



Oyster Restoration is Team Effort

By
Phyllis Kohlman

Taking a trip to Gwynn Island, Virginia, to see and participate in the VCU Rice River's Virginia Oyster Shell Recycling Program on July 16 2021, revealed that it really takes a team effort to restore oysters in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Gwynn Island is located in Mathews County, near the mouth of the Piankatank River, which feeds directly into the Chesapeake Bay, a perfect location for oysters and now the efforts for restoration of the oyster beds. It has been reported that *"Gwynn's Island's waters were so inundated with oysters it became hard to come ashore in some areas, as the oysters were so abundant and deadly sharp they would tear up and peel away entire hulls."* (Gwynn's Island: The Amazing and Significant History of a Small Island, by Dianne Saison, Nov. 28, 2017).

continued on page 2



Colors of Change

Peninsula Master Naturalists are resilient and dedicated to improving the environment.

This issue is filled with articles and photos of changes in nature, natural, noticed, or restored by members through service and volunteering.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to Field Notes this year.

Please continue to share your photos and articles with Meera Rao, Newsletter chair. Email articles and photos to pmnfieldnotes@gmail.com



Photo: Meera Rao

In This issue:

Oyster Restoration
PAGE 01-03

You Might Already Know this
PAGE 04-05

Encounters with
Lycorma delicatula
PAGE 06

Pandemic Passages
PAGE 07

Welcome Cohort 16
PAGE 08

Cleaningup the Bay and Rivers
PAGES 09-10

Forest Immersion
PAGE 11

VMN Day of Service
PAGE 12

Remembering
Lorraine Austin
PAGE 13

Peninsula Chapter Information
PAGE 14



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continued from page 1

Our assignment was to clean the empty tank and PVC pipes that hold up the thick black cover, which is used to prevent rainwater entering the tank. It also aids in decreasing the water evaporation due to the summer heat. Additionally, the oysters tend to migrate toward the light, and keeping it dark ensures the tank's entire space will be utilized by the oyster larvae as they enlarge. The larvae will become an oyster spat once they permanently attach to a surface.



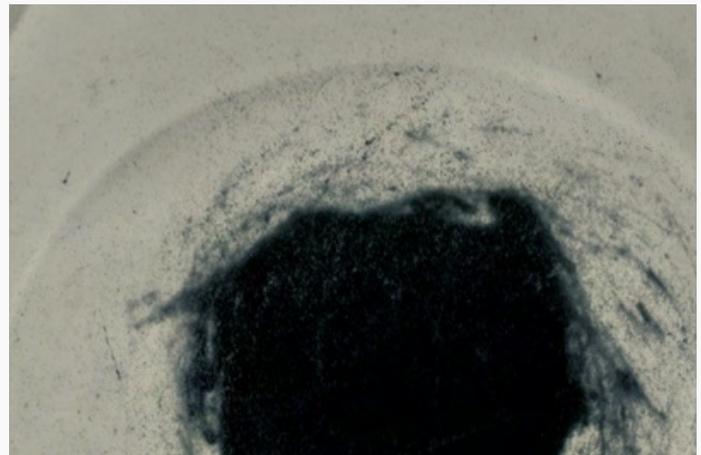
Cleaning the PVC pipes.



Inside the tank that needs to be cleaned and volunteer cleaning it with scrub brush.

A volunteer was cleaning inside and bottom surfaces of the tank, with a scrub brush and putty knife. All of the beginning attachments of the previous oyster shells need to be removed to help with the new colonies that will be growing in this tank. Any other water critters like squirts and sea worms, need to be removed so there will be no interference in the growth of the new colony. Cleaning everything down and letting the surfaces dry in the summer heat helps to make this environment as free as possible from anything microscopic that might interfere with the survival of the oyster larvae.

The oyster larvae look like a clump of shiny, wet, jet-black soft mud. These are held together in a specialized closely woven material so that the pinpoint larvae will not be captured between the woven fibers or escape through the weave. The total number of oyster larvae in this clump is estimated to be 9 million. About teaspoon of the larvae is placed into a beaker with water from the receiving tank. The larvae are dispersed by gently stirring the liquid and letting the larvae "string" and settle to the bottom of the beaker. One can see them becoming active, moving to attach to each other -stringing. Once settled on the bottom, they move upwards to begin their journey to locate an attachment site. After noting that the oyster larvae are active, the entire clump is transferred to the readied tank.



The larvae placed in beaker and swirled to see them begin to string.

continued on page3



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continued from page 2

Beakers filled with the tank water and a portion of the oyster larvae are poured into the waiting tank. Having a number of volunteers to help with these final steps, ensures that the transfer goes quick enough that no larvae suffer being out of their ideal environment longer than necessary. The ready tank is already filled with appropriately prepared mesh bags of oyster shells. The larvae need to attach to old oyster shells to survive. Once these are seeded and the spats are large enough, these bags make it easy to transfer the colony to the boat and then to the oyster beds in the selected river or bay sites.



Dispersing the larvae throughout the tank

Placing the black tarp over the tank and the PVC pipes ensuring the tarp does not contact the water's surface.



Volunteers then disburse the beakers of larvae throughout the tank. Once this is done, the thick black tarp is placed over the already cleaned PVC pipes positioned over the top of the tank. The tarp is held in place on all sides with bungie cords hooked to ensure no disturbance of the colony in this nursery environment.

When we think about the reports of the quantity of oyster beds needed and what we are trying to accomplish now, one might get discouraged. But these efforts by many, have had an impact on the recolonization of oyster beds. Doing our part, however insignificant we think that is, helps make the efforts by all successful. Think of this the next time you enjoy an oyster!

Photo credits: Phyllis Kohlman



Choose only one master - Nature

~Rembrandt~



You Might Already Know This, but this week I learned...

....some interesting fun-facts about our native butterflies

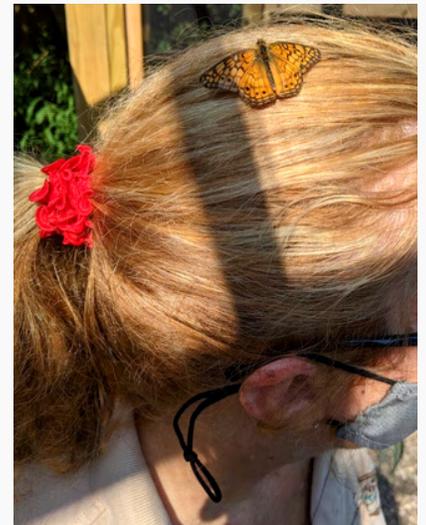
By
Susie Engle



Butterfly Haven sign at VLM



volunteering at Butterfly Haven at Virginia Living Musuem



*Variegated Fritillary on
co-volunteer's head*

As a volunteer for the Virginia Living Museum's Butterfly House, I get to share 'Lep Love' with guests young and old. With native host plants, tiny butterfly eggs of different shapes, colors, and sizes, varied caterpillars, as well as jewel-like chrysalises and lovely lepidoptera, we interpret the life cycles of these native delicate beings.

Beautiful Pipevine Swallowtail



A cluster of (at least 5) Monarchs nectaring



continued on page5

You Might Already Know This, but this week I learned...

continued from page 4

*Caterpillars are picky eaters, so the adult butterfly lays her eggs only on leaves the kids will eat! Zebra Swallowtail cats eat ONLY Pawpaw. Fritillaries prefer Passionvine. Monarchs munch only Milkweed. Pipevine Swallowtail cats eat...you guessed it, Pipevine!

*Just this week, I learned that native wisteria (yes there is such a thing!) is the host plant for the showy Silver Spotted Skipper. To avoid predation, they roll themselves into a temporary leaf-cocoon when dining is done for the day.

Late summer/early fall is Butterfly Bonanza time, so get outside and look for these lovelies!

Silver-spotted Skipper caterpillar in her nightly roll-up



Spicebush Swallowtail caterpillar

Photo Credits: Susie Engle



**There is nothing in a caterpillar that tells you
it is going to be a butterfly.**

~R. Buckminster Fuller~



Encounters With *Lycorma delicatula*

BY
Christy Gardner



I have always enjoyed observing nature - everything from clouds floating in the sky, trees rustling in the breeze to animals living in their habitat. I've passed this down to my children who are both teenagers now. A few years ago, while vacationing in Lancaster, PA, my daughter brought to my attention a lovely plant hopper we had never seen before. It had spots on its dull gray wings and when she got close to it, it would show a beautiful flash of red/scarlet as it hopped away. We spent some time following it until it flew into a field of corn.

Being a VMN, I attend many continuing education courses about nature and the environment. One such course was about the invasive species, the spotted lantern fly (*Lycorma delicatula*). They can damage fruit trees—particularly apples and grapes—in addition to other plants. I remember thinking to myself, “It’s a shame that such a beautiful insect causes such destruction.” I honestly didn’t remember that lone plant hopper that had caught my daughter’s eye a few years prior.

This year, my family vacationed in Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. We saw spotted lantern flies everywhere. Thousands of them. There must be a good media campaign about them because there were quite a number of them squashed on the ground. It hurt my heart to squash these beautiful creatures, and to watch my children squash them, too. I reported the sightings (and squashings) to the Spotted Lanternfly Project <https://lanternflies.org/>.



Scientists are researching biological controls to curb the spread of these invasive insects. As I sit writing this from a cottage overlooking Keuka Lake in the Finger Lakes region of New York, I am happy to report that I have not seen any spotted lantern flies in wine country. And, as we travel South, back through the infested areas, I will do my part to ensure they don’t travel home with me to Virginia.

Photo Credits: Christy Gardner



Pandemic Passages

Miracle of Metamorphosis

By
Meera Rao

One day during Spring/Summer of the pandemic year 2020, as I was about to chop some parsley from the garden, I saw some very tiny black swallowtail butterfly caterpillars munching on the leaves. I put that whole bunch of parsley in a bottle with a little bit of water, and nurtured the caterpillars for the next few weeks. I was rewarded richly when most of the caterpillars turned to chrysalises. Unfortunately, there was one caterpillar that somehow escaped the bottle and fell prey to a spider.

I waited and watched them closely until one night I saw one of the chrysalises had turned a darker color. The patterned dots were also glowing a bit. Early next morning I sat beside it with my cup of coffee and a camera waiting eagerly. My research indicated that the butterfly would emerge early in the morning as the sun's rays warmed the chrysalis. Finally when the butterfly emerged, it took less than a minute. The chrysalis undulated and throbbed as the butterfly made its way out. The butterfly then hung on to the twig for about two hours to warm and stretch its wings before flying away!!! This was my first time watching a butterfly emerge and it was definitely a most amazing miracle to witness.

Here is a page from my Nature Journal where I sketched and recorded my experience:



WELCOME COHORT 16



Alex Carley



Amber Miller



Elke Erb



Elizabeth Bircher



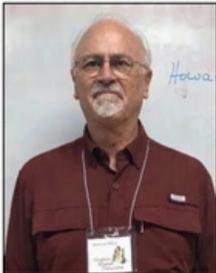
Elizabeth Coughlan



Hannah Lewis



Helene Drees



Howard Miller



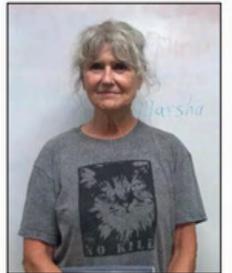
Kim Prisco-Baggett



Lauren Chambers



Mark Cochran



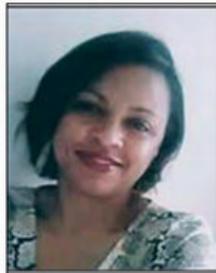
Marsha Hoiberg



Maureen Zaino



Melody Avery



Nakia Ayisumo



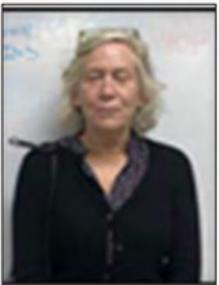
Ray Thurnes



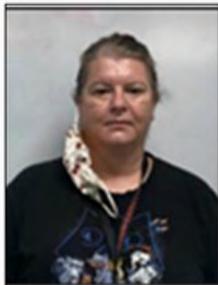
Rex Holmlin



Roger Rice



Suzanne Collins



Tanya Ward



Taylor Littleton



Submitted by Shirley Chirch and Laura Marlowe

The growth of a naturalist is like the growth of a musician or athlete:
excellence for the talented, lifelong enjoyment for the rest,
benefit for humanity.

~ E.O.Wison ~

CLEANING UP THE BAY AND RIVERS



June Hartzler, Daina Henry and Laura Marlowe at Lucas Creek. Unusual items removed included a fishing pole and a huge square of coated foam that weighed about 20 pounds!

On sept 19, 2021, Laura Marlowe, June Hartzler and Daina Henry paddled Lucas Creek in Newport News to collect trash by kayak. It was a great day to be on the water. In their two hours, they collected 85 lbs of trash. Unusual items removed included a fishing pole and a huge square of coated foam that weighed about 20 pounds! This event was part of the month long clean up of the Bay and James River.

Submitted by Laura Marlowe
Photo credits : Laura Marlowe

June Hartzler in the sedge collecting trash.

June Hartzler and Daina Henry



CLEANING UP THE BAY AND RIVERS



John Adair, Marilyn Adair, Daina Henry, Roger Rice, Anne Boeh, Bill Boeh, Barbara Waring, June Harzler.



Ray Thumes, Roger Rice, Rex Homlin and Alex Carley

As part of International Coastal Cleanup Week and James River Association Action Week, the Peninsula Master Naturalists volunteered for 2 hours at Denbigh Dock/park in Newport News. We had a dozen volunteers. We collected 80 pounds of trash and filled the back of the Newport News Parks and Recreation truck. A good and dirty time was had by all.

Submitted by Daina Henry
Photo Credits: Daina Henry

June Hartzler and Alex Carley



Roger Rice



Ray, Roger, Barbara, Rex, Alex, Daina, June with 80 lbs of trash.



FOREST IMMERSION



Jack Chirch, Shirley Chirch, and Leigh Fenigsohn



Shirley Chirch and Leigh Fenigsohn

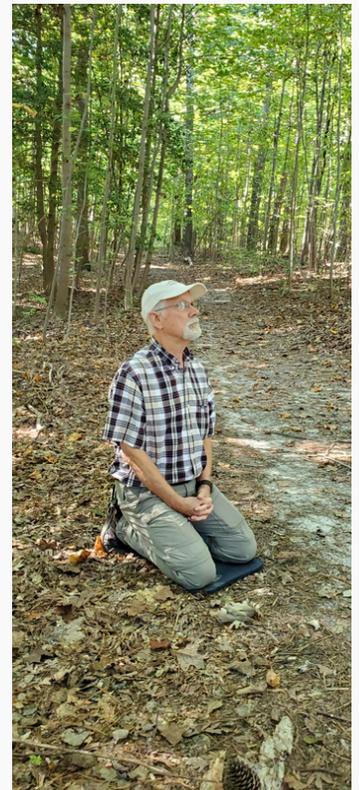
Daina Henry, Outreach Chair, stepped out of her comfort zone and provided to 12 Peninsula master naturalists a *Forest immersion Experience or Shinrin Yuko*. The goal of Forest Immersion is to walk slowly through a forest, breathe deeply the phytoncides, and engage more fully the five senses. It was a great morning to walk a less traveled portion of the Noland Trail at the Mariners' Museum. This immersion exercise was the PMN part of the Virginia Master Naturalist Conference field experience on Saturday Oct 2 2021. Everyone enjoyed the event, and felt refreshed. Forest immersion or forest bathing is an ancient practice that has found a revival. It combines walking slowly in a forest with yoga, meditation and breathing exercises. It is hoped we will do this again soon.

Submitted By Daina Henry Photo Credits: Daina Henry

Friend of Janet Tucker , Françoise Veland and Meera Rao

Jackie Frankiewicz, Gayle Phillips, Janet Tucker, Chris Gwaltney, Hilary Probst

Larry Lewis



Leave the road, take the trails
~ Pythagoras ~



VAMN DAY OF SERVICE



Gary Wright collecting litter near the water at the Menchville Marina Baffer

June Hartzler with 165 lbs of Trash collected by Gary and June



PMN held a distributed Day of Service in conjunction with Virginia Master Naturalist State Conference 2021 on October 3. Gary Wright and June Hartzler did an area cleanup at the Menchville Marina for four hours collecting 165 pounds of trash including car parts, lots of glass bottles, cans, plastic bottles & bags, and cigarette butts. They also collected some fishing gear, trash, fishing lines and styrofoam coolers.

Bonnie Baffer picked up about 10 lbs of trash on Cook Road, Yorktown, which goes through the Yorktown Battlefield National Park.

Submitted By : Laura Marlowe

Trash collected by Bonnie Baffer



**There is no such thing as 'away.'
When we throw anything 'away' it
has to go somewhere.**

~Annie Leonard ~

Executive director of Greenpeace USA.

REMEMBERING LORRAINE AUSTIN



Lorraine Austin 1948-2021



Edward and Lorraine Austin



Patricia Bell, a homeowner recipient of Habitat for Humanity in Newport News, gives Lorraine Austin a hug after the dedication of Habitat's 99th home.
Daily Press file photo (Dave Bowman/Daily Press)

Lorraine Austin was a wonderful Master Naturalist who lived and loved her life, according to PMN member June Hartzler. It was sad to lose Lorraine so early in such a tragic accident. At her funeral, her sons spoke very highly of both Lorraine and her husband Edward Austin.

Lorraine was in Cohort 15 and quickly became involved in Basic Training, CoCoRa, and the Hampton Rhodes Bird Club. PMN Member Bill Boeh said that she was the only one who volunteered to help with the Christmas Bird Count near the airport. She researched the project so she was very prepared to help with the count.

June Hartzler met her through a friend, lost contact, and was excited to meet her again at the Cohort 15 classes where they often chatted. They shared what was happening in their lives and what projects they were working on. June was able to visit her at home where Lorraine showed her how she set up the CoCo Rah project equipment. Lorraine was especially proud of a hail pad she created and called June back after a storm to tell her it was successful.

On the same day that June visited Lorraine at home, as they took a long walk around the neighborhood, June realized Lorraine's depth of knowledge about nature. She identified ducks, bird calls, different plants and talked about fishing. Lorraine was very humble when she spoke about her involvement with Habitat for Humanity and other things she was engaged in. June could tell Lorraine cared more about actually living, learning, helping and educating others than getting any recognition.

Submitted By Charlotte Boudreau

Here is a link for her obituary : <https://www.dailypress.com/news/dp-nw-lorraine-ed-austin-obituary-20210803-olxfvcupqrhefagwbzljox5om-story.html>

PENINSULA CHAPTER

2021 Peninsula Chapter Board of Directors

President	Charlotte Boudreau
Vice President	Shirley Chirch
Secretary	Bill Boeh
Historian	Maria Nissen
Treasurer	Christy Gardner
Chapter Advisors	Megan Tierney & Meghan Mulroy-Goldman



Member Meetings and Continuing Education

Day/Time: Second Tuesday of every month, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Location: Sandy Bottom Nature Park
1255 Big Bethel Road, Hampton, VA 2366
(Currently held on Zoom until further notice)

2021 Committee Chairs

Basic Training	Christiana Wilson
Continuing Education	Yukari Hughes
Community Outreach	Daina Henry
Hospitality	Merry Kennedy
Membership	Cindy Moore
Projects	David Singletary
Public Relations	Nate Brauner
Fund Raising	Jim Francis
VMS Coordinator	Laura Marlowe
Property Manager	Diane Peters
Newsletter	Meera Rao
Web Master	John Berry
Past President	Daina Henry

Upcoming Meetings and CE

Date: Wednesdays (Zoom link and topic on BI Calendar)
Time: 6:00 p.m. Basic Training

Date: November 9, 2021 (Zoom link on BI Calendar)
Time: 6:00 p.m. Member Meeting 7:00 p.m CE :Better Impact Training.

Date: December 14, 2021 (Zoom link on BI Calendar)
Time: 6:00 p.m. Member meeting

Date: October 21, 2021 CE Bird walk King & Queen County
8:00AM-10:00AM (details: BI Calendar)
Date: November 7 & 21, 2021 CE - Bird Walk at Newport News Park
Time: 7:00am (details: BI Calendar)

FIND US!

Peninsula Chapter Website: <http://vmnpeninsula.weebly.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VMNPeninsula/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTblGR9RcDI62oxfJSLi3Ww>

Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/VMNPeninsula/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/vmnpeninsula/?hl=en>

**Our Address: 809 Aberdeen Road, #9263,
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