



Roanoke Valley Master Naturalists Quarterly Meeting
Sunday January 15, 2012
Virginia Department of Forestry Office, Salem

Attendance: Beth Hawse , Nancy Fabian, Bill Fabian, Jim Bush, Pat Taylor, James Clark, Christina Koomen, Dennis Woodson, Denny McCarthy, Bob Peckman, Kris Peckman, Sharon Vest(12)

Call to Order: The general membership meeting was called to order at 3:21 PM by Beth Hawse.

Old Business

✓ **Secretary's Report** - Bill Fabian briefly outlined updates from old business including the acceptance of the new Upper James and Roanoke rivers watersheds steam monitoring project.

✓ **Treasurer's Report (Bill Fabian for Ann Stinnett)** - Ann, absent due to illness had reported to Bill that the previous balance of \$ 658.53, was increased to a current balance of \$ 782.53 after deposit of \$124.00 from hat sales.

✓ **Other Old Business -**

- Letters to members with an update on each member's needs for completion of their certification were sent to all members in November so they could verify hours and class needs to complete certification.

- Denny McCarthy had completed the annual report with the volunteer hours, and stated that the chapter had achieved a number of certifications and one recertification. Beth Hawse talked about the earlier decision to fund name tags for those individuals who had achieved certification status, and Denny agreed to send the list to Anne Stinnett to order the name tags.

- Denny McCarthy stated that he had compiled a listing of everyone in the chapter with all the contact information he had on them, and passed around the list for members to correct and/or update their information. The list is enclosed, so if anyone has correction or update,s send them to Denny at dennis.mccarthy@dof.virginia.gov.

- Beth Hawse and Bill Fabian reported on the DGIF permit training that they, along with Ellen Holtzman, had attended in December in Charlottesville. There are four basic permits that we as a Master Naturalist chapter might need to be concerned with:

1. DGIF Scientific Research and Collection Permits (SCRCP) – this permit applies to vertebrate non-game species. Collection is defined as removal from or disturbance of natural habitat, albeit private land is excepted where disturbance is involved.
2. DGIF Exhibiter's Permit (needed when exhibiting living things)- Exhibits for this purpose are those that are open for public display, i.e. animals collected under an



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SCRIP that are not displayed in a public environment do not need an Exhibiter's permit.

3. DGIF Salvage Permit (needed when collecting dead things and parts of dead things)- Parts of dead things includes nests and other species modified habitats, e.g. a beaver lodge.
 4. Federal USFWS Scientific Collection Permit (needed in addition to the DGIF permit(s) when collecting birds and/or bird parts/nests). Invasive species are excepted from this requirement, unless they are considered threatened or endangered.
- Discussion as to our Chapter's requirements ensued. Beth recommended that for Exhibits where we wanted to use borrowed live or salvaged artifacts that were already under a permit, such as the materials at the Douthat State Park Nature's Outpost, that we become sub-permit holders with a list of all our members included on the sub-permit. This would entail ensuring that we monitor our membership and mod all existing lists as membership changed. She suggested that become part of the Secretary's duties.
 - We discussed the costs of the permits, which were nominal and well within the budgetary constraints of the Chapter, and Sharon Vest made a motion that we get the permit applications initiated. Beth seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Bill Fabian volunteered to draft the application(s).

New Business

✓ Beth brought up that there was a new policy about claiming travel hours as volunteer time. Starting January 1st 2012, travel time to and from volunteer sites can be considered as volunteer hours, but not travel time to and from training. Beth mentioned that common sense needed to be applied, i.e. the policy was intended for travel to volunteer sites in your local area, such that claiming 3 hours of travel time to a site across state for one hour of work, and three hours of travel back would be frowned upon. While no specific guidance as to the percentage of travel time would be allowed per year against the 40 hours of volunteer time required, the Virginia Master Naturalist Volunteer Policy Handbook (www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/documents) was expected to provide such guidance when it was updated to reflect the new policy. She said we could use the comments filed in the time sheet to notate how many hours we were claiming for travel time on each entry, until the time sheet form was updated to explicitly identify where such entries should be made. Beth also stated that the hours spent at the quarterly chapter meetings could be counted as administrative volunteer hours as well.



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✓ Beth also stated that the new automated time sheet should be available to our chapter soon, and that we should all endeavor to keep our hours on the web based application for the 2012 year. Bill Fabian was asked to mail the instructions out to all Chapter members, and those present received a paper copy. The instructions indicate that each member will receive an e-mail from the system with the information for initially logging in, and setting up their account. Denny said there was a little more information he needed to provide to get our chapter's members into the system, but that should be done soon, and we could expect to start using it at that time. Members should be on the lookout for e-mail from the "Virginia Master Naturalist Volunteer Management System (VMN-VMS).

- Beth announced that she was no longer working for Douthat State Park, as she had accepted a position with the VCE. She provided a new e-mail address for members to use: bhawse@vt.edu.

- Bill Fabian brought up the idea of creating a monthly newsletter to supplement the quarterly meetings, and facilitate communications between members about opportunities to participate in training and volunteer events. The idea was well received, however, discussion noted that someone in the group would need to put forth the effort to gather input and create the newsletter. No motions to proceed were made.

Subcommittee Reports

✓ **Executive Committee Report (Beth Hawse)** – Beth Hawse stated that due to the length of time we took for training, that we would include any executive committee business with the general membership meeting in session.

✓ **Membership/Marketing Committee Report (Christina Koomen)**- Christina reported that Laurie Spangler had coordinated a very nice display for the Blue Ridge Library. Discussions ensued about what other types of events we thought we might be able to put something together for.

- Beth Hawse suggested that Family Fun Day at the YMCA in April.
- Sharon Vest brought up the Children's Festival at the Tanglewood Mall as a good opportunity.
- Dennis McCarthy suggested that we determine the purpose for each exhibit and modify the display accordingly. For example, we could have one display for kids educational purposes, another configuration for recruitment of new members
- Nancy Fabian reported that she had solicited photos for the display board from the Chapter, but had not gotten any response. She asks that anyone who has photos of events where they had volunteered to please send them to her at nfabian@ntelos.net. She also requested and received the



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flyers that Denny McCarthy had gotten from Michelle Prysbee to include as display handouts, so she could make them available for farmers markets and other venues..

✓ **Curriculum Committee Report (Lynda Calkins)** Linda was unable to attend the meeting, so no report was available. Bill Fabian and Ann Stinnett are participating on this committee. Additional members interested in participating on the committee may contact Lynda for details.

- Bill Fabian mentioned that he had contacted Mike LaChance, an entomologist who worked for Virginia Tech, in December about conducting an entomology class both as a make up for last year's class, as well as for the curriculum for the upcoming 2012 class. Mike had indicated that he would be interested in conducting the classes, but Bill had not heard back from him yet on specific dates and times Mike might be available for the make-up class.

✓ **Advanced Training/Project committee report (Fred Walters).** Fred was unable to attend the meeting, but prior to the meeting start, James Clark had arranged for advanced training that was conducted by Bill Hunley on ecological topics. Areas that were highlighted included:

- Relationships between plants and animals in which he described three kinds of symbiosis:
 1. ++ (plus-plus), where both parties benefit such as the relationship between flowers and pollinators.
 2. +- (plus-minus), i.e. parasitism, where one party benefits to the harm of another, such as mistletoe sucking the nutrients from the cambium layer of trees.
 3. +0 (plus-neutral), where one party benefits, albeit without harming the other party it was benefiting from, e.g., Spanish Moss using trees as a growth site to augment its light availability.

- This led to discussion of predatory relationships where one party kills the other for food, such as seed predators like squirrels and birds. Fruiting on plants provides for a symbiotic like relationship between species, since not only is food provided for the predator, but the reproductive success of the plants is enhanced by the spreading of its seeds beyond the immediate locality of the parent plant thus reducing competition between parent and progeny, and providing a wider habitat range for the species. Examples discussed included mammals like bears, foxes, raccoons and opossums eating berries, and seeds like persimmons and paw paws, and squirrels hoarding acorns and nuts by burying (planting) them. Bill talked about different masting strategies developed by oak families which complimented the behaviors of their animal seed predators.

✓ Poisons or Toxins produced by the plant world in their defense was discussed as a protection from predators, and the fact that we have adapted many of these toxins for medicinal purposes.



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Animals also take advantage of these toxins using zoopharmacognosy, the process by which non-Human animals self-medicate, by selecting and using plants, soils, and insects to treat and prevent disease. Animals use these plants and insects in a range of gastronomic and topical ways to rid themselves of worms, fleas, ticks as well as other parasites, and will ingest bacteria to aid in digestion.

- Finally, Bill Hunley discussed a number of plant species that had developed characteristics which seemed to be a mystery as to their survival benefit, but could be explained as leftover traits from a time when much larger now extinct animals, such as mammoths, mastodons, and tree sloths could have ingested their seeds and disbursed them through fecal matter. Osage orange, honey locust and Paw Paw may at one time have been much more widespread than today. Some species, such as the avocado, with its very large seed, may have been saved through human cultivation.

Upcoming Advanced Training

Ideas for advanced training were discussed:

- Jim Bush suggested that Mike Donahue, “Mr. Butterfly”, could provide a class on butterflies.
- Beth Hawse suggested that the class on entomology that Mike LaChance would present could be used for advanced training for those members who didn’t need it for their basic curriculum.
- It was suggested that the mushroom training that had been lined up last year, but that had to be cancelled seemed to have had a lot of interest, and that we should see if we couldn’t get that re-scheduled.

Volunteer Projects

- Bill Fabian mentioned that the new Chapter project for stream monitoring of the Upper James and Roanoke rivers’ watersheds had been approved. The project was formed in conjunction with Virginia Save our Streams (VA SOS) organization, which would provide monitor training and establish stream sites for monitoring. Anyone interested in getting trained and certified as a stream monitor could contact Bill Fabian who would put them in touch with the appropriate VA SOS coordinator, i.e. Wes Jargowsky for the Roanoke River watershed, and/or Jay Gillem for the Upper James.
- Beth Hawse discussed other ideas for other projects including the opportunity to volunteer at 4H summer camp at the Smith Mountain Lake 4H center for a week at a time and get your entire 40 hours in for the year. Interested members should contact Beth for whom to contact to volunteer for this opportunity.



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Remaining Meeting dates for 2012 (third Sunday of listed month)

Generally, the Executive committee meets at 2:30 and general membership meeting is at 3 PM.

- 2nd Quarter Apr 15
- 3rd Quarter July 15 (tentative picnic)
- 4th Quarter Oct 21

Adjournment of Meeting

James Clark motioned to adjourn the meeting, Nancy Fabian seconded the motion. All members were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by
Bill Fabian, Acting Secretary
Roanoke Valley Master Naturalists