



THE NATURALIST

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

<http://historicrivers.org>

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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In this Issue

President's Message
Page 2

*The Zoo Visits the Farmer's Market
and the Night of the Living Museum*
Pages 3-7

Why Bother Reporting Your Hours?
Page 8

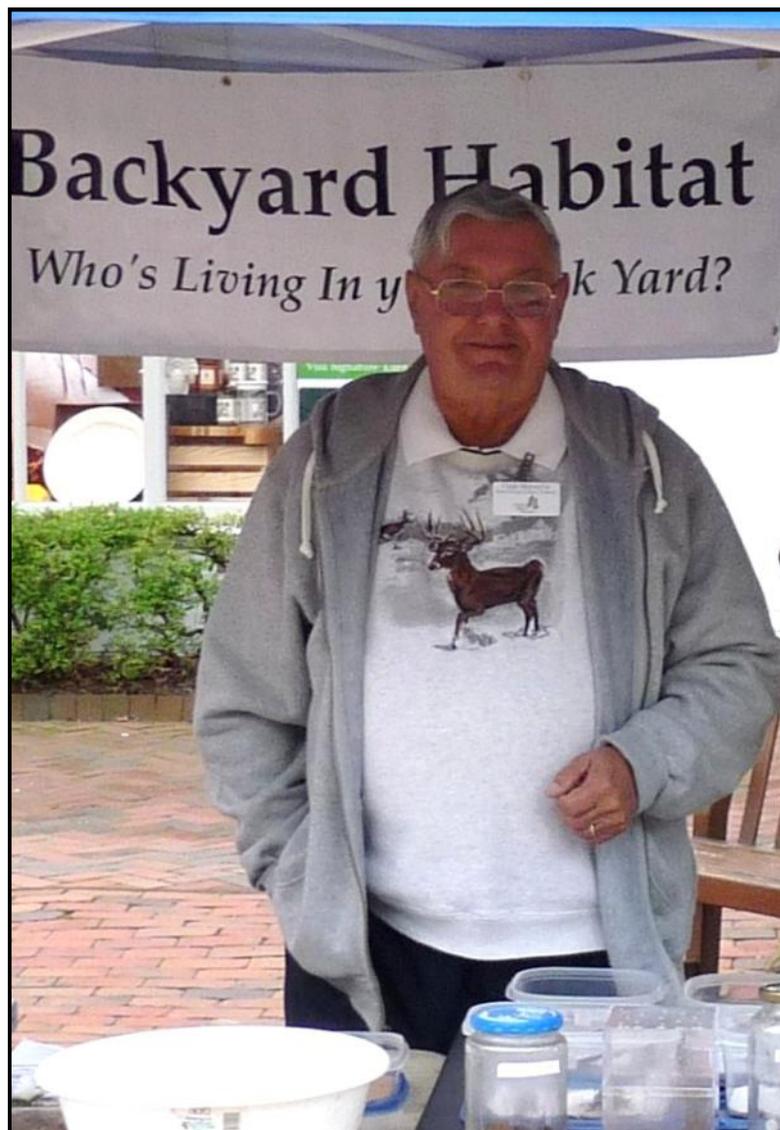
"Migration Happens"
Page 10

Art in the Garden
Pages 13-14

Basic Training Schedule Revised
Page 15

Williamsburg Farmer's Market
Pages 16-17

Advanced Training
Pages 18-19



Meet Clyde Marsteller! Clyde's Zoo has Entertained and Enlightened Over 6,000 Adults and Children Since its Inception in 2006. Clyde is a Member of the Historic Rivers Chapter, Cohort I. Way to Go, Clyde!

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings! We are a busy group of people! Just look at all the events we have been involved in this year and all those hours we spent helping our community protect and preserve our natural resources. All the hours spent increasing our knowledge of the natural world has enabled us to be excellent stewards of Virginia's natural world. While most (or all) of us look at these hours as love's labor or just having fun, keeping track and reporting the hours we volunteer is very important. An article in this edition goes into detail as to why it is important to record our hours (and there are more reasons than I realized), so be sure to read it and follow the directives. The end of the year is coming soon, and our reports to the Commonwealth of Virginia should reflect the extraordinary efforts put forth by our Chapter.

The year winds up with lots of fun things to look forward to – the Chapter's photography contest, the end-of-year party at the Freight Shed – just to name two! I encourage everyone to make sure their hours are recorded and to commit to taking a more active role in our Chapter. If you have let other activities take priority over your Master Naturalist activities, make an effort to schedule some time for the Chapter. Find out what you have been missing. I guarantee 2012 is going to be a busy, fun, exciting year! Hope to see you all very soon!

Barbara W. Boyer

President, Historic Rivers Chapter

Virginia Master Naturalists

Notes from the Board

All meetings of the Board of Directors are open to members.

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Saturday at the Market and the Museum

By Clyde Marsteller

First a little history.

It is six years since I started this Life Adventure as a VMN, as our new Chapter coalesced , we in Cohort 1 started to come together as colleagues and friends. The course work was awesome and I fast realized how little I knew and how much there was to learn. After graduation the real work and learning started. Projects and Advanced Training presented new opportunities as we started to find the -"ologies" and disciplines we would become most interested in. As we became comfortable in our new Personas the work and training became FUN.

The new Cohorts added their strengths and knowledge to our "Kettling" and we rediscovered the truth of the old adage, " There are no strangers, only friends we haven't met".

Now back to Saturday. The Williamsburg Farmer's Market again demonstrated our commitment , knowledge and excitement of what we are about. Kathi continued to show her organizational skills setting up the project and a good mix of "Oldsters" and new Trainees brought it all together. We divided our resources into two stations . One group told folks who we are and what we do. They educated the visitors about under story trees and shrubs, birding, binoculars and answered questions the public asked.



Left to right, Jeanette Navia, Kathi Mestayer, and Jean Balutanski ready to meet visitors at the HRC display.

My station featured the Zoo and captured a lot of attention. My Zoo Cru of Dave Youker, Tom Dougherty, Cheryl Jacobson, Shirley Brubaker and Inge Curtis fast became adept at handling the animals and answering questions. The hours sped by so fast that it was the first time I attended the Market and didn't buy anything. At the end of the morning we had tallied 353 visitors. Well done Zoo Cru!

HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER



Tom Dougherty assists Clyde with the Zoo at the Williamsburg Farmer's Market, October 22nd.



Market photos by Kathi Mestayer, Inge Curtis, and Patty Riddick

Clyde and his Critters have the Crowd's Attention!



Ash, the Cat, a VLM volunteer with buckets of candy, joined the Wizard and the Witch at “the Night of the Living Museum” for lots of fun with hundreds of kids and the Zoo’s creepy-crawlies.

The second part of the Zoo’s day started that evening at 4:30 PM . The Zoo was magically transformed into the Diagon Alley Apothecary at the Virginia Living Museum’s “Night of the Living Museum.” As the Wizard Chemist (British for Pharmacist), I had an assistant, the awesome good Witch of the East, Patty Riddick.

The Zoo animals, assorted berries, fungi, preserved snakes, lizards, newts and salamanders were offered as ingredients for potions, elixirs, and spells. All were for sale for Knuts, Sickles and Gallions. No Muggle money accepted. I would like to share them with you:

Hissing Cockroaches 10 Sickles each

Make wonderful Familiars

Roly Polies 10 for a Knut

Essential ingredient for Metamorphosis Soup-

Changes caterpillars into BUTTERFLIES

HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER

Millipedes 10 Sickles each

Make lovely pets, easy up keep, eat dead leaves

Worms (that act like snakes) 6 Knuts each

Touch them if you dare!

Talking Beetles 1 Sickle each or 3 for 2 Sickles

They have been sprinkled with Pixie Dust

Daddy Long Legs 17 Knuts each

Crush and mix with Mandrake Root for a Love Potion (#9)

Wolf Spider 2 Galleons

A must have for turning someone into a spider- person must be Bitten during a Full Moon

Black Widow Spider 3 Galleons

For Sale To Adults Only! (part of 100 ways to lose your lover)

Salamanders 3 for 1 Galleon

Absolute need for all Fire Enchantments

Toad 1 Galleon and 2 Sickles

Good for giving someone warts

Frog

The other White Meat

“Princess’ a Ring Neck Snake

NOT FOR SALE

The Wizard’s Familiar

If you speak Parsel Tongue ask her to show you her necklace

Buckle Berries, Fire Tree Berries, Ilex Berries, Mushrooms, Fungi 3 Sickles a gram

HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER

At the end of the night a buyer from Hogwarts School of Wizardry and Magic came by and bought my entire stock.

Incredibly the Zoo- Apothecary recorded an amazing 808 visitors!

The total for Saturday was 1,161 children and adult visitors, an exhausted Zoo Keeper/ Wizard , five Zoo Cru and one Witch.

As a personal aside, since its' inception in 2006 the Zoo has been seen by over 6000 children and adults.

The Adventure continues....



HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER

A MESSAGE FROM MICHELLE PRYSBY AND SHIRLEY DEVAN....

The HRC Chapter leaders cannot stress enough how important it is to record your Volunteer Service Hours and Advanced Training Hours. Only a few more weeks left in this year (how can that be? Wasn't it just March??). Each of you needs to update your hours in our Master Naturalist database for 2011!

If you've been keeping your hours in a notebook and waiting for a spare minute to enter them, now is the time! The Board members will be working on the HRC Annual Report to submit to the state VMN coordinator, Michelle Prysby. We want to highlight our projects and those projects where the most people have volunteered.

Why bother reporting hours, especially beyond the first 40? Here are 5 good reasons and words of wisdom from our VMN State Coordinator, Michelle Prysby!

1. Your volunteer hours demonstrate the value of the Virginia Master Naturalist program to your local communities and to the Commonwealth of Virginia.
2. Your volunteer hours justify the state funding of the program, the time that your chapter advisors spend on your chapter, and the time and other contributions of your local partners.
3. Without reporting your volunteer hours, you cannot become a Certified Virginia Master Naturalist, you cannot qualify for recertification, and you cannot achieve our milestone levels of service (250, 500, 1000, 2500, and 5000 hours.) We have special limited edition pins for recertification, and this year's will be a dogwood flower with artwork designed by one of our Virginia Master Naturalists! We also have pins for each milestone. Some volunteers are very motivated by these and others couldn't care less, but it is one more reason to document what you do. Last year's Big Eared Bat pins were very popular!
4. Risk management. To be covered by the state's liability insurance, VMNs must be enrolled in the program and participating in an approved volunteer project. Reporting your hours is your documentation of what you were doing in case later there is a liability issue that comes up. If there is no documentation that you were doing what you were doing as a VMN volunteer, then it might be difficult to ensure that you are covered with the liability insurance. Of course, you may choose to do other, related volunteering not as a VMN volunteer, and that's totally up to you, but the state liability insurance only covers you when you are wearing your VMN hat, so to speak.
5. Reporting hours helps cultivate an active, connected chapter with members who feel dedicated to the program and interested in continuing to participate.

As Membership Chair, it is my job to make it easy for you to record your hours. If you need a nudge or a refresher, please contact me: 757-813-1322 or email: sedean52@cox.net. As we draw closer to the end of the year, expect a note or phone call from me with a reminder! If you're up to date with your hours, THANK YOU!! We appreciate all the good work that all our members do.

SAVE THIS DATE!

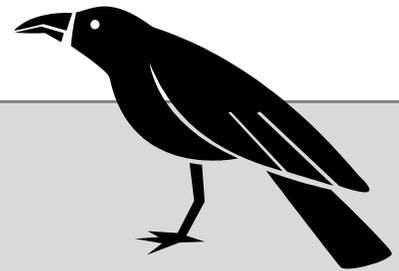
CHAPTER PARTY!

WEDNESDAY, 14 DECEMBER, 6 TO 9 P.M.

AT THE FREIGHT SHED IN YORKTOWN
331 WATER STREET

DETAILS TO FOLLOW.....

You Know You're A Master Naturalist When.....



.... you are on the way to Pilates and running late, as always, and encounter a big crow with an even bigger attitude, walking in the middle of the road, looking you *right in the eye*, stopping a couple of times to investigate possible kernels of food or potential playthings, then taking his sweet time to meander over to the kerb. You wait, albeit not patiently, so you can continue on your way.

Kathi Mestayer

"Migration Happens"

The rest of the East Coast had been pelted with snow the day before, while here in the OBX, the foggy dark skies were merely cool. However, the sun and cold clear skies greeted me as I awoke on the final Sunday of October. I took a brisk walk to a northwest edge of the island to view the white caps on the Sound. I was greeted with a blessing that kept me still for over half an hour. In stunned silence, I watched as hundreds of thousands of continuously undulating dark ribbons drifted by. These migratory waterfowl were propelling themselves due west while the powerful wind from the north pushed them south, their desired direction. Continuing to observe for as long as I could bear the chilled gusts, these Cormorants filled the sky. Reluctantly, I turned to leave and walked quickly back to the sheltered harbor of Ocracoke's Silver Lake. The mouth of the harbor spills out to the Sound and provides a clear view from multiple docks. For another 20 minutes, I witnessed the awe inspiring sight. Wanting to share this blessing with my late-sleeping comrades, I bounded the stairs of the hotel...but could rouse no one. From the balcony, I could still see the continuing strands of birds magically weaving their way southward. Intellectually, I 'know' that migration happens. To witness it in action is miraculous.

Susie Engle

HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER

Volunteers at the Farmer's Market—October 22, 2011

Market photos by Kathi Mestayer, Inge Curtis, and Patty Riddick

Larry Riddick at the HRC display.



HRC members Jeanette Navia, Larry Riddick, and Les Lawrence.

How does this tent fold up?



Volunteers at the Farmer's Market with our Event Leader, Kathi Mestayer



Clyde Marsteller, Patty Riddick and Tom Dougherty



Kathi Mestayer



Patty Riddick Watches Clyde Marsteller Check out the Zoo Critters.



YORK COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS—“ART IN THE GARDEN—OCTOBER 2011”

Written by Michelle Gazarik

Photos by De Ann Posey

York County Master Gardeners

Submitted by Linda Miller, Virginia Master Naturalist

Dazzling Mexican Blanket flowers and Southern Magnolia seed pods were just a few specimens posing for fourteen young artists during the recent “Art in the Garden” workshop presented by botanical artist Linda Miller. Linda’s methodology is simple: let the young budding artist dive right into drawing and painting then guide and assure them. Her technique is effective: every child produced at least one beautiful water color or sketch of flowers, leaves, or seeds. She supplied the artistic materials while the Learning Garden offered inspiration. Master Gardeners Cindy Ortman, Carol Bartram, De Ann Posey, and Michelle Gazarik chaperoned the students as they collected the flora for specimens.



Linda Miller Instructs Youth at the York County Master Gardeners’ Learning Garden

HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER

This is the second time this year that Linda offered this free art training. Anna Murphy, a returning artist who attends Grafton Bethel Elementary School, commented, "I love to draw flowers!" The garden offers a variety of different flowers during October than in July when she first attended. One artist discovered some mushrooms growing in the mulch and sat right next to them to sketch the classical shape. Another student mixed watercolors in reds and blues to get just the right shade of magenta for illustrating an azalea. Linda demonstrated color blending and proper techniques to care for paint brushes so they last a long time.

Parents and the twelve young artists agreed that this was a fantastic program and are looking forward to the next time they are invited to the Learning Garden with Linda. She mentioned that springtime would bring an interesting mix of opening buds, vivid spring greens, and those first blooms that everyone waits to see.



Linda C. Miller

Artist ~ Naturalist ~ Instructor

Botanical Art Today

<http://lindacmillerbotanicalarttoday.com/>

"May your day be filled with the wonders of Nature!"



Basic Training Coming Attractions, November/December, 2011

By Jennifer Trevino

November 1st, 6:00-9:00 pm., Indigenous Cultures, with Aleck Loker

November 12th, 9:00 am.-3:00pm., Geology Field Trip, with Jerre Johnson

November 15th, 6:00-9:00 pm., Entomology, with Barb Abraham

November 29th, 6:00-9:00 pm., Geology, with Jerre Johnson

December 6th, 6:00-9:00 pm., Climate and Weather, with Chuck Bailey

HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER

Master Naturalists at the Williamsburg Farmer's Market

By Kathi Mestayer

Well, we had beautiful weather. And then it wasn't so beautiful. And then it got really beautiful near the end, when the birdwatcher contingent arrived. Coincidence?

We had three big themes this time:

Clyde the Zookeeper, who had people transfixed with Princess the Ringneck Snake and her minions. And it wasn't only young folks; I saw a few spellbound folks-of-a-certain-age among them (see the ladies in the red coats below). Thanks to the VNPS for loaning us their blue tent.



The rest of us were across Merchant's Square, talking about Master Naturalism, binoculars, understory trees, and whatever else people wanted to know. The CW Garden, thanks to Don the Gardener, loaned us some cute understory trees, and we got quite a few questions on them. Sourwood, sweetbay magnolia, *Euonymus americanus* ("strawberry bush") and one I can't recall the name of. We also had some info on the understory forest layer and how important it is in terms of habitat.



We also had a small assortment of binoculars, and a fact sheet on the parameters/numbers that describe them (<http://www.birding-binoculars.net/faq.html>). Our main purpose was to let people look through them and see the difference, which several did. I think in the future, we could arrange the space so that it's easier for people to approach the tables and play with the toys. Food for thought.

It was, as always, a great opportunity to interact from the general public and learn what interests and engages people.

Thanks to everyone who came out, to those who did some of the heavy lifting. I went home and slept for two hours!

k



Advanced Training for November and December 2011

Adrienne Frank and Gary Driscoll, AT Co-Chairs

Please go to the website for more information www.historicrivers.org

Living Shorelines: Addressing Erosion - November 1, 2011 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at Jamestown 4H Educational Center

CLASS: Indigenous Cultures - November 1, 2011 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at Human Services Building, 5249 Lode Towne Rd., Williamsburg, VA

River Rats Training Session - November 5, 2011 all day at Jamestown 4-H Center, 3751 4-H Club Road

Bluebird Society Conference - November 5, 2011 all day at Fredericksburg Library

HRBC Bird Walk - November 6, 2011 from 7:00-10:00 am at Newport News City Park

Train-the-Trainer Wildlife Habitat for MNs - November 9, 2011 from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm at Luter YMCA in Smithfield, VA

VIMS - Grasses, Sedges and Rushes, Oh My! - November 9, 2011 from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm at McHugh Auditorium, VIMS Campus, Gloucester Point, VA

Monthly meeting - November 9, 2011 from 6:00-9:00 pm at JCC Human Services Bldg., 5249 Olde Towne Rd., Williamsburg

WBC Bird Walk at New Quarter Park - November 12, 2011 from 8:00 am to 10:00 am at New Quarter Park, 1000 Lakeshead Dr., Williamsburg

Continued on next page.....

FIELD TRIP: Geology - November 12, 2011 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

CLASS: Entomology - November 15, 2011 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at Human Services Building, 5249 Lode Towne Rd., Williamsburg, VA

WBC Field Trip - November 20, 2011 from 7:00 am to 1:30 pm at WBC Field Trip

HRBC Bird Walk - November 20, 2011 from 7:00-10:00 am at Newport News City Park

CLASS: Geology - November 29, 2011 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at Human Services Building, 5249 Lode Towne Rd., Williamsburg, VA

HRBC Bird Walk - December 4, 2011 from 7:00 am to 10:00 am at Newport News City Park

CLASS: Weather and Climate - December 6, 2011 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at Human Services Building, 5249 Lode Towne Rd., Williamsburg, VA

WBC Bird Walk at New Quarter Park - December 10, 2011 from 8:00 am to 10:00 am at New Quarter Park, 1000 Lakeshead Dr., Williamsburg

HRBC Bird Walk - December 18, 2011 from 7:00-10:00 am at Newport News City Park

WBC Audubon Christmas Bird Count - December 18, 2011—more to follow