



Celebrating 20 Years of
coast kids
2003 to 2023

A Year In Review
2022-2023

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www.ACTforBays.org
(410) 629-1538



Introducing our Strategic Vision

Beaches. Magnificent coastal bays. Endless recreation opportunities. Charming seaside towns. The natural beauty of the Delmarva peninsula is a draw for residents and visitors alike. For over 50 years, Assateague Coastal Trust (ACT) has protected and defended the health of Delmarva’s waters, along with our public health, rural character and unique quality of life.

This year we are celebrating Coast Kids 20th anniversary. Two decades of building the next generation of environmental stewards. They will be critical for a future where our coastal waters, drinking water, and natural areas are clean, valued and protected by those who live, work and play in the region.

Over the next five years, we will focus on three key priorities to defend our coastal waters and communities from the rising threats of climate change, development and sources of pollution.

Working together we will:



Inform, influence and hold government and businesses accountable for clean water policies and regulations;



Educate and engage residents and visitors to be active stewards of and lifelong advocates for Delmarva’s waters; and



Grow our capacity, funding and effectiveness to defend the coastal waters.

This is a big job that will take all of us, working collaboratively with our community, partners and funders. We invite you to join us.



Eric Vinson
Chairman of the Board of Directors



Brenda Davis
Executive Director

About our Organization's Direction

Assateague Coastal Trust (ACT) was first established in 1970 as The Committee to Preserve Assateague Island. The catalyst for this all-volunteer group was the introduction of legislation that established Assateague Island National Seashore, including a provision that would have allowed a significant portion of the island to be developed as a resort, destroying the unspoiled beauty of the island. The Committee succeeded in saving Assateague and ACT was formed to continue the work of protecting the water.



In 2002, ACT joined the Waterkeeper Alliance and launched the [Assateague COASTKEEPER®](#) program, which serves as our on-the-water monitor, on-the-ground educator, and in-the-trenches advocate for clean water and healthy communities.

Our [Coast Kids Program](#) was launched in 2003 to provide environmental education and interactive nature experiences for area youth and their families. Coast Kids allows ACT to educate and engage our next generation of environmental stewards.

Building on our proud past, ACT's Board and staff developed this Strategic Roadmap to focus our efforts and clearly define our future. Guided by Due East Partners, our planning process began with engaging and learning from key constituents including:

16 Current and former board and staff members

5 Key constituents representing local conservation groups, partners, funders and innovators

38 Local residents and businesses, former board and staff, longtime volunteers, agencies, funders and partners who responded to our community survey

ACT's Board and staff participated in multiple planning sessions from fall 2022 through early 2023. The goal is a 5-year Strategic Roadmap (p. 7) with a refreshed mission, vision, and values made actionable through 3 updated priorities, corresponding strategies and performance measures. Recognizing ACT's leadership role and shared accountability for improving Delmarva's waterways, our Strategic Roadmap concludes with two collective goals:

- **People across the watershed are actively engaged in protecting Delmarva's waters; and**
- **Swimmable, fishable, drinkable waters across a thriving coastal watershed.**



Board of Directors

Eric Vinson
President & Treasurer

Wyatt Harrison
Vice President

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Secretary

Charlie Brown
Board Director

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Board Director

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Board Director

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Brenda Davis
Executive Director

Verena Chase
Coast Kids Program Director

Debbi Dean
Community Engagement Coordinator

Nicole Maskell
Operations/ Administrative Specialist

Hiring Fall '23
Assateague Coastkeeper



MISSION: Working with diverse community partners, we protect and defend the health of Delmarva's waters through advocacy, education, science and the enforcement of clean water laws.

VISION: Our coastal waters, drinking water, and natural areas are clean, valued, and protected by those who live, work and play in the region.

VALUES: ACT is a passionate advocate for our diverse communities and ecosystems. Our board, staff, volunteers and partners strive to be collaborative and results-driven. We believe every community has both a right to clean water and a voice to protect that right.



230 water samples tested in 2022



1,000+ students educated in 2022



Advocacy:

ACT's **COASTKEEPER®** ensures water policies and regulations are enforced and polluters are held accountable. ACT regularly monitors the quality of our waters. Local residents, businesses, and technologies such as **Swim Guide**, **Water Reporter**, and **MyCoast** apps, help elevate this work.



Environmental Education:

ACT's **Coast Kids Program** educates our youth and their families through hands-on outdoor experiences in how to properly care for our coastal bays, creating the next generation of environmental stewards.



Community:

ACT's **Community Outreach Coordinator** engages with the community about the importance of the environment, protecting public health and quality of life for all living things. We provide public assistance through regulatory processes, informative lectures, trash clean-ups, nature exploration and other proactive opportunities.

20 YEARS OF coast kids

ASSATEAGUE COASTAL TRUST

Never stop asking questions!

- ✓ 15,000 people participated in 240 year-round, monthly Coast Kids events.
- ✓ Over 3000 students learned about environmental issues and solutions at Coast Kids in-school programs.
- ✓ Over 300 science classes were held for homeschool students.
- ✓ 70 weekly scholarships for the Nature Explorers summer camp were awarded during 22 camp weeks.
- ✓ 48 Coast Cards and 15 Look Books published.



Coast Kids is fun for the whole family!

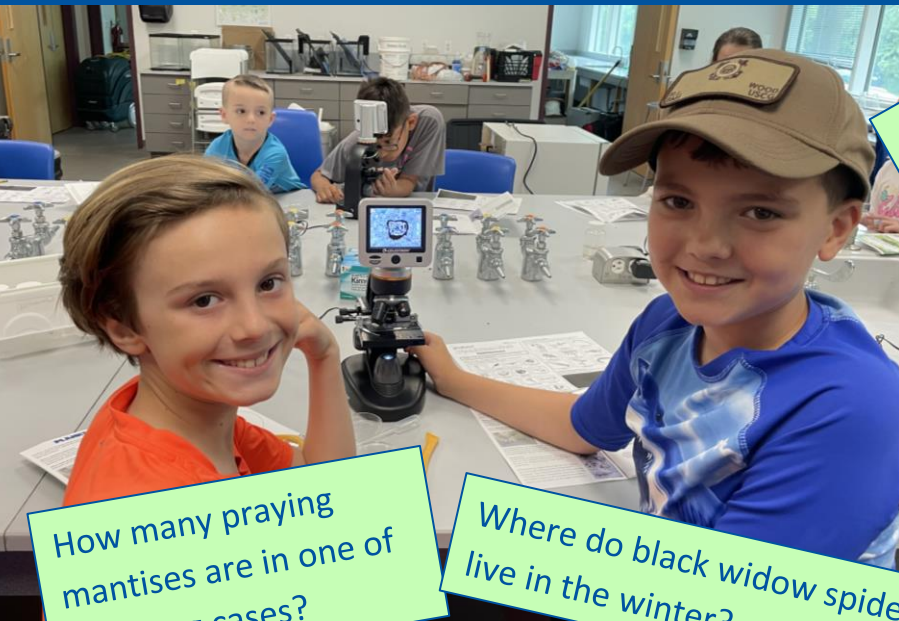
A year-long Coast Kids membership includes:

- 12 free monthly events such as bird banding, kayaking, or building nesting boxes for native bees
- A Coast Kids T-shirt designed by Marc Emond
- A membership present such as a Coast Kids water bottle



Sign up for Coast Kids memberships here

Costs: \$35 for first child, \$20 for each additional sibling

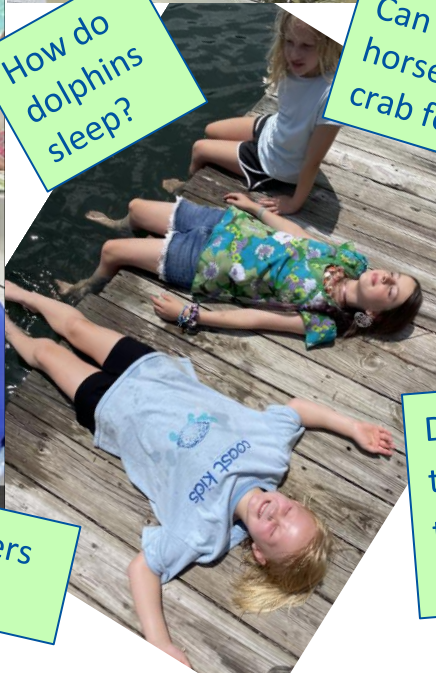


How many praying mantises are in one of their egg cases?

Where do black widow spiders live in the winter?

How do dolphins sleep?

Can I have a horseshoe crab for a pet?



Do bees become nice bees, when they grow up in a nice beehive, and they get the sweetest honey when they are babies?

What do roly-polies eat?



Water Quality Monitoring

Swim Guide is a tool used by our **COASTKEEPER®** to share water quality data since 2014.

“**Swim Guide** has helped to prevent **thousands** of waterborne illnesses simply by making it easy for people to know when their water is contaminated and when it is clean for swimming”.

Water samples are collected, and bacteria levels are compared to the regional government standards. Each area is given a “**PASS**” or “**FAIL**” rating until the next samples are collected.

You can use **Swim Guide’s** free website www.theSwimGuide.org or download the smartphone app for iOS and Android.



Available on the App Store



ANDROID APP ON Google play

www.theswimguide.org



2022 Swim Guide Statistics

15 Weeks (Memorial Day – Labor Day)

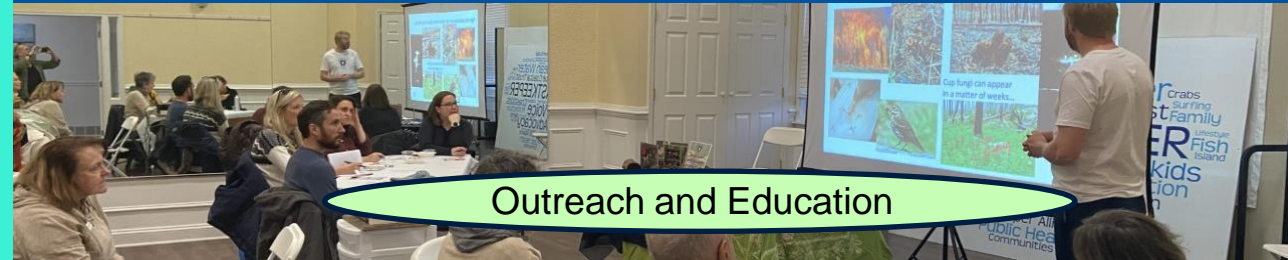
31 Frequently used recreational areas

465 Bacteria samples reported

14,519 Swim Guide clicks

Outreach, Education, Fundraisers & Volunteering

ACT is always looking for innovative ways to educate the public about ways to achieve cleaner water through education. We would love to have your involvement through volunteering with outreach, fundraising and special events.



Outreach and Education



Volunteers



Fundraisers

FACTS



1,853 square miles of Maryland's coastal waters that support aquatic and wildlife are listed as impaired. (1)



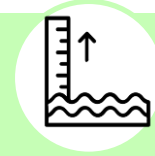
Healthy coastal areas promote a healthy economy. A 2021 study found Delaware Inland Bays support \$4.5 billion in economic activity every year and 35,000 jobs throughout the state. (2)



Sources:

- 1: [EPA: Maryland Water Quality Overview](#)
- 2: [The Economic Value of Delaware Inland Bays](#)

Between 1980 and 2019, sea levels near Worcester County rose roughly 0.6 feet leading to more frequent and severe coastal flooding and property damage. Sea levels will rise an additional 0.5 to 2.4 feet in the next 50 years (by 2070), submerging property and permanently reshaping Worcester County's coastline. Worcester County residents will face increasingly severe weather- and other climate-related hazards such as heat waves, flooding, and storm surge. (3)



Rising water tables cause septic backups and groundwater pollution, putting drinking water at risk of contamination. (4)



Thousands of acres of wetlands have been lost to rising seas. By 2050, 50% of the lower Eastern Shore's high marshes are expected to disappear. (5)



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- 3 & 4: [Worcester County Community Climate Outlook](#)
- 5: [FWS: An Effort to Conserve the Delmarva Peninsula's Wetlands](#)

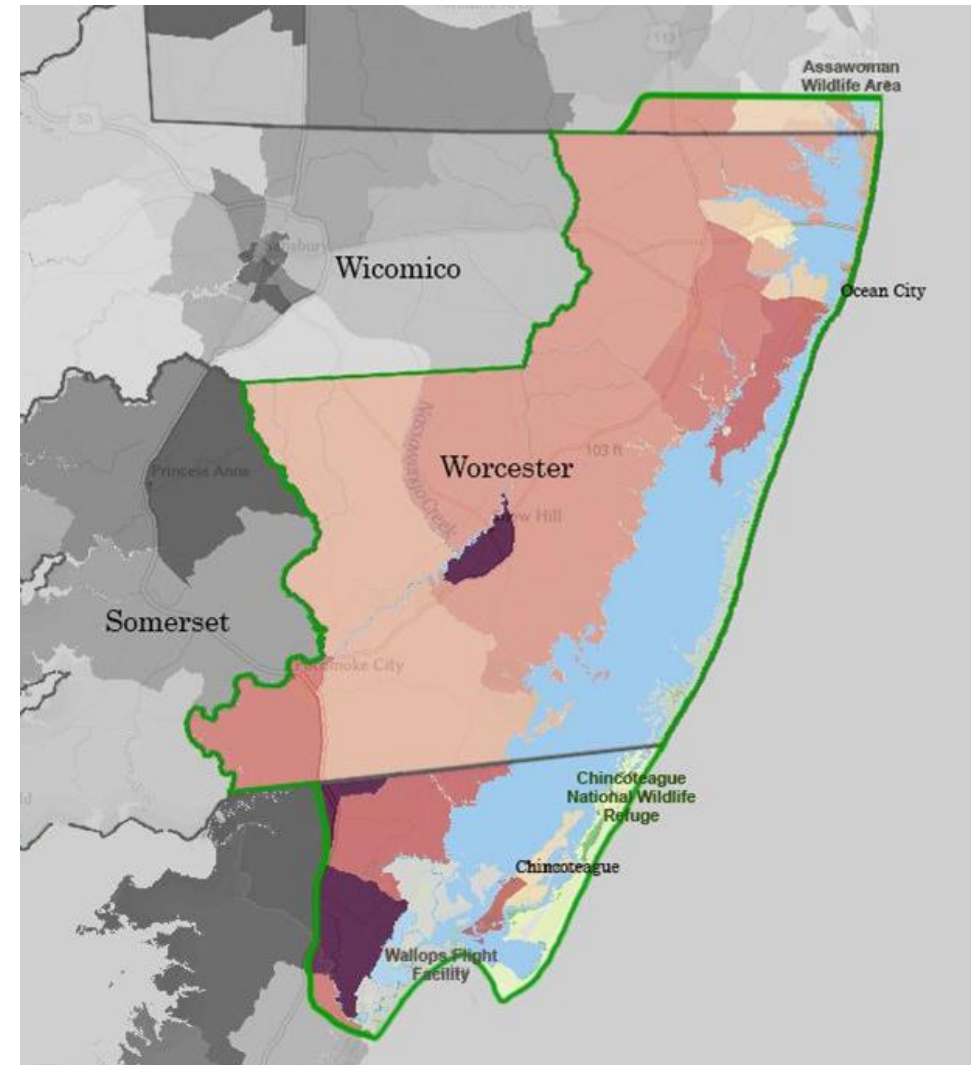
Improving Our Water Protecting Our Health

What is Water Quality?

The Clean Water Act, enacted over 50 years ago by the federal government, set a standard for water quality for the health of people, wildlife and the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency has further defined that standard as swimmable, fishable, and drinkable waters for all.

Where do we work?

Our COASTKEEPER® jurisdiction includes Worcester County and small portions of Delaware and Virginia covering roughly 823 sq. miles. Amplifying the voices of impacted communities is a staple of our work. See our website for a full [list of creeks, prongs, and bays](#) where we routinely monitor water quality.



*ACT and our COASTKEEPER® serves areas outlined in green. Pink/purple shading reflects ACS poverty/equity status based on median income with dark purple areas displaying >24% of the population, and the darker pink areas representing ~13% of the national average

THANK YOU!

2022 Donors and Supporters

BAY DEFENDER LEVEL \$1,000+

American Legion Post 166, Catherine Cooper, Charles Delmar Foundation, E. Bowen & Frances Hyde Quillin Foundation, Elizabeth Daugherty, Karen Hunter, Elsie MacMullin, Richard McBride, Deborah Palmer and Kenneth & Stacy Paulsen

WATERSHED DEFENDER LEVEL \$500 - \$999

Carol Armstrong, Marc Custodio, Ken Diu, Eleanor R. Humphrey, Mary Ann Le May, Leta Serafim, Bobby Taylor, United Way of Carlisle & Cumberland County and VM Ware Foundation

SWIM & FISH ADVOCATE LEVEL \$250 - \$499

Charles Brown, Dave Darrah, Kent Giles, Alfred Harrison, Marc & Phyllis Koenings, Parker McIntosh, Wayne & Virginia Outten, Patricia Pilling, David Quillin, Kate Shaffer and Joan Worrall

CLEAN WATER PATRON LEVEL UP TO \$249

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GRANT SUPPORT

Anonymous, Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, Surf Industry Members Association and Stroud Water Research Center

WORKPLACE GIVING SUPPORT

American Online Giving Foundation, America's Charities, The Benevity Community Impact Fund, Earthshare and Maryland Charity Campaign

DONOR ADVISED SUPPORT

Network For Good and Give Lively Foundation

LOCAL BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP SUPPORT

45th Street Taphouse, American Legion Post #166, Assateague Surf Shop, Bank of Ocean City, Buxy's Salty Dog Saloon, Cabana's Beach Bar & Grill, Cork Bar & Grill, Crawl Street Tavern, Deeley Insurance Group, ERA Martin Associates - Donna Frankowski, ERA Martin Associates - Julie Woulfe, , Legion Riders Post #166, Heart of Gold, Mary Mac Foundation, MD Coast - Worcester Co Tourism, OC Wasabi, Orsted, Pit & Pub, Seacrets, Seaside Plumbing, Shotti's Point – OC, Sierra Club - Lower Eastern Shore Group, Sons of the American Legion Post #166, The Bearded Clam, The Original Greene Turtle, The Treasure Chest, Wild Bill's and World of Toys

ACT envisions a future where our coastal waters and natural areas are clean, valued and protected by the people who live, work and play in the coastal watershed.

Assateague Coastal Trust, Inc
PO Box 731
Berlin, MD 21811

Please consider donating to help us continue our mission.

