

APRIL



THE POWER OF TREES

Trees, shrubs and other plants that **GROW NEXT TO STREAMS AND RIVERS** — also known as *forest buffers* — prevent pollution from entering waterways, steady stream banks, provide food and habitat for wildlife and keep streams cool during hot weather.

Trees also help keep our air clean and our ecosystems healthy. We breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide. Trees breathe

carbon dioxide and breathe out oxygen. We're perfect partners!

To celebrate the importance of trees, we have two designated days in April. As a nation, we observe Arbor Day on the **LAST FRIDAY OF APRIL**. However, the best time to plant a tree varies by state depending on when the weather begins to warm and the soil softens from winter. In Maryland, we celebrate our own Arbor Day on the first **WEDNESDAY IN APRIL**.



PLANT A TREE!

Talk to your parents about planting a tree in your yard. Since trees grow in all shapes and sizes, check out these guides on how to **CHOOSE** and how to **PLANT**.



A TREE TRIBUTE

An acrostic poem is one that spells out a word or phrase vertically.

Using the first letter of each line, it's your job to write the rest. Start with the letters on the right to describe what you like best about trees!

I _____

L _____

O _____

V _____

E _____

T _____

R _____

E _____

E _____

S _____

MAY



THE NATIVE WAY

Native plants — or plants that either occur naturally, have developed, or have existed for many years in a given area — play a vital role in sustaining Maryland’s ecosystems. Sitting at the base of the food chain, they support many types of insects, which in turn support larger reptiles, amphibians and mammals. As an added bonus, many **NATIVE PLANTS LOOK BEAUTIFUL** in backyards and gardens, and famously require less work than non-natives.

Plants introduced from other parts of the world in different types of environments can mean big trouble for the ecosystems that natives work so hard to support. These *invasive species* can aggressively take over a forest, stream or open land, robbing everything else of space, sunlight and food. They tend to spread quickly and can be very difficult (and costly) to remove. In fact, almost half the rare, threatened or endangered species in the nation are listed as such **BECAUSE OF SPREADING INVASIVES**.

NAME THAT PLANT!

To the right are photos of the top ten native plants in Maryland. Explore your backyard or local park to see how many you can spot. If you have a smartphone or tablet with you, you can use apps such as **LEAF SNAP**, **NATUREGATE** and **PLANTNET** to identify species on the spot!



BEEBALM



BLACK CHERRY



CARDINAL FLOWER



COMMON MILKWEED



GOLDENRODS



NORTHERN RED OAK



RED CHOKEBERRY



SILKY DOGWOOD



SWITCHGRASS



WINTERBERRY HOLLY

WORD SEARCH Find the following words in the puzzle below!

- 1. BACKYARD
- 3. ECOSYSTEM
- 5. GOLDENROD
- 7. INVASIVES
- 9. NATIVE
- 2. BEEBALM
- 4. GARDEN
- 6. HOLLY
- 8. MILKWEED
- 10. PLANT

T S O Y A L G D T U D B I C G I P S M N V X T P B
 U O E E L A O W Y G O N E N Q N H T M A R B D N E
 Q F Y V R L H S D D R D C E J L G D N T W X H L I
 D X D D I X O Q Z G N V L D B G R Q J I T N A L P
 M L E Y A S E H Q W E A Y L M A G H I V J K R A Z
 S N N I U K A Q W U D X X C Y I L S B E S D K A G
 N O B W W M P V I L L W A K N O Q M X Y O D F N L
 V F R V R E Q P N H O N C E O D H F P W U A S D I
 M E T S Y S O C E I G A N X M O Y M Q U M N V O N
 M I L K W E E D S O B P X I Q Y N N E K E S G C O

JUNE

SPLASH! INTO SUMMER

Hello friends, fellow boaters and aquatic enthusiasts! Allow me to introduce myself. My name is **Splash the Water Safety Dog**, and I am here to remind you always to be safe around the water.

Even though we Chesapeake Bay Retrievers are excellent swimmers, I feel so much safer wearing my life jacket. It floats — I don't! Accidents can happen very quickly, and if you don't know the proper way to handle the situation, you could get seriously hurt.

Wearing your life jacket can mean the difference between life and death. Did you know 84 percent of boating accident drowning victims were not wearing a life jacket? That's a scary statistic — well over half! Fatalities can be avoided, so let's play it safe.

All you have to do is pick a jacket you like and **WEAR IT** any time you're near the water. They come in many different colors and styles that are designed for various **water-related activities**. Find which option works best for you!



Spreading the word in Annapolis with my pal Bill the Goat!

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Answer the clues below to fill in the blanks.

ACROSS

- 3. What can happen if you're not safe
- 5. What you should always wear while near water
- 6. The Water Safety Dog

DOWN

- 1. One type of boat you can use on a water trail
- 2. Type of dog Splash is
- 4. Where to paddle, kayak or canoe

Answer Key: ACROSS: 3. accident; 5. life jacket; 6. splash
DOWN: 1. kayak; 2. retriever; 4. Water trail

GO FOR A PADDLE!

From open waters to quiet creeks to raging whitewater, our state has a wide **VARIETY OF WATERWAYS**. To date, Maryland has more than 600 miles of designated water trails. These trails provide well-mapped, easy-to-get-to day trips in a variety of settings and for all levels of paddling experience.

Grab an adult and a kayak, canoe or paddleboard, and enjoy a trail in your neck of the woods or take a trip and explore somewhere new. While paddling, you'll see historical sites, wildlife and wetlands first-hand. No matter which trail you choose, wear a life jacket!

