

# The Naturalist

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
FROM THE HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER  
VIRGINIA MASTER NATURALISTS



November - December 2017

Volume 11, Number 8



**Gentle Mourning Dove** Photo by Inge Curtis

## The President's Report

In March of 2017, our chapter advisor and dear friend, Mary Apperson, left the role of Historic Rivers Chapter Advisor, a position she had diligently and assiduously nurtured for 10 years ('since the beginning of time', as our membership chair, Renee Dallman, always describes it). We were sorry to see her leave us as she had truly been our rock for years. As they say, however, as one door closes, another opens. And so it is for us....along comes a transfer to our chapter, Page Hutchinson, arriving at the perfect moment to not only become a valuable, charming, and knowledgeable new member, but also to agree to step into the role of Chapter Advisor. And so, for the last eight months, Page has been adjusting to a new home, a new job, a new chapter, and a new role as our advisor. She has been a stroke of luck for us, and I hope we, in turn, have been a blessing to her. If you haven't had a chance to meet her yet, read on, for she is our "Meet the Board" focus of the month.

### FIVE QUESTIONS FOR AN AMAZING LADY

#### FILL IN A LITTLE BACKGROUND INFO PLEASE...

My father was a pilot in the Air Force and we moved around a lot. I was born in Philadelphia, but I haven't been back since! My gypsy soul must be related to my early years of moving around. Even now I long to see new and different places and experience all this world has to offer. My parents were from western PA, but both went to college in Virginia; Mom to Madison and Dad to VMI. When I was in high school, we took a road trip to visit grandparents and friends in PA and made the drive up Rt. 11 so we kids could see their Alma Maters. I fell in love with Madison and, since I had always wanted to be a teacher, it was perfect. I got accepted and took a Greyhound bus from Memphis to Harrisonburg to start school. At that time, we were stationed in the middle of miles of cotton fields in the north eastern corner of Arkansas.

After I graduated from James Madison University (Madison College at the time), I was accepted into the Peace Corps and lived in the interior of the main island of Fiji, Vanua Levu, for 3 years. Everyone envisions me spending lots of time on the beach! I was very much inland and only made it to the beach a few times my whole 3 years there. I didn't have my own transportation so had to rely on the local bus to get me to town and then had to hire a taxi to take me to a beach. There are a lot of Mangrove swamps along the coast - it's not all pristine beach. Getting to the beach was a costly ordeal. Sounds crazy, doesn't it? But I was happy up in my little village of Waicoba.

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**Page Hutchinson** Photo by Judy Jones

When I got back from Fiji, my folks were in Gloucester because dad got stationed at Langley. I got a teaching job in Norfolk and eventually fell in love with a sailor. The next 7 years brought more travel and two children. My eldest son was actually born in Spain and my youngest in Pensacola, FL. Unfortunately, while in California, the marriage fell apart, but my sons and I stayed there for a few years before deciding to move back to the East coast where all our family lived.

The boys and I moved to Albemarle County from California in 1992 and in about 4 years I got that itch to move, but I had committed to them and to myself to stay put—which turned out to be a great decision. I taught middle school science for 15 years for Albemarle County before making a considerable life change. More on that later.

### **FILL IN A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF NOW**

I currently live in Quinton, Virginia, which is New Kent County. I started working for the Virginia Dept. of Forestry in the fall of 2015 as a forest education specialist and the State Coordinator of Project Learning Tree. Most folks assume I'm a forester, but I'm not! My BS is in Elementary Education and my MS is in Environmental Education. I have three cats: Tia Maria, Lewis, and Charlotte. I'd love to have another dog, but travel too much to make that a reality right now. My two sons, Sean and Myles, both live in Albemarle County/Charlottesville, which is where I'll head when I retire. I don't have grandchildren yet, but I'm sure looking forward to that experience.

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## **Chapter Board 2017**

<b>Chapter Advisor</b>	Page Hutchinson
<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



**Young buck in Inge Curtis's yard seems to be keeping an eye on the Board.** Photo by Inge Curtis



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## **TELL US ONE THING ABOUT YOURSELF THAT IS FUNNY, QUIRKY, UNIQUE, OR REALLY RATHER BIZARRE**

I had tried numerous times to get my Master's Degree. In fact, I had actually started three times and life kept throwing me curve balls so I had to abandon each time. The years my sons were in college (they're only 18 months apart so they were gone at the same time), I was reevaluating my life and whether it was worth my while to try again. I didn't want to continue teaching and try to go to school part time because I knew it would take forever. While trying to make this decision I became aware of a specialized Master's program through Lesley University in Cambridge, MA. It was a traveling program that only accepted 15 folks and travel would be on a retrofitted school bus while "lodging" in tents and living and studying in different ecosystems – kind of an immersion program. You had to commit to NO electronics of any sort while you were in the program, not to include the summer off in between years. We would be a tight knit community who shared all duties for cooking, shopping, bus cleaning, and making consensus decisions for the community. I was enthralled so applied and got accepted. The upshot: I quit my job, sold my house, and lived on a bus and in a tent from 2008-2010 and graduated with my MS in Ecological Leadership and Environmental Education.

## **WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME A MASTER NATURALIST?**

There is little free time beyond the work week so one has to choose how one is going to spend the free time they have. I realized it was quite important to me to be able to spend time with like-minded people who have a passion about our Earth and wish to contribute as they can to their communities. By being a VMN, I get fellowship, opportunities to be outside in a meaningful and fun way, and a sense of contributing to the bigger picture. A pebble in a pond has a wide ripple. And I sure do learn a lot, which I particularly enjoy. Remembering is another issue altogether...

## **FINAL QUESTION...WHICH ACTIVITY OR ACTIVITIES IN VMN HAVE BROUGHT YOU JOY?**

I only involve myself in the projects that are going to bring me joy!! For whatever crazy reason, I really do enjoy the oyster cleaning and bagging. Of course, I loved the Powhatan Creek project which included kayaking and exploring the creek, recording plants and animals. Even though it's what I do for work, I do enjoy being involved in educational programs like walking the trail at Freedom Park with families.



**Page Hutchinson** Photo by Judy Jones

## **CHECK IT OUT**



## **100,456, that's how many volunteer hours**

the Historic Rivers Chapter Virginia Master Naturalists have recorded since its founding more than 12 years ago. That translates into about 13,000 hours a year and more than 1,000 hours of volunteer service each month. I think we all can take a lot of pride in this accomplishment!



# MASTER NATURALISTS OYSTER RESTORATION EFFORTS YIELD BIG NUMBERS

By Sara Lewis



Seventeen hands were on deck, including Historic Rivers and Peninsula Chapter Master Naturalists and Chesapeake Bay Foundation Oyster Restoration Program staff, for another Fifth Friday at VIMS. In months with a Fifth Friday, Master Naturalists have a regular date with CBF ORF to help Save the Bay. On September 29, volunteers washed and bagged 197 bags of oyster shells! The bags are placed into tanks where oyster larvae are introduced to set on the shells. The shells will be dumped on restoration reefs in the Chesapeake Bay tributaries. In three years, the oysters will be mature and filtering bay water at a rate of 50 gallons per oyster per day. The oyster shells bagged on September 30 will go to the Elizabeth River and the next river scheduled for restoration reefs is the Lynnhaven River.

So here's your word problem for today—How many gallons of Chesapeake Bay water will be cleaned each day by the 197 bags of shells if 1) 150 bags of oyster shells fill one tank where oysters larvae will set on the shells, 2) approximately 250,000 oysters are produced in each tank, and 3) each oyster filters 50 gallons of water a day? A lot of cleaning power in those 197 bags!

Fifth Fridays at VIMS/CBF ORF will continue in 2018. Upcoming volunteer days are March 29, June 30, August 31, and November 30, 2018.

Fourteen of the 17 volunteers at the September 29 Master Naturalist Fifth Friday event are pictured here in front of pallets of oyster shells bagged so far this year by a number of volunteer organizations.

**Helen Hamilton is Cohort XII's current heroine! In one week, Helen taught a class and led a plant walk for Cohort XII. PLUS, she presented a program for our entire Chapter in between! THANK YOU, HELEN!!**

**Left to right: Bob Thomas (Cohort X), Helen Hamilton, Paul Showalter, David Lunt, Co-Chair Basic Training, Lauralyn Copan (Cohort V), Betty Ben-nick, Carolyn Black, Julia Thomas, Claire White.**



*Photo taken by Shirley Devan November 11 in Williamsburg Botanical Garden on Native Plant Walk.*



# YOU ARE INVITED!!

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE HISTORIC RIVERS HOLIDAY PARTY!**

**WHO:** ALL members of the HRC Master Naturalists along with their spouses and significant others

**DATE:** Wednesday, December 13, 2017

**TIME:** 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

**PLACE:** Legacy Hall. (4301 New Town Avenue, Williamsburg, VA 23188

**LINK TO DIRECTIONS:** [www.jamescitycountyva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2687](http://www.jamescitycountyva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2687)

**DRESS:** Master Naturalist Casual

**RSVP:** DECEMBER 1, 2017 Please let us know the total in your party

**WHAT TO BRING:** Place Settings (plates, cutlery, glasses, napkins,) food to share. Cups and Coffee will be provided with dessert Ice tea and water will be provided.

**PLEASE LET US KNOW:**

What you are planning to bring to share (appetizers, main dish, salad, side or dessert

If you want to assist with setup, clean up, door prizes and picture taking, please contact Randi Heise or Kathy Cross.

**FELLOWSHIP, RAFFLES AND DOOR PRIZES!**



## Bird Club Announces Tunnel Islands Field Trip



**Birders on the Bay Princess**

The Williamsburg Bird Club is sponsoring a boat trip to Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands Saturday, January 20, 2018. Geoff Giles has chartered a large comfortable boat for this eye-level look at the bay ducks and other wonderful species around the tunnel islands. Birding and photo opportunities should be very good from the boat. The boat will stay around the CBBT tunnel islands and pilings and will likely go as far as Fisherman Island near the Eastern Shore and then out to the Capes near the mouth of the Bay if the birds are there. The CBBT area tends to have smoother water than ocean trips with many of the same exciting views of birds. It will be possible to do some birding from the warm, dry cabin, but the best views and photos will be from outside on deck, so clothing that protects against wind and dampness is recommended.

We will have a good opportunity to observe sea ducks, shorebirds, raptors and more from a large, comfortable boat with ample heated cabin space, rest rooms, tables and indoor seating. The last few years this trip has given us some views and photo ops with humpbacked whales and harbor seals!

We will gather at 8:30 a.m. to board the Bay Princess, which will leave at 9 a.m. from Lynnhaven Inlet at 3311 Shore Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23451, January 20<sup>th</sup>, and return to the dock at about 1 pm. There is a very good seafood

restaurant dockside for those inclined to have lunch on return. If the trip gets weathered out, we'll return your check, of course, or give you the option of a rain date about two weeks later.

The fee is \$30 per person. Your check is your reservation. Please sign up early (by mailing in your check) so we can be sure to have enough people for the trip to go -- we need 25. Reservations will be taken on a first come, first served basis until the trip is filled.

Please make checks (\$30.00 per person) payable to "Williamsburg Bird Club" and mail to Ann Carpenter, PO Box 764, Lightfoot, VA 23090. Include your email address and phone number so Geoff can get back to you to confirm and let you know the final details.

For additional info contact Geoff Giles at [tylerandal2@aol.com](mailto:tylerandal2@aol.com) or (757) 645-8716. More info at Bird Club web site: [williamsburgbirdclub.org/](http://williamsburgbirdclub.org/)

**(Left) Northern Gannet**





# OCTOBER 28, 2017 HRC VMN FALL PICNIC



**Garden Spider** Photo by Wendy Nelson



**Barbara Bucklin kayaks at the picnic.**  
Photo by Shirley Devan



**Bald Eagle carrying nesting material**  
Photo by Rose Ryan



**The masterminds behind the fall picnic, left to right Randi Heise and Kathy Cross.** Photo by Shirley Devan



**Jerre Johnson jokes around with Gary Driscole.** Photo by Shirley Devan



**Judy Sargent, far left, steps back as Master Naturalists sample her recipe for Pickled Salmon which she brought back from Alaska!** Photo by Shirley Devan



**Painted Lady**



**Teta Kain leading the "lep trek" (i.e., butterfly walk). Left to right: Teta Kain, Nancy Barnhart, Barbara Neis, Adrienne Frank, Gary Driscole, unknown, Jeanne Millin.** Photo by Shirley Devan



**Gerre Johnson Shows Ted Sargent a fossil of a mastodon.** Photo by Shirely Devan

**Picnic goes head off on a mushroom walk.**  
Photo by Shirley Devan







**James River Wildlife Refuge Clean-up L to R: Rick Brown, Robin Culler, Frank DeBolt**



**Chickahominy River - Netting for Macroinvertebrates: Claire White, Background: Glenda White, Kathleen Jabs, Betty Bennink, Rose Ryan**



**Examining the Wetlands at York River State Park, Melody Mosbaugher and Scott Hemler**



**Polluting the Watershed - Scott Hemler, Paul Showalter, Wendy Nelson, Kathleen Jabs, Pam Schnabel, Melissa Schutt, Joe Geddes, Page Hutchinson**

## COHORT 12 IMMERSSED IN VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

With over one-third of the classes and one-half of the field trips accomplished, Cohort XII is well on their way to becoming certified Master Naturalists. The Cohort has traveled far and wide for their field trip experiences: exploring the wetlands at York River State Park, examining macroinvertebrates in the Chickahominy River as well as measuring trees at the New Kent Forestry Center.

Members of this Cohort have already immersed themselves in many volunteer activities.

Stewardship project leaders appreciate the sweat and muscle expended at Wahran Trail, New Quarter Park, and James River National Wildlife Refuge as our new cohort members maintain trails, manage the bobwhite habitat and dig out assorted remnants (sheds, tin roofing, batteries, chainlink fencing) of a hunting club at the Wildlife Refuge (see photo below).

Local schools have also benefitted from our trainees involvement in educational outreach projects including field trips to the New Kent Forestry Center and watershed experiences at Harwoods Mill.

Last but not least, trainees are collecting data in several Citizen Science projects including Catching the King Tide, the Bat Monitoring Project, and kayaking in Powhatan Creek for the Field Guide project.

Please continue to welcome these new trainees as they participate in the projects and attend the general meetings, bird walks, plant walks and other Historic River Chapter activities. Our chapter greatly appreciates their added helping hands.



**Measuring Trees at the New Kent Forestry Center: Paul Showalter, Wendy Nelson, Scott Hemler**



# Upcoming Continuing Education (CE) Opportunities

The Continuing Education (CE) calendar is posted on the VMN Volunteer Management System website. When you log into 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 apart of CE credit/hour(s). Note: Should additional applicable CE event(s) come up during the month the event(s) will be posted on the CE calendar in the VMN Volunteer Management System.

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. Applicable courses are listed on the CE Calendar. VLM programs require registration through the VLM. VIMS programs require registration through 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](mailto:jbktrevino8@cox.net)

MON 11/27/2017	C. Wren Class-For the Beauty of It All: America's National Parks- 9:30-11:30 am W&M Hall-Wightman Cup Room (2 of 3 classes)
FRI 12/01/2017	VMN Leadership Day for Board Members- 10:00 am-4:00 pm- New Kent Forestry Center
SUN 12/03/2017	Hampton Roads Bird Club Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park- 7:00 am
MON 12/04/2017	C.Wren Class-For the Beauty of It All: America's National Parks-9:30-11:30- W&M Hall, Wightman Cup Room (3 of 3 classes)
TUE 12/05/2017	HRC Cohort XII Basic Training Class- "Ornithology," 6-9 pm- Williamsburg Community Chapel, Room 120
SAT 12/09/2017	WBC Bird Walk at New Quarter Park- 8:00 am
SAT 12/09/2017	New Quarter Park- Holiday Make and Take using natural materials-New Quarter Park, 10:00 am-12:00 pm; led by HRC members Page Hutchinson/Nancy Barnhart
SUN 12/17/2017	Hampton Roads Bird Club Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park- 7:00 am
SAT 12/23/2017	Williamsburg Bird Club Bird Walk- New Quarter Park- 7:00 am
MON 1/01/2018	WBC Annual New Year's Day Bird Walk at Greensprings Trail, 1:00-3:00 pm; meet at the boardwalk by the Old Beaver Pond