



THE SEVERN RIVER ASSOCIATION

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MARCH 2016 OYSTER NEWS

Another easy winter (except for Snowzilla) and your oysters should have survived well down near the bottom at your piers. Spring arrived last weekend, and the water is warming up - now 49 degrees at the mouth of the Severn. It's just about time to bring the cages up to their summer level 12" or 18" below low tide. They must also be cleaned of their winter accumulation of sediment so lift them up and "tea bag" the cages while you're raising them to their summer home. You also need to redistribute the shells in the cages, they are going to enjoy a growth "spurt" in early spring. Bring the cages up on the deck, roll them over a couple of times, and knock loose any shells attached to the cage. A little attention now will lead to greater growth this spring.

Circle June 4th on your calendar for the oyster planting day, and start thinking about how your local group will organize to gather the oysters from the cages for this planting. We'll provide details in subsequent Oyster News.

DNR remains committed to the Marylanders Grow Oysters Program and the fine people at the University of Maryland's Center for Environmental Science's Horn Point Oyster Hatchery are gearing up for another major spat setting season. Here's what they say about the oyster's role in the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem: <http://hatchery.hpl.umces.edu/oysters/importance-of-oysters/> .

This year, SRA's Maureen Burt is organizing cleanups at three sites in the Severn River watershed. Two are in the Severn Run Natural Environmental Area near where Veterans Highway meets I-97. The third is in Crownsville just off General's Highway. If you'd like to help beautify our dear river, meet your neighbors and get a free lunch, please volunteer to help at one of the sites listed at <http://www.severnriver.org/> .

Bob Whitcomb

Chair, SRA Oyster Committee