



SHENANDOAH SAW-WHET

Spring Newsletter
2020

A NEWSLETTER OF THE *SHENANDOAH CHAPTER OF THE VIRGINIA MASTER NATURALISTS* PROGRAM.

OUR NEWSLETTER IS NAMED IN HONOR OF THE NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL — A SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED IN THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 2nd – Seven Bends State Park
Grand Opening

May 9-10th – Blandy Farm Garden
Fair

June 6th – Garden Fest at Belle
Grove

June 16th – Chapter Mtg

NEWSLETTER INTRODUCTION

BY TIM KOPPENHAVER

In this inaugural edition of the *Shenandoah Saw-whet*, our chapter's newsletter, it seems an introduction from the editor is appropriate.

First off, the name. As Virginia Master Naturalists, one of our charges is to *offer services dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources within our communities*. Naming our newsletter after a species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) is our way of bringing awareness to an important natural resource in our chapter's community.

Second, this newsletter falls under the responsibilities of our chapter's Outreach Committee; therefore, it has been designed for two audiences - our chapter members but also *anyone* in our community interested in naturalist-related news, events, tips, and stories.

Being an inaugural newsletter, its look and feel are still finding their way so if readers have any suggestions for improvement, or if you have a story idea, please don't hesitate to let me know.

I sincerely hope you enjoy this inaugural edition of the *Shenandoah Saw-whet*!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE BY KELLY MACOY

We are excited to launch our chapter's inaugural Shenandoah Saw-Whet newsletter. What a wonderful way to highlight the various natural resources within our chapter!

As spring approaches, the Shenandoah Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists' activities begin to ramp up. There are several volunteer opportunities on the horizon – the Garden Fair at Blandy Experimental Farm on May 9th and 10th and the Garden Fest at Belle Grove on June 6th. These are great events and wonderful opportunities for our chapter's naturalists to put their skills and training to good use. Other events are in the works as well involving help with the Bluebird trails, pollinator plots and our chapter's Sensory Trail at Sky Meadows State Park. Additionally, the grand opening of Seven Bends State Park in Woodstock is scheduled for May 2nd. Please remember to check the VMS calendar regularly to stay informed about these and other upcoming events.

Happy reading! I and the entire board hope you enjoy reading the engaging and educational articles.

FAMOUS NATURALISTS

SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

We all know David Attenborough for his silky smooth British-accented voice. The 93-year old broadcaster, writer and naturalist has written and narrated numerous award winning documentaries including *Life on Earth* and *The Living Planet*. A trained naturalist, he studied geology and zoology at Clare College before landing a job at the BBC during the infancy of television broadcasting.

Where did David's passion come from? According to his brother Richard, after hearing a lecture presented in 1936 by Grey Wolf, a Canadian fur trapper, David was "*bowled over by the man's profound knowledge of the flora and fauna of the Canadian wilderness and by his warnings of ecological disaster should the delicate balance between them be destroyed. The idea that mankind was endangering nature by recklessly despoiling and plundering its riches was unheard of at the time, but it is one that has remained part of David's own credo to this day.*"

David's next documentary - *A Life on Our Planet* - will land on Netflix this spring. This unique feature tells the story of life on our planet by the man who has seen more of the natural world than just about any other.

MEMBER PROFILE

Being an inaugural newsletter, our first Member Profile features one of our chapter's inaugural members **Sally Anderson** from the class of 2007.

What prompted you to join VMN?

The program was brand new at the time and I remember being very excited about the idea. I loved being outside, and had always been looking at plants, so it was a natural next step to learn what plants were doing out there, and learn about some of the other parts of the natural world. I signed up right away. Although I loved the classes and field trips, the program has improved a lot since its beginning.

Do you have any favorite plants?

This varies from year to year, as I learn something new and get interested in plants I didn't know well before. I love wet, boggy places and deep woods, but rock barrens and lots of other specialized habitats are places I like to explore. So in a way it has become more about plant communities than just individual plants.

What prompted you to join Va Native Plant Society?

I was interested for a long time, but the local chapter was not very active. I was spending a lot of spare time in West Virginia and got hooked up with that state's group. At the time they had a very active Eastern Panhandle chapter. But I was volunteering at Blandy and took field botany one summer, which brought me back to my original interest in plants, and I was volunteering at the native plant trail. Around then I became more involved with VNPS. Since I was not working any more, I was asked to join the board and had time to do so, and before you know it I was state president and then president of the Piedmont chapter. I am still very involved with the group at the chapter and state levels.

Any favorite places in our territory that you like to visit?

The G. Richard Thompson WMA is a favorite because it is so rich. I also like our nearby state parks, Shenandoah National Park, the woods at Cedar Creek Battlefield, Abrams Creek Wetland Preserve, and the wonderful bluebell sites along the Shenandoah River.

UP CLOSE & PERSONAL

I grew up in coastal Texas and attended the University of Texas in Austin, got a degree in botany, and some years later went back to school at Boston University to study archeology. I moved quite a bit, but now have been settled in Winchester for over 30 years. I feel lucky to have landed in such a beautiful place with so much of interest to do.

I like performance art, and with good friends go to an arts festival in South Carolina every year. And my spouse and I often visit the Blackfriars playhouse in Staunton. I like to visit art museums when traveling. I have several hobbies involving fiber - quilting, weaving and even a little knitting has been known to happen.

I like to say I've never met a hobby I didn't like.

Photo: VMN in Action Photo Contest



FLORA & FAUNA CALENDAR

Some regularly recurring events and resources of interest for our chapter's territory

Time of Year	Event
April	Great Blue Heron Rookery at the north end of Shen. University's Cool Spring campus on Parker Island.
April	Bluebell flowers blooming at Shenandoah River State Park
First Week of May	Trillium flowers blooming at the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area <i>Note: DGIF Hunting, Fishing or Access Permit required</i>

Other Resources

WILDFLOWER CALENDAR - Shenandoah Nat'l Park:
www.nps.gov/shen/learn/nature/upload/WildflowerCalendar_Web.pdf

WHAT'S BLOOMING NOW - State Arboretum of Virginia:
blandy.virginia.edu/arboretum/what-s-blooming-now

VIRGINIA BIRDING AND WILDLIFE TRAIL:
vafwis.dgif.virginia.gov/FindWildlifeVA/#/findWildlife

WILDLIFE VIEWING TIPS - Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries:
www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife-watching/respect-wildlife/

"Out yonder there is this huge world, which exists independently of us human beings and which stands before us like a great, eternal riddle ... The contemplation of this world beckons like a liberation."

By Albert Einstein

PHOTO STORIES

IMAGES CAPTURED BY SHENANDOAH CHAPTER VMNS ALONG WITH DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SPECIES, PHOTO TECHNIQUES, AND OTHER USEFUL TIPS & INFO.



PHOTOGRAPHER:
Tim Koppenhaver

SUBJECT SPECIES:
Northern Mockingbird, Mimus polyglottos

NOTES/TIP:
I deliberately left as many thorns in the frame as possible to amplify the precarious nature of the mockingbird's perch.

LOCATION: *Rose Hill Park, Winchester, Virginia*

CAMERA: *Canon EOS Rebel, 70-200 mm lens*



PHOTOGRAPHER:
Marie Majarov

LOCATION:
*G. Richard Thompson Wildlife
Management Area*

SUBJECT SPECIES:
Young hickory sapling, Carya sp

CAMERA:
*Canon 50D
28-135 mm lens at 85 mm*

NOTES/TIP:
*Beautiful, very young hickory
saplings can often look like spring
wildflowers!*

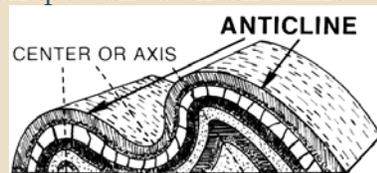
PLACES OF NOTE

INTERESTING LOCATIONS TO VISIT IN OUR SHENANDOAH CHAPTER TERRITORY

VEACH GAP ANTICLINES

Overview

A dynamic geological feature formed by the folding of rock strata into an arch-like shape. The rock layers in an anticlinal trap were originally laid down horizontally and then earth movement caused it to fold into an arch-like shape called an anticline.



Location

The Veach Gap anticlines are an easy one-mile hike from the Veach Gap trailhead in Fort Valley, Shenandoah County. A few stream crossings are required though. For Geocachers, use this link: www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC2TJH6





The Virginia Master Naturalist program and the Shenandoah Chapter are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

CONTACT US

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