



Natural Area News

A publication of the Ivy Creek Foundation
Volume 16, No. 1

Summer Newsletter 2010

Relocation of the Ivy Creek Bat Shelter

Many of you have likely seen the Ivy Creek bat shelter built by Daniel Perry as an Eagle Scout project in 2000. It is an impressive structure made of yellow poplar with a slate roof and room for thousands of bats. The shelter has not yet attracted a colony of bats and we are hoping to change that. A seasonal colony of bats sheltering at Ivy Creek would be wonderful experience for Ivy Creek visitors and a great educational asset for the Foundation.

Robin Eastham, a local wildlife rehabilitator specializing in bats, has advised us to move the bat shelter to a more open area. Robin, also known as the “bat lady,” explains that the bats may not feel safe in the shelter where it is, which has become more overgrown over the years. Bats are very slow and groggy when they emerge from their shelter, so they need to feel safe, and for them, that is an open place where they do not feel vulnerable to a possible prey perching in wait in a nearby tree!

Dan Bieker supported Daniel Perry with the bat shelter construction and has now offered to lead the project of relocating it. Given the size and weight of this structure, this will be no frivolous task. We will need to prepare a new foundation for the shelter and employ a crane to move it. The bat shelter will be moved to the right of the barn, just above the North Field. Here the shelter will be in an open space, get plenty of sun, and provide the bats we hope to attract a perfect field over which to swoop after their day’s slumber.

We cannot be certain the bats will come. All we can do is move the shelter to a more attractive location and wait. If they do come, it could take several years for a sizeable colony to use the shelter. But if they do, it will be wonderful to behold them.

Derek van der Linde of **van der Linde Cranes Services** has very kindly offered to donate his crane services for the move. This would have been the most costly part of the job, so we are incredibly thankful! We will also need about \$200 in materials to build the new foundation for the bat shelter and Dan will need some handy volunteers to help with the task. If you would like to contribute financially or otherwise to this project please be in touch – icf@ivycreekfoundation.org or (434) 973-7772. We also hope to see you at the bat program Robin will be hosting on August 7th at 7.30pm!



Director’s Note

As usual, it has been a busy season at Ivy Creek and we are looking forward to an equally active summer.

One of the season’s highpoints for me was finally meeting the Carr family descendants who came to Ivy Creek in March to celebrate the life of Dr. Charles Whitten, grandson of Hugh Carr. Thank you to the family for sharing this time with us.

Unfortunately we missed the burn again this year due elusive winds. We have scheduled a woody invasives removal day on June 26th for the warm season grass fields. We may possibly burn the grass fields this winter – so keep an eye out for news on that!

Moving the bat shelter will be a big project this month and we are hopeful the relocated shelter will attract a bat colony. I have read about other bat shelters, like the one in Gainesville, Florida, (check it out if you have not) and it is exciting to think of similar bat activity at Ivy Creek!

As ever, thanks go out to our trail stewards and other volunteers. Your work is vital to our stewardship of the natural areas. We will need extra help this summer keeping the green growth out of the trails, so anyone interested please be in touch.

Finally, please join us on September 12th for the 2010 Annual Meeting, where we will celebrate the history of the Ivy Creek barn and share plans for the barn’s future.

Wishing you the best for summer,

Karen

New Plant Identification Markers

Phil Stokes

If you have been curious about the species of native trees and shrubs planted by the Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards (CATS) in the Quiet Area border at the Ivy Creek Natural Area, they have now been labeled. In October 2008, after removing smothering invasive vines, the stewards replanted the eastern edge of the wildlife watching area located between the Education Building and the barn. To supplement the modest amount of salvageable blackberries and spicebush, CATS planted fifteen species of native woody plants highly rated to benefit wildlife.

CATS has provided a box on the site with a flyer describing the project and showing a detailed map of species present. However, it has been difficult to identify particular plants due to the many species in close proximity. Eighteen staked plant labels and three nail-mounted tree labels, funded by a Trees Virginia Mini Grant, have now been installed to clearly identify the species groupings. The markers should be beneficial to both individuals interested in landscaping with natives as well as those learning to identify plants seen in wild areas. Over half of the labeled species naturally occur at Ivy Creek Natural Area and are all native to Virginia.



Nature Writing Feature on Birds

We are truly pleased to share with our membership an excerpt from a piece of writing by one of our volunteer nature guides, Sharon Baiocco. In her piece, Air: I am a Lover of Birds, Sharon recounts stories from her childhood and shares her love for birds. To read the full piece, please go to the homepage of the Ivy Creek website and follow the link to the newsletter.

All of these recollections are by way of introduction to the serious question I asked myself recently, “Why do humans in all cultures love birds?” Is it their diversity that is so appealing? Yes, in part. Birds are the **flowers of the air**. Others argue that the sounds of birds are the source of our love for them. And bird behavior, as I have described, is also fascinating. But I believe it is not their diversity, their songs, or their behavior that makes us devout lovers of birds. We humans envy **their wings**. Birds have become symbols of peace and freedom in many cultures. Most birds are pacifists. When threatened, they fly away and hide. And, if you’ve ever watched the gulls at the shore suspended motionless in the air as they catch the onshore breeze, you’ve witnessed the pure bliss of freedom.

What would our world **be** without birds? As I understand the Gaia Theory, the Earth functions like a living system. If there were no birds, insects and rodents would soon overpower plant life—and, therefore, animal life, including that of man—would be impossible upon this globe. This is an astounding scientific conclusion.

Today many birds face extinction. In the last two centuries over 100 bird species have disappeared. Another 1,200—12 percent of the planet's total—face extinction this century. We who claim to love birds are to blame for this decline. And like canaries down the coalmine, birds act as a crucial early-warning system that should alert us to the vulnerability of other plants and animals.

In the last century, through the magic of *The Peterson Field Guide* series, we became a nation of birdwatchers -- and, more importantly, protectors -- of every form of life on our planet. We must be ever more diligent. We must understand and change our own destructive habits. All living things depend on it. Our lives and our grandchildren’s lives depend upon it. Our **spirits** depend upon it. A philosopher who spent his lifetime trying to define **love** once told me, “Love is the apprehension of beauty in the beloved.” To paraphrase Robert Frost, “One could do worse than be a lover of birds.”

Save the Date!

Please join us **September 12th, 1-3pm** for the 2010 Ivy Creek Foundation Annual Meeting.

As usual, board members and staff will talk about plans for the coming year. The special theme this year is the barn. We will celebrate the history of Ivy Creek’s important landmark and hope to update the membership on plans for its renovation.

We hope to see you there!

Volunteer Work Day at the Ivy Creek Natural Area

On Saturday, May 8th, a team of energetic volunteers made Ivy Creek a better place. The Ivy Creek Foundation participated in the statewide Invasive Species Removal Day sponsored by Master Naturalists and the Virginia Native Plant Society. A group of intrepid volunteers worked hard to remove Japanese Barberry (pictured right) from areas near the white and yellow trails. Japanese Barberry has been seen at Ivy Creek for a while, but in recent years it has increased alarmingly, forming dense stands in some wooded areas.



Over at the Education Building, another group of brave volunteers pruned shrubs and trees, some of which had never been trimmed since they were planted eleven years ago. Volunteers also cleaned up winter storm damage on the Blue Trail and around the Education Building.

Many thanks to Mary Lee Epps, Ruth Douglas, Tana Herndon, Jackie Heath, Tony Russell, Pam Forrest, Susan Pleiss, Phil Stokes, Conrad Smith and Howard Davis. Volunteers are the heart of Ivy Creek Foundation!

Calling for Celebrating the Nature of Virginia Photography Entries



We look forward to seeing this year's entries for the Celebrating the Nature of Virginia photography contest. Winning photographs will be shown in a local gallery space in October and be part of the October First Fridays art walk. We are still working on all the details, so please watch the website homepage for news.

Tony Russell, one of our contest winners, is often seen at Ivy Creek with his camera. Here are two of his recent photographs. The one on the left is of coral fungus found near the School Trail – about an inch tall. The one on the right is white milkweed. We have



been expanding our nature photography programming over the last two years. One of our youth contest winners, Pearl Zmick, led a program in May and we are working on scheduling something for later in the summer. Please watch the website for details. If you take photographs on your walks at Ivy Creek or Ragged Mountain, or at one of our public programs, we would love to be able to post them on our website. So please send them in or post them on our blog at ivycreek.wordpress.com. And please enter our second annual photography contest. Entry fees are \$20 for adults and \$10 for youth and support Ivy Creek free environmental programming.

Coordinator's Corner

The winter snow seems a distant memory, but its effects are still clearly seen. Broken branches are healing. Streams still run high. The plants are vibrant and many birds have already sent their first clutch of young on their way. We have scheduled many programs this summer for young and old alike. See the calendar for details and check the website for additions and changes.

This past season, our volunteer school guides took the opportunity to introduce about a thousand students to the natural world. They did it just a few students at a time. Central Virginia has quite a few budding naturalists. Indulge them when they ask to go back to Ivy Creek.

In the coming summer, the different trails offer up unexpected delights of nature and a welcome respite from summer heat. Leave your worries behind and join us at both natural areas this season.

Bruce

We Need Summer Help on the Trails!

This time of year we have a lot of extra work keeping the green growth out of some of the most regularly used trails. Trails like the Paved and Red Trails have grasses and vines growing into the open area that need constant cutting back. Keeping this growth under control helps us minimize the chigger and tick exposure of those enjoying their walks at Ivy Creek. These are not the natural wonders hikers are hoping to enjoy!

If you are at all interested in this kind of volunteer work, any small amount of time would be helpful! If you have shears or other tools you find handy, feel free to bring them along on a walk with you. If you need tools, that too can be arranged. Early morning is obviously a good time for this kind of work! Let us know if you can help. Even if you do not need tools, it would be great to know where you might be working so we can allocate other help accordingly.

All programs are free of charge and open to the public unless otherwise indicated.

June 2010

- 12 Drawing from Nature**
Saturday, June 12, 10:00 am
Join local artist Lee Alter to explore the art of sketching in a beautiful location at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. Bring paper, pencils, and a drawing board if you have one. This offering is free to the public. Meet in the Education Center.
- 13 Butterflies of Ivy Creek**
Sunday, June 13, 1:00 pm
Join Mike Scott for a butterfly walk at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. Start by meeting in the Education Center for an introduction to identification skills and to see Mike's impressive display of butterflies. We'll continue on the trails with Mike. Fun for the whole family.
- 19 Guided Walk**
Saturday, June 19, 9:00 am
Join Ivy Creek nature guides for a one to two hour walk on the trails of Ivy Creek. We'll share the latest nature has to offer that day. The trail will be determined by the guide and the group. Meet in the parking lot.
- 24 Ivy Creek Toddler Time**
Thursday, June 24, 10:00 am
Introduce your toddler to nature with this short talk and trail walk for three to five year olds. Volunteer guide Rachel Bush will host, starting in the Education Center at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.
- 26 Volunteer Work Day**
Saturday, June 26, 7:00 am
Come help clear woody growth from the south field by the parking lot in the early morning. Meet at the Barn for tools. Some woody growth in the field has gotten too large for our seasonal controlled burns. We'll be using handsaws and loppers. Wear appropriate clothing.

- 26 Farm and Barn History Day**
Saturday, June 26, 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.

29 Bees, Wasps, and Hornets, oh, my!

Tuesday, June 29, 7:00 pm
Join Peter Warren for a talk on bees, wasps and hornets and their importance to the local environment. Find out how to avoid stings and what to do if you get stung. Meet in the Education Center.



July 2010

Central Virginia Beekeepers Meeting

No meeting this month.

Monticello Bird Club Meeting

No meeting this month

Virginia Native Plants Society Meeting

No meeting this month

3 First Saturday Bird Walk

Saturday, July 3, 7:30 am
Walk with Ron Kingston of the Monticello Bird Club in the cool of the morning for a midsummer bird walk. Beginners are always welcome. Meet in the parking lot.



10 Fern Walk

Saturday, July 10, 9:00 am
Learn all about ferns at Ivy Creek Natural Area. Tim Williams will lead a walk and talk about the Lady, Rattlesnake, Christmas, Wood, and New York ferns to mention a few. Wear shoes that can get dirty.

Cosponsored by the Virginia Native Plants Society. Meet by the kiosk next to the parking lot.

10 Starry Night at Ivy Creek

Saturday, July 10, 8:30 pm

Learn the latest about the birth of the stars in a one-hour presentation in the Education Building. Afterwards, the Charlottesville Astronomical Society will introduce you to objects in the summer Milky Way from the open mowed area next to the barn. Bring your own telescope or look through the scopes provided. Use low beams or red flashlights only. Free and open to the public. Cloudy skies will cancel this event.

For updates and additional events check out ivycreekfoundation.org/education/calendar.html

11 Butterflies of Ivy Creek

Sunday, July 11, 1:00 pm

Join Mike Scott for a butterfly walk at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. Start by meeting in the Education Center for an introduction to identification skills and to see Mike's impressive display of butterflies. We'll continue on the trails with Mike. Fun for the whole family.



17 Drawing from Nature

Saturday, July 17, 10:00 am

Join local artist Lee Alter to explore the art of sketching in a beautiful location at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. Bring paper, pencils, and a drawing board if you have one. This offering is free to the public. Meet in the Education Center.

18 Dragonfly Walk at Ivy Creek

Sunday, July 18, 11:00 am

See and learn about the dragonflies and damselflies of Ivy Creek. Jim Childress will lead us as we catch a few to look at them in hand and observe the rest as they patrol their territories. Bring binoculars to magnify them up close. Come and learn to identify some of the midsummer species

and their habitats.

Meet in the Education Center for a short initial presentation of the dragonflies and damselflies we are likely to see before we start our walk.



24 Animal Skulls

Saturday, July 24, 9:30 am

We will learn secrets of various mammals diets and life cycles by examining their skulls. Meet in the Education Center at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.

25 Ivy Creek Summer Potluck

Sunday, July 25th, 12:00 noon

Please join us for our summer potluck on July 25th at noon. This meal is our way of spending some time with people who support the mission of the Ivy Creek Foundation. Bring a dish to share and meet in the Education Center. We'll also eat outside in front by the stone wall. Let us know by phone at 973-7772 or email at icf@ivycreekfoundation.org so we can coordinate dishes!

29 Ivy Creek Toddler Time

Thursday, July 29, 10:00 am

Introduce your toddler to nature with this short talk and trail walk for three to five year olds. Volunteer guide Rachel Bush will host, starting in the Education Center at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.

31 Farm and Barn History Day

Saturday, July 31, 2:00 pm

Come enjoy the barn at the 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.

August 2010

Central Virginia Beekeepers Meeting

No meeting this month.

Monticello Bird Club Meeting

No meeting this month

Virginia Native Plants Society Meeting

No meeting this month

1 Guided Walk

Sunday, August 1, 9:00 am

Join Ivy Creek nature guides for a one to two hour walk on the trails of Ivy Creek. We'll share the latest nature has to offer that day. The trail will be determined by the guide and the group. Meet in the parking lot.

7 First Saturday Bird Walk

Saturday, August 7, 7:30 am

Come join Jenny Gaden for an early morning bird walk to see our summer residents. Cosponsored by the *Monticello Bird Club*. Beginners always welcome. Meet in the parking lot.



For updates and additional events check out ivycreekfoundation.org/education/calendar.html

7 Drawing from Nature

Saturday, August 7, 10:00 am

Join local artist Lee Alter to explore the art of sketching in a beautiful location at Ivy Creek Natural Area. Bring paper, pencils, and a drawing board if you have one. This offering is free to the public. Meet in the Education Center.

7 Bats at Ivy Creek

Saturday, August 7, 7:30 pm

Come learn about the amazing world of bats. We'll start in the Education Center for a short presentation on biology, adaptation, and myths concerning bats. Then Robin Eastham, local bat rehabilitator for the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, will take us outside to observe the bats as they come out at dusk to feed.

8 Butterflies of Ivy Creek

Sunday, August 8, 1:00 pm

Join Mike Scott for a butterfly walk at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. Start by meeting in the Education Center for an introduction to identification skills and to see Mike's impressive display of butterflies. We'll continue on the trails with Mike. Fun for the whole family.



14 StreamWatch Training

Saturday, August 14, 10:00 am

Attend the StreamWatch introductory training and 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. Meet in the Education Center.

15 Tracking and the Earth

Sunday, August 15, 9:00 am

Join Hub Knott outdoors to search for signs of wildlife activity. Learn how to read the stories of animal life in the landscape of Ivy Creek. Meet at the barn. Cosponsored by the Living Earth School.

21 Summer Wildflower Walk

Saturday, August 21, 9:00 am

Walk with botanist Tim Williams to see the spectacular late blooming wildflowers of summer. Cardinal flower, boneset, and jewelweed are among the flowers that bloom in August at Ivy Creek. Cosponsored with the Virginia Native Plant Society. Meet in front of the Education Center.

22 Exploring Summer

Sunday, August 22, 9:00 am

Naturalist Mary Jane Epps, will lead an exploratory walk at Ivy Creek to see the wonders of a summer morning in nature. Wildflowers, ferns, mushrooms and an amazing variety of insects are a few of the topics Mary Jane may cover. Meet in the Education Center.

26 Ivy Creek Toddler Time

Thursday, August 26, 10:00 am

Introduce your toddler to nature with this short talk and trail walk for three to five year olds. Volunteer guide Rachel Bush will host, starting in the Education Center at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.

28 Farm and Barn History Day

Saturday, August 28, 2:00 pm

Come enjoy the barn at the 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.

29 Ragged Mountain Forest Walk

Sunday, August 29, 2:00 pm

Join Ellen Powell of the Virginia Department of Forestry on a summer walk at Ragged Mountain Natural Area to learn to identify trees indigenous to Central Virginia. Meet in the parking lot of Ragged Mountain Natural Area.



30 Nighthawk Migration: Circus in the Sky

Monday, August 30, 6:30 pm

This is the first of two opportunities to join members of the Monticello Bird Club in watching the nighthawk's acrobatics as it does its aerial feeding on hunting circuits from the reservoir to native grass field. Meet in the parking lot.

September 2010

1 Nighthawk Migration: Circus in the Sky

Wednesday, September 1, 6:30 pm

This is the second of two opportunities to join members of the Monticello Bird Club in watching the nighthawk's acrobatics as it does its aerial feeding on hunting circuits from the reservoir to native grass field. Meet in the parking lot.

4 First Saturday Bird Walk

Saturday, September 4, 7:30 am

Come join Leigh Surdukowski for an early morning bird walk. Cosponsored by the Monticello Bird Club. Beginners always welcome. Meet in the parking lot.

12 Ivy Creek Foundation Annual Meeting

Sunday, September 12, 1:00 pm

Come hear about the barn's past. Then sit back and hear some of the Foundation's hopes for the future of the barn. Give us your feedback. Meet in the Education Center.

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 _____

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|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Sustaining | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Benefactor |
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Ivy Creek Foundation
P.O. Box 956
Charlottesville, VA 22902

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Change Service Requested

Membership Renewals: Membership renewal letters went out in November. Please send in your membership donation as you are able. As ever, 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.

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For membership information, write to P.O.Box 956, Charlottesville, VA 22902, call (434) 973-7772
email: icf@ivycreekfoundation.org or visit our website at <http://ivycreekfoundation.org>



*Check the website for additional programming
and other news – like bat shelter moving day!*

*We depend on your generous support, so
please send in your renewals!*