**Coastal Plain Talk of the South Hampton Roads Chapter: VNPS         January 2015**

**Thursday, January 1, 2015**-A note from our favorite tour guide: *Field Trip*

Dear Fellow Paddlers,

The winter canoe/kayak trip this year will be on New Year's Day, January 1, 2015. The trip will start at the Route 671 bridge (Hercules) on the Nottoway River and the take out will be at Round Gut, Route 687. Participants may choose to meet us at: Westminster Reformed Presbyterian Church on 3488 Godwin Blvd. in Suffolk, VA 23434 or meet us at Hercules at the Rt. 671 boat ramp. We will leave the church at 9AM and arrive at Hercules around 9:50AM

PLEASE BRING:

 1) Boat, paddles, life vests

 2) Lunch, beverages & snacks

 3) Change of clothes in waterproof bag

 4) As this is a winter trip, dress in layers based on expected weather. Avoid cotton please.

Please let us know if you plan to attend, and if you need a boat or a partner and we will attempt to match you with someone. At the end of the trip we plan to dine at a restaurant in Franklin and everyone is invited to join us.

Contact info: Home (757) 934-0588; Byron’s cell: (757) 705-2035 or Jean’s cell: (757) 651-5300

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, Byron and Jean

**Thursday, January 15th**- *Friends of Indian River* Annual Meeting at 7 PM in the Oaklette United Methodist Church. Discussions and input needed for our plans for 2015. Elections for our board of directors will be held. There will also be a virtual “fly-through” tour of the Indian River watershed. More details at <http://www.friendsofindianriver.org>

**Monday, January 19-Friday, January 23, 2015**-Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course schedule and information found at <http://www.mahsc.org/classes/> Great training, recertification and certification exams on site.

**Wednesdays, January 21-February 25, 2015**-*VOICES Course 2015: Volunteers as Chesapeake Stewards Adult Education Program* will be held from 6-9PM at the Brock Environmental Center. Located at 3663 Marlin Bay Drive in Virginia Beach overlooking the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Learn to be an active watershed steward with many dynamic speakers and educational field trips. For more information and registration go online at <http://www.cbf.org/events/voices/virginia-beach-registration> or call 757-622-1964.

**Thursday, January 22nd**- *Glenn Butler, ISA Certified Master Arborist of Streamline Tree Care* will speak to us on Native Trees and how important they are to the survival of wildlife.

**Friday - Sunday, January 31st – February 2nd, 2015**-*Flower & Garden Expo 2015*: ***Curb Appeal: It’s what’s out front that counts*** VNPS will have a double booth to fill with plants and handouts. The Flower & Garden Expo 2015 will be held at the Virginia Beach Convention Center. The theme will be *Curb Appeal: It’s All About the Front*. The expo will show what we can do to our homes and landscapes to make them more dynamic. Gets that WOW factor going when people pass by and make them slow down to say I love that! Too many backyard grills in the past shows so we will have more venders, contests and prizes. Just remember if you volunteer for a shift, you get into the show free! Pick up something special for your Valentine at the show. Before you know it, spring will be around the corner! Everyone is welcome to participate by standing in or near the booth to greet participants and answer their questions. We always have two to three people per shift to handle the crowds on their many questions about native plants. This is a great opportunity to learn yourself what natives can do to improve your landscape! Please email Amy Jones at amynally1@aol.com with your request or signup at the next meeting. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Thanks!

Volunteer shifts so far are as follows:

Thursday, January 29th Set-up booth 1PM-4PM Amy Jones & Beth Richardson

Friday, January 30th Booth host 10AM-1PM

 Booth host 1PM-4PM Rogard Ross

 Booth host 4PM-7PM Eric Gunderson: 757-373-7763

 Steve and Kathleen Stasulis

Saturday, January 31st Booth host 10AM-1PM

 Booth host 1PM-4PM

 Booth host 4PM-7PM Amy Jones

Sunday, February 1st Booth host 10AM-1PM

 Booth host 1PM-4PM Amy Jones

 Tear-down booth 4PM-6PM Amy Jones & Darcy Stephan

**Thursday, February 5th-8th**- Wildlife Festival: Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation Department. There will be vender booths, classes & field trips. Visit: <http://www.vbgov.com/government/departments/parks-recreation/special-events/Pages/winter-wildlife-festival.aspx#excursions>

**Thursday, February 26th** – *Carol Heiser, Habitat Educational Coordinator with the Virginia Department of Games & Inland Fisheries* will speak to us on current projects being developed using native plants. Our meeting begins at 7 PM.

**Thursday, March 26th**- Plant sale preparation and a native plant slide show. Preparations for our plant sales will need volunteers also. Please email Pat Quinn at Patricia Quinn paquinn726@gmail.com if you are interested. We will have fewer plants than last year and will sell only the most popular native plants so to cut down on labor and plant space needed to care for the plants from extreme weather. Thanks!

**Saturday, April 4, 2015** will be the *Native Plant Sale* at the Frances Land House during the Gathering of the Guilds Celebration. Plant sale hours: 10 AM-3PM.

**Saturday, May 9-10, 2015** will be the *Native Plant Sale* at the Norfolk Botanical Garden. Plant sale hours: 10 AM-3PM.

**President’s Message**:  The *Gathering of the Gardeners Potluck Dinner* was delicious which was held at the Norfolk Botanical Garden. Society members brought something to share and joined other organizations that meet at and support the Garden to break bread. After socializing and dinner, we will be able to drive through the *Garden of Lights* display. Yummy food, nice conversations and a very nice light display!

Was anyone able to go the Winter Tree ID Education Walk at *Paradise Creek Nature Park* with Chesapeake Master Gardener Ed Bradley? He was leading a group on a journey through the woods to learn about the native trees in our area. Ed was also going to share some valuable skills to identify trees throughout the winter when leaves are absent. 757-399-7487 or ssumoski@elizabethriver.org

I want to apologize to VNPS members because I did not attend the VNPS Board meeting on Saturday, December 6th in Glen Allen, VA. I was blindsided by my daughter’s babysitter who got sick. I had to make a choice between family and volunteer work. On top of it both my water heater and air handler had to be replaced that day at a tune of almost $4000.00 just before Christmas. I am sorry I blew off my VNPS responsibilities without more notice but I was faced with a tough decision which is a no brainer when it comes to my family. Please accept my apology for not making more of a sacrifice for you.

Happy holidays to our members and their families. See you in the New Year with plenty to come for members and their guests like education, fundraisers, field trips and fun!

Wild about native plants! Beth