



# Natural Area News

*A publication of the Ivy Creek Foundation, Volume 22, No. 3*

## A Quarterly Newsletter

### Our New Website Launches: A First Look

We've reported on it before, but now it's live! Everything on [ivycreekfoundation.org](http://ivycreekfoundation.org)—from the homepage to the archives—is new.

You will see immediate differences. The navigation bar at the top is better organized and more intuitively user-friendly. Below it is a large, attractive "slider" with photos and coming events, followed by short current news items. The calendar is easy to find, interactive, and includes events on grounds as well as those scheduled in the Education Building and the Barn. We have put organizationally important and time-sensitive information up front, and moved our rich troves of natural and cultural history information to well-organized, "behind the scenes" libraries.

The new search function allows you to find Bess Murray's transcripts, Dede Smith's trail guides, old newsletter articles, the flora and fauna handouts, and more.

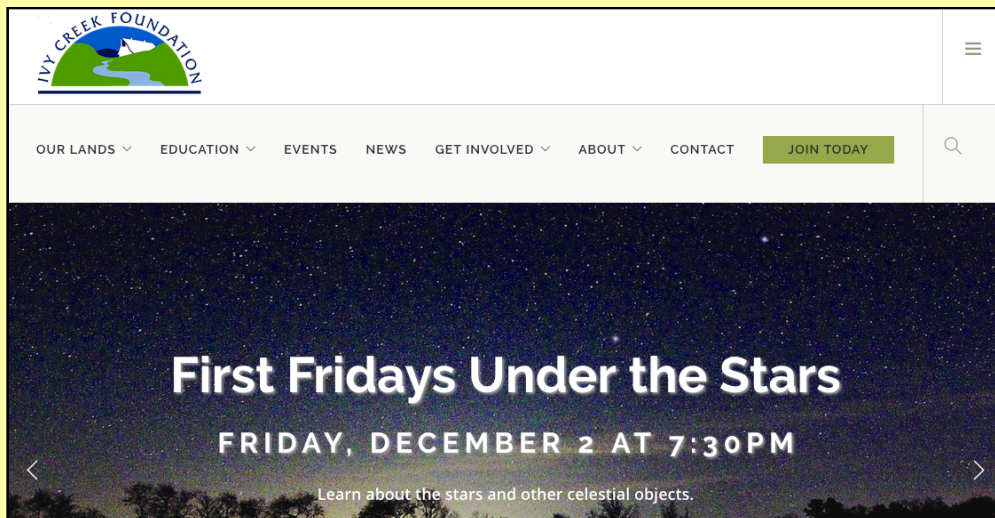
Our news blog enhances our ability to keep you informed between our quarterly newsletters. Once we

have a few volunteers trained on the site, we will be able to update you on trail and weather conditions, provide you with more features and announcements, and share photos and event news as well. The website is linked to our Facebook and Twitter accounts, and we will be adding Instagram soon.

Although we are launching the site, we are not yet done! Building a website frame is one process;

transferring and integrating the old content is another; and training and tweaking is a third. The most important upgrade we still need to integrate is our new DonorPerfect software (see p. 2), so that we can expand our online giving options and make contributing to Ivy Creek Foundation easier for donors, class registrants, building renters, and Friends.

The wizard behind the website is **Debra Weiss** of DRW Designs, who was hired in June 2016 based on her response to our request for proposals. One of the best new features is responsive design. Our website pages now resize and shift depending on the kind of device you are using—computer, tablet, or cell phone. Wherever you are, on whatever device, we invite you to bookmark and explore our new website!





## Perfecting “Friendly” Relations with DonorPerfect

We are pleased to announce we have purchased a new donor, contact, and volunteer database, DonorPerfect, thanks to a \$5,000 National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (NEEF) grant award that we reported on in June. DonorPerfect will replace MS Access software that we have used since 2005, but have found insufficient to meet our growing needs.

Since joining Ivy Creek Foundation in December 2012, Executive Director **Tatyanna Patten** has made it a priority to improve our systems and infrastructure; the new software will become a key piece of that initiative. The new database will allow us to retrieve data easily and quickly. We are thrilled to have such a robust and flexible tool. Thank you, NEEF!

## Where Have All the Kestrels Gone?



American Kestrels are disappearing at an alarming rate. Today’s range-wide population is only half of what existed in the 1960s. Come to the ICF Education Center on **Thurs., Dec. 15 at 7 pm** for a presentation by **Dr. Sarah Schulwitz**, assistant director of the American Kestrel Partnership. For more info: [kestrel.peregrinefund.org](http://kestrel.peregrinefund.org).



## VOLUNTEER WANTED: Newsletter Assistant Editor

If you love building community, collecting nature news, and/or designing page layouts on your computer—all from the comfort of your own desk—you could be the right person to assist ICF Volunteer News Editor **Sharon Baiocco** with our quarterly newsletter. Sharon will train you to work with our team—gathering and writing our news and working with layout software. We create this newsletter four times a year and generally need help in November, February, May, and August. The ICF News is circulated to 300 print members and 400 online members. Previous experience as an ICNA volunteer is highly desirable.

## Introducing Piedmont Master Gardeners



### Featured Ivy Creek Partner Organization

The Piedmont Master Gardeners (PMG) are volunteer educators and enthusiasts who bring scientific knowledge of the best horticultural and landscape management practices to the Central Virginia community. In partnership with the Virginia Cooperative Extension, the Piedmont Master Gardeners have provided research-based information from the state’s land grant universities and research stations since 1979.

The Master Gardener program trains and deploys volunteers to multiply the effective outreach of the Virginia Cooperative Extensions. Nationwide, nearly 100,000 Master Gardeners are active in all 50 states, contributing some 5 million service hours to communities. In 2015 alone, some 115 Piedmont Master Gardener volunteers gave nearly 9,200 hours of service to the people of Charlottesville and Albemarle County.

Master Gardener programs are designed around achieving community gains in five main areas:

- Environmental Horticulture — sustainable landscape management practices
- Youth Gardening — horticultural awareness and skills for young people
- Value of Landscape — understanding of economic and aesthetic benefits of good design
- Food and Nutrition — interest in, and skills needed for, home food production
- Quality of Life — effects of landscape management on physical and emotional health.

“Local master gardener volunteers are horticultural educators who give their plant knowledge free to the public. They each receive over 90 hours of horticulture training, and then volunteer their time to share research-based information about plants of all kinds. One of their projects is to assist, maintain and teach people about the Ivy Creek butterfly garden,” according to **Scott Boven**, Master Gardener Coordinator. For more information, go to [www.piedmontmastergardeners.org](http://www.piedmontmastergardeners.org).

## Rivanna Master Naturalists Offer Evening Course

The Rivanna Master Naturalists’ spring training is nearly here! Classes will be held on Tuesday evenings beginning on **Feb. 7**. If you are interested, RMNs will be hosting information sessions in the Education Building on **Tues., Dec. 6, 7 pm, Tues., Dec. 13, 7 pm, and Sat., Jan. 7, 2 pm**.

# Welcome to Our New Board Volunteers



## David Hannah

**Natural Resources Manager, Albemarle County StreamWatch, Wild Virginia**

A year ago, David Hannah began working as Natural Resources Manager for Albemarle County to guide the Natural Heritage Committee of volunteers who advise the Board of Supervisors and other agencies on issues related to biodiversity. With part of the Shenandoah National Park in Albemarle County, David says his group is just beginning to develop a County biodiversity plan for the rural areas

Prior to holding this position, David served as a conservation officer for Piedmont Environmental Council; as the Executive Director of StreamWatch, where local water quality monitoring and reporting was the primary mission; and for six years as the Conservation Director of Wild Virginia.

David received his M.S. degree in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Florida and has worked as a professional in the conservation and natural resource field since 1993. His career has also included work in Delaware and North Carolina,

David formerly served on the Board of Directors for the Virginia Society of Ornithology, and he is a member of the Monticello Bird Club and the Virginia Native Plant Society. Since 1998, he has lived in Charlottesville with his wife Laurie. His favorite area in ICNA is the Green Trail to the west that follows the perimeter of the property and features deep forest. We are lucky to have David's wide range of skills and experiences on the Board.

## Gus Colom

**Systems Analyst, Albemarle County IT Dept., Master Naturalist**



When Gus Colom stepped down as curriculum chair for the Rivanna Master Naturalists (RMN) last year, we saw an opportunity to recruit him for our ICF Board. For more than ten years Gus has served as GIS Mapping Coordinator for the County. He has photographed and prepared digital maps for a whole host of analyses by county managers and planners. The maps he helps create inform building inspections, fire rescues, and elections, and they delineate critical slopes and tax parcels.

Gus graduated from Virginia Tech in 1991 with majors in geography and history. Twenty years ago, Gus moved to Charlottesville from Blacksburg. His wife became a master naturalist (RMN) in 2008, and Gus followed her to become a master naturalist in 2012. He is particularly interested in ecosystem issues—the balance between wildlife like deer, for example, and nature.



Gus has served on other boards in the County, and he

expects to join the Trails Maintenance group or the Education Committee.

For fun, Gus likes to “get out of the way” on the Orange Trail or the Peninsula Trail. He has been both a member of the Monticello Bird Club and a StreamWatch volunteer.

# Wayfaring Project Update

*Diana Foster*

Two years ago we undertook what we dubbed “wayfinding synchronization” at ICNA, with a goal of providing enough accurate signage so that people are comfortable on the trails without our being guilty of “sign pollution.”

Over the years, as our wonderful volunteers have cared for ICNA's seven miles of trails, changes have occurred requiring correction, such as in trail names and trail colors. We started with a complete assessment of our maps, on-the-ground signage, marking materials, decision histories, and ideas for improvement.



Using the gorgeous and expensive-to-replace topographical map in the kiosk as our gold standard, we set the colors that were going to represent the various trails, and gave an official name—South Field—to the trail that allows visitors to experience ICNA's birding hotspot. Our long-time supporters at **Gropen Signs** then helped us by cleaning the topo map, painting grey lines for the newly named South Field Trail, making a new legend, and installing a new clear acrylic protective cover.

Our **Teens Give** volunteers repainted the marker posts along the Red Trail. We then corrected directional signage on the junction posts. We still have some work to do, but we are well on our way to having a synchronized system that will reassure hikers that they are on the right trail.

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Charlottesville, VA 22902

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**“Ivy Talks” Features *Albemarle’s Black Classrooms* (ABC’s) Sunday, Feb. 12, 2 pm**

Native Charlottesville area filmmaker Lorenzo Dickerson will educate us about our County’s historical African-American schools at our first “Ivy Talks” of 2017. Based on his upcoming documentary film, *Albemarle’s Black Classroom (ABC’s)* due for release in February 2017, his lecture will detail the experience of African-American educators and students over the past 100 years, including Ivy Creek’s Hugh Carr family’s connection to Albemarle County’s early African-American schools.

**For More Events -  
Go to Our New Website**

Check our **online calendar** at <http://ivycreekfoundation.org/education/calendar.html> for more dates of events, meetings, and Volunteer Work Days.

**Monticello Bird Club Talks and Walks**

**Weds., Dec. 7, 7 pm** - Young Birder **Gabriel Mapel** will be giving a presentation on the biggest week in American birding at Magee Marsh in NW Ohio.

**Weds., Jan. 4, 7 pm** - **Dr. Ashley Peele** of VA Tech, the Coordinator for the *Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas* will give a presentation on her work. **Please note the meeting time change to first Wednesdays. Free and open to the public. Also, First Saturday Bird Walks, Dec. 3, Jan. 7, and Feb. 3, 7:30 am.**

**Virginia Native Plant Society Festivity**

**Weds., Dec. 14, 7:30 pm** -A festive gathering with entertainment provided by —you! If you wish, bring an object of nature, picture(s), or an experience to share before the group for no more than 2 or 3 minutes. Table space is available if you wish to just show and not tell in front of the whole group. A digital projector will be on hand for flash drive pictures / slides or connection to your laptop. We’ll enjoy snack items members may bring. The chapter will supply drinks, plates, etc.



Ivy Creek Foundation

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