



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

Summer 2015

Greetings New Oyster Gardeners,

Thank you for your interest in participating in the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) Oyster Gardening program. You are about to embark on a fun and rewarding journey raising your very own oysters for a year! In partnership with the Elizabeth River Project and Lynnhaven River Now, this program has been one of CBF's most impactful restoration endeavors because it provides hundreds of citizens with a hands-on opportunity to grow and nurture thousands of oysters each year.

Oysters play an important role in the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. Every oyster is like a living "water treatment plant" and the cumulative effect of this program is of great impact. The informational brochure in this package will provide you with tips to help you become a successful Oyster Gardener. Please be aware that the brochure emphasizes how to grow single "seed" oysters using bags and floats. Through the CBF program, you will grow "spat-on-shell".

Seed oysters have been beneficial to restoration efforts, but they perform best when they are cultivated for human consumption. Spat-on-shell oysters are better suited for restoration because they grow in natural "clumps" that keep them protected from predators while providing abundant habitat for many Bay species.

This June, you will have an opportunity to attend a free workshop where you can learn how to maintain a productive Oyster Garden. If you choose, you can purchase a bundle of spat-on-shell oysters and two small cages for \$30. This materials fee will include a one-year membership to CBF.



Spat-on-Shell: a whole shell with several oysters permanently attached.



A single cage full of spat-on-shell can easily be hung off your dock.



After growing your oysters for about one year, you will return them to CBF at an Oyster Gardening Round-Up event in 2016 (dates TBD). You can also pick up more baby oysters at this time. You may keep your cages as they should last for many years with proper care. We will replace lost or damaged cages at no cost.

Returning your one-year-old oysters is one of the most important parts of this process. They will be mature and ready to thrive on a sanctuary reef near your home!

When it's time to return your oysters, they should be about the size of the oysters in the middle. Spat-on-shell oysters turn into "mini oyster reefs!"

*(Left to right) 1 month, 4 month,
& 3-year-old spat-on-shell oysters*

What are the next steps?

1. Register for one of our events. To do so, visit www.cbf.org/vaoystergardening, email OysterGardener@cbf.org, or call 757/622-1964 ext. 3303.
2. If you like, come and learn how to care for spat-on-shell oysters during a brief presentation at one of the dates/locations given below. If you want to just start growing your new spat-on-shell oysters, you can take home your oysters and cages at a round-up listed below.
3. Grow your "babies" for about one year.
4. Return your oysters at a 2016 Oyster Gardening event and pick up a new batch of babies!

2015 Oyster Gardening Seminar Workshops			
Event Area	Location	Date	Time
Southside <i>(Norfolk)</i>	Norfolk Yacht & Country Club	Tuesday, June 9	<i>Round-up:</i> 6:00 – 8:00 pm <i>Seminar:</i> 6:00 Registration 6:30-7:30 Presentation
Eastern Shore <i>(Wachapreague)</i>	VA Institute of Marine Science	Thursday, June 11	<i>Round-up:</i> 6:00 – 8:00 pm <i>Seminar:</i> 6:00 Registration 6:30-7:30 Presentation
Northern Neck <i>(Kinsale)</i>	Bevan's Oyster Company	Saturday, June 13	<i>Round-up:</i> 9:00 – 11:00 am <i>Seminar:</i> 9:00 Registration 9:30-10:30 Presentation
Lower Peninsula <i>(Newport News)</i>	Mariner's Museum	Tuesday, June 16	<i>Round-up:</i> 6:00 – 8:00 pm <i>Seminar:</i> 6:00 Registration 6:30-7:30 Presentation
Middle Peninsula <i>(Deltaville)</i>	Dozier Regatta Marina	Saturday, June 20	<i>Round-up:</i> 9:00 – 11:00 am <i>Seminar:</i> 9:00 Registration 9:30-10:30 Presentation
Southside <i>(Virginia Beach)</i>	Brock Environmental Center	Saturday, June 27	<i>Round-up:</i> 9:00 – 11:00 am <i>Seminar:</i> 9:00 Registration 9:30-10:30 Presentation

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO FOR CLEAN WATER!!

– The Virginia Oyster Crew
(Jackie Shannon & Heather North)

OysterGardener@cbf.org
757/ 622-1964 ext. 3303.
www.cbf.org/vaoystergardening

This program is in partnership with:

