



**Virginia
Master
Naturalist**
Southwestern Piedmont Chapter

2014 OFFICERS

Teresa Prillaman, President

Lynn Regan, Vice-President

Denny Casey, Treasurer

Jessica Driver, Secretary

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Brian Phillips, Volunteer

Service Projects

Jessica Phillips, Membership

Linda Drage, Newsletter Editor

Paul May, Host

Joy Cartwright, Basic Training

Tiffany Haworth, Outreach

Lynn Regan, Program Committee

Southwestern Piedmont

Master Naturalists

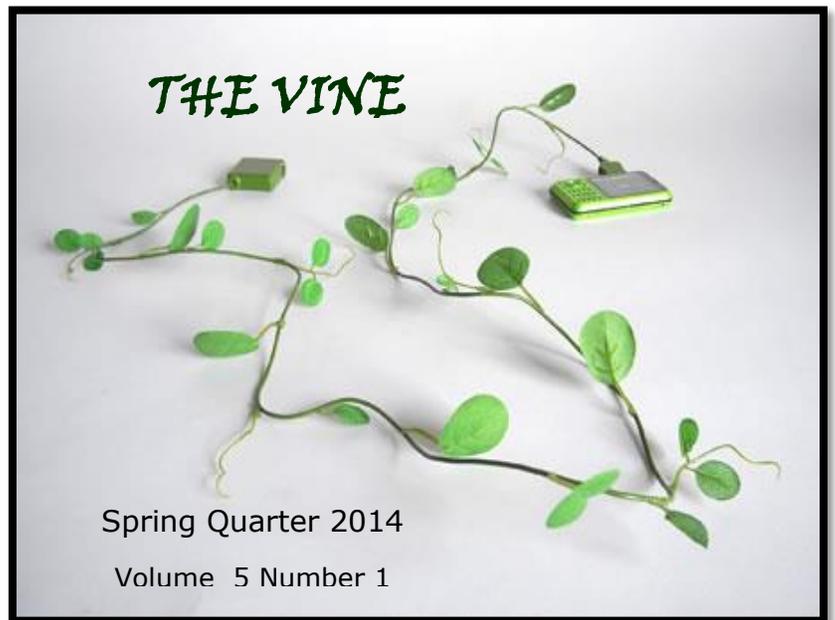
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Chapter Advisor

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Chapter Webpage

<http://www.vmnh.net/virginia-master-naturalist-program>



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Chapter Members are encouraged to submit reports of Chapter or State Virginia Master Naturalist events, articles of special interest and photographs for inclusion in *The Vine* newsletter. The Chapter Board reserves the right to select and approve content of the newsletter. Written submissions must be of original composition, and free of copyright infringement. All photographs submitted must be taken by members or trainees in good standing with the Southwestern Piedmont Master Naturalist chapter.

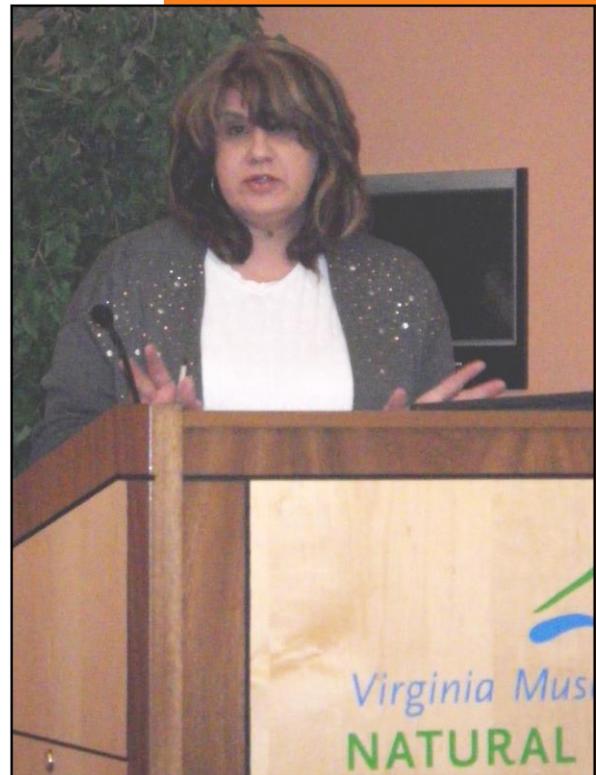
President's Message

Winter in Martinsville Henry County has been especially cold and snowy. The leaves are now beginning to show and the bright colors of spring will soon fill the landscape.

Yes, spring is here and I hope all the members will join together for some exciting projects. In my past experiences, time spent volunteering can be as diverse and exciting as you want it to be. As members, your expertise and life experiences can always benefit projects that our chapter and partners are planning and completing. Being a Southern Piedmont Virginia Master Naturalist has given me incredible volunteer opportunities and a great sense of accomplishment. I hope you have experienced this as well.

We have several new members from our great Class of 2013. I ask that you volunteer at every opportunity and attend every training session available; you will not be disappointed. And to the members who have not been able to attend our meetings or volunteer for a while, come back and meet our many new members.

The committees have been planning great opportunities for everyone to volunteer and learn in the upcoming months. There is something for everyone to enjoy! I hope to see everyone there...



Teresa Prillaman, Chapter President

ANNUAL RECOGNITION DINNER

Basic Training Graduates Celebrated & Chapter Members Certified.

Report Submitted by Ashby Pritchett

The Southwestern Piedmont Virginia Master Naturalists Chapter welcomed ten new graduates of the Basic Training Class as new chapter members at the annual chapter meeting on January 16, 2014 held at the Virginia Museum of Natural History. Training requires 40 hours of time in classroom and field trips.

<http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/training.html>

Certification requirements include both 40 hours of volunteer time and 8 hours of advanced training per year.

Teresa Prillaman, Chapter President, presided over the meeting portion of the Annual Recognition Dinner. A few Chapter members were recognized for reaching thresholds of volunteer service during 2013:

Mary Foster – 500 volunteer hours;

Kathy Fell – 250 volunteer hours;

Lynn Pritchett – 250 volunteer hours;

Lizz Stanley – 250 volunteer hours; and

Teresa Prillaman – 250 volunteer hours.



New graduates are: Joy Cartwright, Christopher Tillely, Stacey Reed, Ellen Jessee, and Christine Boran.

Not pictured Michael Davidson, Shaun Gooden, Ryan Bowman, Holly Stewart and Adrian Hermes.



Newly certified as Virginia Master Naturalists and Recertified (are in blue):

Evalyn Chapman, Mary Foster, Tiffany Haworth, Lynn Pritchett, Lynn Regan, Linda Drage, Dottie Haley, Teresa Prillaman, John Prillaman, Paul May, Kathy Fell, Jesse Powell, and Ashby Pritchett. Not pictured are: **Lizz Stanley, Samantha Tiber, Brian Phillips, Jessica Phillips, Noel Boaz, and Janine Howard.**

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ANNUAL RECOGNITION DINNER(Continued)

Also on the 2014 Ballot was a proposed Bylaws change to Article IV Membership, section G, number 2, changing the date Chapter dues are payable. Change approved by affirmative vote:

"Dues Schedule: Dues shall be payable in advance of the first day of January each fiscal year. If dues are not paid by January 31st each fiscal year, then all privileges afforded all chapter members are rescinded until dues are paid."

After dinner, certification announcements and election of officers and committee chairs, display tables were set up to invite all Chapter members to sign up for work on one or more of seven major committees:

Host Committee

Membership Committee

Volunteer Service Projects Committee

Basic Training Committee

Program/Advanced Training Committee

Publicity/Outreach

Newsletter

End of Report

Special guests were recognized during the meeting:

Brian Miller, site Manager at Eastman Chemical Company – Eastman has allowed placement of bluebird boxes on its grounds.

Wayne Kirkpatrick, member of Dan River Basin Association – trains Master Naturalists in water safety monitoring.

The Election of new Officers for 2014 was conducted during the meeting. The slate of candidates was approved and the following persons were elected:

Teresa Prillaman, President

Lynn Regan, Vice-President

Denny Casey, Treasurer

Jessica Driver, Secretary

Noel Boaz, Chair of Advanced Training Committee

Brian Phillips, Chair of Volunteer Service Projects Committee

Jessica Phillips, Chair of Membership Committee

Linda Drage, Chair of Newsletter Committee

Paul May, Chair of Host Committee

Joy Cartwright, Chair of Basic Training Committee

Tiffany Haworth, Chair of Outreach Committee



Bluebird Nest Boxes Placed at Eastman Chemical Company

Martinsville, Va. -- Eastman Chemical Company, in partnership with two local organizations, has placed four bluebird nest boxes around the grounds of the administration building of its facilities in Martinsville/Henry County, Va. The members of local Boy Scout Troop 63 donated the materials and labor to build the nest boxes, while the cost of the mounting and guarding materials was shared by Eastman and the Southwestern Piedmont Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalist. The boxes will be monitored by Eastman team members.

About Eastman

Eastman is a global specialty chemical company that produces a broad range of products found in items people use every day. With a portfolio of specialty businesses, Eastman works with customers to deliver innovative products and solutions while maintaining a commitment to safety and sustainability. Its market-driven approaches take advantage of world-class technology platforms and leading positions in attractive end-markets such as transportation, building and construction and consumables. Eastman focuses on creating consistent, superior value for all stakeholders. As a globally diverse company, Eastman serves customers in approximately 100 countries and had 2012 pro forma combined revenues, giving effect to the Solutia acquisition, of approximately \$9.1 billion. The company is headquartered in Kingsport, Tennessee, USA and employs approximately 14,000 people around the world. For more information, visit www.eastman.com.



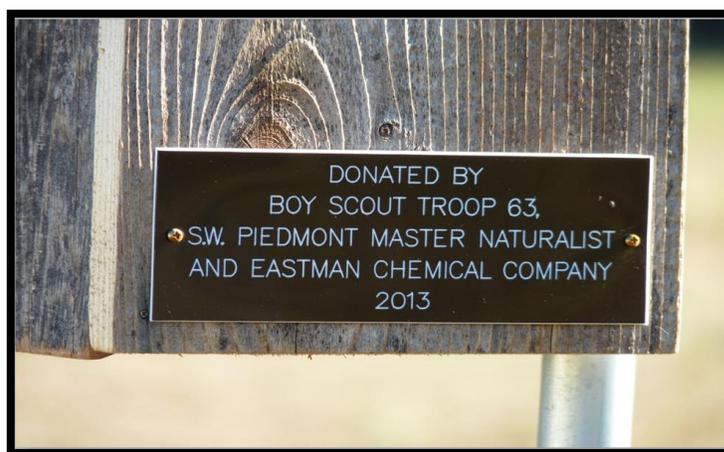
Corbin Stone and Daniel Peay work on assembling nest boxes.

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Bluebird Nest Boxes Placed at Eastman Chemical Company (Continued)



Pictured around a newly installed Eastman nest box from left to right (Scout Troop 63 representatives - Daniel Peay, Dr. Craig Dietrich- Troop Leader, Sean Peay, Corbin Stone, Eastman Representatives -Rocky Fizzano- Principal Engineer and Boy Scout District Representative, Dottie Haley - Advanced Quality Representative , Virginia Bluebird Society nest box monitor and Southwestern Piedmont Master Naturalist member and Jay Hudson – Global Business Manager and Boy Scout Troop 166 Committee Chair. Photo by Joe Richard - Eastman Principal Global MTS Technical Service Representative.



Tags on the side of each Eastman box show the names of the partnering organizations. Photo by Joe Richard.

End of Report submitted by Dottie Haley.



Twenty bird enthusiasts gathered at the VMNH on February 1 for a presentation entitled "Welcome Back, Bluebirds" given by Christine Boran. Although Christine is a newly trained Virginia Master Naturalist, she has been involved with bluebirds since 2006 and a Virginia Bluebird Society member since 2007. She is the current State Coordinator for the Virginia Bluebird Society and County Coordinator for Floyd and Patrick Counties and monitors a trail comprised of 34 nest boxes around her home in Woolwine.

Bluebirds are members of the thrush family and cousins to the well known robin. Our native bluebirds are the Eastern Bluebirds. The concept of nest boxes and nest box monitoring was initiated by the North American Bluebird Society in the late 70's. Bluebirds are secondary cavity nesters and commonly use abandoned woodpecker holes as nesting sites. The natural habitat for bluebirds began to quickly disappear.

Open farmland was becoming much less prevalent due to sprawl, dead trees and snags were removed, and wooden fence posts were being replaced by more durable plastic and metal. The abundant use of pesticides and herbicides was killing the adult birds and their young. Competition for food with non-native bird species such as house sparrows and European starlings, harsh winters and scarce winter food supply (berries and fruits) took their toll on the bluebird population. Observant bird enthusiasts could tell that the bluebird population was on a sharp decline and began looking for ways to reverse the trend before it was too late.

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Welcome Back, Bluebirds (Continued)

Christine explained the typical nesting cycle of the bluebird and noted that two to three broods per year are typical for a pair of bluebirds. Nest building begins in March or April and takes 5 to 10 days. The female lays one egg per day for three to six days. She incubates the eggs for about 2 weeks before they hatch. She will continue to brood or warm the newly hatched chicks for eight days. The male and female both take part in feeding the young up to five times in an hour. The young birds fledge after 16 to 20 days and become totally self sufficient six weeks.

If you would like more information on bluebirds or nest box monitoring, please contact Christine Boran (276) 930-9963, woolwinehouse@gmail.com or Dottie Haley (276)666-1071, ctha-ley@embarqmail.com.



Display boards set up as part of the presentation.

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Welcome Back, Bluebirds(Continued)



Nests of birds that commonly inhabit nest boxes.

Written by Dottie Haley

Past President, SWPMN

Henry County Coordinator, Virginia Bluebird Society

CLAWS at Raywood Landscape Center

Local chapter members attended a presentation given by CLAWS at Raywood Landscape Center on February 22. It was an amazing experience to be so close to these majestic birds that we know are all around us but we rarely get to see up close and personal. Ages of the attendees ranged from toddler to senior citizen.

CLAWS (Creative Learning About Wildlife), based in Chapel Hill, NC is primarily a rescue operation but also has a goal of educating the public to live in harmony with the local wildlife. Another main purpose of the organization is to rescue exotic pets that people no longer want in order to find safe and permanent homes for them. The birds displayed during the presentation were animals who were rehabilitated but not to the point that they could be released back into the wild. When this happens, the rehabilitator has two choices - humanely euthanize the animal or use it for educational purposes. Sadly, a large number of the birds that were displayed were the victims of gunshot wounds.

Following are some interesting bird facts brought out during the presentation:

Ravens and crows are thought to be among the smartest birds with the same intelligence level as a gifted 4 year old.

The larger the bird is, the longer their life expectancy. Larger hawks and owls have an expected life span of about 35 to 40 years.

These large raptor birds have a phenomenal grip pressure. Great Horned Owls exert about 1,000 lbs of pressure in their grip.

Birds with yellow eyes are diurnal; birds with dark eyes are nocturnal.

Eastern screech owls are crepuscular - hunting only at dawn and dusk in order to avoid the nocturnal as well as diurnal larger birds of prey.



Red Tailed Hawk



Eastern Screech Owl

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CLAWS at Raywood Landscape Center(Continued)

Peregrine Falcons are the fastest member of the animal kingdom traveling at 200+ mph. The wings of fighter planes were fashioned after its V shaped wings. This species almost went extinct in the 60's due to the use of DDT.

For more information on the CLAWS organization, visit <http://www.nc-claws.org/>.

If you are interested in helping with the cause, visit <http://www.nc-claws.org/index.php/help-claws>.

Submitted by Dottie Haley,
Certified Master Naturalist



Red Shouldered Hawk



Barred Owl



Barn Owl



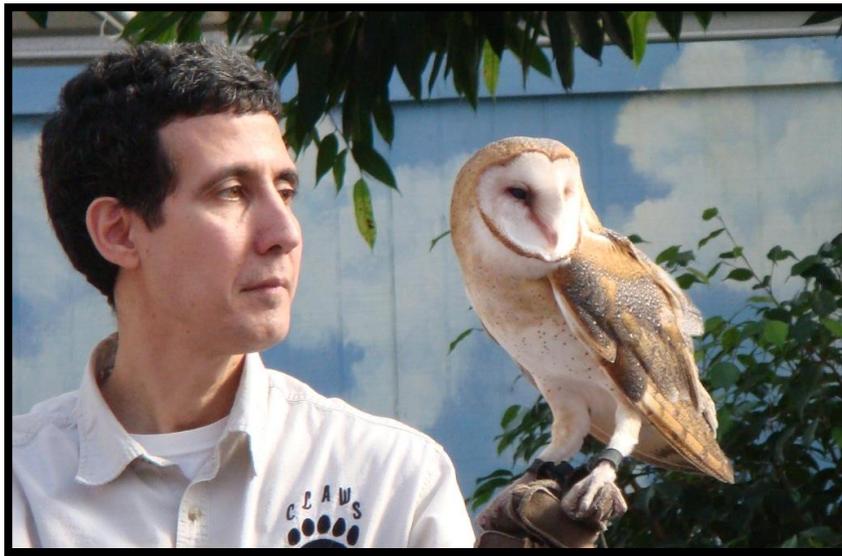
Great Horned Owl

Raptors at Raywood Nursery

Submitted by Kathy Fell

I made the trip to Danville, on Saturday February 22nd, to see the program on Raptors at Raywood Nursery. It was well worth the trip!

We heard from Tanya Lovern, who is a licensed wildlife rehabilitator in Danville. She owns the Southside Virginia Wildlife center and serves a 5 county area, including Henry County. Last year, they successfully treated and released 327 critters. See <http://critterrescue.wix.com/tanyascritterrescue> to learn more or to report an injured animal.



Barred Owl

Photo submitted by Kathy Fell

Kendra Mammone is a licensed wildlife rehabilitator from Chapel Hill, NC. She brought a number of raptors from her rehabilitation center so we could get a rare, up close look at these fabulous birds.

We were treated to the antics of Grip, an African Raven, who enjoyed being photographed on the arms of young children. We saw a Red Tailed Hawk, a Red Shouldered Hawk, an American Kestrel, and a Barbary Falcon.

The owls included a Great Horned Owl, a Barred Owl, a Barn Owl and a tiny Screech Owl who scolded so quietly, you could barely hear her. Kendra answered lots of questions from a packed audience about the life expectancy and diet of each of the different species and the injuries suffered by each bird that prevented their release back into the wild. Find out more about Kendra and Claws, Inc. at <http://www.nc-claws.org/>

Blue Ridge Foothills Chapter Visit and Unwanted!

Invasive Insects of Concern of Virginia

By Lynn Regan

On March 15, the museum hosted a Master Naturalist double header. At 1 o'clock, Denny Casey gave a personal tour of the museum to over 20 of neighboring MNs based in Franklin and Bedford Counties. Later in the afternoon, about 20 of our chapter joined them in Walker Hall for refreshments. A hearty thank you to our Host Committee for putting on such a fine yummy spread (with very short notice, I -- might add).



We also look forward to having some joint programs in the future with the Blue Ridge Foothills Chapter. Currently, we're looking at paleo, botanical, and geology field trips. Anyone with a keen interest in any of these topics is welcome to help the Program Committee (contact myself or Lynn Pritchett).



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Unwanted! Invasive Insects of Concern of Virginia (Continuing Ed.) (continued)



Jessica Driver presented a fantastic talk on Invasive insects.

After we had our fill and chatted it up, Jessica Driver presented a fantastic talk on Invasive insects. It was a very informative and entertaining presentation, and we all learned a lot. Along with the talk, we were introduced to 5 new volunteer projects – if you were unable to attend, please take a look at the Project list to see if any of these projects would appeal to you – help us, help our partners.

After the talk, Jessica and many of the group headed outdoors to the park to get up close and personal with the pesty buggers and see first hand the damage they can do. Thank you all – it was a very memorable and successful program.

END OF REPORT



In Memory of Ellen Compton-Gooding

The 2014 class lost a dedicated naturalist with the loss of Ellen Compton-Gooding. Ellen was a long time outstanding leader of the Girl Scouts. She loved the outdoors and teaching children about nature and respect for the environment. She was previously employed by the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Virginia Museum of Natural History, where she worked in the Paleontology Department.

Ellen helped for several years with the Chapter by helping me with presentations and reports. She often made suggestions and showed interest in the work of the master naturalist. After speaking to her about the training class, she was so excited about joining the Southwestern Piedmont Master Naturalist and we spent hours talking about the projects we were going to work on. She was thrilled that her daughter Sian and she were going to complete the program together. I am very proud that Sian completed the program last year.

~ Teresa Prillaman

We had the fortunate opportunity to meet Ellen when we helped host one of the Master Naturalist classes last year. Ellen was very energetic and had a fun loving sweet personality. We miss her and feel that Sian shares the same wonderful qualities as her mom. ~ Brian & Jessica Phillips



"While I did not have the honor of knowing Ellen personally, I feel I know her a bit through Sian, her beautiful, intelligent, loving daughter. I look forward to getting to know and love Sian more as we connect in nature, and I trust Ellen will be ever present with us"

~Lynn Regan

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Volunteer hours reported as of
March 31, 2014:

**2014 CHAPTER GOAL:
1000 VOLUNTEER HOURS**

Categories -

- Administration - 72
- Advanced Training - 59.2
- Citizen Science - 96.2
- Education - 91
- Stewardship - 6



Reported Total– 324.40 hours or 34% of Chapter Goal.

Thank you, volunteers!

Jessica Scott Phillips, Chair of Membership Committee

UPCOMING EVENTS

See Chapter Calendar

- April 12: Invasive Species & Group Project at the Physick Garden 10-1pm.
- April 26: "Earth Day Festival Smith River Sports Complex 10-3pm.
- May 3: Bug Day Festival at VMNH 9-4pm

DON'T FORGET TO LOG YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS FOR THE SPRING QUARTER 2014!

<https://viriniamn.volunteersystem.org/UniversalLogin.cfm>.

Have a new Volunteer Project in Mind?

Download a Volunteer Project Proposal Form from our Chapter's VMN [Volunteer Management System](#):

<https://viriniamn.volunteersystem.org/users/documents/20Forms151.doc>

Southwestern Piedmont
Chapter Website:

<http://www.vmn.net/virginia-master-naturalist-program> .

Click on "Calendar of Events" to see what other things we are doing!

