



**Virginia
Master
Naturalist**
Southwestern Piedmont Chapter

THE VINE



WINTER, 2011
VOLUME 1 NUMBER 4

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Vice President, Larry Turner
Secretary, Carolyn Turner
Treasurer, Dennis Reeves,
Past President, Christy Deatherage

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Membership, Christy Deatherage
Newsletter/Web Page, Ashby Pritchett
Outreach/Publicity/Historian, Lynn Pritchett
Program, Larry Turner
Training, Rachael Wingfield
Volunteer Service, tba

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Every January, I like to reflect on the past year and set goals for the new. As I look back on 2010, many positive things stand out: we learned a lot, gave back to the community and had fun.

I would like to thank the board members for coordinating a wonderfully diverse program in 2010. The canoe trip, hikes and socials were enjoyed by all. I lost track of the sheer number of approved opportunities for advanced training! Almost half of our Chapter meetings included training on the agenda and we approved over 20 events held by sponsors and partners for Advanced Training credit. I'm sure we are all looking forward to more outings and opportunities to learn new things in 2011.

Virginia Master Naturalists is a service organization. Last January, I set a chapter goal of 2010 hours for 2010, based on an average of 50 hours per member. The naturalists who turned in their time sheets this year did achieve an average of 50 hours per member! This is a remarkable team effort! As a result, our chapter provided over 1100 hours of volunteer service to the community. Thank you! I'd like to set our 2011 goal at 2011 hours. With more members this year, this works out to just under 48 hours per member. In this newsletter, you will find the list of the most significant service projects of 2010 that we have submitted with our annual report to the state. I extend a special thanks to the naturalists that planned and coordinated these projects and I look forward to continuing them all into 2011.

Kathy Fell

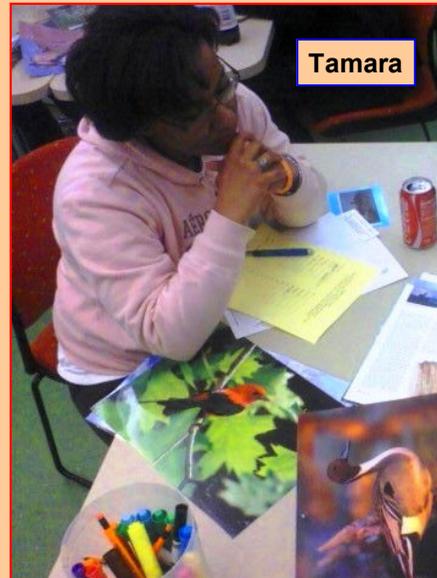
Congratulations to the 2010 training program graduates who have completed the course requirements and become chapter members: Linda Drage, Natalie Coleman, Dannie LaPrad, Patty May, Paul May, Marion Miller, Caroline Pilson, Teresa Prillaman, Mavis Rice, and Samantha Smith!

FLYING WILD WORKSHOP

Master Naturalists from the Southwest Piedmont Chapter attended the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' "Flying WILD" wildlife education program at the Virginia Museum of Natural History on Saturday, December 4, 2010. Flying WILD is one of the programs of Project WILD, emphasizing the ecological value of birds. Key concepts stressed in the four hour workshop included migration, adaption, the importance of habitat, and bird conservation efforts. Participants were given a guide containing activities suitable for teaching about birds. For more information on Flying Wild professional development workshops, visit <http://www.flyingwild.org/> .



Evalyn



Tamara

Chapter members attending workshop— Gael Chaney, Evalyn Chapman, Natalie Coleman, Christy Deatherage, W.C. Fowlkes, John Hollandsworth, Susan Martin, Caroline Pilson, Tamara Poles, Teresa Prillaman, Ashby & Lynn Pritchett, and Dennis Reeves.

Photos by Lynn Pritchett



John & Christy



Susan & Ashby

VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROJECTS

Active Citizen Science Projects

Water Quality Monitoring

Project Leader: Lynn Pritchett
lynnpritchett@comcast.net

Research and Collections Volunteer

Project Leader: Kathy Fell
kathyfell@yahoo.com

Frank Wilson Park Eco-Survey

Project Leader: Christy Deatherage or
Tamara Poles
Christy.Deatherage@vmnh.virginia.gov
Tamara.poles@vmnh.virginia.gov

Bio-Blitz Project

Project Leader: Larry Turner
ltct59@comcast.net

Active Stewardship Projects

Frank Wilson Park Clean-Up

Project Leader: Christy Deatherage
Christy.Deatherage@vmnh.virginia.gov

Invasive Species Removal Day

Project Leader: Kathy Fell
kathyfell@yahoo.com

Gravelly Nature Preserve

Stewardship

Project Leader: Denny Casey
denny.casey@vmnh.virginia.gov

Collection of Acorns for Seedling Stock

Project Leader: Lynn Pritchett
lynnpritchett@comcast.net

Riparian Buffer

Project Leader: Kathy Fell
kathyfell@yahoo.com

City Park Beautification

Project Leader: Kathy Fell
kathyfell@yahoo.com

Active Education Projects

Publicity & Communication Networking

Project Leader: Lynn Pritchett
lynnpritchett@comcast.net

Area Pocket Naturalist Guide

Project : Denny Casey
denny.casey@vmnh.virginia.gov

Education Department Volunteer

Project Leader: Gael Chaney
Gael.chaney@alumni.duke.edu

Basic Training Course

Project Leader: Rachael Wingfield
rlwingfie@RADFORD.EDU

Trout in the Classroom

Project Leader: Rachael Wingfield
rlwingfie@RADFORD.EDU

WILSON PARK - Volunteers Support Local Outdoor Events and Activities

10/02/10 Open Park Day



Above, Master Naturalist volunteers Tamara Poles, Christy Deatherage work with other volunteers to create a new access extension from Mulberry to existing Frank Wilson park trail.

As the leaves began changing, the weather became more bearable for projects. In Wilson Park, an Open Park Day event was held on Oct. 2. Several chapter members participated in trail maintenance that day. An extension was added to allow access to the park from Mulberry. Volunteers diligently created the new addition to the trail in one afternoon by clearing leaves and using natural markers such as branches. The Mulberry access seems to have handled quite a bit of traffic since its creation, bringing many families and friends to the wonderful city park.

Rachael Wingfield



NOVEMBER CHAPTER MEETING AT FAIRY STONE STATE PARK

Chapter members gathered at Fairy Stone State Park on Saturday, November 20, 2010 for its November Chapter meeting. A short business meeting was held before beginning a trail hike.

Park Ranger Sam Jensen did an excellent job guiding the group along the Whiskey Run Trail. The Whiskey Run Trail is a 1.5 mile difficult hiking trail loop that encircles the other trails in the system with only slight elevation changes. The trail passes through secluded wooded areas where abandoned mines are visible. Hikers may access this trail from the Iron Mine Trail. Whiskey Run is part of the Stuart's Knob trail system.

Right, the Whiskey Run Trail.



Source of Above Photo—
<http://www.virginiaoutdoors.com/parks/activities/fairy-stone-state-park/Hiking/>

The weather for the event was perfect, warm and sunny. At the conclusion of the hike, Chapter members enjoyed a picnic lunch at the allied shelter. The Chapter will hold more of these popular outdoor activities in 2011.

Right, the hikers gather.



Left, chapter members listen as Park Ranger Sam Jensen explains features of the trail. (Photos by Lynn Pritchett)

More photos on next page.

FAIRY STONE STATE PARK

Right, trail marker. Below, mine entrance on trail.



Below, discoveries along the trail.



Buckeye Moth



Earthstar Mushroom



Sam Jensen looks at Beach from Stuart's Knob Trail Overlook



Fairy Stone Mushrooms

Photos by Lynn Pritchett

DECEMBER CHAPTER SOCIAL—A Celebration of a Successful Year.

To celebrate a successful year of activity, the Chapter held a social during its December monthly meeting in the Distance Learning Classroom at the Virginia Museum of Natural History on Tuesday, December 21, 2010.

Attendance for the year-end “social mixer” exceeded expectations. Recent graduates of the Southwest Piedmont Chapter’s 2010 Basic Training Course were invited as special guests of the Chapter. Chapter members and graduates took advantage of their first opportunity to network with each other, to discover common interests and to make plans for Chapter activities in 2011.

Chapter President Kathy Fell encouraged graduates and members to be active in Chapter activities by either serving as an officer, a member of the board of directors, or a participant in volunteer service projects.



NOTEWORTHY PROJECTS IN 2010

Excerpts from the Chapter Annual Report

Project 1: Wilson Park Master Naturalist, Friends of Wilson Park

The Southwestern Piedmont chapter participated in several stewardship projects, in conjunction with Friends of Wilson Park, to improve Wilson Park in Martinsville, VA. The park is located in the heart of the city and offers families, children, students, and individuals an outdoor environment that fosters appreciation and enjoyment of natural resources. The goal of improving the park was to encourage the community to utilize the park.

Throughout the year, chapter members assisted with events held at the park, such as Screen on the Green, Outdoor Fun Festival, and Open Park Day. These events helped to promote more community awareness about what Wilson Park had to offer and promoted outdoor activities. Also, aesthetic improvements were made to the park. A trail was created and maintained. Several trail extensions have been added throughout the year as well. Numerous park clean ups were held with great success. Combined, these efforts continue to further community members developing an appreciation for natural resources, which in turn furthers stewardship and conservation endeavors.

Total volunteers: 7

Total volunteer hours: 62

Project 2: VMNH Volunteerism

The Southwestern Piedmont chapter volunteers for Virginia Museum of Natural History Department of Education and Public Programs through a variety of educational programs and festivals. Members also work on citizen science projects with the Department of Research and Collection's curators. Work has been done in the Vertebrate Paleontology Lab, cleaning and repairing dinosaur and whale bones. Work has also been done in the Recent Invertebrate Lab preparing insect specimens. Recently two chapter members worked with VMNH archaeologist and the Archaeological Society of Virginia Patrick Henry Chapter in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in promoting an effort to record and preserve previously unrecorded cemeteries in Virginia. A one day workshop was held to educate the public about different facets of cemeteries. On the following day, trainees including master naturalists journeyed to Martinsville's Oakwood Cemetery to examine and record information that could be gleaned from the graves there. Worked with Virginia Museum of Natural History.

Total volunteers: 17

Total volunteer hours: 490.3

Project 3: Southwestern Piedmont Chapter Newsletter "The Vine"

The chapter created a newsletter to promote and highlight chapter events, past and present. The newsletter is submitted to chapter members quarterly. The newsletter lists a calendar of events, so that chapter members will be aware of upcoming volunteer opportunities or meetings. The newsletter also features total volunteer hours for the quarter with a "thermometer" goal for chapter hours. Newsletters are archived on the VMNH chapter information website page. Total

volunteers: 3

Total volunteer hours: 31.5

(continued on next page)

Noteworthy Projects in 2010 (continued from previous page)

Project 4: BioBlitz-

The chapter took part in two bio blitzes the past year. The first herpetofauna bio-blotz was held on Saturday, April 17, 2010 on the Grassy Creek watershed area of Franklin County. Led by Jason Gibson, a Danville biology teacher and nature photographer who has served as president of the Virginia Herpetological Society, and Dr. Paul Sattler, professor of biology at Liberty University the group explored part of Little Chestnut Mountain, in Franklin County. The blitz recorded five species of frogs and toads with one county record; seven species of salamander; three turtles; two species of lizards with one county record, and three snake species with one county record. The information gathered was submitted to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Atlas of Amphibians and Reptiles in Virginia.

The Southwestern Piedmont Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists sponsored it's second bio-blotz of 2010 with a search for timber rattlesnakes in an area on the eastern slope of Chestnut Mountain in Franklin, County, Virginia. Jason Gibson, and Dr. Sattler led the group again, and Dr. Richard Hoffman, curator emeritus at VMNH (recent invertebrates) also accompanied the group. Although no timber rattlesnakes were found, the group recorded seventeen different species of frogs, toads, salamanders, lizards and snakes. This total included three county records. The information was submitted to the Virginia Department of Games and Inland Fisheries to be included in their Atlas of Amphibians and Reptiles in Virginia.

Four salamanders that had never been found in Franklin County were identified.

Total volunteers: 12

Total volunteer hours: 88.5



CHAPTER BOARD INFO ON THE WEB

Board decisions affecting the membership will be posted in this section in future issues.

Board Minute archives are available at the Southwestern Piedmont Chapter Google Group website. For more information, send an email to Ashby Pritchett, arpritchett@comcast.net

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Volunteer hours reported as of December 31, 2010:

Categories -

- Administration
- Advanced Training
- Citizen Science
- Education
- Stewardship

Total- **1456** hours or 72% of our Chapter Goal. Thank you, volunteers!

Report all volunteer hours to

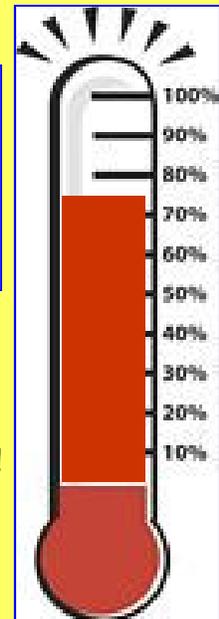
Christy Deatherage

turkeyball@comcast.net

276-627-6276

2010 CHAPTER GOAL:

2000 VOLUNTEER HOURS



CHAPTER CALENDAR OF EVENTS—January thru March 2011

January 6, 2011 5:30PM-7:30PM Chapter Board Meeting at President Kathy Fell's home.

January 20, 2011 6:00PM Chapter Meeting at VMNH—Graduation of 2010 Basic Training Class, Election of Chapter Officers & Presentation of Certificates of Achievement.

February 3, 2011 5:30PM-7:30PM Chapter Board Meeting at President Kathy Fell's home.

February 12, March 12, April 16, May 12, 2011 Wilderness Survival. 10AM—3 PM. Cost \$7.50 per person. Register at (276) 252-0701. For more info, go to <http://www.smithriveradventureoutfitters.com/> Advanced Training.

February 17, 2011 Chapter Meeting 6:00PM. VMNH Great Hall. Speaker- Dr. Joe Keiper, Executive Director of VMNH. Topic- "Forensic Entomology". PUBLIC LECTURE. Advanced Training.

Feb. 19, 2011 8th Annual Landowner's Woods & Wildlife Conference Charlottesville, VA. Cost: \$45/person \$80/2 people. Pre-Register by Feb. 9th <http://www.cnr.vt.edu/forestupdate/Pages/woods%20and%20wildlife.html> . Keynote speaker: Jeff Kirwan Advanced Training.

**Feb. 23, 2011 Free Webinar: Options for Converting Lawn to Natural Areas
12 pm- 1pm Register: <http://www.agnr.umd.edu/Seminars/Description.cfm?ID=156>
7pm- 8pm Register: <http://www.agnr.umd.edu/Seminars/Description.cfm?ID=158>
Advanced Training.**

February 25, 2011 7 PM - 8 PM. Dr. James Cowan, "Life Deep Beneath the Ocean: The Most Remote Biosphere on Earth". FREE PROGRAM. Advanced Training.

February 26, 2011 9 AM – 3 PM. Interactive teacher workshop: "Earthquake Prediction, Dinosaur Death, and Other Discoveries from the Deep Sea!" FREE PROGRAM. Pre-registration is required for both programs by contacting Tena Bullins of the Virginia Museum of Natural History at 276-634-4185 or discover@vmnh.virginia.gov by Friday, February 18. Advanced Training.

March 3, 2011 5:30PM-7:30PM Chapter Board Meeting at President Kathy Fell's home.

March 12, 2011 Kite Festival from 10:00-3:00 at Jack Dalton Park Education Service Project opportunity Please contact Tamara Poles for more info: 634-4159 or tamara.poles@vmnh.virginia.gov

March 17, 2011 6:00PM Chapter Meeting at VMNH.

SECOND QUARTER 2011 EVENTS:

April 7-10, 2011 Virginia Forestry Summit Williamsburg, VA
http://www.vaforestry.org/vfa_events.html

April 15, 2011 Earth Day at VMNH from 9:30-11:00 AM and noon-1:30PM. Education Service Project opportunity. Please contact Robin Jensen for more info: 634-4188 or robin.jensen@vmnh.virginia.gov

April 22, 2011 Earth Day Screen on the Green- starts at 7:00 PM. Education Service Project opportunity. Please contact Tamara Poles for more info: 634-4159 or tamara.poles@vmnh.virginia.gov

April 23, 2011 Earth Day Festival from 10:00 AM-4:00 PM. at Smith River Sports Complex Education Service Project opportunity Please contact Tamara Poles for more info: 634-4159 or tamara.poles@vmnh.virginia.gov



Photo by
Dennis Reeves -
January 20, 2011

Good Leadership In 2011

President Kathy Fell presents the Chapter's first 2010 President's Award for Most Volunteer Hours to John Hollandsworth. Kathy will serve a second term as Chapter President in 2011, and John will serve as Chapter Vice-President.

Let's Get Outside in 2011!



On the River- CANOEING !



On the Land -BIOBLITZ !