



Rivanna Naturalist News

A newsletter for Master Naturalists of Albemarle and surrounding Virginia counties.

Volume 4 No. 3

Sep-Nov 2011

The majority of you can access the internet. More information is on the following websites. I've not repeated most of this information because Eric has been doing a good job of putting it onto our website.

- Our web site vmn-rivanna.org/index.html
- Va Naturalists Va Naturalists
- Va Native Plants Virginia Native Plant Society.
- Monticello Bird Club link from vmn web site above
- ICNA ivycreekfoundation.org/

If the auto links don't work, copy and paste the URL into your browser.

☺
 Hip-Hip-Hooray for Diane Lewis, who will be taking over timekeeping duties for the Rivanna chapter. Diane is a graduate of the 2010 class. You might know her from her past work on the Program Committee and her multitude of volunteer hours for education projects such as SPCA camp and Camp Albemarle. Diane is extremely capable, knowledgeable and friendly - and she is already bringing excellent improvements to the timekeeping position. If you have any questions about timekeeping, you can reach Diane at rivannamn.hours@gmail.com, as shown in the box below. *Rose Brown*

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| Diversity Committee | Tony Russell |

☺ ☺

Volunteer Opportunities
Designated below by this green color

☺ ☺

Upcoming Meetings
Designated below by this purple color

☺ ☺

Upcoming Education Opportunities
Designated by this burnt yellow color.

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2011 Virginia Master Naturalist Statewide Volunteer Conference and Training
Friday, September 23, 2011 - Sunday, September 25, 2011

Camp Friendship, 573 Friendship Way, Palmyra, Virginia 22963
[Link to driving directions on the Camp Friendship Web site](#)

Registration has closed (August 23rd) on this already, but this is this quarter's headline event. I won't be there because my Mom's 90th birthday party occurs exactly in the same period. - Ralph

☺ ☺

T-shirts for Conference

Be sure to get your shirts ordered for the annual conference in Fluvanna County. www.facebook.com//a9e26sw3KHWIyClzMoy7LMwea-w/www.cafepress.com/RivannaMN

Perhaps you have ordered from them for other organizations such as StreamWatch. Our logo can come on long and short sleeve shirts, sweatshirts, a cap, a tote, a patch or water bottles. Per the Board of Director's wish, we are not making any 'profit' on the purchases, but requested Cafepress to keep the prices low.

I ordered a polo shirt, long sleeve T-shirt and the denim shirt and was very pleased with the quality and the service. I recommend them to you.

Enjoy!! And plan to wear your Rivanna Master Naturalist shirt or cap to the State Conference September 23-25 (or any other event where you are volunteering).

If you have any questions, feel free to ask. And when you see Rose, thank her for her efforts in getting this set up for us.

Ida Swenson



June 2011 Meeting

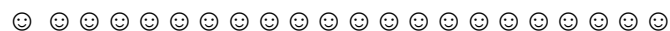
Great turn out for such a hot evening! Thanks to all who came.

I came home with a camera, sunglasses, platter, salt and pepper shakers, and games I never had before. If you can claim one or all, let me know.

Congratulations to the class of 2011 for bragging rights on the attendance contest!! But the class of 2010 is hot on your trail. . they almost got it and now they are inspired to win at the annual meeting in December.

Also, congratulations to Laura Seale on receiving the new "Advisor's Leadership Award".

Ida Swenson



Advisor's Leadership Award

Before she left, former chapter advisor LoriAnne Barnett wanted to institute an "Advisor's Leadership Award" that would be chosen by the chapter advisor and would recognize someone in the chapter who not only went above and beyond the call of duty, but who also showed great leadership. This year's recipient is someone who showed

excellent leadership with the basic training course and curriculum committee in 2010-2011. Laura Seale, committee chair, helped streamline committee communications, revise and improve the training course, and be a liaison and point of contact for all of the new trainees. LoriAnne left a certificate and a gift for Laura. (Knowing that Laura loves nature apps on her phone, LoriAnne chose to give her a waterproof bag to take her phone out on the trail!)

Here's Laura and Michelle at the June meeting.



Michelle Prysby



Shenandoah National Park's 75th



Volunteers at the Shenandoah National Park's 75 Celebration on June 25. Left to right: Carol Lawson, Marilyn Potter, Jim Lawson, Gene Potter, Jackie Heath, Marianne O'Brien

Jackie Heath



Clean The Bay Day Results



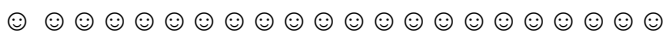
(Jackie, Ida & Keggie, l. to r.)

John and Tex would like to thank everyone that participated on Saturday, June 4th in making the CLEAN THE BAY DAY 2011 event a huge success! Master Naturalists were among over 90 volunteers that came together to remove debris from 1.5 miles of the Rivanna Trail at Riverview Park and 9 miles of water features in the Rivanna watershed. This resulted in approximately 1,600 pounds of debris collected and disposed of from our local trails and waterways! In addition, Master Naturalists helped provide watershed education resources at a display table. Special recognition is extended to the main sponsors of this event: Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Blue Ridge Mountain Sports, The Nature Conservancy, Rivanna Conservation Society, Rivanna Master Naturalists and Dixon Disposal! We look forward to your participation again at this annual event next year (Saturday, June 2, 2012)!



(Ida, capping off the joy of the task.)

John Holden & Tex Weaver



Virginia Naturally

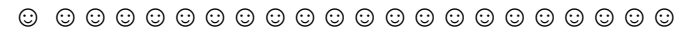
Many of our chapters are already Virginia Naturally partners, but I try to send out a reminder about Virginia Naturally a couple of times a year to catch any chapters who are not partners. Virginia Naturally is Virginia's environmental education organization, and chapters are encouraged to join this environmental education network. It is free, and their e- newsletter is a great place to both advertise your programs as well as hear about advanced training and other opportunities.

Virginia Naturally is currently updating its partner database. If you would like your chapter to be listed on a map of environmental education providers in the state, follow the link listed in the email below.

Michelle Prysby

As far as I know, we are not a Virginia Naturally partner. I think it may worthwhile to become one. More information is at this link. www.vanaturally.com/partners.html It does not cost anything, and folks looking for environmental education may find us by looking at the links.

Ida Swenson



Reclaiming Our Natural Connections

Jon Young, internationally known nature educator and mentor will be in town for a public talk and two day workshop Friday September 2 - Sunday September 4. The description is below. This seminar is well worth the time and money. See <http://www.livingearthva.com/adult.html>, and click on adult programs

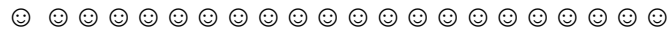
September 3 – 4: Reclaiming Our Natural Connections and Building Community Resiliency

Sat. 9am - Sun. 3pm/ Free Evening Talk Friday Sept. 2 @6:30pm

Have you heard of The Last Child in the Woods and Nature Deficit Disorder? Are you curious about ways to increase the health and vitality of children and families, especially ways to unplug from media and get outside? Do you wonder about how to build and sustain community? If so, come to an evening talk and weekend workshop that promotes connecting with nature and community building,

through timeless indigenous approaches such as storytelling, relationship and sustainability. Hear about an international movement that looks at ways to connect with nature and people, to live in balance with modern culture and the outdoors. Living Earth School is thrilled to bring our long time mentor Jon Young to Charlottesville, to share his inspiring words and vision. It is truly a not to miss weekend. Jon's work and the work of The Living Earth School, is the kind of work that builds hope and creates a better place for our children and their children. This vision not only gives us the resilience to survive but to thrive in the years to come.

Our weekend is held at beautiful Camp Albemarle nestled among river, field and mountains. The program is held for adults and families are welcome, as there will be a children's program for ages 5-8 and 9+ (space for children is limited).

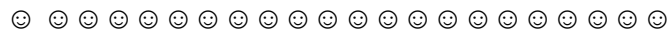


Invasives Removal Day – Sep 9th

Here is another opportunity to get hours. A demonstration on effective ailanthus controls will be held, Wed., Sept. 7, at Montpelier demonstration forest. We will then work on the ailanthus, wineberry and perilla at the far end of the demo forest. Plan to meet in the visitor center parking lot at 9 am. Rain date will be Friday, Sept. 9.

Hope to see you there

Linda Murphy via Tana Herndon



United Way Laurence E. Richardson Day of Caring

Trail Workday: Fortune's Cove Preserve (Nelson County)

Wednesday, September 21

The Nature Conservancy is again participating in the [United Way Laurence E. Richardson Day of Caring](#) on Wednesday, September 21. Every year our trails need maintained by lopping overgrowth, picking up downed branches, cutting side-hill and repairing any accrued damage or re-routing sections of trail. Volunteers will be maintaining a hiking trail through the Conservancy's [Fortune's Cove Preserve](#), a rugged mountainous trail around 5 miles long. Volunteers will use hand tools like heavy rakes and hoes and pulaskis to shape the trail, moving dirt, roots and rocks out of the way. Plan on hard work, but enjoy rewarding landscape views at the

ridgetop. Be prepared to hike into the preserve carrying tools for about a mile before working on the trail.

Jennifer Dalke [jdalke@TNC.ORG]



Water Health for the Commonwealth

A Project of the Rivanna Conservation Society

THE PROJECT: The Rivanna Conservation Society is creating a new program called Water Health for the Commonwealth. As a part of this project RCS will;

- 1) Create a comprehensive water quality monitoring "Network" of students, teachers and schools throughout the Rivanna and James River Watersheds,
- 2) Input collected data into the Virginia DEQ and World Water Monitoring Day data bases,
- 3) Provide the opportunity for students to address local government officials to share the results of their monitoring project,
- 4) Provide opportunities for students to do river clean-ups throughout the watershed, and
- 5) Conduct the annual Student Watershed Summit.

The Water Monitoring Network will engage young people and educators in the creation of a comprehensive student/teacher program to monitor the rivers and streams for the chemical, physical, and biological parameters. These parameters include, but will not limited to pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity (clarity), nitrogen, phosphorous, bacteria, and invertebrate surveys and analysis.

The "Network" will begin at the headwaters of the Rivanna River and will end at the confluence of the James River and the Chesapeake Bay. This project is unique because we are creating a monitoring network that will be linked throughout the two watersheds by email, internet, FaceBook and twitter. This will allow continuing communication between participating students/teachers/schools. Within the first three years we expect to involve more than 40 schools, 419 teachers, and 8,190 students.

RCS will, in October, be hosting the Student Watershed Summit which has, since 2007, become a traditional event throughout our watershed.

Finally, as an outgrowth of the 2008 World Water Monitoring Day Proclamation between the City of Charlottesville and the Hsin Chu City, Taiwan, RCS will be arranging for coordination between Charlottesville and Taiwan for the World Water Monitoring Day events taking place in a number of locations in September 2011.



Waterwise Landscaping

October 22, 2011
9 AM to 3 PM
W.E. Skelton 4-H Center Educational Conference Center at Smith Mountain Lake, 775 Hermitage Road, Wirtz, VA 24184, 540.721.2759
Skelton4H@vt.edu

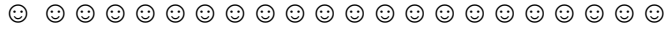
Water is essential in our lives. In this workshop, we will explore landscaping techniques which are Water –Wise, from the perspective of conservation, retention and impact. Included in the day will be a tour of the 4H Center Buffer Landscape which was installed by the Franklin County Master Gardeners.

Open only to VCE Master Gardeners, MG Interns and VA Master Naturalists. Registration is limited to 70, so please register early!
If you have any questions, please contact the host for this event, the Franklin County Master Gardener Association.

- 8:00-9:00 Registration
- 9:00-9:15 Welcome
- 9:15-10:15 "Water Quality and the Home Landscape"
Laurie Fox
- 10:15-10:30 Break
- 10:30-12:00 Water Quality Projects: Concerns and Strategies Panel
- 12:00 -1:00 Salad Buffet Lunch
- 1:00-2:00 "Waterwise Plant Selection"
Sandra Reichert
- 2:00-2:15 Break
- 2:15-3:00 Slide show and Tour of 4H Buffer Landscape
- 3:00 Tie-Up: Evaluations

This workshop will provide a forum for better understanding the role of MGs & MNs in educating our constituents on the positive impact waterwise landscaping has on water retention, water quality and the environment. The registration fee includes a workshop packet, refreshments and a delicious all you can eat Salad Buffet for lunch. Rooms are available at the 4H center for Friday night Oct.21st

Nelda Purcell: purcelln@hughes.net or 540 576 9931



Youngsters learn to be naturalists

Ida Swenson, a Lake Monticello resident, is helping to start up the 4H Junior Naturalists Club starting on August 20. The club is looking for 8-13 year olds who love the outdoors.

4H Junior Naturalist Club Programs
August 20 - Organizational Picnic 3-7 at Heritage Trail Picnic Pavilions. Catch bugs in the river to study water quality. Bring old sneakers or water shoes, swim suits, towels, and a dish to pass. \$1 per person, but we'll supply the hot dogs, hamburgers and beverages. RSVP to Ida at 589-2777.

September 17 - 3-5 Pond Study at Scheier Natural Area. Bring dry shoes and socks for afterwards. Wear old sneakers or long boots (snapping turtles and leeches). We supply hand sanitizer, nets, buckets, some boots and knowledge.

October 1 - Old Farm Day Pleasant Grove 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Take turns doing puppet shows on saving the environment. Show kids how to do nature crafts. Our table will be in the 4H tent.

October 15 - 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Leaf collection hike at Monticello's Saunders-Monticello trail. Learn about trees and how Thomas Jefferson studied nature. Start a leaf collection. (Alternatively we may go to Colonial Williamsburg)

November 19 - Fluvanna Public Library 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. leaf collection organization identify the leaves and mount them for a scrapbook. 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. Hike the Heritage Trail behind the library.

December 17 - Fluvanna Public Library 2 - 4 p.m. Holiday party, how we use nature at the holidays, make bird treats, hike.

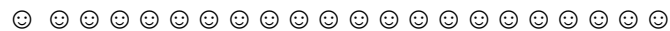
January 21 – TBA, continuing the club, depending on attendance.

For more information, contact Ida Swenson at 589-2777 or e-mail her at idthefriz@gmail.com . Or contact Kim Mayo at the Fluvanna Cooperative Extension Office. Being a member of 4H is free, but they require

membership forms, including code of conduct and health forms to be on file. Swenson and Mayo have forms available at the meetings but these forms are also available online for enrollment at <http://www.4-h.ext.vt.edu/forms/388-002.pdf> and for health history at http://www.4-h.ext.vt.edu/forms/388_906.pdf

They meet on the third Saturday afternoon of every month and we have some wonderful activities planned for this coming year. The club is open to any child age 8 to 13. However, they do allow children age 5-7 as long as they are accompanied by parents.

Page H. Gifford, Correspondent 03 August 2011 in www.fluvannareview.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2416:youngsters-learn-to-be-naturalists&catid=34:headlines&Itemid=152



New Resources

I thought you might like to know that the new Albemarle County DOF forester, Erik Filep, will be starting July 1. His contact information is 434-971-1526, erik.filep@dof.virginia.gov

Also, the new Riverkeeper for the Upper James is Pat Calvert, pcalvert@jrava.org, 434-964-7635. You may have already met Pat; prior to this position, he worked for 13+ years as an educator for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, leading many a paddling trip.

Michelle Prysby



Recycling Garden Pots

If your local Charlottesville area garbage company takes their material to van der Linde, garden pots will be recycled. It might help to follow the first two (corky-doted) recommendations shown below in the VT article.

Hi all—This morning, I posted an article about recycling garden containers on the Virginia Master Naturalist [blog](http://virginiamasternaturalist.blogspot.com/2011/06/recycle-your-garden-containers.html) (see virginiamasternaturalist.blogspot.com/2011/06/recycle-your-garden-containers.html), but I wanted to pass along this full article from Virginia Tech for those folks who don't read the blog. Finally, I can empty my shed of all those plastic plant pots that have been building up.

The direct Web site for the program discussed here is www.hort.vt.edu/vagardenersrecycle/index.html.

Michelle Prysby

BLACKSBURG, Va., June 15, 2011 – Every year, millions of pounds of agricultural plastics such as flower and vegetable containers make their way to landfills, and only a handful of recycling centers in Virginia collect garden pots. Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Green Industry Council hope to buck this trend by bringing a successful garden container recycling program in Richmond to the rest of the state.

The program, Virginia Gardeners Recycle, expands on a pilot project last summer in which project partners recycled more than 50 pallets — or 7,500 pounds — of plastic nursery and garden containers in the Richmond area. Schools, community colleges, community gardening groups, and area businesses removed several additional pallets of collected materials for reuse. Only four Richmond-area garden centers participated in 2010.

Project organizers expect the statewide initiative to reach a wider audience and to have a greater environmental impact than last year.

“We are identifying additional garden centers, nursery and greenhouse retailers, and even landscapers who are willing to collect and sort pallets of your nursery and garden containers,” said Joyce Latimer, Extension greenhouse crops specialist and professor of horticulture at Virginia Tech. “We also have the Extension Master Gardener volunteer educators who promote container recycling to consumers, educate those consumers on how to prepare and sort their containers for recycling, and in some cases, assist garden centers with collection and sorting.”

The three major horticultural suppliers in Virginia — Griffin Greenhouse & Nursery Supplies in Richmond, Wetsel in Harrisonburg, and Maryland Plants & Supplies in Baltimore — will assist participating garden centers, growers, and landscapers in the recycling effort.

According to Latimer, homeowners and growers can prevent recyclable waste from ending up in landfills by returning plastic pots to a recycling collection drop-off location. She offered the

following recommendations to help with the process:

- Knock all loose soil from the plastic containers.
- Remove all metal wire from hanging planters.
- Stack similar containers and group common resin codes (the number on the bottom of the pot).
- Return containers to the garden center and add them to the appropriate pallet or bin for that type of plastic.
- Only deliver pots during normal business hours.

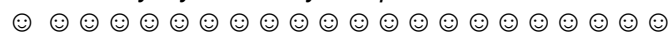
“Together we can make recycling work for you and the garden center,” Latimer said. “Remember, Virginia Gardeners Recycle is for collection of plastic gardening pots and flats only. No other plastics can be accepted.”

Project organizers will donate any funds received for the recycled plastics to the Virginia Master Gardeners Association’s State Master Gardener Coordinator endowment fund.

A complete list of participating garden centers, retailers, and commercial landscapers is available on the [Virginia Gardeners Recycle website](#). Others may register by contacting [Joyce Latimer](#) at 540-231-7906.

Virginia Cooperative Extension brings the resources of Virginia’s land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, to the people of the commonwealth. Through a system of on-campus specialists and locally based educators, it delivers education in the areas of agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences, community viability, and 4-H youth development. With a network of faculty at two universities, 106 county and city offices, 12 agricultural research and Extension centers, and six 4-H educational centers, Virginia Cooperative Extension provides solutions to the problems facing Virginians today.

Michelle Prysby & Dorothy Tompkins



Annual NABA Butterfly Count 2011

Twenty plus enthusiastic butterfly watchers gathered at ICNA on the beautiful morning of June 25. Here they are (picture from Caryl Buck).



After instruction, they were split into three teams, led by Nancy Weiss, Terri Keffer, and Caryl Buck, and sent on their way throughout the city and county to identify and count butterflies for the Annual North American Butterfly Association Count.

You couldn’t have asked for a more perfect day - warm and sunny enough for the butterflies yet not too hot as the teams headed off to Pen Park, Ivy Creek Natural Area, Kemper Park, Bundoran Farm Conservation Area, and Old Trails nature trail. While not a spectacle of butterflies like 2010 provided, we identified over 28 species, with a total of 291 individuals. Question Marks, Hackberry Emperors, and Zebra Swallowtails were just a few of the cool species seen. Very cooperative Red-spotted Purples excited the Kemper Park team as they displayed their gorgeous markings (the butterflies, not the team!). Here’s one of them that I photoed.

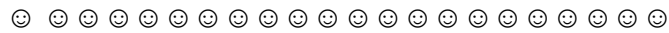


An elusive Harvester, the only carnivorous species, honored the Pen Park team with its presence. (The caterpillar of this species feeds on woolly aphids usually found on beech trees and alders.) The Bundoran Farm team spotted the unusual American Snout.

It was a great day out to help out with a worthy cause, and practice identifying skills to boot! Keep an eye open for the 2012 count next summer!

Thanks to all who participated, with special thanks to Laura Seale and Carol Wise for their invaluable help in assisting the leaders.

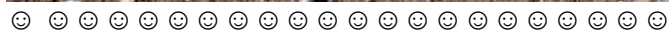
Terri Keffert



This summer, after our initial spring rains, turned very dry to about mid summer. Dorothy Tompkins sent this picture in to show what the early part of the summer was like.



Then, of course, it got also very hot. This picture was more like what it was where my Mom lives in Oklahoma.



Bill Dunson sent me several "ramble" files this summer. All of them are informative to us naturalists. If you want the other 3 let me know. Here is the one from late July.

Ramble Late July

One of the major features of the natural history of summer is the progression of breeding in which some species breed once and then stop at various times of the summer, and some reproduce all of most of the summer. It is a great pleasure to observe this sequence of the rejuvenation of life. The fun is in finding "old friends" that you know well from previous years, or in occasionally encountering something new. Thus I was surprised to find a plant in fruit which I did not recognize on a south-facing forested hillside with rich soil. After some page turning in plant guides and some web searching I discovered that this was a goldenseal with fruit.



Now goldenseal or orangeroot is a buttercup-relative which is a famous and valuable plant since it has a long history of medicinal use by humans.

In contrast a very common plant which I found of interest is the black-eyed Susan, a coneflower which we have planted in large numbers in fields along with other wildflowers to replace exotic pasture grasses. This particular flower is a color variant in which a reddish brown pigment encircles the inner part of the petals.



But I was particularly interested in watching the progression of blooming in the disc flowers which make up the "cone" of this composite/aster family "flower." This family is one of the most highly evolved in producing a reproductive "flower" that is actually made up of many smaller flowers specialized to make petals or to reproduce (disc flowers). In this photo you can observe the tiny yellow disc flowers blooming in a circular pattern which will gradually progress to the top of the cone. So we can observe a remarkable process occurring even in something so common.

Nearby on a black-eyed Susan there was a common buckeye butterfly perched with its wings open, allowing us to observe the interesting pattern on the inside of the wings. The so-called eye-spots are believed to either scare away bird predators, or divert their attacks to peripheral areas of the wing which are less vulnerable than the body. In fact you will note that there are three separate holes in the edges of the hind wings which are likely peck marks made by birds.



An insect that is usually heard rather than seen is the annual or summer cicada. The buzzing call of the males is a characteristic sound of summer that we rarely give any thought to.



The "annual" cicadas actually require 3 to 5 years to mature from a subterranean nymph, but this is far less than the periodical cicadas that remain underground for 13 to 17 years. I am enthusiastic about the sounds of nature, not only because they allow us to identify many creatures that are only rarely seen, but they add an extra level of interest and complexity to the tapestry of life.

(missed bullfrog egg photo.)

One of the most distinctive sounds of summer is the jug-of-rum call of the male bullfrog which is defending its territory and attracting females with this vocal display. Our bullfrogs call every night and I found some eggs just last week. Bullfrog eggs are laid in a matrix of thin jelly that floats as a film on the surface, quite unlike the globular clusters of woodfrogs or leopard frogs. This is likely related to the differences in temperature of the water at the time of breeding and the smaller amounts of oxygen present in warmer water. So why is it that male bullfrogs have a huge eardrum much larger than that of the females?



This seems to be due to the importance of sound in defense of the pond-edge territory. But females are also known to rely heavily on sound to judge the body size and thereby the quality of the territory of

the mate they choose. So when you listen to bullfrogs, see if you can discern the big boys with the deeper voices.

Mourning doves are one of the species that breed almost continually and it is interesting to watch their nests. Their nest is minimal but obviously adequate for the purpose and they normally lay only two white eggs which would be extremely obvious to predators if the adult were not covering them. However one advantage of the tiny nest is that when the parents are away, the nest is not easily visible and the babies are rather cryptic in color.



Indeed this nest on a fence post is rather open, yet the babies are quite inconspicuous. These nests are usually discovered only when the adult flushes.

So see if you can hone your listening skills this summer and tune into the extravagant sounds made by insects, amphibians, birds and mammals. Another benefit of listening to creature sounds is that you can often observe and study while being lazy!

Bill Dunson, wdunson@comcast.net



Deadline for items to be included in the newsletter is the **26th of November before the next quarter (December)**. Please submit any announcements or articles of interest to be included in the next issue to *Rivanna Naturalist Notes* Editor, Ralph Hall, preferably by [e-mail](#), by facsimile 434-297-1963 or by USPS mail to 420 Ivy Farm Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22901-8841.

