Fall 2016 Newsletter



Natural Area News

A publication of the Ivy Creek Foundation, Volume 21, No. 2

Monticello Bird Club Meetings Bird Walks

Thurs., Sept. 8, 7 pm — Bob Schamerhorn will speak on wood warblers.

Oct. 13, Nov. 10. All talks are free and open to the public at 7 pm.

First Saturday Bird Walks. Sept. 3, Oct. 1, and Nov. 5, 7:30 am, led by Leigh Surdukowski. Binoculars are available to share. Meet in the ICNA parking lot.



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Trees of Ivy Creek - A Walk Sunday, Oct. 23, 2 pm

Join **Ellen Powell** of the Virginia Department of Forestry on an autumn walk at Ivy Creek Natural Area to learn to identify trees indigenous to Central Virginia. Meet in the parking lot of Ivy Creek Natural Area.

Little Naturalists

Mondays, Sept. 12, Oct. 10, and Nov. 9; Thursdays, Sept. 29, Oct. 27, all at 10 am — For 3-to-5-year-olds in the Education Building.

Native Plant Walks and Talk

Sat., Sept. 17, 9 am — Mary Lee Epps will lead a walk to observe fall flowers and fruits.

Sat., Oct. 15, 9 am — Phil Stokes will lead a walk focusing on invasive plants.

Sat., Nov. 14, 9 am — Ruth Douglas will guide a late fall walk focusing on identifying weeds in winter.



Wed., Sept. 14, 7:30 pm — "Ivy Creek's Plant Diversity and the Ivy Creek Herbarium," a talk by Jefferson Chapter members Tana Herndon and Tim Williams.

Master Landscapers to Reveal New Vision for ICNA

Join us at the Sept. 18 ICF Annual Meeting

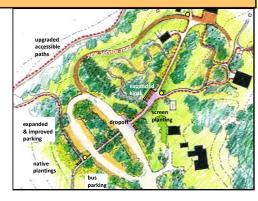
Renowned landscape architects

Susan Nelson and Warren Byrd
have generously volunteered their
time and expertise to design a
proposal for ICNA's central
welcoming areas. At the invitation of
ICF's Board, they worked closely
with a subcommittee over the last
eight months to create a workable
plan that would address numerous site
issues. These designs will be unveiled
at the Sept. 18 Annual Meeting.

The designs envision enhancements to the most heavily used portions of ICNA – the entry road, parking lot and arrival/drop-off area, kiosk/ interpretive zone, and the primary pathways that link the entrance to the Barn, Education Building and walking trails. (See rendering, right.)

The most intriguing aspect is the scalability of their vision, which describes both reasonable, immediate upgrades to ICNA's most public spaces and imagines what might unfold over the next 10 to 20 years. It proposes modest and practical changes for the arrival and interpretive experience, while also suggesting how we could expand our interpretation and treatment of these areas in ways that promote ICF's mission to maintain an accessible place committed to both preservation and education.

The couple writes, "As members of ICF, we believe that the dedication



and commitment to provide and care for the ICNA remains strong as ever. Membership involvement and your support of an improved, enhanced design are both vital to insure ICNA continues to be welcoming and wonderful."

Please join us at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, Sept. 18 at 2 pm, for this very special presentation. Space is limited to 65, on a first come, first seated basis. Doors open at 1:30 pm.

Are You a Friend of Ivy Creek?

Of course you are! From "Friends of the National Zoo" to "Friends of JMRL," we have all seen and many of us belong to supporting organizations. Now we are happy to introduce "Friends of Ivy Creek," our new d/b/a ("doing business as") name.

All of ICF's members are friends, and this step recognizes that, while opening the door for wider public support of ICNA. Starting



lvy Creek Foundation

with the Annual Meeting in September, our brochures and materials will carry our new "Friends of..." logo (see logo at left).

We encourage our current friends to spread the word and help us meet new friends. Look for more info on the "Friends" drive when you get your renewal notices later this autumn!

Where Are We with Woods NHA?

As reported in 2015, ICF will assist Albemarle County on the William S.D. Woods Natural Heritage Area. (Woods NHA is the former Arrowhead Farm parcel which we committed to manage last year.) The wording of the Memorandum of Understanding is in the final stages. It will last until December 2017 and our duties include:

Trails: Review all of the existing trails and assess their condition; make recommendations about which trails will

be maintained and which will be closed to the public; provide the final trail system, and conduct quarterly trail work field trips to remove debris, fallen branches, overgrowth, and trash.

Conditions: Conduct monthly property visits to check on key areas of interest or concern, report on conditions found, and recommend actions as needed.

Boundaries: Conduct once per year monitoring of the property lines, marking and posting lines as needed with the County's assistance.

General Monitoring: Report any unauthorized use while the property remains closed to the public.

Peter Clark is our head trail steward for Woods NHA. He has been quietly leading monitoring trips to the property. To volunteer at Woods NHA, please contact him at peterdclark@gmail.com or contact me at ivycreek.director@gmail.com, and put

Ivy Creek Volunteer Work Days

Thursdays, Sept. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 10, Dec. 8; Saturdays, Sept. 24. Oct. 22. Nov. 19— all at 9 am.



Ivy Creek Foundation

President: George Barlow Vice President: Marilyn Smith Secretary: Diana Foster Treasurer: Phil Stokes **Executive Director: Tatyanna**

Patten

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Coordinator's Corner

Ivy Creek Natural Area is a special place for nature and history lovers, but what makes it truly special are the contributions of visitors and volunteers who keep the trails in good shape for everyone.

Keeping the trails up requires the partnership of the city, county and the Ivy Creek Foundation, but the more complex contributions like building a bridge over a stream are often the work of Eagle Scouts.

In the past two years, scouts have built trails, bridges, benches, animal houses and information boxes. Scouts from Troop 111 who contributed

major projects since 2014 are Chris McDaniel, Jay Gillinwater, and Daniel Jones. Several trails now lead to previously hidden areas of Ivy Creek: Hydraulic Mills (blue trail), Dragonfly,





— Bruce Gatling-Austin



Fall 2016 Ivy Talks

Come join a stellar group of local scholars and experts for the upcoming 2016-17 Ivy Talks. Presenters will offer a wide range of topics for adults interested in the environment, nature, and education. These Sunday talks will all take place at 2:00 pm in the ICNA Education

building.



Sept. 11, "Waterworks: A History of the Local Water Supply, 1819-2016: A Drama **Unfolding in Two Acts."**

This co-authored talk by **Steve Thompson** and **Dede Smith** charts Charlottesville's almost 200-year long

struggle to develop and maintain a centralized water supply. (See details, p. 8.)



Oct. 9, "The Genius of Birds"

Local author of the acclaimed book, *The Genius of Birds*, **Jennifer Ackerman** will discuss the research that led to the discovery of the brilliance of birds. A recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship in Nonfiction, a Bunting Fellowship, and a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Ackerman has been writing about science and nature for almost three decades. In addition to her many published books, her work has appeared in a number publications including Scientific America, National Geographic The New York Times. Birders, bird lovers and science buffs will enjoy this presentation of science told by a masterful storyteller.

Nov. 13, "Bound to the Fire: Slavery, Race and Food in 18th and 19th century Virginia"

Scholar and educator of the African Diaspora, **Dr. Kelly Deetz**, will share insights about the complicated social and cultural relationships between slaves who worked in kitchens and their owners. Based on her upcoming book, Bound to the Fire: Virginia's Enslaved Cooks and their Kitchens due out in 2017, this talk will explore the lives of Virginia's enslaved cooks and their legacy in American culture. Dr. Deetz has taught African American Studies at the university level for over a decade; her research and teaching focus on constructions of race, identity, culture, public narratives and histories within the African



Diaspora. She is a former Vice President and Board Member of the Legacy Museum of African American History, coeditor of the African Diaspora Archaeology Newsletter and a board member/director of the Nate Parker Foundation.

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts."

Rachel Carson

Bess Murray's Radio Shows - Her Gift to Ivy Creek:

A treasure trove of our natural history by an extraordinary local naturalist

by Sharon Baiocco



It's time to pay homage to Bess Murray, known best around Central Virginia for her Saturday morning fiveminute radio talks, "Natural History Notes" on WTJU (FM 91.1). She and Jeff Kirwan of WTIU started out in 1992-93 taking turns doing the spot, but he became too busy, and Bess carried on alone, creating and reading her nature stories every other week on the air.

Bess's British accent was already the well-

known "voice" of the Ivy Creek Foundation from 1983 to 1993 when she served as the second coordinator of Foundation operations. After a decade of "juggling the roles of office manager, public relations director, naturalist, spokeswoman, historian, guide organizer, and too many others functions to list, Bess stepped down as coordinator," according to **Dede Smith**, who succeeded her in that role.

But from 1991 through 2005, Bess Murray's voice and delightful storytelling took natural history to the wider public through the University of Virginia's public broadcasting radio station. The talks are a compendium of elegant, sharply accurate, and colorful stories ranging from A - "Ant Lions" to W - "Woodcock." Bess's artistic eye for nature explores our local Virginia landscapes from Smith Mountain Lake to the George Washington National Forest and from the Rivanna River to Thomas Jefferson's 'Birthday Tree.' At times she takes us farther "afield" to Alaska, North Carolina, and our Virginia coast.

Just in! We have obtained a release from the radio station to make the electronic recordings available online to the public. Soon you will be able to listen and learn from our own superb and dedicated educator.

Now, over 300 typescripts of her talks from 1992-1997 are in the admiring hands of Ivy Creek Education Committee member **Mary Lee Epps**, who has been reading them, trying to "whittle down the pile somewhat" for digitization. In addition, Bess had donated 62 of her five-minute audiotaped versions to ICF throughout her work with the Foundation, and this year **Dede Smith**, Education Committee member

and former executive director of ICF, offered to transfer them to electronic mp3 formatting. Coincidentally, **Nathan Moore** at WTJU had the same idea and has given us permission to publish them online. If you are a lover of language, nature, and ICNA, you will want to explore these "gems" by a dedicated educator.

This year, Bess also loaned Epps typed copies of her radio scripts to be digitized using OCR (Optical Character Recognition), and Epps has recruited the **Rivanna Master Naturalists** to make transcripts from the typescripts. Epps writes, "The original typescripts have penciled corrections, water stains, etc., so that they will require some further editing and cleanup even after using the OCR. And," she added, "this is just a start. Bess has typescripts for additional 'Natural History Notes' that she presented in the years 2001-2005, and she has promised to lend me those when we finish with this batch from the 1990s."

Epps writes, "I think these ['Natural History Notes'] would make an excellent book. Meanwhile, we plan to make transcripts and/or recordings of many of them available soon through the Ivy Creek website." Bess's love for all things wild and her desire to protect them have guided our vision for ICNA from the beginning and will continue into the future through her "Notes" and Ivy Creek's dedicated volunteers.

About Bess and Jim Murray...

Bess and Jim Murray, retired biologists, live outside Charlottesville near Proffit. Together they and their forebears have been a formidable force for the environment, not only at Ivy Creek, but throughout Virginia and the nation.

According to a 2009 article in *UVA Magazine*, "The two met as lab partners at Oxford, and, . . . [ever since] the pair have shared a passion for environmental activism." Following in the footsteps of Jim's father, founder of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, Bess and Jim, who is professor emeritus of biology at UVA, led efforts to protect wilderness "by passing a bill through Congress every 10 years or so." Their victories include the 1975 Eastern Wilderness Areas Act, adding 200,000 acres; the 1984 Virginia Wilderness Act, adding two areas in the George Washington National Forest and eight in the Jefferson National Forest; and the 2000 Virginia Wilderness Act" (http://uvamagazine.org/articles/into the wild spring 2009).

Bess and Jim have been tireless supporters of ICF. In addition to recording and promoting its natural history, **Dede Smith** reports, "Bess also took an avid interest in the human history of the area, hosting members of the Carr and Greer families when they gathered in Charlottesville in 1990 for a family reunion. Bess arranged for Foundation members and the press to be present, resulting in the recording of invaluable family stories."

Ivy Creek News Roundup

ICF Mid-Year Fundraiser Reaches \$13,000 Goal

Thank you to everyone who gave during the mid-year special appeal that went out in June!

We met our goal of \$13,000, and will finish our fiscal year in great shape thanks to our members and friends.

New Capacity-Building Grant Awarded to ICF

In August, ICF received notice from the National Environmental Education Fund that it will receive a \$5,000 award to help us purchase new member, donor,

and volunteer database and tracking software. It will greatly improve our record-keeping and reporting ability and provide us with tools to analyze our trends over time. You should be able to see the improvement reflected in our communications by spring 2017. Thank you to NEEF for providing us the means to acquire a key piece of infrastructure!

HIT REFRESH!

This fall, keep an eye on our website, ivycreekfoundation.org, because a change is in the air! In May, to give the Ivy Creek website a complete overhaul, and we put out a bid for proposals, and we selected web designer **Debra Weiss** of drw Designs in June. We have been working with her this summer and will continue into the fall on a redesigned website. When will it go live? **Start hitting that refresh button around mid-October!** (We will "blast" it out on the e-mail list and the Facebook page when it is ready.)

Disaster/Wilderness First Aid Returns to Ivy Creek

Learn the tools to assist when 911 is overwhelmed or not immediately available! In Medic Matt Rosefsky's two-day course at ICNA on Oct. 22-23, classroom and practical instruction are woven together to give you confidence on the trails or in an emergency. To learn more about or sign up for the course, go to www.solowfa.com on the Web, or call 434-INJURED (434-465-8733). A portion of the class's proceeds will be donated to Ivy Creek.



Death in the Forest

by Tom Dierauf, May 2016

Trees are always dying at Ivy Creek, hundreds of them every year. There is nothing bad or unnatural about this – it happens all the time in any forest. Most are very small trees that lose out in the unending competition for scarce resources — sunlight also soil moisture. Few people ever notice their

mostly, but also soil moisture. Few people ever notice their passing. It is only when larger trees die, usually for the same reasons, that people may notice.

Recently a large tree died at Ivy Creek. I noticed it when helping **Dan Bieker** with the final exam of the recent Natural History class. It was a white pine, the largest at Ivy Creek, which dominated the area in which it grew and seemed to be a healthy tree. It was 30.9 inches in diameter when we measured it in May 2014, two growing seasons

ago. This tree is on the uphill side of the Blue Trail, and is described at the top of p. 27 in our report (available at ivycreekfoundation.org). It grew in a small stand of about a dozen white pines; all other white pines at Ivy Creek occur as scattered individuals. We cored a smaller white pine nearby (tree #165 in the same stand, described on p. 34), which originated about 1931, and I would guess that the pine that died originated about the same time. White pines can live a very long time, so at about 85 years, it was not an old tree. Why it died is a mystery to me, but when I measured its diameter it had not grown any in the past 2 years, which is strange. Normally I would expect a tree like this to grow at least a half inch in two years.

White pine is the only pine species native to Virginia which is tolerant of shade, so there is the possibility that this tree might be replaced someday by a seedling that would eventually grow into the canopy, although this is not likely. The other pine species at Ivy Creek — Virginia, shortleaf, pitch, and loblolly — are all very intolerant of shade. As they gradually die out, they will not be replaced.

Spotlight on Our Long-time Nature Guides

Guides like Hugh, Adele, and Marjie are unique gifts to Ivy Creek, and we treasure their loyal service.



Hugh Gildea, Nature Guide

Hugh's experience as an Ivy Creek guide dates back to the mid-1990s. A native of Albemarle County, he takes pride in sharing a first name with Ivy Creek's "founding father," Hugh Carr, and in sharing with others the area's rich natural and cultural history through hikes and hands-on history displays. He also is a volunteer at the Lewis and Clark Exploratory Center, recently opened in Darden Towe Park, and the mountain farm at Humpback Rocks on the Blue Ridge Parkway. He serves on the staff of the education department at James Madison's Montpelier, where his favorite interpretive duty is the Gilmore Farm (home of a freed-slave family with close parallels to Carr's River View farm).

Hugh claims to be a "generalist" as a nature guide, but he likes to point out that the evidence of an ancient Native American presence here, as well as the traditional rural agricultural lifestyle honored by the Ivy Creek barn, indicate that our area has been a favorable place to live for thousands of years.



Adele Wood, Nature Guide

Adele Wood has served as an Ivy Creek nature guide since 1997, and has also volunteered with 4-H Junior Naturalists. When she was 12, her family had a farm in Earlysville, where she spent a lot of time walking in the woods. Her stepfather's hobby was to make "miles and miles" of trails through the woods, and she continues to enjoy sharing with children "the excitement, the fun, and the richness of the natural world." She says she teaches children how to "fall in love with nature."

Her favorite trail at ICNA is the Red Trail to the reservoir where the children can observe aquatic creatures. She says, "The children are so excited and yet quickly learn the wonderful skill of walking quietly enough to see turtles up close sunning themselves on logs!"

Adele holds a B.A. from Virginia Tech and a B.F.A. in Sculpture from Virginia Commonwealth University. She has been active in the Mill Creek South Homeowners Association, and is also serving on two Albemarle County committees, 5th and Avon Community Advisory Committee and the Southside Citizens Library Committee. Once a week Adele gives her friend's young daughter a private one-on-one nature lesson by taking her on an after school nature walk in Old Trail, where her friend lives.



Marjie Giuliano, Nature Guide, Docent, Little Naturalists Assistant

Marjie Giuliano has been connected to Ivy Creek since before its official beginning in 1978. She remembers when the land came up for sale in 1975, and Bess Murray was the education director when she first became a nature guide. Back then, she recalls, "When the kids came from the schools in the inner city, they were often afraid of entering the woods." Marjie stopped guiding for 20 years while she pursued a career as a public health nurse for the Charlottesville Department of Health, working on teen pregnancy prevention with teenagers in the public schools. She retired from that position 12 years ago and returned to Ivy Creek as a guide.

Today, Marjie is happy that the children she guides from the city no longer fear entering the woods: "It's so encouraging that the children from Charlottesville are much more appreciative of being in the woods."

Recently, she has worked with the Little Naturalists and is a substitute barn docent. Marjie has taken full advantage of the great nature programs offered at ICNA: "I keep learning!" she says. She is a master gardener, a master naturalist, and a tree steward, and she also volunteers at the Rockfish Valley Natural Science Center in Nellysford.



Monticello Bird Club Celebrates its 30th!

Featured Ivy Creek Partner Organization
We are grateful for our long-time partnership!



Young Birders

In 2012, several youth who were members of Monticello Bird Club formed the Blue Ridge Young Birders Club. They are a group of young birders from Charlottesville and surrounding areas between the ages 7 and 18, who share a passion for birds, birding, bird watching, bird photography, adventure and everything to do with birds and nature. The Young Birders offer regular field trips to local and distant places and also participate in conservation and citizen science projects. They maintain and monitor Bluebird Trails at Piedmont Community College in Charlottesville, and in the Shenandoah Valley. For more information, go to www.blueridgeyoungbirders.org.



Need Bird Seed?

The MBC has only one fundraising

project, its annual Birdseed Sale. Orders for several varieties of seed, suet and nest boxes are solicited beginning in September each year. Orders may be placed online at the club's website www.monticellobirdclub.org. or by paper order form (on the club's web site) and check. Orders may be picked up on Delivery Day – usually the last Saturday in October or the first Saturday in November – at the Department. of Forestry warehouse near Fontaine Research Park. Last year, the club sold over 8 ½ tons of seed!

This year is the thirtieth anniversary of the formation of the Rivanna Chapter of the Monticello Bird Club (MBC), a long-time partner of Ivy Creek Foundation. The Club now has 165 members. Meeting monthly since 2002 in our Education Building to educate members and the public about birds, MBC members have long served as guides of our First Saturday Bird Walks. The club's annual "Birding Before Work" bird walks occur during spring migration, and several are held on the ICF grounds.

Our close partnership with MBC dates back to the installation of a purple martin house in 1989. **Doug Rogers**, president of MBC says, "ICF is an invaluable and irreplaceable partner with the MBC. It is a 'marriage made in Heaven' kind of relationship. It has been a mutually rewarding and mutually supportive relationship for many years, with MBC members doing some of the ICF volunteer activities like installing and subsequently relocating the bat house on ICF grounds, and MBC members attending the annual night-hawk migration event held at ICF. **Dave Hogg**, Ivy Creek Foundation's past Board president, who is still active in the club, normally leads this event."

The club sponsors field trips led by experienced guides each month for birders of all skill levels, to help participants learn where to find and how to identify an exciting variety of bird species. Local trips usually last two to three hours, while others going farther away may be daylong trips or even "overnighters."



Members also participate in the annual Hawk Watch at Rockfish

Gap, the Kestrel Nest Box Project of the Virginia Society of Ornithology and the Albemarle Spring Bird Count.

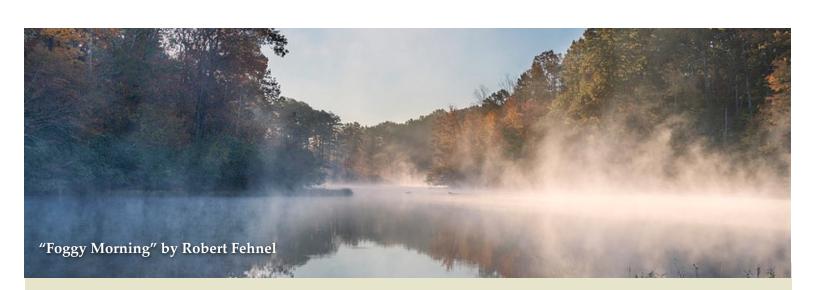
To learn more about the Monticello Bird Club, you can attend a meeting on the second Thursday of each month, September through May — **the next meeting is**Sept. 8 — or go to their website, www.monticellobirdclub.org. The web site contains links to many wonderful resources, such as the *Annotated Check List of Birds of Albemarle County and Charlottesville*, *Virginia* and *The Birder's Guide to Charlottesville*, *Virginia and Vicinity*.

If you have an interest in birds, birding, conservation of natural resources or just like to spend quality time outside enjoying good camaraderie of like-minded folks, come to ICNA and check out the Monticello Bird Club.

Ivy Creek Foundation P.O. Box 956 Charlottesville, VA 22902 Non-Profit Organization U.S. Postage Paid Charlottesville, VA Permit No. 299

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IVY TALKS: Charlottesville's Water Supply - Sunday, Sept. 11, 2 pm

Kicking off our Ivy Talks this fall, **Steve Thompson** and **Dede Smith** will present "Waterworks: A History of the Local Water Supply, 1819-2016: A Drama Unfolding in Two Acts." In the first part, **Steve Thompson**, local archaeologist, principal at Rivanna Archaeological Services and ICF Board Member, focuses on water supply at the University of Virginia from its founding to its collaborative venture to create the first publicly-owned municipal waterworks.

In the talk's second part, long-time Charlottesville resident, former director of ICF and founder of Citizens for a Sustainable Water Plan, **Dede Smith**, chronicles the growth and evolution of the public supply system from the first Ragged Mountain Reservoir in 1886 through the recently completed dam reconstruction. Seating is limited.