



Field Notes



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

Volume 3/Issue 2

Summer 2011

Dear Peninsula Master Naturalists,

I am so excited and honored that you have chosen me as President of the Peninsula Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalist. We have had our ups and downs since the founding of our chapter in 2008. Any organization is only as good as its members and I know that we have many talented and enthusiastic members.

There are several new and exciting projects that have been added to our Project Calendar including the Living Barrier at the Big Bethel Landfill, the Bluebird Gap Farm maintenance project and the Peninsula Waterways Clean-up. These projects, while able to be done on an individual basis, ideally will be worked on as a group to promote unity within our group.

I am looking forward to working with each and every one of you over the coming year.

Julia Horton

VOLUNTEERS are needed to staff the Peninsula Master Naturalist display at the Go Green Expo at the Newport News Brittingham Midtown Community Center located at 570 McLawhorne Drive, September 24th, 2011, 10 am—4 pm.

To sign up for a time slot, contact Sandy Graham



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Potato sponge (top) with dead man's finger sponge at Buckroe Beach

Photo by Megan Tierney

Peninsula Chapter

Peninsula Chapter Board of Directors

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Sandy Graham

Training Committee Chair

Elisabeth Wilkins and Sandy Graham

Volunteer Service Project Committee Chair

Charlotte Boudreau

Newsletter

Susan Walton

Web Master

Larry Lewis

Chapter Advisor

Megan Tierney



Upcoming Meetings

Board of Director's Meeting

Date: October 11, 2011

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Location:

Sandy Bottom Nature Park

1255 Big Bethel Road Hampton, VA 23666

General Membership Meeting

Date: October 11, 2011

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Location:

Sandy Bottom Nature Park

1255 Big Bethel Road Hampton, VA 23666

Advanced Training

Date: October 11, 2011

Time: 8:00 P.M.

Location:

Sandy Bottom Nature Park

1255 Big Bethel Road Hampton, VA 23666

November meeting will be November 1st!

Please note this change to the first Tuesday of the month, due to elections. Sandy Bottom is a polling place.

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Volunteer Management System

Have you logged into the **Volunteer Management System** yet?

Misplaced your password? No problem!!

Go to the website:

<https://virginiamn.volunteersystem.org>

Type in your email address and click on the link at the bottom that says NewUser? Password Problems? This will give you access to a portal you can use one time to get information on the system.

Thanks to Julia for explaining and demonstrating the Volunteer Management System website at the September meeting. If you haven't used it, don't worry. The site is user friendly and will help making keeping records of your participation with PMN activities at all levels much easier. You can even get a record of your hours and mileage downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet for tax purposes with one quick link!

Another neat feature is the calendar, which links to specific events and projects. Plus, you can have the system send you reminder emails of chapter meetings and other chapter happenings. Pretty cool!

Please note: **EVERYONE** needs to log in.

Please note that this is a secure website – the "s" in https tells you it is a secure site.

PMN Projects

September 24 - PMN table at Go Green

October 22 - trash pick up at Grandview Nature Preserve, 9 am to noon. Contact: Dawn Currier

October, various dates - Connecting to the Bay at Riverview Farm Park. Contact: Jackie Roquemore

We are looking for your input!

Please submit your articles for the next newsletter.



Peninsula Chapter

NEWS AND OTHER EVENTS

The Mid Atlantic Education Association will be holding its regional conference in Williamsburg on October 7-9. For more information check their website at www.mamea.org This conference is being held in conjunction with the Virginia Environmental Education Professional Development Institute and is for formal and informal educators

- Friday, October 7 -EE Leadership workshop (pre-conference). Friday night is the opening of the MA-MEA/VA EE conference, dinner and guest speaker.
- Saturday, October 8 -all concurrent sessions, dinner & auction.
- Sunday, October 9 optional field experiences.

An article "**Coastal Wild Edibles: Stalking the Wild Sea Lettuce**" by Terri Hathaway can be found in the latest issue of COASTWATCH, The North Carolina Sea Grant Magazine, at

<http://www.ncseagrant.org/home/coastwatch/>

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries publishes a bimonthly *Outdoor Report* filled with information about events across the state. To subscribe, go to www.vdgif.virginia.gov

AutumnFest at the **Chesapeake Arboretum**, October 22,



VLM Corner



The Virginia Living Museum could always use your help as a volunteer! The application can be found at: <http://www.thevlm.org/volunteer.aspx> and faxed to 757-599-4897 Attn: Volunteer Services or scanned and emailed to volunteer@thevlm.org For more information contact Julia Horton. (She will be happy to act as a reference.)

Happenings at the VLM

The **FALL NATIVE PLANT SALE** continues September 24-25 from 9am to 3 pm on Saturday and noon to 3 pm on Sunday. It's a great time of the year to do some major planting to have those important native species in place for next spring. Check out the list of available plants at

<http://www.thevlm.org/files/doc/VLM-FallPlantSale-2011.pdf>

TUESDAY EVENING SEMINAR SERIES

Time: 6 - 7:30 p.m.

Cost: \$5 Members; \$7 Non-Members. Active volunteers are free.

Register online at www.thevlm.org

October 4, 2011 Cabinets of Curiosity

In the 1800s it was not unusual for people to compile their own collections of natural history specimens, some of which were extremely unusual. Discover how modern natural history museums evolved from the eclectic accumulations of wealthy collectors and get a look at some of the stranger specimens in the museum's non-live collections.

November 1, 2011 The World's Weirdest Plants

Trees that drip acid strong enough to blister skin? Alien invaders that grow 12 inches a day and "devour buildings? Chemically loaded plant assassins that can heal as well as kill? This is real life—not science fiction. Discover amazing facts about these oddities and many more in a fascinating survey of the world's strangest plant life.

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Snakes of Virginia

Marc Nichols, law enforcement officer with Hampton Parks and Recreation, once again shared his knowledge of wildlife with us at the August meeting. Marc's talks are truly helpful. He not only gives us much information about the species he addresses, but he lets us know which species he has observed personally at Sandy Bottom and in Tidewater in general. Marc also has given us specifics as to where in the park what seasons, and under what conditions the species have been observed.



Peninsula Master Naturalists help 6th grade science classes get down and dirty while learning about the importance of wetlands to the Chesapeake Bay.

In October 2010 and April 2011, Peninsula Master Naturalists, Susan Walton and Charlotte Boudreau, assisted with an environmental education project where over 250 middle school students participated in meaningful watershed educational experiences. This was part of the "Connecting to the Bay" project from the Center for Wetland Conservation (CWC) at Christopher Newport University (CNU). Project funding was provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and is designed to increase ecological knowledge and foster Chesapeake Bay stewardship. The 6th graders worked alongside Virginia Master Naturalists and CNU undergraduate and graduate students to collect information about water quality, soil characteristics, plant communities, and wildlife populations in two wetland areas of Riverview Farm Park in Newport News, Virginia. The data collected by the students will be used as part of a future project to restore one of the wetland areas. This project continued into May and June of 2011 and the CWC is excited to have continued support of the Peninsula Master Naturalists.

Volunteers are also needed for this fall. The dates are Oct 4th, 5th, 18th, 24th, 25th, 27th, 28th, 31st. Times are 9:15 to 1:00. Please contact Jackie if you can help! (jackieroquemore@cox.net)

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Photo Gallery from "Connecting to the Bay" project from the Center for Wetland Conservation (CWC) field trips

Dusky Salamander from River Farm Park field



Project coordinator Jackie Roquemore supervises from the boardwalk.

