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Marshes and Wetlands

In the 1920's the Black Marsh beaches were popular getaways for Baltimore city residents. It was an easy, inexpensive place to escape the heat of the summer, with picnic areas and even an amusement park.

Wetland describes the shallow wet area between the land and the water. Marshes are a type of wetland that are on the shoreline. Many fish, birds, reptiles, and invertebrates feed on the worms, periwinkles, mussels, small crustaceans, and insects that live in the wetlands. Two-thirds of the nation's commercial fish and shellfish depend on wetlands as nursery or spawning areas. Muskrats and beavers also call the wetlands their home.

Black Marsh is located close to developed areas, but it remains beautiful. It is part of North Point State Park and protected by the Maryland Park Service. Many different plants can be found in the marsh. Wetland grasses and marsh-loving shrubs are common in the Black Marsh. The land surrounding the marsh is covered dense forest.

The common reed is an invasive species that is a large threat to the marsh ecosystem. It reproduces vegetatively. In vegetative reproduction, genetically identical new growth detaches and develops from the parent plant without the need for pollination. Because of this, common reed can quickly crowd out native plant species that benefit wildlife. To preserve Black Marsh Natural Area, efforts to control or eradicate common reed are needed.

Sources

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/fieldguide/categories/category/marshes_wetlands

http://www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Publiclands/Natural_Areas/BlackMarsh.asp