

Peninsula Chapter



Field Notes



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

Volume 4/Issue 2

Summer 2012

President's Message

We want to thank the outgoing board, Megan Tierney (Chapter advisor), and the work of all the committee chairs for giving us a firm foundation. Great strides and improvements were made this past year. Your accomplishments are a springboard for continued success.

We are looking forward to getting to know all of our new members and their interests. Your talents will be put to good use.

Our signature project at Blue Bird Gap Farm will continue to need our group support as it evolves. Many other projects are currently underway and deserve our attention. We encourage members to submit new projects.

Goals for this year include:

- Recognition for recertified members
- New Chapter display board (take to State Conference)
- Obtain collection permits for artifacts
- Explore regional cooperation with local Master Naturalist Chapters

We welcome suggestions from all members to improve your Peninsula Master Naturalist Chapter.

Pam Courtney and Brad Halcums

Next Meeting Tuesday July 10

Scrapbook for Peninsula Chapter

Virginia Master Naturalists

Historical Information and Photos Needed!

While it is admittedly a low tech and old school format, a scrapbook would be an excellent addition to the PMN exhibit. Our neighbor exhibitors at the Hampton Environmental Conference, Friends of Sandy Bottom Nature Park, had their scrapbook on display. I noticed that most attendees thumbed through the document.

If you have photos, newspaper clippings or other items you think would be helpful to document the history of our chapter, please let me know. I will be glad to scan items and return them or you can email copies to me at susan.walton@vmnh.virginia.gov and I will include them in the record. These items can be added to an electronic portfolio as well.



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Peninsula Chapter

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Volunteer Service Project Committee Chair

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Upcoming Meetings

General Membership Meeting

Date: July 10 2012

Time: 6:00 P.M.

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

Advanced Training

Date: July 10, 2012

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Location: Sandy Bottom Nature Park
Topic: Photography by John Gresham
1255 Big Bethel Road Hampton, VA 23666

Other Events

July 15 deadline for early registration, VMN Conference

July 19 John Clayton Chapter, Virginia Native Plant Society Meeting

July 28 Dismal Swamp NWR butterfly count

August 14 PMN meeting 6:00 pm, advanced training 7:00 pm (Clyde M)

August 12-24 Forested Wetlands Project data collection

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Travel Time to Count with Volunteer Hours

Your travel time to and from volunteer project sites can count as part of your Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer hours!

Below is the relevant information that Michelle Prysby forwarded when asked about this policy. You can get the entire document on the Documents page of the VMN Web site. Thanks to Elisabeth Wilkins for noting this important point to the Executive Board!

Travel Time Starting January 1, 2012, VMN volunteers may count time spent on travel to conduct volunteer service towards the certification requirements and milestone achievements. Volunteers are strongly encouraged to choose service opportunities close to their communities, rather than choosing projects that have very high travel time compared to the actual service time. Volunteers must log travel time as a separate project in the online reporting system so that it is possible for chapters to report the percentage of volunteer time that was spent on travel each year. In addition, Master Naturalists may want to track their mileage on all projects for tax purposes, and the online reporting system provides a field for tracking this information. Only the travel time to and from volunteer service counts towards certification; travel time to and from training (whether the basic training course or advanced training events) does not qualify.

Hampton Conference a Success

Congratulation to Megan Tierney and her team for the success of the Hampton Environmental Summit 2012: Keeping the Crab in Crabtown. Peninsula Master Naturalists participated in planning and staging the event, as well as in the exhibition hall. Here are some of our members at work!



Congratulations and Welcome to Cohort IV!

Despite difficult weather conditions, the Cohort IV graduation and annual potluck picnic dinner proceeded on June 12th. Welcome to new training graduates!



Here's a recipe from the potluck:

MEDITERRANEAN QUINOA

2 chicken sausages with cheese and herbs cut into coins
32 oz. chicken broth
2 cups quinoa
3 oz. crumbled feta cheese with herbs
4-5 oz. sun dried tomatoes in oil

Brown sausage pieces in oil. Set aside.

Cook quinoa in chicken broth. Drain off extra liquid if all is not absorbed.

Add sausage to quinoa. Cool slightly. Add feta cheese. Toss together. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Pam Courtney

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Balloon Litter Research Project

What do all of these balloons have in common? They were all found as litter in Tidewater over that last few weeks. And, they are all data points in an important citizen science project.

Virginia Clean Waterways, the Virginia Aquarium and Longwood University are teaming up to collect data on balloon litter

found across the Commonwealth. This research project is a two year endeavor to find out more specifics about the types of balloons and balloon attachments that are found in our litter.

In a July 27th conversation with Katie Register, director of Virginia Clean Waterways, she said that the purpose of the data collection is to have accurate information to convince balloon manufacturers and retailers to end the promotion of balloon releases. The balloon industry claims that newer balloons are biodegradable. However, the attachments – ribbons, holders, etc. - that are used on balloons offer no such claims. Besides, in the time it takes for a balloon to degrade an animal can become entangled in the ribbons, marine creatures such as sea turtles can ingest the debris and other unfortunate environmental events can occur.

What can you do to help? Pick up the litter, of course! And, report your findings to the project. A data sheet can be printed from the website or you can email your data, making this a litterless project. If you are interested. The website address is:

www.longwood.edu/cleanva/balloonresearch.htm.



Photographer to Speak at July 10 Meeting

John Gresham, who works at York River State Park, will be the speaker at our meeting. He does photography for the Virginia State Park system. Please join us as he shares his techniques for our monthly advanced training session. For more information about John, visit his website:

<http://baystrideimages.wordpress.com/about>

PMN and VMN Photography Contests

It's no coincidence that our July speaker is a photographer! With the deadline for the state contest right around the corner the Peninsula Chapter needs to consider entrants and select representative photos to submit. We are allowed to submit one photo of Virginia fauna and one featuring Virginia flora.

The pictures must be taken in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Only minor digital corrections may be used, i.e. one click of your editing software. No use of artistic filters are permitted.

The photographer must be able to provide the following information about the photograph for the entry form: name, chapter, image title, location where image was taken, species show in image (common and scientific names,) and date image was taken.

Our chapter contest will take place at the August 14th meeting. We will consider electronic submissions that will be presented via PowerPoint at that meeting. Photos will be numbered and the identity of the photographer will remain anonymous. More details will be explored during the July 10th general meeting.

History of Botanical Art

John Clayton Chapter Meeting

Virginia Native Plant Society

On July 19th, the John Clayton Chapter will welcome Linda Miller, botanical artist, of Williamsburg as their speaker. Linda is a member of the Historic River Chapter of Virginia Master Naturalists. The meeting begins at 6:45 pm at the Yorktown Public Library. For more information go to www.claytonvnps.org.

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Forested Wetlands Mitigation

Thanks to Wes Hudson for explaining the wetlands mitigation process to us at the June advanced training. Not only did he provide us an inside look at how wetlands mitigation, he shared some interesting information about his own research that examines the efficacy of various wetlands reclamation techniques. Wes' project at the Virginia Department of Forestry is an approved project. An announcement from Wes concerning the project:



Dr. Jim Perry's Wetland Ecology Lab at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science seeks volunteers to assist with field work for a 7 year forested wetland investigation. The purpose of this study is to improve the understanding of successful forested wetland restoration in Virginia by investigating the growth and survival of 7 species of native wetland trees planted in three hydrologically distinct mesocosm cells at the Virginia Department of Forestry New Kent Forestry Center. The results from this study will help advance the fields of wetland science and restoration ecology, and we need your help!

We will be measuring the growth and survival of our 3000 trees from 9am to 6pm everyday between August 12 - August 24.

We will be providing transportation from the following locations or you can meet us at the New Kent Forestry Center: Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Gloucester Point, Phi Beta Kappa Hall at William and Mary Main Campus (Jamestown Road,) and the New Kent Forestry Center (www.dof.virginia.gov/regEast/nkt-index.shtml)

What to wear:

- Sneakers or boots you don't mind getting dirty
- A hat
- Comfortable clothing, preferably long pants

What to bring:

- A water bottle (we will provide water)
- Sunscreen (we will have some, too)
- Bug spray (optional, the bugs aren't that bad)

Come out and learn valuable skills in identifying tree species, surveying for adaptations, measuring tree growth and collecting data in the field!

We Will Provide Lunch (Including Vegetarian Options)!

Please contact Wes Hudson (hwhudson@vims.edu) with any questions and to RSVP. Please indicate dates for volunteering and preferred pick up location (Half days are great too!).

Virginia Master Naturalist Conference

Our state conference will be held at the Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville on September 7-9. Some workshops are already filled, so register soon. Information is available on the VMN website, which is linked to the PMN website. Deadline for the early registration fee of \$100.00 is July 15th. After that date, registration will be \$120.00

Website Focus Group

The work Larry Lewis has completed on our website is nothing less than awesome! However, we would like to have more input as to the format for the website. If you are interested in helping, join the focus group that Elisabeth Wilkins is forming to investigate other websites as we look to make the PMN the best website every. Focus groups will meet on Tuesdays. Contact Elisabeth at iliketohike@ymail.com if you would like to participate.

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Mariners Museum

