

The Naturalist

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FROM THE HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER
VIRGINIA MASTER NATURALISTS

Virginia
Master
Naturalist



January/February 2018

Volume 12, Number 1

The President's Message *by Judy Jones*

Happy New Year, my friends, and welcome to 2018. It should be a wonderful year for the Historic Rivers Chapter. There are two items I'd like to address as we wander into January and February—the End of Year Report and the revision of our chapter's Bylaws and Operating Handbook.

As you know, we've submitted the End of Year Annual Report to the state, highlighting the terrific projects that we are creating and participating in as well as the numbers that make all the folks at Virginia Tech happy! Our chapter highlighted four different projects:

NEW KENT FORESTRY CENTER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM—This report describes how HRC has had a huge impact on the youth education programs at New Kent.

POWHATAN FIELD GUIDE PROJECT—Now that the research is completed, it's time to layout the field guide and share the information.

4-H HABITAT SCHOOL YARD INITIATIVE—Here we share how the efforts of the core team have allowed the project to migrate into other schools and other aspects of youth education

WILDLIFE CAMERA TRAP—This report reveals the new goals the team and YRSP have devised for 2018.

I hope you had a chance to look this report over when it was emailed out...it will definitely raise a flag of pride in your heart for the quality, caliber, and dedication of HRC.

Our newly revised Bylaws and Operating Handbook are the other topics of interest

as our Chapter grows and evolves in 2018. As a chapter, we voted to accept the changes to our Bylaws, updating them and creating consistency between our document, our Operating Handbook, and the state template. This updated document, created by a committee of Sue Mutell, Connie Reitz, Shirley Devan, and myself, has been approved by the committee, by our Chapter Advisor Page Hutchinson, by the VMN State Coordinator Michelle Prysby, as well as by you, our wonderful chapter members, at our last general membership meeting, January 10th. For those of you who couldn't join us that night, some of the more major changes made are:

- To remove the paragraph on "Honorary Members (recommended by Michelle Prysby)

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This Great Blue Heron has a great big mouthful of fish. Photo by Judy Jones



- To change our term limits for elected and appointed board members to 'no more than 3 one-year terms'
- To make sure the description of 'a quorum' is consistent between the documents
- To ensure that shared chairs of committees understand that they are entitled to only one vote per committee
- To change the term 'audit' to 'financial review'

Shirley Devan put it so well when she wrote: " Our objective in updating the Bylaws has been to provide the Board with flexibility and to reflect the way our Board and Chapter currently operate. The

last time this document was touched was in 2009. Our Chapter has matured and grown in eight years. The Bylaws were due for an update." I would have to agree and think we have revised both the Bylaws and the Operating Handbook to ensure that we are well-structured for many years to come.

So 2018 offers us change, opportunity, and friendship. This is definitely going to be a great year....

Did You Know?

Male opossums are called jacks and females are called jills. Their young are called joeys, just like their Australian cousins. A group of opossums is called a passel.



Chapter Board

Chapter Advisor	Page Hutchinson
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 Driscoll, Adrienne Frank, Alister Perkinson, Joe Beene
Webmaster	Jeanette Navia
Social Media	Sonny Bowers
Liaison to the State	Susan Powell



Look who popped up to check on the board.
Photo by Cindy Baker



Sara Lewis, Keith Navia and Thad Hecht view the rain garden before they get to work.



Keith Navia, Cheryl Jacobson and Thad Hecht replanting after basins were dug



Cathy Flanagan, Keith Navia and Cheryl Jacobson digging up plants.



The rehabilitated top basin after a one-inch-plus rain

Photos by Jeanette Navia

Rain Garden at New Quarter Park Revitalized *by Jeanette Navia*

The Rain Garden at New Quarter Park was started in 2010 as a joint project of the Historic Rivers Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists, York County, the Master Gardeners/Water Stewards, and the Virginia Native Plant Society. HRC member Jeanne Millin noticed that the ground by one of the big trees was being eroded when heavy runoff from the parking lot came through the culvert. It was determined that, to help control the flow and save the tree, a rain garden would be helpful. A basin was dug where the culvert dumps its water, and then a swale was created to divert the water away from the tree. Further down the slope, there is another basin. Coir logs were put in to help define and shore up the basins and let water out slowly. In both basins and around the sides, many shade-and-water-loving plants such as ferns, Mayapples, and Jack-in-the-Pulpits were planted to help take up the water. Over the years, the basins filled in with dirt and the coir logs deteriorated.

Keith and Jeanette Navia took over the project this year. They had a lot of help from Sara Lewis and input from some of the Master Gardeners and experts who had originally made the plans. A York County landscaping crew came, redug the basins and put in new coir logs. Before they dug, Cheryl "Christmas Fern" Jacobson, Cathy "Wild Ginger" Flanagan, Thad "Lizard's Tail" Hecht helped the Navias dig up many of the plants that were already in and around the garden. The day after the crew dug, these plants were replanted around the newly dug basins. Thad had many Lizards' Tails in his home garden, some of which were dug up and planted in the bottom of the basins. Lizards' Tails love water and should look great once they grow in the spring.

More plants need to be planted in the spring! Watch for notices of work days when the weather gets warm.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OUR NATIONAL BIRD IS EATING?

Photo by Lester Lawrence



FIFTH FRIDAYS CONTINUE IN 2018: MEET AT VIMS FOR CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION OYSTER RESTORATION PROJECT STEWARDSHIP

by Sara Lewis

In 2017, we initiated a “Fifth Fridays at VIMS” project with Chesapeake Bay Foundation Oyster Restoration Project staffers Heather North and Jackie Shannon. On months with a fifth Friday, we meet at their Gloucester Point work site to lightly wash oyster shells collected from area restaurants and bag them for use on oyster restoration reefs in the Bay. The fun will continue in 2018! Mark your calendars now – March 30, June 29, August 31, and November 30 – and join us from 9 am to 12 noon. Dress for the weather and plan to get wet and messy as we wash off the cocktail sauce and pick out the lemon slices, then fill bags of shells as we do our bit to Save the Bay. You’ll need to fill out a health form for CBF. Plan to do it there or contact me at slewis@cox.net and I will send a copy for you to print and fill out ahead of time. The form is required each calendar year, so if you submitted one last year, be prepared to do it again. Charge your volunteer hours to S3d-Oyster Restoration Projects-VIMS/CBF for this stewardship project.

The work requires a little bit of muscle, but it’s easy enough. Shells are dumped on a conveyor belt and washed, then loaded into net bags. Bags of shells are twisted, clamped shut, and loaded in wheelbarrows that our most hearty soul wheels over to pallets and unloads. In the spring, the bags are loaded into tanks and oyster larvae are added. At this stage in their life cycle, they attach to shell substrate to grow on a spot where they spend the rest of their lives. During the summer, the shells with baby oysters attached will be dumped from the bags onto reefs in Chesapeake Bay rivers. As a keystone species, oysters filter water and reefs provide habitat for young fish, crabs, and other Bay creatures. Oysters were decimated by disease and over-harvesting through the mid-20th century. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation have been working since then to study and restore oysters and the critical habitat they provide.

Let me know if you’re in for the first 5th Friday, March 30, from 9 am to 12 noon by emailing me at slewis@cox.net. I’ll be emailing and recruiting during the week before the 5th Friday volunteer date.

DIRECTIONS TO VIMS/CBFORP:

- Cross the George P. Coleman Bridge (Route 17 North) to Gloucester.
- Turn right at the first traffic light after crossing the bridge.
- Turn right on Route 1208. The VIMS campus is just ahead.
- Proceed down the hill toward the York River and turn right under the bridge.
- Turn right, left, and left to follow the road around the VIMS boat basin.
- Look for the CBFORP work site straight ahead, on the southwest edge of the boat basin near the York River beach.
- If using GPS, use the address 1200 Franklin Road, Gloucester Point, Virginia 23062



Master Naturalists from the Historic Rivers and Peninsula Chapters participated in CBF ORP shell washing last September. The tired and messy but proud and happy group gathered at the end of the day in front of pallets-full of shell bags.

Wildlife Mapping in Words and Pictures

WILDLIFE MAPPING IN YORK RIVER STATE PARK *by Adrienne Frank*

On Mondays during 2017, a regular and enthusiastic group of HRCVMN wildlife mappers recorded birds, butterflies, mammals, herps, mushrooms, and more species at York River State Park. Each Monday, there was an average of 8 participants, from about 16 members, across almost all of the cohorts. We all learned something every week!

Bird data were submitted to ebird by Les Lawrence (Jan-Sept) and Adrienne Frank (Oct-Dec). The average number of species seen on any one day was over 30, with a high of 49 in June. This year, a few bird species were new to our count, including the Blue-headed Vireo and Worm-eating Warbler.



Photo by Shirley Devan

Here are some highlights from the 142 species of birds that we recorded. This is a new high; last year the total was 121 species.

January – Ruddy Ducks (2500) floating on the York River and Fox Sparrow (12)

February – Dark-eyed Juncos (154)

March – Tufted Titmouse (22)

April – Black-Throated Green Warbler (1)

May – Black-throated Blue Warbler (3)

June – Wood Thrush (5)

July – Ruby-throated Hummingbird (5)

August – Blue-winged Warbler, Great Egrets (5)

September – Worm-eating Warbler (4)

October – Marsh Wren

November – Bufflehead (>500)

December – Blue-headed Vireo (1)

Come join us. We are on Mondays weather permitting.

For more information, contact Adrienne at Adrienne-gary@cox.net

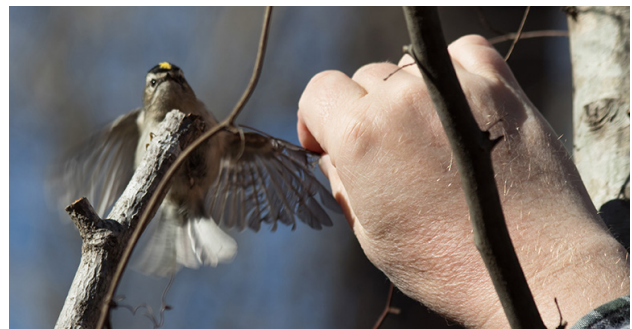
WILDLIFE MAPPING ALONG THE GREENSPRING TRAIL *by Hart Haynes and photos by Jeanette Navia*

A BIRD IN THE HAND IS WORTH....

While wildlife mapping on the Greensprings Trail, a group of us spotted a Golden-crowned Kinglet in distress. The bird's wing was entangled in spider webs and vines about 10 feet off the ground. We tried using sticks and poles to bring the vine down to our reach. Finally, one of us was able to balance on the tree to reach and rescue the bird. With the beautiful bird in our hands, we cleaned the spider webs and vines from his wing. And then, the Golden-crowned Kinglet flew....it's worth...priceless!



Kinglet caught in the thicket.



Scott Hemler handed the Kinglet a stick on which to escape.



Patty Maloney warms the little guy before setting it free.



Free again!

Just a Smattering of What Master Naturalists Do

MORE WILDLIFE MAPPING



HR Master Naturalists wildlife mapping in the cold at Jamestown Island.
Photo by Judy Jones



For more info contact:
roger.gosden@gmail.com

ROGER GOSDEN PUBLISHES "A BIOLOGIST IN PARADISE"

Historic Rivers Chapter Master Naturalist Roger Gosden published "A Biologist in Paradise: Musings on Nature and Science" in December 2017. Roger turned to full time writing after a career in reproductive science and became a Master Naturalist in Williamsburg, VA in 2010. He writes about things he knows and cares about in forty essays and memoirs, touching on the environment, food, culture, curiosity, and sustainability concerns.

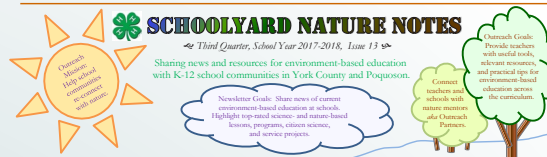
Many of the essays are about naturalists and care of the environment. The first essay is titled "The Heart of a Naturalist." One chapter features Clyde Marsteller's zoo (with his permission) and two members kindly donated pictures. This is the first of two volumes, so there's more to come.

Prepared by Shirley Devan from text provided by Roger Gosden
January 28, 2018

MASTER NATURALISTS LEAD WEEKLY BIRD WALKS AT LOCAL SCHOOL

Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

VCE York/Popson
108 County Drive
PO Box 532
Yorktown, VA 23090



On Monday, 5 February 2018, Roger Searies' 5th Grade Students at Waller Mill ES returned outside with members of the Williamsburg Bird Club in preparation for the upcoming Great Backyard Bird Count. "We saw Chipping Sparrows, Yellow-rumped Warblers, a Red-bellied Woodpecker, a Downy Woodpecker, American Crows, Eastern Phoebe, Turkey Vultures, Black Vultures, a Red-shouldered Hawk, Northern Cardinals, American Robins, Dark-eyed Juncos, and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The students have also spotted and identified a variety of birds at their classroom window feeder (pictured above right): American Goldfinches, Brown-headed Cowbirds, House Finches, White-throated Sparrows, Chipping Sparrows, Northern Cardinals, and Carolina Chickadees." Photos & report from bird walk contributed by Patty Maloney, WMES Outreach Partner, Virginia Master Naturalist

The front page of this newsletter has pictures of the Waller Mill Elementary School bird walk that Jan Lockwood and Patty Maloney lead each week with 25 5th-graders. The 4-H Schoolyard Habitats Outreach is one of HRC's approved volunteer activities. There are also some great birding links in the newsletter. (Lee Schuster, a member of The Williamsburg Bird Club, also participates in the walks.)

THEY EVEN CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTED



Photo by Sharon Plocher

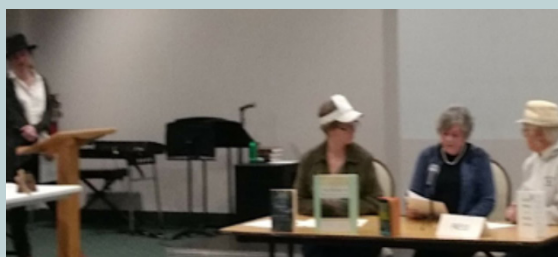
A Step Back in Time

Toward the end of their training, the members of Cohort XII Master Naturalists step back in time to explore the lives of Rosalie Edge, Rachel Carson, Susan Fenimore Cooper, Roger Tory Peterson and John Muir through skits, interviews, dramatic readings, interactive posters, and historic videos. Here is a sampling of their work in the photos and words of David Lunt, Co Director of Basic Training.



Kathleen Jabs presents hawks from the HRC VMN Collections and Resources (CAR) typical of those protected by Rosalie Edge in the Hawk Mountain sanctuary.

Kathleen and colleagues Melissa Schutt, Pam Schnabel, and Claire White (seated off camera) researched Edge's life and work for their Cohort XII Naturalist Biography presentation.



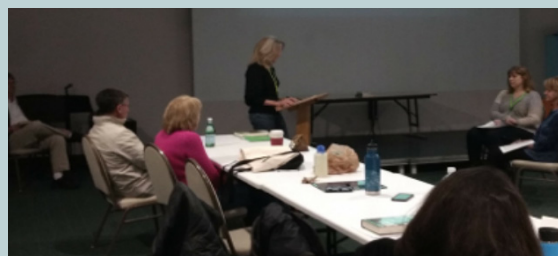
Glenda White (table center) as Rachel Carson during a skeptical press interview with (L to R) Wendy Nelson and Deena Obrokta moderated by Carolyn Black.

Glenda and her colleagues researched and presented the groundbreaking environmental activist work of Carson for their Cohort XII Naturalist Biography presentation.



Melody Mosbaugher presents an interactive children's educational activity inspired by a stained glass window memorial to Susan Fenimore Cooper in Christ Episcopal Church, Cooperstown, NY.

Melody and her colleagues Jan Marry, Lisa Reagan, and Paul Showalter (seated off camera) researched and presented the writings (particularly Rural Hours, 1850) and philanthropic work of Cooper for their Cohort XII Naturalist Biography presentation.



Betty Bennink (lectern) preparing the audience for speaker Scott Hemler (seated left) as Roger Tory Peterson to a bird club meeting attended by Rose Ryan and Robin Culler (seated right L to R).

Betty and her colleagues researched and presented the life and work of Peterson particularly development of A Field Guide to the Birds, 1934, and the subsequent publishing of numerous naturalist field guides for their Cohort XII Naturalist Biography presentation.

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Rick Brown (lectern) summarizes the work and lasting influence of the naturalist John Muir. Rick and colleagues Joe Gerdes, Frank DeBolt (seated behind, L to R) and Julia Thomas (seated directly behind Rick) researched and presented the extensive environmental activist work and legacy of Muir for their Cohort XII Naturalist Biography presentation.



Alice Kopinitz (at camera left) records the presentations while members of Cohort XII and others look on during a presentation. Breakfast snacks and a celebratory lunch fueled the participants and onlookers during a great day of learning and fellowship.



Inge Curtis's Birds



Cedar Waxwing plucks a berry from a bush. Berries are a winter staple.



Tufted Titmouse clings to an icicle while it forages for food.

Upcoming Continuing Education (CE) Opportunities

- End of February-March 2018

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). 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. Typically, there are 3 session and 6 session courses. Applicable courses are listed on the CE Calendar. 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

THU 02/22/2018	VIMS After Hrs Lecture, "Romance Under the Waves," 7:00-8:00 pm VIMS
SAT 02/24/2018	Williamsburg Bird Club (WBC) Bird Walk at New Quarter Park - 8:00 am
SAT 02/24/2018	VA Cooperative Extension/Landowners' Woods & Wildlife Conference, 8:30-4:30, Germanna Community College - \$45/person - must pre-register to attend
MON 02/26/2018	HRC Field Trip to Hampton Roads Waste Treatment Plant
TUE 02/27/2018	HRC Cohort XII Basic Training Class (optional class), "Climate Change," 6-9 pm,
SAT 03/03/2018 H	Hampton Roads Bird Club Bird Walk at Newport News Park; 7:00 am *Note: This is a change in day/date
SAT 03/10/2018	Williamsburg Bird Club (WBC) Bird Walk at Ware Creek- 8:00 am
SAT 03/10/2018	HRC Field Trip, Alligator River Tram, Manteo, Note: Tentative-more information to follow
WED 03/14/2018	CBNERRVA/VIMS Workshop: "Capture and Curation Methods for Studying Terrestrial Vertebrates & Invertebrates" - 8:30 am to 3:30 pm Catlett-Burrus Research and Education Laboratory/Wilson House, at the CBNERRVA Offices on the VIMS campus - you must register to attend
WED 03/14/2018	C. Wren Class, "Shoreline Studies"- 1:30-3:30 pm- W&M Campus Little Theatre-1 of 3 sessions - \$\$\$
WED 03/14/2018	HRC Cohort XII Graduation and Annual Membership Mtg, 6-9 pm- JCC Library
SAT 03/17/2018	Williamsburg Bird Club (WBC) Field Trip, 8:00 am; Location TBD
SAT 03/17/2018	WBotGarden, "Cottage Gardens," 10 am- Freedom Park Interpretive Center
SUN 03/18/2018	Hampton Roads Bird Club Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park, 7:00 am
WED 03/21/2018	C. Wren Class, "Shoreline Studies"- 1:30-3:30 pm- W&M Campus Little Theatre- 2 of 3 Sessions - \$\$\$ SAT 03/24/2018
SAT 03/24/2018	Williamsburg Bird Club (WBC) Bird Walk- New Quarter Park- 8:00 am
SAT 03/24/2018	Alliance for the Bay: "Woods in Your Backyards Workshop," 8:30-4:00, VA Public Safety Training Center, Smyth Hall, Rm 401, 7093 Broadneck Rd. Hanover, VA, \$20; must pre-register to attend, https://www.allianceforthebay.org

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WED 03/28/2018	C. Wren Class-Shoreline Studies- 1:30-3:30 pm- W&M Campus Little Theatre- 3 of 3 sessions - \$\$\$
THU 03/29/2018	VIMS After Hrs Lecture, "The Science Behind Oyster Breeding," 7:00-8:00 pm, VIMS

*Note from CoCoRaHS: "Upcoming WxTalk Webinars: The CoCoRaHS WxTalk Series is going on vacation after 21 straight webinars . . . after some rest and relaxation it will be back during the latter half of 2018 with a new line up of interesting webinars. Check back in late summer for the latest update."