

# The Naturalist

Historic Rivers Chapter of Virginia Master Naturalist Program

April 2007 Volume 1 Issue 2

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## President’s Message

*“When you are a Bear of Very Little Brain, and Think of Things, you find sometimes that a Thing which seemed very Thingish inside you is quite different when it gets out into the open and has other people looking at it.”* Winnie the Pooh, House at Pooh Corner

I think Winnie the Pooh was truly on to something. This quest for knowledge and this thinking of thoughts (be they tree, insect, bird, fish, and now ecological) have been inside all of us and it is nice we have found a group of people who share in the

excitement, exploring, and talking about it all once it gets out.

We have done a lot in the past two months! It has been invigorating and exciting.

This newsletter should help keep information flowing. More ideas keep flowing so there will be more in the future. Approved advanced trainings and projects are inside.

I looking forward to our group morphing, though in a funny sort of way I will miss seeing everyone once a week, as we move to a more normal

schedule of monthly meetings. April holds a field walk with Hugh Beard. It has been suggested that our May 9 meeting be a lecture on Virginia butterflies. June 13 will feature a discussion with Scott Bruce, a DEQ geologist specializing in ground water characterization, who was one of the key players in discovering the Chesapeake Bay Impact Crater. Hopefully we will all be engaged.

Cheers to you all, and to our future endeavors!

*Kari Abbott, President,  
Historic Rivers Chapter and*

## April 11 “Walk and Talk” with Hugh Beard

Our very first “monthly program” of the Historic Rivers Master Naturalist Chapter will be Wednesday, April 11 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Meet Hugh Beard in the faculty parking lot behind Lafayette High School. Lafayette High is on Longhill Road. From Route 199, continue on Longhill Road through the intersection (and traffic light) with Olde Towne Road. Lafayette is about a mile past this intersection. The faculty

parking lot is directly behind the school, closest to the building.

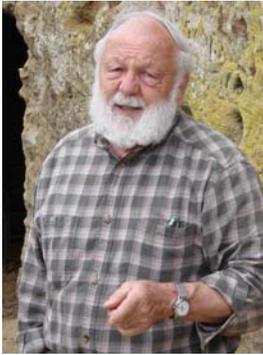
Hugh, award-winning science teacher and “teacher of teachers” will lead us on a “Walk and Talk” (i.e., field trip) in the woodlands and swamp next to Lafayette High School to study the flora and fauna of this specific environment.

Be sure to wear sturdy walking shoes that can stand to get muddy; long pants, long

sleeves, and a hat; bring bug spray, a hand lens, and a collecting bag of some sort.



Hugh Beard will lead our field trip Wednesday, April 11.



Dr. Jerre Johnson at Cornwallis Cave March 24, 2007. Photo by Shirley Devan

## Chesapeake Bay Impact Crater – April 22

[Advanced Training]

Dr. Jerre Johnson, professor of Geology for 36 years at the College of William and Mary, will speak on **“The Chesapeake Bay Impact – Virginia’s Most Cataclysmic Event.”**

Date: Sunday, April 22, 2007

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Location: York Hall, 301 Main Street, Yorktown, VA

Sponsored by: York County Historical Society.

This event is free and open to the public.

Call 757-890-4490 for more information.

## VIMS After Hours – “Algal Blooms” April 26

[Advanced Training]

**“Algal Blooms in Chesapeake Bay: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.”**

Blooms of microscopic, single-celled plants called algae help fuel Chesapeake Bay’s bounty of fish and shellfish. But too much of a good thing can be bad: excessive algal growth in the Bay, stimulated by runoff of nitrogen and other nutrients,

can devastate submerged vegetation and lead to oxygen-poor “dead zones.” Some algae can also produce toxins harmful to marine life. Join Dr. Larry Haas as he describes the causes and consequences of good, bad, and ugly algal blooms in Chesapeake Bay.

Date: Thursday, April 26

Time: 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Location: Freight Shed, Yorktown Waterfront

Registration for this free public lecture series are required because of limited seating space. Call 804-684-7846 or online at:

<http://www.vims.edu/afterhours/index.html>

## Trail Maintenance at York River State Park

[Volunteer Service Project]

York River State Park has an ongoing need for trail maintenance work. Contact Mary Apperson at 757-566-3036 (YRSP) to arrange a time for you to work on trails at the park.

## Local Spring Bird Counts – April 28 & 29

[Volunteer Service Projects]

The two local Bird Clubs each conduct a Spring Bird Count similar to the Audubon Christmas Bird Count.

The Hampton Roads Bird Club will conduct their count Saturday, April 28. Hayes Williams is the coordinator. To participate, contact Hayes at 804-693-4417. Their area includes Newport News, Hampton, York County, Gloucester, Poquoson and Yorktown.

The Williamsburg Bird Club will conduct their count

Sunday, April 29. Brian Taber is the coordinator. Contact Brian at 757-253-1181. The area includes Hog Island, Jamestown Island, York River State Park, Williamsburg, College Woods, and the Colonial Parkway.

Each event will start at approximately 7:30AM and end at approximately 4:00 PM. Once you've been assigned to a sector, you will coordinate start time and meeting place with the sector leader.

The objective of each count is to obtain field data on

bird species and numbers in the local area. This data is collected annually and is useful to the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the local Bird Clubs in monitoring bird species population trends.

This is also a great opportunity to get out in the field with knowledgeable birders and gain valuable field experience. The groups welcome extra sets of eyes and ears.



Ospreys on nest at Greensprings Trail. Photo by Joe Piotrowski

## Project WILD

[Advanced Training]

Kari Abbott and Barbara Dunbar, Historic Rivers Chapter Master Naturalists in Training, are both certified facilitators in Project WILD and can conduct a workshop if our group desires one.

Project WILD is one of the most widely-used conservation and environmental education programs among educators of students in kindergarten through high school.

It is based on the premise that young people and educators have a vital

interest in learning about our natural world. A national network of State Wildlife Agency Sponsors ensures that Project WILD is available nationwide -- training educators in the many facets of the program. Emphasizing wildlife because of its intrinsic value, Project WILD addresses the need for human beings to develop as responsible citizens of our planet.

Project WILD's mission is to help students learn *how* to think, not *what* to think about wildlife and the environment.

Project WILD curriculum materials adhere to those strict efforts for balance and objectivity, backed by sound educational practices and theory. It also represents the work of many within the fields of education and natural resource management from across the country.

In Virginia, Project WILD is sponsored by the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

<http://www.projectwild.org/overview.htm>



Virginia Project Learning Tree, sponsored in part by VA Department of Forestry, one of our VMN sponsors

## Project Learning Tree

[Advanced Training]

Kari Abbott and Barbara Dunbar are both certified facilitators in Project Learning Tree and can conduct a workshop if our group desires one.

Project Learning Tree® is an award winning, multi-disciplinary environmental education program for

educators and students in Pre K- grade 12. PLT is one of the most widely used environmental education programs in the US and meets state and national education standards. The curriculum provides the tools educators need to bring the environment into the classroom and their students into the environment. Topics range from forests, wildlife,

and water, to community planning, waste management and energy.

This program would be valuable for Master Naturalists who plan to present children's programs.

[http://www.plt.org/cms/page/s/21\\_19\\_1.html](http://www.plt.org/cms/page/s/21_19_1.html)

## WOW! Wonders of Wetlands

[Advanced Training]

WOW! For Educators: The 1-day, 1/2 day or 2 hour workshop will introduce you to the three parameters of wetlands (vegetation, soils, hydrology), wetland functions and values as well as management options all through fun and engaging activities.

Educators of all levels from schools, outdoor education centers, wildlife refuges, and non-traditional programs will benefit from this hands-on introduction to WOW!

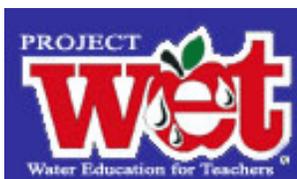
A team of highly qualified wetland educators travel extensively teaching teachers how to bring wetlands alive and into their classrooms. All workshops

are full of hands-on, inquiry-based cross-curricular activities that can be brought back to the classroom.

This program would be valuable for Master Naturalists who plan to present children's programs.

Kari Abbott can arrange a session for our group if we desire.

<http://www.wetland.org/wowteacher.html>



## Project Wet

[Advanced Training]

Trained facilitators deliver Project WET materials through professional development workshop. Participants engage in cooperative, hands-on learning, experiencing the activities as they are presented by skilled facilitators and their peers.

Upon completing the training, participants receive the Project

WET Curriculum and Activity Guide as well as other water resource education materials, and leave prepared and inspired to teach about water in their classroom or informal educational setting.

Project WET workshops may be thematic, focusing on wetlands, watersheds, conservation, ground water, water quality, or other specific topics.

Project WET workshops are delivered by the Int'l Project WET network. Workshops are widely available throughout the US.

Kari Abbott can arrange a session for our group if we desire.

<http://www.projectwet.org/index.html>

# Wildlife Mapping Workshop – June 2

[Advanced Training]

If you have not already signed up for the June 2 Wildlife Mapping Workshop at Ft. Eustis, do so soon because the session is filling up fast. This workshop trains citizen scientists to make wildlife observations, identify habitat types, and submit such data to the

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. It augments scientific research (particularly in terms of distribution of wildlife species) as well as brings citizens into understanding the value of wildlife resources.

According to certified facilitator Tim Christensen,

Workshop participants attend a one-day workshop (8 am – 4 pm) and then are trained to provide wildlife data. Majority is classroom lecture with some application of concepts time and weather permitting.

Look for additional information about this workshop in the next newsletter.



The first Wildlife Mapping Workshop will be June 2.

# Photos from Geology & VIMS Field Trips



Jerre Johnson starts the day off with a song.



Angela Scott and Jerre Johnson demonstrate.



Karen Duhring in the VIMS Teaching Marsh



Jerre Johnson at the "Buffalo Wallows" (Grafton Preserve)



At the Hampton Landfill



Judy Hansen helps Sheila Kerr-Jones into chest waders at VIMS.



Mary Apperson and Felice Bond examine their finds in the VIMS lab.

All photos from our trips by Linda Cole! Thanks, Linda!