

May 7, 2010

Historic Rivers Chapter



PO Box 6424
Williamsburg, VA 23187

**Historic Rivers Chapter
Virginia Master Naturalist
Information and Application Form
For Cohort V
(Fall 2010 – Winter 2011 Training Class)**

This document includes:

1. Information letter about Historic Rivers Cohort V Training Class – pages 2 – 4
2. Application Form – pages 5 – 7 please print out 3-page Application Form, complete by hand, and mail to address on form.
3. Information about the Virginia Master Naturalist Program – 16 slides

May 7, 2010

Historic Rivers Chapter



PO Box 6424
Williamsburg, VA 23187

Dear Citizens:

The Historic Rivers Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalist Program is accepting applications for its Cohort V training class, which will begin Tuesday, August 31, 2010, and end by March 9, 2011.

Most training classes will be selected Tuesday nights, 6 – 9 p.m. at the Human Services Building, 5249 Olde Towne Road in Williamsburg, and selected Saturdays. See the schedule on page 2.

The Virginia Master Naturalist Program is a statewide corps of volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities. Interested Virginians become Master Naturalists through training and volunteer service.

People who are curious about nature, enjoy the outdoors, and want to be a part of natural resource management and conservation in Virginia are perfect candidates to become Virginia Master Naturalists. It is open to all regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

The process for becoming a certified Virginia Master Naturalist typically takes 6 to 12 months. To become a member of the Historic Rivers Chapter, you must complete a basic training course (at least 15 of 17 classes and 4 of 6 field trips) as well as an additional 8 hours of advanced training. An important part of the certification process is the requirement for 40 hours of volunteer service.

Enrollment is limited to 20 applicants and will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis starting May 10. Tuition, which includes all materials, instruction and Chapter membership dues for 2010 and 2011, is \$150.

To apply, please complete the application below and send it with \$150 tuition (cash or check made payable to the Historic Rivers Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalists) to:

Historic Rivers Chapter
Virginia Master Naturalists
PO Box 6424
Williamsburg, VA 23187

May 7, 2010

Here are the specific requirements of our Historic Rivers Chapter:

1. You must complete 15 of 17 classes and 4 of 6 field trips. Most classes will be on Tuesday evenings, and there will be at least one Saturday field trip/training class each month from September to February, except December. See the specific dates below.
2. After you complete the basic training, you must volunteer for at least 40 hours each year to remain an active Master Naturalist.
3. You must also agree to complete 8 hours of advanced training each year you are an active Master Naturalist.
4. You must be able to send and receive documents by email. A great deal of communication in this class is by email so plan to check email daily and respond as necessary. (A high-speed Internet connection is highly recommended.)
5. You must be able to open PDF documents. (Adobe PDF Reader is free and safe to download from: <http://www.adobe.com/>)
6. You must be able to open, print, and prepare documents in Microsoft Word.
7. You must be able to do research on the Internet.
8. You will be expected to do work and research outside of class.
9. A short open book quiz, distributed by email, may follow each class session. You must complete and return the quizzes before the next class.
10. An open book final exam, distributed by email, will follow at the end of the basic training course. You must achieve 70% on the final exam to continue in the program.
11. You are expected to attend every class, but you can miss 2 of the 17 classes and 2 of the 6 field trips and still complete the basic training requirements. We will work with you to arrange makeup opportunities if you miss more than this.

Most training classes will be selected Tuesday nights at the Human Services Building, 5249 Olde Towne Road in Williamsburg, and selected Saturdays.

Unless otherwise noted, evening classes begin promptly at 6:00 p.m. and end before 9:00 p.m. The 2010 – 2011 specific training dates are: (subject to change, but we hope not; Saturday dates are underlined):

August 31, 2010

September 7, 18, 21

October 5, 16, 19

November 2, 13, 16, 30

December 7, 8 [2nd Wednesday, December 8 is our Chapter's Holiday Party.]

January 4, 15, 18, 2011

February 1, 12, 15

March 1, 9 [2nd Wednesday, March 9, is Cohort V's graduation date and our Chapter's Annual Meeting.]

May 7, 2010

Here are the topics for the Cohort V training (subject to change):

Introduction to Virginia Master Naturalist Program	Indigenous Cultures of Virginia	Field Trip to New Kent Forestry Center
Risk Management Training	Botany	Herpetology
Citizen Science, Biology Basics, Taxonomy	Dendrology	Mammalogy
Geology of VA and Geology Field Trip	Entomology	Winter Botany
Scientific Methods & Field Skills	Ornithology	Fishes of Virginia
Wetlands Ecology Field Trip	Freshwater Ecology	Ecology

In addition to these classes, you are expected to:

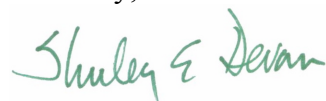
- Attend at least two hours on one or more bird walks/field trips with either the Williamsburg Bird Club or the Hampton Roads Bird Club. You will receive information about these opportunities early in the program.
- Attend at least two hours on one or more native plant field trips/walks with a chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society. The local John Clayton Chapter leads 1 – 2 walks per month (sometimes more). You will receive information about these opportunities early in the program.
- Attend at least one program in the series “VIMS After Hours” presented once a month at VIMS in Gloucester Point, VA. You will receive information about these opportunities early in the program.
- Write a short biography of a noted naturalist/scientist. You will receive information about this requirement early in the program.
- Each of these four requirements is included in the required hours for completing the Basic Training.

If you have questions, please contact Shirley Devan: phone – 757-813-1322 or email – sedevan52@cox.net

Information about the program is also available at the statewide Virginia Master Naturalist website, <http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org>. You may learn more about the Historic Rivers Chapter at our web site: <http://www.historicrivers.org/index.html>

Thank you for your interest in our program. We look forward to having you with us.

Sincerely,



Training Committee, Phone: 757-813-1322. Email: sedevan52@cox.net
The Historic Rivers Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists

May 7, 2010

**Historic Rivers Chapter
Virginia Master Naturalist Program
Volunteer Information and Basic Training Enrollment Form**

Cohort V: Fall 2010 – Winter 2011

A. GENERAL INFORMATION *(please print)*

Name: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle Initial)

Mailing Address: _____
(Street, Box, Route, Apt #) (City) (State) (Zip)

County or Independent City of Residence: _____

B. CONTACT INFORMATION *(please print)*

Phone (please indicate which phone number is preferred):

Home: _____ Mobile: _____ Business: _____

E-mail: _____

Emergency Contact: Name _____ Phone: Day _____ Evening _____

C. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION *(Optional, for record keeping purposes only)*

Gender: Female
 Male

Race:
 White
 African American
 American Indian
 Hispanic
 Asian
 Multi-Racial

Date of birth: _____ Highest level of education: _____

How did you learn about the Historic Rivers Chapter Virginia Master Naturalist training? _____

May 7, 2010

D. THREE REFERENCES

1. _____

(Name)	(Phone: day & night)	(Relationship)	
(Street, Route, Box, Apt #)	(City)	(State)	(Zip)

2. _____

(Name)	(Phone: day & night)	(Relationship)	
(Street, Route, Box, Apt #)	(City)	(State)	(Zip)

3. _____

(Name)	(Phone: day & night)	(Relationship)	
(Street, Route, Box, Apt #)	(City)	(State)	(Zip)

E. DRIVING INFORMATION

	Yes	No
Do you have a current and valid driver's license? If yes, issued in the state of _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you currently have the minimum vehicle insurance coverage as required by the Commonwealth of Virginia?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a current commercial driver's license (CDL)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

F. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

(This information will be kept in a confidential manner and accessible only to authorized personnel. A "yes" answer does **not** automatically exclude you from becoming a registered volunteer.)

Have you ever had any **criminal convictions** related to:

	Yes	No
a. alcohol or drug abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. child abuse or neglect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. spousal abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. elder abuse or neglect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Have you ever been convicted of any violation(s) of law? Yes No

If volunteering for a position that requires the operation of a vehicle, have you been convicted of any moving traffic violations within the last 5 years? Yes No

If "yes" to any of the above, please describe. Use a separate sheet if necessary.

I understand that records and criminal background or reference checks may be conducted on me at any time during the application process or during volunteer service for the Virginia Master Naturalist Program.

Signature, Volunteer _____
Date

G. VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

- I understand that I am a volunteer for the Virginia Master Naturalist Program and will receive no financial compensation or benefits for assistance rendered in any capacity.
- I agree to abide by all policies and procedures of the Virginia Master Naturalist Program and its sponsoring agencies.
- I understand that I am responsible for my personal injuries and illness while participating in this program, and that I will hold the program and all joint and sponsoring agencies harmless. I understand that my chapter adviser may file a claim for my injuries with the Virginia Division of Risk Management. If accepted, I understand that I or my insurance company may be fully or partially reimbursed. I understand that a claim filed with the Virginia Division of Risk Management does not guarantee acceptance or reimbursement.
- I understand that the Virginia Master Naturalist Program is open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital and family status.
- I have read and understand the requirements for becoming a Certified Virginia Master Naturalist in the Historic Rivers Chapter.

Signature, Volunteer

Date

H. MEDIA RELEASE

Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Master Naturalist Program periodically use photographs or video or audio footage or testimonials of program participants for local, regional, or state publicity or educational purposes. By my signature on this Volunteer Information form, I acknowledge receipt of this document and give permission for Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Master Naturalist Program to use such reproductions for educational and publicity purposes.

Signature, Volunteer

Date

Please print this 3-page application form, sign it in the 3 fields indicated, and return it to:

Historic Rivers Chapter
Virginia Master Naturalist
PO Box 6424, Williamsburg, VA 23187

Along with your application, you must include the \$150 fee in the form of cash or check made payable to the Historic Rivers Chapter, Virginia Master Naturalists. We cannot accept credit cards at this time. This fee includes all course instruction, printed materials, and Chapter membership dues for 2010 and 2011. Enrollment is limited to 20. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis starting May 10, 2010. We recommend that you maintain a copy of your completed application. You will receive confirmation of your enrollment by email or phone call.

The Virginia Master Naturalist Program is sponsored jointly by Virginia Cooperative Extension, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Virginia Department of Forestry, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

The Virginia Master Naturalist Program



Mission

To develop a well-informed corps of volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the Commonwealth of Virginia.



Agency Sponsors

Collaboration among 5 sponsoring
state agencies:

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Department of Forestry

Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries

Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation

Virginia Museum of Natural History



Virginia
Cooperative
Extension





Certification Process

Basic Training

+

Advanced Training

+

Volunteer Service

=

Certified Virginia Master Naturalist



Certification Process

Basic Training

at least 40 hours

Classroom and field experiences

Natural history, conservation and management, teaching and research skills

Led by local experts



A Virginia Master Naturalist Knows...

- All aspects of his or her role as a Virginia Master Naturalist, the mission and objectives of the program, and the guidelines for participation
- What a naturalist is and does and the significance of naturalists and natural history
- Biogeography of Virginia
- Ecology (basic concepts)
- Geology (basic concepts)
- Resource management (basic principles)
- Some native flora and fauna in the region
- Process of science
- Roles of Virginia state agencies in the management and conservation of natural resources



A Virginia Master Naturalist Can...

- Use a key to identify organisms
- Use a field guide
- Share knowledge with others
- Make and record observations in nature
- Recognize when he or she does not know the answer to a question, but be able to seek out answers from people, books, or other reliable resources



Every Master Naturalist training includes...

- Both field and classroom experiences, with a minimum of 25% of the course time spent in the field
- Information from unbiased, research-based sources
- Material on the following topics:
 - Introduction to the Virginia Master Naturalist program
 - American Naturalists
 - Basic Ecology
 - Biogeography
 - Geology
 - Nature of Naming
 - Education and Interpretation Skills
 - Citizen Science and Research Skills
 - Ecology and Management of the systems occurring in the region
 - Overview of vertebrates, invertebrates, trees and other plants (biology, ecology, identification, conservation and management)



Certification Process

Basic Training

40 hours

Classroom and field experiences

Natural history, conservation and management, teaching and research skills

Led by local experts

+

Advanced Training

8 hours

Specialized topics that build on basic training

Required annually to maintain certification



Advanced Training-Objectives

- Promotes continued learning and development of naturalist skills
- Provides Master Naturalists with knowledge and skills necessary to work in local volunteer efforts
- Provides Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their interests in one or a few topics
- Builds on the core curriculum initially provided
- Provides information on natural resources and resource management information applicable to Virginia
- May be a full 8 hours of one training, or a series of shorter trainings over time



Certification Process

Basic Training

40 hours

Classroom and field experiences

Natural history, conservation and management, teaching and research skills

Led by local experts



Advanced Training

8 hours

Specialized topics that build on basic training

Required annually to maintain certification



Volunteer Service

40 hours

Education, citizen science, or stewardship

Required annually to maintain certification



Service Projects

- Must be dedicated to the beneficial management and conservation of natural resources in the community
- Must be of public benefit, not personal gain
- May be a series of short, unrelated experiences or a long-term commitment to one project
- May take 3 forms: education, citizen science, or stewardship



Volunteer Service: Education

For volunteers who enjoy public speaking or working with youth!

Examples include:

- Being a volunteer interpreter at a state or local park
- Developing an interpretive trail
- Being a guest presenter on a natural resource topic in a classroom



Photo by Mike Hayslett



Volunteer Service: Citizen Science

For volunteers who enjoy helping with scientific research!

Examples include:

- Collecting data for the VA Wildlife Mapping program
- Collecting data for the VA Frog and Toad Calling Survey
- Participating in a Christmas Bird Count
- Conducting water quality monitoring



Photo by Mike Hayslett



Volunteer Service: Stewardship

For volunteers who just want to get their hands dirty!

Examples include:

- Maintaining trails at a state park
- Pulling out exotic invasive plants and planting natives at a nature center
- Restoring bird-friendly habitat at a local park



Photo by Mike Hayslett



Is This Program For Me?

- Are you curious about nature?
- Do you enjoy the outdoors?
- Do you want to make a difference in the environment?
- Do you care about the natural areas and native species in your community?
- Do you want to be actively involved in managing, conserving, and educating about Virginia's natural resources?
- Do you have time to complete the training?
- Do you have time to complete the volunteer service?
- Are you interested in being a part of a local team and interacting with other individuals who care about natural resources?
- As a possible charter member, do you have a sense of adventure?
- **If so, then YES, the program may be for you!**



Is This Program For Me?

- Are you mostly interested in getting the training and less interested in the volunteering?
- Are you wanting the certification for your job or to promote yourself in some way?
- Are you hoping to use the certification for environmental advocacy?
- Are you more interested in promoting personal opinions about the environment than research-based information?
- Are you thinking that your Master Naturalist service will count towards Master Gardener service requirements?
- If so, then, **NO**, this program may not be for you.