

Volunteer Service Project Proposal Form
Habitat Helpers
Stonehouse Elementary School
13 November 2008



Project proposals should be completed by partner organizations or chapter members and submitted to the chapter's Volunteer Service Project for review. Projects will be evaluated for relevance to program mission and objectives. Projects and activities implemented without approval are not considered Master Naturalist activities, do not count towards required service hours, and do not carry the liability shield.

Complete each of the following areas described on the left by typing the answer in the cell to the right:	
1. Project Name: (for recording purposes)	"Habitat Helpers" at Stonehouse Elementary School
2. Submitted by:	Name: Susan Powell Phone and/or e-mail: 757-564-4542 smapowell@cox.net
3. Project Chair:	Name: <u>To be determined</u> Phone and/or e-mail:
4. Project Type: Place an "X" in the appropriate cell to choose your project type.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education/Outreach: related to educating the public. Examples: being a volunteer interpreter at a park, developing an interpretive trail, being a guest presenter on a natural resource topic in a classroom or garden club, staffing presentations at fairs, booths, etc, training other non-VMN volunteers or MNs-in-training.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Citizen science/monitoring: data collection, monitoring, biological inventories contributing to the management of local natural resources or other research-oriented activities. Examples: collecting data for wildlife mapping, VA frog and toad calling survey, bird counts, conducting water quality monitoring
	<input type="checkbox"/> Stewardship: improve habitat and other natural resources or improve the ability of the public to access these resources, dedicated to management of natural resources within our local community. Examples: maintaining trails at local state and county parks, pulling out non-native invasives or planting natives at a nature center, restoring bird-friendly habitat at a local park.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative: chapter organization, volunteer development, training and other management roles. Examples: leading general membership meetings, planning and supervising VMN training classes, working on the chapter newsletter, attending state meetings on behalf of the chapter.
	<input type="checkbox"/> None of the above: project will not be approved
5. Is this project available to <u>all</u> members of the VMN?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, continue to 6
	<input type="checkbox"/> No, the project may not be approved

Virginia Master Naturalist 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

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Project Partnerships	
6. Is this project part of a statewide project? (VA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation, VA Dept of Game and Inland Fisheries, VA Dept of Forestry, VA Cooperative Extension, VA Museum of Natural History)	<p>Yes, proceed to 8</p> <hr/> <p>X No, proceed to 7</p>
7. Is this project specific to a local partner? the College of William & Mary, VIMS, VA Nature Conservancy (local chapter) Williamsburg/JCC Schools, John Clayton Chapter of the Native Plant Society or other potential partners	<p>X Yes, proceed to 8</p> <hr/> <p>No, the project may not be approved</p>
8. Project Partner(s)	<p>Partner organization: James City County Public Schools, Stonehouse Elementary School</p> <p>Contact Name: Jan Newton</p> <p>Phone and/or e-mail: 757-566-3646 home 757-291-8760 cell JNewton110@cox.net</p>
Project Specifics	
9. Description: What does the project entail? What will participants actually do? Give as much as detail as possible.	See attachment A at the end of this form.
10. Location: Where will the project take place?	Habitat Garden at Stonehouse Elementary School
11. Timeframe: What is the timeframe? Be as specific as possible: dates, times, ongoing, seasonal, etc.	Right now, this occurs during the public school academic year on Thursdays at 11:30am, 12:50pm and 1:15pm. If enough people are interested, this could occur on Tuesdays as well.
12. Experience needed: What, if any, prior experience or expertise is required or preferred?	none
13. Training: If training is needed, who will provide it?	n/a

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14. Safety Hazards and protocols: What hazards might volunteers encounter? Describe your safety plan.	Risks include encounters with stinging/biting insects, and exposure to plants and soil. Volunteers who are adversely affected by these risks should take care to wear appropriate clothing and gloves to minimize these risks.
15. Resources provided: Describe resources provided for the volunteers.	none
16. Resources needed: Describe resources that volunteers must provide and/or that the chapter must provide and cost of the resources.	none
17. Are minors involved? If so, all volunteers must be trained in working with youth and the Above Suspicion policy.	Yes
18. Project Evaluation: How will the project be evaluated both during implementation and after completion?	Volunteers will report their time on membership timesheets. Members are encouraged to provide “after action” reports for projects.
19: How will the Virginia Master Naturalist program be recognized?	The program will be providing education and outreach to children, parents, and school staff.

For VSP Committee use only:	
Project Approved?	
Date:	
Comments:	

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Attachment A: Description of Project

The following is an email conversation between Jan Newton, Shirley Devan and Susan Powell. These emails provide the description for the project.

From: [jim and jan newton](#)

To: '[Shirley Devan](#)' ; '[susan and mike Powell](#)'

Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2008 8:42 AM

Subject: a proposal: Habitat Helpers program at Stonehouse Elem. Habitat

Susan and Shirley,

I work with the "Habitat Helpers" at Stonehouse Elementary School. I have so many interested students this year that I need help from other adults interested in working with children in the habitat. I spoke with Kathi Mestayer, knowing that she was interested in habitats, and she recommended that I contact the two of you to see if this would be a project that Master Naturalists would like to be a part of. I have listed below information about the Stonehouse Habitat, as well as info about the Habitat Helper's program that I started at Stonehouse and have also attached some photos. (I will send more photos in a separate email.) I currently work with groups of 6 students for 20 minutes during their recess time once a week. Right now this occurs on Thursday at 11:30am, 12:50pm and 1:15pm. I have other grades and classrooms wanted to participate and can not accommodate all of them alone.

When Kathi mentioned the Master Naturalists, I thought, "what a great idea, they would have much to offer the student Habitat Helpers at Stonehouse Elementary School!" I can envision many learning experiences for the children and the adults! If you have any Master Naturalists interested, please let me know or have them contact me.

Thank you,

Jan Newton

Parent Volunteer and Team Member of the Stonehouse Elementary Habitat; and John Clayton Chapter Member, VNPS

757-566-3646 home

757-291-8760 cell

Habitat Helpers:

Habitat Helpers are groups of 5-6 students who give up their recess once a week to help with mulching, weeding, planting new plants, collecting seeds and discovering new critters in the Habitat. While working in the Habitat, the children learn about native plants and their benefits to specific wildlife, as well as the drought-tolerant properties of many of the plants. The students learn first hand about the benefits of compost and mulch. They experience the life cycles of butterflies, ladybugs and other wildlife. The Habitat makes learning about wildlife and the environment a fun and memorable experience.

Kindergarteners commented recently when they were studying about the monarch butterfly's life cycle,

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that they remembered seeing the monarch chrysalis on the door and window frames in the Habitat in the previous fall. They were excited to have seen a real chrysalis just like the one in the book!

In the following weeks groups from the classrooms rotate so that all interested students get to help at least once a month. Habitat Helpers often receive a native plant seedling and/or seeds at the end of the year. Last year's Habitat Helpers felt proud to help maintain this important spot for wildlife and for the students, faculty and staff of Stonehouse. Mrs. Jan Newton works with the Habitat Helpers. She is a parent volunteer, serves on the Stonehouse Habitat Team and is a board member with the local chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society.

Stonehouse Habitat History and Goals:

Not only does the Stonehouse Habitat aim to enhance learning, but also strives to help with erosion, conservation, preserving wildlife, and filtering water before it enters the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, as well as to foster an awareness of the environment along with relationships among students, faculty and local community. The Stonehouse Habitat is located in a courtyard of the school and is easily accessible. When the habitat was being installed, donated compost was tilled into the mostly clay soil to add nutrients and allow the soil to better retain moisture. Likewise, donated mulch was applied to conserve water and help reduce the amount of erosion in the area. Plants were strategically placed around the two-foot square drain and throughout the garden to help soak up and filter water, as well as to keep mulch out of the drain. Over the four years, the Habitat has had 13 bird's nests and has been home to countless numbers of black swallowtail and monarch caterpillars, toads and tree frogs. Hummingbirds have been seen drinking nectar from several plants and butterflies, ladybugs, praying mantises and many other insects have also been living in and feeding in the Habitat. Last year bluebirds raised their young in one of the birdhouses and this summer a baby rabbit was living in the habitat. As the plants in the Habitat keep maturing and growing, we plan on seeing and learning about more and more different species of wildlife.

Habitat Education Wall:

I have also started a Habitat Wall in the hallway near the Habitat. This wall has been designated as the habitat education wall and exhibits information about wildlife habitats, as well as photos of the native plants and critters that have resided in the Habitat thus far. I am in the process of collecting and arranging educational posters, charts and other materials for use on the Habitat Wall to better connect the Habitat to the Virginia SOLs and to related study topics.

Jan Newton

566-3646

Jnewton110@cox.net

Stonehouse Habitat



s and employment are
orientation, or marital o

national origin, sex, religion, age,
affirmative action employer

Located in courtyard off the hall to the K-1 pod

