



BUG BYTES

Newsletter for the Banshee Reeks Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalist Program

Website: www.vmnbansheereeks.org Email: vmnbansheereeks@gmail.com

President's Message

By Barbara Erlandson

Summertime...the time of year when all the committees kick into high gear. The Membership Committee is looking for new class members; the Training Committee is pulling together materials; the Host Committee is working on making the summer picnic a success; CE and Volunteer committees continue to find education and volunteer work for our members; Outreach is preparing materials for the fall events and the Communication Committee continues to keep us all informed of the many opportunities and news from our chapter. And there are so many wonderful volunteer opportunities: blue bird, kestrel and barn owl boxes to build and monitor, camera trapping, wildlife rehabilitation, leading nature walks and so much more. So join a committee or go into the VMS and find a project that speaks to your heart.

Summer is fleeting.

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200th Banshee Reeks Volunteer Day!

May 20th, 2017 marked the 200th (200!) volunteer day at Banshee Reeks. As readers of Bug Bytes are surely aware, there is a volunteer workday held at 9am every 3rd Saturday of the month. As our home base and just an amazing place, Banshee Reeks is a great place to volunteer.

There is always something interesting to work on and this workday proved no exception – a tree planting! Tree planting is one of my favorite types of habitat restoration. I love the thought of these tiny native trees growing into a forest; A forest to feed the caterpillars and house the birds. A forest filled with trees that will grow and live for many decades to come.

At the start, Ron spoke to the assembled volunteers – thanking them and talking about the history of the day. That was followed by a

SAVE THE DATES!
VMN Banshee Reeks Picnic
 Sunday, August 13th

Butterfly Count & Bat CE
 Saturday, August 5th

Native Plant Sale
 Saturday, September 9th

demonstration of proper planting technique by Kyle Dingus, state forester. The large turnout planted more than 100 native trees in 3 locations – many where the goats had cleared the invasive plants last year. Volunteers were treated to a special t-shirt commemorating the event.



Two of our favorite naturalists

Upcoming Bat CE

Bill Cour has arranged a real treat for the VMN Chapter on August 5th. Acclaimed [Dr. Sterbing-D'Angelo](#) will present a program on bats including bat detection and identification! The presentation starts at 7pm and at sunset will go to the Spring House pond looking for flying bats. She's a fantastic speaker with amusing anecdotes from her many years of research especially involving [Vampire Bats](#). Her most recent work is focused on applying some principles of bat sensory detection to aircraft.

Dragonflies

By *Bryan Henson*

Dragonflies are ancient; one extinct related species dates back about 300 million years. And they were big - imagine the Meganeura species flying in our modern world - it had a wingspan

over 2 feet! In today's world, they are no longer as large, but:

- They are found on all continents except Antarctica
- One species is known to migrate more than 4000 miles
- One species flies higher than 6km



Stream Bluets (*Enallagma exsulans*) damselflies mating in the wheel position – Bles Park



Calico Pennant (*Celithemis elisa*) dragonfly – Morven Park

Naiads

Dragonflies do not undergo metamorphosis like a butterfly, but they do experience a dramatic transformation. They start their lives underwater as a Naiad. As they are in the air, they are in the water - ferocious predators. They have a mouth part called the [labium they can pneumatically](#) extend almost the length of their body to capture prey. In fact, many dragonfly species spend the bulk (years!) of their life underwater and the adult stage we commonly

think of may just spend day or weeks outside of the water – mostly to reproduce. The naiads emerge to shed their skins (exuvia) and become the adult stage dragonfly we are more familiar with.

Diversity

When we talk of dragonflies, we often include everything in the order of Odonata (odonates or odes for short). The order is divided into 3 parts, but with two main groups – Anisoptera (Dragonflies) and Zygoptera (Damselflies). Dragonflies and damselflies are typically separated by resting wing position, body shape, wing shape, and eye position.

Odonata contains roughly 5000 species. Of these, [70+ species](#) have been found in Loudoun.

How to learn more

Hopefully, I have whetted your appetite to find out more about odes. One dragonfly enthusiast created a very detailed website about [dragonflies of Northern Virginia](#). Loudoun Wildlife typically does a dragonfly walk in the middle of the summer each year – this year it was June 24th. Huntley Meadows typically runs a dragonfly class and walk – this year it is on August 13th. ANS has a beginner dragonfly class and walk – this year it was held July 6/9th.

Some good field guides include:

- [Stokes Beginner's Guide To Dragonflies](#)
- [Dragonflies and Damselflies of Georgia and the Southeast](#)
- [Damselflies of the Northeast](#)

I'd highly recommend the Damselflies of the Northeast for damselfly identification in our area.

Old Field Guides? We'll Take 'Em!

Do you have field guides you're not using anymore? Moving away and don't need Virginia specific guides? Do you have three copies of Peterson's Guide to Eastern Forests but need only one? Consider donating any unneeded field guides to the Banshee Reeks VMN Chapter.

Your donation helps offset the costs of books for the upcoming VMN class. In specific, we're looking for copies of the following, but are happy to give any of your extra guides a home:

- Peterson Field Guide to Eastern Forests
- Common Native Shrubs and Woody Vines of Virginia
- Common Native Trees of Virginia
- Newcomb's Wildflower Guide

Email vmnbansheereeks@gmail.com to let us know if you'd like to donate books.



A young fisherman enjoying the derby

Bee Outdoors Festival

By Julie Paul

For those of you who were unable to attend our Summer in the Reeks: Bee Outdoor Festival on June 24th, you really missed a great day. We had a great turnout (after some concern with Tropical Storm Cindy approaching the area) and perfect pollinator weather! The festival was a

family-friendly event with over 200 attendees and included multiple conservation organization booths, Virginia Master Naturalist Society, Banshee Reeks Chapter outreach, a welcome table hosted by the Friends of Banshee Reeks as well as local native plant and mason bee house vendors. Demonstrations by the Archaeology Society of Virginia, Loudoun County Beekeepers Association, Virginia Outdoors Foundation, goats for resource management, Loudoun County Aeromodelers Association, Secret Garden Birds

and Bees, and Potomac Trees were all a big hit. A highlight of the day was a kid's catfish derby of which we had 45 kids registered with five derby winners in the categories of: biggest catfish, most catfish, biggest bass, most fish, and first fish of the day. Thank you to all the great volunteers who helped make Summer in the Reeks 2017 a success! We hope you will be able to join us for next year's *Summer In The Reeks* on Saturday, June 16, 2018.

Annual Chapter Picnic

Sunday, August 13

1:00-4:00 pm



Join fellow naturalists for an afternoon of great food and summer fun! Try your luck in the raffle and silent auction to win new gear, books, home decor, handcrafted accessories, plants and much more!

Kindly RSVP to Debbie Crew, Host Committee:

debcrew@comcast.net or 703-777-5774

- Indicate guest # and main dish preference: Omnivore or Herbivore?
- Please mention which side dish you intend to bring and share!
- Interested in donating items to our annual picnic raffle or auction? We greatly appreciate your generosity!

Our Chapter programming benefits directly from the proceeds of this annual fundraiser. Whether a large or small item, the benefit of donations helps us to support our mission to educate and for outreach! Contact Thaisa Klimavicz to donate – thaisa.klim@verizon.net or 703-669-3856!

Save the Date! 2017 Statewide VMN Conference: September 15 – 17

Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center in Front Royal, VA

Registration is open! Join fellow VMN volunteers to share ideas and learn from each other, participate in high-quality continuing education sessions, and learn about another region of Virginia. It's a time and place to recognize and reward volunteers and chapters for all their efforts. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/2pGg4Z2>.

VMN Training Class Application Deadline Approaching

Please encourage your friends, family or co-workers to consider joining VMN. Our 2017-2018 class starts on September 9th, 2017. We have a [flyer](#) you can print out and share. The class schedule can be found on the website at <http://www.vmnkansheereeks.org/home-page/class-schedule/>.

COMMITTEE CORNER

Volunteer Service Projects Committee

Chair: Jane Yocom

Looking to earn some volunteer hours? Too hot to even think about going outside? Here's a project that you can do in the air-conditioned comfort of your home. And...you can even stay in your pajamas for this.

Notes from Nature – Plants of Virginia

Did you know that 80% of new plant species are recognized and uncovered for the first time in herbarium collections rather than in the field? Herbarium specimens are pressed and dried plants gathered and identified by taxonomic experts. Specimen label information includes the species name, the precise location of collection, associated habitat, as well as when and by whom it was collected.

Over 650,000 unique herbarium specimens are kept in Virginia herbaria, with another estimated 200,000 unique Virginia species in nearby states. Unfortunately, they are inaccessible to most people. Through a grant from the National Science Foundation, ca. 500,000 specimens are being captured in high-resolution images. With the help of citizen scientists, these images are being examined and their label information transcribed into a user-friendly online program

called NotesfromNature.org. The label information and image are collected by sernecportal.org, a research-quality database, free to researchers as well as the general public.

So, if you like to do data entry and want to improve your skills at identifying plant species, while contributing to a research database that will be the basis for future Virginia plant identification manuals, please go to NotesforNature.org and check it out.

While there are many worthwhile projects on the Notes from Nature site, only hours spent on the Plants of Virginia qualify for VMN volunteer hours.

Historian

VMN Banshee Reeks is looking for a new Historian. The Historian is essential to maintaining the historical record of our chapter, primarily through photos of social events and the great volunteer work performed, but also to maintain an archive of key chapter records. A project to create a digital version of our scrapbook was recently begun and would benefit from the attention of a dedicated (and much appreciated!) volunteer.

In the meantime, please be sure to send photos of your volunteer activities to the chapter at vmnbansheereeks@gmail.com.

Communications/Newsletter Committee

Chair: Bryan Henson

We're always looking for article contributions to the website, so **remember that writing and research time count as VMN Volunteer Hours!** We hope that you're enjoying our website, www.bansheereeks.org. Please also check out our [VMN-Banshee Reeks Chapter Facebook group](#). If you haven't yet joined, please do!

Outreach Committee

Chair: Vacant

Brian Meyerreicks has taken over as the Outreach Committee chairperson. He is looking for volunteers to help staff upcoming events throughout the year, including the native plant sales.

Host Committee

Chair: Debbie Crew

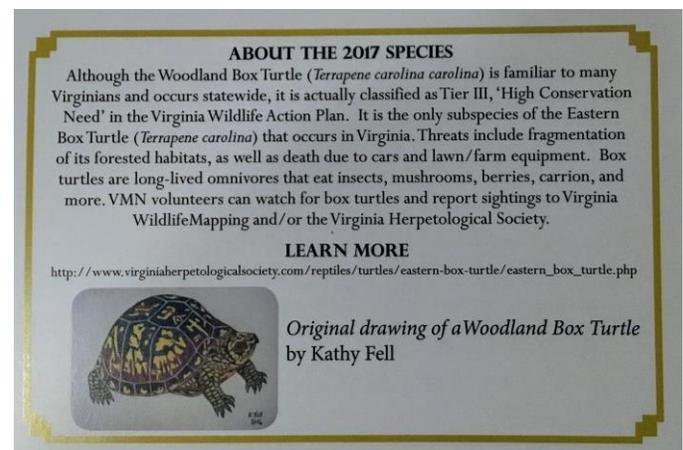
Save the date! The Annual VMN Banshee Reeks Summer Picnic is Sunday, August 13, 2017 from 1:00-4:00 pm! We are thankfully accepting contributions for the Raffle and Silent Auction fundraiser. Contact Debbie Crew for further information - debcrew@comcast.net.

Membership Committee

Chair: Frank McLaughlin

Membership activities at this time of year consist of getting the word out about our next class in September. The deadline for application is August 15th. Class starts September 9th, 2017. Applications can be found on the website in both [Word](#) and [PDF](#) formats. Single page color [fliers](#) have been prepared and distributed in many places that have bulletin boards like libraries and some grocery and hardware stores. We also place announcements in local newspapers that provide a public service at no charge to non-profits like us. If responses to our efforts are meager we will place a ¼ page paid ad in the Loudoun Times- Mirror. If you receive this paper look on page 31 of this past week's paper for our ad. To date we have 17 prospects, 4 persons who

are confirmed and 2 persons who have submitted applications. These seem like low numbers, but this is not unusual for this time of year. Through June of this year we have five members newly certified for the first time. They are Danielle Dillion, Anne Ellis, Larry Johnson, Anne Owen and Susan Sims. Also two members have achieved volunteer service level of achievement awards. They are Paul Kreingold for the 250 hour award and Brian Meyerreicks for the 500 hour award. We hope to receive both the certification certificates and volunteer service pins in time for presentation and acknowledgment at our annual picnic.



The description of the Box Turtle pin given for recertification

Continuing Education Committee

Chair: Bill Cour

And, as previously mentioned, there is a great Bat CE at Banshee Reeks on the evening of August 5th.

And the Statewide VMN Conference will be convenient to us this year - out in Front Royal from Sept. 15 to 17. For those with concerns about their CE hours, this is a chance to get the year's quota all at once. In addition, it's an opportunity to meet VMNers from around the state and see what other chapters are doing.

If you have a class that you would like to offer for the chapter, or you see an event that you think would be a CE opportunity, or there is a topic on which you would really like the chapter to

present a class, contact Bill Cour (wmkcour@gmail.com).

Training Committee

Chair: Sue Robinson

The training committee is gearing up for the new class. Supplies, schedule and binders are keeping the Training Committee busy. Also, if you have old field guides from a previous class, you want to donate, that would be appreciated.

About Banshee Reeks VMN

The Banshee Reeks chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalist program is a volunteer corps focused on education, outreach, conservation, and management of the natural resources in Virginia. The chapter was founded in 2006 and focuses on Loudoun County and hosts many events at Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve. We are always looking for new members and like-minded organizations.

To find out more, visit our website at <http://www.vmnbansheereeks.org/> or email us at vmnbansheereeks@gmail.com.

And join our Facebook group:
[Virginia Master Naturalist-Banshee Reeks Chapter](#)