

NEWS RELEASE

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Adkins Arboretum Completes *Parking Lot Alive!*

June marked the completion of *Parking Lot Alive!*, a parking lot retrofit project at Adkins Arboretum. The project transformed a barren sea of asphalt into a parking lot that demonstrates best practices for managing stormwater and benefits from lush plantings and added shade.

Over the span of four months, Unity Landscape Design/Build implemented a design by Champion Hruby Landscape Architects and DesignGreen, LLC to create a beautiful, functional and innovative cultivated garden designed as a series



of stormwater management devices. The parking lot is now outfitted with six erosion sediment control devices and seven additional planted gardens. Eleven areas throughout the lot have been densely planted with 17,000 native plants.

Areas of the lot were excavated and regraded to help direct stormwater, slow its flow and allow it to be absorbed into the landscape instead of flowing unchecked to the Arboretum wetland, Blockston Branch, the Choptank River and, ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay. Asphalt was removed and replaced with permeable pavers that also function as a pathway to the entrance bridge. An underground hydraulic bridge connects some of the gardens and now serves as an overflow redundancy for heavy rain events. The past month's heavy rains have been held by planted swales that allow the rainfall to gradually percolate and transpire.

The dense plantings of trees, shrubs and herbaceous perennials have already attracted numerous species of birds and pollinators and will offer much-needed shade once they become

established. A broad variety of native plants was selected for both dry and wet conditions, and plants were installed densely to reduce weed pressure.

Arboretum volunteers assisted in planting five of the garden beds and continue to help keep weeds at bay. Volunteers and staff have already dedicated more than 300 hours to planting and caring for the gardens. The public is invited to visit, enjoy the gardens and learn about best practices for managing stormwater.

Parking Lot Alive! was funded by the Chesapeake Bay Trust G3 Implementation Phase Grant Program and the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays 2010 Trust Fund. The Arboretum has been fortunate to partner with project designers Campion Hruby Landscape Architects and Design Green, LLC and contractors Unity Landscape Design/Build, and to consult with the Caroline County Department of Planning and Codes and the University of Maryland Sea Grant Extension Program.

Photos by Kellen McCluskey

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Adkins Arboretum is a 400-acre native garden and preserve at the headwaters of the Tuckahoe Creek in Caroline County. Open year round, the Arboretum offers educational programs for all ages about nature and gardening. For more information, visit adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

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