa@earthlink.net
(Retired Deputy Director, Indoor Environment Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)



At left: Board members shaking hands at the 2007 Earth Day event.



BOARD MEMBERS

Society's current Board members appear in

JOHN LYON, Secretary

Bethesda, MD

E-mail: johnwlyon@hotmail.com

(Retired Attorney, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)

ADAM ORTIZ

Edmonston, MD

E-mail: adam@gmail.com

(Mayor, Edmonston, MD)

JAMES ROSAPEPE

Washington, DC

E-mail: jcrosapepe@yahoo.com

(MD Senator, Former Ambassador to Romania, International Entrepreneur)

ANYA SCHOOLMAN

Washington, DC

E-mail: Anya.schoolman@gmail.com

(Director of Westside Programs, The Wyss Foundation)

MICHAEL TILCHIN

Bethesda, MD

E-mail: mtilchin@ch2m.com

(Vice President, CH2M Hill)

JACK WENNERSTEN

Washington, DC

E-mail: jrwennersten@hotmail.com

(Environmental author, Professor Emeritus of American Studies—UMD Eastern Shore)



Board member Elissa Feldman greets visitors entering AWS members at the George Washington House. Above (l to r): Board member Jack Wennersten, John Lyon, and Michael Tilchin attend our 10th Day Celebration in Bladensburg.



AWS Board member Sadara Barrow (right) visits with Executive Director Jim Connolly during the organization's 2006 Tavern Toast membership recognition event.

...Committees, continued from pg. 4

members by invitation only. Staffed by AWS's Director of Development.

The following committees are open to all members of AWS and will be led by a Board member.

Advocacy Committee

Recommends policy positions, including the organization of rapid response to quickly unfolding issues. Also includes litigation and grassroots organizing for advocacy campaigns. Staffed by AWS's Executive Director.

Public Awareness Committee

Provides strategy and direction for media outreach and targets adult audiences outside of organization for education on environmental issues. Staffed by

AWS's Director of Communication & Outreach.

Membership Committee

Leads initiatives in membership recruitment and retention, marketing, benefits, and mobilization and management of volunteers. Staffed by AWS's Director of Communication & Outreach and Membership Coordinator. Committee Chair is

currently vacant.

Environmental Education Committee

Leads outreach strategy for student-oriented educational programs. Staffed by AWS's Manager, Education Programs. Committee Chair: Charles "Collie" Agle.

Audit Committee

Reviews audits and various policies as required by outside auditors. Staffed by AWS's Executive Director.

Join the Board!

Because the Board is the proverbial 12th man on the AWS team—providing invaluable vision, direction, fundraising, and sheer physical labor—its development has become one the organization's most important initiatives. As we grow our capacity to accomplish our mission of cleaning the river, it will take superior problem solving and passion to resolve the complex challenges associated with our urbanized watershed. If you would like to play a role in this mission, the AWS Board is the place to be!

If you have an interest in serving on the AWS Board as a member or subcommittee volunteer, please contact Mike Tilchin at mike.tilchin@ch2m.com. At present, those with an interest in becoming Board Treasurer are especially

...Join the Board, continued, pg. 6



Board members Charles "Collie" Agle (left) and Charles Evans make the rounds at AWS's 2006 Tavern Toast membership recognition event.



AWS Board member Anya Schoolman (center) chats with former Board Treasurer Bill Strathmann (left) and Jim Connolly at the Robert E. Boone Legacy Event held earlier this year at the U.S. Botanic Gardens in Washington, D.C.

...Join the Board, *continued from pg. 5*

encouraged to apply.

The AWS Board of Directors meets four times a year at the organization's headquarters in Bladensburg, MD, though, weather permitting, the group also meets out on the river! Committees and subcommittees meet at the discretion of their members. In addition to addressing larger issues of governance and finance, Board members work to enhance AWS's reputation in local communities by helping to develop specific fundraising opportunities and assisting with special events. All AWS Board members are covered by Director's insurance.

SHOWCASE!

AWS'S NEW WEB SITE

It's here! Our brand new Web site saw its initial launch on Thursday evening, October 1, 2009, during the height of our Moonlight On The Water fundraising cruise. The redesigned site features a new blog, an updated photo gallery, and complete social networking integration. Visit the site today at www.anacostiaaws.org.

...BST Project, *continued from pg. 4*

and Dr. Franz's laboratory—which conducted BST testing about 6 years ago at Salisbury University—produced accurate data for human fecal bacteria percentage, there seems to be no reduction in human fecal bacteria on the Anacostia River," continued Maeda.

In 2002 and 2003, the Salisbury University data showed about 6-9% of human fecal bacteria on average around the mouth of the Anacostia's Northeast and Northwest Branches. In 2008 and 2009 AWS's and Dr. Hagedorn's data showed 6-10% of human fecal bacteria on average at the same or at nearby sampling stations.

"Interestingly, canine fecal bacteria percentage drops to nearly zero during the coldest months," said Maeda. "In winter, dog owners may not walk their dogs so long and so far, resulting in fewer droppings along streams. This indicates that proper pet waste management could reduce fecal bacteria up to 14%."

The majority of fecal bacteria on the Anacostia emanate from wild and domestic animal feces that wash into the river. This result is due likely to increases in the amount of impervious surface found throughout the Anacostia watershed. Levels of fecal bacteria in local streams become elevated when stormwater runoff flushes significant amounts of accumulated animal feces from these hard surfaces during and following each rainstorm. Since water quality standards for fecal bacteria do not discriminate between human sources and those from other animals, high levels of fecal bacteria entering the river from animal activity must be addressed alongside similar those caused by human activity. Stormwater infiltration techniques will play a vital role in reducing fecal bacteria levels from wild and domestic animals because they emulate Nature's own method for cleansing runoff.

Under the 2008 consent decree between WSSC and EPA, the State of Maryland, AWS and others, WSSC is

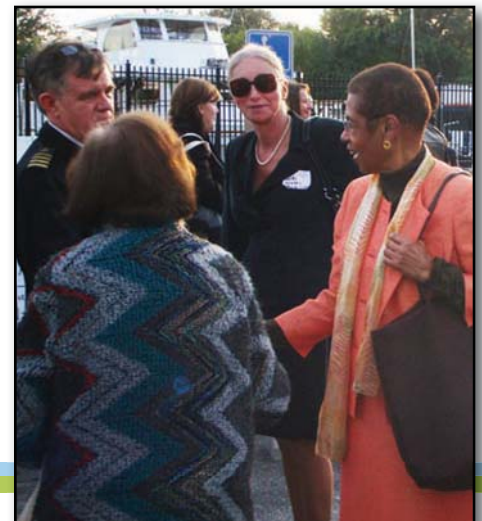
working on inspecting and repairing miles of sewer lines to reduce overflows. Sewage overflows can spread harmful protozoa, bacteria, and viruses. Sewage also includes a multitude of harmful household products, including pharmaceuticals and illegally dumped chemicals. Some of these products do not readily biodegrade. This work is planned to go on for up to 10 years.

This effort was funded in part by the Chesapeake Bay Trust.

Photos From Our Fall 2009 Special Events



Above: Volunteers at our 20th Anniversary Cleanup on September 12, 2009, move in to capture some floating trash on the Anacostia River. Below: U.S. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (far right) greets visitors attending AWS's Moonlight on the Water Benefit Cruise and Silent Auction on October 1, 2009.





After gorging on milkweed to store up fat and other nutrients, the Monarch caterpillar moves into the next stage of its life, known as the pupa stage. After creating a hard chrysalis around itself like the one shown above, the caterpillar begins transforming into the butterfly we all know.

...Bugs, continued from pg. 1

seen it!

It's funny how you start seeing things differently. Most gardeners, including me, have a knee-jerk reaction to their flowers being eaten: fight the bugs. But I'm reading a new book, *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*, by Douglas Tallamy (2007). Tallamy, a professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware, says we've altered the North American landscape to such a degree, and replaced native plants with azaleas, daffodils, and roses in our suburban yards to such an extent, that the insects at the bottom of the food chain—which have specific relationships with native plants—are in decline. Birds eat bugs. If there are no bugs, there are no birds. It turns out that those beautiful azaleas and roses—so widespread and showy—are actually undercutting biodiversity, since suburbs

are so pervasive a land cover nowadays. Tallamy's message is simple: choose native plants for your garden to help sustain wildlife.

I ended up moving the monarch caterpillar to a bigger swamp milkweed so he wouldn't completely strip the milkweed seedling. Earlier, I would have squashed him. But my attitude is changing. Instead of seeing the finely striped caterpillar as an enemy, I'm seeing this creature as part of the beautiful, intricately evolved system that sustains life on this continent. As I write, the late-flowering boneset (*Eupatorium serotinum*) blooms out on the rain garden bank. It's not what you'd call a classic garden stunner, having only small off-white blossoms. It's a plant that grows unnoticed along road edges in September. But the bumblebees love it! They're all over it! Appreciating the beauty there—the ecology of insects and native plants—feels like a different and more meaningful kind of aesthetic. Like repairing damage; like restoration. Read Doug Tallamy's book: it's a treasure trove of bug pictures and natural history. You'll find the abundant bug pictures and natural history a delight.



Above: A monarch butterfly perches atop the blooming crown of a Green-headed coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*), also known as the Tall coneflower. Below: Fall berries, flowers, and foliage grace AWS's rain garden in late September 2009.



You May Be Able To Support AWS Through Workplace Giving!

Workplace giving is another way you may choose to support the Anacostia Watershed Society. AWS participates in employee payroll deduction giving campaigns at the workplace as a member of Community1st-America's Charities of Greater Washington, DC.

For over 25 years, America's Charities has brought many of the best-known and most-loved charities to workplace giving campaigns run by hundreds of employers across the USA. Please support us in your workplace campaign. If your employer does not have a payroll deduction campaign or does not offer the choice of giving to AWS, ask about bringing America's Charities to your workplace. America's Charities works with employers to develop employee-friendly, cost-effective and productive campaigns.

For more information: 800/458-9505 or visit www.charitiesdc.org.



ATTENTION FEDERAL EMPLOYEES: IT'S TIME FOR THE CFC!

According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Combined Federal Campaign (or CFC) is the world's largest and most successful annual workplace giving campaign. Through it, every federal employee in the country has an opportunity to promote and support a favorite charity by deducting a monthly, tax-free donation directly from their paychecks. This fall, please remember AWS when you complete your 2010 CFC form. **Our CFC number is 88425.** Thank you for your support!



Anacostia Watershed Society
4302 Baltimore Avenue
Bladensburg, MD 20710
p. 301-699-6204
f. 301-699-3317
e. info@anacostiaws.org
w. www.anacostiaws.org

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AWS FALL 2009 CALENDAR

SPECIAL EVENTS[†]

November 12

AWS Lecture Series featuring Howard Ernst, author of *Fight for the Bay* and Associate Professor of Political Science at the U.S. Naval Academy
Time: 7PM - 8:30PM
RSVPs are appreciated.

TREE PLANTING VOLUNTEER EVENTS[†]

Oct. 24 & 31, Nov. 5 & 21
Locations & Times: Contact AWS for specific locations and event times or visit www.anacostiaws.org for an updated calendar.
RSVP: Please call 301-699-6204 or write to Steve McKindley-Ward at steve@anacostiaws.org.

TRASH CLEANUP VOLUNTEER EVENTS[†]

No trash cleanup events are scheduled at this time. Please visit AWS's online calendar at www.anacostiaws.org for new dates as they become available. If you have a group of 8 or more volunteers, contact us to arrange a date and time for a cleanup event.

INVASIVE PLANT VOLUNTEER EVENTS[†]

Nov. 7 & Dec. 5
Greenbelt Park, Greenbelt, MD
Time: 11AM - 3PM
Nov. 21 & Dec. 19
Magruder Park, Hyattsville, MD
Time: 9AM - 1PM

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Weekday office volunteers are needed during regular business hours (9AM to 5PM) for data entry & other clerical tasks. Please call 301-699-6204 or write to info@anacostiaws.org for more information.

Oct. 31, Nov. 28, Dec. 26

Little Paint Branch Park, Beltsville MD
Time: 11AM - 3PM

Nov. 12 & 14, Dec. 12
Ft. Dupont Park, Washington, DC
Time: 9AM - 2PM

AWS OFFICES CLOSED

Nov. 26 & 27 - Thanksgiving Holiday

Dec. 24 to Jan. 3, 2010 - Winter Holidays

†Participation may require pre-registration or RSVP. Please visit AWS on the Web at www.anacostiaws.org or call 301-699-6204 for information. All events are subject to rescheduling or cancellation without notice.