

# Mount Washington

The key to your community

# Life

Road to Recovery  
**BECKAH'S STORY**  
Training in Lillehammer  
**AN OLYMPIC EXPERIENCE**  
Capturing the Best of Baltimore  
**BILL ADAMS**

February 2014

## Best Kept Secret

The Cylburn Arboretum Gives Locals a Chance to Explore

## Outdoors

# Bird Extravaganza at Robert E. Lee Park

*Experience wildlife during this family-friendly event.*

by Bart Viguers  
Community contributor

“Bird” is the word this month at Robert E. Lee Park. On Feb. 15 and 16, between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., visitors to the park, located at 1000 Lakeside Drive, can meet live birds, play games, make crafts, go on birding hikes, help build a giant bird’s nest and enjoy hot drinks around the campfire. All ages are welcome to this free event, from beginning bird watchers to experts. Registration is not required.

In addition to the interactive bird activities, rangers and members of the Baltimore Bird Club will help visitors identify and record the bird species seen during the event. Scientists will use this information to track how bird populations are doing around the world. The Bird Extravaganza is part of the Great Backyard Bird Count, an annual four-day, worldwide event that engages bird watchers in counting birds to create a snapshot of where birds are today. Since scientists can’t document and understand the complex distribution and movements of so many species in such a short time, help is needed.

Attendees will learn how they can help and even count bird species in their own backyard. You might even see our resident eagles or one of the numerous hawk or owl species that frequent the park.



Photo courtesy of Bart Viguers

## Visit the Park

**ROBERT E. LEE Park is located** at 1000 Lakeside Drive. Parking is available at the end of Lakeside Drive or at the Falls Road light rail lot. For more information, call the park at 410-887-4156 or visit [roberteleepark.org](http://roberteleepark.org).

## Bald Eagles at Robert E. Lee

*National bird can be seen at the park.*

The bald eagle is a bird of prey found only in North America, and maybe even right in your backyard. At Robert E. Lee Park, 1000 Lakeside Drive, visitors often see a pair of bald eagles and their offspring soaring over the Lake Roland. Eagles mate for life, and the park has been fortunate to be their home for many years. The lake is a great attraction for the eagles, because fish comprise the majority of the eagle’s diet.

The bald eagle is both the national bird and the national animal of the United States. In the late 20th century, the bald eagle was on the brink of extirpation in the continental United States. The passage in 1973 of the Endangered Species Act and the banning of the pesticide dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethan contributed to the recovery of the bald eagle population and allowed future generations to enjoy this magnificent bird.

On Feb. 15 and 16 visitors to Robert E. Lee Park will help make a life size replica of a giant eagle’s nest, and hopefully add our resident eagles to the national bird count.

—*Information provided by Robert E. Lee Park Rangers*



Photo courtesy of Bart Viguers

## Learn About Hooded Birds

*A secretive species at Robert E. Lee.*

Hooded Mergansers are secretive ducks, and data on their population size and status is difficult to obtain. They are found on small ponds and rivers where they dive for fish, crayfish and other food, seizing it in their thin, serrated bills. They use a third set of eyelids, which act like a pair of goggles, to help them actively pursue their prey underwater. They are extremely agile swimmers and divers, but awkward on land because their legs are set far back on the body.

Several hooded mergansers arrived at Robert E. Lee Park, 1000 Lakeside Drive, at the end of November. The males will be easy to spot on Lake Roland or the Jones Falls, as their recognizable black and white colors stand out. When the drake is alert on the water, the fully-raised crest reveals an elaborate hood of white. Females are grayish-brown, with a shaggy, cinnamon-colored crest at the back of the head. Visitors to the park will help gather information on this handsome secretive species during the Bird Extravaganza on Feb. 15 and Feb. 16.

—*Information provided by Robert E. Lee Park Rangers*



Photo courtesy of Bart Viguers