

Northern Neck Master Naturalists



July 2013

PLANNING RETREAT SUCESSFUL FIRST STEP

by Pam Narney



CHAPTER GETS NEW ADVISOR



Chief Ranger James Wright

James (Jamey) Wright has been named as the Chapter's new advisor, replacing Rebecca Wilson. Jamey is Chief Ranger at Westmoreland State Park.

CHAPTER PASSES MILESTONE

On May 23, 2013, volunteer hours recorded by the Northern Neck Master Naturalist Chapter surpassed **10,000** hours. Congratulations and thanks to all who have made this happen.

"Dead Skunk in the Middle of the Road"

Twelve people came to the first Northern Neck Master Naturalist Retreat. We had such a great time that we want to share and do it again.

Save the date of Thursday, September 26, for a retreat tentatively scheduled for Camp Kitty from 1:00 until 5:00. This will be a much deeper dive into our mission, goals, and long term planning. We will need many more of us there to be as successful as we hope to be. Please join in making the chapter the best that it can be.

Facilitator, Bobbie Burton, opened the retreat by having us introduce ourselves. We had to give our name, why we became an MN, and reveal what book is on our bedside table. We learned a lot about each other and got some interesting book titles. We laughed a lot too.

Our morning's work began with the basics: our chapter's mission statement and goals. These have probably never been revised. Our mission statement reads: "The mission of the Northern Neck Master Naturalist Chapter is to provide leadership, knowledge, volunteers and assistance to the professionals who serve as stewards of our natural heritage."

Did you know that "creation of habitat for Bobwhite quail, feral cat control and public education, phragmites control in wetlands, and investigation into the apparent decrease in the Eastern box turtle" are some of our major goals? Not many of us had seen these goals or read the chapter's mission statement in a long time. This might be an area to review at the next retreat. The next discussion topics were based on the results of the MN Survey (Go to

the Retreat group in the Document section of the Volunteer Management Site to see the results) and brain stormed comments from participants. Bobbie led us to think about who we are as Master Naturalists and what we want to be. We also discussed our core values, our identity, what we want to accomplish, and how we get there.



Lise Maring, Bobbie Burton, Pam Collins, Paula Boundy's shoulder and Earline Walker at Planning Retreat

After our morning work session, we shared some fantastic barbeque from Plan B in Montross. During lunch, Cindy Baliles played her guitar as we sang along. Cindy entered the Gathering at the Gap songwriter's contest and was picked to be 1 of 10 contestants to sing at Southwest Virginia Museum State Park. Her first song was one she wrote.



Cindy Baliles Leads Sing Along

Then Cindy played old songs and we sang along to: "Dead Skunk in the Middle of the Road," "This Land is Your Land" and many more. Well, you get the general idea. It was a Hootenanny

that Pete Seeger would have been proud of. Much more laughing than singing was heard.

After lunch Gail gave us each a slip of paper with the name of one of our MN programs on it. When she pulled the same title out of the hat, the person whose title matched had to give a fact about the program before selecting from the table full of giveaways. This was even funnier than the singing, but Gail was very liberal in what answers she accepted. Everyone got a prize. With a bit of horse trading, most people got something that they wanted.

With pleasantly full stomachs and smiles on our faces, we returned to the meeting table to determine what we should do next. Many more ideas were discussed. A few of these are: providing training on entering hours, providing mentors for the members of the next class, ramping up Advanced Training by having more programs that focus on one topic in depth with two or more follow-on sessions, and encouraging members to be on committees by teaching them a skill while they are on a committee. It was decided that no decisions could be made at this time but that we had very successfully begun an ongoing process. Consensus to have another retreat building on the day's work, with a much earlier announcement so that more people could participate, was the best way to conclude the day's activities.

Please come to the next Northern Neck Master Naturalist Retreat and be prepared to make some new friends, laugh a lot, and do a little chapter work too. Singing optional!

PS Anyone who would be interested in helping coordinate the September retreat should contact Bobbie Burton at burtonbs@longwood.edu.

Menokin Flora/Fauna Survey Completed

Over last fall and this spring, eight NN Master Naturalists logged over 87 hours of volunteer time participating in the Menokin Flora and Fauna Survey. This project was an informal survey that will be used to aid the Menokin Foundation in securing permits for two soft water access landing canoe/kayak sites and one view shed. Volunteers measured and recorded the location of 424 trees along the



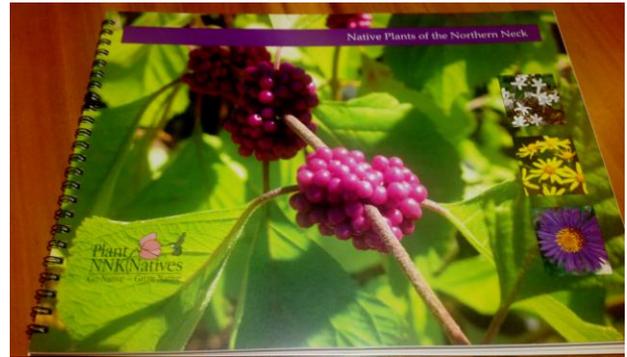
Kate Daniel--Tree Hugger

Historic Road. The most prevalent of the 21 species counted was the Tulip Poplar which accounted for 171 or 40 percent of the total. The largest tree recorded was a Beech with a diameter of over 30 inches. It was in a stand with five other Beeches with diameters of over 25 inches. Other large trees recorded were a Hickory and three Loblolly Pines with diameters of over 28 inches. Special recognition to Cathy Sachs and Kate Daniel for their efforts in organizing the effort and their yeoman work in getting all the data recorded.

GO NATIVE GROW NATIVE

One of the MN approved projects has recently come to fruition. The Northern Neck Chapter of The Virginia Native Plant Society has published

a new guide to be distributed free at many partner locations in the Northern Neck.



The guide, Plant NNK Natives, showcases in photos some of the native plants home to the Northern Neck and includes a list of other natives to help plant purchasers choose plants for their yard or businesses. The guide is easy to read and has helpful planting information for each plant. Look for a banner at your local retailer as seen in the photo below.

Carol Hammer



Another Chapter activity under the Go Native Grow Native project is a native plant garden for the old ice cream shop next to the Kinsale Museum. Chapter members created a design for the garden and wrote a grant for funding. The grant was successful and the Museum received \$500 from the Northern Neck Garden Club to purchase plants. Planting the garden will be in the Fall.



CHAPTER MEMBERS FIND SATISFACTION IN VOLUNTEERING AT ANIMAL REHABILITATION FACILITY

The red fox has graduated to a pre-release pen and the raccoon is waiting for food! I am loving



Red Fox at Wildbunch Rehab Facility Near Montross

volunteering at the Wildbunch under the guidance of Diana who is the director and Ron who is there on weekdays. Mary Sulik and I work together most days and Nancy Garvey works with us on Thursdays. There is so much to learn and I feel I am learning something new every day I am there. Due to the fact that I had, many years ago, rabies vaccines due to possible exposure, my titre is still good enough for my current handling of mammals; feeding



Young Raccoon Waiting for Lunch at Wildbunch

the babies is wonderful and I am fortunate enough to be allowed to count this 2 days a week for my volunteer hours. Also, is the duty of cleaning cages and I am here to tell you it is messier than any diaper that I have changed! I am learning by hands on and by reading and listening to my mentors! Martha Berger



BOOTH DISPLAY REVAMPED



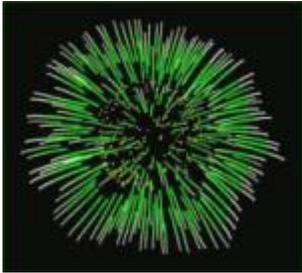
Paula Boundy With New Booth Display

Kudos to Jane Henley for her outstanding work revamping the chapter's booth display. Jane has created a display that is colorful and eye catching. More than that, it successfully illustrates our pollinator focus. It draws crowds where ever it goes.

You can see the display for yourself at these upcoming events:

- Aug 3 Irvington Farmers Market
- Sept 15 Boots N Barbeque
- Sept 21 Kinsale Days
- TBA Go Wild

Better yet, contact Jane at mlewisnut@aol.com about volunteering to man the booth at any of these events. She will be glad to have the help.



ITEMS OF INTEREST

LYME DISEASE

From Lyme Disease Association March 21 Newsletter

“Spring officially began today, bringing positive thoughts of increasing daylight and warmer temperatures. As we look forward to shedding winter wear and spending more time outdoors, the national Lyme Disease Association (LDA) reminds everyone that ticks, which transmit Lyme disease, become more active when temperatures are above 35°.

“Lyme is found in ~65 countries worldwide and is endemic in many areas. In 2011, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 33,097 Lyme disease cases. With only 10% of cases actually reported, numbers may exceed 300,000 annually. The top 10 states were PA, NY, NJ, WI, CT, MA, MN, MD, NH, and VA.

“If not diagnosed and treated early, Lyme can lead to disseminated infection, affecting every system in the body, including cardiac and central nervous systems. Mental confusion, memory problems, weakness, arthritis, and gastrointestinal problems may occur.

“Blacklegged (deer) ticks, feed once per stage - larva, nymph, adult - and can pick up Lyme and pass it on at each feeding. They can also transmit babesia, bartonella, anaplasma, tularemia, and Powassan virus. The poppy seed-sized nymph probably causes more disease. Other types of ticks can transmit different diseases.

“Effective tools to manage Lyme are lacking. Diagnostic tests have significant limitations causing treatment regimens to be problematic and controversial. To that end, LDA held its 14th annual Lyme & Tick-Borne Diseases CME Conference June 1-2 in Minnesota.

“While hosting scientific conferences and funding research on Lyme - \$250,000 awarded in 2012 grants alone - the LDA emphasizes the importance of prevention, such as wearing protective clothing and immediate tick checks after being in tick infested areas, especially on the edges of woods and paths. [See more prevention tips on LDA's website.](#)

“**FEDERAL LEGISLATION.** While LDA and other groups are advocating for better patient care, federal legislators have joined the fight to improve Lyme research and education. Congressman Christopher Smith (NJ-4) joined last month by Congressmen Wolf (VA), Gibson (NY), and Peterson (MN), introduced HR 611, a bill that expands federal efforts in Lyme and other tick-borne diseases' prevention, treatment, education, and research activities. It also establishes a Tick-Borne Diseases Advisory Committee to improve communication among federal agencies, medical professionals, patients and advocates to ensure that the best science is represented in public health policy decisions.

“**STATE LEGISLATION.** Legislators in nineteen states have introduced bills in recent years to

address Lyme. Virginia Governor McDonnell signed a law earlier in March requiring doctor disclosure of limitations of Lyme diagnostic tests. [See LDA's website for a state-by-state Lyme legislation table.](#)

“Fighting for patients for 21 years, LDA is gratified that so many others have joined in to develop tools to prevent, treat, and cure tick-borne diseases.”

WEB BASED ATLAS OF RARE SPECIES IN VIRGINIA

The Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation's, Division of Natural Heritage has just completed a web-based Atlas of Rare Butterflies, Skippers, Moths, Dragonflies & Damselflies of Virginia. Developed with funds provided by the VA Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries through a state wildlife grant from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this new resource allows the public to quickly access current and accurate information about these rare species in Virginia.

One can search a database by species or common name and get a summary of its state and national conservation status ranks, as well as a list of counties where the species has been observed in Virginia. Likewise, one can search by locality name for a list of the rare species observed there. The Atlas also includes a printable factsheet for each species, which includes information about the species' ecology and life history; identifying characteristics; photographs; population trends and potential threats; a county level distribution map, images, and more. Check it out at www.vararespecies.org.

BEE OBSERVER CARDS

The [Entomology Department](#) at the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology and the Encyclopedia of Life (eol.org) have collaborated to develop a set of "Bee Observer Cards" that are intended to teach naturalists, teachers, resource managers and other interested public something about the diverse anatomy, natural history, and behaviors of bees. **The cards are not a guide to taxonomic identification, but more a tool to help people observe the remarkable diversity of body structures, nesting habits etc. when they are out in the field.** They are freely available to anyone as a PDF on the EOL website:

http://eol.org/info/disc_observer

From there, they are easy to print up as cards or for use on screen devices. Please take a look, and spread the word!

VIRGINIA NATURAL HERITAGE DATA EXPLORER



A few mouse clicks are now all it takes to reveal a wealth of information about Virginia's natural assets.

The new Virginia Natural Heritage Data Explorer at <https://vanhde.org> provides public access to maps and data about protected lands,

ecologically significant areas, wetlands and more. With a few more clicks, users can create customized maps.

Natural Heritage Data Explorer merges three previously used web tools into a single powerful tool. It was developed for DCR by the nonprofit conservation organization [NatureServe](#). NatureServe is working on similar platforms for other states, but Virginia's is the first to launch.

The tool provides access to 20 map layers showing the status of all protected lands, conservation priority lands, boundaries and reference information such as streams and roads. Layers can be viewed on one of eight base maps, such as a street map or topographic map. Users can search backend data with text queries or by clicking a point on the map; details are displayed instantaneously. Users even have the capability to share and print customized maps.

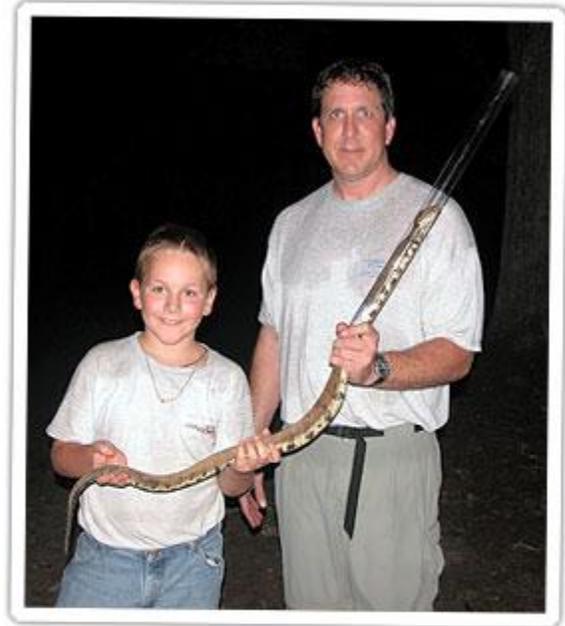
A detailed user guide is available at the site.



NOTES FROM CHARLENE

Don't Try This At Home

From the VDGIF Outdoor Report Newsletter



J.D. Kleopfer and his nephew captured this cottonmouth while doing research. Note the snake has been safely "tubed." Do not attempt to capture snakes — leave that to professionals trained and equipped to provide safety for both the "catcher" and the "caught."

Remember, killing snakes is illegal in Virginia.

"Snakes have been the focal point of folklore for centuries. The word "snake" itself often yields a strong emotional response ranging from awe and wonder to shock or fear. These individual responses originate from the diverse values people associate with snakes. While some people find them fascinating, others are not very fond of snakes because they do not appear and behave like any other animals we know. Additionally, there are numerous deeply rooted tales and myths about the extraordinary powers and abilities of snakes. Regardless of the source of our response, misconceptions about snakes have made them among the most feared and misunderstood of all animals. Once

we begin to learn more about snakes, our misconceptions usually fade with the facts and our fears give way to curiosity.

“There are many different control strategies for dealing with snakes, whether in a residence, a business setting or other occupied space. Regardless of why a snake may have entered a residence or work area, most people just want to know how to remove it. How-to information and literature on dealing with snakes is available from different sources. Under Virginia law, snakes are classified as a non-game species and are afforded protection under non-game regulations. While killing snakes is not a permitted activity, they can be taken (along with certain other species of wildlife) when classified as a "Nuisance species" (29.1-100); when found committing or about to commit depredation upon agricultural or property damage, or when concentrated in numbers and manners to constitute a health hazard or other nuisance. For example, if a blacksnake is found in your chicken coop, you have the legal right to kill it; or if a copperhead is found in your garage, you have the legal right to kill it. Basically what this means is that, for example, if a snake crawls into a chicken coop or into someone's house, the individual is allowed to take some action to protect livestock or family.

“The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), along with many other governmental, nongovernmental agencies and private citizens, has worked diligently to dispel the belief that "the only good snake is a dead snake." Snakes play a valuable role in nature and help control insects and rodents that damage crops and carry diseases harmful to humans. Millions of dollars in crop damage is avoided every year as a result of the free pest control service that many snakes provide. In order to help citizens better understand the ecological value of snakes and identify snakes in

their areas, the Department has developed "A Guide to the Snakes of Virginia". This publication covers many interesting facts regarding Virginia's snakes including their contributions to the ecosystem. This publication is available for purchase at www.HuntFishVA.com.

“If you do encounter a snake in the woods, simply leave it alone, it'll get out of your way or you can walk around it. **SNAKES DO NOT CHASE PEOPLE.** Here are a few tips to avoid the possibility of being bitten when hiking in the woods”

1. Stay on the trail.
 2. Watch where you place your hands and feet, and where you sit down.
 3. Do not attempt to capture snakes.
- [Purchase copies of A Guide to the Snakes of Virginia »](#)
 - [View Streaming Video on Rattlesnakes »](#)
 - [Read the Outdoor Report article 'The Eastern Cottonmouth: Separating Fact from Fiction' from July 22, 2009 »](#)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

10,000 hours of volunteer time—what an achievement. That is the equivalent of 4.8 years of work. To achieve these hours, we have racked up nearly 74,000 miles of travel. Unfortunately we may be off the pace so far this year. The year is half over and we all should be approaching the half way mark towards our hours for certification or recertification. A review of the data in the time reporting system shows that as of the end of June only 27 members had recorded hours for the year. Of those only 13 had recorded 20 or more volunteer hours and only 14 had 4 or more

advanced training hours. For those who have just put off entering their time, I encourage you to do it sooner rather than later. If you are having difficulty making the system work, please ask for help.

The recently revised and approved Chapter Bylaws and Operating Handbook have been placed in the documents section of the Volunteer Management web site. Also there are the results of the 2013 interest survey and Insights from the recently completed Retreat. These last two are in the group titled Retreat.

Pam

UPCOMING ADVANCED TRAINING*

Jul 9 – “Bats” 2:00 PM, Sammy Zambon, Menokin, General Meeting to follow

Jul 13 – “Edible Plants” 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Hal Wiggins, Stratford Hall (\$10.00 fee, Register at jbachman@stratfordhall.org)

Aug 6 – “NNMN Menhaden Program” 9:00 to 11:30 AM, Omega Protein, Reedville

Sept 10 – “Invasives ID Walk” 2:00 to 3:30 PM, Paul Billings, Menokin, Gen Meeting to follow

Oct 8 – “Agriculture in the Northern Neck” 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Stephanie Romelczyk, Farmer’s Museum

Oct 18-20 – “VA MN State Conference” TBD, Richmond

*For more details, times and locations go to the Event Calendar on the Virginia Master Naturalist Volunteer Management web site.
<https://virginiamn.volunteersystem.org/users/index.cfm>

Thanks to Martha Berger, Kate Daniel, Carol Hammer, Kathy Sachs, Polly Ward and Charlene Talcott 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.