

Merkle Natural Resources Management Area

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Merkle Natural Resources Management Area

11704 Fenno Road
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
Ph: 301-888-1377, 301-888-1410



Hours of Operation: Sunrise to Sunset


SOUTHERN REGION

Merkle Natural Resources Management Area

Merkle NRMA is the wintering ground for the largest concentration of Canada Geese on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay. It was named after Edgar Merkle (1900-1984), an active conservationist who devoted much of his life to protecting wildlife. Starting with a handful of breeding pairs, a great deal of perseverance and a plan for habitat improvement, he eventually encouraged thousands of geese to feed and rest at the 400-acre farm. In 1970, the Merkle's sold their land to the State. With the acquisition of adjoining tracts, the Merkle NRMA now encompasses 1,670 acres.

A handsome building, the Frank Oslisto Visitor Center sits atop a rise overlooking several ponds and many acres of handsome fields and woods sloping down to the Patuxent River. Its two-story wall of windows and circular balconies face a spectacular view.

Inside, seasonal exhibits encompass a variety of environmental and wildlife topics, including the life history and management of the Canada goose. In addition to many kid-friendly displays, a discovery room stocked with crayons, books and dress-up clothes also features live turtles, snakes and toads.

-  **HIKING**
Four hikers-only trails
-  **SIGHTSEEING**
Many species call this park home
-  **PICNICKING**
Several scenic locations
-  **FISHING**
Five stocked ponds



Chesapeake Bay Program

Nature Trails

Four trails, open to hikers only, wind through the upland forests and marshes of the Patuxent River. They range from .72 to 3 miles.

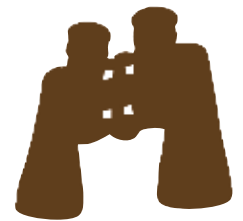
Fishing

Five stocked public ponds — open from April 1 to October 1 — offer large mouth bass, blue gill and various other species. Refer to the Maryland Recreational Fishing Guide at eregulations.com/Maryland/fishing for other regulations and restrictions.



Wildlife

Upper Marlboro hosts one of the most diverse bird populations in Maryland. Bring your binoculars to glimpse a variety of hummingbirds, finches and purple martins. You're likely to see great blue herons stalking their prey and ospreys nesting close to the Visitor Center. Other frequent sightings include white-tailed deer, red fox and skunk.



Chesapeake Bay Program



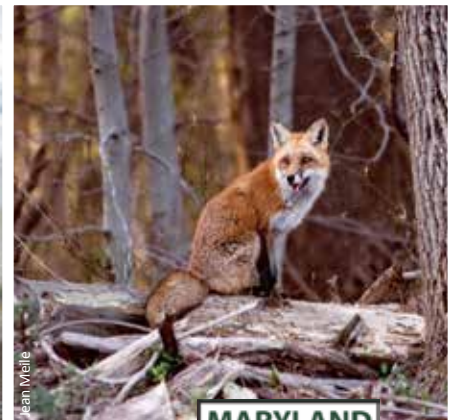
John C. Gorman



M/D DNR



Chesapeake Bay Program



Jean Weile

Bring the dog

Dogs on a leash are welcome. Please remember to clean up after your pet.



Picnic in comfort

Several picnic tables are located around the sanctuary. Grills and open fires are not permitted.

