



# Natural Area News

A publication of the Ivy Creek Foundation  
Volume 14, No. 4

Spring Newsletter 2009

## Making Ready to Burn the South Field at ICNA

If all goes to plan, this April we will conduct the prescribed burn of the larger of our two warm-season grass fields, known as the South Field. As conditions become close to ideal, our Burn Manager, Sam Lindblom of the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Ivy Creek Foundation (ICF) board member, will monitor every possible detail of weather conditions and one morning will make a call to ICF letting us know it is the day for the burn. The gears are set in motion, more calls are made, and any planned business for the afternoon is put aside as we prioritize the burn. Jenn Detweiler observed the TNC fire crew last spring and took these photographs. It is amazing how quickly the small fire pictured above, becomes the impressive one below!



Ivy Creek's warm-season grass fields were initially planted with Indian grass, Big Bluestem and Little Bluestem, all of which are thriving. Last spring we held a public program on prescribed burns and one participant asked whether we had considered introducing further native plant species. As we make ready for the 2009 burn, we are considering this question and have begun to discuss it with local experts.

One of the ICF board committees is developing a detailed and comprehensive management plan for the Ivy Creek Natural Area. We are eager to have more membership involvement in our work. This question of adding plant species to the grass fields and others - such as more closely monitoring the grass fields, new planting in the butterfly areas, managing invasives - would be ideal for interested members to focus on as part of a board committee or advisory group. Please let us know if you would like to work with us - [icf@ivycreekfoundation.org](mailto:icf@ivycreekfoundation.org) or (434) 973-7772!

Any new planting in the grass fields would likely take place next year, but this year's burn will be as exciting as ever. Keep an eye on the website - <http://ivycreekfoundation.org>. One morning in April, we will post a burn notice!

### From the ICF Board President

Dear members and friends,

Thank you all for the many ways you support the Ivy Creek Foundation. Your memberships, financial gifts and grants create the financial base to maintain these areas we all treasure. Your donation of time as guides and trail monitors provide invaluable support for the many educational activities we make available to the public.

All of us at Ivy Creek also appreciate that you spend time visiting the natural areas. It is you who provide the incentive and inspiration to manage and improve these areas for your enjoyment and enlightenment. We are truly a community based organization.

In these difficult and troubling financial times, we especially value your support and ask for your help in many ways. Yes, we would always welcome monetary donations or higher levels of membership, but for us to truly reflect our community, we need your involvement. Most of our board committees are open to members. If you have the time and desire and interest or expertise in environmental education, land management, non-profit governance and management or any other aspect of our mission, please let us know.

In this issue of *Natural Area News*, we give specific examples of areas where we seek membership participation. Please get in touch if you want to take part in any of these, or other, projects. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Peter D Clark*

## Ivy Creek Educational Events During Earth Week, April 17<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>

Earth Week 2009 will kick off with Fridays After Five at the Pavilion on April 17<sup>th</sup> with Earth Week volunteers working concessions and promoting the Eco-Fair. The Eco-Fair will take place at the Pavilion the next day and we are expecting a big crowd! It will start at 11am on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, and last until 5pm. Over 100 groups working on environmental issues, including Ivy Creek, will have information tables. Several local bands will play in the afternoon and there will be lots of fun activities for families. Check for details, news and updates at <http://www.earthweek.org>.

During Earth Week, Ivy Creek will work with partners participating in the Charlottesville Regional Environmental Education Coalition (CREEC) supporting local schools as they undertake Earth Day/Week activities. Activities may focus on resource conservation, water quality, responsible management of stormwater run-off, or simply promote appreciation and enjoyment of nature. As an educational prop, Ivy Creek will have our new worm box, a gift we will receive from Tandem Friends School later in March. Watch our website for news on this green gift!

Our worm box will be populated with Red wigglers (*Eisenia foetida*), pictured below and considered the best compost worms around. Red wigglers live well in densely populated conditions and do not need to burrow, making them ideal for a compost producing worm box. They eat just about anything that originally came out of the ground, consume up to half their body weight a day, and leave behind rich humus, ideal for fertilizing your garden. And of course, being able to show these guys to the students will make their environmental education experience really come to life!



Sunday April 26<sup>th</sup> will find us at the end of Earth Week 2009, celebrating Natural History Day and the Annual Native Plant Sale held by the Jefferson Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society at Ivy Creek Natural Area. Come and enjoy an afternoon of nature and fun with local environmental groups and choose from over 50 species of native plants to take home with you!

Please let us know if you would like to help out with any of these Earth Week activities or other upcoming events. Support in working at the Pavilion, with local schools, or at Ivy Creek on the 26<sup>th</sup> would be greatly appreciated!

### 2009 Membership Renewals!!

We are still waiting for some ICF members to renew for 2009. If you have not done so yet, please renew as soon as you can ( by May 1<sup>st</sup> if possible).

We will include the membership list in the next issue of *Natural Area News* and we would like to include every member!

Thank you for all your support!

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## ICF Membership

The Ivy Creek Foundation is a volunteer-based non-profit organization that depends on community donations to maintain the natural areas for your enjoyment and to provide free educational programming. This year we are developing a series of environmental education units, several of which we have described in past newsletters. We are also working with local teachers, school administrators and other community partners to develop education programs related to the rich family history of Ivy Creek.

We can not do any of this without the support of our membership! This year we have launched our first concerted membership drive, and we need your help! Please become a member if you are not already, or pass this form on to a friend who enjoys the natural areas but is not yet a member. To join, please send your tax-deductible contribution to: Ivy Creek Foundation, P.O. Box 956, Charlottesville, VA 22902

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

- |                                       |  |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Sustaining | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Benefactor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Regular | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Subscribing  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Donor      | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Patron   |

## Winter Trail Maintenance at Ragged Mountain

This winter trail monitors and volunteers have worked hard to clear the trail system at Ragged Mountain Natural Area. Our regular trail monitor there has been clearing fallen trees through out the winter, and in the last week of February a group of students and teachers from Tandem Friends School went out and cleared over 20 fallen trees, largely from the Peninsula Loop. Tandem students Sam Cole and Andrew Cary are pictured right hoisting cut sections away from the trail, as Adam Peacock continues to chainsaw away.



In the fall we ran our first trail building and maintenance course with Albemarle County. One of our goals as we carry this work forward will be to establish an extensive network of trail stewards, trained to maintain our natural area trails, other local trail systems, and to lead groups of other trail volunteers. We will also train and certify volunteers to work with hand tools, and to a lesser extent, chainsaws. Working on the trails can be dangerous. It is essential that trail stewards know the proper way to work with hand tools, power tools (in some cases), as well as how to handle situations like figuring out how a tree hung up on another will fall when cut down or otherwise freed. In our trainings we will cover all the basics. We hope to hold our next course later in the spring. If you would like to work with us in developing and running this training program, please be in touch!



Preparations have also been made to repair the foot bridges at Ragged Mountain. Some will be repaired, but at least one of them will be replaced with stairs. On March 20<sup>th</sup> we will have a work day to get a good deal of this work done. Please join us! We will meet in the parking lot at 9am. Given the time it takes to get to the work sites, please plan to stay as long as you can. The work day will last until 3pm. If you can plan ahead of time, let us know you will be coming so we can be sure to have plenty of tools! Dan Bieker, and County and City trail staff will be leading the work groups, so we will all learn a lot too!

- Thanks to **Bob Spencer, Adam Peacock, Dean Joyner, Mia Taylor** and the students and teachers from **Tandem Friends School** for their help at Ragged Mountain this winter.
- Many thanks also go out to **Ralph Hall, Frank Wilczek** and the **Montessori Community School** upper elementary students and guides for their regular trail work at Ivy Creek Natural Area!

## Author Talks at Ivy Creek Natural Area

Brown College was the first residential college established at the University of Virginia and is probably best known for its annual “Hauntings” at Halloween and the Sally Brown Visiting Environmental Writers and Scholars (ViEWS) Lecture Series. The ViEWS series brings nationally renowned environmental authors, artists and scholars to Charlottesville to share their work. Ivy Creek has been lucky enough to have a number of these visiting environmentalists hold an additional program at our Education Center at ICNA.

On February 13<sup>th</sup> Michael Branch shared with us the fascinating evolution of the pronghorn, a holdover from the Pleistocene age and the fastest animal of North America. The pronghorn is adapted to run at speeds up to 60 mph in order to escape the North American cheetah, now extinct for 10,000 years. The pronghorn is so adapted for speed across flat grasslands that it cannot jump barriers more than a few inches high!

On March 26<sup>th</sup> Karen Tei Yamashita will be reading from her books *Through the Arc of the Rainforest*, *Tropic of Orange*, and her forthcoming novel *I, Hotel*. Her writing is known for its beauty, honesty and dark humor. Please join us!

### Making the Conant House Ready for Sale

This spring we will be putting the house Babs Conant so generously donated to ICF on the market. A small group of Ivy Creek supporters are planning to work on the yard, putting in native, drought tolerant plantings and undertaking other small projects they can get done in a short period of time. If you have a gift for gardening for curb appeal and would like to help out, please let us know!

*All programs are free of charge unless otherwise indicated.*

## **March 2009**

- 4 Family Nature Craft**  
*Wednesday, March 4, 3:30 pm*  
Explore the natural world with your children through story, song, games, and craft. Every Wednesday, storyteller and nature-educator Kate White shares the joy and fun of nature. Topics include tree and plant identification, animal tracks and signs, stargazing, bird language and much more. Free and open to the public. Meet just outside the Education Building.
- 5 Central Virginia Beekeepers Meeting**  
*Thursday, March 5, 7:00 pm*  
Come hear Mark Bennet of Dadant & Sons talk about beekeeping equipment. He'll also bring a delivery of orders. Beginners welcome to our first meeting of the year. Free and open to the public. Meet in the Education Building.
- 7 First Saturday Bird Walk**  
*Saturday, March 7, 7:30 am*  
Join John Zimmerman for an early morning bird walk with the Monticello Bird Club. Beginners always welcome. Meet in the parking lot.
- 7 Wilderness First Aid Certification**
- 8** *Saturday and Sunday, March 7-8*  
*8:30-5:30 pm each day*  
Learn how to deal with medical emergency when you are out on the trail. Registration required. Fee includes books, handouts, and certification. For more information go to <http://www.outdoorsocial.com/wfa.htm> or call (434) 760-HIKE. 10% of fee becomes a donation to the Ivy Creek Foundation.
- 11 Family Nature Craft**  
*Wednesday, March 11, 3:30 pm*  
Explore the natural world with your children. See March 4<sup>th</sup> for a complete description. Meet just outside the Education Building.
- 11 Virginia Native Plant Society Meeting**  
*Wednesday, March 11, 7:30 pm*  
Hear Martin Johnson, Urban Conservation Specialist with Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation, discuss riparian buffers in our area. Free and open to the public. Meet in the Education Building.
- 12 Monticello Bird Club Meeting**  
*Thursday, March 12, 7:30 pm*  
Hear Jim Nix's presentation on birds of Ecuador. While in the Andean highlands Jim and his wife Phyllis saw nearly 150 bird species including 34 hummingbirds, 20 tanagers and three species of strange and secretive antpittas. Ecuador is a land of spectacular scenery and fascinating culture as well as incredible birds.
- 17 Ivy Creek Volunteer Guide Training**  
*Tuesday, March 17, 9:30 am*  
Become a volunteer guide! Learn the trails and how to be a basic naturalist. Topics covered include mammals, reptiles, amphibians, trees, plants, birds, and the history of River View Farm. Meet every Tuesday morning. We'll start in the Education Building. Free. For more information contact Bruce Gatling-Austin at [programs@ivycreekfoundation.org](mailto:programs@ivycreekfoundation.org)
- 18 Family Nature Craft**  
*Wednesday, March 18, 3:30 pm*  
Explore the natural world with your children. See March 4<sup>th</sup> for a complete description. Meet just outside the Education Building.
- 19 Digital Nature Photography**  
*Thursday, March 19, 7:00 pm*  
Victoria Dye, professional nature photographer, will teach a workshop about digital nature photography. Meet in the Education Building. Free and open to the public.

**20 Volunteer Work Day at the Ragged Mountain Natural Area.**

*Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm*

Join volunteers to work on the trails at the Ragged Mountain Natural Area. We will repair bridges, build stairs, and clear fallen trees from the trails. Meet in the parking lot. Email [icf@ivycreekfoundation.org](mailto:icf@ivycreekfoundation.org) so we can arrange to have plenty of tools!

**21 Tracking and the Earth**

*Saturday, March 21, 9:00 am*

Join Hub Knott outdoors to search for signs of wildlife activity. Learn how to read the story of animal life in the landscape of Ivy Creek. Meet at the barn.

**21 StreamWatch Training Workshop**

*Saturday, March 21, 10 am – 4 pm*

In this StreamWatch introductory training, learn the fundamentals of benthic invertebrate sampling to gauge water quality and stream health. Class size is limited, and a reservation is required. Contact Rose Brown at 962-3527 or [rose@streamwatch.org](mailto:rose@streamwatch.org). Meet in the Education Building. No charge.

**21 Heavenly Bodies at Ivy Creek**

*Saturday, March 21, 7:30 pm*

Get close to the stars at Ivy Creek. After a short presentation in the Education Building, the Charlottesville Astronomical Society will introduce you to the spring stars from the open mowed area next to the barn. Bring your own telescope or look through the scopes provided. Use low beam or red flashlights only. Free and open to the public. Cloudy skies will reschedule this event to April 18<sup>th</sup>.

**22 Rain Barrel and Water Quality**

*Sunday, March 22, 12 noon*

Come hear Garnett Mellen of the Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District give a water quality presentation in the Education Building. Free and open to the public.

**25 Family Nature Craft**

*Wednesday, March 25, 3:30 pm*

Explore the natural world with your children. See March 4<sup>th</sup> for a complete description. Meet just outside the Education Building.

**25 The Songs of Frogs and Toads**

*Wednesday, March 25, 7:00 pm*

What better way to celebrate the new season than to learn the sounds of spring? Michelle Prysby will present a program on local frogs and toads and how to identify their songs and calls. The event is free. Meet in the Education Building.

**26 Ivy Creek Toddler Time**

*Thursday, March 26, 10:00 am*

Enjoy a read-aloud and trail walk for three to five year old toddlers at Ivy Creek. Volunteer guide Rachel Bush will host, starting in the Education Building at Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.

**26 Author Talk: Karen Tei Yamashita**

*Thursday, March 26, 7:00 pm*

Come hear novelist Karen Tei Yamashita reading from her books *Through the Arc of the Rainforest*, *Tropic of Orange*, and her forthcoming novel *I, Hotel*. Professor Yamashita is sponsored by Brown College of the University of Virginia. Meet in the Education Building. The event is free.

**28 Farm and Barn History Day**

*Saturday, March 28, 2:00 pm*

Come enjoy the barn at Ivy Creek Natural Area. This was formerly the showpiece of the working farm known as River View Farm. This is a rare afternoon with the barn open to the public.

## **April 2009**

**2 Central Virginia Beekeepers Meeting**

*Thursday, April 2, 7:00 pm*

Learn how to create a bee-friendly garden from Dick and Carmen Nies. Beginners

welcome. Free and open to the public. Meet in the Education Building.

**4 First Saturday Bird Walk**

*Saturday, April 4, 7:30 am*

Spring migration will be the highlight of our April bird walk with Stauffer Miller of the Monticello Bird Club. Meet in the parking lot. Beginners welcome.

**4 Birdwatching Binocular “Show & Tell”**

*Saturday, April 4, 9:00 am*

After the bird walk, join members of the Monticello Bird Club in the Education Building for binocular “show and tell.” Individuals are encouraged to bring their own binoculars and to learn about other models currently available. Open to the public.

For updates and additional events check out <a href="http://ivycreekfoundation.org/education/calendar.html">ivycreekfoundation.org/education/calendar.html</a>
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**4 Beekeepers Hive Demonstration**

*Saturday, April 4, 11:30 am*

Learn how to set up a beehive from the Central Virginia Beekeepers Association. Meet in the parking lot.

**5 Changing Forests**

*Saturday, April 5, 2:00 pm*

Hear Tony Russell talk about our changing forests and the impacts of invasives, pests and climate change. This is an advanced Rivanna Master Naturalist Presentation free and open to the public. Meet in the Education Building.

**8 Virginia Native Plant Society Meeting**

*Wednesday, April 8, 7:30 pm*

Come hear Philip Coulling, the camp director for Nature Camp near Vesuvius, VA speak about the facilities and natural history programs for both youth and adults at the monthly meeting of the Jefferson Chapter. Open to the public. Meet in the Education Building.

**9 Monticello Bird Club Meeting**

*Thursday, April 9, 7:30 pm*

Join us as Dr. Marshall Faintich presents Birding Wintergreen. He has taken more than 35,000 wildlife photos since December 2006, and has photographed 126 species of birds in the Wintergreen area, as well as other species of birds outside the area.

**18 Tracking and the Earth**

*Saturday, April 18, 9:00 am*

Join Hub Knott outdoors to search for signs of wildlife activity. Learn how to read the story of animal life in the landscape of Ivy Creek. Meet at the barn.

**18 Earth Day Fair**

*Saturday, April 18, 11-3 pm*

Ivy Creek Foundation will participate in the Earth Day Fair at the Charlottesville Pavilion on the downtown mall. Come and enjoy events planned by organizations from around the region. More information at [www.earthweek.org](http://www.earthweek.org).

**25 Farm and Barn History Day**

*Saturday, April 25, 2:00 pm*

Come enjoy the barn at Ivy Creek Natural Area. This was formerly the showpiece of the working farm known as River View Farm. This is a rare afternoon with the barn open to the public.

**26 Natural History Day**

*Sunday, April 26, 1:00 pm*

Celebrate Earth Week with local environmental organizations and clubs for an afternoon of nature and fun at the Ivy Creek Natural Area and learn about all the wonderful opportunities for nature lovers in our community. Hands on fun for the whole family. Meet in the Quiet Area outside of the Education Building.

**26 Native Plant Sale**

*Sunday, April 26, 1:00 pm*

Don't miss the unique opportunity to purchase garden grown native wildflowers, trees, and ferns from the *Jefferson Chapter of the Virginia Native Plant Society*. The

event is free and held in the Education Building.

**30 Ivy Creek Toddler Time**

*Thursday, April 30, 10:00 am*

Enjoy a read-aloud and trail walk for three to five year old toddlers at Ivy Creek. Volunteer guide Rachel Bush will host, starting in the Education Building at Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.

## May 2009

**2 First Saturday Bird Walk**

*Saturday, May 2, 7:30 am*

Walk with Jim Nix of the Monticello Bird Club at the peak of spring warbler migration. Beginners are always welcome. Meet in the parking lot.

**3 Tracking and the Earth**

*Saturday, May 3, 9:00 am*

Join Hub Knott outdoors to search for signs of wildlife activity. Learn how to read the story of animal life in the landscape of Ivy Creek. Free and open to the public. Meet at the barn.

**7 Central Virginia Beekeepers Meeting**

*Thursday, May 7, 7:00 pm*

Beginners welcome. Free and open to the public. Meet in the Education Building.

**13 Virginia Native Plant Society Meeting**

*Wednesday, May 13, 7:30 pm*

Hear Sallie Brown's presentation titled "The Trees of the WPA Bird and Wildflower Sanctuary in McIntire Park" at the monthly meeting of the Jefferson Chapter. Free and open to the public. Meet in the Education Building.

**14 Monticello Bird Club Meeting**

*Thursday, May 14, 7:30 pm*

Join us for a special night as members present their own pictures and videos. Free and open to the public. Meet in the Education Building.

**17 Butterflies of Ivy Creek**

*Sunday, May 17, 1:00 pm*

Join Mike Scott for the first butterfly walk of 2009. Start by meeting in the Education Building to see Mike's impressive display of the butterflies of Ivy Creek and for an introduction to identification skills. Continue on the trails with Mike. Fun for the whole family.

**28 Ivy Creek Toddler Time**

*Thursday, May 28, 10:00 am*

Enjoy a read-aloud and trail walk for three to five year old toddlers at Ivy Creek. Volunteer guide Rachel Bush will host, starting in the Education Building at Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.

**30 Farm and Barn History Day**

*Saturday, May 30, 2:00 pm*

Come enjoy the barn at Ivy Creek Natural Area. This was formerly the showpiece of the working farm known as River View Farm. This is a rare afternoon with the barn open to the public.

**31 Learning the Native Trees of Virginia**

*Sunday, May 31, 2:00 pm*

Learn the trees of Ivy Creek using leaf, bark, branching, seed, flower, and other distinguishing characteristics. Join Ellen Powell of the Virginia Department of Forestry on a Spring Walk. Meet by the kiosk.

## June 2009

**4 Central Virginia Beekeepers Meeting**

*Thursday, June 4, 7:00 pm*

Beginners welcome. Free and open to the public. Meet in the Education Building.

**6 First Saturday Bird Walk**

*Saturday, June 6, 7:30 am*

Walk with Jenny Gaden of the Monticello Bird Club at the peak of spring warbler migration. Beginners are always welcome. Meet in the parking lot.

Ivy Creek Foundation  
P.O. Box 956  
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Charlottesville, VA  
Permit No. 299

*Change Service Requested*

**Membership Drive:** As part of our Annual Fund Drive, we are working hard to expand our membership. If you know someone who enjoys our natural areas, or does not know about these wonderful community assets yet, please share this newsletter with them and encourage them to become a member!

**Ivy Creek Foundation**

Our Mission: To preserve and manage the Ivy Creek and Ragged Mountain Natural Areas for community education and appreciation.

The Ivy Creek Foundation is a volunteer-based, non-profit organization created in 1979 that works to manage, improve, and preserve the ecosystems of the Ivy Creek and Ragged Mountain Natural Areas for the purposes of environmental education, land conservation, and the appreciation of Virginia's natural heritage.

**Ivy Creek Foundation Board of Directors 2008-2009**

President: Peter Clark	LoriAnne Barnett	Linda Goodling	Terry Nauss
Vice President: Victoria Dye	Meghan Cloud	Jim Hutcherson	Liz Palmer
Secretary: Ruth Douglas	Brad Conner	Samuel Lindblom	Susan Pleiss
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For membership information, write to P.O.Box 956, Charlottesville, VA 22902, call (434) 973-7772  
email: [icf@ivycreekfoundation.org](mailto:icf@ivycreekfoundation.org) or visit our website at <http://ivycreekfoundation.org>



*Send in your membership renewal by May 1<sup>st</sup> to be included in the next issue of Natural Area News!*

*Check the website for news and possible schedule changes due to weather.*