

**Virginia  
Master  
Naturalist**  
Southwestern Piedmont Chapter



*THE VINE*

FALL, 2010  
VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3



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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Autumn is a wonderful time for naturalists! I marvel as the trees put on their colorful show and acorns rain down for the woodland creatures to enjoy. Wild turkey and deer pass across my driveway. I watch the drama as one praying mantis eats another for dinner. The feeders are less crowded since the migratory birds headed south. Now is the best time for a hike in the woods and for some outdoor stewardship projects!

**Kathy Fell**

**OUCH! - Watch Out for the Io Moth Caterpillar**

I had a 15 minute window between meetings and I ran out to quickly pull some weeds. I started to grab a lespedeza plant, a horrible invasive I'm on a mission to get rid of. Pain immediately shot up from my hand!! Ow Ow Ow!! I went straight to the sink and washed up in cold water, then went back out to see what I had gotten into. I found a strange looking caterpillar munching on the weed. Then I went inside to look it up and find out the recommended first aid.

I had tangled with an Io Moth Caterpillar. The first aid is to use tape to remove any of the microscopic barbs that are left on your skin, wash with soap and cold water, then apply ice. It took an hour before the stinging went away.

Next time, I'll look more closely before I grab a weed, or better yet, wear my gardening gloves!



**Kathy Fell**

Picture of IO Moth  
Caterpillar by  
Kathy Fell—8/10

## 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 Net- working**

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 CLEANUP—July 31, 1010**

Southwestern Piedmont Chapter Master Naturalist volunteers joined the Friends of Wilson Park for a cleanup of trash and debris around the picnic shelters, playground and creek. Eleven people, including six master naturalists and two children, participated in collecting seven bags of trash, and planted “tree cookies” as stepping stones at the playground.



**Above, Rachael Wingfield and Tamara Poles team up to fill a huge black trash bag.**  
(Photo by Ashby Pritchett)



**Below, Robin Jenson watches as Christy Deatherage and Tamara Poles try to break ground to plant “tree cookies”.**  
(Photo by Ashby Pritchett)



## TREES IN THE CLASSROOM - Taking Root in Henry County Schools

At the regular chapter meeting on August 26, 2010, master naturalist volunteer Danny Martin and Susan Martin discussed the new "Trees in the Classroom" program they have developed for use with local students.

"You can't do anything without trees," explained Danny Martin. From toilet paper to furniture to their role in cleansing the air we breathe, trees play a part in just about everything.

The Trees in the Classroom program is modeled on the Trout in the Classroom program that allows students to raise trout in tanks in their schools. The tree program would allow youngsters to watch seeds grow into seedlings in aquariums in their classrooms. Students learn the answers to questions such as:

- How do trees cleanse the air?
- How do trees sustain human life and wildlife?
- What are the benefits of urban forests?
- How do trees fight global warming?
- What's a renewable resource?
- What kinds of economic benefits, jobs and products come from trees?

The program would run for an entire school year, Martin said. Schools in Henry and Patrick counties and Martinsville have expressed interest. After one school year of growth, the trees likely would be six- to eight-inch-tall seedlings. Martin plans to initially use white pines in the program. It will be up to students to plant, fertilize, water and watch over their sprouting tree seeds until they are strong enough to survive replanting outside the terrarium. Prior to planting in the terrarium, seeds are first soaked in water overnight and then put in the refrigerator for 35 days.

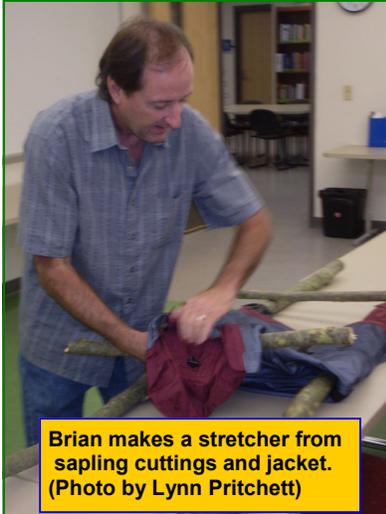
Partners and volunteers are needed to expand the program into the schools. Those that have agreed to partner in the program include the Virginia Department of Forestry, which will provide the seeds, the Virginia Museum of Natural History and Dr. David Jones, who currently coordinates the Trout in the Classroom program in the area.

Project sponsors will help out by supplying terrariums, sun lamps and soil for the classrooms, and will help identify opportunities to plant the seedlings as they mature. They also will assist with a variety of interpretive programs that can help kids understand the vital importance of trees and forests.



**Above, white pine seedlings.**  
(<http://www.nurserymen.com/trees-seedling-plugs/evergreen-seedling-plugs/white-pine-seedling-plugs.jpg>)  
**Right, at Magna Vista High School, Danny Martin shows how to plant a seedling.**  
(Bulletin photo September 13, 2010)





Brian makes a stretcher from sapling cuttings and jacket. (Photo by Lynn Pritchett)

## “WHEN HELP IS DELAYED” - Wilderness First Aid Training

What can you do to help someone who is injured during an outdoor activity, and medical help is not readily accessible? On September 16, thirteen chapter members listened attentively as Brian Williams carefully explained emergency action steps to follow in cases where help is not readily accessible.

Brian Williams is the Dan River Basin Association’s Education, Outreach and Conservation Coordinator. He has a background in wildlife biology and fisheries, including breeding fish and reptiles, as well as in conservation, education and wildlife preservation.

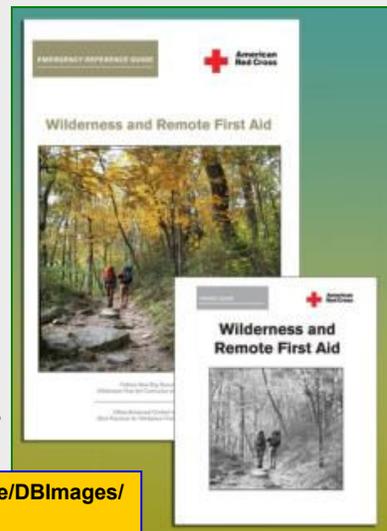
Williams told the group that if help will be delayed for 30 minutes or more, when assisting at an emergency scene you may be called upon to do many things. Helping at the scene does not necessarily mean providing direct care to the patient. You may be needed to keep the scene safe, leave to get professional help, or give care to the patient.

Most medical emergencies are the result of falls, exposure, stings and bites, illness and poor hygiene. Monitor yourself and others for problems. Be prepared for the trip: carry a knife, cell phone, compass and or GPS device; first aid kit; wear proper clothing and shoes; carry sunscreen and insect repellent. Williams recommended carrying a shell (jacket), webbing (strap or cable), headlamp or flashlight, and dry bag (waterproof container) when journeying outdoors, in caves or on water. Depending on your level of training, when help is delayed, there are a few basic steps to follow:

- **Check the scene** for dangers, the victim for injury, and the area for resources.
- **Call for help** by staying where you are and signaling for help, sending someone or leaving the victim to get help, transporting the victim to help, or caring for the victim yourself until they have recovered enough to travel on their own.
- **Use Distress Signals** - smoke, mirrors, and whistles. If you go somewhere, mark the path so that you can find your way back. If you are leaving the victim alone in order to get help, leave a note that tells your route, time of departure, and anticipated time to return. Be sure that the victim has shelter and water. Place the victim in the recovery position (on side) if they are unconscious.
- **Provide Care** - Monitor the patient's condition, creatively splint any broken limbs, control major bleeding, treat for shock, and maintain in-line stabilization of the head, neck, and back. Keep the patient as warm as possible.
- **Prepare** - If you are going on a trip, the best thing that you can do is prepare and prevent dangerous situations. Know the local geography, watch the weather and prepare appropriately, and avoid hazardous conditions. Practice wilderness skills-- have a compass, good equipment, proper clothing, and a first aid kit. Let others know your route, plan, destination, and estimated time of arrival.

Williams recommended the American Red Cross “Wilderness and Remote First Aid” course of study for advanced training. The written Emergency Guide can be ordered online from the Red Cross Store.

[Http://www.redcrossstore.org/Navigation/RedCrossStore/DBImages/ItemImage\\_543\\_5013.jpg](http://www.redcrossstore.org/Navigation/RedCrossStore/DBImages/ItemImage_543_5013.jpg)



## HERP BLITZ ON CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN -September 18, 2010

An intrepid band of hunters traveled to the lower slope of Little Chestnut Mountain in Franklin County, hoping to find a nest of rattlesnakes, and any kind of amphibians in the creek running along the bottom of the mountain.

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 pictured at right, plus a few others, fanned out in groups of two, poking around fallen trees and any ground cover that might provide cover for snakes. The hunters didn't find any rattlesnakes, but did locate a pair of non-poisonous black racers and one queen snake, and several varieties of salamanders.



Herp Blitz participants gather.  
(Photo by Lynn Pritchett)



The only casualty of the day was the guy in the above picture wearing the red shirt, whose story appears below.

At the October 22 Chapter meeting, Larry Turner talked about the September 18<sup>th</sup> bio-blitz and the search for rattlesnakes. While no rattlesnakes were found, sixteen different species of animals were documented. Four salamanders that had never been found in Franklin County were identified. The next bio-blitz is tentatively set for April 9, 2011.

Northern black racer on Chestnut Mountain.  
(Photo from Dennis Reeves)

## When Chiggers Attack!

Ashby Pritchett  
Master Naturalist Volunteer

In late summer 2010, two herpetologists accompanied by a small group of volunteer Master Naturalists walked upon the north-eastern edge of Chestnut Mountain in Franklin County, Virginia, searching for a nest of rattlesnakes. We found none. But something else there found me, hitched a ride on my shoes and pants, and turned this hunter into an unwilling host.

To prepare for snake hunting, I was advised to cover my lower legs with some material that would deflect a snake bite. Thinking myself very clever, I rolled two pieces of cardboard into tubes big enough to cover my legs to the knee but small enough to stuff under my blue jeans. This left no room to pull my socks over the bottom of my jeans, and it took so long to stuff my pants with the cardboard, I neglected to spray myself with any bug repellent.

Stumping upward like the Tin Man of Oz along the ridge of Little Chestnut Mountain, I poked my walking stick under logs and anything else lying on the ground, hoping to find nothing under it. In that effort, at least, I was successful. Pairing up with my wife Lynn, we moved toward a section of Walker Creek. Outdoors, Lynn always seems to gravitate toward water. She almost immediately went into the water, taking pictures and documenting her finds, while I followed along the creek's edge, passing through tall grasses and twisting around clumps of mountain laurel and green briar vines.

(continued on next page)



## When Chiggers Attack! (continued)

Practically invisible to the eye, *Trombicula alfreddugesi*, commonly called the “harvest mite” and in its larval form, the “chigger”, is the only parasitic stage of this mite's life cycle. They are tiny—less than 1/150th of an inch in diameter, are born red and when well-fed, change to a yellow color.

Pouring over my shoes, and taking advantage of the cardboard-clad superhighway I had made for them, about a hundred crawled into my boots and up my legs into some areas of my body I cannot even see, where they gained purchase on their host for several hours.

Enlarged approximately 1,500 times. (<http://mdc.mo.gov/sites/default/files/images/editors/chig1.jpg>)

Being the careless city boy that I am, I left the mountain at midday, and didn't go home for several hours. Until returning home later that day, peeling off sweaty clothes and bathing, I served as a smorgasbord for these fast-moving pests, who swarmed between the tender skin of my toes, around my ankles, up my calves to the back of both knees, then farther up into unmentionable territory, stopping at my beltline.

Chiggers first show up as annoying red bumps. Severe itching begins. More hard red welts appear. Scratching just makes the welts ooze worse, hardening into a hard scab. By now someone has probably told you these bumps are chigger bites, and that the nasty little critters are under your skin, feeding on your blood; that they crawl to other spots and bite you again and again; that you must dig into the welt, and either wash the creatures out with an antiseptic or suffocate them by covering each welt with fingernail polish.

That's what I thought, so I set about cleaning myself with hot Epson salt and water, breaking the blistering welts and looking for the critters with a magnifying glass. Boy, were they going to regret messing with me!

Surprise! I did not find one single chigger. Had I killed them all? Would I just have to wait until my body dissolved them or expelled them from my skin? The itching set in. Nothing I had in my medicine cabinet at home seemed to offer relief.

What did I do next? Why, of course, I went to the Internet. I needed to learn more about my adversary, and find the best ways to wage war against this invisible enemy. Unfortunately, I discovered that the war was already over, the battle lost, and I was the sole surviving casualty.

The good news is that chiggers are not equipped to burrow, and are too large to enter through skin pores. So if chiggers do not burrow under the skin or drink blood, how do they create such damage? Chiggers bite people by inserting specialized mouth parts into skin depressions, usually at pores or hair follicles. The chigger inserts saliva into its victim, which contains a digestive enzyme that dissolves skin cells. It is this liquefied tissue, and not the blood, that the chigger ingests and feeds upon.

Chiggers are not bugs or insects; they are a juvenile form of a family of mites, the Trombiculidae. Mites are arachnids, like spiders and scorpions, and are closely related to ticks.

Why don't we feel these things crawling on us, or the bite? The bite is not the source of the itch, which serves as our signal that something has been on our skin. The chigger goes unnoticed for several hours after it starts feeding. Your skin reacts to the digestive saliva by hardening the cells on all sides of the saliva path, forming a hard tube-like structure called a stylostome. The stylostome walls off the corrosive saliva to protect the skin; but this unfortunately provides a feeding tube for the chigger, which sits with its mouthparts attached to the stylostome, sucking up liquefied tissue as if it were a milkshake. The longer the chigger feeds, the deeper the stylostome and the larger the welt becomes.

Usually, the chigger will be washed or scratched off before it is able to finish its meal. If it is removed before it becomes fully engorged, it cannot bite again and will eventually die. Itching usually peaks a day or more after the bite. The stylostome remains in your skin after the chigger is gone. The itch is caused by the allergic reaction to the stylostome, which is eventually absorbed by the body. Absorption may take up to ten days.

(continued on next page)

## When Chiggers Attack! (continued)

I went up Chestnut Mountain with the equivalent of a billboard crying "Free Eats Here!" I did everything I possibly could wrong. I didn't protect myself and I walked in the wrong places. What have I learned from this experience?

First and foremost, I will wear the right kind of clothing when walking or working outside - tightly-woven socks and clothing, long pants and long-sleeve shirts, and high shoes or boots. Tucking pants legs inside boots will help keep the chiggers on the outside of my clothing.

Second, I will spray a repellent containing deet every two or three hours to exposed skin and around boot tops and waistband, and permethrin to clothing.

Third, knowing that chiggers are affected by temperature and are (1) most active when ground temperatures are between 77 and 86 degrees, (2) will avoid objects hotter than 99 degrees, (3) are constantly on the move and cluster onto new objects placed in their environment, I may be able to avoid contact by staying clear of thick brush and weeds whenever I can, and rest in cleared areas or upon stones that have been sufficiently heated by the sun.

Fourth, even after observing the above precautions, I will still presume I have picked up chigger hitchhikers, and wash myself and my clothing as soon as possible after exposure in hot, soapy water (the hotter the better) and clean my boots thoroughly. A bath will wash off unattached and feeding chiggers before I start to itch.

In the meantime, how will I alleviate my suffering? After several baths, I am certain the chiggers are gone. Scratching will only cause the stylostome to irritate, introduce new bacteria into the wound, causing new infection. I will continue to treat the affected areas with hydrocortisone cream or topical antiseptics and ingest a low dose of Diphenhydramine hydrochloride, blocking the effect of histamine and reducing the itching associated with an allergic reaction.

I read that chigger bites in this country do not expose you to Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tularemia or other disease. Nietzsche said that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. Let's hope it makes you wiser, too!

### References:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trombiculidae>

["Chiggers!" at Missouri Department of Conservation](#)

[Chiggers at Pestproducts.com](#)

[Iowa State University Department of Entomology Insect Information](#)

[Note](#)

[NIH Medline Plus](#)

[Ohio State University Extension Fact Sheet, Entomology, Chiggers,](#)

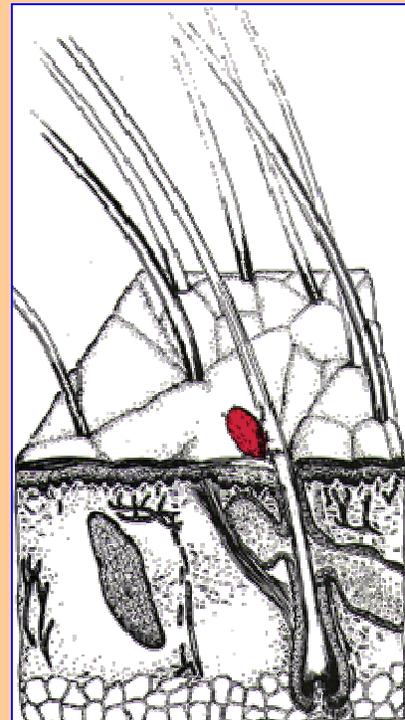
[HYG-2100-98](#)

[Trombicula autumnalis](#)

Taxonomic information at [UniProt Consortium](#) and [NCBI](#)

At right, a chigger in relation to a human hair follicle. Chiggers do not burrow under the skin, but bite us, often at skin pores or hair follicles.

(<http://mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/avoid-outdoor-pests/chiggers>)



## Students Meet Macroinvertebrates at SOS Training — September 25, 2010

Southwestern Piedmont Chapter President Kathy Fell hosted a Save our Streams training field trip for the current Virginia Master Naturalist basic training class. Wayne Kirkpatrick, a certified water quality monitor, provided the materials and lecture commentary for the event. Five students participated in this event.

Students were trained to determine the health of the stream on Kathy's land by evaluating the number and diversity of the types of tiny organisms, or macroinvertebrates, found living in the stream. Using methods developed by Virginia Save Our Streams, students learned how to collect, identify and rate their findings.



Left, Wayne Kirkpatrick explains how the water quality formula works.

Right, sorting macroinvertebrates, students collected a record number of critters.



Left, some of the macroinvertebrates.

(Photos by Kathy Fell 9/10)

## Volunteers Support Local Outdoor Events and Activities

Open Park Day at Frank Wilson Park—October 2, 2010  
Master Naturalist volunteers Tamara Poles, Christy Deatherage, Glenda Hairston, Rachael Wingfield and Denny Casey helped create a new access extension from Mulberry to existing Frank Wilson park trail.



Screen on the Green—September 24, 2010  
Held at Hooker Field featuring the movie “Happy Feet” with eco-friendly crafts and educating games. Master Naturalist volunteers assisting were Tamara Poles, Christy Deatherage, Glenda Hairston, Rachael Wingfield and Dennis Reeves.



## 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](mailto:arpritchett@comcast.net)

## VOLUNTEER HOURS

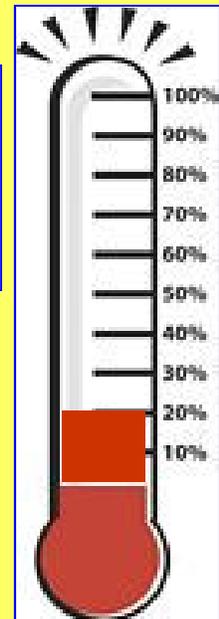
Volunteer hours reported as of September 30, 2010:

Administration- **80.5** hours  
Advanced Training- **69.5** hours  
Citizen Science- **74** hours  
Education- **143** hours  
Stewardship- **8.5** hours  
Total- **375.5** hours

Report all volunteer hours to  
Christy Deatherage  
[turkeyball@comcast.net](mailto:turkeyball@comcast.net)  
276-627-6276

**2010 CHAPTER GOAL:**

**2000 VOLUNTEER HOURS**



## **“Good Green, Bad Green” Conference Report— Kathy Fell**

In October, I attended the “Good Green, Bad Green” conference in Front Royal, Virginia. Approximately 150 attendees included a mix of forestry professionals and volunteers from several states.

We learned about the impact of invasive plants and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques to control them. IPM uses multiple approaches to manage local containment of invasive species, where eradication is not cost effective. These approaches include chemicals, biological controls, and mechanical approaches. It is important to understand the particular problem species and how it propagates to target the best management approach. For plants that reproduce by seed, control measures should occur before seed set. Any material that may have produced seeds must be removed. Management must continue until the seed bank is exhausted. For plants that spread vegetatively, chemicals or bio-controls are the best option. Management must continue until the root reserves are exhausted.

Most invasives reproduce by multiple means. Removing one invasive species often leaves an opening for another to move in. An effective management plan includes replanting with a desired species. They recommend waiting a year before replanting, to allow for additional treatments if required. We also learned about the impact of global warming on invasives. Many invasives are more aggressive in warmer climates and in higher concentrations of carbon dioxide.

We went on a number of field trips to see restoration projects in progress. We saw test fields where autumn olive is being controlled by fire, adjacent to control fields. We learned about the new pesticides that target plants with specific amino acids. We met the Eco-goats, who eat anything. We visited test areas in the forest, where the impact of deer is on invasive plants is being studied. It was amazing to see the invasive plants stop at the fence line. When tree saplings are not eaten, they provide effective competition to eliminate the woodland invasive plants.

We learned about “Social Marketing”, through a presentation on the Plant Native campaign on the eastern shore. The goal of Social Marketing is to change people’s behavior. Desired behaviors are defined and impediments are understood and addressed. The goal of the Plant Native campaign is to have the local citizens plant native species in their gardens and along the shore line. Marketing addressed misconceptions about native plants and worked with the local nurseries to assure an adequate supply. Community members are now very proud that their lovely gardens are also helping with local conservation efforts.

Our last field trip was to a private 720 acre preserve. Here, 500 acres of horse pasture have been taken out of production, replaced by a spectacular meadow of wildflowers and native grasses that sprang to life from dormant seeds.

**For details about the conference: <http://forestryforthebay.org/ggbg/>**

**See Good Green, Bad Green Photo Gallery, next page!**

## Good Green Bad Green Photo Gallery—Photos by Kathy Fell



### Eco-Goats (left)

Are all "girl goats". The girls are fenced with invasive plants and munch away.

### Deer Fence (right)

Deer Fence on the Smithsonian property. Invasives outside the fence, young trees and wild flowers inside.



### Jones Farm (left)

A native wildflower and grass meadow that sprang up from the dormant seed bank.

### Smithsonian Farm (right)

Autumn olive grows where the test burn plot ends. In the distance, there are some fields where they are trying to grow native warm-season grasses to feed the zoo animals. They said that horses are fussy and only eat high protein grasses that are "too rich" for most zoo animals.



**BUTCH and TERRY FREELAND:  
Finding Serenity in Nature  
Interviewed by Lynn Pritchett**

*Last December, the Southwestern Piedmont Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists organization graduated its third annual Basic Training class. So far, thirty-seven people have completed the 40-hour training course and most of them have chosen to pursue certification by completing an additional 8 hours of advanced training and 40 hours of volunteer service. As part of its publicity outreach, the chapter board decided to interview recent graduates to assess how they felt about the training curriculum, and if it created a desire for continuing education and volunteer service.*



Butch and Terry Freeland graduated from last year's class. Since this married couple exemplified the spirit that the program was meant to develop, a call was made to schedule an interview with them. Butch quickly agreed to be interviewed, but Terry's first reaction was "No Way!" Her husband suggested a follow up call the next day after they talked it over. When called back, Terry was excited and ready to be interviewed. She had changed her mind after thinking about how interesting and fun the Master Naturalist training program had been for her and how much it had helped her.

During the interview, Butch and Terry explained how the basic training course had given them a new sense of discovery. They've found new friends, fascinating activities, and helpful connections. They've found other people in other volunteer organizations in the community and throughout the state. Most importantly to them, both reported a new appreciation of the natural beauty "out their own backdoor and just around the bend" and wherever they go

Terry Freeland is a modest, unassuming person, who describes herself as "shy". Butch is very extroverted. Even with her husband beside her, when they came for the first day of class, she was nervous. Butch appreciated Loretta Niblett, the museum security guard, for being "a really, really friendly person." Terry said Loretta's big welcoming smile melted away her fears when she opened the door and greeted them. The spirit of welcome and inclusiveness continued in the classroom. Christy Deatherage, 2009 chapter president, was "especially open and sweet". The Freelands already knew, liked and admired many of their classmates. Several had stressful jobs, and they found class an opportunity to unwind, relax and enjoy new kinds of educational experiences. As the Freelands met other master naturalists from prior classes, Terry realized "We didn't know there were other classes full of more wonderful people."

Drawing together a community of like-minded people, the Master Naturalist program creates a strong social network. Butch and Terry learned about the efforts of many other organizations devoting time, money, knowledge and energy to improve the natural environment. They were introduced to community volunteers like Dr. David Jones in the Trout in the Classroom program, and the activity of other organizations like the Dan River Basin Association. Butch concluded "Those people [needing volunteers] are going to be glad that there's a lot of us around!"

The Freelands were impressed with the knowledge of the course instructors. Butch noted these teachers were "real smart," adding "Well, the good news is that teachers in the programs are experts in their field. If you ask a question, they can answer it." Terry chimed in "or they can tell you how to find it."  
(continued on next page)

### **BUTCH AND TERRY FREELAND (continued)**

Because many of our chapter's instructors are community residents, and some are curators at the local natural history museum, the Freelands are encouraged by the quality and availability of the expert help that can support their activities.

One benefit of basic and subsequent advanced training is relief of fears and phobias. For example, although Terry is afraid of snakes, she and Butch attended Reptile Day at the Virginia Museum of Natural History. Although the snakes terrified her, she watched professionals handle them out in the open in a respectful and competent manner. Although she would not voluntarily handle a snake, the little extra familiarity now helps her feel a little more safe and confident around them.

One particular instructor has helped her overcome her shyness. Dr. Richard Hoffman teaches the entomology class for basic training. She marveled at how he displayed great respect for the life of the tiniest living bugs and all critters. She watched how gently, quietly and unassumedly he would bend over to scratch aside ground cover as he searched for centipedes on a field trip.

Terry recognized Dr. Hoffman in a scientific publication she found in the waiting room of her workplace. She boldly approached him at Snow's Sandwich Shop with a copy for his autograph. "Do you know he wrote?" She continued, "'Please respect our reptiles.' He knows I hate snakes. Well, I did use to hate them. Because of Dr. Hoffman, I look at them differently. They're just trying to live too. He has been wonderful, and is a good friend."



**Freelands on the Smith River—June 19, 2010**

(Photo by Lynn Pritchett)

The Freelands have actively pursued advanced training. They have attended lectures at the Reynolds Homestead; the bluebird lecture at the Museum of Natural History; the coyote lecture at the Philpott Lake Visitor Center.

"We have so much beauty here", say Terry. "Our Smith River, our streams, our wildlife, our mountains, our forests...times are tough, but taking a walk outside doesn't cost anything. We just need to take care of it and enjoy it. Get our children outside. We grew up in the country, and there wasn't anything to do. Our pasture had a creek, and my brother and I would catch crayfish. Being outside was my entertainment. I want our children to appreciate what we have that doesn't cost anything, and to take care of it." Reviewing her notes for the interview, Terry summarized, "Even though our

town is going through a terrible time economically, we have so much here that doesn't cost anything. Just get outside and take care of it. Don't litter, watch your chemicals, don't clearcut."

The Freelands' appreciation for the natural world found its focus by participation as Master Naturalist volunteers. The Freelands are interested in establishing a new chapter stewardship project involving clean up of the Doe Run Park on Dupont Road. Sitting at the bench in the creek bottom at the park, Terry experienced the magic of the sound of the water running over the rocks. It "takes away all your problems. Right here in Martinsville, who would have thought you could find something so peaceful as clusters of blooming rhododendron, the sunbeams filtering through the tree canopy...and it doesn't cost a thing."

Through their efforts and activities, Butch and Terry Freeland embody the mission of the Southwestern Piedmont Chapter's efforts to create a corps of volunteers dedicated to "providing education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities."

## CHAPTER CALENDAR OF EVENTS—October thru December 2010

October 2, 2010 12 noon-2:00PM Open Park Day at Frank Wilson Park (stewardship)

October 7, 2010 5:30PM-7:30PM Chapter Board Meeting at President Kathy Fell's home.

October 21, 2010 6:00PM-7:00PM Chapter Meeting at VMNH

October 30, 2010 9:00AM-12:00PM Clean-Up at Frank Wilson Park (stewardship)  
12:30PM Chapter Picnic Fairystone State Park

Nov. 3, 2010 5:30PM-7:30PM Chapter Board Meeting at President Kathy Fell's home.

Nov. 20, 2010 10:00AM-until Hike at Fairystone Park in lieu of Chapter Meeting . Bring lunch. Gather at Shelter 3 - Allied Block Shelter. Chapter members asked to gather at 9:45 for brief business announcements.

November 23, 2010 2010 6:00PM Training Class Presentation at VMNH.

December 2, 2010 Chapter Board Meeting at President Kathy Fell's home.

December 16, 2010 6:00PM Chapter Meeting at VMNH. Potluck holiday party.

**January 2011 Annual Meeting 6:00PM at VMNH. Election of new Chapter Officers and Presentation of Certificates of Achievement.**

## Photos of New 4.5 Mile Dick & Willie Passage in Martinsville



At left, visitors try out the trail Monday, October 11, 2010 on foot and on two wheels. The paved trail is wide enough for walkers and bicyclists. (Bulletin Photo by Mike Wray)



Photos of Autumn along Dick & Willie Passage by Lynn Pritchett.

