



The Naturalist

The monthly newsletter of the Historic Rivers Chapter

Virginia Master Naturalist Program

<http://historicrivers.org>

A Monthly Newsletter

Volume 2 No. 10 October 2008

Nov 12 and Dec 10 Monthly Meetings

"Sounds of Nature" in November and Graduation and Elections in December.

Page 2

Advanced Training Topics

New events for October added.

Page 3

Volunteer Service Projects

New opportunities in October, November and December.

Page 4

Mushrooms in the Enchanted Forest

Jordan Westenhaver's fun learning session with fungi.

Page 5

Estuaries Day at York River State Park

Angela Scott recounts the fun day with visitors and volunteers. Photos by Felice Bond.

Page 6

Historic Rivers Chapter at Farmer's Market

Kathi Mestayer describes the event and Felice Bond provides photos.

Page 7

President's Message

The Historic Rivers Tribe...Oops, I Meant Chapter...

"If I were to name the three most precious resources of life, I should say books, friends, and nature; and the greatest of these, at least the most constant and always at hand, is nature." - John Burroughs

One of the things I love most about being a volunteer for the Historic Rivers Chapter VA Master Naturalist program is being able to get outside and work in nature. Finally, I have an excuse to trade broom for binoculars, boring chores for birds, and novels for nature guides!

We are very lucky to have a program such as this in our community. The Master Naturalist program is unique because it encourages those with a volunteer spirit to play an active role in the community by participating in citizen science, environmental education, and stewardship of our local environment.

For me, the added benefit of being a member of the Historic Rivers Chapter is that I have been able to build new friendships with people who share my love of nature. Kathi Mestayer once referred to the chapter as her "tribe." This is definitely my tribe.

If you feel that this is your tribe too, consider playing a part in the leadership of the chapter or joining one of our volunteer service project committees. Sure, it involves some work and perhaps a commitment of time, but the rewards are immense. You will be doing the things that you find the most satisfying; not to mention the fun and new friends you will discover along the way.

The October 8 Membership Meeting will give every member a chance to join a committee, suggest a field trip, or champion a new volunteer service project. I encourage all members to attend all our meetings regardless of where you are in the training or certification process. Everyone will be welcomed.

The theme of the October Membership Meeting is "What's Happening in the Chapter." We are asking all members who are involved in a volunteer service

project to present information about their project to the chapter so we can all be aware of "what's happening." We will give you time to display or talk about your project, meet with your committee, and ask for volunteers. It will also be a good time to get to know and involve the new trainees.

The meeting will start at 6:00 pm, but you can arrive at 5:30 if you would like extra time to mix and mingle with some friends beforehand. We can stay as long as anyone likes, or until 9:00 pm, whichever comes first.

As an added bonus, anyone attending the meeting will receive three hours of volunteer service.

I hope everyone will choose to make our chapter your tribe. See you at the October 8 meeting.

Susan Powell, Acting President
Historic Rivers Chapter (Tribe!)
VA Master Naturalist Program

October 8 Chapter Meeting

See Susan's note above -- we'll meet in our usual Multi-purpose Room in the Human Services Building on Olde Towne Road.

The focus of this meeting will be to mingle and chat with other Chapter members for a bit in a relaxed atmosphere and share ideas about projects and advanced training. If you've got ideas, bring them with you!

Volunteer Service Project leaders will share information about current projects like Wildlife Mapping, Land Conservancy Walk and Talk, Bobwhite Habitat Restoration Project, Farmer's Market opportunities, York River State Park projects plus others.

So join us to learn "What's Happening in the Chapter" and how you can join in the fun. Everyone has talents to bring to projects.

CHAPTER OFFICERS 2008*Susan Powell, President**Open, Vice President & Programs Chair**Linda Cole, Secretary**Judy Hansen, Treasurer**Shirley Devan, Newsletter Editor**Jordan Westenhaver, Historian**Jordan Westenhaver, Host**Patty Riddick, Membership**Bruce Hill, Volunteer Service Projects**Susan Powell, Training**Clyde Marsteller, Advanced Training**Alice & Seig Kopinitz, Outreach Committee**Seig Kopinitz, Webmaster**Bruce Hill, Member-at-Large***COMMITTEES*****Volunteer Service Projects****Bruce Hill, Chair**Cherie Aukland**Laurie Houghland**Jim Booth****Advanced Training****Clyde Marsteller, Chair**Joanne Medina**Susie Engle-Hill****Training Committee****Susan Powell, Chair**Bruce Hill**Angela Scott**Shirley Devan**Jordan Westenhaver***NOTES FROM THE BOARD**

All meetings of the Board of Directors are open to members. The next meeting is October 20 at 6:00 p.m. at the Williamsburg Regional Library, Scotland Street, Williamsburg.

Patty Riddick reminds all to turn in their hours for September 2008. You can't get certified unless you send in your hours! Send them to:

pattyridnick@cox.net

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November 12 Monthly Program

Join us Wednesday, November 12 from 6 - 9 pm at the Human Services Building for "Sounds of Nature." This qualifies as "Advanced Training."

From 6 - 7 pm, we'll have a Chapter Business Meeting to bring you up to date on the latest Chapter news and to let you know what we learned at the VMN State Conference in Wytheville October 17 - 19.

Then at 7 Seig Kopinitz and Susan Powell will present a program exploring the natural sounds all around us and why it's important that animals communicate the way they do.

If you have sounds to share, please contact Seig Kopinitz at 565-1753.

December 10 Annual Meeting and Graduation

Save this date because this is an important event in the life of our Chapter. We'll celebrate the graduation of Cohort III (Yea!!) and hold our Annual Election for our Board of Directors. Renaissance woman Teta Kain will be our guest speaker and we'll enjoy a buffet of hors d'oeuvres and desserts.

Date & Time: Wednesday, December 10, 2008, 5 - 9 pm

Location: Meeting Rooms A and B at Williamsburg Jame City County Community Center on Longhill Road (known as the Rec Center).

Fee: \$20 per person to cover catering. Bring a guest!

More info in the November newsletter!!

Cohort III Training Continues

All members are welcome to attend basic training sessions. Want a refresher on Ornithology or Ichthyology? You still have time. Training sessions are Thursday nights from 6 - 9 pm at the Human Services Building on Olde Towne Road. Here's the upcoming schedule and speakers:

October 9: Geology with Dr. Jerre Johnson

October 11: Geology Field Trip (Advanced Training for ALL) with Dr. Jerre Johnson. Meet at 9 am at Phi Beta Kappa Hall on Jamestown Rd.

October 16: Entomology with Dr. Barbara Abraham, Hampton University

October 23: Ornithology with Bill Williams, Williamsburg Bird Club

October 30: Mammalogy with Bo Baker, VA Living Museum

November 6: Freshwater Ecology with Charlie Dubay. *NOTE:* This class will be in Charlie's classroom at Jamestown High School.

November 13: Ichthyology with Bob Greenlee, VA Dept of Game and Inland Fisheries

November 20: Ecological Concepts, Dr. Lou Verner, VA Dept of Game and Inland Fisheries

Members can pick up Volunteer Service Hours for coming early and staying to help pack up. We need at least one volunteer for each session above. Contact Shirley Devan at sedevan52@cox.net or 757-813-1322 if you can help.

More Advanced Training Opportunities

Each Master Naturalist needs 8 hours of Advanced Training to become certified and then another 8 hours each year after that. Check out these opportunities and mark your calendars. If you discover an event that you believe would qualify as Advanced Training, send information to Clyde Marsteller, Chair of the Advanced Training Committee, clydeceddm@aol.com

Geology Field Trip -- October 11, 2008 -- 9 am - 3 pm

Dr. Jerre Johnson will lead us to several different areas in Williamsburg and the Peninsula to explore the Coastal Plain geology. Meet in front of Phi Beta Kappa Hall on Jamestown Road by 8:45 am. We will be carpooling.

James City County Water Quality Monitoring Training Sessions

October 25 (2 sessions), 9 am – 12 noon, and 1 – 4 pm

James City County, in partnership with Virginia Save Our Streams (VA SOS), will be holding water quality monitoring training sessions October 25. The sessions are open to anyone in James City County interested in promoting healthy waterways by gathering useful data that local decision-makers will use.

Participants will learn about James City County waterways and the skills needed to collect quality data, as well as practice those skills in the stream. These hands-on sessions are intended for first-time monitors and for previously trained monitors looking to improve their skills.

Once trained and certified, volunteers will monitor selected streams three or four times per year. The data will be published in an annual report and used to track the health of the County's waterways.

Interested citizens must RSVP by contacting the Stormwater Division at 259-1460 or email: stormwater@james-city.va.us no later than one week before each session.

Virginia Master Naturalist Statewide Conference October 17 - 19, 2008

Where: Wytheville Meeting Center, Wytheville, VA. There will be field trips to many nearby natural areas.

Who: All Virginia Master Naturalist volunteers who have enrolled in or completed a basic training course are invited to attend. Chapter advisors are encouraged to come as well! We hope to see at least a few representatives from each of our 25 chapters, and the more the merrier.

What: This conference offers an opportunity to obtain advanced training in many natural resource topics, a venue for chapters to share their accomplishments and ideas with each other, and time to explore a beautiful part of our state. Located in the Southwest VA, Wytheville is a terrific spot for a fall getaway during prime leaf changing season. We'll have access to the National Forest, several state parks, a wildlife management area, and other wonderful natural areas. Our 6 field trips will range from environmental education to fish biology to forest ecology and more!

Fee: Registration is \$120 and includes the program and instruction, transportation for Saturday field trips, lunches on Saturday and Sunday, dinner and a dessert social on Friday, and a dinner banquet on Saturday.

Web site for detailed program and registration form:

<http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/conference2008.html>

12th Annual Wings Over Water Festival. A Celebration of Wildlife & Wildlands in Eastern North Carolina

Nov 4 - 9, 2008

Location: Outer Banks of North Carolina

The programs, field trips, and walks of this birding festival have been approved for advanced training. Numerous birding and natural history events spread over six days on the Outer Banks. Advanced registration and payment for each trip is required. For info: <http://www.wingsoverwater.org/>

The 32nd Annual Fall Forest & Wildlife Field Tours October 2, 10, 15, 16, 2008

These bus tours are approved for Advanced Training. Sponsored by The Virginia Forest Landowner Education Program and Virginia Cooperative Extension, these tours promote wise resource management on private forest lands. Each date is a full day bus tour and fees are \$40 per person.

Fort Pickett/Nottoway County - October 2

Montgomery/Giles Counties - October 10

Rockbridge County - October 15

Essex County - October 16

Please register one week prior to tour - \$45/advance; \$50/day-of. Check-in begins at 8:00 a.m., tours begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. and conclude no later than 5:00 p.m.

To find a detailed itinerary for each date and a registration form, go to: http://www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate/pages/field_tours.htm

2008 Virginia Geological Field Conference -- "Geology of the Saltville and Pulaski Fault Blocks"

October 10-11, 2008, Marion, Virginia

<http://web.wm.edu/geology/vgfc/2008.php>

The objective of this trip is to examine the contrasting geology of the regionally extensive Saltville and Pulaski thrust faults. The Saltville fault typically has a sharp fault plane with Cambrian-age rocks over Mississippian-age rocks, but locally the fault zone contains slices of Cambrian- to Devonian-age rocks. This contrasts with the Pulaski fault which has a mappable disturbed zone (mélange to dismembered formation), aerially up to ¼-mile wide, with Cambrian-age rocks faulted over Cambrian- or Ordovician-age rocks. Stratigraphically, correlative geologic formations have different lithologies and strikingly different thicknesses on the Saltville and Pulaski blocks, reflecting telescoping (by thrusting) of stratigraphies representing different depositional settings. Features important in interpretation of the geologic history, such as carbonate buildups, and unconformities provide additional points of interest for the conference.

The VGFC will be based at Hungry Mother State Park near Marion, Virginia. A pre-trip gathering will be held at the Hemlock Haven Conference Center in the park on Friday evening, October 10, with registration opening at 6:30 and the meeting commencing at 7:15 p.m. We will leave Hungry Mother State Park at 8:30 a.m. and return by 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. Transportation, lunch, and guidebook will be provided.

LODGING & CAMPING: Marion is served by Interstate 81 and there are numerous chain motels. Camping is available at Hungry Mother State Park located 5 miles west of Marion(276-781-7400), http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/hun.shtml.

Putting Nature to Work: How To Design and Build Living Shoreline Projects -- Friday, October 24, 2008

Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester Point, VA -- Watermen's Hall Lobby & Auditorium

8:00 am - 9:00 am Registration; 9:00 am - 4:30 pm Workshop

A workshop will be held at VIMS for marine contractors, permitting agents, environmental consultants, local government and state agency staff, advisory board members, and anyone else interested in learning how to apply the living shoreline approach for habitat restoration and erosion protection. Invited speakers include VIMS advisory scientists, habitat restoration experts, consultants and contractors.

Registration: Dawn Fleming (dawnf@vims.edu, (804) 684-7380)

Planned Topics

- Non-Structural Methods 2: Planting tidal marshes, fiber logs, beach nourishment, and planting sand dunes
- Hybrid / Structural Methods: Marsh sills, headland breakwaters, gapped offshore breakwater systems, construction access and restoration
- Ecosystem services provided by tidal shoreline habitats and the cumulative effects of shoreline hardening
- Recognizing Opportunity: Feasible living shoreline alternatives based on regional and local shoreline conditions
- Non-structural methods 1: Upland runoff controls, riparian buffer enhancement, and bank grading

Registration - \$25 (includes lunch). Deadline for payment & registration: October 17, 2008



Empty Monarch Butterfly Chrysalis. Photo by Felice Bond.

Volunteer Service Projects

The following projects have been 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. Meanwhile, if you have a service project that you think will fit with HRC VMN talents, contact Bruce Hill at euplotes@msn.com Chair of the Volunteer Service Committee.

Acorn Collecting

It's that time of the year again! The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) collects acorns to preserve native Virginia tree species. Growing Native is a year-round volunteer project that collects hardwood seeds and plants trees to help restore and protect rivers and streams in the Potomac River watershed. Citizens can help preserve native Virginia tree species by collecting acorns and delivering them to the VDOF nurseries.

The Department of Forestry needs these acorns: Black Oak, Cherrybark Oak, Chestnut Oak, Chinese Chestnut, Northern Red Oak, Pin Oak, Southern Red Oak, Swamp Chestnut Oak, Swamp White Oak, White Oak, Willow Oak.

Check the web site for the specific "how-to" instructions (one of the most important rules is -- Do not combine acorns from different species of oaks in the same bag.)

<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/mgt/acorn-collect.shtml>

Walk and Talk with Williamsburg Land Conservancy at Greensprings Nature Trail -- Sunday, October 26, 12 noon - 3 pm

The Historic Rivers Chapter will assist the leaders of the Walk and Talk in escorting groups of adults and children along the trail during this annual event open to the public. If you can help that day, contact Susan Powell, smapowell@cox.net, 757-564-4542

Removal of Nonnative Invasives at Historic Jamestowne with National Park Service Staff -- October 27 - 30, 2008

Removal of nonnative invasives at Historic Jamestowne with National Park Service, Mid-Atlantic Exotic Plant Management Team. Focus will be on wisteria, stiltgrass, phragmites and privet. Midday October 27 through mid day October 30, 2008 at Historic Jamestown. Volunteers should wear appropriate protective clothing, i.e. long sleeves, hat, shoes and socks. NPS will supply other protective gear in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and their training as licensed herbicide applicators.

Contact Kathi Mestayer at 757-229-6575; kwren@widomaker.com. or contact Kate Jensen, Lead Biological Science Technician, NPS. Phone: 540-999-3498.

Walk and Talk at New Quarter Park -- "A Habitat Happening," Saturday, November 1, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Sponsored by our own Historic Rivers Chapter, Va. Master Naturalists and New Quarter Park. 9:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. Plans are in the works for a full day of nature activities with guest speakers Donna Ware, Jim Orband, Randy Chambers, and Dave Graft. Participants will pay \$25 for the day and the proceeds will go to York County for programs for adults and youth at New Quarter Park. If you can help out in planning or on the day of the event, please contact Shirley Devan, sedevan52@cox.net or call 757-813-1322.

Walk and Talk at New Quarter Park -- Northern Bobwhite Habitat Restoration Project -- December 6, 10 am - 12 noon

The Northern Bobwhite Habitat Restoration Project will be the focus of the Park's monthly "Walk and Talk" program December 6. This project is a joint effort of the Historic Rivers Chapter, the John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society, and the Williamsburg Bird Club. Contact Shirley Devan at sedevan52@cox.net or 757-813-1322 to lend a hand in planning or on the day of the program.

School Tree Counting Project

Counting the number of trees that are within 100 feet of the school for all of the James City County Schools for Dr. Jeff Kirwin at VA Tech. Volunteers will:

1. Go to the school site and count, measure, and record the types of trees and saplings within 100 feet of the school building.
2. Report data back to Dr. Kirwin for loading into the school site web page.

Contact: Kari Abbott, bearsbaskets@cox.net

Location: James City County Schools

Time Frame: One time project. The project will take about 1/2 day for each school and there are 8.

New Quarter Park Native Plant Teaching Trail

Work continues at the Native Plant Teaching Trail at New Quarter Park. Contact Laurie Houghland at woowee@cox.net or call at 259-2169.

Trail and Garden Maintenance, York River State Park

This is an ongoing service project you can do anytime. Organized days are Tuesday mornings and Friday afternoons, but you can go out any time. Contact Mary Apperson at the Park, phone 566-3036 or at bmapp44@msn.com

Wildlife Mapping

York River State Park, Greensprings Trail, New Quarter Park, Freedom Park or your own backyard. Attend the October 8 Chapter Meeting to learn how this works. If you've completed the Wildlife Mapping Training program, visit already "mapped" areas regularly to record your wildlife observations. Contact Susan Powell, smapowell@cox.net, 757-564-4542

Bobwhite Quail Habitat Restoration Project

Enhance and restore habitat for Bobwhite Quail at New Quarter Park. This is a cooperative project with the John Clayton Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society and the Williamsburg Bird Club. Project has been approved by York County Department of Parks and Recreation. Contact Shirley Devan, sedevan52@cox.net. 757-813-1322 if you can help out.

Here Are the Next Ten Tips for Conserving Water

91. Cook food in as little water as possible. This will also retain more of the nutrients
92. Adjust your watering schedule to the season. Water your summer lawn every third day and your winter lawn every fifth day
93. Turn the water off while you shampoo and condition your hair and you can save more than 50 gallons a week.
94. Bathe your pets outdoors in an area in need of water.
95. Choose new water-saving appliances, like washing machines that save up to 20 gallons per load.
96. Water only as rapidly as the soil can absorb the water.
97. Aerate your lawn. Punch holes in your lawn about six inches apart so water will reach the roots rather than run off the surface.
98. Select the proper size pans for cooking. Large pans require more cooking water than may be necessary.

99. Place an empty tuna can on your lawn to catch and measure the water output of your sprinklers. For lawn watering advice, contact your local conservation office.

100. Turn off the water while you shave and you can save more than 100 gallons a week

<http://www.wateruseitwisely.com/100ways/se.shtml>

Mushrooms in the Enchanted Forest

By Jordan Westenhaver, Historic Rivers Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalist Member

You know you are in Master Naturalist Heaven when you enter a classroom and see these words: What is a Mushroom? Why are they here? What do they do?

At Norfolk Botanical Garden on September 20 I had fun learning all about mushrooms and earned advance training hours for the experience. Theresa Augustin, curator of natural areas, led a small group of fungi fans on a hunt that took us behind the scenes into several areas that are not open to the public as well as all over the familiar well-tended acres of theme gardens.

Theresa started us off with a short slide presentation of what to look for. Then, armed with a handout of illustrations and several guidebooks, we climbed aboard a tram and were off on the hunt. Thanks to recent rains there were many shapes, sizes, and colors of mushrooms to find. One member of the group had a really great eye. From far away she could spot even the tiny bird's nests that are no bigger than pieces of gravel. A young man in our group had a great nose and a big vocabulary. He could discern aromas in mushrooms that he described in words that a wine lover might use. My contribution was my hand lens which I passed around so everyone could view our finds in 10x. We even used it to look at some raccoon scat to see if it had been eating mushrooms. We thought so but it was really hard to tell! We were successful at using a dichotomous key to confirm most of our identifications but, as often happens, there were a couple of specimens that had not read the field guide. For those we had to be content with a tentative identification followed by a question mark.

The two-hour class was part of an ongoing NBG series called Curator's Corner. Watch for announcements for other sessions that qualify as advanced training for HRCVMN. They are affordable and just far enough away to make a delightful day trip.



Monarch Butterfly with Chrysalis. Photo by Felice Bond.

Estuaries Day at York River State Park: Our Second Year and Counting....

By Angela Scott, VMNHRC Estuaries Day chair and Historic Rivers Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalist Member

On Saturday, September 20th, 2008, our VMN Historic Rivers Chapter participated in our second Estuaries Day - a special event day held annually at York River State Park to "celebrate our estuaries and tidal rivers." (http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/yor.shtml) The VMN Historic Rivers Chapter was joined by a variety of other exhibitors, including the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS); Jerre Johnson (retired William & Mary Professor Emeritus of Geology) with his fossils; York River State Park and their "Critter Corner;" the Hampton Roads WET Trailer; as well as a concessionaire selling hotdogs, hamburgers, and other tasty snacks. Canoe and kayak rides, hay rides, seining activities, ranger-led hikes, and other fun family activities rounded out the day, complemented by great weather at the park.



Angela Scott with visitors to HRC Exhibit. Photo by Felice Bond.

Last year's Estuaries Day was the first time our organization debuted a booth at a public event. Chapter members earned service project hours for their participation in planning, gathering, and developing the booth's display materials before the event - and by the time that day was over, it was evident that all that hard work paid off. In much the same fashion, this year's booth was also a hit, thanks to the dedicated efforts of yet another great team of volunteers from all three cohorts who staffed our table and assisted me with preparations before and during the event. It turned out to be great fun!

Our first brave bunch of intrepid volunteers to "woman" the VMNHRC booth (in addition to myself!) were Sheila Kerr-Jones and Margaret Ware, arriving bright and early at 8:30am and 9am on Saturday morning to help set up the booth (it looked beautiful!) and work the first shift of the day. Margaret offered to volunteer even though she had two broken toes and was hobbling around - what a trooper! Sheila also worked some magic of her own by rustling up some kids' coloring activities, informational brochures, and natural history artifacts from the Virginia Living Museum (where she is a volunteer) to enhance our display to the public. She was even able to obtain a few small specimens from the VLM folks which they agreed to donate to our collection - thanks Sheila and VLM!! Our very own Mary Apperson (also a ranger at York River State Park) even dropped by to visit with us, and gave us a perfectly molted exoskeleton of a fiddler crab from the park's Taskinas Creek salt marsh. What a neat find!

Felice Bond and Jim Booth worked the mid-afternoon shift, spending some of their time identifying insect specimens that Felice collected and donated to our VMN collection. Felice also brought her camera and shot some terrific photos of our display (including a live Monarch Butterfly in a chrysalis, which a visiting family brought to our booth to share with park visitors - what a great idea, and a stroke of luck for us!). Finally, Jeanne and Mike Milin arrived to finish out the late afternoon shift, and they also did a fabulous job of packing up the booth at the end of the event - which is never an easy job after spending a long day serving the public!

I do not want to neglect giving special thanks to Sandra at the Virginia Cooperative Extension Office in Toano for loaning us their display board for use in our booth; to Larry and Patty Riddick for coming through at the last minute to provide us with the VMNHRC "Toolbox" of specimens, despite their busy preparations for a trip to Ireland the next day!; to Jordan Westenhaver and Susan Powell for providing the banner and other booth display items for me in the days before the event; to Kari Abbott for offering me the opportunity to chair Estuaries Day this year; and finally to Linda Cole, for briefing me on the details of last year's event that I'd forgotten so I could pick up the reins and go!



A young visitor examines items from the "toolbox." Photo by Felice Bond.

All in all, everyone did a super job in making our Estuaries Day booth a success this year, and we received many compliments and positive feedback both during and after the event. Sarah Cosby (the York River State Park ranger who organized Estuaries Day), also extended her appreciation to our VMN chapter members for a job well done:

"I just wanted to thank you again for bringing the Master Naturalists out for Estuaries Day this year. You all had a wonderful display and I really appreciate the time and effort you all went to to join us. Thank you and the other volunteers too!"

Sarah Cosby

Environmental Educator, York River State Park

In closing, I'd like to raise one issue that I think is important to remember for our future VMN booth displays, whether at Estuaries Day or anywhere else: people love looking at our "Toolbox" collection of specimens - and while we have a nice collection right now, we could still use more COOL STUFF!! Please keep your eyes open for any interesting items (i.e. dead insects, identifiable bones, shells, dried plants, nests, etc.) that you think would make a good addition to our collection - and please bag/box and identify them accordingly (along with the date and location of their collection, and your name). If you have any suggestions for items you want to donate or think we might need for our specimen collection, please contact Larry Riddick, Keeper of the "Toolbox" stuff!) at larryriddick@cox.net. We could also use a few magnifying glasses for observing specimens more closely.

Thanks everyone!

Historic Rivers Chapter at Farmer's Market

By Kathi Mestayer, Historic Rivers Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalist Member

HRC Master Naturalists held Backyard Habitat Day at the Williamsburg Farmer's Market October 4. We had a LOT of visitors to our tents, which featured live native plants and many critters eating, laying eggs on, and nesting in them.



A look at our two tents and two signs. Photo by Felice Bond.

Stephen Living of the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries came by in his official capacity and brought some materials to distribute and answered questions from visitors. Thanks, Steve!

We gave away a lot of Philip Merritt's list of natives that should be "findable" in these parts, as well as the VNPS list of nurseries. Two people left their names and emails and requested more info on native plants and VNPS. It was pretty cool to see a college student recite the native shrubs and plants she had put in the yard at home. If memory serves me correctly, we used Virginia Native Plant Society's blue tent, and borrowed one from the Farmer's Market. We were all exhausted by 11:00 a.m. when we packed up.

Volunteers who staffed the exhibit: Pam Camblin, Jeanette Navia, Joanne Medina, Gary Driscoll, Adrienne Frank, Jordan Westenhaver, Felice Bond, Kathi Mestayer, Sheila Kerr-Jones, and Shirley Devan.

A grand THANK YOU goes to Jordan Westenhaver, Kathi Mestayer and Felice Bond for preparing new photos and posters and implementing the theme of "Backyard Habitat." A wonderful job!



Sheila Kerr- Jones, left, interacts with children at the Farmer's Market. Photo by Felice Bond.

"There's no place like home, there's no place like home..."

By Kathi Mestayer, Historic Rivers Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalist Member

Turtles are often seen in the road or in other places that are not safe for them. If you see one in the road, carefully move it to the other side, in the same direction that it is heading. Don't take it home with you or move it somewhere else; turtles have to stay in their "home" territory for their whole lives to reproduce, find food and be healthy. And be very careful when mowing the lawn -- mowers can kill turtles. Below is one that DGIF Wildlife Biologist Stephen Living said was probably injured by a lawnmower, but seems to have healed over. If you have a question, go to <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/WILDLIFE/information/?s=030068> for more information.



Injured Box Turtle. Photo supplied by Steven Living, VaDGIF



Baby Box Turtle. Photo by Kathi Mestayer

Follow Up: Box Turtle and Eggs

By Jim Booth, Historic Rivers Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalist Member

The apparent nest in my front yard did not yield any baby turtles after 90 days. I removed the protective cage. I was hoping for some babies to show you, sorry, no luck this year.

As a corollary to my box turtle story, the advanced training that I attended at VCU Rice Center in Charles City County on box turtles on 27 September was superb.