

Virginia Herpetological Society
Minutes of Fall Meeting
Three Lakes Nature Center and Aquarium
400 Sausiluta Drive
Richmond, VA 23227
October 24, 2009

The Fall Meeting was called to order by our president, Susan Watson, around 4:30pm. No old business was in need of discussion. The meeting was then turned over to our committee chairs for reports.

Treasurer and Cafe Press: Pattie Crane was unable to attend the business meeting, therefore a report was not given. See Catesbeiana for the corresponding reports.

Conservation Committee: Tim Christensen was unable to attend the business meeting, but the following report was made available:

1. The Conservation Committee current includes the following members: Tim Christensen, David McCarthy, and Todd Fredericksen.
2. The Conservation Committee presents the following tasks and statuses:
 - a. "Conservation of Reptiles and Amphibians in Virginia" presentation (originally Task #3).
 - (1) The Presentation is now finished.
 - (2) Committee members are finishing the design for a 4-hour workshop intended for and offered to certified Virginia Master Naturalists. The workshop is intended as a Train the Trainer forum so that VMNs can use the presentation to various audiences to help promote conservation of reptiles and amphibians across Virginia. We are woefully behind in getting this accomplished and have reset the goal of 15 Jan 2010 to complete and then offer the workshop in the spring and summer. Targeted audiences/events include (but not limited to) school teachers, Cooperative Extensions, Reptile Weekend @ VLM, VDGIF' Outdoor Education Program, corporate landowners, homeowner associations, 4-H, Boy/Girl Scouts and neighborhoods. I'd like to give the presentation during Reptile Weekend in 2010.
 - (3) Christopher Wren Association (CWA). There's an potential opportunity to advance the awareness of reptiles and amphibians to the public through the CWA sponsored by the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. This Association dedicated to continuing learning for individuals purely interested in learning (there are no tests or coursework outside the classes). Courses offered are quite varied and include history, photography and science. CWA was contacted with the proposal of a course along the lines of "Reptiles and Amphibians of Southeast Virginia" having been submitted. Awaiting a response. Conservation would be included as a topic.
 - (4) WildlifeMapping. VA Dept of Game and Inland Fisheries could use more herp observations in its database. We should continue to promote this program to our membership.
 - (5) Threats to Herpetofauna Poster. The Committee proposed designing charts/posters that illustrate threats to herpetofauna. The suggestion is to have separate materials for anurans or amphibians as one group and one for turtles & snakes or reptiles as another group. This could potentially be made available for sale through the VHS Store, provided to schools, etc. Proceeds could go towards specific conservation-related projects. No further action has taken place since its proposal; however, due to time but will be revisited once the #1 task above is complete.
 - (6) Herp Stamp. Just a reminder, we should revisit this once we attain nonprofit status.
 - (7) Federal Duck Stamp Promotion. This was promoted previously and we have information about it on the website. Recommend we push on this again and possibly have a list of names on the website with the number individuals purchase. Could we possibly have a prize to the individual who purchases the most in each year or every 2 years? Remember, ninety-eight cents of every dollar generated by the sale of

Federal Duck Stamps goes toward purchase or lease of wetlands within the National Wildlife Refuge System.-supports efforts towards habitat for herps.

3. The Committee continues to solicit more members.

Newsletter editor and Yahoo Groups: Kory Steele reports problems with sending the newsletter via email out to our members. Often servers will reject the email and send it to spam or deny it due to a mass mailing list. This creates a problem in getting in touch with our members. We need to encourage our members to set their email filters appropriately.

Research committee: Joy Ware reports that the research committee has continued working on a basic disease/abnormality information sheet that will be available for use at each survey. She appreciates everyone completing these in addition to the species data sheets already being used. Some of the biology department from VCU and herself will be performing a herp survey at Powhatan State Park. This is a new state park and has not yet developed herp inventory. They will also have in attendance high school students from Powhatan High. This will allow the students to learn the basic methods of collecting, identifying, and recording data. The survey is currently scheduled for May 8, 2010.

Education Committee: Mike Clifford reports a lot of participation in educational activities over the past year. Presentations have been given to the American Camping Association, Nelson Garden Club, 4-H Club, Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists, and the Virginia Science Olympiad. There are many different ways to reach out to the public such as handouts and the internet. Mike presented a 2hour live audio/visual interactive program for extension agents across the state. He would like to remind everyone to submit reports to him which show their educational efforts on behalf of the VHS. He strives to provide an annual report showing all efforts of education to our website; he feels the society's efforts are an important history to document for years to come. If interested in doing more and serving on this committee, he reminds all members to contact him, mjc4h@vt.edu -or- froholler@hughes.net.

VHS Webmaster: John White reports the website is seeing about 200 new visitors per month and has seen the total hits per month increase to 2,000. He has recently completed the venomous snakes and classifications of snakes sections. He hopes to soon complete Mike's education committee reports. Mike requests that anyone being contacted through the website for possible educational opportunities and inquiries to please cc (carbon copy) him in their reply.

Catesbeiana editor: Paul Sattler reports that 150 copies were printed and about 140 were mailed out for a total of a little under \$320.00. This is down from previous years and hopes the treasurer stays on top of email reminders for renewals of membership and hopefully recruit new members. He currently has major articles for the next journal, but is always open to more material, so please continue to send him your field notes. He is using new software this upcoming journal and feels it is an easier format. It will allow the journal to become available in PDF and hopefully allow it to become searchable, which would then allow the journal to be cited in books as reference.

The meeting proceeded in a guided-open discussion with key points presented by Susan. She announced that the VHS Archives are now being kept with Paul Sattler at Liberty University. They are in need of organizing and cataloging and hopefully Paul will be able to do this over the next few months.

Richard Hoffman has discussed organizing a special honor to Frank Tobey for all of his work on the first Atlas of Amphibians and Reptiles of Virginia. However, Tobey did receive our first "Lifetime Achievement Award" for his work. Steve Roble will request Richard Hoffman to write up a brief honor.

DGIF has offered to match our \$500 VHS Grant in Herpetology if research is geared towards a Wildlife Action Plan species. The website, <http://bewildvirginia.org/>, provides of list of the accepted species. It was suggested that we advertise this opportunity to professors throughout the state, in hopes that more student involvement will be initiated.

A professional request has been received by the Prince William County Park Authority regarding a new 230-acre unit to their park system that will be in need of inventory. This presents a possible survey location for 2010 or 2011.

The suggestion was made for a VHS Virginia state license plate. The difficulty with pursuing this is the state requires 350 people to prepay in order for production to start. Further requirements and costs will continue to be researched.

The potential for allowing vendors at future meetings and symposiums as been presented. This will be revisited once the non-profit status has been achieved.

Proper conduct during surveys was reviewed regarding observing wildlife and not always catching the animals, replacing logs, decontaminating boots, checking traps every 24 hours, creating a standardized sheet/packet on the website or handing out during the beginning of each survey.

VHS elections and appointments for the new term were presented by our nominating committee chair, Jason Gibson. Kory Steele has been elected President; Larry Mendoza Vice President; Emily Steele Treasurer of the Co-Secretary/Treasurer position; and Scott Duncan Secretary of the Co-Secretary/Treasurer position. Susan Watson was appointed Newsletter Editor; Paul Sattler Editor of Catesbeiana; and Jason Gibson Chair of the Nominating Committee. The meeting was brought to end by Kory Steele as he presented the goals as the new VHS President for the 2009-2011 term.

Emily C Steele
VHS Secretary