

THE NATURALIST



The monthly newsletter of the Historic Rivers Chapter
Virginia Master Naturalist Program

<http://historicrivers.org>

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 3 No. 2 February

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

May the Forest Be With You!

Finally, and after much anticipation, the chapter will be able to hit the open road on a field trip to the New Kent Forestry Center (NKFC) on Saturday, February 7th. The Center is managed by the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF), and we will be hosted by forester Billy Apperson and forest education specialist Lisa Deaton.

Billy Apperson has been a forester with VDOF for over 40 years. He lent his expertise to the chapter during the very first Historic Rivers training session. Unfortunately, he had to cancel the field trip planned for the second training session because of bad weather. We have been hoping for a reschedule ever since.

The center includes a research center with a state-of-the-art greenhouse and conference center. The field trip will showcase some of the center's ongoing research projects which include the propagation, maintenance and preservation of at least ten species of rare or threatened trees and grasses. In the greenhouse, Billy or Lisa will be able to demonstrate the propagation techniques used for seed germination, grafting and vegetative propagation.

Restoration research projects at the Center include: preservation of Virginia's native Longleaf pine gene pool, as well as loblolly pines. Research is also conducted on American chestnut, Atlantic white cedar, and Christmas Trees.

Lisa Deaton plans a walk through the unique trails that meander through the property. Hopefully, you will be able to stroll along the boardwalk through a cypress swamp.

Please plan to come along. Anyone who attends the meeting will receive advanced training hours.

BTW – What did the beaver say to the tree? It's been nice gnawing you!

Okay, one more – How do trees get on the internet? They "log" in!

**Susan Powell, President
Historic Rivers Chapter
VA Master Naturalist Program**



PICKY EATERS

By Kathi Mestayer

Okay, for the record, here's the breakdown:
37% of all animals are herbivorous insects. Of those, 90% are "specialists," which means that they rely on 3 or fewer host plants in order to propagate. So the monarch butterfly that must have milkweed for its caterpillars to eat, is far from being the only "picky eater" in nature; if you take 90% of 37%, ONE THIRD of all animals require one of 3 or fewer plants to survive. Makes you think it really does matter what you plant, doesn't it?
Sources: Tallamy, p 45., Bernays, E.M. and M. Graham. 1988. On the evolution of host specificity in phytophagous arthropods. Ecology 69: 886-892. Weiss, A. and M.R. Berenbaum. 1988. Herbivorous insects/plant interactions. Pages 140-183 in Abrahamson, W.G., ed. Plant-Animal Interactions. MacMillan, New York, New York.

See the news on a Virginia tagged Monarch Butterfly found (alive!) in Texas!

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CHAPTER OFFICERS 2009

- Susan Powell, President*
Shirley Devan, Vice President & Programs Chair
Angier Brock & Katie Schultz, Secretary
Jim Booth, Treasurer
Barbara Boyer, Newsletter Editor
Felice Bond, Historian
Alice Kopinitz, Host
Jeanette Navia, Membership
Bruce Hill, Volunteer Service Projects
Bruce Hill, Training Chair
Susan Engle-Hill, Joanne Medina, Advanced Training
Adrienne Frank & Gary Driscoll, Outreach Committee
Seig Kopinitz, Webmaster
Dave Youker, Member-at-Large
Mike Powell, Member-at-Large
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- Volunteer Service Projects***
Bruce Hill, Chair
- Advanced Training***
Susie Engle-Hill, Co-Chair
Joanne Medina, Co-Chair
- Training Committee***
Bruce Hill, Chair
- Outreach/Publicity***
Adrienne Frank, and Gary Driscoll

ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The VIRGINIA VERNAL POOLS PROGRAM, sponsored through the Department of Biology at Sweet Briar College in central Virginia is pleased to announce an offering of the SPRING POOLS INSTITUTE March 16-19, 2009

This advanced field workshop focuses on the ecological and conservation dynamics of vernal pools and related wetlands, with emphasis on their amphibian fauna and other distinctive biota. http://www.lynchburgbiz.com/virginiavernalpools/spring_institute.htm

(Note: different contact info provided below)

This workshop will be based at Sweet Briar College (with classroom instruction and lodging/meals available on campus) and EXPLORE A WIDE VARIETY OF WETLAND environments throughout the Piedmont, Blue Ridge and Ridge

& Valley regions of Virginia. http://www.sbc.edu/http://www.biology.sbc.edu/biophotos_spr08.html

This workshop is open to all natural resource professionals, naturalists, educators and enthusiasts of the subject. Space is limited to the FIRST 10 REGISTRANTS. Registration is required.

Mike Hayslett at mhayslett@sb.edu or 434-381-6439

Note: See Felice Bond's beautiful photographs of the Grafton Ponds vernal pool, page 11.

The Virginia Native Plant Society News

VNPS Annual Workshop

High Mountain Flora

Saturday March 7, 2009

9:15 am—3:15 am

Gottwold Center for Sciences

University of Richmond

Keynote speaker: **Elizabeth Byers**, West Virginia Natural Heritage Program

Other speakers: **Chris Ludwig, Tom Wieboldt, Laura Neale**

Fee is \$40. Registration due by March 2, 2009

Brochures have been mailed to members. Additional information and registration forms will be on the VNPS website soon

The local web site for the John Clayton Chapter is:

<http://www.claytonvnps.org/index.htm>

New Quarter Park Event

Join us this Saturday, **February 7**, at 10 a.m. for a

[Walk and Talk to Civil War earthworks led by J. Michael Moore](#),

curator of Lee Hall Mansion, Newport News. Michael has worked on the recently produced WHRO series, the Civil War in Hampton Roads. He is sure to provide us with a highly informative program.

Those who attended last year will attest to his enthusiasm for the topic and entertaining presentation skills. The program is free and lasts for two hours, concluding at noon.

The weather forecast calls for a nice day in the 50s, so you won't want to miss this opportunity to get outside for a walk in the woods!

BIRD WATCHING AND MEMOIRS OF A FARM BOY

by Sara E. Lewis

On Saturday, January 24, I went birding with the Williamsburg Bird Club at New Quarter Park. Let me say, first of all, that my new binoculars enhanced the experience tremendously. My Eagle Optics Ranger 10 x 50s were a Christmas gift from my husband. (Thank you, dear.) We watched a variety of birds from hawks to songbirds and I learned so much because I could really see the details!

We didn't see many ducks on Queens Creek, however, and this was slightly unusual. After birding for awhile, we began to hear gunshots and eventually picked out the duck hunters' boat sitting next to the marsh at the place we call The Point. (In the center and to the right in this photo.) We saw about a dozen decoys anchored around the camouflaged boat. Some of the birders grimaced and shook their heads every time we heard a blast. Poor, poor ducks.

On Sunday I read William H. Turner's book *Chesapeake Boyhood: Memoirs of a Farm Boy*. It had been loaned to me by my cousin Ralph Anderton from Bohannon in Mathews, Virginia. Ralph grew up in that rural way too, and I have heard our birding friend Bill Williams mention a similar attachment to the land rooted in his childhood exploits. As boys, these men hunted and fished because that was what you did. Through hunting and fishing they grew to appreciate wildlife and the natural environment. I highly recommend Turner's book to all who care about Virginia's

natural history and Virginian's attachment to it. It's not a scholarly book, it's just a good, country boy memoir. I hope some of you will read it if you are interested in developing greater empathy with hunters and fishermen.

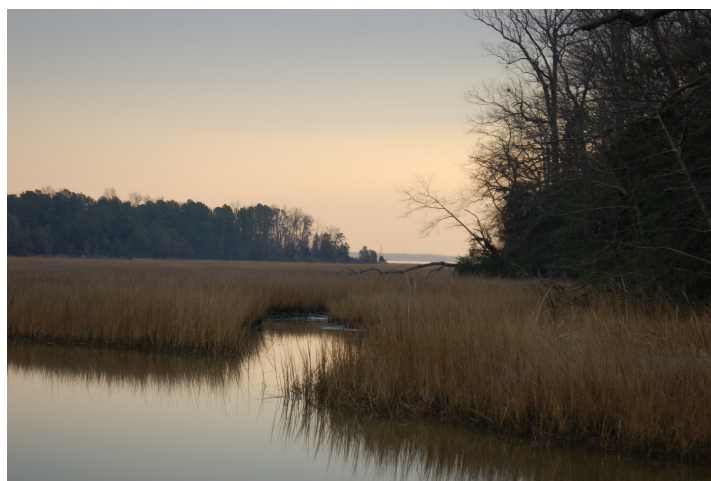
Additionally, of historical and environmental interest, my favorite chapter was "Farm Life:"

"When I was growing up in the 1930s and 1940s, farm life on the subsistence level in Virginia revolved around certain routines ... There was little planning or expectation, but this does not mean to imply any monotony, shortsightedness, or boredom. To the contrary, we lived exciting and wholesome lives..."

"One of the biggest jobs we had was pulling weeds and hoeing. No herbicides were ever used, and there were significantly fewer weeds than you have now. Somehow I think that the weeds have become immune to poison ... their immunity is keeping ahead of modern chemistry, and the art of pulling them by hand is lost."

"It was a good, simple, healthy life, enjoyed by young and old. But it is as extinct as the passenger pigeon."

Turner's book brought back memories, even though I am female and nearly 15 years younger. As a child who grew up around the rural edges of the Mobjack Bay I recall the scenes and similar county characters. Time spent traipsing through the woods and crabbing with friends, working in Nana's garden and helping her can, collecting eggs from Granny's hen house, and fishing with my father are fond memories at the core of my current concern for the environment and interest in the Virginia Master Naturalists program.



MORE ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Climate Change in Virginia

Al Weed of Public Policy Virginia and Glen Besa of the Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club will address federal and state actions to reduce carbon emissions during a lecture/discussion scheduled for 7pm on Monday, February 9 at Andrews Hall 101 (at back of Phi Beta Kappa Hall, College of William and Mary), Jamestown Rd, Williamsburg. The public is invited to learn about expected federal and state legislation regarding climate change, prospects for a national renewable portfolio standard, possible tax incentives, public policies needed to support biomass energy economy in Virginia and how to engage the power industry in fighting global warming. The remaining two lecture/discussions will take place on March 2 and April 13. The series is sponsored by the Williamsburg Climate Action Network, the Student Environmental Action Coalition and the Program of Environmental Science and Policy at the College of William and Mary. More information at 757-253-8029 or www.williamsburgclimate.org.

Monday, February 9

Climate Change in Virginia: Part One. A lecture/discussion at which Al Weed of Public Policy Virginia and Glen Besa of the Sierra Club discuss federal and state actions

to reduce carbon emissions. 7pm at Andrews Hall 101 (at back of Phi Beta Kappa Hall, College of William and Mary), Jamestown Rd, Williamsburg. More info at 757-253-8029 or www.williamsburgclimate.org.

Monday, March 2

Climate Change in Virginia: Part Two. A lecture/discussion at which Al Weed discusses Virginia's biomass resource base and its potential economic effects; Dennis Taylor discusses the College of William and Mary biofuel plant that processes waste cooking oil into usable biodiesel, and Liz Canuel reviews the Virginia Institute of Marine Science project to turn algae into renewable fuel. 7pm at Andrews Hall 101 (at back of Phi Beta Kappa Hall, College of William and Mary), Jamestown Rd, Williamsburg. More info at 757-253-8029 or www.williamsburgclimate.org.

Monday, April 13

Climate Change in Virginia: Part Three. A lecture/discussion at which Al Weed will present a vision for life in Virginia beyond fossil fuels. Also a discussion about changes to public policy needed to reach this bright future. 7pm at Andrews Hall 101 (at back of Phi Beta Kappa Hall, College of William and Mary), Jamestown Rd, Williamsburg. More info at 757-253-8029 or www.williamsburgclimate.org.

Department of Conservation and Recreation Education Training - Time Sensitive!

Here is an opportunity for some terrific advanced training in the realm of environmental education. This is a train-the-trainer workshop, so the people attending would be expected to then train other educators (such as other people in the Master Naturalist chapter, or local teachers). If you are looking to get your chapter more involved in environmental education, this is a great opportunity. One person could be trained as a facilitator, and then train other people in the chapter so that they could lead the curriculum-based activities.

Project WILD and Project Underground will be offering Facilitator Training workshops February 25-27 at Douthat State Park in Clifton Forge. The workshops will train volunteers to conduct the in-service workshops for these two environmental educational programs. Once an educator has been through this workshop, they may offer workshops for teachers in your division on in-service days. During the 2 1/2 day training, they will learn about wildlife or karst * topography, become familiar with Project WILD or Project Underground materials and how to conduct high quality professional development workshops for teachers in your system. Please look over the attached information and return it to Carol Zokaites by **February 6th**. There are only 15 spaces in each workshop (30 total) so please do not hesitate.

Carol Zokaites
Karst Education Coordinator
DCR - Virginia Karst Program Suite 201 8 Radford Street
Christiansburg, VA 24073
540-394-2553 Carol.Zokaites@dcr.virginia.gov



Photo courtesy of DCR— Natural Heritage Program

- Karst - a landscape resulting to a significant degree from the dissolution of bedrock
- Karst - landscape features include sinkholes, sinking and losing streams, caves, and large flow springs.

Volunteer Service Projects

General Projects		
Prothonotary Warbler Nest Box Project	Shirley Devan	sedevan52@cox.net
Ellipse Garden: Botanical Demonstration and Education Project	Gary Driscole	Adrienne-gary@erols.com
Colonial National Historical Park Invasive Species Control and General Maintenance	Angier Brock	abrock@vcu.edu
Invasive Plant Removal at New Quarter Park	Jeanne Millin	scotfarquhar@cox.net
Diamondback Terrapin Fencing Project	Tim Christensen	mtnc066@msn.com
New Quarter Park Native Plant Teaching Trail	Laure Houghland	woowee@cox.net
Zoar State Forest Nature Trail	Sibyl Rose & Dave Milby	milby@dof.virginia.gov
Jamestown 4-H Center – Environmental Education Instructional Aide	Sara Lewis	saraclewis@cox.net
Trail Maintenance at York River State Park	Mary Apperson	mary.apperson@dcr.virginia.gov
Virginia Frog and Toad Calling Survey	Felice Bond	fbond203@cox.net
Craney Island Monitoring, Conservation and Management of Beach and Marsh	Shirley Devan	sedevan52@cox.net
Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel, South Island Bird	Shirley Devan	sedevan52@cox.net
Bobwhite Quail Habitat Restoration Project	Shirley Devan	sedevan52@cox.net
Bird Counts		
Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory	Susan Powell	smapowell@cox.net
Big Sit Survey of Birds		
Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory Hawk Watch at College Creek	Susan Powell	smapowell@cox.net
Williamsburg Audubon Christmas Bird Count	Shirley Devan	sedevan52@cox.net
Tabb area of Newport News Audubon Christmas Bird Count	Tim Christensen	mtnc066@msn.com
Spring Bird Count Williamsburg	Shirley Devan	sedevan52@cox.net
Spring Bird Count Hampton Roads	Tim Christensen	mtnc066@msn.com



Butterfly Counts		
Chippokes Plantation State Park	Alice & Seig Kopinitz	askop4@cox.net
Eastern Shore Wildlife Refuge	Alice & Seig Kopinitz	askop4@cox.net
Great Dismal Swamp Butterfly Count	Alice & Seig Kopinitz	askop4@cox.net
Butterfly Survey at Nansmond National Wildlife Refuge	Shirley Devan	sedevan52@cox.net
Wildlife Mapping		
Williamsburg Winery	Susan Powell	smapowell@cox.net
York River State Park	Mary Apperson	mary.apperson@dcr.virginia.gov
Greensprings Trail	Susan Powell	smapowell@cox.net
Grafton Ponds	Larry & Patty Riddick	larryriddick@cox.net pattyriddick@cox.net
Bassett Trace Nature Trail	Cherie Aukland	Aukland.c@cox.net
New Quarter Park	Susan Powell	smapowell@cox.net
Freedom Park	Susan Powell	smapowell@cox.net

Q: What type of luggage did the turkey vulture use on his trip?

A: **Carrion**



VIMS AFTER HOURS

After Hours Lecture: Invasive Species

Starts: February 26, 2009 at 7:00 PM

Location: Watermen's Hall, McHugh Auditorium

Event URL: <http://tethys.vims.edu/events/registration.cfm>

Contact: 804-684-7846, programs@vims.edu

Summary

Join VIMS Asst. Professor Eric Hilton as he explores how human activities and climate change promote invasive species in Chesapeake Bay.

Full Description: Not your grandfather's Chesapeake: How humans and climate change are altering the Bay's fauna Join VIMS Asst. Professor Eric Hilton as he explores how human activities and climate change promote the invasion of non-native species in Chesapeake Bay, and how these invasives may impact the Bay ecosystem. Register here (required). Learn about future lectures.

After Hours Lecture: Blue Crab Blues

Starts: March 26, 2009 at 7:00 PM

Location: Watermen's Hall, McHugh Auditorium

Event URL: <http://tethys.vims.edu/events/registration.cfm>

Contact: 804-684-7846, programs@vims.edu

Summary

Join VIMS researcher Jacques van Montfrans as he describes issues surrounding blue crabs and the blue crab fishery.

Full Description

Blue crabs, key players in the ecology, economy, and culture of Chesapeake Bay since the colonial era, are in trouble. Join VIMS researcher Jacques van Montfrans as he describes the life of blue

crabs in the Bay, as well as current management issues surrounding the blue crab fishery in Virginia and Maryland. Register here (required).

After Hours Lecture: Is our energy future blowing in the wind?

Starts: April 30, 2009 at 7:00 PM

Location: Watermen's Hall, McHugh Auditorium

Event URL: <http://tethys.vims.edu/events/registration.cfm>

Contact: 804-684-7846, programs@vims.edu

Summary

VIMS alum Charles Natale explores the opportunities and challenges associated with development of wind energy off the East Coast.

Full Description

Join VIMS alumnus Charles Natale as he explores the environmental opportunities and regulatory challenges associated with development of offshore renewable wind energy projects along the US East Coast and in Virginia. Natale is President and CEO of ESS Group, Inc., one of the Northeast's largest environmental consulting and engineering companies. ESS has been actively involved in the siting, design, and permitting of the 420 MW Cape Wind project, the nation's first offshore wind farm, which will be located in Nantucket Sound, Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Register here (required).

Note that the programs are free but attendees must register in advance. Here is the link with the 2009 schedule:

> <http://www.vims.edu/newsandevents/events/2009/index.php>

ONGOING HRC PROJECTS

Craney Island Bird Monitoring, Conservation, & Management

Dates: **Tuesdays, February 17 and 24 and other March dates TBA**

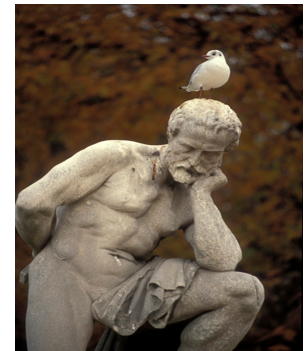
Departure time: 8 am from Colony Square Shopping Center. Arrive back in Williamsburg approximately 3 pm

Monitor of beach and marsh nesting birds; carry out approved management and conservation action plans under the supervision of Ruth Beck, Professor Emeritus of Biology at W&M.

Contact Shirley Devan, sedevan52@cox.net, 757-813-1322

Williamsburg Spring Bird Count April 26, 2009

Sponsored by Williamsburg Bird Club. Join experienced birders to survey a sector in the Williamsburg area. There are eight sectors in the Williamsburg Count and all need additional eyes and ears. Contact Shirley Devan, sedevan52@cox.net, 757-813-1322 or Bill Williams, the Count Coordinator, jwwil2@wm.edu



Hampton Roads Spring Bird Count -- Date TBA

The Hampton Roads Bird Club (HRBC) will conduct the Spring Bird Count for its respective 13 sectors (areas of Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson and York County). More info coming in next newsletter.

Calendar of Events at **NEW QUARTER PARK** york county, virginia

February 2009

- 7 - Walk & Talk, J. Michael Moore, Battle of Williamsburg, 10 a.m.-noon
- 14 - Bird Walk, 8-10 a.m.
- 28 - Bird Walk, 7-9 a.m.
- 28 - Stargazing 7:00 p.m.



March 2009

- 7 - Walk & Talk, Steve Living, Natural History, 10 a.m.-noon
- 14 - Bird Walk, 8-10 a.m.
- 28 - Bird Walk, 7-9 a.m.
- 28 - Great Atlantic Rescue Dog Training, 8:30 a.m.
- 29 - 2nd Annual Cabin Fever Sunday



Bird watchers saw hunters in a camouflaged boat who also watched Queens Creek for waterfowl. January 24 was the last day of duck hunting season.



**Winter Hours through May 1:
Fri 10 a.m. to Dusk; Sat & Sun 8 a.m. to Dusk**
Park opened for special events
(Mon-Thurs trail/playground users: Port-A-Johns available)

Directions to the Park

- Exit Col Plevy at Queen's Lake, turn right. Turn onto Lakeshead Dr. & follow signs to Park.
- From Peninsula: Exit I-64 at Rt. 199 toward J'town. Exit Rt. 143W. Right on Penniman Rd., left on Hubbard Ln. Right on Lakeshead Rd. & follow to Park.



NQ Park Office - 1000 Lakeshead Dr; 757-220-3653 (Cell 757-812-5589)
York Co Parks & Rec - 757-890-3500; www.yorkcounty.gov/parksandrec/index.html

Bird Walks - 2nd & 4th Saturdays; www.williamsburgbirdclub.org
VDGIF Watchable Wildlife Trails; www.vdgif.state.va.us/wildlife/wildlife_watching
Mountain Biking - www.evms.org Native Plants - www.daytonwpms.org
Hiking - www.tidewateratc.org Master Naturalists - historicrivers.org
Disc Golf - www.pdga.com www.meetup.com/NewQuarterPark

- | | |
|---|--|
| April 2009 | May 2009 |
| 4 - Walk & Talk, Bill Williams, Migratory Birds, 10 a.m.-noon | 2 - Walk & Talk, Vicki Shufert, Edible Flowers |
| 11 - Colonial Road Runners 5K Run, 1K Fun Run/Walk | 2 - Tournament, North American Chapter, British Long Bow Society |
| 11 - Bird Walk (meet in overflow parking lot), 8-10 a.m. | 2 - Tentative: Stargazing 7:30 |
| 14 - Into the Woods! Trails, After-School Eco-Program, 3:45-5:30 p.m. 6-wks, \$30 | 2 & 3 - Disc Golf Tournament |
| 18 - BYOK! 9 a.m.-noon | 5 - Into the Woods! Conservation |
| 21 - Into the Woods! Birds | 9 - Bird Walk, 8-10 a.m. |
| 25 - Bark in the Park | 12 - Into the Woods! Watershed |
| 25 - Bird Walk (meet in overflow parking lot), 7-9 a.m. | 16 - BYOK! 9 a.m.-noon |
| 28 - Into the Woods! Trees | 19 - Into the Woods! Kayaking |
| | 23 - Bird Walk, 7-9 a.m. |

- Disc Golf
- Daily \$3, Annual \$25.
 - Equipment Sales & Rentals.
 - Gift Certificates for Merchandise & Passes.

Shelter & Fire Circle Reservations

- \$50 & \$25,
- Call 890-3500

FIELD SKETCHING

with
Lara Call Gastinger

Saturday, April 4 &
Sunday, April 5, 2009



Join internationally renowned botanical illustrator Lara Call Gastinger for two days of observing, sketching, and painting wildflowers and Piedmont landscapes at Flower Camp near Howardsville, Virginia. During this workshop, Lara will help students learn how to render natural phenomena more accurately, how to turn even a quick sketch into a valuable botanical record, and how to depict plants (including trees) in ways that include both near and far views. As a trained botanist as well as illustrator of the *Flora of Virginia*, Lara will help participants identify phenomena unique to the first week of April. Enrollment limited to 12 participants. Students with some previous drawing or painting experience benefit most from this workshop.

Tuition of \$350 includes three meals (lunch Saturday through brunch Sunday) and one night's lodging. *Campers wishing to arrive Friday night may do so for an additional \$100 which includes lodging and dinner Friday night, and a light breakfast Saturday morning. Workshop chef: Erin Bishop

To register, send a \$50 deposit or full payment to Flower Camp, c/o Nancy R. Hugo, Director, 11208 Gwathmey Church Road, Ashland, VA 23005. For more information, visit www.lowercamp.org or contact Nancy Ross Hugo at nancy@lowercamp.org or 804-798-6364.

COMMUNITY BASED HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS

Community Based Habitat restoration projects
Request for Proposals for Community-Based Habitat Restoration Projects through the **National Association of Counties/NOAA Restoration Center Partnership**

The National Association of Counties (NACo), in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Community-Based Restoration Program (CRP), is pleased to announce the third year of funding for the Coastal Counties Restoration Initiative (CCRI). The initiative provides financial assistance on a competitive basis to innovative, high quality county-led or county-supported projects. *Projects must occur within a NACo member county, and be supported by the chief county elected official.

In 2009, the initiative will provide \$350,000 in grants to improve stream, river, estuarine, and other important marine habitats. Priority areas for CCRI are coastal restoration and the removal of fish passage barriers in coastal streams and rivers. Grants will range from \$50,000

to \$100,000 based upon need. The grant application must be submitted online at the website below.

Proposal Deadline *April 6, 2009*

More Information

To access the full RFP and application instructions visit* National Association of Counties*: www.naco.org/ccri <<http://www.naco.org/ccri>> Applicants may contact Carrie Clingan, NACo at 202-942-4246, cclingan@naco.org or ccri@naco.org <<mailto:ccri@naco.org>> and Melanie Gange, NOAA, Melanie.Gange@noaa.gov <<mailto:Melanie.Gange@noaa.gov>> with questions regarding potential proposals.

May Louise Sligh

York/Rappahannock Watershed Field Coordinator University of Mary Washington Earth & Environmental Sciences VA Department of Conservation & Recreation Tappahannock Regional Office/ P.O. Box 1425 Tappahannock, VA 22560 804/443-1494
watershed address: Hoskins Creek-Rappahannock River-Chesapeake Bay

The Nature of Habitat: Principles and Practical Considerations for the Gardener

Whether we're planning gardens and landscapes, putting them together, tending what's already there, or just observing nature, it's about habitat. In fact, the outdoors is habitat whether we think of it that way or not. That puddle in the sidewalk the birds seem to prefer to the birdbath, the fireflies flashing in unison in summer, the box turtle crossing Strawberry Plains Road – they're all dealing with the resources (and obstacles) of their habitats. And we, as humans and especially as Master Gardeners, have a significant impact on them.

The Nature of Habitat workshop will deepen our ability to "see" habitat. During the past decades, the science of ecology has made huge strides in understanding the components of living systems, and how they interact and change. Using examples from our local area, we will discuss and illustrate concepts such as ecosystem, biome, diversity, fragmentation, succession, etc., and how they help us to see the outdoors as habitat, in all of its beautiful complexity.

A big part of the workshop will be discussing and sharing examples of how to create, enhance and preserve habitat in terms of its four basic components: water, food, shelter and space. We will talk about how habitat concepts play out in our work as Master Gardeners, and think about what makes a habitat garden, yard or landscape good, better, and best. Habitat can be attractive, easy to maintain, and a source of year-round fascination for all ages (of humans).

Learning to "see habitat" is an ongoing learning and observation process that changes the way we experience nature and our yards, gardens, public spaces, and the outdoors. You'll never look at that leaf litter the same way again!

The class will be given by a group of Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, and a Watchable Wildlife naturalist from the Va Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. And all present will be invited and encouraged to share and participate.

— Kathi Mestayer



Name: _____ Badge Name: _____ Cert. Initials: _____
 Title: _____ Agency: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone (Office): _____ Fax: _____
 Phone (Mobile): _____ Email: _____

Registrations postmarked by February 13, 2009 will receive the discounted fees!

Please Check Your Registration Packet		I plan to attend the following included meals:
Rate	Rate for Early Discount (Postmarked by 2/13/09)	
_____ \$159.99	\$144.99 Full Conference VRPS Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Monday Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday Lunch
_____ \$179.99	\$159.99 Full Conference Non-Member	<input type="checkbox"/> I require special accommodations, including meals, to fully participate in the Management Conference. (Please attach a description of your needs with your registration by February 13, 2009.)
_____ \$89.99	\$79.99 Daily VRPS Member	
_____ \$99.99	\$89.99 Daily Non-Member	

If a one day registration, please circle the day you will attend:
 _____ Monday _____ Tuesday

_____ \$10.00 CEU Fee
 _____ \$15.00 CEU Fee after 2/13/09
 Total Amount Paid: \$ _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION- PLEASE COMPLETE ALL THAT APPLY (Make Checks Payable to "VRPS")

Payment Type (Circle Type) Check: Check # _____ Credit Card Cash PO#: _____
 Credit Card Type (Circle Type) Visa MC AMEX Discover
 Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: ____/____/____ Credit Card Security Code: _____
 Name on Card: _____
 Address on Statement: _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Signature: _____ Date: _____
 Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Before signing and authorizing credit card payment, please be aware of the cancellation policy for the conference.
 Cancellation Policy: "If for any reason, conference delegate requests cancellation of attendance to the conference, cancellations must be made by 12:00 pm on March 13, 2009. In order to receive a registration fee refund, minus a 20% administrative fee. Cancellations received after 12:00 pm on March 13, 2009 will NOT receive a registration fee refund."

Lodging Information
 Fredericksburg Hospitality House & Conference Center Conference Discounted Rate: \$99 (Single/Double) + 11% tax
 2801 Plank Road, Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401 Room rate good until March 2, 2009 or when block is full.
 Reservations: Call (540) 786-8321 or 1-800-682-1049

Virginia Recreation & Park Society
 6372 Mechanicsville Turnpike, Suite 109 Mechanicsville, Virginia 23111
 Phone: (804) 730-9447 • Fax: (804) 730-9455 • Email: vrps@vrps.com



Registration Form for the
 VRPS goGreen Management
 Conference.

<http://vrps.com>

Project Budburst at New Quarter Park

Monitor plants at New Quarter Park for Project Budburst, a national climate change observation and research initiative, and receive volunteer service hours for your efforts. Volunteers will record the time of phenological events such as first budding, leafing, and flowering. The data will be submitted by the park to the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research to support a national study concerning regional average temperature change.

Project Budburst volunteers should sign up in the New Quarter Park office to make daily to weekly observations of plants. Activity guides and plant information sheets are available there or can be downloaded from www.budburst.org. One, two, or more plants can be chosen by the volunteer. Plants to be observed at the park include Common Dandelion, Flowering Dogwood, Eastern Red Columbine, Jack in the Pulpit, Mayapple, Red Maple, and Tulip Poplar. Project Budburst information sheets describe which phenophase events are to be recorded for each species of plant.

An optional information session will be held at the park at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 14, 2009, for instruction in phenological events. Contact Sara Lewis at sara.lewis@cox.net or 757-220-2042 with questions.

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT Sponsored by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. We'll be adding updated 2009 GBBC materials as they become available. From the web site: <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/whycount.html>

1. Plan to count birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, February 13–16, 2009. You can count for longer than that if you wish! Count birds in as many places and on as many days as you like—one day, two days, or all four days. Submit a separate checklist for each new day. You can also submit more than one checklist per day if you count in other locations on that day.

2. Count the greatest number of individuals of each species that you see together at any one time. You may find it helpful to print out your regional bird checklist to get an idea of the kinds of birds you're likely to see in your area in February. You could take note of the highest number or each species you see on this checklist.

3. When you're finished, enter your results through our web page. You'll see a button marked "Enter Your Checklists!" on the website home page beginning on the first day of the count (February 13, 2009). It will remain active until the deadline for data submission on March 1, 2009.



Courtesy Michael Fuchs



Red Maples will be observed for Project Budburst at New Quarter Park. This tree's bursting buds are among the first signs of spring.

Other helpful tools and information:

2009 data form. Some people find it helpful to fill out the form before entering it on the website. By printing it off ahead of time, they know what information they need to be aware of, such as snow depth, for example. GBBC participation certificate to give out to students or to anyone who takes part in the GBBC (This will be updated for 2009)

2009 PowerPoint slideshow about the GBBC

Local events. Have a look at some of the events from the last count to get some ideas on what you could plan in your community for the 2009 GBBC. If you're a teacher looking to get your class involved with the GBBC, read through our educator's materials for some ideas. If you're new to bird watching, you might want to check out our "Learn About Birds" section. You'll find help with tricky bird identifications, choosing binoculars, bird feeding tips, and much more.

HRC members can count number of hours of participation as Volunteer Service Hours – Citizen Science.



Eastern Screech Owl
Otus asio

Courtesy Nora Marien VLM

Journey of a Monarch

By Patty Riddick

The Virginia Living Museum tags and releases monarch butterflies at the end of each summer, and we recently were notified that one of our monarchs was found in Texas. There was much excitement at the museum as you might imagine. I wanted to share this story with you as it appeared in our VLM newsletter, "The Buzz."

Butterfly tagged at the VLM found in Texas

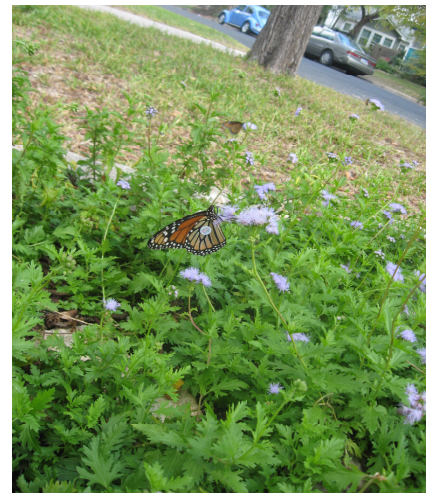
A female monarch butterfly raised at the VLM and released at 4:20 p.m. on Oct. 3 was photographed in a butterfly garden in Austin, Texas on Oct. 25. It was discovered by six-year-old Jimmy Boone Walker who was doing a science project on monarch migration. The butterfly had traveled 1,306 miles in 22 days. This is the third time a monarch tagged by the Museum has been located since the VLM began participating in the [Monarch Watch](#) program in 1996. One butterfly was found in Mexico in spring 2001 and another was recovered nearby in Newport News in fall 2001. Those who attended the September 2008 Storytime at the VLM saw volunteer **Tede Johnson** display the pupa of the monarch found in Texas.



Jimmy Boone Walker—Monarch spotter



Photos courtesy of the Walker Family



Volunteer Service Hours—News from January meeting

By Angier Brock

For those who missed the January HRC meeting, **Dorothy Geyer** is the resources person for Colonial National Historical Park. She has a volunteer group that gets together on Monday mornings, 9-12, somewhere in Yorktown, Jamestown, or along the Parkway to help with various projects, mostly involving removal of invasive species. Following a short winter break, the group is reconvening next Monday morning. Working with her on these projects is approved for MN service hours.

She states: "It's February, a fine time to start gearing up and getting our pruning muscles warmed up for the oncoming gardening/weeding season. I would like to start attacking the invasive privet this coming Monday, February 9, providing weather conditions are favorable (ie. not raining).

We can meet at the Yorktown Visitor Center at 9 am towards the back of the parking lot. Look for my new white truck with a camper cab. Men are particularly welcome, since we will also need some good arms to cut through some shrubs and wire, since we will try to take down the enclosure netting as well."

A couple of you have expressed interest in working with this group. I'll be there on Monday, and if you or others want to join us then to try it out, please let me know, and I'll pass that information along to Dorothy so she'll have enough tools, etc. Generally she asks that we bring only our own gloves and water and she provides the rest, but if you have pruning tools you prefer to use, you're welcome to bring those too, of course. If you cannot come this week but are interested in pitching in another time, let me know that, too, and I'll keep you posted.

Coming Soon!

Wildlife Mapping at Grafton Ponds!

By Patty Riddick

We will begin wildlife mapping this spring at Grafton Ponds in York County, and you're all invited. This is a really interesting area as you know from our delightful geology trips there with **Jerre Johnson**. According to the website, www.vernalpool.org, The Vernal Pool Association describes a vernal pool as follows: "A vernal pool is a contained basin depression lacking a permanent above ground outlet. In the Northeast, it fills with water with the rising water table of fall and winter or with the melting water and runoff of winter and spring snow and rain. Many vernal pools in the Northeast are covered with ice in the winter months. They contain water for a few months in the spring and early summer. By late summer, a vernal pool is generally (but not always) dry." They go on to say, "A vernal pool, because of its periodic drying, does not support breeding populations of fish. Many organisms have evolved to use a temporary wetland which will dry but where they are not eaten by fish. These organisms are the 'obligate' vernal pool species, so called because they **must** use a vernal pool for various parts of their life cycle. If the obligate species are using a body of water, then that water **is** a vernal pool."

Grafton Ponds October 2008



Wheel Bug
Arilus cristatus
Courtesy Felice

American Grasshopper
Schistocerca Americana
Courtesy Felice Bond



Grafton Ponds January 2009

"Grafton Ponds," according to Department of Conservation and Recreation," represents Virginia's best remaining example of a coastal plain pond complex. The many ponds here were formed by dissolution of the underlying calcareous marine deposits of the Yorktown Formation. This wetland complex supports several rare plants and animals for Virginia including Harper's fimbriatylis, pond spice, Cuthbert turtlehead, Mabee's salamander and barking tree-frog."

Larry and I have made two reconnaissance trips of the area in preparation to chair this project. We were first there this past fall with the help of **Felice Bond** who knows the area well. Everything was very dry at that time. Although not reportable wildlife, we did encounter a **Wheel Bug** (with an attitude) stalking a grasshopper and Felice was able to get their pictures.

Just last week we returned for another visit to find many vernal ponds all over and very full of water. Since we were out there, we decided to do some wildlife mapping unofficially. We did see four white-tailed deer leap across the path ahead of us and a handful of song birds. Our plan would be to map at least once a quarter to record the seasonal changes. We can certainly go out more often and more information will be forthcoming about that as time goes on.



The Seventh Annual
Good Gardening Symposium

Enrich the Environment - Go Native!

Saturday, March 14, 2009
 8:45 AM – 3:00 PM
 Prince George High School
 7801 Laurel Spring Road, Prince George, VA

"Virginia's Native Plants from the Mountains to the Sea"
 Catharine Tucker, Virginia Native Plant Society

"The Alien Invasion"
 Controlling Invasive Trees and Shrubs and Developing a Healthy Habitat
 Jim and Denise Pilversack, Master Naturalists and Wildlife Habitat Facilitators

"Invasives - In or Out of our Landscapes?"
 Dierdre Roden, Master Gardener and Master Naturalist

"Creating a Butterfly Habitat with Native Plants"
 Ruth Burch, Butterfly Society of Virginia

Symposium Registration fee: \$10
 Box Lunch fee: \$8 (or you may bring your own)
 Registration forms available online at: www.vmgc.net
 or from the Prince George Extension Office, 6450 Administration Drive,
 Prince George, Virginia. Call 804-733-2686 for more information
 Registration opens February 2, 2009 - Space is Limited
 Sponsored by the Prince George Master Gardeners

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Mark McCann, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; Alisa C. Hobbs, Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State, Petersburg. If you are a person with a disability and desire assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this event, please contact the Prince George Extension Office (804-733-2686/TDD) during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event. *TDD number is (800) 828-1120.

Steward's Guide to the Universe By Shirley Devan

When you're next puzzled about what to give a friend for a birthday gift, put the Master Naturalist side of your brain to work and give the gift of reusable everyday items.

I used this strategy for family and friends this past holiday, and they are still my family and friends! Instead of a paper box with wrapping paper, choose a colorful cloth bag from a local gift shop or retail store. Then fill it with reusable shopping bags from the grocery store where your friends likely shop. In my case, six Food Lion bags worked great. Then get a wonderfully large reusable mug from your favorite coffee shop (perhaps add in a gift card to sweeten the deal) and then include a colorful, durable, BPA-free reusable water bottle. Instead of tissue paper, hide everything with a new towel for the gym workouts or bath. When your friend gives you that funny look after opening the bag, reply, "I'm a Master Naturalist. What else did you expect?" Your friend will get the message very quickly: you're serious about reusing products and believe it is important to reduce the plastic and paper going into our landfills.

7th Annual "Good Gardening" Symposium

Sponsored by the Prince George Master Gardener Association

To register, please return the completed form with check [payable to **Tom Geer Education Fund**] to **Good Gardening Symposium, 4801 Tatum Rd., Disputanta, VA 23842**. Directions and the emergency contact number will be sent with the confirmation. Pre-Registration required. Registrations will be accepted after February 2, 2009. Sorry, no refunds for cancellations made after March 10th.

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

E-mail _____

Street Address _____ Phone No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I enclose: \$ _____ for _____ Registrations @ \$10.00

\$ _____ for _____ Box lunches @ \$8.00 **Total enclosed: \$ _____**

[Lunch order forms are below, please copy if ordering more than one lunch.]

The site is fully Handicap accessible Need Lodging information? Y__N__

Lunch order [only one per form, please] Copy as needed.

NAME _____

Please select one item from each category [complimentary soft drinks, tea and coffee are provided.]

Sandwich

Roast beef on onion roll [horseradish sauce on the side]

Tuna salad on rye

Chicken salad on croissant

Veggie wrap [cucumber, carrot, lettuce & spinach w/ dill cream cheese]

Turkey, Ham & Swiss on Focaccia [pesto sauce on the side]

Side dish

Marinated green beans

Chips

Potato salad

Cole slaw

Dessert

Lemon Meringue tart

Carrot cake /w cream cheese icing

Chocolate Chip cookie

Brownie

Fruit cup



A
 perfectly
 "green"
 gift

Walk and Talk

New Quarter Park hosts a "Walk and Talk" on the first Saturday of each month. Here is a list of the upcoming topics.

February 7 – J. Michael Moore – Civil War Battle of Williamsburg

Civil War Battle of Williamsburg by J. Michael Moore. Learn why this engaging Civil War historian and Endview Plantation curator is back by popular demand! Walk with him to Redoubts 12 and 13 at New Quarter to hear more about Civil War battle strategy on the Virginia Peninsula. Imagine what it must have been like to be a soldier fighting in the Hampton to Richmond skirmishes and pitched battles of the Peninsula Campaign.

March 7 – Steve Living – New Quarter's Natural History

Join Watchable Wildlife Biologist Steve Living of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries on a walk along the hiking trails at New Quarter to learn more about the park's natural history. Discover tracks and trails as well as other evidence of wildlife in the parks varied habitats. Learn how to look and listen for birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, and more.

April 4 – Bill Williams – Watching for Migratory Birds

Learn more about the birds that stop by Williamsburg on their flight along the East Coast each spring in search of food and nesting locations. Well-known Williamsburg birder and educator Bill Williams will inspire you to get excited about our tiny feathered friends and learn to identify them by field marks and calls. See osprey as they settle in for the summer on Queens Creek and learn to listen for and spot songbirds that are just passing through.

May 2 – Vicki Shufer – Edible Flowers

Look for new blooms on the forest floor with naturalist and author Vicki Shufer. The Virginia Beach wild foods expert will lead walk and talk participants along the park's trails on a foraging excursion to see and learn how to identify native and edible plants.

June 6 – Gregory Millsagle – On the Bluebird Trail

Take a look inside the bluebird boxes at New Quarter Park with Gregory Millsagle, who installed and has been tending to the boxes at New Quarter Park for many years. Millsagle is the owner of the Wild Birds Unlimited store in the Village Shops at Kiln Creek.

July 4 – No Walk and Talk

August 1 – Katie Sanford – Environmental Education: James versus York River Habitat

Discover York River habitat features and learn how they differ from those on the James River, about ten miles away. Sanford is the environmental educator at Jamestown 4-H Center who teaches children to appreciate the turtles, snakes, fish, and other creatures that inhabit the swamp, river, and educational center on Greensprings Road in Jamestown.

September 5 – Helen Hamilton Growing a Beautiful Bobwhite Habitat

October 3 – Jerre Johnson – It's All Downhill from Here: New Quarter's Geology

November 7 – Clyde Marsteller – What's Crawling Under that Log?

December 5 – Flora and Fauna of the Holiday Season

http://www.yorkcounty.gov/parksandrec/parks/new_quarter/1nqp_info.htm

For more information on upcoming events at New Quarter Park, check out

www.yorkcounty.gov/parksandrec/parks/new_quarter/1nqp_info.htm

News from the Virginia Native Plant Society

February 28: 9 am – 2 pm: Big Tree Drive Around in Hampton and Newport News. Meet at the VA Living Museum parking lot at 9 am for a tour of champion trees, led by the "Big Tree Guy" **Byron Carmean**. The National Champion Swamp Bay tree is near the CNU campus. Others are at Hampton University, Ft. Monroe, Ft. Eustis and some are on private property. Group will do lunch at a local restaurant or bring your own if you prefer. Contact **Mary Hyde Berg** at 804-693-3568 to register.

March 19: 7 pm. John Clayton Chapter meeting at York County Library on Route 17 in Yorktown. Workshop on the Origins and Meaning of Botanical Names of Native Plants. Leaders will be **Lee Bristow and Donna Ware**.

For more information go to

> <http://www.claytonvnps.org/index.htm>

All of the local and state events sponsored by the VA Native Plant Society are approved for Advanced Training. The local chapter is the John Clayton Chapter.

CHESTERFIELD MASTER GARDENERS

3rd Biennial Horticultural Horizons Symposium

Tuesday, April 21, 2009

Joan Massey Conference Center

Lewis Ginty Botanical Garden, Richmond, VA

www.lewisginter.org

Registration \$45.00; \$40.00 if by March 1, 2009

Speakers:

Mr. Dave Close, State Master Gardener Coordinator,

Dr. Annette Meredith, Director for Scientific Outreach

Chris Burkett, Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator,

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

Ms. Margo Dawley, Global ReLeaf Program Director,

Dr. Holly L. Scoggins, Associate Professor and Garden Director, Hahn Horticulture Garden at Virginia Tech

For more information: Susan Edwards, Chesterfield County MG Coordinator 804-751-4401, suedward@vt.edu