The Naturalist

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE HISTORIC RIVERS CHAPTER VIRGINIA MASTER NATURALISTS



May 2018 Volumn 12, Number 4

The President's Message

By Adrienne Frank



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail Photo by Judy Jones

PARTNERS AND PROJECTS

Our Historic Rivers Chapter is becoming well known and well respected in our community, as knowledgeable and committed to not only our mission of stewardship and education, but also for supporting the mission of our community partner agencies. Recent successes in projects, especially with parks and recreation, have given us credibility and a voice in the community.

With greater visibility, communication, and joint efforts, we have an increasing ability to influence and increasing responsibility to maintain our credibility. We need to keep up the wonderful work that we are doing! Our chapter has numerous volunteer projects, and there is always the fear that we will spread out selves too thin. The HRC Board and members want to be careful about what we choose to do and the quality of what we do. To my knowledge, there have only been good reports and feedback about the work we have been doing. However, we haven't been able to provide volunteers for all of the community requests, and some times our participation has been limited to a relatively small number of people. In the last year, the Board has said "no" to some of the community requests for help, due to lack of person power.

As you know, projects are typically

generated by an individual or small group of members. One person, our "champion", submits the project proposal and helps to facilitate participation. When we do not have a champion, we don't submit or approve a project.

Some projects do have priority over others. For example, our chapter must be committed to the governmental partners that support the Statewide Master Naturalist program. Locally, our partner agencies include York River State Park and New Kent Forestry Center. Ideally, we should be working with these entities doing stewardship, education, and citizen science. Here are a few examples of our work over the past decade at York River State Park: wildlife cameras, wildlife mapping, trail maintenance, building and/or installing several types of bird boxes, and more. Examples at New Kent include: tree steward, field trips for students, and the Annual Walk in the Forest. Our chapter has provided 1000s of hours to support our State partners and these types of projects need to remain a high priority.

With an ever-growing list of projects, how do we decide what are priorities? How do we help members to find priority projects?

How do we manage the ever-growing list of projects?

continued on the next page

How do we say no?

We need your help! Please let us know your thoughts. Talk with a board member and let us know what you think about our priorities.

HRMN MEETINGS & LOCATIONS FOR THE REST OF 2018

June 6 Board meeting at the

Landing

June 13 General meeting in the

Kitzinger Room Photo

contest for members

July no meetings

August 1 Board meeting at the

Landing

August No general meeting

August 19 Photo reception at the

Williamsburg Library

September 5 Board meeting at the

Landing

September 12 General Meeting at the

Stryker Building

October 3 Board meeting at the

Landing

October 10 General Meeting at the

Stryker Building

October 20 Picnic at Ted's

November 7 Board meeting at the

Landing

November 14 General Meeting at the

newly-renovated Kitzing-

er Building

December 5 Board meeting at the

Landing

Chapter Board

Chapter Advisor President Adrienne Frank

Vice President, Programs

Co-recording Secretaries

Treasurer Membership

Volunteer Service Projects

Continuing Education

Basic Training

Past President

Historian

Education & Outreach

Publicity

Newsletter

Webmaster

Social Media

Field Trip Coordinators

Host Committee

Members-at-Large

Page Hutchinson

Linda Morse

Sue Mutell, Connie Reitz

Barbara Neis Renee Dallman

Shirley Devan

Jennifer Trevino

David Lunt, Janet Harper

Judy Jones

Keith Navia

Sherry Brubaker, Karen Grass

Joni Carlson

Cindy Baker

Maud Ann Wilson, Barb Bucklin

Randi Heise

Sharon Plocher, Gary Driscole, Rick Brown, Alister Perkinson,

Joe Beene

Jeanette Navia

Sonny Bowers

Kind of scary that a snapping turtle has been selected to keep an eye on the Board in May. And did you know, that if you find a snapping turtle in your yard, according to Madeline Vann, you're not allowed to relocate it.

Students See Owls Up Close

Page Hutchinson, left, and Jan Marry, a VMN HRC Cohort XII graduate, right, present the interactive Virginia Owls and Hammock Experience Station to third graders at the New Kent Forestry Center on May 7. Page is the state coordinator for Project Learning Tree, a master naturalist and HRC Chapter advisor. She has run the NKFC educational program for three years. Over that time, Virginia Master Naturalists have volunteered to present specific SOL-correlated lessons and serve as trail guides throughout NKFC's 850 acres of diverse trail systems of forests and swamps. Due to funding cuts, this is the last year the program will operate. Contact Page about this program at page.hutchinson@dof.virginia.gov.



Rare Butterflies Spotted in Williamsburg



HARVESTER

It is the only butterfly whose caterpillar feeds on Woolly aphids and not plants. It is a fast moving, small orange butterfly, and we were lucky enough to catch it sitting for 30 seconds, so that we could identify it.

Photo by Adrienne Frank



PEPPER AND SALT SKIPPER

The Pepper and Salt Skipper was seen at New Quarter Park last spring and was never recorded before for our area. This tiny butterfly was seen very quickly and very close to the Harvester, along the Warhill Trail. Its host plant is grass, an unspecified variety. It was seen again on May 2, by four of us, and we were able to get a few photographs. One photo shows the tiny size of the skipper. Photos by Gary Driscole and Shirley Devan

A Passion for Birds

by Cheryl Jacobson

Cheryl atop a big pile of oysters.



Wildlife Mapping at New Quarter Park.



Wildlife Mapping in the snow.

Editor's Note: Cheryl recently reached the 5000-hour volunteer mark with HRMN.

Born Free

Growing up on the South Dakota prairie, I had the freedom to roam freely and thus I learned to love nature. Birds especially caught my attention; whether it was the Western Meadowlark announcing the coming of spring with it melodious song, the Canada Geese honking in the heavens in the fall as they formed their v shaped flying pattern and prepared to fly south, or the Killdeer displaying a mock injury and leading any predator away from their nest. All birds fascinated me and they continue to do so today.

In 2003 when I was living in Denver, I participated in an Audubon class on Birding Basics but my birding activities were hit and miss due to the demands of caring for a family, working full time, and pursuing an advanced education.

Career Filled with Innovation

I lived in Colorado (mostly the Grand Junction area) for 25 years. When I moved to Denver, I developed a program to help youth who were being raised in foster care to obtain permanency. Hundreds of youth experienced multiple disruptions when foster families gave up on them and had them moved from their homes.

At the time these chikdren went into care, Social Service Department did not have the tools to look for extended kin for possible homes for these kids. With the advent of the internet, it was possible to go back and locate extended families. The program I developed and taught to social workers throughout the state, included not only how to locate family members but also techniques for helping to reestablish these broken relationships. Much of what I developed led to placement and even adoption. Because of the success of this approach, California contracted with me to move there and teach the process to their social workers state wide.

Traveling throughout California gave me the opportunity to look for birds in the evenings. For example, while near the Salton Sea I found my first Yellow-footed Gull (found regularly only at the Salton Sea) and many beautiful Verdins. I hope to reach my goal this summer of seeing 600 bird species in the continental U.S. (only four more needed).

Family is my first priority. I have a son in Florida and a son here as well as my two grandsons. When I moved to Virginia seven years ago to be close to them, I was looking for ways to become involved with people like myself who loved nature and especially birds.

Introduction to HRMN

My daughter-in-law saw a newspaper ad about HRC, I enrolled in Cohort 6 and thus began my new life. (see some of my photos of my favorite times with HRC). Many of the HRC projects I have become involved with are bird related. I initiated Osprey Watch for our Chapter



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Franktown on the Eastern Shore. Photo by Cheryl Jacobson

as well as Wild Life Mapping at New Quarter Park. which I co-led with Jan Lockwood until I handed it off to her capable hands. Other involvements are Feeder Watch, Christmas and Spring Bird Counts (I lead what is called the Kingsmill Sector), VA Breeding Bird Atlasing, Wildlife Mapping at Greensprings, YRSP, my backyard, New Kent Forestry Center and other locations, Bluebird Monitoring (YRSP and NQP) and Prothonotary Warbler Monitoring at Northwest River. I am also the President of the Williamsburg Bird Club.

Birds are not my only interest. Other projects I have enjoyed are Butterfly Monitoring, Oyster Restoration, Rain Garden at NQP, Camera Trap at YRSP, HRMN Training Committee, Mastodon Project, Walk in The Forest, School Education at New Kent Forestry and James River Elementary, rain monitoring and others. What has made earning hours so easy is the enjoyment of sharing these experiences with all of you!

I have enjoyed learning about flora and fauna of the East from all of my new friends. Perhaps Susan Powell from Cohort I has taught me the most. She is so knowledgeable and shares her skills in such a way that one learns without even knowing they are being taught. I have birded with her in many locations in Virginia, Florida, Mississippi, and elsewhere. Often when we would see a bird she wouldn't immediately identify it, but give me time to figure it out by asking questions about what I was observing like what was my impression from size, shape, bill, behavior etc. To me this is the sign of a great teacher and friend.

Visible Goals

I have two mantras that have served me well: "Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible," Tony Robbins; and "The goal is the going," Horace Kallen.

For 2016, I set goals of continuing to improve my bird identification skills, adding more photos to my eBird lists, and seeing and learning more about all of Virginia. To accomplish this, I decided to do a Bigger Year (increase the number of bird species I have seen in Virginia). I have no desire to do a Big Year because that requires money and time to travel throughout the entire U.S. in one year.

In 2013 (my first year of serious birding in Virginia) I saw 230 species, 2014 was 263, and 2015 was 270. I knew that 300 species would be a big stretch but that is what I decided to do. On November 11, 2016, I saw my 300th bird and joined the ranks of four other birders who had also seen at least 300 species of birds in Virginia. The bird was a very handsome Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Franktown on the Eastern Shore.

Truly, the going was the goal and I saw some very lovely places in Virginia that I went to because a rare bird/or one I hadn't yet seen for the year had been seen at that location. Some of them were: Lickinghole Creek, near Crozet (Black Swan, Common Raven); Silver Lake (Trumpeter Swan); Machipongo River near Willis Wharf (Western Grebe); Back Bay NWR (King Rail, Buff-breasted Sandpiper); Hog Island WMA (Black-necked Stilt); Gull Marsh (Long-billed Curlew); Gloucester Court House (Ruff, Stilt Sandpiper, Yellow-breasted Chat); Route 604 near Wakefield (Eastern Whip-poor-will); Piney Grove Preserve (Red-cockaded Woodpecker); Purvis Lane (Loggerhead Shrike); Warbler Road (Cerulean Warbler, Canada Warbler); Poor Mountain Natural Area Preserve (Grasshopper Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Bobolink); Guinea Marsh (Nelson's Sparrow); NE Suffolk (Lazuli Bunting).

Great Virgina Birding Spots

But even more important is the joy of birding with friends With Geoff and Matt, two of my birding buddies, I traveled to Silver Lake in Rockingham County to see the Trumpeter Swan, stopping in Staunton to see the Greater White-fronted Geese (which we missed but saw a Common Merganser) and in Louisa County for the Rough-legged Hawk, (which we also missed) and Colonial Heights for the Iceland Gull (which we also missed). Later I traveled back to Louisa County and ran into Matt and this time we successfully saw the Rough-legged Hawk. One of the reasons, I think people go birding and make photos of birds is because of the challenge.

Because of weather, scheduling, and family commitments, I hadn't added many pelagic birds to my sightings. To remedy that, I spent two hours at Little Island Park, Virginia Beach, and saw hundreds of scoters, a variety of gull species, and my sought after Razorbill. Then I went on to Back Bay and got great photos of the Lark Sparrow and met a new birder friend. He told me where to find King Rail and sure enough, I enjoyed many views of a cooperative King Rail at my new friend's suggested location.

Several weeks later I joined my new friend and others for a boat trip out of Willis Warf to see the Western Grebe on the Machipongo River in Accomack County and on to Gull Marsh to see the three Long-billed Curlew. Besides hundreds of shore birds, the Peregrine Falcons were amazing. I especially enjoyed seeing a Lazuli Bunting in Suffolk. None of these birds added to my life list because I moved



from the West, but seeing them again is always extra touching. I even had a wonderful Western Tanager stop in for an eight day visit at my feeders. Someone said he must of known I was doing a Bigger Year but I think he knew I was missing my friends in the West (both human and bird) and he stopped in to let me know that they are there when I go back to visit.

For example, when I lived in California I loved watching a Bullock's Oriole that often came to my feeder for grape jelly. When one was reported at a neighborhood near Machipongo, I decided I needed to go see this lovely bird. It would like be visiting an old friend. The homeowners were delightful and even put out chairs in their driveway so anyone visiting the bird could wait in comfort. If they had not been gracious, this bird could not have been enjoyed by so many. They even had a journal by the lawn chairs so people could sign their names and make comments. It was fun reading the entries while I waited for the bird to come to the feeder.

I am often asked, What is my favorite bird? I usually reply, the one I am looking at in the moment. I always enjoy hearing stories from people about the birds that they have recently seen.

I am so thankful for all my friends in the birding community who have assisted me in learning about eastern birds. I have learned a great deal by participating in the Williamsburg Bird Club, the Virginia Society of Ornithology and Master Naturalists. All have been valued teachers.



A Meadowlark sings to hearld spring. Photo by Cheryl Jacobson





FIFTH FRIDAY AT CBF ORP IS JUNE 29!

Mark your calendar now for another fun-filled day at the beach! Join the oyster-washing crew at the VIMS boat basin beach (1200 Franklin Road, Gloucester Point) on June 29 from 9 am to 12 noon as we put oyster shells through the wash cycle - dump, push, catch, and bag - to create habitat for these beautiful baby Chesapeake Bay cleaners. The oysters we bag go into setting tanks where baby oysters find a place they'll become attached to for life. CBF Oyster Restoration Program staff will talk to us about their reef building work and where the spat-on-shell will be dumped.

Come on out and network with CBF ORP staff to find out about more opportunities to help with the Oyster Restoration Program this summer by boating to the reefs or becoming an oyster gardener.

At the most recent Fifth Friday event at CBF ORP event in March, seven HRC Virginia Master Naturalists had a great day doing their bit for the Bay!

Photo by Sara E. Lewis

Wildflower of the Month - June 2018

JOHN CLAYTON CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY CROSSVINE (Bignonia capreolata)

By Helen Hamilton, John Clayton Chapter, VNPS

Blooming profusely in coastal Virginia from late April through June, with red and yellow bell-shaped flowers, crossvine is a stunning addition to the home garden. The funnel-shaped flowers varying from orange to red outside and trimmed with yellow, and glossy green leaves mark crossvine as a plant of unusual beauty. Its native habitat is moist woods and the flowers can be seen from local roadways at the edge of woodlands. Walking the Jamestown Loop Road in May and June, the blossoms appear at your feet with no apparent source nearby. That's because the vine has climbed to the top of the tallest trees to catch sunlight.

While it will reach a height of 50 feet, in the home garden it will grow on a trellis, fence or porch, rewarding the homeowner with cascades of flowers at eye level. Without a structure to climb upon, crossvine will spread across the ground. Because the leaves remain on the vine over the winter, this species is a nice alternative groundcover to nonnative periwinkle and ivy. It has appendages on the ends of its tendrils that cling to surfaces, so that it can climb a brick wall or wood arbor without support wires.

Its stems are small, and this woody vine grows fast once it has become established, spreading throughout the area from root suckers. The orange-flowered trumpet creeper (*Campsis* radicans) is in the same family and blooms after crossvine, in late summer through fall.

Flowering occurs as the daffodils fade; the bright reds and yellows complement the wild blue phlox and azaleas. Brown seed pods appear in late fall; the paired leaves are semi-evergreen, turning bronze or copper in the fall and remaining on the vine through the winter.

Crossvine likes swampy forests, rock outcrops and limy river banks, growing in sun or part shade, in acid to alkaline soils. Bees, butterflies and hummingbirds love the flowers. The cut stem shows a cross pattern, which is the source for the common name.

It is deer resistant, and there are no serious disease or insect problems associated with crossvine. This plant is a native alternative to invasive nonnative English ivy, Japanese honeysuckle, and the Asian wisterias.

For more information about native plants visit www.vnps.org.



Crossvine

Happy Bluebird Trails to You By Jan Lockwood & Lois Ullman

You probably have to be of a certain age to get this particular title



Photo by Cindy Baker

Hi HRC Bluebirders,

The Summary of activity on the HRC-VMN Bluebird Monitoring Trails for James City and York Counties as of May 11, 2018 is attached. Activity has increased considerably since the last report of April 18. It's especially exciting to see the first fledges!

Active Eastern Bluebird nests have increased to 109 from 40.

Active "Other" nests have increased: Chickadee nests have increased to 17 from 4; Tufted Titmouse nests have increased to 5 from 0; Brown-headed Nuthatch nests have increased to 2 from 0; and Carolina Wren nests have increased to 1 from 0;

We usually like to know how this year compares with previous years. May 19, 2017 is the closest date for which I have comparable figures:

COMPARISON OF ACTIVITY ON HRC BLUEBIRD MONITORING TRAILS MAY 2018 AND 2017

	May 11, 2018	May 19, 2017
Number of Nestboxes	313	298
Bluebird Eggs	267	78
Bluebird Chicks	237	244
Bluebird Fledges	11	161
Bluebird Total	515	483
Other Eggs	77	74
Other Chicks	28	86
Other Fledges	0	59
Other Total	105	219

Note: we have 15 additional nestboxes this season

It appears that the 2018 season is slower paced than 2017 for the Bluebirds. They have laid 32 more eggs in 2018, but have more eggs in the nest and far fewer fledges at this time than the 2017 birds, which may make them more vulnerable to predation and extreme weather events.

It is also a slower season for the "Other species" in 2018. However, since many, particularly the Chickadees, nest only once in a season, it's unlikely that "Other species" will be unusually productive.

We have received some reports of predation by House Wrens who have pierced or removed eggs from other species nests and/or built dummy nests on top of other species nests. These are native species and are protected. However, a dummy nest may be removed if the female doesn't "take" it and construct an egg cup. Please contact Lois or me if you have these birds on your trail. House Sparrows continue to build nests in the boxes on a couple of trails and monitors continue to remove them. Unfortunately, the Brown-headed Nuthatch at Newport News seems to have abandoned its possible nest. However there are two at Poquoson.

THANK YOU all for your hard work and consistent monitoring and record keeping. With our recent warm temps, storms, and increase in biting critters, please be mindful of your personal safety on your trips round the boxes. Please remember your sunscreen, insect repellent, hat, water, and cell phone and let someone know where you're going.

Happy Bluebirding,

Jan Lockwood and Lois Ullman



Photo by Cindy Baker

Male Bluebird collectnesting materials. Photo by Cindy Baker



Upcoming Continuing Education (CE) Opportunities May/ June 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, jbktrevino8@cox.net

SAT 05/26/2018	Williamsburg Bird Club Bird Walk at New Quarter Park, 8:00 am
SAT 05/26/2018	Walk & Talk at New Quarter Park, "Great Snakes, " New Quarter Park, 10:00 am
SUN 06/03/2018	Hampton Roads Bird Club Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park; 7:00 am
SAT 06/09/2018	Williamsburg Bird Club Bird Walk at Powhatan Creek Trail - 8:00 am
SAT 06/09/2018	John Clayton Chpt-VNPS Plant Walk- ""Campus Trees-"" Wren Bldg- W&M
WED 06/13/2018	HRC Field Trip to Lavender Fields Herb Farm- Tour 9:30-11:30 am (carpool 8:00 am)
WED 06/13/2018	HRC Gen Meeting – 6:00 pm- JCC Library- Kitzinger Room
SAT 06/16/2018	WBotGarden-""The Art of Gardening w/ Rocks and Plants-" 10:00 am- Freedom Park Interpretive Center
SUN 06/17/2018	Hampton Roads Bird Club Sunday Bird Walk at Newport News Park; 7:00 am
SAT 06/23/2018	Williamsburg Bird Club Bird Walk at New Quarter Park - 8:00 am
SAT 06/30/2018	HRC Field Trip to Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), 9:00-12:00 noon

Volunteer Opportunities May 27—June 15

May 28, 2018	9:00 AM	C1b Wildlife Mapping- York River State Park	Adrienne Frank	adrienne-gary@ cox.net	
Tuesday, May 29, 2018	8:00 AM	C2v Monitor Eastern Meadow- Iarks. Yorktown Battlefields	Angier Brock	abrock@vcu.edu	
Friday, June 1, 2018	8:00 AM	C2v Monitor Eastern Mead- owlarks Yorktown Battlefields	Angier Brock	abrock@vcu.edu	490
Friday, June 1, 2018	9:00 AM	Work in Williams- burg Botanical Garden every Friday	Gary Driscole	adrienne-gary@ cox.net	
Saturday, June 2, 2018	9:00 AM	S2b Clean the Bay Day	Judy Jones	jjones184@cox.net	
Monday, June 4, 2018	9:00 AM	C1b Wildlife Mapping- York River State Park	Adrienne Frank	adrienne-gary@cox. net	
Tuesday, June 5, 2018	8:00 AM	C1b Wildlife Mapping at New Quarter Park	Jan Lockwood	nzedr@msn.com	
Tuesday, June 5, 2018	8:00 AM	C2v Monitor Eastern Mead- owlarks Yorktown Battlefields	Angier Brock	abrock@vcu.edu	
June 6, 2018	6:30 PM	HRC Board Meet- ing	Adrienne Frank adrienne-gary@ cox.net	adrienne-gary@ cox.net	
June 6, 2018	8:45 AM	C1b Wildlife Mapping - James- town Island	Nancy Barnhart barnhartnt@ gmail.com	barnhartnt@gmail. com	
June 6, 2018	9:00 AM	S2c - US Fish & Wildlife Service - Plum Tree Island NWR	Cyrus Brame, US Fish & Wildlife	cyrus_brame@fws. gov	You must let Cyrus Brame know you are planning to attend
June 7, 2018	8:30 AM	C1b Wildlife Mapping - Green- springs Interpre- tive Trail	Hart Haynes	olimar97@hotmail. com	

Great Blue Heron Photo by Cindy Baker (photo screened behind chart)

June 8, 2018	8:00 AM	C2v Monitor Eastern Mead- owlarks Yorktown Battlefields	Angier Brock	abrock@vcu.edu	
June 8, 2018	9:00 AM	S1e -Work in Williamsburg Botanical Garden every	Gary Driscole	adrienne-gary@ cox.net	
June 8, 2018	10:00 AM	S2a5Artifact Wash and Talk at New Quarter Park	Sara Lewis	selwmsbg@gmail. com	
June 11, 2018	9:00 AM	C1b Wildlife Mapping- York River State Park	Adrienne Frank	adrienne-gary@ cox.net	
June 12, 2018	8:00 AM	C1b Wildlife Mapping at New Quarter Park	Jan Lockwood	nzedr@msn.com	
June 13, 2018	6:00 PM	A1a HRC General Meeting Busi- ness	Adrienne Frank	adrienne-gary@ cox.net	
June 14, 2018	8:30 AM	C1b Wildlife Mapping - Green- springs Interpre- tive Trail	Hart Haynes	olimar97@hotmail. com	
June 15, 2018	9:00 AM	S1e - Work in Williamsburg Botanical Garden every Friday	Gary Driscole	adrienne-gary@ cox.net	_







Variegated Fritillary Photo by Shirley Devan