

Northern Neck Master Naturalists

August 2014

2014 STATEWIDE VOLUNTEER CONFERENCE AND TRAINING

Registration is now open for our 2014 Virginia Master Naturalist Statewide Conference! We have a great conference planned with a weekend full of exciting field trips, workshops, and outdoor activities. The conference will be held Friday September 26 through Sunday September 28 at the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News. The conference is being sponsored by the Peninsula and Historic Rivers Chapters.



Registrations close **September 1**. Participants should register as early as possible to get your choice of sessions, all of which have limited availability. Participants may choose whether they want to participate in the Full Conference, Saturday Training with Keynote Dinner or just the Saturday Training sessions only.

This event is an annual opportunity for VMN volunteers to share ideas and learn from each other, to participate in high-quality advanced training sessions, and to learn about a region of Virginia that may be different from their home communities. It's a time and place to recognize and reward volunteers and chapters for all their efforts.

This year, the format for conference sessions and field trips has changed significantly based on member feedback. Our chapter hosts have done a wonderful job of choosing programming they think you will enjoy. We will now have four concurrent sessions on Saturday and two

concurrent sessions on Sunday - for a total of six possible trainings! There will also be opportunities for field trips on both Saturday and Sunday as well as pre-conference field trips on Friday.



Aquarium at Virginia Living Museum, Newport News, VA

For more details and registration information go to the conference web site

www.regonline.com/2014vmnconference or contact Tiffany Brown at tiffany.brown@vt.edu.

ART EVANS TO BE KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Dr. Art Evans

Arthur V. Evans D.Sc. is an author, lecturer, photographer, and radio broadcaster. His books include *An Inordinate Fondness for Beetles* (with Charles Bellany), *An Introduction to California Beetles* (with James Hogue), *Field Guide to Beetles of California* (with James Hogue), *National Wildlife Foundation Field Guide to Insects and Spiders of North America*, and *What's Bugging You? A Fond Look at the*

Animals we Love to Hate. He lives in Richmond, Virginia.

The lecture will feature plenty of colorful images and engaging anecdotes of beetles from not only Virginia, but also across North America and around the world.

Art is no stranger to Northern Neck Master Naturalists. He has taught Entomology for our basic training classes and has given his "Lust in the Dust" to the group.



Dr. Art Evans teaching entomology for NNCM Basic Training class

CHAPTER PHOTO CONTEST

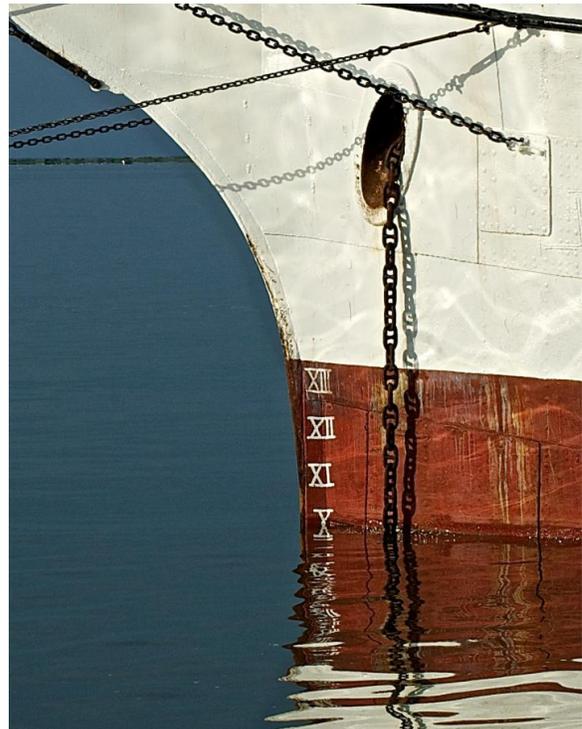
From Petra Walian

I hope that you all are doing well and enjoying your summer, I sure am! Are you taking some pictures of your jaunts into nature? I hope so, because we would love for you to enter them into our **3rd Annual Northern Neck Master Naturalist Photo Competition!**

Participation is easy and open to all members in good standing in our group. Share your beautiful pictures of Virginia flora, fauna, and/or other scenic views - which may include sunsets, waterfalls, landscapes etc. We are thrilled to see what you have been capturing behind the lens of your camera! Let us all see

what has intrigued you and who knows you may even win a ribbon for your submission!

Photo entries will be judged and the 1st place winner in each category will have his/her photo submitted to the state competition!



Moored in Reedsville, Carol Hammer's Third Place Photo in the 2013 State Contest Other Category

All photo entries should be submitted by Saturday, August 30, however; you are encouraged to submit earlier if at all possible. Please submit your photo entries via email to Mike Geisinger at mikeg@mikegphotos.com.

Submission rules are outlined in the attached document for your convenience. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to either call me at 757.869.4974 or even email me at pwalian@yahoo.com. I look forward to hearing from you and even more so to seeing your stories in picture!

Keep a look out for an email with information about the Northern Neck Master Naturalist photo exhibit at the Kinsale Ice Cream Shop,

another wonderful opportunity to share our photos with the public.

SHE'S BACK

From Alycia Crall

Following completion of the strategic planning process, I have been working with our sponsoring agencies on ways to move forward with some of the needs identified for the program. Over the past few months, we have been seeking to hire someone to lead some new initiatives guided by the feedback we received from all of you. We are very happy to announce that Michelle Prysby will be returning to our program as our Special Projects Coordinator on September 1. As a leader in the development of the VMN program, as a current volunteer with the Rivanna chapter, and through her previous work experiences, Michelle has a lot of knowledge and skills to bring to this position (bio below). We look forward to having Michelle with us and for the exciting future that lies ahead for the Virginia Master Naturalist program! Cheers, Alycia



Figure 1 Michelle Prysby Teaching Basic Ecology for NNMN Basic Training Course 2010

Michelle Prysby is an educator, volunteer program developer, and ecologist. As part of her Master's research in ecology at the University of Minnesota, she started the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project, a nationwide citizen science project, and she has

continued to be active in the citizen science field. Most recently, she has served as the Director of Science Education and Public Outreach in the College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences at the University of Virginia. Michelle is a Certified Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer, focusing her volunteer time on the Virginia Frog and Toad Calling Survey, providing educational programs at Ivy Creek Natural Area, and serving as webmaster and a training course instructor for the Rivanna Chapter. Michelle served as the statewide coordinator of the Virginia Master Naturalist program for its first seven years, and she is thrilled to return to assist the program as it expands to have even more positive impacts on its volunteers and on Virginia's natural resources.

NOMINATION OF CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR 2015

It is not too early to be thinking about election of next year's slate of Chapter officers. President, Vice President, and Secretary will be elected at the November General Meeting. If you would like to be nominated for one of these offices or know someone you feel would be well suited for the position please contact the nominating committee: Pam Narney pnarney@verizon.net, Bobbie Burton burtonbs@longwood.edu, or Lise Maring lonewolf1366@hotmail.com.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Hull Springs Farm

A new volunteer opportunity has been added to the Chapter's project list. The project is **C4c**, Hull Springs Farm Water Monitoring.

The purpose of this project is to aid in long term research being conducted by and for Longwood University students and faculty who are monitoring the change in water quality due to the implementation of a wetlands mitigation bank (WMB). The involvement of the Master Naturalists (MN) will be to collect water samples from two automated collectors during the absences of an on-site University employee.

The project description and proposal have been posted to the VMS web site. To volunteer or to get more details contact Nancy Joel at joeln@wmlcps.org.

Gloucester Area

Six new volunteer projects have been approved to support Woodville and Beaver Dam County Parks in the Gloucester area. The projects are:

C5k Plant Surveys at Woodville Park
E4o Lead Nature Walks at Woodville Park
S4k Stewardship at Woodville Park

C5l Plant Surveys at Beaver Dam Park
E4n Lead Nature Walks at Beaver Dam Park
S4l Stewardship at Beaver Dam Park

Project descriptions are on the VMS site. Bill Blair is the coordinator. For more info contact Bill at varanger@cox.net.

Kilmarnock Irvington Area

Tom Teeples has five continuing projects around Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury in Irvington. These projects are:

C3t Monitor Bluebird Trail
C5j Plant Survey
E2h Create Trail Maps
S2o Invasive Plant Removal
S4j Nature Trail Maintenance

Contact Tom for details and volunteer opportunities. tomteeples@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 6, 2014 - "VMN Webinar" Collaborative Science: Using Adaptive Management and Modeling for Citizen Science. Presented by: David Mellor, VMN Citizen Science Projects Coordinator, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM.

August 19, 2014 6:00-8:00 PM Virginia Institute of Marine Science Discovery Labs -- Scallops Gloucester Point, VA. Discovery Labs are free,

but registration is required. For more information see:

http://www.vims.edu/cbnerr/education/public_programs/index.php

Qualifies as Continuing Education.

August 30, 2014 - "NNMN Photo Contest Deadline"

September 9 2014 NNMN General Meeting. Menokin, time TBD. Presentation by Alycia on Citizen Science.

September 26 - 28, 2014 - "Virginia Master Naturalist Annual Conference" at the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News, VA. See the conference web site for more information (<http://www.regonline.com/2014vmnconference>)

NUISANCE & PROBLEM WILDLIFE

How to Prevent or Resolve Conflict with Wildlife

From DGIF

As human populations continue to rise and move into traditional wildlife habitat, human/wildlife contact is becoming more prevalent. This section provides general information and techniques for Virginia property owners when wildlife becomes a problem.



Below are some easy techniques which will usually solve the problem and prevent it from re-occurring:

- If you are feeding wildlife, stop. This will cause them to lose their natural fear of humans.
- Keep trash inside until the morning of trash pick-up or place trash in an animal proof container, such as a metal trashcan with latches on the lids.
- Do not leave pet food outside; keep pet feeding areas clean.
- Remove bird feeders when problem species, such as bears, have been seen around them.
- Close up all openings under and into your buildings. Animals look for places to den and raise their young—don't give them that opportunity.
- Clear overhanging tree limbs and branches which may be providing wildlife access to structures.
- Clear fallen fruit from around trees.
- Pass along this information to your neighbors. If anyone in the neighborhood is feeding wildlife directly, or indirectly, it can cause trouble for everyone.
- Reflective tape, lights, or noise sometimes work, but they will eventually grow accustomed to these methods, so this is only a temporary solution.
- Electric fencing can be very effective in keeping wildlife out of crops, beehives and structures.
- It is illegal in the State of Virginia to trap and relocate an animal to another area.

If these techniques do not solve the problem, you can contact a [licensed trapper](#) or a critter removal service which you can find in your local phone directory.

If you are experiencing a problem with wildlife, please dial our toll-free wildlife conflict helpline at 1-855-571-9003.



VOLUNTEER HOURS

With the year half over, everyone should be making progress toward the required 40 hours of service and 8 hours of continuing education. Unfortunately a review of reported hours shows that is not the case. If you are not half-way there don't wait until fall. The State Conference provides an excellent opportunity to get all or most of your Continuing Education hours in one weekend.

Thanks to Alycia Crall, Petra Walian, Bonny Wilson and, Pam Narney for their work on this issue.

Please send items of interest, advanced training opportunities, news and pictures about your projects, and other newsletter items to jnarney@verizon.net.



MASTER NATURALIST PHOTO COMPETITION SUMMER 2014

Submission rules

1. All entries must be taken by members or trainees in good standing of the NN Master Naturalist Chapter
2. A participant may enter up to five images total. The categories include:
 - a. Virginia Flora
 - b. Virginia Fauna
 - c. Virginia other e.g. landscape, scenic, such as waterfalls or sunsets etc.
3. All entries must have been photographed in the state of Virginia
4. File size: 500K to 1MB jpg (Or if your software options are just Small, Medium or Large, select Medium. See note *1 below)

Photo Editing Guidelines

1. Modifications ***not*** permitted:
 - No borders or frames may be added to the image
 - Adding or replacing elements in an images is not permitted
 - Artistic filters are not permitted
2. Permitted modifications
 - Images may be cropped, resized, rotated as necessary
 - Red-eye removal
 - One-step enhancement (such as Auto-Fix, Quick-Fix, Auto Levels etc.)
 - Minor use of filters to sharpen, soften, blur, de-speckle
 - Minor use of corrective functions to improve the natural appearance of the image such as white balance levels, contrast, brightness, curves, intensity, tone, hue, saturation, lightness, value, color balance, de-saturation and tint

Send photos via email to: mikeg@mikegphotos.com

Deadline Saturday, August 30th, ***but please send in your submissions earlier if possible***

Identify your image see note*2:

- a. Your name: First initial + Last Name + 4 digit number
- b. Image Title
- c. Location
- d. Category: Flora, Fauna, Other
- e. Date image was taken
- f. Species shown in image (both common and scientific)

Notes

*1 For the purposes of this competition, the above file sizes are appropriate. However, if you are planning on printing your photograph/s later on for exhibition, use the largest format on your camera

*2 This information can be added to the metadata that is automatically embedded in the actual image. If you do not know how to do this, please supply the information with your emailed entry, and we can add that for you

Hints on How to Take a Good Photograph

Ask yourself: what is the subject of this image? Is the foreground important? What does the background add to the composition? Is there anything in the viewfinder that is distracting from the main subject?

Adjust your depth of field appropriately (check your user's manual for tips on how to do this). Better yet, take several images with different depths of fields or exposures, so that you can judge the differences (but be sure to take notes so that you know what you did!)

Get rid of extraneous details, either through the lens or by cropping

You may have heard of the "Rule of Thirds" but treat it as a guideline not a hard and fast Rule. If you imagine a tic-tac-toe grid over your image, the main subject/s usually look best when placed on these lines or intersections of lines. This will normally produce a more balanced image But don't let your own creativity hold you back from experimenting with placement

Other composition tips:

Horizons? Keep them straight unless there is an artistic reason not to do so

Close ups (whether flora or fauna) need to be really sharp (again unless there is an artistic reason not to do so). Use a tripod if necessary

Be conscious of "framing" the image when appropriate so that the viewer's eye is drawn to the subject

Beware of harsh light (e.g. midday) but if that is when you have to shoot, then see how you can soften it (again, check your user's manual)

Where is the light source for your subject? Take advantage of back lighting to achieve great effects, even silhouettes

Move! This is so important especially with nature photography. More than likely you cannot move your subject, whether that is a natural scene, insect etc. So you must move yourself to take a better photograph. For example:

Get in close, shoot from above or below, lie on the ground etc. Move along the trail, to avoid the distraction of over-hanging branches

Judging

Judging will be handled by three judges: **Bill Portlock, Mike Geissinger and Cathy Sachs**

Our esteemed photo competition judges come from a variety of backgrounds but all have in common a good eye for photos. With pleasure please find a little information of each of our judges.

Cathy Sachs was Executive Director of the American Society of Picture Professionals (www.aspp.com) from 1995 to 2010. Her 35 years of experience in the industry has included photo research and editing, stock agency manager, speaker, portfolio reviewer, judge, panelist and moderator. She has worked closely with many associations to foster communication and common best practices across the photography industry.

Michael Geissinger has been a professor of photojournalism at Rochester Institute of Technology, Director of Photography at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, the staff photographer to President Lyndon Baines Johnson, and continues to do freelance photography based in Washington, D.C. His works have appeared in *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *LIFE*, *Newsday*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Vanity Fair* – to mention just a few publications.

Bill Portlock, an educator & photographer, was recently honored by one of the nations' premier natural history organizations, the Roger Tory Peterson Institute (RTPI), with a photography exhibit. "I'm excited, and a bit scared," Portlock confided about this singular honor, "[yet] very honored and pleased to get such an audience, and the opportunity to get people engaged and outdoors more." Portlock was State Naturalist for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation before joining the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF). He has worked with Mitchell Byrd and Bryan Watts, founders of The Center for Conservation Biology since the early 1980's. His work on the Rappahannock River Bald Eagle Concentration Area has provided historical context to recent trends. In his current role as Senior Educator at the CBF, Portlock is a valuable collaborator and partner to CCB.

A live critique will take place in early September, with the finalists being announced

The first place winning photograph in each category will be matted in white and placed in a black frame and presented at the Virginia Master Naturalist Statewide Volunteer Conference in September

Questions?

Contact **Petra Walian** per phone at 757.869.4974 or via email at pwalian@yahoo.com