



# Chesapeake Ecology Center Update

Fall 2008



Saturday, October 25, 9 a.m. - noon

## Make a Difference Day at the Chesapeake Ecology Center (CEC)

at Adams Academy at Adams Park  
245 Clay Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

Join us for the installation of a new Rain Garden! We will also plant trees and shrubs in other locations to add to the 20 Native Plant Demonstration Gardens and Sites-which are a public resource. Tour the 10-acre grounds, along the tidal headwaters of College Creek, and check out the beautiful fall colors! Snacks and tools will be provided. This project is made possible with funding from Unity Gardens.

Notably, CEC volunteers will work with Adams Academy students the following week; and adult volunteers are welcome.

### Directions

The Chesapeake Ecology Center is located just minutes from downtown and the State Capital, on the grounds of Adams Academy (alternative middle school) at Adams Park, 245 Clay Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

#### Directions from Route 50

Take Exit 24 Rowe Blvd. toward Annapolis; turn right on Taylor Ave. (just past the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium); turn left onto Glenwood St. (0.42 miles); Glenwood St. becomes Clay St.; turn left into the parking lot and you're there!



*October gave a party;  
The leaves by hundreds came -  
The Chestnuts, Oaks, and Maples,  
And leaves of every name.  
The Sunshine spread a carpet,  
And everything was grand,  
Miss Weather led the dancing,  
Professor Wind the band.*

~George Cooper, "October's Party"



## **Compost - It's Habitat Forming!**

'Tis the season to make compost. Composting is nature's way of recycling organic material. It is a great way to recycle nutrients from our garden clippings, autumn leaves, and other organic materials and to re-use them by making a valuable soil amendment. Compost is often referred to by gardeners as "black gold." By shredding and mixing grass clippings, plant stalks, leaves, twigs, and (where appropriate) kitchen scraps, the rate of decomposition can be increased. Materials that attract pests (such as meat and fat), promote disease (such as pet waste), promote weeds (weed seeds and roots), cause odors, or create other nuisances should not be composted.

Adding yard waste to a compost pile is more convenient than bagging and dragging leaves and grass to the roadside curb. Why throw away, then go and buy a resource you have right in your own backyard? Usually the most accessible items to add to a compost pile or bin are leaves, shredded cardboard or newspaper (black and white only), sawdust, straw, twigs and other woody materials, which are examples of carbon-rich or "brown" material; while fresh grass and garden clippings, fruit and vegetable scraps, and coffee grounds and filters are nitrogen-rich "green" material.

### **An easy formula to remember is:**

"One part green, two parts brown\*, makes the yard waste turn to ground.  
Add some water and some soil, turning is the only toil."

(\*Proportions may vary.)

### **Factors to keep in mind:**

- Locate your compost bin or pile in an appropriate area, as close to where it will be used as possible, without being in the way.
- Shredding yard waste hastens decay.
- Nitrogen, e.g., fresh grass clippings, accelerates decomposition, although too much nitrogen can cause odors.
- Air: The pile or bin should be well ventilated. Turning the pile speeds up the decomposition process.
- Water: The compost pile should be kept as moist as a squeezed sponge.
- Volume: The bin or pile should be at least 3 feet square to ensure enough heat build up. Temperatures of 160 degrees and above will kill most weeds seeds.

You'll have a valuable soil amendment for your garden within a few weeks to a few months (based on moisture and how often the pile is turned). Notably, if your pile is very large, it may become difficult to turn. Anaerobic (without oxygen) composting can work too, if you don't turn or aerate your compost; but it works more slowly.

### **Did You Know?**

Yard waste alone accounts for approximately 18 to 20 percent of municipal solid waste, and during peak seasons, can account for 25 to 50 percent, according to the US Environmental Protection Agency. Backyard composting saves valuable landfill space. It also saves taxpayers the additional costs to collect, haul, and manage yard waste.

### **You Can Make A Difference!**

- Add a compost bin(s) or make a compost pile and in your yard for leaves, grass clippings, and other yard trimmings.
- Add compost to your garden-it's a valuable soil amendment.
- Learn more at: [www.epa.gov/osw/conservation/rrr/composting/](http://www.epa.gov/osw/conservation/rrr/composting/)



***“What people don’t understand, they won’t value. And what they don’t value, they won’t protect; what they don’t protect they will lose.”***

**- Charles R. Jordan, *The Conservation Fund***