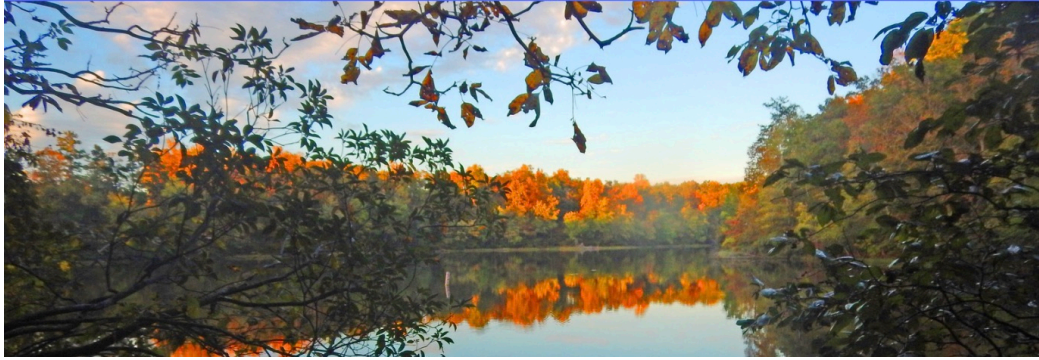


RIVANNA MASTER NATURALISTS



June 2026. President's Corner - RMN Sherri Fitzgerald



Biscuit Run - Vernal Pool Monitoring Spring 2026

In early spring, I joined RMN volunteers Nancy Cohen and Rebecca Minor on a vernal pool monitoring project at Biscuit Run. Biscuit Run has undergone an intervention to address the adverse effects on the streams' hydrology and ecology.

The Albemarle County project has been working in phases to restore the natural flow of water, reduce water velocity, prevent stream bank erosion, and mitigate the smothering of habitat by excessive silt, sand, and clay. At least two beaver lodges and signs of beavers have been documented in the Biscuit Run streams which drain into the Moores Creek and then into the Rivanna River.

For a detailed look into the restoration project, visit this link:
[Restoration Project](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjQINzWrXLQ)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjQINzWrXLQ>

President of RMN 2026

Nancy, Becky, and I were prepared to brave the boggy area in our rain gear, surrounded by an overcast, drizzly, and misty sky. Despite the challenging conditions, the lighting and environment were breathtaking. Our objective for the day was to count the number of vernal pools, record their coordinates, search for egg casings, and input the data. Nancy and Rebecca were pleasantly surprised and excited about the remarkable changes that had occurred. A new wetland appeared as a result of the stream restoration project. Onsite materials were used, mimicking engineering techniques of beavers. The resulting rise in water levels allowed for these new pools to form this spring. Nancy believes that vernal pools monitored by RMN have a positive effect downstream and that it is a reminder that nature is resilient when given a chance. Prior to our visit, someone had planted overcast-seeded annual rye, which served as a temporary solution to prevent runoff and provide ground cover. Not to mention that the verdant color added a beautiful replacement for the mud.

In my opinion, the wetlands resembled ideal beaver habitat nestled in Central Albemarle!

The 2nd photo captures an earlier date when Jessie Wingo, a Natural Resource Specialist for the park, found spotted salamander eggs on their first visit. The remaining photos reflect our recent visit. Becky enjoyed the serenity, and Nancy was absorbed in the changes. It was a beautiful way to spend the morning.

To volunteer, contact the official RMN Vernal Pool Liason, Lynda Mosen, at lsmosen@gmail.com.

UPCOMING 2026 Topics

KESTREL BOX PROJECT WORKSHOPS
RARITY & NATURAL HERITAGE
BUTTERNUT TREES AT BLANDY EXPERIMENTAL
THE CLAUDIUS PROJECT UNVEILED: MUSHROOMS
BOX TURTLES & VA WORKING LANDSCAPES
DAM DEMOLITIONS IN OUR AREA

THE PROBLEM(S) WITH DEER
FROGS & HEALTH
MONARCHS & MADISON COUNTY
NATURE IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL REGION
NATURALIST IN FOCUS: JOHN MUIR
USING iNATURALIST AND ROCKED APPS

Blue Ridge Prism

Central Blue Ridge & Piedmont Conservation Stewards Workdays

- **June 10, 8:00–10:00 a.m.** — [Ridgeview Park](#), Waynesboro
- **June 18, 10:00 a.m.–noon** — [Carrier Arboretum](#), Harrisonburg
- **June 19, 9:00–11:00 a.m.** — [Greene Community Park](#), Ruckersville
- **June 20, 9:00–11:00 a.m.** — [Hoover Ridge Park](#), Madison
- **June 25, 9:00–11:00 a.m.** — [Botanical Garden of the Piedmont](#), Charlottesville
- **June 30, 9:00–11:00 a.m.** — [Piney River Trailhead \(Blue Ridge Railway\)](#), Piney River

Join Natali Walker and Jacob Edel, Invasive Management Specialists at Blue Ridge PRISM, for **FREE field trainings** where you'll learn how to identify invasive plants during walks and remove them on workdays to preserve the health and enjoyment of these beautiful natural areas.

If button doesn't work, go to their website or contact

info@blueridgeprism.org

Registration is Now Open for the 2026 Tree Steward Training Class!

Charlottesville Tree Stewards and the RMN share the same educational platform, certification process, and many members. Classes run from August 4 to November 14, 2026, and include class time at Ivy Creek as well as field trips.

The 2026 class will consist of a combination of online training sessions and field activities with a maximum of 32 students to facilitate the best field training possible. The classes cover a 15-week duration beginning August 4 and ending November 14. The online classes will precede the field activities held on every other Saturday at various locations in the Charlottesville area.

Tuition for the training is \$160 , which includes textbooks and other training materials.

For more information: <https://charlottesvilleareatreestewards.org/become-a-tree-steward/>

To Register: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/registration-is-now-open-for-the-2026-tree-steward-training-class-registration-1988862912510?aff=oddtcreator&keep_tld=true

Photos from RCA workday at Darden Tower Park



On Tuesday June 9 there was a RCA workday at Darden Tower Park along the river to remove Japanese hops from the riparian area. Several RMN's and other RCA volunteers got the job done and in the process saw some insects including quite a number of spotted lantern-fly nymphs.

Zebra and Eastern Tiger Swallowtails, American Nursery Web Spider, Georgia Wolf Spider, Virginian Tiger Moth and two in-stars of Box elder bugs.

Submitted by RMN JoAnn Dalley





Cville Bird Patrol

is monitoring bird–window collisions across Charlottesville during spring migration and is now in Week 8 of its pilot program, continuing through May 31. Volunteers have documented multiple fatalities and injuries, generating data to support future bird-friendly building advocacy. On May 6, the team celebrated its first successful rescue, an injured Mourning Dove was rehabilitated at The Wildlife Center of Virginia and then returned to Charlottesville for release.

Recruitment is ongoing for both the current spring season and the upcoming fall migration period (August 15–November 30). Volunteers can assist with monitoring, rescue, or transport. Those interested are encouraged to contact Tyler

Demetriou at tyler.demetriou@gmail.com or your fellow master naturalist Kendra Jacomo at kendrajacomo@gmail.com

OUTREACH

Volunteer Activities and Education Opportunities submitted by Outreach Chair Beth Kuhn

Turtles, snakes, and spiders; what do they have in common? Well, many things, in fact, one of which is that **the Outreach Committee will be teaching the public about them at IX market** this summer! Volunteer to join us at one of our market tables, between 8am-12noon:

- **Saturday July 11th,**
- **Saturday August 8th**
- **Saturday September 26th (date possibly subject to change)**

Contact Holly Hintz to volunteer for a two-hour shift. hollyhg1@yahoo.com

RMN will be at the Fluvanna County Fair on Saturday August 15th, from 8am to 4:30pm at Pleasant Grove Park. We traditionally bring our Wingspan exhibit to this event, and we need many volunteers to measure “wingspans”, help participants find their bird, and generally educate about birds. Suggested shift times are 8-11am, 11am-2pm, and 2-4:30pm, or whichever

time frame suits your schedule. **Please contact Pat Klima to volunteer.** rapunzel2658@gmail.com

Aldersgate Methodist Church is holding an adult camp this summer, “Camp Young at Heart”, and they would like RMNs to provide talks on nature topics. Have you got a passion or area of specialty that you’d like to share? Each talk is one hour long, 12:45-1:45pm on August 24, 25, or 26. **Please contact Beth Kuhn if you’re interested in this opportunity.** bethkuhnrnm@gmail.com



NATURE PHOTOS

Submitted by RMN Dave Volin



G S Fritillary on Stokes Aster

The Great Spangled Fritillary has emerged this spring in great profusion. I could not resist taking a few shots of them on our Stokes Aster bloom



Eyed Click Beetle Found by Curious 7-year old

A few weeks ago our two granddaughters from Farmville spent the weekend with us while their parents celebrated their tenth anniversary. Being raised near hundreds of acres of woods, they have developed a robust sincerity about any wild creature and will not hesitate to pick up unknown critters. By now, of course they are aware that bees can sting and other bugs can bite, so they are cautious enough to ask first when seeing something totally new. Such was the case when the younger of the two, age 7, picked up a bug she had never seen before and was wondering if it had telescopic vision. It was an Eyed Click Beetle and startled her when it bent its body, clicked and went airborne. She picked it up again, turned it over and it did the clicking trick again. The girls were fascinated and I had to explain that those weren't real eyes on the body, but fake ones likely to scare away any predators into thinking it was much bigger than it really was. And the clicking/jumping was another way to scare away and escape from something that might eat it. This whole incident prompted me to do a little research. It turns out that this 1 to 2 inch long beetle plays a crucial role in the ecology of our eastern forests.

The Eyed Click Beetle, like its smaller cousins, is commonly found in deciduous forests, woodlands and areas with decaying logs. The larvae, known as wireworms, are predatory, feeding on the grubs of wood-boring beetles. They can consume hundreds of larvae during development. The adults feed minimally on nectar or plant juices and are primarily focused on reproduction. The adults are also prey for birds and other insect predators. Quite a dual role for such an "eye-catching" bug! .

Nature's Critters by RMN Peggy Armand



Natures Bounty



by RMN Steve Pullinger

**The Mimosa
or "Happy Tree"**

We all love the beauty and smell of the Mimosa tree and it's a great resource for bees, butterflies and Hummingbirds. It is one of the few trees that has edible flowers but toxic fruit/seeds. The Mimosa is native to Asia and has no known pests in this country.



NEW INITIATIVES FOR RMN

From Michelle Prysby

- **Wonderful Water:** Our 2026 volunteer service theme focuses on Virginia's water resources. VMN volunteers who do water-focused service, like stream monitoring, should add #WOW to the description when they enter their hours so that we can measure our collective positive impact on water!
- **Living with Coyotes:** This project builds on the success of the Living with Black Bears education program and is also in partnership with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. Trained VMN volunteers give presentations on coyotes and behaviors humans can adopt to reduce conflict with these animals.
- **Butternut Hunt:** VMN volunteers will be helping University of Virginia researchers locate and collect samples from butternuts, a diminishing tree species in Virginia.

WAVY-LEAF BASKET GRASS SCOUTING

We will be scouting for wavy-leaf basket grass at Chris Greene Park. If populations are small enough, we will be pulling it out. Bring gloves, protect yourself from ticks.

To sign up for wavy-leaf basket grass scouting in Better Impact (BI), login to BI and choose Opportunities. It is under stewardship-invasive plant management/removal and Habitat Restoration on public lands. Choose the shift on June 5 from 9-11 and then you can sign up. If you are interested and don't want to sign up through BI, just send me an email and I'll put you on the list.

submitted by RMN Ruth Stornetta



Butternut Hunt Project Interest Survey - Summer 2026

Please fill out the survey below. Email uvabutternuts@virginia.edu if you have any questions. Check out the link [here](#) to explore project resources including our website!

July 9 Master Gardener presentation, check their website.

In my email signature is a [LinkTree](#) with all of my project related links including my [website](#)

Mia Murray (she/her)
MSc Student | Roulston Lab
University of Virginia | Environmental Sciences
E: fks7vf@virginia.edu | [LinkedIn](#)
<https://linktr.ee/butternutprojec>

POSTING ANNOUNCEMENTS

ON THE RMNGooglegroups listserv

To post announcements, mention projects, and pass on information of interest to RMN members, please contact rivannamn.info@gmail.com.

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COME JOIN US AND SHARE YOUR ADVENTURES AND PHOTOS.

RMN PRIVATE Group - Rivanna Master Naturalists Private Group - **Only RMNs can join and post.** Join us to post your own pictures and see photos by others.

"Rivanna Master Naturalists Help" Page - This page is **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC** if they want to ask questions, see what we are doing, etc.

Rivanna Master Naturalists Public Page - Our public face to the world.

SEE SOME OF OUR POSTS FROM FACEBOOK BELOW

GOODLinks

Log In Your Volunteer Hours Click on BETTER IMPACT

Resources for Master Naturalists [Click Here](#)

Virginia Master Naturalist Webinars - Check out the available webinars at the VMN Webinar page for Continuing Education Credit

Contact Us!

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rivannamnmembership@gmail.com

Check out our website
www.vmn-rivanna.org

The Virginia Master Naturalist program is 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.



**Virginia
Department
of
Wildlife
Resources**