

FIELD NOTES

PENINSULA CHAPTER



THE VIRGINIA MASTER NATURALIST CONFERENCE

BY

Sandy Graham

Planners could not have picked a more perfect weekend (Sept 9-11, 2022) to hold the 2022 annual conference. I spent Friday's fall-like weather touring Back Bay Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park in an open-air Tram. Erica Ryder with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lead the 2-hour tour which included wildlife sightings and information on how the refuge is managed for migratory waterfowl.



Blue Heron
at Back Bay Wildlife Refuge



Heritage Live Oak at False Cape State Park

On Saturday I had the chance to learn about the Virginia Pollinator-Smart Solar Program from Kevin Hefferman - a stewardship Biologist with the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Currently, Virginia has 100,000 acres of land committed to solar farms - either built or in process. The Virginia-Pollinator-Smart Program encourages and supports Solar Farm Developers to plant pollinators as ground cover around solar panels in place of turf grass or hardscaping.

Continued on page 2,



Winter Warmth

Even as the temperatures dip, Peninsula Master Naturalists are busy with community outreach, stewardship and more. A new vibrant cohort are graduating from the Basic training program and contributing to the community with their time, knowledge and enthusiasm. As always, in this issue there are articles and photos of nature, service and volunteering from our members as they continue to make a difference in the world around them.



Golden Rod Blooming
at Back Bay Wildlife Refuge
Photos: Sandy Graham

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 (as separate attachments) to: pmnfieldnotes@gmail.com

In This issue:

The VMN State Conference
PAGES 01-02

Celebrations
Cohort 17
PAGE 03

Celebrations:
Presidents Note
PAGE 03

Nature Journal :
Poem: Beauty Berry
Photo Journal:
A Trip to Wyoming
PAGE 04

Community Outreach
and Stewardship
PAGES 05-07

Peninsula Chapter Information
PAGE 08

THE VIRGINIA MASTER NATURALIST CONFERENCE

submitted by
Sandy Graham

Continued from page 1,

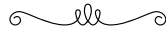
The benefits of using pollinator plants at Solar Sites are ecological, economical, and aesthetic. The ecological benefits include the creation of wildlife habitat, prevention of soil erosion, carbon sequestration, and increases in underground and above-ground biomass. The economic benefits include fewer mowing costs and a cooler microclimate as a result of plant transpiration which increases panel efficiency by 20%.



Westmoreland Schools Solar Habitat (from the web)

Westmoreland County's Cople Elementary School was the first pollinator friendly solar project in the state. Installed by Sun Tribe Solar three years ago, the project provides 95% of its electrical needs for two of the county's schools. Sun Tribe Solar has partnered with NEEDS (National Energy Education Development Project) to develop a solar curriculum for students and training for teachers.

For more information on the program visit the [Virginia Pollinator Smart/Solar Site](#).



VMN CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS SEPTEMBER 9-11, 2022

Submission and Photos by Daina Henry

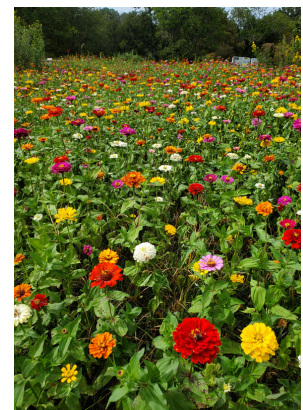


One of Fridays pre-conference trips was to the **Dismal Swamp and Lake Drummond**. The participants met at the entrance to the swamp, and then had a guided tram ride through the swamp to see the bald cypress and Atlantic white cedar. The lake was impressive, one of only two natural lakes in Virginia. And the water was black with tannin.



Magothy National Wild Life Refuge

A little known wildlife refuge on the Eastern Shore (right over the CBBT). Four mile walk through the refuge – through different ecosystems – cleared fields, to shrubs, to old forests, to marshes.



Saturday afternoon at the VMN conference – a trip to **Norfolk Botanical Garden and the pollinator gardens**. The walking guided tour of the garden was educational. And the bees and wasps were everywhere, nectaring on the flowers.

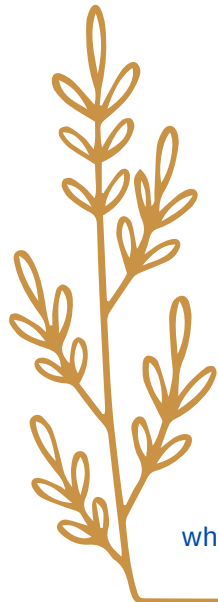


CELEBRATIONS!



COHORT 17

Anderson, Maya
 Brunk, Laurie
 Buskirk, Grace
 Cantrell, Beth
 Fouch, Kisha
 Grojean, Emily
 Hanson, Michele
 Ingle, Gabrielle
 Joy, Jaime
 Keener, Jacqueline
 Oglesby, Lynne
 Patel, Prafulla
 Reed, Chris
 Schaller, Kate
 Shaw, Carole
 Shaw, Dennis
 Solitro, April
 Vinturella, Amy
 White, Edith



CONGRATULATIONS

to those members of Cohort 17
 who have completed Basic Training!

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

As 2022 draws to a close, I'd like to extend best Holiday season wishes to everyone and their families. Thank you all for the good work accomplished this year in the Chapter. What you've done has made a difference in our communities. Thank you also to our board members for their work behind the scenes to make our Chapter operations effective, meetings organized (and well fed), training interesting/useful, and events (i.e., basic training, PawPaw festival, stewardship, outreach, fundraising) successful. And finally, thank you Megan and Meghan for being our advisors. Your leadership, guidance and Zoom support is very much appreciated.

Happy Holiday season; more fun and opportunities in 2023!

Sincerely,
 Jim Francis



*To him who in the love of Nature holds
 Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
 A various language....
 Go forth under the open Sky, and list
 To Nature's teachings....
 ~William Cullen Bryant~*

NATURE JOURNAL



Beauty Berry By Laurie Brunk

My father-in-law, Kenneth Samuel Brunk, died last evening, Saturday, September 17 at 9:56 pm. His life was one of service to others. Caring for children in a boys orphanage in Korea and girls home in Jamaica, working with the Mennonite church and outreach in Jamaica and Trinidad, and pastoring a church in Williamsburg.

As his health was failing over this past month, I found myself thinking that he will miss watching the birds eating the berries off of the beautyberry bush outside the kitchen window. He always seemed to take great pleasure in seeing how rapidly the birds could clear off the bush. Then, with my gardening mind, I found myself thinking about the features of the beautyberry bush and comparing that to some of Ken's traits and qualities

BEAUTYBERRY

*Roots going deep and wide
Holding steadfast and true
throughout the storms*

*Cascading branches lowering down to the
ground
Providing loving shelter for the
turtle, rabbit, or snake
a quick refuge for the flitting songbird*

*Freely sharing the abundance of food
Beautiful clusters of purple berries
wrapping around extending arms
Nurturing many with generous profusion
berries shared and spread far and wide*



*Ken, your love of God
and of those around you
has been steadfast and true
Many are grateful
for your shelter and refuge
Many were nurtured
by your unselfish sharing
Your life lives on in all of us
As the berries grow
from saplings to shrubs
Roots going deep, holding steadfast and
true*

*Cascading branches of shelter and refuge
Providing berries to share with all
Your life lives on through us all*



A Trip to Buffalo Wyoming

Submitted by
Jim Francis



Buffalo, Wyoming nature trail heading west along Clear Creek. There is good country everywhere.



An example of nice nature trail signage on Russian Olive- an invasive species along with natives Birch, Maple, Cottonwood and Buffaloberry at the Clear Creek Riparian Forest -Made possible through a co-operative effort by local organizations, state departments and federal agencies.



Another signage about the Clear Creek Riparian Forest showing native Buffaloberry, Mountain Adler, chokeberry and some of the animals found there.

STEWARDSHIP COMMUNITY OUTREACH



International Coastal Cleanup Day

submitted by **Laura Marlowe**

On September 17, I lead a group of nine members of the CNU Biology Club on Lake & Steam Cleanup on Virginia Living Museum property. We cleaned both sides of the stream top to bottom and got the edge of the lake between the otter exhibit & the educational building. We collected two reusable bags of trash weighing 49 pounds. We found a tennis shoe and a pacifier along with the regular cigarette butts, Styrofoam, plastic cups & bags, aluminum cans and glass bottles.

Then on the way back from cleaning up the gear, I collected an additional 5 pounds of trash, including a green bath towel, in the alley between the educational building and the gate to the parking lot for a total of 54 pounds!

VLM educators lead other teams of volunteers around the VLM and Deer Park and collected over 150 pounds of trash. They spent the afternoon sorting the trash for data entry for scientific research.



Laura Marlowe



Our first Saturday workday on September 17 at Bluebird Gap Farm



Kate Schaller, Grace Buskirk, Robert Boone, Linda Boone, and Mar Herrera

Photo: Kate Schaller

Kate Schaller, Grace Buskirk, Robert Boone, Jim Francis, Linda Boone, and Mar Herrera worked to make the shoreline trail to the left completely walkable now. The graveyard plateau was cleared of invasive vines thanks to Jim's perseverance. We made fantastic amount of progress on the azalea trail; mulching the trail leading to the vernal pond. Jim assessed the rain garden that the PMN planted in 2017 and advised mostly weeding necessary for improvements. Kate, in our new cohort, took a picture and we encouraged her to send to the newsletter.

Kate and Grace both members of the newest Cohort 17 are performing their first PMN stewardship volunteering!

Our areas of concentration will be weeding the small rain garden in front of the office and continuing the Azalea trail clearing & mulching in October

submitted by

Kate Schaller and Linda Boone



Maria Nissen and Becky Nissen

On this beautiful Saturday Nov 19, we were able to clear the invasive vines/privet away from the train station at Bluebird Gap Farm. We also agreed where the directional signs are needed for the shoreline trail and vernal pond. Amazing how much can get done with three people and good direction from staff member Becky Nissen.

We hope the weather will be just as beautiful on December 17 for our next scheduled project maintenance 09:00 to 11:30.



Maria Nissen , Robert Boone
and Linda Boone

Submitted by
Maria Nissen



STEWARDSHIP COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Traditions Brewery Outreach: On the dangers of light pollution for migrating birds.
submitted by
Daina Henry



Francoise Veland , Daina Henry,
Christiana Wilson, Meera Rao and Kate
Schaller



Bird theme corn cob hole board
with stuffed animals for throwing



Christina and Kate Schaller
testing their skills



Lilly Garden at the Mariners' Museum.

Charlotte Boudreau, Chris Gwaltney,
Larry Lewis and Kate Schaller
Photo: **Daina Henry**



Rain Garden at Bluebird Gap Farm

On October 15, 2022, Jim Francis, John Adair and Janet Tucker cleared the overgrown rain garden at Bluebird Gap Farm and validated various trees and shrubs shown on the original planting guide.

Submission & Photo: **Janet Tucker**



Field Trip to VIMS Cohort 17 Submitted by Shirley Chirch



Pollinators Garden at Mariners' Museum

Charlotte Boudreau
Chris Gwaltney
Anne Graber
pirate scarecrow
Larry Lewis
Kate Schaller and
Dennis Boudreau

Photo by **Daina Henry**





STEWARDSHIP COMMUNITY OUTREACH



HAPPENINGS AT ENDVIEW

submitted by
Daina Henry



Endview wreath preparation.
Pictured clockwise.
Amber Miller, Daina Henry, Kate Schaller, Francoise Veland, Janet Tucker, Prufalla Patel, Marie Smith, Hillary Probst and Chris Gwaltney.
Daina Henry



Endview helpers
l to r Merry Kennedy, Barb Waring, Chris Gwaltney, Prafulla Patel, Kate Schaller, Daina Henry, Laura Marlowe.



Decorating Endview home.
Francoise Veland, Marsha Hoiberg, Daina Henry, Laura Marlowe, and Kate Schaller.

THE STORAGE SHED ASSEMBLY AT MARINERS MUSEUM

submitted by Daina Henry



Vounteers: Jim Francis, Rex Homlin, John Berry, Bill Boeh, Kate Schaller and Daina Henry



*Announced by all the trumpets of the sky
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
~Ralph Waldo Emerson~*

PENINSULA CHAPTER

2022 Peninsula Chapter Board of Directors

President	Jim Frances
Vice President	Shirley Chirch
Secretary	William 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 in person and also on Zoom)

2022 Committee Chairs

Basic Training	Rex Holmlin
Better Impact Coordinator	Laura Marlowe
Continuing Education	Yukari Hughes
Community Outreach	Kimberly Prisco-Baggett
Fund Raising	Charlotte Boudreau
Hospitality	Merry Kennedy
Membership	Cindy Moore
Newsletter	Meera Rao
Projects	Chris Gwaltney
Property Manager	Jeanette and Ray Yoh
Public Relations	Nate Brauner
Web Master	John Berry
Past President	Charlotte Boudreau

Upcoming Meetings and CE are listed in VMS-BI Calendar

Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022. AD: Monthly Member Meeting
Time: 6:00 p.m. Basic Training Graduation

Date: Saturday December 17, 2022-January 1 2023. Citizen Science: Audobon Christmas Bird count. Link and details in Better Impact Opportunities Calendar.

Date: Monday December 12, 19, 2022, Stewardship: Endview Nature Trail
Maintenance contact info in BI Calendar

Date: Thursday, January 12, 2023, 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
CE - PMN Book Club (virtual) Contact and info in BI Calendar

FIND US!

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

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

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTbIGR9RcDI62oxfJSLi3Ww>

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

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

Our Address: 809 Aberdeen Road, #9263,
Hampton, VA 23670



www.ext.vt.edu

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the US Dept of Agriculture, and the local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, military status or any other basis protected by law. If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in this activity, please contact the York/Poquoson Extension office at 757-890-4940 TDD* during business hours of 8:15 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to discuss accommodations 10 days prior to the event.

*TDD number is (800) 828-1120.