

**Historic Rivers Chapter - VMN
General Membership Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 12, 2012**

The September General Membership Meeting of the Historic Rivers Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists was called to order by Patty Maloney at 6:10 p.m. The meeting was held in the Auditorium and Multipurpose Room of the Human Services Building, 5249 Olde Towne Road, Williamsburg, VA.

Items discussed at the September 5, 2012 Board meeting were reported/updated for the information of members.

Programs

1. October 10: Photo Contest – Ted Sargent has asked members to submit their digital 5 x 5 photos of Virginia flora and fauna to him one week prior to the meeting; professionals will judge the photos prior to the meeting; members' choices will be made at the meeting.
2. November 14 at 7:30 p.m.: Seig Kopinitz, photos of Antarctica. The meeting is a joint meeting with the Williamsburg Bird Club, which will be held in Millington Hall at the College of William and Mary. Food will be provided by both organizations.
3. December: TBD

Treasurer's Report

1. September activity – collection of registration fees from Cohort VII members.

Basic Training:

1. The official portrait of Cohort VII has been posted on the HRC website. Thanks to Felice Bond and Tom Dougherty for the portrait and the link to the video of the first training meeting, respectively. Cohort VII has 26 members.

Membership:

1. Susan Powell presented Certifications and Milestone Awards:
 - a. 2012 Certifications – Bill O'Connell (absent), Judy Tucker, and Maria Myers
 - b. 2011 Certification - Pam Camblin
 - c. Milestone 250 Hours – Jim Booth (absent) and Jan Lockwood
 - d. Milestone 500 Hours – Dave Youker (absent), Cheryl Jacobson, Larry Riddick, Jennifer Trevino, and Sharon Plocher

Volunteer Service Projects:

1. Once trained on the login process (September 18), Cohort VII members are encouraged to view the service projects on the HRC website.
2. Information on Acorn Collection to follow. Les Lawrence and Cheryl Jacobson, Co-chairs.
3. Monarch Initiative, designed to provide teachers in York County-Poquoson schools with materials and guidance to build or expand wildlife habitat, geared especially to monarch butterflies on school grounds. Area Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists will assist as Outreach Partners in supporting teachers' use of schoolyard habitats for hands-on outdoor education. Barb Dunbar is HRC contact.
4. "Invasives pull" at the Teaching Garden, New Quarter Park, September 29, 9 – 11:30 a.m. Jeanne Millin is HRC contact

Advanced Training

1. After Hours at VIMS, Thursday, September 27, 7 p.m. “Natural selection in Chesapeake Bay oysters: Disease resistance and restoration”, by Professor Paul Ryan. (Oyster Restoration is a Chapter Volunteer Service project.)
2. Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation 2012 Natural Areas Conference, in Norfolk, October 9-12.
3. International Butterfly Breeders Association (IBBA) Annual Conference, in Williamsburg, November 9-11. Keynote Speaker is Dr. Lincoln Brower, an authority on Monarch Butterfly Research. HRC member, Catherine Short, is Co-chair.
4. Attendance at Cohort VII training sessions qualifies as Advanced Training for members of prior Cohorts.

Newsletter

1. HRC-VMN Salvage Permits (dead organisms) have been amended to apply to the State of Virginia. They no longer apply to area counties and cities alone.

Historian

1. The Chapter’s Tri-fold display boards have been updated.

Outreach/Publicity

1. The Chapter will participate in Estuaries Day at York River State Park, Saturday, September 15, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Host

1. Plans for the Chapter’s Picnic on Saturday, September 22, at Fort Pocahontas and Sherwood Forest Plantation reviewed:
 - Members requested to complete RSVP and Survey of food and activity choices, families and guests welcome
 - Program includes a Bird Walk, Tree Quiz, BYO Lunch, James River activities, Butterflies and Spiders presentation, Clam and Oyster Dinner, and an Evening Hike
 - Assistance requested to clean up Fort Pocahontas on Friday, September 21, at 9 a.m.
 - Volunteers requested to assist with birders’ breakfast

Calendar

1. Vickie Schufer, naturalist, author, and wild foods expert, foraging walk at New Quarter Park, Sunday, September 23, at 1 p.m.
2. Williamsburg Bird Club celebrates 35th Anniversary, Wednesday, September 19, at 7:30 p.m., Millington Hall, College of William and Mary. Bill Williams, founding Club member and area birding authority, will provide a fun retrospective.

Break 6:45 p.m. – 7:05 p.m.

Nature Camp Scholarship

Jesse Nelson, recipient of a 2012 Scholarship to Nature Camp, reported that it had been a truly extraordinary experience and he was most grateful to the Chapter for the opportunity to attend.

Program

Dr. Rowan Lockwood, Associate Professor of Geology at the College of William and Mary presented, "Extinctions, Past and Present". Stating that 99.9% of taxa that have ever lived are extinct, she discussed the characteristics of the five major extinctions in the fossil record: the loss of taxa is statistically significant, it is global in extent (unlike the mastodon extinction), it is taxonomically broad, and it is geologically rapid, occurring within 2 million years or less. Fossil extinctions did not have biotic causes (disease, predation), but were related to climate change, volcanism, bolide impact, ocean acidification, and changes in sea level. Following a summary of the Big Five and the victims and survivors of those, she spoke about her earlier research on the effects of the K-T extinction (65 mya) on marine communities, in particular, clams.

Dr. Lockwood reviewed the effects of the Chesapeake Bay Impact Crater, which occurred 35 million years ago. Scientists have not found mass extinctions resulting from the impact, possibly because the crater's diameter was vastly smaller than those of the Chicxulub and Sudbury craters.

Dr. Lockwood suggested that a possible sixth major extinction has been occurring over the last 500 years. It differs greatly from fossil extinctions in that 99 percent of the newly extinct species have disappeared due to the activities of one organism (humans) resulting in habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation, climate change, and over-exploitation. Biotic causes contributing to modern extinctions are invasive /introduced species and disease. The possible sixth extinction meets the defining characteristics of a major extinction: it is global or geographically widespread, it is taxonomically broad, and it is geologically rapid. The rate of change is faster today than in the fossil record and there is little or no origination taking place. However, it does not behave like previous extinctions and cannot be predicted.

She concluded with a brief discussion of conservation paleobiology and her current research on the reconstruction and history of area oyster beds, which are threatened by overharvesting and disease, suggesting that the habitat may not be sustainable

There being no further business to consider, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Lockwood, Co-Recording Secretary