



# THE NATURALIST

*The monthly newsletter of the Historic Rivers Chapter*

*Virginia Master Naturalist Program*

<http://historicrivers.org>

August 2015

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## Chapter Board 2015-2016

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## President's Message

Partnerships are critical to success – plus they are fun. A new partner just signed on as a sponsor for the state-wide Virginia Master Naturalist program. Alycia Crall announced this week that our next-door neighbor, Virginia Institute of Marine Science's Center for Coastal Resources Management, is our seventh sponsor.

I look forward to our Chapter being involved with citizen-science projects with the Center for Coastal Resources Management. If you have ideas for projects, shout out! (Expanded quotes about VIMS new relationship on Page 13)

More recently, our partnership with the Williamsburg Botanical Garden featured a successful Butterfly Festival at the Garden August 1 and 2. Quite a few HRC members contributed time and effort to set up Friday, tear down Sunday plus "docent" duty in between. As one who spent considerable time inside the tent, I was as excited as the youngsters to have a Monarch land on my hat  
*Continued on Page 2*

### Notes from the Board

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

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## HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER

and watch a chrysalis turn into a butterfly in the case in the back corner. Many thanks to ALL who helped out –particularly in the pre-event planning and the July meetings to finalize details. I know the Garden appreciated our help and our Chapter gained a new member for Cohort X as a result of our presence at this event.

We have MANY other partners in the “historic rivers” area. The two described above are only two examples of the mutual benefits – and fun – of partnerships.

Trivia Challenge  
(answer on Page 16)

What is the only insect that can turn its head?

## Wildflower Spot – June 2015

John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society

Dune Sandspur

*Cenchrus tribuloides*

This native beach grass is often found when walking the dunes or the beach in the fall. As with most grasses, the flowers are inconspicuous and the plant is recognized by its fruits and seeds. The flowering spikes of Dune Sandspur carry several hairy, cup-shaped burs, covered with bristles. Each one has a backward-pointing barb that is very painful to the skin, and difficult to remove. As one of nature's hitchhikers, these spiny fruits easily attach to shoes, pants, and skin, where they will be carried to new locations.

Of the 3 species of the genus *Cenchrus* in the Coastal Plain, this is most likely the species discovered in sand dunes and along the beach, especially when walking barefoot. Other species of *Cenchrus* are recognized by differences in the character of the spines and leaf blades.

Dune Sandspur is an annual with lots of branches that trail along the sand. The leaves are leathery and rough to the touch, and fold inward so they appear to be round. By late fall the plant begins to root wherever the stem touches the ground. This native plant requires sandy soil and full sun, and is common in Virginia's Coastal Plain, growing in coastal sands, sandy fields and woods. The range is from southern New York to Florida and Texas.

Despite its formidable seeds, Sandspur does have redeeming qualities as a sand binder. The stems produce roots while lying flat, thereby securing the plant; the low profile and rooted stems are adaptive features that reduce wind abrasion and increase water uptake.

The species name *tribuloides* comes from the Latin "*tribulus*" referring to a weapon called a caltrop that had four spikes, one always pointing upward when supported on the ground by the other three.

For more information about native plants visit [www.vnps.org](http://www.vnps.org).

By Helen Hamilton, past-president of the John Clayton Chapter, VNPS

**Photo:** Dune Sandspur (*Cenchrus tribuloides*) taken by Helen Hamilton



## Native Plant Walk

Saturday, August 29, 10 AM (rain date, August 30, 10 AM)

**Shadow Witch Orchid**– This small plant occurs in only 7 southeastern counties in Virginia and one location is at the home of John Clayton chapter members Hayes and Joyce Williams. Along with other fall plants such as cardinal flower, jewelweed, Jerusalem artichoke, and goldenrods, *Ponthieva racemosa* should be in full bloom.

Hayes' property is a mixed hardwood forest with many trees over 100 years old and wetlands created by hillside springs where bald cypress thrives. American chestnut and American hazelnut will be in fruit as well as chokeberry, winterberry, and other hollies.

The address is 6351 Brookwood Lane, Gloucester Va. Traveling north on Rt. 17, turn right 2 miles north of the White Marsh Post Office onto Hillside Drive, which is just past the flea market. (After the stoplight at T.C Walker, start to look for the flea market and Hillside Drive on the right.) About two blocks from Rt. 17, on a gravel road, the second blue street sign identifies Brookwood Lane, the Williams' driveway, and the house is not far. Hayes will have the gate open. For



## Master Naturalists Support "Nature in Your Backyard" Freedom Park June 29 - July 2

Kathi Mastayer (Trees), Christina Clarke (Birds and Butterflies), Catherine Short (Reptiles and Amphibians) and Dean Shostak & Les Lawrence (Mammals) provided program inputs to the session. The faces of the kids in the picture say everything that needs to be said. The chapter received the following "thank you" for the support.

Master Naturalists,

I can't thank you enough for your tremendous help with our nature camp this week. The presentation that you contributed helped create a very unique experience for the youth in this camp, and we would not have been able to pull it off with our your help. I have received nothing but positive feedback from the parents; the children were excited to come to camp each day, and the all learned a great deal!

Thank you!!!

Alister Perkinson  
Park Coordinator  
Freedom Park





## **2<sup>st</sup> Annual Williamsburg Area Butterfly Count - August 8, 2015**

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Butterfly Count was a great success! We had a slightly higher number of species and individual butterflies than last year. We identified 53 species and 1187 individual butterflies. There were 24 species that had a higher individual count than last August. There were 6 butterflies new to our count list, but 5 that we observed last year and did not see this year.

There were more than 30 people who participated including two representatives from the National Park Service, one person from Richmond, 24 members of our chapter, and a few others from the Williamsburg area. We were in the field from 9:00 to 4:00 pm and spent more than 200 hours in the field, walking approximately 22 miles on foot. See Table in following page for sectors and participants.

The day started off cloudy and cool (74-82 degrees) and when the sun came out in the afternoon the wind picked up to gusts 15+ knots. You would think that those conditions would have limited our sightings, but apparently not.

For the count, our Butterfly Circle (15 miles wide) was divided into the following 5 sectors: Williamsburg Central, Upper James City County, Upper York River, Lower York River, and Centerville Corridor. Each sector was assigned a local leader from our HRCVMN group, a photographer, and observers. We only had one expert join us this year, but because our members have significantly improved their skills of identification, we did great!

Most abundant species: Eastern tiger swallowtail (220), Fiery Skippers (80), Eastern-tailed blue (80), Carolina Satyrs (75), Common buckeye (61), Pearl Crescent (57), and Least skippers (50).

Missing (on last year's count): Palamedes Swallowtail, Morning Cloak, Painted Lady, Little Wood Satyr, and Saltmarsh Skipper.

Our findings will be submitted to North American Butterfly Association and published in their annual report. Hopefully, we will be up there near the top for total species!

Special thanks goes out to our local leaders for collecting money and recording data. Thank you all for a wonderful day!

If you have questions, contact Adrienne and Gary ([Adrienne-gary@cox.net](mailto:Adrienne-gary@cox.net)).

# HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER

Sectors/Area	Participants	Special Species - New to count * or not observed by other sectors	High Count for Individuals
<b>Upper York River</b> – York River State Park, Croaker Landing, Mt. Zion Road	Leader – Les Lawrence Sieg & Alice Kopinitz, Judy Jones, Portia Belden Anne-Marie Castellani	Hoary Edge (1)* Aaron’s Skipper (2)* Comma (1)	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (93)
<b>Lower York River</b> – New Quarter Park, Queen’s Lake	Leader – Jan Lockwood Nancy Barnhart, Sara Lewis, Jeff Honig, Joyce Lowry, Libbey Oliver	Northern Pearly-eye (2) Delaware Skipper (2)	Eastern Tailed Blues (22) Zabulon Skippers (9)
<b>Upper JC County</b> – Little Creek Reservoir Park, Menzels Road, Stonehouse School	Leaders – Gary Driscole and Adrienne Frank, Shan Gill, Leslie Orr, Peggy Whitney, Dorothy Geyer	Common Wood-Nymph (3) Cloudless Sulphur (3) * Northern Cloudywing (1)	Sachem Skipper (31) Ocala (28)
<b>Centerville Corridor</b> –Warhill Tract and Freedom Park	Leader – Shirley Devan, Ken Lorenzen, Joanne Sheffield, Barb Bucklin, Patty Maloney, Bill Wallace	Viceroy (1)* Snout (1)* Tawny-edged Skipper (1) Common Checkered Skipper (1)	Pearl Crescents (45) Fiery Skipper (33)
<b>Williamsburg Central</b> –Colonial Williamsburg, William & Mary	Leader – Deane & Ruth Gordon, Sherry Brubaker, Roger Gosden Bev Baker, Linda Morse, Adriano Azombuten, Monica Almeida	Pipevine Swallowtail (1)* Clouded Sulphur (1)	Silverspotted Skipper (28)



Gemmed Satyr – wings open



Centerville Corridor team



Upper James City County observers at Stonehouse School looking at the Mountain Mint and more than 50 butterflies.



Northern Pearly-eye - closed-wing view

Pipevine Swallowtail – closed-wing view





## Bluebird Walk and Talk New Quarter Park June 27

Jan Lockwood and Lois Ullman lead a very successful Walk and Talk program that attracted interested members of the public from Gloucester to Suffolk. Jan and Lois talked about the bluebird life cycle and the Historic Rivers Virginia Master Naturalists bluebird monitoring program and answered many questions. Although bluebirds haven't been as abundant this year due to the harsh winter, participants were able to see nestlings in one of the boxes on the New Quarter trail.

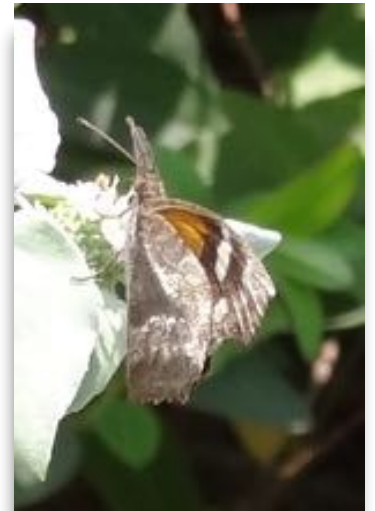


Recent New Quarter Park Wildlife Mapping Photos

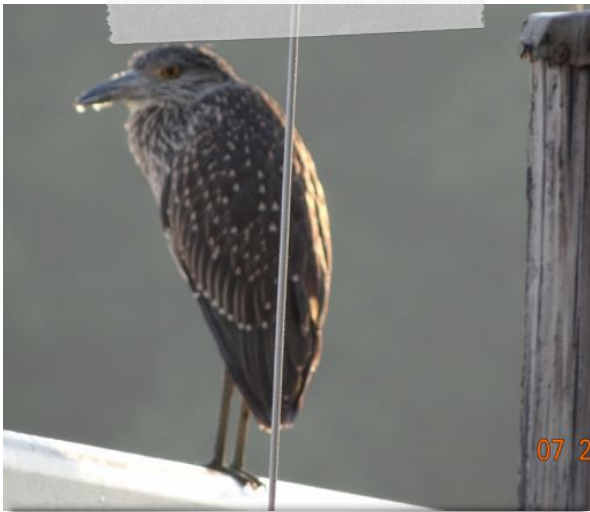
Copperhead Snake



American Snout Butterfly



Yellow-crowned Night Heron



Diamond Back Terrapin



HRC Field Trip June 15  
Virginia Living Museum



Shedding Coyote



Corn Snake

# HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER

## Williamsburg Butterfly Festival August 1-2 at Freedom Park

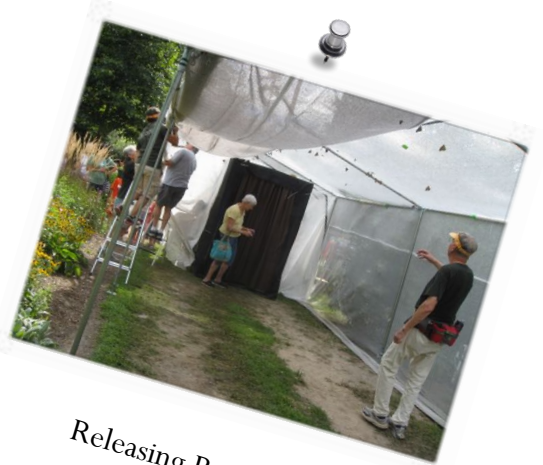
The Williamsburg Botanical Garden and VMN HRC collaborated to sponsor the festival with funding provided by the Williamsburg Area Council of Garden Clubs. The festival was held in the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. HRC provided a tent with hundreds of native butterflies for visitors to experience. Susie Engle-Hill provided the pictures from the event.



Mating Monarchs



Mourning Cloak  
& Monarch



Releasing Butterflies



Monarch on  
Susie's Pinkie



Shirley Bestowing  
Honor

Also see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BuZCYG1Ppk> for a great video from James City County about the event

## VMN Announces VIMS as Seventh Sponsoring Agency Excerpts from VMN Office Press Release

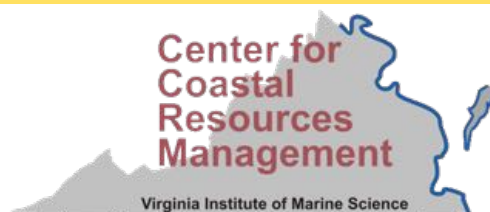
BLACKSBURG, Va., Aug. 3, 2015 – The Virginia Master Naturalist program (<http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org>) — a statewide volunteer training and service program providing education, outreach, and service to better manage natural resources and natural areas in Virginia — welcomes the Virginia Institute of Marine Science's Center for Coastal Resources Management (<http://ccrm.vims.edu>) as its newest sponsoring agency.

"We are excited to have the Center for Coastal Resources Management join our growing network of sponsoring agencies and partnering organizations around the state," said Alycia Crall (<http://frec.vt.edu/people/crall/index.html>), statewide coordinator for the Virginia Master Naturalist program. "With a rapidly growing program, we continue to look for ways to diversify our funding support. The center's contribution will further support that growth and advance the mission of our program, as well as that of the center throughout the commonwealth."

The Center for Coastal Resources Management develops and supports integrated and adaptive management of coastal zone resources. To fulfill this mission, the center undertakes research, provides advisory service, and conducts outreach education, including Master Naturalist training courses for coastal and estuarine ecology and management in collaboration with other Virginia Institute of Marine Science departments.

"Supporting the Virginia Master Naturalist program is a logical extension of our outreach efforts," added Center Director Carl Hershner Jr. "There is a growing need for educated citizens to support various local and state government initiatives aimed at restoring the Chesapeake Bay and adapting to climate change. These volunteers are well positioned to serve the commonwealth in these roles, and we look forward to helping make that happen."

Karen Duhring, the center's outreach and training coordinator, will represent the agency on the Virginia Master Naturalist program's steering and executive committees. "The annual Virginia Institute of Marine Science training classes for Master Naturalists have been well received and are a pleasure for us to conduct," she said. "Expanding our relationship as a sponsoring agency will allow us to connect the program to more continuing education courses and opportunities. We are also willing to assist any chapter interested in developing citizen science programs related to coastal and wetland issues."



**Mark your calendar!**  
**Upcoming General Membership Meetings**

- September 9 - Dr. Gregory Hancock, Geology Department, College of William & Mary, "Groundwater at Jamestown Island - Was it Poisonous to the Early Settlers?"
- October 14 - Dr. Martin Gallivan, Anthropology Department, College of William & Mary, "Recently Uncovered Artifacts from the Kiskiak Tribe at the Naval Weapons Station"
- November 11 - TBD
- December 3 - Holiday Party
- January 13 - Dr. Norman Fashing, Biology Department, College of William & Mary, "Spiders of the Coastal Plain, Their Webs and Habits"
- February 10 - TBD
- March 9 - Cohort X Graduation Speaker

Trivia Challenge  
(answer on Page 16)

What is a group of toads called?

## Upcoming Continuing Education Opportunities

Please check the Chapter website for more information (<http://www.historicrivers.org>). Workshop registration may be required ahead of time.

**[CE] Super Turf Saturday - Free Workshop by Master Gardener's - August 15, 2015** from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm at James City County Recreation Center, 5301 Longhill Road, Williamsburg, VA

**[CE] HRBC Bird Walk - August 16, 2015** from 7:00 am to 10:00 am at Newport News City Park

**[CE] WBC Bird Walk - August 22, 2015** from 7:00 am to 9:00 am at New Quarter Park, 1000 Lakeshead Dr., Williamsburg

**[CE] NPS Walk with Helen Hamilton - August 22, 2015** from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at Freedom Park

**[CE] VIMS Lecture - Native Use of the Chesapeake - August 27, 2015** from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at VIMS - Watermen's Hall, McHugh Auditorium 1375 Greate Road Gloucester Point, VA 23062

**[CE] VMN Regional Conference in Wakefield - August 30, 2015** all day at Wakefield 4 H retreat

**[CE] NPS Walk Shrubs Galore with Susie Yager - September 5, 2015** from 9:30 am to 11:30 am at The Noland Trail, Newport News, VA 23601, USA

**[CE] HRBC Bird Walk - September 6, 2015** from 7:00 am to 10:00 am at Newport News City Park

**[CE] Monthly meeting - September 9, 2015** from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at JCC Human Services Bldg., 5249 Olde Towne Rd., Williamsburg

**[CE] WBC Bird Walk at New Quarter Park - September 12, 2015** from 8:00 am to 10:00 am at New Quarter Park, 1000 Lakeshead Dr., Williamsburg

**[CE] VIMS - Discovery Lab-Echinoderms - September 15, 2015** from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at VIMS - Catlett-Burruss Research and Education Lab 7577 Spencer Road Gloucester Point, VA 23062

**[CE] WBC Monthly Meeting - September 16, 2015** from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm at College of William & Mary, Andrews Hall, Room 101

**[CE] WBGardens - THE NIGHT BELONGS TO MOTHS with Teta Kain -**

**September 19, 2015** from 10:00 am to 11:30 am at Freedom Park Interpretive Center

**[CE] Walk with Lisa Deaton, Forest Education - September 19, 2015** from 10:00 am to 11:00 am at New Kent Forestry Center

**[CE] HRBC Bird Walk - September 20, 2015** from 7:00 am to 10:00 am at Newport News City Park

**[CE] VIMS - Lecture: Antarctic Edge: 70° South - September 24, 2015** from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at VIMS - Watermen's Hall, McHugh Auditorium 1375 Greate Road Gloucester Point, VA 23062

**[CE] WBC Bird Walk - September 26, 2015** from 7:00 am to 9:00 am at New Quarter Park, 1000 Lakeshead Dr., Williamsburg

**[CE] HRBC Bird Walk - October 4, 2015** from 7:00 am to 10:00 am at Newport News City Park



Trivia Challenge

Page 2: Praying Mantis

Page 14: A knot