



Field Notes



The Monthly Newsletter of the Peninsula Chapter - Virginia Master Naturalist Program

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Spring 2012

Volunteer Hours are

REALLY, REALLY, REALLY important!

Is there anyone who ENJOYS logging in their volunteer hours on the VMS? Probably not. In fact, but bet most people are like me - I often forget to even write my hours down, especially this time of the year when I tell myself, "Don't worry, you have the entire year to make those hours!"

Over the weekend, I had another reminder of how important those hours are to people *outside* of our Master Naturalist Chapter. I attended the spring conference of the Virginia Association of Parks. A section of the business meeting was devoted to a review of statistics of volunteer hours provided to the parks from their various friends groups. Across the state they had an amazing amount of volunteer hours. This translated to an equally amazing dollar amount of support—over three million dollars! These statistics are critical pieces of data supplied to the legislature during General Assembly sessions. The monetary value of volunteer hours is often used as match funding when organizations individuals and agencies apply for grants. hours can literally make the difference between a proposal being funded or not.

So, think of a system to help make it easier for you to keep track of hours. I try to keep my hours on my planning calendar, right there with the date for the activity. I've also tried keeping a list or spreadsheet where I keep track of hours. The spreadsheet is nice, because I also have a column for mileage, which comes in handy at tax time. (If you itemize your deductions, you can claim 14 cents per mile traveled as a volunteer.)

Remember, your efforts to help with Peninsula Chapter projects have a huge impact on the environment or individuals that you serve. But, your impact goes well beyond our community. You are also serving a greater good for the agencies that we support.

Next Meeting Tuesday May 8

Save the Date!

June 12, 2012

Election of Officers 5:30 pm

Cohort 4 Graduation

and potluck dinner 6:00 pm

Speaker 7:00 pm



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Peninsula Chapter

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Newsletter

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Upcoming Meetings

Board of Director's Meeting /General Membership Meeting

Date: May 8, 2012

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Location: Sandy Bottom Nature Park
1255 Big Bethel Road Hampton, VA 23666

Advanced Training

Date: May 8, 2012

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Location: Sandy Bottom Nature Park
Topic: Amphibians of the Coastal Plain, presented by Travis Land
1255 Big Bethel Road Hampton, VA 23666

Other Events

May 5 Invasive Plants Day

June 12 Cohort 4 graduation

June 15 Newsletter deadline

June 16 - Hampton Environmental Summit,
"Keeping the Crab in Crab Town"

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Peninsula Chapter

Notes on Choosing a Binocular

from Elisabeth Wilkins' presentation



Magnification (1st number) and **aperture** (2nd number)

7x35

8x42

10x50

Increase in magnification, also magnifies shaking, etc.

In your yard, etc., 6, 7, 8 power magnification would be fine. For shorebirds, animals that are far away, you would want a higher power, 10. However, this has a very narrow field of view, which is not good if you wear glasses.

Aperture is the outer lens, brings light into binocular, diameter in mm

Depth of field

Field of view (linear feet across at 1000 yards) you won't have to train across as much when following an item.

Have an idea what you need when you shop.

TRY THEM OUT - GET WHAT FEELS BEST TO YOU.

Eye relief – distance from eye to eyepiece

If you wear glasses you need an eye relief of at least 10 mm. Look for binoculars that specify long eye relief if you wear glasses.

Transmittance – amount of light getting to your eye, want highest possible for quality, over 50%, more for more expensive, depends on number of lenses and quality of optics. Coatings can keep light going to your eye.

Exit Pupil dot you see when you hold up to light and look in

7x35 (35/7 = 5 mm exit pupil)

8x20 (20/8=2.5 mm exit pupil)

8x32 (32/8= 4 mm exit pupil)

10x50 (50/10= 5 mm exit pupil)

Exit pupil larger than your eye's pupil, you will lose light, smaller you will get a vignetted view) This changes with light and age. If you are under 25 maximum pupil dilation is 5 – 6 mm. Around age 50 it decreases to 5 mm or less.

Roof prism design vs porro prism. Prism makes it so you don't see image upside down. Traditional shape, porro prism, lenses and aperture are offset, better depth of field because the lenses are farther apart. But, consider what kinds of prisms are used inside. BK7 prisms are the less expensive, lower quality glass. Superior optical glass is BAK4. Roof prisms are lighter, more compact, more expensive because prisms have to be smaller. Good roof prism binoculars have to be in the higher price range.

Coatings more important with roof prism design due to phase shift. Design causes a shift of light rays that possibly cause a blurred image. So, you need a phase corrective coating. Aluminum (cheap) silver (better) dielectric prism coating (best) Coated, fully coated, multicoated, fully multicoated. Coated (1 layer) fully coated (all air to glass surfaces are coated) multicoated (some services have multiple coating) fully multicoated (all air to glass surfaces have received fully multicoating).

Ruby or red coating filters red light out, makes things look green, a cheap way to attempt to approve.

A binocular, two telescopes mounted side by side. The two telescopes must be in line with each other. Cheaper binocular, easier to knock out of alignment.

Adjusting for your eyes: (don't share with other people)

1. adjust eyecups (down if you are wearing glasses)
2. set interpupillary distance
3. adjust diopter

Put lenses cap on right eye and focus with left eye.

Look through right eye and turn diopter to get perfect focus

Lock it down, if you have a lock, and you should only have to focus in the future.

Other features to consider:

1. Weight and comfort/ease of controls
2. Close focus measurement (ie. for butterflies) under 10 feet is good if you want to do that.
3. Waterproofing (don't clean with eye glass cleaners) remember humidity, etc.
4. Nitrogen-purged (prevents internal fogging and condensation)
5. Zoom
6. Image stabilization
7. Wide angle

There are also photography accessories available.

Remember, less expensive binoculars have cheaper optics and the resolution of your field of view will not be as sharp.

eagleoptics.com is a good source of information

Peninsula Chapter



Mariner's Museum Project

It all started when Chris and I were taking a walk on the Nolan Trail. We saw two men working on the trail and asked them if we could help in any way. We explained about being Master Naturalists and that we could help with trail maintenance. Tim Minich, who is in charge of maintaining the trail and said doing that was a full time job, but he thought the museum could use some help in maintaining some of the gardens near the trail and he would be back in touch after checking with his supervisor. He let us know a couple of weeks later about the first garden we have been working on. It was planted by one of the garden clubs, but had not been maintained in some time. It was so overgrown we couldn't see many of the plants that were there.

We (Chris Gwaltney, Charlotte Boudreau, Larry Lewis, and Bev Nunnally and occasionally Susan Walton, and Art Ritter) began work in January and with the mild winter weather we worked once a week for several weeks. Tim and his staff helped with a large tree that had fallen in back and on top of some of the garden. He lent us tools so we could dig up the massive amounts of honeysuckle and grass of honeysuckle and grass that was on top of the shrubs. We discovered beautiful yule tide camellias, pink spirea, hawthorne, roses, and Japanese silver grass, along with many perennials. There were also groups of sweetspire or *Itea*,



We spent many weeks removing honeysuckle, plants that had spread too much, and pruning and cutting trees. What a difference it made! Many of the walkers and joggers come by and thank us for our work. We explain we are volunteers with the Master Naturalists.



After finishing that garden, we moved to a garden off of the right side of the trail that had many day lilies and shrubs that needed pruning. We discovered a cranberry bush, several Butterfly bushes, and sweetspire that were covered in vines as well as a large trailing rose bush that Bev has been fighting with!

Charlotte Boudreau



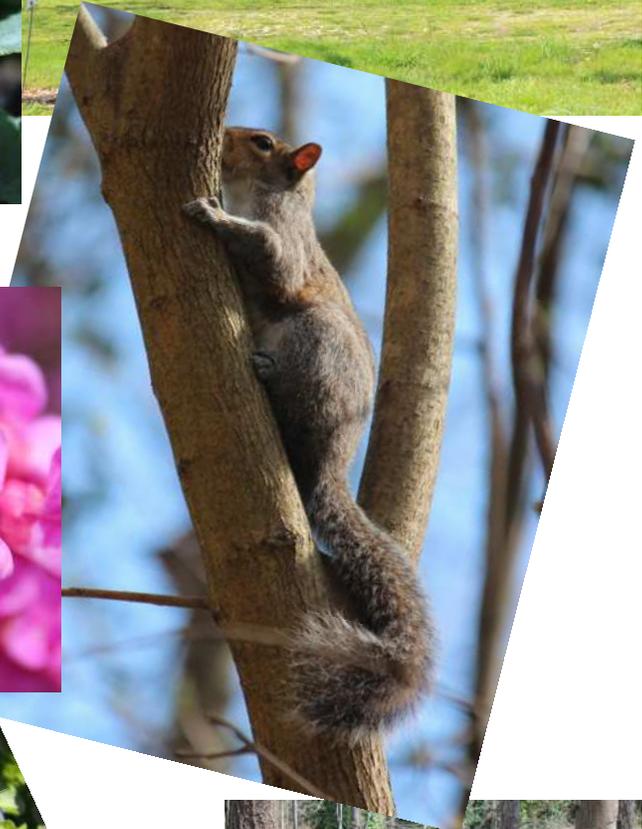
Plants from the Nolan Trail:

Bloodroot (top)

Lenten rose (left)

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Spring at the Chesapeake Arboretum



Chesapeake Arboretum
<http://www.chesarbor.org/>



Peninsula Chapter

GREAT DISMAL SWAMP NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

MAY 10 - 12, 2012

GREAT DISMAL SWAMP BIRDING FESTIVAL



SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

THURSDAY, MAY 10

- 7-11am Bird Banding Station Demonstration - Jericho Ditch
- 9am-12pm Canoe Birding - Dismal Swamp Canal (adults)
Departs from Ballahack Boat Ramp
- 8:30am-10am "Get N2 Birds" - adult beginners class at Refuge Headquarters
- 7:30-9:30pm Owl Prowl - bus tour departs from Refuge Headquarters

FRIDAY, MAY 11

- 7-9:30am Guided Bird Walk - Jericho Ditch (adults)
- 7-9:30am Guided Bird Walk - Washington Ditch (adults)
- 7-11am Bird Banding Station Demonstration - Jericho Ditch
- 8:30-10am Nature Photography Workshop with Guided Photography Walk - Refuge Headquarters (12-16 yrs w/adult)
- 10:30am-12pm Bus Tour to Lake Drummond - Refuge Headquarters
- 11am-2pm Light lunch items available at Refuge Headquarters
- 1-2pm Informal Showing of "Dismal History" - Refuge Headquarters
- 2-4:30pm Canoe Birding - Lake Drummond (adults)
Departs from Refuge Headquarters
- 3-4:30pm Bus Tour to Lake Drummond - Refuge Headquarters
- 7:30-9:30pm Owl Prowl - Jericho Ditch

SATURDAY, MAY 12

- 7-9:30am Guided Bird Walk - Jericho Ditch (adults)
- 7-9:30am Guided Bird Walk - Washington Ditch (adults)
- 7-11am Bird Banding Station Demonstration - Jericho Ditch
- 7-10am Birding Bus Tour to Lateral West Fire Scar (adults)
Departs from Refuge Headquarters
- 9-11:30am Family Activities - Refuge Headquarters
- 10-11:30am Bus Tour to Lake Drummond - Refuge Headquarters
- 10:30am-12pm Bob Ake's "Big Year" Presentation - Refuge Headquarters
- 11am-2pm Light lunch items available at Refuge Headquarters
- 12:15-1pm Informal Showing of "Dismal History" - Refuge Headquarters
- 1:30-3:30pm Bus Tour to Lake Drummond - Refuge Headquarters
- 2-3:30pm Nature Photography Workshop with Guided Photography Walk - Refuge Headquarters (12-16 yrs w/adult)



All activities and events are FREE & open to the public.
Bus tours, canoe birding, guided walks and workshops require reservations as space is limited.
757.986.3705 for more information

