

**Northern
Neck
Chapter,
Virginia
Master
Naturalists**

**NEWS & NOTES
for Members**

**July
2022**



Virginia Master Naturalists
shared by Camille

Virginia Master Naturalist Statewide Conference and Volunteer Training 2022 Registration is OPEN!

Virginia Beach, VA,
September 9-11

Check it out at:

<http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/vmn-statewide-conference.html>

and let cgrabb9@gmail.com know that you have registered!

"I highly recommend participating in the September statewide VMN conference. I had a terrific time at the 2019 conference and learned so much about a part of the state that I knew little about. One major reason I went was that I did my BTC presentation on the Rusty Patch Bumblebee and an expert in the RPB was a lecturer, presented a bee identification workshop using his professional specimen collection, and lead a field trip. I was not disappointed.

This year the conference is in Virginia Beach. Though it will be a similar ecosystem to our own situation I know you will see it with fresh eyes.

It will be an opportunity to consolidate your BTC training or be a refresher on ecosystems of the coastal plains, maritime forests, and much more. I found the programming to be stellar so have no doubt attendees will experience the same this year.

I met some wonderful fellow master naturalists, earned CE hours, heard some exceptional speakers, participated in field trips, and learned a few things about how other chapters work. I wish I could be in two places at one time but I co-lead Girl Scouts Love Virginia State Parks that same weekend at Belle Isle.

I do plan to go to Virginia Beach in late September to meet up with my 2019 conference friend from the Tidewater VMN for a poke around what I am going to miss. See, that's a perk of making new friends! Please consider going and bringing back ideas, speaker suggestions, and sharing your experience with us. I don't think you'll regret it." Anne Clewell - BTC 2019



**from the
July 12**

**board
meeting**

Our July meeting was held at the Northumberland Sheriffs Office Building in Heathsville.

Covid Transmission Rates

Our chapter advisor, Tara Brent, shared that Lancaster and Northumberland have both been in the "high Covid transmission" category recently (meaning masks are required in the VCE offices). Wendy reports that Richmond and Westmoreland have been in the "medium," range, so no masks are required. *These designations are updated weekly. If you need to go to an extension office, please read the signage at the doors to see what mask requirements might be in place at the time of your visit.*

Both Tara and Wendy will be involved in 4-H camp during the week of July 18 and not readily available to us by phone or email.

2023 Dues Increase Proposed

The Board passed a motion to increase the dues (which apparently have been \$20 for the life of the chapter) to \$30 annually. This has to be decided by the membership, so the vote will take place at our November 1 General Member and Election meeting.

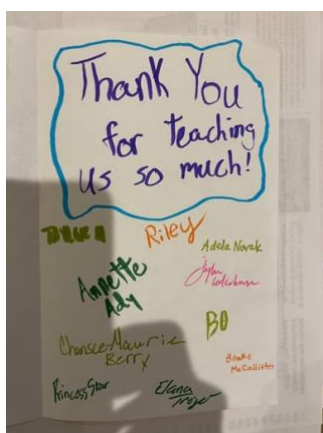
Next Program Meeting

Eric Hentges and Jerry Fairman have worked diligently to secure our next program, which will be a discussion and informational session with Chief Anne Richardson of the Rappahannock Tribe. This meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 2, 2023, in the morning, at the Cat Point Creek Lodge of the Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge. More details will be shared by email, but this is a wonderful opportunity for us to begin the conversation with Chief Anne about opportunities for our involvement. Members of the “Friends of RRVNWR” will also attend. Provided below is a link to an article about Fones Cliff being returned to the tribe:

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/ancestral-homeland-returned-to-rappahannock-tribe-after-more-than-350-years-180979863/>

Belle Isle State Park – YCC 2022

Belle Isle was fortunate to have a Youth Conservation Corps Crew for three weeks this summer. Nine high-schoolers and three leaders built a new trail, removed barnacles from the floating dock, maintained existing trails, and enjoyed our “neck of the woods.” Northern Neck Master Naturalists provided enrichment opportunities for the group during their non-working time. Special thanks to Pam and John Narney (Ospreys, of course!), Karen Williams (Butterflies), Anne Atkins (Nature Journaling), Terry Jordan (Marshes and the Bay), Anne Parker (Mammals), and I shared Oysters. Katie Shepard reported that the YCC crew gave very positive feedback on our efforts!



BASIC TRAINING COMMITTEE – LESLEY NEWMAN

We are on schedule to do a press release or news article and open applications in August, with an anticipated start in January 2023.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE – ALICE STIEVE

Alice reported the following:

- February - 5 email blasts to chapter members
- March - 8 emails
- April - 4 emails
- May - 9 emails
- June - 10 emails

Total: 36 email communiques so far in 2022

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE – CHARLENE TALCOTT

Charlene’s committee met via Zoom and have several ideas to engage people of diverse backgrounds. The committee will explore these possibilities and share with chapter members when action is set to begin.

NNMN Membership Report - July 2022

(Pat McMurray)

From the 2021 BTC, 7 people (Carole Alexander, Andy Bailey, Polly Foote, Patricia Harris, Terry Jordan, Betsy Maddox and Anne Parker) have achieved initial certification.

Quarterly Volunteer Hours Report 2nd Quarter 2022


Report Group	Hours	Volunteers	%Total
VMN Chapter Administration	135	13	8.4
VMN Citizen Science	632	28	39
VMN Continuing Education	108	28	
VMN Education and Outreach	428	26	26.8
VMN Stewardship	278	27	17.4
Total Volunteer Hours	1595		
Total Hours	1703		



Nancy reported that the National Trails/Clean the Bay Day was a huge Success!

She is still compiling the data of how many NNMNs participated on June 4 or around that weekend. She will share the final tally soon! If you participated, please be sure to report your hours and location in Better Impact. She has been asked to write an article about this for the next VMN newsletter!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LOG YOUR HOURS!
www.MyImpactPage.com

 <p>NEXT BOARD MEETING</p>	<p>Tuesday, September 13, for both! Time and Place to be announced.</p> <p>See you there!</p>
<p>General Membership Meeting</p> 	



The complete Minutes of all Chapter Board Meetings are posted in Better Impact: From HOME, on right side go to "Files," then to "See All Files", then to "Board and General Meeting Minutes."



Asclepias syriaca

Common Milkweed

Nature's All You Can Eat Buffet
By Karen Williams, BTC 2019

I've had lots of opportunity to observe this plant since I relinquished my raised beds to the plant's tendency to explore and conquer. Soon one bed became five with no help from me. Raise it and they will come – and they did! Lots and lots of Monarchs as expected, but I've been surprised by the plethora of other species this workhorse of a plant supports! Beyond the usual suspects - milkweed bugs, aphids, and a myriad of pollinators sipping from the beautiful mauve blooms - there were many fascinating visitors that had me running to iNaturalist on a daily basis. First, the Tussock Moth, which presented as a pattern of white eggs, then a network of tiny yellow caterpillars who morphed into caterpillars that could decimate a plant within a day and leave nothing but a standing skeletal reminder of what had been there. The aphids add a pop of yellow which I try to ignore since they are a food source for the native lady beetle.



Photo by Karen Williams

Some ant species enjoy a mutualistic relationship with the aphids by protecting them so that they can "milk" the honeydew, a dietary by-product of the aphid, by stroking them with their antennae.

The milkweed beetles, who share the beautiful orange and black coloration of the Monarch, are a quite amorous group and will normally be seen tail to tail diligently performing their duty to perpetuate the species, which evidently pays off in spades. This pair seems to be in foreplay mode!



Photos by Karen Williams

Judging by the number of young, it must have been successful!

Next are the unwanted visitors who use the plant to supplement their diet. Wasps make purposeful surveys of the underside of leaves looking for the monarch caterpillars. Wheelbugs, assassin bugs, and praying (or I should say “preying”) mantises stealthily explore the leaves for that special larval treat.

Stinkbugs leave an interesting tight triangular pattern of white eggs that become bizarre leggy instars who run in unison to the leaf you can’t see when you are trying to photograph them.



Photo by Karen Williams

There are many more, but don’t take my word for it – say the word and I will share seeds with you so you can observe this beautiful plant while helping the monarch butterfly. There never can be too much of a good thing!



Tuesday, July 26
Northumberland-Lancaster
Summer NABA Butterfly Count
 Contact Jeff Wright
pec11908@mac.com



Final Count for 2022:
Tuesday, September 27
 George Washington Birthplace
 Fall NABA Count
 Jeff Wright, Compiler



Great Spangled
 Fritillary
 (*Speyeria cybele*)
 Photos by Camille



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