

The Naturalist

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FROM THE HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER
VIRGINIA MASTER NATURALISTS

Virginia
Master
Naturalist



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Welcome to the world little Blue. More of Inge Curtis's photo essay on an Eastern Bluebird fledgling on page 8.

The President's Report

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MEET THE BOARD—CONNIE REITZ

When new cohorts join the Historic Rivers Chapter, it can sometimes take a few weeks for the melding of new and old to occur. However, that is far from what happened when Connie Reitz appeared. Her zing, her smile, and her warm personality just made her a part of the HRC gang in a heartbeat. It's fun to see her enthusiastically embrace each opportunity for volunteer projects or continuing education, and her excitement and eager approach to each and every activity is just a joy.

Now Connie is on the board, serving a two-year term as our historian. And she's just as eager to embrace this new responsibility as she is all the others. So, if you haven't met Connie, take a moment to read about her below and to see her photo as she begins her first kayaking adventure at the Dragon Run. Then make it a point to meet her at our next general membership meeting. You'll be glad you did!

CONNIE REITZ

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT MYSELF

I grew up in Southampton County just outside the Franklin city limits. It was, and still is, a rural agricultural area. My mom was a great gardener and some of my best (and worst) times were helping her in both the vegetable and flower gardens. Entertainment consisted of playing outside and biking to the city pool in summer. I lived in a farming area and traipsed through the woods and streams to my heart's content. We had longleaf pines on our property!! Maybe this constant 'being outside' as a youngster was the foundation for my later adventures as a naturalist. I don't think any of this stayed with my 3 brothers and one sister.

I went to nursing school in Richmond (Johnston-Willis Hospital and VCU) and continued my education in Charleston, SC, at the Medical University of SC (MUSC). I became a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist—yes, that's a lot to say so shorten it to CRNA! What a great career which lasted from April, 1975 to February, 2016. It was wonderful but I'm glad to be retired and have time to do other things which interest me.

I have lived in Williamsburg since 1992 with my husband, Jack. We have a son, Stephen, who lives in Pittsburgh with his wife and our two grandchildren—Logan & Paige—and their basset hound, Bartleby. We try to visit them every other month and have our grandchildren here for 2 weeks in July. Talk about a change in activity level! They are the ultimate weight loss program.



ONE QUIRKY THING

I'm a baseball fan and love a good baseball game whether it's little league, high school, college, or professional. I really love to see the NY Mets win. That's not happening too much this season but you "Gotta Believe!" My husband is a Yankees fan so sometimes this is a House Divided. I don't understand ice hockey at all but I am slowly becoming a Penguins fan. Maybe this will be another Stanley Cup year for them.

THE CURRENT ME

I am a Cohort XI graduate! I think I can still hear Pomp and Circumstance playing. I found the HRC-VMN by accident at a tree identification program presented by Stuart Ware at Jamestown Settlement. I arrived and was immediately greeted by a friendly group asking me if I was a Master Naturalist. More members of the chapter came and I thought I had mistakenly joined a private educational program. This happened again 2 weeks later at another education program. I had never met such a fun group who were willing to share any knowledge they had and answer any questions. I wanted to join.

MY FAVORITE MASTER NATURALIST ACTIVITY

I don't know if I've found my favorite activity yet. It feels great to be outside again after years of being in an operating room with no windows. Maybe I'm destined to be a "jack of all naturalist things but not a master." Each adventure brings more fun and a totally different learning experience. I love to do Wildlife Mapping. I'm just getting through my first year of seasonal changes of the plants and animals. I signed up for the Dragon Run kayaking adventure before ever being in a kayak. I took classes and now we're considering buying our own kayaks. I love the BBT monitoring and have 2 boxes at our home. There are so many teachers, mentors, and kindred spirits in this group...I have found my tribe.

Chapter Board 2017

President	Judy Jones
Vice President & Programs	Jan Lockwood
Co-recording Secretaries	Sue Mutell, Deane Gordon
Treasurer	Barbara Neis
Membership	Renee Dallman
Volunteer Service Projects	Nancy Barnhart
Continuing Education	Jennifer Trevino
Basic Training	David Lunt, Janet Harper
Past President	Shirley Devan
Historian	Connie Reitz
Education & Outreach	Deb Woodward
Publicity	Joni Carlson
Newsletter	Cindy Baker
Field Trip Coordinators	Maud Ann Wilson, Barb Bucklin
Host Committee	Randi Heise, Kathy Cross
Members-at-Large	Sharon Plocher, Gary Driscole, Adrienne Frank, Alister Perkinson, Joe Beene
Webmaster	Jeanette Navia
Social Media	Sonny Bowers
Liaison to the State	Susan Powell



Look who's keeping an eye on your board Photo by Judy Jones

New Quarter Park Stewardship Update

By Sara Lewis

We've made lots of progress in our three garden projects at New Quarter Park since my last report, so I wanted to bring you up to date.

RAIN GARDEN

On March 24, a few Master Naturalists made short work of re-digging the retaining pond and re-building the berm. Thank you Dave Graft, Madeline Vann, and Anita Angelone (and me!). Also, thanks to the York County maintenance crew for blowing away 2 years-worth of leaves.

After my plea for a champion, I got two! Keith and Jeanette Navia stepped up to take on the role of Rain Garden Champions. They helped accept the leftover native plants from the Virginia Native Plant Society's annual sale and transport them to New Quarter Park on April 29. Over the next two weeks they planted all of the shade plants—ferns, May apples, and more—around the perimeter of the upper pond and along the stream path to the lower pond. Good work, Navias, and a BIG thank you.

Soon, they will be asking for help to dig out the lower pond and replant its berm. Does anyone have access to more ferns, lizard's tail, and other wet, ground-oving and shade-tolerant plants? If so, please let Keith, Jeanette, or me know. We could really use them to replace those we have lost, to hold on to soil with their roots, and to drink up some of the runoff water as it reinfilters the earth.

POLLINATOR GARDEN

Anita Angelone is the Pollinator Garden Champion. Her garden was also the recipient of new "leftover" plants from the Native Plant Society Sale. On Saturday, May 6, Anita and Bob Thomas planted ten sun-loving plants in the garden. Pollinator Garden volunteers meet Anita at 9 am on second Saturdays for planting, weeding, and butterfly watching. Please contact her if you wish to join her crew.

BUTTERFLY HABITAT

On April 21 and May 6, 19, and 27, volunteers helped me plant about 150 plants in the Butterfly Habitat! Thank yous go to out to Jan Lockwood and her husband, John, Alice Kopinitz, Shirley Devan, Les Lawrence, Nancy Gore, Patsy Carlson, Cathy Flanagan, Katie Johansen, and Graham Rose. I am also grateful for help from our park staff and the GAP/community service kids for mulching a border and "through" path to help us better enjoy looking for butterflies and for schlepping back and forth with water, plants, tools, and bug spray. And a final big thank you goes to our volunteer consultant and "biologist for hire" Meegan Wallace. Her plant identification and maintenance planning help has been most valuable!

We are targeting the removal of stilt grass, carp grass, and ground ivy and the reduction of native, but aggressive, dog fennel. After weeding, we put landscape fabric "skirts" around the native plants we want to flourish, give them a drink of water, and mulch around them to make

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Volunteers removed two-years-worth of leaves and branches, then dug the pond and rebuilt the berm.



The rain garden is filling out with new plants.



Anita Angelone, Dave Lunt, and Bob Thomas pose for a selfie in front of the Pollinator Garden.

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Bob Thomas stands back to admire his work in the Pollinator Garden.



Volunteers are as busy as bees during this recent work to weed, plant, and mulch. The north end of the Butterfly Habitat is looking good.

it harder for the invasives to find the sun. It will take a long time to “weed” the meadow and get natives established. Please hang in there with me! I hope you will make a pledge to come out and help with this project. After stewardship days on Friday, June 16, and Saturday, June 24, we will take a break for the hot summer months and regroup in the fall.

WHEW!

All three gardens—Rain Garden, Pollinator Garden, and Butterfly Habitat—are long-term initiatives. It’s good for us to participate in all of them as reminders that one-third of our volunteer mission is about stewardship! Whenever you are at the park or anywhere else, do your bit by stopping to pull up a few handfuls of Japanese stilt grass wherever you see it. Even a little is a big help in the fight against this prolific invasive. No wildlife is known to eat it, so every few plants you pull prevents thousands of seeds from galloping across the landscape.

Attention Attention

Information and application forms are now posted on our website for the 2017-2018 Basic Training Session. These are located under the “becoming a naturalist” tab. If you know of anyone who might be interested, please let them know, and encourage them to send in the application as soon as possible to wharper15@cox.net



Page and Barb are Saving the Bay one bag of oyster shells at a time!

It’s Time to Wash the Oyster Shells!

Don’t forget! June is a month with a Fifth Friday, which can only mean one thing: It’s time to wash the oyster shells! On this upcoming Fifth Friday, June 30, from 9 am to 12 noon, HRC Master Naturalists join Peninsula Chapter Master Naturalists and CBF staff at VIMS to wash and bag oyster shells. Send me an email at saraelewis@cox.net to let me know if you can join us! If you can’t plan that far ahead, I’ll be emailing and recruiting again during the week before the date. Plan to relax and eat lunch afterwards at Scoot’s Barbecue with your Master Naturalist friends.

Spring Butterfly News

by Adrienne Frank

This spring, a number of us from our chapter and a few other enthusiasts have been observing which plants have been attracting butterflies. Butterflies often travel fast and far in the spring to find flowering plants. The butterflies definitely have preferences and are often found nectaring on plants that are or are near their host plants. Some butterflies are seen only in one place while others are everywhere. These are some of the interactions we've noticed.

Many of the butterflies like the milkweed plants (Common milkweed, Butterfly weed, Dogbane). At New Quarter Park, more than 75 Saltmarsh skippers and a number of other species were observed on the Common Milkweed patch that volunteers have been preserving. The Zebra swallowtail seems to come back and forth frequently to the Butterfly Weed. Dogbane has a lot of caterpillars on it.

Eastern-tailed blues, Gray Hairstreaks, and others have been seen on white clover, dandelions, and other weeds in the lawn. Cabbage white, which seems to be abundant at the moment, likes the broccoli and mustards in the gardens and fields.

At York River State Park, we noticed more than 40 Broadwing skippers on American Germander flowers clustered at the base of the dam.

UPCOMING BUTTERFLY COUNTS

- Chippokes Butterfly Count, July 9. Contact Count Coordinator Teta Kain if you want to help out: tkdragonrun7@gmail.com
- Eastern Shore Butterfly Count, July 30. Contact Count Coordinator Lynn Davidson: hal.lynn@comcast.net
- Williamsburg Area Butterfly Count, August 12. Contact Count Coordinator, Adrienne Frank: adrienne-gary@cox.net

These are approved volunteer service projects and lots of fun! Don't worry if you don't know all the butterflies. Teams need a variety of skills such as spotters, record keepers, photographers, etc.



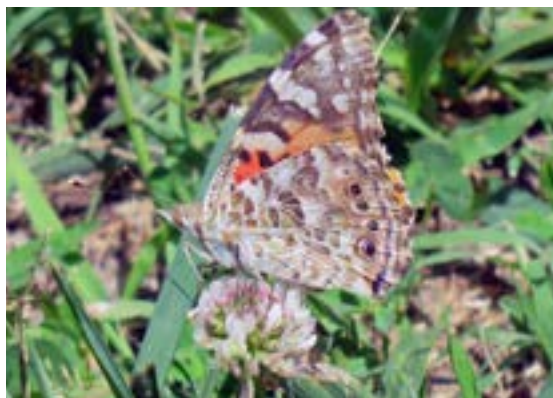
Common milkweed up close with a Broad-wing skipper on it.

Photo by Ken Lorenzen



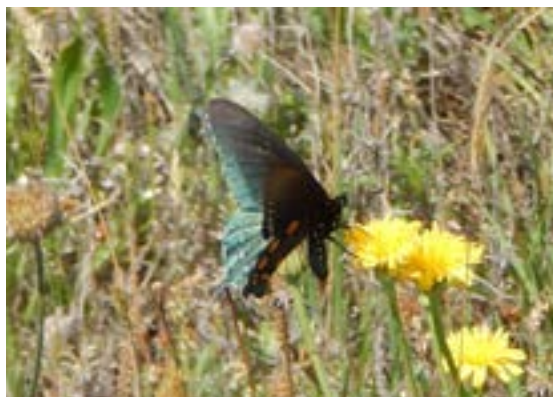
Butterfly weed with Zebra swallowtails on them.

Photo by Gary Driscole



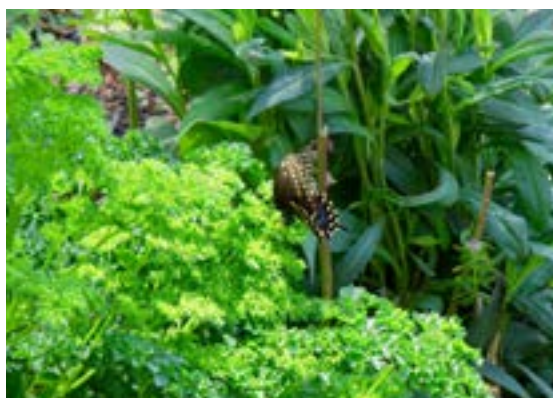
White clover with Painted lady on it.

Photo by Ken Lorenzen



Pipeline swallowtail.

Photo by Brian Taber



Black swallowtail laying eggs on parsley.

Photo by Shirley Devan

Master Naturalist Progressive Property Tour

On Saturday, June 3, over thirty VMN-HRC members and some family members participated in The Master Naturalists in Action—a Progressive Property Tour. The weather was perfect, the refreshments were quite refreshing, and the sights were incredible. Everyone saw beautiful and well-loved yards, fields, forests, and a meandering creek. Everyone seemed to have a wonderful time and left with new ideas. Special thanks go to our very knowledgeable and generous hosts and hostesses—Deanne and Ruth Gordon, Gary Driscole and Adrienne Frank, and Mike and Susan Powell.

The Sights of the June 3 Field Trip



(Above) Adrienne Frank and Gary Driscole with their Devil's Walking Stick.
Photo by Shirley Devan



(Above) Ginny Carey, Gary Driscole, Patty Maloney, Nancy Barnhart, Adrienne Frank.
Photo by Shirley Devan

(Above) Group at Deane and Ruth Gordon's house: Ginny Carey, Shirley Devan, Nancy Barnhart, Deane Gordon, "Tillie," Ruth Gordon, Patty Maloney
Photo by Shirley Devan



Bobwhite-Butterfly Habitat Maintenance



Graham Rose (straw hat kneeling, waving); John Lockwood (standing, straw hat, shovel); Jan Lockwood (In a smaller photo with John); Katie Johanson (sitting with weed she pulled); Sara Lewis (Center); Meegan and Chuck Wallace (Sitting, weeding) Virginia Native Plant Society

Photos and collage by
Cathy Flannigan

For three hours on Saturday, May 27, volunteers from HRC and Virginia Native Plant Society weeded, planted, and mulched with the goal of establishing a thriving edge habitat to both attract bobwhite quail and provide food for other birds and butterflies. This project has been ongoing for years and as the young native plants try to take hold, competition from aggressive and invasive species is always a threat. For example, tall fescue (*Festuca arundinacea*), ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), small carpetgrass (*Arthraxon hispidus*), and Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium vimineum*) need to be carefully removed from around the growing plants while at the same time not leaving too much exposed ground for invasives to re-grow. Where larger clumps of invasives have been removed, a new native is planted in its place along with a weed barrier fabric and a layer of mulch. Smaller bare patches are covered with mulch. It is careful and nurturing work. The rewards are many as it is a very pleasant place to be. Tall stands of milkweed at one end of the habitat are abuzz with pollinators. The surrounding woods is alive with birdsong. It is an excellent opportunity to brush up on bird songs, native plant and butterfly ID, and great for photography, too.

If you would like to help, June 24th from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm is the next work session scheduled.

Please watch for emails regarding changes or additions to the schedule.

A Fledgling Eastern Bluebird Leaves Home

A male Eastern Bluebird brings nourishment to an about-to-be fledgling in the nest box before it gathers up its courage to take flight.

Photos by Inge Curtis



Earn MN Continuing Education Hours Through James City County Parks and Recreation

Below are the dates and activities for James City County Parks and Recreation through which HRC members can earn education hours. Contact Catherine Short or Alistair Perkins for more information.

June 24

7:30PM, Freedom Park
Fairy Garden Class,
10PM, Chickahominy Park
Campfire Program

June 26 - 30

9AM - 12PM Dirt Diggers Camp, Archeology

July 1

9AM, Freedom Park
Family Program on Decomposers
Family walks along the Children's Hiking Trail

July 8

7:30PM
Chickahominy Park
Campfire Program

July 10 - 13

8AM - Noon Freedom Park Nature in Your Backyard Summer Camp

July 15

7:30PM
Chickahominy Park
Campfire program

July 22

7:30PM
Chickahominy Park
Campfire program

July 24 - Jul 27

8:30 - 11:00AM
Freedom Park
Little Sprouts Summer Camp

July 29

7:30PM
Chickahominy Park
Campfire Program

August 1 -4 volunteers needed for Butterfly Festival preparations

August 4 Tent set up for Butterfly Festival

August 5 - 6

9AM - 5PM
Freedom Park, Butterfly Festival, Williamsburg Botanical Garden
Tent take down Sunday 4:30

August 7 - 11

4-H Wildlife Explorer Camp

August 12

7:30PM
Chickahominy Park
Campfire Program

August 14 - August 17

8AM - Noon
Freedom Park
Nature in Your Backyard Summer Camp

August 19

7:30PM
Chickahominy Park
Campfire Program

August 21 - 24

8:30 - 12PM
Freedom Park
History Camp
August 26
8:30 - 3PM
York River State Park
Estuary Day
7:30PM
Chickahominy Park
Campfire Program

September 2

Freedom Park.
9AM
Family program on leaves
10AM - noon
Family walks along the Children's Hiking Trail

September 9 - 10

Chickahominy Park
Family campout

Catherine Short, MS Environmental Education
804 310-3925
CLSLEGAL@msn.com

Upcoming Continuing Education (CE) Opportunities

The Continuing Education (CE) calendar is posted on the VMN Volunteer Management System website. When you log in to enter your hours, you can find the link to the CE calendar in the left-hand column under, Event Calendars - Continuing Education. Click an activity on the calendar and open to find a more detailed description (including registration information, contact information, any cost, etc.) of the continuing education activity. Reminder: Travel time is not a part of CE credit/hour(s).

Christopher Wren classes that contain content on the natural environment are accepted as CE training. CW classes require registration and payment (\$\$\$) through the W&M Christopher Wren Association.

VLM programs require registration through the VLM. VIMS programs require registration through the VIMS.

If you have a question about the relevance of a topic for Continuing Education or wish to check whether or not you can obtain CE hours, please contact the Continuing Education Chair, Jennifer Trevino, jbktrevino8@cox.net

Tue 27 Jun 2017	HRC Field Trip to Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, 10:00-11:30 am tour, lunch 11:30, \$\$
Wed 28 Jun 2017	VMN Webinar-"Butterfly Identification; Beyond the Basics"-12:00 pm, VMN Website
Sun 02 Jul 2017	HRBC Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park-7:00 am
Sun 08 Jul 2017	WBC Bird Walk at New Quarter Park-8:00 am
Thu 13 Jul 2017	CoCoRaHS WX Talk Webinar-"Mesoscale convective systems: Bringing both beneficial rains and hazardous weather to the central and eastern US"-1:00 pm EDT, CoCoRaHS website
Sat 15 Jul 2017	WBotGardens-"Old & New Garden Favorites"-10:00-11:30 am, Freedom Park
Sun 16 Jul 2017	HRBC Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park-7:00 am
Sat 22 Jul 2017	WBC Bird Walk at New Quarter Park-7:00 am
Sat 22 Jul 2017	John Clayton Chpt VNPS-"Backyard Natives"-Woodland Farms, 10:00 am-12:00 pm
Thu 27 Jul 2017	VIMS After Hours Lecture, "VA Game Fish Tagging Program"-7:00-8:00 pm
Sat 29 Jul 2017	"Plants and Butterflies," a walk with Helen Hamilton, Adrienne Frank, Gary Driscole, 10:00am Warhill Tract
Sun 06 Aug 2017	HRBC Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park-7:00 am
Fri 11 Aug 2017	WBC Field Trip to Craney Island-7:00 am meet at Colony Square for carpool; birding 8:00 am-11:00 am; limited to 30 people
Sat 12 Aug 2017	WBC Bird Walk at New Quarter Park-8:00 am
Sat 19 Aug 2017	WBotGardens-"Little Yards & Gardens"-10:00-11:30 am, Freedom Park

DON'T FORGET

Please have your content into me, Cindy Baker, by September 7, 2017 for the September newsletter.