



# The Naturalist

The monthly newsletter of the Historic Rivers Chapter

Virginia Master Naturalist Program

[www.vmn-historicrivers.org](http://www.vmn-historicrivers.org)

A Monthly Newsletter

Volume 1 No. 6 August 2007

**VIMS Discovery Lab**

*Fish of the York River,*  
August 21  
Page 2

**VIMS After Hours**

*Blue catfish in*  
*Virginia's tidal waters,*  
September 27  
Page 2

**Volunteer Projects & Advanced Training**

*What, where, who to*  
*contact*  
Page 3

**The Old Man of the Mountain**

*Clyde's story continues.*  
Page 6

**Butterfly Count at Great Dismal Swamp**

*Plus photos!*  
Pages 4 & 5

**Schedule for Fall Class**

*With speakers listed.*

Page 4

## President's Message

Greetings All,

One of the things I am learning as we grow as a group is what a wonderful thing it is to be a Master Naturalist. We are group of people who stop and look at the little things in life, the sulfur wing butterfly, the patent leather beetle grub, the newly metamorphed American toad hopping out of harm's way. Our awe and wonder in the natural world can be quite contagious.

I saw this the other day when Clyde, Alice, Seig and I met the photographer from the Daily Press for the article [look in the Daily Press August 13]. In my busy day I had sketched in 10-15 minutes for this photo session, figuring he would not care, and would be on his way quickly. He started off that way, clicking shots our very first steps onto Greensprings Nature Trail. Then Clyde turned over a dead log, and the poor photographer was hooked on decomposers, Clyde's favorite. Dave, the camera guy, listened, even touched a beetle. As we walked and talked about the things around us, and discovered more nature to share, he was drawn in. When the ospreys showed up with fish in talons, binoculars were shared, and he was hooked. When the Red-headed Woodpecker appeared, Dave was a bit excited. He had not seen the beautiful bird before. He listened patiently to all of the discussion amongst us MNs, and got caught up in the moment. Suddenly we all realized we had been out for about

45 minutes, and it was time to return. Our return back was not at a zippy pace, as there was more to discover on the same path in the reverse direction. Dave, the camera guy, even found a five lined skink going up a tree on the way back. In the parking lot, Seig was really suave at recruiting Dave to try to become a MN, since he learned so much with us. I think Dave is thinking about it -- he remembered the wonder of nature from his childhood. I hope he and others join us, because this group and what we do is just a lot of fun.

My best to you all. Cheers

Kari Abbott, Member and President

Historic Rivers Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalist

## Ice Cream Social

August 8 at 6 pm

OUR ICE CREAM SOCIAL will be a nice get together to catch up, visit, share experiences, and enjoy the outdoors. Felice Bond has graciously offered her home for this fun monthly membership meeting. Many of you signed up to bring stuff at the last monthly meeting. If you forgot, contact Kari who has the list. For those of you not in attendance at the last meeting, email Kari and she can let you know what we need. We're hoping to see EVERYONE! Check your email from Kari on July 25 with directions to Felice's house attached.

## Upcoming Events

**August 11:** Susan Powell leads Bird Walk at New Quarter Park for Williamsburg Bird Club, 8 - 10 am

**August 14-15:** Young Naturalist Days at New Quarter Park (see page 3)

**August 15:** Big Tree Training, 6 - 9 pm at James City County Library on Croaker Road. (see page 3)

**August 21:** Wildlife Habitat "Train-the-Trainer" session with Carol Heiser (see page 3)

**September 5:** Fall Cohort Training Class begins (see page 4)

**September 12:** ALL MEMBERS are invited to hear Hugh Beard, naturalist and award-winning science teacher, present our session on Taxonomy, Biology, and Citizen Science to our fall class. Start time is 6:00 p.m.



CHAPTER OFFICERS

*Kari Abbott, President*

*Susan Powell, Vice President & Programs Chair*

*Linda Cole, Secretary*

*Judy Hansen, Treasurer*

*Shirley Devan, Newsletter Editor*

*Anne Marie Castellani, Historian*

*Patty Riddick, Membership*

*Gary Hammer, Projects*

*Clyde Marsteller, Advanced Training*

*Alice & Seig Kopinitz, Outreach Committee*

*Seig Kopinitz, Webmaster*

Check Out Our Web Site



Historic Rivers Chapter

[www.vmn-historicrivers.org](http://www.vmn-historicrivers.org)

Seig Kopinitz, Webmaster, has loaded up our web site with great documents, links, photos, and references. There's even a "members only" section. If you have not yet logged in with your magic password, plan on clicking over there soon and book mark that page. He's looking for feedback too, so let him know your ideas.

Summer Discovery Lab at VIMS

"Fish of the York River" -- August 21



August 21, 6 - 8 pm at VIMS in Gloucester Point. No cost or registration required. Visit their website at [www.vims.edu/cbnerr](http://www.vims.edu/cbnerr)

The fish of the York River are varied and interesting and include several different species living in diverse habitats that are not always acknowledged or explored. The VIMS fisheries department will lead a lecture on the common species of the Chesapeake Bay. Activities will include tanks with many of the York River species, fish from the VIMS fish collection, Gyotaku, or fish painting, and microscopes to give a close up view of the fish world.

VIMS "After Hours"

Fat Cats: Blue catfish in Virginia's tidal tributaries

Thursday, September 27, 2007



Blue catfish, native to the Mississippi River drainage, were introduced to Virginia's tidal rivers begin-

ning in the mid-1970s, where they now support a significant recreational and commercial fishery. These fish, which can grow to well over 100 pounds, eat a wide variety of prey and are prolific spawners, traits that have enabled them to thrive in local waters. Join Bob Greenlee, a fisheries biologist with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, as he explores the unique status of this species among the fishes of Virginia's tidal freshwater tributaries of Chesapeake Bay.

All lectures begin at 7:00 p.m.

Reservations to this free public lecture series are required due to limited space. Register by calling 804-684-7846 or register online at: <http://tethys.vims.edu/events/registration.cfm>

Master Naturalist Resources at Williamsburg Libraries

By Anne-Marie Castellani, Historian

There are currently 19 books at the Williamsburg Regional Library that are on the Historic Rivers Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists' resource list or were recommended during a class meeting. To find a list of these titles in the library's catalog, just do a [series search](#) and type in Virginia Master Naturalist resource list. This should bring up the list of titles from which you can check on the books' availability and location in the libraries.



# Volunteer Service Projects

Our board has a goal of having each member become certified before the end of 2007. That means eight hours of Advanced Training and 40 hours of Volunteer Service. Look for a list of Advanced Training opportunities on this page. Meanwhile, listed below are the Volunteer Service Projects already approved. Feel free to contact the "go to" person listed for each event and find out how you can join in and earn those hours.

## Trail Maintenance, York River State Park

This is an ongoing service project you can do anytime. Most Friday afternoons from 1 - 3 pm, several Master Naturalists convene to maintain (and sometimes create!) trails. We have lots of fun and have subtitled it our "Friday Afternoon Learning Lab." Feel free to join in. Contact Mary Apperson at the Park, phone 566-3036 or email: [Mary.Apperson@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:Mary.Apperson@dcr.virginia.gov)



*Alice & Seig Kopowitz plus Ho Jin Jeon and Mary Apperson blaze a new trail at York River State Park July 27.*

## Greensprings Trail Wildlife Mapping and Interpretation

Contact Susan Powell or Kari Abbott to get in on the Interpretive role here. If you've had the Wildlife Mapping course, you can obviously go out there any time and record your observations and record them in the Wildlife Mapping database. Contact info: Susan Powell, [vice-president@vmn-historicrivers.org](mailto:vice-president@vmn-historicrivers.org) or Kari Abbott, [president@vmn-historicrivers.org](mailto:president@vmn-historicrivers.org)

## Giant Oil Refinery Property Wildlife Mapping and Interpretation

Contact Patty Riddick to get more info on the logistics for this location. It will be helpful if you've had the Wildlife Mapping course. Contact info: Patty Riddick, [patty\\_riddick@cox.net](mailto:patty_riddick@cox.net)

## Big Tree Project

Dr. Jeff Kirwin from VA Tech has asked our Master Naturalists to assist him with his project of counting and measuring the Champion and Big Trees in our area of the state. We have to be trained first [see the Advanced Training column] and then we can go out in pairs or teams to locate, measure, and record the trees' data. The project must be completed before November 30. Contact info: Larry Riddick, [larryriddick@cox.net](mailto:larryriddick@cox.net)

## Young Naturalist Days at New Quarter Park

Tuesday & Wednesday, August 14 & 15, 9 am - 12 noon. A team of HRC Master Naturalists will conduct a children's nature camp at this local park. A variety of skills is needed. Contact info: Clyde Marsteller, [clydeceddm@aol.com](mailto:clydeceddm@aol.com)

## Estuary Day at York River State Park

Saturday, September 22 all day. Help design and staff an exhibit to represent our Historic Rivers Chapter and introduce us to the community. The exhibit most likely will be used for subsequent community events. Contact info: Project Leader will be announced soon. Stay tuned!

## Williamsburg Land Conservancy Wildlife Mapping

We're still working out details and logistics for this project. We're looking for a project coordinator so contact Kari Abbott if you want to be in on this effort. Wildlife Mapping course is a necessity for this project.

## Project Box [Master Naturalist in a Box!]

A collection of field guides, books, and other local information to assist any Master Naturalist who is out in the field in an interpretive capacity [Greensprings Trail comes to mind!!]. We need a "go to" person to create and maintain the box. Contact Kari Abbott to help complete this important cog in our contact with the public.



*Striped Wintergreen at York River State Park. Photo by Felice Bond.*

# Advanced Training Opportunities

Two opportunities in August to pick up some skills to help in a citizen science project and in education/outreach.

## Big Tree Advanced Training, August 15, 6-9 pm

Dr. Jeff Kirwin from VA Tech will be in our town to give us Advanced Training Wednesday, August 15 from 6 - 9 pm in the e-click room at the James City County Library. We'll learn how to measure and record remarkable, big, or champion trees in our area. The training will include using a tree measuring device, GPS, and how to input data into the VA Tech web page. Also, Dr. Kirwin will talk about how the trees will be marked to be preserved.

If you have not already done so, you must sign up in advance by email or at the ice cream social on August 8. Registration will be first come, first in. There are 11 computer stations so there is probably room for 15 people. The cost is \$5 to cover the expense of the room.

Larry Riddick is the Big Tree Project chairperson, so contact him if you have questions or to register: [larryriddick@cox.net](mailto:larryriddick@cox.net)

## Wildlife Habitat Train-the-Trainer, August 21:

**Location:** James City County Rec Center on Longhill Road in Williamsburg

**Time:** 8:15 - 4:00 p.m. Bring lunch and be prepared to go outside.

**Deadline:** Registration must be received on or before August 7. For the registration form, check your email of July 8 from: [president@vmn-historicrivers.org](mailto:president@vmn-historicrivers.org)

**No cost** for the workshop, but participants must attend the FULL DAY to receive ALL materials and a certificate.

It is intended that upon completion of the training, participants agree to be part of an active facilitator list who will be called upon by DGIF to conduct habitat programs and/or workshops for schools, community organizations or other educational venues in their local area, as the need arises. Ideally, such programs and workshops will create opportunities for future habitat plantings or restoration projects that your Chapter helps to coordinate.

Master Naturalists need to feel comfortable with many audiences. Our goal is to give you the tools to:  
1) understand how to work effectively with varied

audiences and answer commonly asked questions; 2) be able to identify habitat elements on a site that need improvement and recommend solutions; and 3) plan and conduct your own habitat program or workshop. This training will therefore include techniques for outdoor instruction, habitat mapping, and planning an agenda for different audiences.

Each participant will receive a training binder as well as numerous resource materials and publications from the Habitat Partners© program, which includes Schoolyard Habitat and Habitat at Home© components.

## Great Dismal Swamp Butterfly Count

By Alice Kopinitz

Just the thought of “counting butterflies” conjured up some interesting images. Seig and I had visited the Great Dismal Swamp earlier in the year and had seen a number of puddling butterflies. How were we going to count the flittery, moving targets? Nevertheless, Seig, Alice, Shirley and Clyde formed a carpool to try a new venture July 29, 2007. We came upon Anne-Marie Castellani and David Monahan when we arrived at the Swamp.

Project leader, Don Schwab, announced to the group of about 25 assembled butterfly counters that “The good news is that there are not many bugs and the bad news is that there are not many bugs.” The implication being that there were not lots of butterflies.

We were assigned to an eight person team and sent off to the Jericho Ditch to count butterflies. Fortunately, we did have three seasoned counters in our group. Our first observation was of the Palomedes Swallowtail. There were quite a few of those around. Then we drove several miles down the ditch and began our leapfrog trek (walk awhile, move the cars, walk awhile, etc.) back to our starting point. [Below is Seig’s photo of a Buckeye.]



As our walk progressed, everyone became more adept at looking for and actually finding butterflies. There were some smaller species perched right under our noses. You just had to keep looking. Most of the time, the critters were so busy on the leaf, ground or grass, that we were able to take pictures. Some were more cooperative for the camera than others. After getting pictures of their wings in the closed position, we wanted to get a picture in the open position. Some butterflies look very different in the two poses.

Speaking of wings, the wing differences between the butterflies and skippers was fascinating to see up close and personal.



As we walked along, we found a flower that begged identification. Shirley reached down and picked a stalk to take to Clyde who was further up the ditch. No sooner was the stalk in Shirley’s hand than a Red Admiral [shown in Seig’s photo above] landed there. He/she climbed the stalk and found some salty sweat on the back of her hand. We watched as that butterfly enjoyed himself/herself on Shirley’s hand for almost an hour. In that time, we studied the critter up close and personal with a magnifying glass and took many photos. The proboscis was working and working and working. We got to look at the antennae and eyes. This was a most cooperative butterfly. Shirley reported that she could just barely feel the tip against her skin. By the way, the flower was a native four o’clock as identified by Clyde.

We did observe some other interesting creatures – katydid, toad, cow-killer ant, some wasps and a snake.

Here (thanks to our sector Bob Ake) is a complete list of species the group observed: Palomedes Swallowtail-68, Southern Pearly-eye-2, Cloudless Sulfur-8, Clouded Skipper-2, Zebra Swallowtail-14, Pearl Crescent-22, Sleepy Orange-6, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail-10, Red Admiral-24, American Lady-3, Monarch-3, Eastern Tailed Blue-2, Summer Azure-4, Common Buckeye-4, Carolina Satyr-1, Red-spotted Purple-1 and Great Purple Hairstreak-1.

According to Anne-Marie, “Our group leader was David Hughes. He was great and we found 15 species of butterflies. The Palomedes outnumbered

them all. I enjoyed butterfly counting, we don’t scare the butterflies away like we sometimes do with the birds.”

## Schedule for Fall VMN Training Class

The Fall class is scheduled to be 50 hours to give more time to some topics we felt were “short changed” in the spring session. Classes will be Wednesday nights at the Human Services Building, 5249 Olde Towne Road in Williamsburg. Unless otherwise noted, classes begin promptly at 6:00 p.m. and end by 9:00 p.m.

Master Naturalists from the first class are welcome to sit in the classes, but the new trainees get seats around the table.

**September 5:** Introduction to Virginia Master Naturalist Program and Risk Management Training

**September 12:** Class kick-off -- Citizen Science, Biology, Dichotomous Keys, Taxonomy; Instructor Hugh Beard

**September 19:** Geology of Virginia; Instructor Dr. Jerre Johnson

**September 26:** Wetlands Class and Workshop at York River State Park, Class is from 5:00 - 8:00 pm; Instructors David Norris and Stephen Living, VA DGIF

**October 3:** Botany, Dr. Donna Ware

**October 10:** Dendrology (pot- luck dinner from 5:30 - 7:00; class from 7:00 - 9:00); Dr. Stewart Ware

**October 17:** Entomology; Instructor Dr. Bill Dimock

**October 24:** Ornithology; Instructor Bill Williams

**October 27:** Saturday Field Trip to Forestry Center in New Kent County, Tentative time: 9:00 - 2:00; Instructor Billy Apperson

**October 31:** no class -- Halloween!

**November 3:** Saturday Field Trip to VIMS for Estuary and Coastal Ecology and Aquatic Ecology; Instructors will be VIMS staff

**November 7:** Herpetology; Instructor Tim Christensen

**November 14:** Mammalogy; Instructor Bo Baker, VA Living Museum

**November 21:** no class -- Thanksgiving Eve

**November 28:** Ichthyology; Instructor Bob Greener, VA DGIF

**December 5:** Ecology; Instructor Dr. Lou Verner, VA DGIF

**December 12:** Holiday Get Together with Stephen Living, VA DGIF. Place and time to be determined.

# Save the Dates

## August 18, "Bird Field Trip," Craney Island

Ruth Beck, Professor Emeritus from William and Mary's Biology Department, will lead a group to Craney Island in the Elizabeth River near Portsmouth to search for migrating shore birds. Meet at 7 am at Colony Square Shopping Center to carpool. Sponsored by Williamsburg Bird Club. For more info: [www.wmbgbirdclub.com](http://www.wmbgbirdclub.com)

## September 1, "Walk and Talk," New Quarter Park

Vicky Schufer will be "Down in the Paw Paw Patch" where she'll lead a walk around the park to find edible native plants. Walk starts at 10 am.

## October 6, "Walk and Talk," New Quarter Park.

Helen Hamilton, botanist, will lead a walk around the park to explore and learn about grasses. Walk starts at 10 am.

## October 5 - 7 Easter Shore Birding Festival in Cape Charles, VA.

The Eastern Shore Birding and Wildlife Festival is an annual celebration during the Fall migration of the Neotropical songbirds and raptors. Virginia's Eastern Shore creates a natural funnel focusing the migration of birds to the southernmost tip of the Peninsula. The area provides an excellent opportunity for novice and experienced birdwatchers to witness incredible numbers of birds congregated in preparation for their flight to the tropics. Web site: [www.esvachamber.org/festivals/birding/](http://www.esvachamber.org/festivals/birding/)

## October 9, 2007, 7:00 p.m. Scott Weidensaul

We have learned from the Friends of the Williamsburg Regional Library that their annual meeting will host author and naturalist Scott Weidensaul. Mark your calendars now for October 9, and plan to attend this presentation by an engaging, thoughtful, inspiring naturalist. Our community is fortunate that the Friends of the Library has engaged Scott for their special event – it is not to be missed! If you are not a member of the Library, now is the time to join: [www.wrl.org/](http://www.wrl.org/)

[The information below is from Scott's web site: <http://www.scottweidensaul.com>]

Scott has earned a reputation as a dynamic speaker on environmental topics, and maintains an active speaking schedule across the country, ranging from universities to nature centers and museums.

Visit his web site, [www.scottweidensaul.com](http://www.scottweidensaul.com) to read the first chapter in his new book: [Of a Feather: A Brief History of American Birding.](#)

He has written more than two dozen books on natural history, including his widely acclaimed [Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds](#) (North Point 1999), which was one of three finalists for the Pulitzer Prize for general non-fiction. Other recent titles include [The Ghost with Trembling Wings: Science, Wishful Thinking and the Search for Lost Species](#) (North Point 2002), about the search for animals that may or may not be extinct, and his most recent work, [Return to Wild America: A Yearlong Search for the Continent's Natural Soul](#) (North Point 2005), an ambitious journey to take the pulse of America's wildlife and wildlands.

## October 12 - 13, Volunteer Water Monitoring in the Mid-Atlantic: Citizen Scientists Involved in Their Local Watersheds

**Location:** Shenandoah University, Winchester, VA

The conference offers opportunities for volunteers and local, state, and federal agencies to learn how water quality data can be used to protect and restore streams. The Friday conference will feature workshops and breakout sessions while the Saturday events will include field trips and water quality workshops. Agenda and registration information will be available shortly. Featured Topics

- Using online water quality databases
- Using water quality data to measure effectiveness of land management practices
- Case studies of successful volunteer collaborations
- Training sessions on macroinvertebrate identification; making a rain barrel; water quality monitoring including how to detect E. coli bacteria using Coliscan Easygel®

Sponsored by VA Dept of Environmental Quality, Shenandoah University, Friends of the Shenandoah River, and the Department of Conservation & Recreation. For more info, contact James Beckley, Department of Environmental Quality, (804) 698-4025, email: [jebeckley@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:jebeckley@deq.virginia.gov)

## November 3, "Walk and Talk," New Quarter Park.

Dr. Jerre Johnson will lead a walk around the park and explore and explain the Geology of Virginia's Coastal Plain. Walk begins at 10 am.

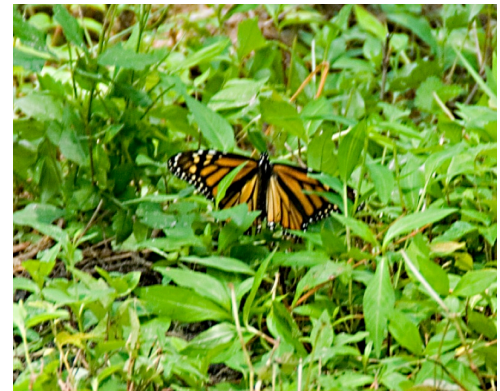
## December 1, "Walk and Talk," New Quarter Park.

Stephen Living will be in the park to celebrate the designation of the park as a stop on Virginia's Birding and Wildlife Trail. He'll lead a walk looking for "watchable wildlife." Walk begins at 10 am.

# More Photos from our Club's Photographers



Two Eastern Tiger Swallowtails on iron weed at York River State Park. Photo by Felice Bond.



Monarch Butterfly at Great Dismal Swamp. Photo by Seig Kopinitz



Morning Glory -- "A sure sign of Fall." Photo by Mary Apperson

# “The Old Man of the Mountain”

## Clyde’s Story Continues

By Clyde Marsteller

On the last day of the 1955 deer season I woke up to a sparkling white dawn. It had snowed during the night and the world looked like it was just minted.

Dad & I left home driving in our 1949 Pontiac headed for our country place “Tawalfen” in the slate belt of the Blue Ridge Mts near Delaware Water Gap. The Old Man had just come off a night shift at the Bethlehem Steel but nothing was going to stop us from getting one more day of deer hunting in.

The previous forays into the woods had produced no success, the bucks were still illusive. We didn’t expect to see much as the deer were scattered over the ridges and were gun shy after two weeks of being shot at.

On the drive up, a big doe bounded across the road. “A good omen” the Old Man remarked. We pulled into Tawalfen’s front yard about 8 am and quickly unloaded our gear into the farmhouse and started a fire in the kitchen stove.

Dad decided that we would “pussy foot”, drifting through the woods from the lower springs behind the house towards the PP&L power line running down the mountain from the Appalachian trail. I was hunting with my Savage 30-30 that Uncle Mike had given me for my birthday the year before. I had paid it off by shooting my first buck last season. The deal was the gun was mine if I killed a deer the first time I used it, if not I had to clerk at the store all next summer. The hunting Gods had smiled on me.

Dad & I walked within sight of one another stopping & listening every so often. The snow muted our footsteps and the woods were quiet with even the squirrels and jays sleeping in.

As we climbed a small ridge above the springs three does suddenly got up. They pushed up their hind quarters first and stood there quivering with their big ears & eyes focused on us. When Dad whistled they bounded off with their white tails flashing. When we walked over to their beds Dad pointed out a single set of tracks off to one side. They were big splayed prints with deep dew points. A buck had been bedding down away from the does and as we watched the ladies run off he had crept away.

I trembled with excitement and wanted to start tracking him. Dad laughed at me and said, “if you push him now, he’ll be in the next county”. He made me go back to the farm house and eat a light breakfast. He figured the deer might bed down again further up the mountain watching their back trail.

He advised me to walk slow and look hard. “Remember” he said, “you’re in his world. If he was in our parlor you would see him right away, well you’re in his parlor”. If by dumb luck I shot anything I was to drag it to the road (Rte 191) and fire three shots in quick succession. He would drive the road up to the Trail to look for me.

I spent the next couple of hours picking up the trail. In the snow I could see the buck was letting the does walk first and he would check the back trail and then follow them. Their trail crossed over 191 just below the Trail and headed across the top of the mountain. I was so pumped up on adrenalin that I didn’t mind the climb or the cold. I had come to a little glen filled with scrub pine & white birch. I stopped and suddenly saw the does climbing up the ridge ahead of me. As I watched them I noticed a slight movement to my right. A big deer was standing about 30 yards from me and I had caught it moving its head. It moved cautiously until I could see its shoulder through a break in the trees, I released my safety and eased my rifle up. Suddenly I caught a glint of antlers! I fired and the deer lurched forward and fell. I chambered another round and ran forward. The buck was slowly swinging his head in the snow and bleating. I couldn’t believe my eyes. The antlers were huge! I started to count – ten points! It was a monster buck. I shot him again and the light in his eyes went out and his tongue slipped out of his mouth. I stood there shaking with elation and sadness. I had just shot a deer of a life time but deep inside I felt guilty about killing such a magnificent animal.

I quickly field dressed and tagged him. I realized that I didn’t have any rope with me so I had to drag him by his antlers. Thank goodness for the snow. Finally I took my belt off & used it to toboggan him out. As I slid down the mountain he gained momentum and as we hit 191 both of us fell off the bank onto the road. I got up all bloody from his carcass. I fired three shots and started to drag him down the shoulder. Pretty soon I heard a car coming. It was the Pontiac. Dad saw me and slammed on the brakes. He told me later all he could see at first was me doubled over and covered with blood. He thought I had shot myself. We tied the buck to the front fender and drove straight to Uncle Mike’s store. He weighed in on the grain scales at 165 lbs. Dad thought he was close to 200 lbs before I field dressed him. We hung him in the apple orchard next to the store and there was a steady progression of locals coming over to see the “Old Man of the Mountain” that the damned fool kid shot.

I have hunted across this country and shot all kinds of game to include mule deer in the high Rockies but nothing ever equaled that experience.

[See Clyde’s poem about “The Old Man of the Mountain” on the next page.]



“Dad and The Old Man of the Mountain on last day of deer season 1955 near Mike’s.”



Clyde at two years old in 1940.

**The Demi-God**

*By Clyde Marsteller, 1955, upon the occasion of shooting  
"The Old Man of the Mountain"*

The creatures of the forest  
are silent and fearful.  
For death stalks the wooded glades  
relentless and careful.

A movement now a flash  
a sharp thunder is heard.  
A wild death cry thrashing form  
to sight is now bared.

Large and small none are excluded  
rabbit, squirrel and deer.  
From their wild hidden haunts  
by this pursuer are rooted.

Hiding, running, blindly fleeing  
crouching close to the sod.

Quivering, dying, innocent victims  
of the deadly Demi-God.

The majestic buck defiant  
shakes his antlers proud.  
His does unlike their lord  
mill in a frightened crowd.

King of his dominion  
he surveys the familiar wood.  
Unaware out there watching  
concealed the Demi-God stood.

Then thunder. The buck sprang up  
but the messenger flew true.  
The valiant heart stopped  
by the message struck through.

Destroyer. Decreeing that it die  
your tools gun and rod.  
Who is to argue? Not I.  
For I am the Demi-God



*Clyde at three years old in 1941.*