

# The Naturalist

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
FROM THE HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER  
VIRGINIA MASTER NATURALISTS

Virginia  
Master  
Naturalist



September 2017

Volume 11, Number 6

## The President's Report

Well, it's been a while since we've had a general membership meeting—nearly 60 days—and although we may not have been gathering in the Kitzinger Room at the JCC Library, we have seen each other during our summer volunteer projects and educational opportunities. Lots of great activities have headed your way this summer and it's been fun to see your smiling (but sweaty, hot, and tired) faces at wildlife mapping, Estuaries Day, the Butterfly Festival, kayaking the Powhatan Creek, butterfly counts, oyster farming, moving CAR materials, the Farmer's Market, learning about *The Genius of Birds*, attending our Photo Exhibit Reception, bluebirding all over the Tidewater area, learning about the Ginter Botanical Garden, working at the kids' camps at Freedom Park, going on a sturgeon expedition, monitoring osprey, monitoring rainfall, and the list goes on and on. We are blessed to have so many exciting opportunities to teach and to learn, to record and to



**Oystercatcher** Photo by Inge Curtis

## We Are Number

We are so excited to announce our chapters successes' at the state conference.

Inge Curtis took first place in the flora/fauna photography contest with her Oystercatcher photo. Congratulations to Inge!

Les Lawrence took honorable mention as VMN Volunteer of the Year! What a great honor for our Les!

And the Historic Rivers Chapter took first place as Chapter of the Year because of our volunteer hours. We have an average of 130 hours per person!!!!

Congratulations, HRC. We can be very proud, not only tonight, but every day of the year!

observe—and to work together as a chapter to make our community a more viable and ecologically sound one.

But a great deal has gone on behind the scenes too. So let me catch you up. That way we'll begin September together, all on the same page.

We had a terrific display of chapter photographs at the Williamsburg Regional Library. Our photo exhibit reception was equally beautiful (and tons more tasty)! In addition, we are sending three amazing photographs to the September VMN conference in Front Royal on the weekend of September 17<sup>th</sup>: Inge Curtis and her Oystercatcher photo, George Reiske and his photo of two rivers, and Hart Haynes with his photo of Les Lawrence hard at work and up to his knees in mud. No matter what the judges may decide, we are proud of our three entries—they are definitely winners to us.

We spent \$100 to send a vibrant young lady to

the James River Experience. She is 14 and from Charlottesville. She was unable to attend for financial reasons and we were able to make it happen. She may not be a local gal but she is a voice in our future and has definitely learned enough from the experience to know that every action counts when it comes to saving our rivers.

Because our scholarship to James River Experience was such a success, we have decided to rename the Nancy Norton Nature Camp Scholarships to Nancy Norton Scholarships. Our goal for the summer of 2018 is to send three students to Nature Camp, at least one student on the James River Experience, and donate at least one scholarship to our JCC Cops Camp, out at Chickahominy Riverfront Park. We have expanded our goals and hope to touch a lot more youth!

We have had two Saturday mornings

spent as a chapter at the Farmer's Market. It's been a great way to get the HRC name out and into the psyches of many who pass by. The interest has been amazing.

Cohort XII has had its first real gathering, melding together on August 22<sup>nd</sup> for an introductory meeting, having its first class the Tuesday after Labor Day, and then their first field trip on September 10<sup>th</sup>. It's hard to believe training has begun anew for a wonderful group of 20 'Master Naturalists to-be' (and seven on the waiting list!!!)

Our Executive Board meetings have moved...sort of. We are still at Williamsburg Landing and still in the Landing Building. But we've been moved from our Jamestown/Yorktown Room to Auditorium #1. It works well, the size is great, and the Landing's hospitality continues to be a blessing. Many thanks go out to Joe

Beene for making this venue possible!

Our dear friend and HRC member, Lucy Manning, has moved to Saratoga Springs, NY. Family always comes first, right??? The bad news is that we'll miss her like crazy. The good news is a 'two-parter'—her email is the same so we can still keep in touch and, when that cold New York spring is so cold that eyeballs freeze, Lucy can always come down and visit us! Wouldn't that be just the best????

In another update, Felice Bond has passed the 'CAR torch' to Jennifer Trevino. The Collections and Resources, formerly known as the Tool Box, will now be housed and maintained by Jennifer. Many thanks to both ladies for being willing to manage our wonderful collection.

Plans are in place for our Fall Picnic, again being held at the home of Ted and Judy Sargent, out on Menzels Road in Toano. It will be great to see

## Chapter Board 2017

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



***This guy decided to keep his eyes trained on the Board during the summer. Photo by Cindy Baker***



their smiling faces as they return from nearly three months of travel to the national parks of the US and Canada. Many thanks to them both for continuing to host our day-long activities. And our host committee, Randi and Kathy, are working hard to organize the day with bird walks, scavenger hunts, nature walks with Teta Kain, and many more exciting events. Please put the date—October 28<sup>th</sup>—on your calendar!

The Butterfly Festival at Freedom Park was a huge success. Nearly 4500 folks attended and, once again, HRC was able to provide nearly 75% of the 130 volunteers. We should be incredibly proud of our outreach to this community event. The Williamsburg Botanical Garden, as an outgrowth of this event, is creating an Advisory Board—including Williamsburg Bird Club, John Clayton Native Plant Society, several garden clubs, and—of course—ourselves. We are looking for a representative from HRC to serve on this board. Let me know if you're willing to volunteer.

Finally, our chapter has come to realize that we were not following State VMN protocol. We have been having non-VMN visitors participate in our citizen science and stewardship activities. Although it is always wonderful to have an extra pair of eyes, another good set of muscles, and those tremendously enthusiastic energies, we need to change our procedures and match those of the state. Our Citizen Science is important—and we have been trained in protocol. This integrity is critical to our data collection. For this reason as well as for risk management, only trained VMN volunteers will be able to participate in Historic Rivers Chapter-sponsored citizen science and stewardship projects. We realize that this is a change for us as well as for those wonderful and very talented folks who have been joining us, but we must protect the integrity of our research as well as the liability of the chapter. We will implement this protocol in September.

And now you're up to date on all that's happened this summer, chapter-wise.



**Hart Haynes, photographer whose photo of Les Lawrence (above) measuring mud in vernal pools as part of a state-wide project was selected for the state-wide photo contest, fell in the pool and lost his camera body. Les was awarded an honorable mention for his volunteer work at the state-wide VMN meeting.**

## Wildlife Mapping at York River State Park



Wildlife Mapping at York River State Park is always a joy, partly because of the amazing location, great wildlife, and a cool breeze on even the hottest of summer days. But Wildlife Mapping was even better this past Labor Day, as 17 Virginia Master Naturalists gathered together to watch, view, record, observe, and—of course—catch up with each other about summer activities. Here's a photo of the team, right before beginning (to quote Gilligan's Island) their three-hour tour!

## Welcome Cohort 12

On September 5th, 2017, 20 enthusiastic trainees embarked on their Virginia Master Naturalist Training program with the goals of learning about various environmental topics, becoming involved with many of the Chapter's projects, and working with other Chapter members to become friends of nature. Topics for the first class included an overview of the basic training program, requirements for VMN certification and graduation, and Bill Williams' presentation on the principles of classification and the importance of binomial nomenclature. The culmination of Cohort XII Basic Training will be graduation at the General Meeting on March 14th, 2018.

The members of Cohort XII bring a wide variety of ages, experiences and skills to our Chapter as well as the prospect of fresh volunteers for our projects and many years of working and learning together after graduation. As these trainees advance through the program, please be sure to introduce yourselves to them whether at a Chapter General Meeting, a VIMS lecture, a plant or bird walk, or as they begin their volunteer work. Remember when you were the "new kid on the block"? Many of us can still recall all the welcoming folks during Wildlife Mapping and other projects who reached out to educate and befriend us as newbies.

A special thanks to our Basic Training Committee for their hard work in planning, recruiting, and running the program and to our sponsors, speakers, and members who continue to support the program throughout the year.



***Pictured from left to right***

***Front Row - Kathleen Jabs, Claire White, Robin Culler, Wendy Nelson, Jan Marry, Glenda White, Deena Obrokta***

***Back Row - Rick Brown, Rose Ryan, Betty Bennink, Carolyn Black, Melissa Schutt, Julia Thomas, Frank DeBolt, Paul Showalter, Melody Mosbaugher, Scott Hemler, Lisa Reagan, Joe Gerdes, Pam Schnabel.***

*Photo by Sonny Bowers*

Save the Date & Plan to Attend  
the Fall Picnic  
October 28

We are very fortunate to be able to host the Fall HRCVMN at the lovely home of Ted Sargent. Activity details are in development and we welcome your thoughts and suggestions. Please send your suggestions to Randi Heise, [randiheise@yahoo](mailto:randiheise@yahoo).



# WILDLIFE MAPPING IN THE AMAZON

By Jan Lockwood, Nancy Barnhart, Shirley Devan, and Joyce Lowry

The four of us left Williamsburg excited and ready for adventure, but with many unanswered questions. We knew what to bring for the climate and insects, we'd studied maps and colored plates of bird families in a field guide, listened to songs of the Birds of Ecuador app, talked to others who'd been to Amazonian Ecuador, but were we ready for a week along the Rio Napo?

Sacha Lodge is a large eco-lodge on the banks of the Rio Napo, the equivalent of an interstate highway in Eastern Ecuador. All sizes and kinds of boats and barges carry myriad items big and small up and down the river to support the oil and timber industry as well as eco-tourism and local residents.

The trip from Quito to Sacha Lodge took half a day, plenty of time to let our imaginations run wild as to what we would find. We learned the answer as we made our way along the boardwalk from the Rio Napo landing and across Lake Pilchicocha by canoe, finding brilliantly colored hummingbirds, tanagers, anis, the comical Hoatzin, and all manner of flycatchers, including the Great Kiskadee and the ever-present Tropical Kingbird (TK to his friends). No, those field guides had not prepared us for such exotic creatures or the stunning beauty of the rainforest.

On subsequent evenings, our canoe rides back to the Lodge became one of our favorite experiences with the sun setting and night falling while listening to the eerie calls of the Long-



**Amazon Boa** Photo by Nancy Barnhart



**Hoatzin** Photo by Shirley Devan

billed Woodcreeper, the Tawny-bellied Screech Owl and the Common Potoo.

Birding from the towers was a highlight and a feature that distinguishes Sacha. From the three metal towers and swinging walkways between them, we could look down on the canopy and watch tanagers, flycatchers, toucans, cuckoos, becards, hawks, oropendolas and others feeding and flying within feet of

us, as well as groups of parrots and macaws noisily passing by. Per Jan, our first trip up the 114 steps was in light rain. We wore knee-high rubber boots and long ponchos to protect our cameras and binoculars. When I reached the top of the steps and looked out, the very first bird I saw was the Spangled Cotinga glowing in the mist. That was the bird I knew was a "must see" when we initially pored over the field guides to the birds of Ecuador.

Per Nancy, It's very hard to pick out favorite moments from a trip when ALL day EVERY day was a highlight! The locale, activities, and experiencing it all with good friends were beyond compare.

Certainly a standout moment was the first time we climbed the flights of metal stairs beside a huge Kapok tree and arrived at the platform literally IN the tree. Only moments after arriving a most incredible array of birds started landing in and around the very tree we were in, including the Masked Tanager and the Paradise Tanager. Our guides were outstanding at helping us find and identify everything from Many-banded Aracari to a tiny Pied Puffbird. Fortunately we

made two excursions to each canopy tower during the week.

Unexpected encounters with wildlife provided other amazing memories. We saw several families and groups of monkeys during our excursions, including the famed Red Howler species that sounds like a train approaching. The most entertaining, however, was the group of acrobatic Black-Mantled Tamarins we encountered on the way to our cabins. They swung from the trees to the railings on each side of the walkway and back again several times, some with their tongues out. Four Speckled Chachalacas—a large chicken-like bird—were clambering around a tree beside the walkway on another sunny afternoon. Actually, they were the only chachalacas we saw on our trip. The area around the Balsa, the building where we ate breakfast and lunch, was the haunt of a sizable but usually motionless Spectacled Caiman. One day we were surprised to find him swimming along the channel used by the canoes. He was not to be confused with the equally large Caiman Lizard often sunning or cooling between and under the boardwalks around the lodge.

And speaking of unexpected! Take a look at Nancy Barnhart's photo of an Amazon Boa encountered streamside as the canoe passed perilously, and unknowingly, close. Even our guide, Mitch, who's seen and done it all, nearly jumped out of the boat!

Our group comprised three birders from New Mexico, two of whom had birded in Amazonia before, one from Australia, and we four. We were led by Mitch from Field Guides and Oscar and Gerardo (who carried the machete as well as the rain ponchos) from Sacha who were excellent scouts, spotters, and paddlers and ensured we got in and out of the ca-



**Wet Birders** Photo by Nancy Barnhart



**Paradise Tanager** Photo by Nancy Barnhart



**Spangled Cotinga** Photo by Nancy Barnhart

noes safely. We couldn't have been in better hands. Mitch soon had us working as a team. We put in long days, beginning with a wake-up call at 4:00 or 4:30 a.m., finally returning to our cabins around 9:00 p.m. It was fascinating to watch Mitch use his knowledge of birdcalls and behavior to call in the most elusive of birds, corner a crane, quickly focus the scope, and keep eight eager birders quiet and still. When the going got frustrating, he produced chocolate as a consolation! Our Sacha guides found several outstanding birds on roosts—Crested Owls, a Great Tinamou, and the Common Potoo. Our official list of visual and heard bird sightings for the group was around 310.

If you're planning a trip to the "torrid zone" (or returning again), a wonderful read is *The New Neotropical Companion*, by John Kricher. This most recent 2017 edition explains in non-biologist's terms the why and how of the rain forest. More than a third of the world's 10,600+ bird species are found in the Neotropics. Now you know why South and Central America are premier destinations for birders. Can't wait to go back!



# North America Butterfly Association-Count Summary

Williamsburg Area Butterfly Count – August 13, 2017



**The White M. Hairstreak (seen above) is the first time this butterfly was seen during butterfly counts in this area.** Photo by Brian Taber

**Williamsburg, VA.** Yr. 4, 37.3563°, -76.7383°, center at 2000 ft. NW of jct. of Rt. 199 and I-64. See 2014 report for habitats. Imminent threats to habitat: Development, mowing and spraying of road sides, mowing and lack of native planting in parks. Habitat changes since last year: Continuous building of homes.

**13 August 2017;** 0900-1500 hrs; sun AM 10%, PM 76-100%; 75-85°F; wind 0-6 mi/hr. 26 observers in 5 parties. **Total party-hours 32.5; total party-miles on foot 24. Observers (#26):** N. Barnhart, A. Belden, G. Broome, S. Brubaker, K. Carroll, S. Devan, G. Driscoll, J. Etchberger, Adrienne Frank (114 Crescent Drive, Williamsburg, VA, 23188; adri-

enne-gary@cox.net), S. Gill, D. Gordon, K. Grass, C. Jacobson, T. Kain, A. Kopinitz, S. Kopinitz, L. Lawrence, J. Lockwood, K. Lorenzen, S. Mutell, J. Navia, K. Navia, B. Neis, W. Pendleton, B. Taber, S. Voigt.

**Species Count:** Pipevine Swallowtail 1, Zebra Sw. 13, Black Sw. 27, E. Tiger Sw. 73, Spicebush Sw. 70, Cabbage White 10, Clouded Sulphur 1, Orange Su. 4, Cloudless Su. 44, Sleepy Orange 57, **'White M Hairstreak 1**, Gray Ha. 14, Red-banded Ha. 8, E. Tailed-Blue 39, 'Summer' Spring Azure 24, Am. Snout 2, Variegated Fritillary 27, Pearl Crescent 23, Question Mark 2, E. Comma 2, Am. Lady 10, Painted La. 16, Red Admiral

12, Com. Buckeye 90, Red-spotted Purple 9, Hackberry Emperor 1, N. Pearly-eye 1, Gemmed Satyr 31, Carolina Sa. 36, Com. Wood-Nymph 4, Monarch 38, Silver-spotted Skipper 66, Horace's Duskywing 10, Wild Indigo Du. 2, Com. Checkered-Sk. 4, Com. Sootywing 11, Swarthy Sk. 4, Clouded Sk. 16, Least Sk. 7, Fiery Sk. 49, Crossline Sk. 1, S. Broken-Dash 1, N. Broken-Da. 2, Little Glassywing 17, Sachem 260, Delaware Sk. 1, Zabulon Sk. 69, Broad-winged Sk. 7, Dun Sk. 12, Salt Marsh Sk. 7, Ocola Sk. 5. **Total 51 species, 1241 individuals. Field Notes:** Very dry conditions and lack of flowers for the month prior. Rain several days before count.

## Historic Rivers Chapter at the Williamsburg Farmers Market



***On a beautiful Saturday morning, a group of Master Naturalists set up shop in Merchants Square on Market Day to advertise all the good work we do in the community. Photos and collage by Cathy Flanagan***



## Butterfly Festival Huge Success



*Photo by Inge Curtis*

The Butterfly Festival at Freedom Park was a huge success. Nearly 4,500 folks attended and, once again, HRC was able to provide nearly 75% of the 130 volunteers. We should be incredibly proud of our outreach to this community event. The Williamsburg Botanical Garden, as an outgrowth of this event, is creating an Advisory Board—including Williamsburg Bird Club, Native Plant Society, several garden clubs, and—of course—ourselves. The Board would meet once a month and its purpose would be to offer WBG ways of ‘cross-pollinating’ the efforts of our respective organizations. We are looking for a representative from our chapter to serve on this board.

## Opportunity to Arrange Programs for the Williamsburg Botanical Garden

At the end of this year, I will be giving up the Program Chair position for the Williamsburg Botanical Garden. The Garden definitely needs someone willing to take this over. Additionally, that person has the option of serving on the Board. These programs count as Continuing Education for Master Naturalists and Master Gardeners.

This is what being Program Chair involves:

- 1) Arranging for speakers for the Adult Learn and Grow Educational Series—one a month January - November on the 3d Saturday of the month.
- 2) Being there (Interpretive Center-9:15 a.m.) to greet and answer questions from the attendees; having the handouts available and assisting the speaker as needed—other volunteers can help you.
- 3) If the Chairman of the Board is not available, you will be the person to announce WBG happenings and introduce the speaker.
- 4) Seeing that the speaker gets a \$50.00 honorarium and writing a follow-up note of thanks.

There are a few additional miscellaneous duties which we can go into if you think you would be willing to take on this project. I would work with you to get 2018 set up. Please let me know if you think you would be interested in this position. Thank you for considering the opportunity!

Joanne Sheffield

[josheffie@yahoo.com](mailto:josheffie@yahoo.com)

301-983-1785



**Female Ruby-throated Hummingbird**

*Photo by Judy Jonest*

## 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, jbktrvino8@cox.net

TUE 09/26/2017	C. Wren Class-Bird Life of Williamsburg & Southeast VA- 9:30-11:30-W&M Hall, Wightman Cup Room-\$\$\$ (3 of 6)
TUE 09/26/2017	C. Wren Class-Geology of National Parks & Monuments- 1:30-3:30 pm- Wmsbg Reg Library Theater-\$\$\$ (3 of 6)
THU 09/28/2017	HRBC Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park-7:00 am
THU 09/28/2017	VIMS After Hrs Lecture: "Drones in Marine Research-Gaining New Perspective," 7:00-8:pm, VIMS
FRI 09/29/2017	C. Wren Class-Intro to Ecology of VA Coastal Wetlands- 1:30-3:30- Disc Park, New Town, Rm 136-\$\$\$ (3 of 3)
SAT 09/30/2017	WBotGardens-"Old & New Garden Favorites"-10:00-11:30 am, Freedom Park
SUN 10/01/2017	HRBC Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park-7:00 am
TUE 10/03/2017	C. Wren Class-Bird Life of Williamsburg & Southeast VA- 9:30-11:30- W&M Hall Wightman Cup Room-\$\$\$ (4 of 6)
TUE 10/03/2017	C. Wren Class-Geology of National Parks & Monuments- 1:30-3:30 pm- Wmsbg Reg Library Theater-\$\$\$ (4 of 6)
WED 10/04/2017	VIMS Workshop-"Capture & Curation Methods for Studying Terrestrial Vertebrates /Invertebrates"- 8:30-3:30, VIMS-\$30
TUE 10/10/2017	C. Wren Class-Bird Life of Williamsburg & Southeast VA- 9:30-11:30- W&M Hall Wightman Cup Room-\$\$\$ (5 of 6)
TUE 10/10/2017	C. Wren Class-Geology of National Parks & Monuments- 1:30-3:30 pm- Wmsbg Reg Library Theater-\$\$\$ (5 of 6)
WED 10/13/2017	HRC Gen Meeting - 6pm- JCC Library- Kitzinger Room
SAT 10/14/2017	WBC Bird Walk at New Quarter Park- 8:00 am
SAT 10/14/2017	John Clayton Chpt VNPS-A Walk in the Habitat- 9:30 am- Stonehouse Elementary School
SUN 10/15/2017	Hampton Roads Bird Club Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park- 7:00 am
TUE 10/17/2017	C. Wren Class-Bird Life of Williamsburg & Southeast VA- 9:30-11:30- W&M Hall Wightman Cup Room-\$\$\$ (6 of 6)
TUE 10/17/2017	C. Wren Class-Geology of National Parks & Monuments- 1:30-3:30 pm- Wmsbg Reg Library Theater-\$\$\$ (6 of 6)
TUE 10/17/2017	HRC Cohort XII Basic Training Class- 6-9 pm- Williamsburg Community Chapel Room 120
WED 10/18/2017	Williamsburg Bird Club (WBC) Monthly Meeting- 7:00 pm- Andrews Hall- W&M
SAT 10/21/2017	WBC Field Trip to Grandview Beach in Hampton- 8:00 am
SAT 10/21/2017	WBotGardens-Using Hardy Ferns in the Garden- 10:00 am- Freedom Park
THU 10/26/2017	VIMS After Hrs Lecture 7:00-8:00 pm: "Old & Cold-Greenland Sharks and the People Who Study Them"
SAT 10/28/2017	Williamsburg Bird Club Bird Walk- New Quarter Park- 7:00 am