



VMN Admin Info Sheet

Recognition for Basic Training Course Graduation



Virginia Master Naturalists

*This Info Sheet is intended for Chapter Board Members in the VMN Program.
Authored by Virginia Master Naturalist State Office*

Overview of Volunteer Recognition

The Virginia Master Naturalist (VMN) Program has many ways to recognize its volunteers for their service and certifications. These include certificates, pins for recertification and milestones, and electronic badges in Better Impact. Please read through this document and the others listed under “Information on other VMN Recognition guidelines” to better understand what each recognition is for and how they are awarded to volunteers.

If after reading this, or the other documents, you have any questions, please direct them to masternaturalist@vt.edu and a staff member from the VMN State Office will get back to you.

In this document, you will find guidelines on the following:

- VMN Nametags
- Basic Training Course Diplomas
- Better Impact Badges for VMN Training Qualification
- Additional Recognition Options

Information on other VMN Recognition guidelines:

Both of these documents can be found on the [Volunteer Management page of the VMN website](#).

- Recognition of Certified Virginia Master Naturalist Status
- Recognition of Service Hour Milestones

Nametags

What is it

VMN nametags are a plastic name badge with a pin or magnetic back that shows the wearer’s name and chapter. The nametag also designates them as a volunteer of the VMN Program wherever they are doing volunteer work.

Nametags are ordered by chapters through the VMN State Office. Nametag Information and Ordering Procedures are in a separate document and can be found on the Volunteer Management page of the VMN website here:

<http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/volunteer-management.html>. Under “Volunteer Recognition” you need the first two documents: “Nametag Information and Ordering Procedures” and “Nametag Spreadsheet Template”

Who is Eligible

Those individuals who complete the VMN Basic Training Course.

Responsibilities

Each chapter’s Basic Training Coordinator is responsible for making sure the nametags get ordered for any new Training Class graduates. They may do this themselves or ask someone else in the chapter to place the order.

Review the Nametag Information and Ordering Procedures to better understand what might work best for your chapter.

Diplomas – Basic Training Course Diploma

What is it

Chapters may choose to provide diplomas to those individuals who complete the VMN Basic Training Course. The participants may appreciate receiving a diploma during their last day of class, particularly if the chapter is holding a graduation event. The diploma confers the title of “Virginia Master Naturalist Member”, and it should be provided only to those individuals who have completed the course requirements and satisfactorily passed the assessment. Basic Training Course Diplomas are filled in and printed by the chapter when they are ready to give them to their Basic Training Course graduates.

A template for a Basic Training Course Diploma is available on the Volunteer Management page of the VMN state website. The template is a Microsoft Word file and has places to fill in the Chapter’s name, the graduate’s name, the signature of the Chapter Advisor and/or other chapter leaders, and the date.

NOTE: It is important that chapters download the template from the VMN website for each Basic Training Course so that you are sure to have the latest version.

The template can be found here: <http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/volunteer-management.html>. Under “Volunteer Recognition” you are looking for “Basic Training Course Diploma”.

Who is Eligible

Those individuals who complete the VMN Basic Training Course.

Responsibilities

If a chapter would like to give out diplomas at a Basic Training Course graduation, each chapter’s Basic Training Coordinator is responsible for making sure the diplomas get made. The Basic Training Coordinator may do this themselves or ask someone else in the chapter to help with this task.

Better Impact Electronic Badges for Training Qualification

What is it

There are two electronic badges that will show up on a volunteer’s MyImpact page related to the VMN Basic Training Course. The first badge marks the volunteer as a “VMN Trainee” (badge is round and blue) and the second badge marks the volunteer as a “VMN Basic Training Course Graduate” (badge is round and black). The Qualification in Better Impact that controls these badges is “VMN Training”.

When a new VMN volunteer has been accepted into a VMN Basic Training Course, their “VMN Training” Qualification needs to be updated to “Current Trainee.” Once the volunteer has graduated from the Basic Training Course their “VMN Training” Qualification must be updated from “Current Trainee” to “Graduate”

Who is Eligible

Those individuals who are currently enrolled in a VMN Basic Training Course or have completed a VMN Basic Training Course.

Responsibilities

Each chapter’s Basic Training Coordinator is responsible for making sure the “VMN Training” qualification is updated in Better Impact for each individual when they have been accepted into a VMN Basic Training Course and when they have completed a VMN Basic Training Course. The Basic Training Coordinator may do this themselves or ask someone else in the chapter to help with this task.

Instructions for Updating the “VMN Training” qualification in Better Impact

Updating new volunteers to “Current Trainee”

- This needs to be done when a new Basic Training Course is starting and the new trainees have been fully accepted.
- Login to Better Impact as an Admin.
- Go to People.
- Under Qualification in the left column, click “Bulk Update User Qualification”.
- Under Module and Status Filters, click “Accepted” and “People that have ANY of the selected modules and ANY of the selected statuses”. Do not click any other boxes in this section.
- Under Communications Filters, leave all choices as “Don’t Filter”.
- Click “Search”.
 - You will now see Search Results showing all of the accepted members in your chapter.
 - Select all that are trainees in the latest Basic Training Course.
- Under, “Update Qualification for the Selected People”
 - Qualification should be “VMN Training”
 - Value should be “Set the value for every selected person”
 - Choose “Current Trainee” from the dropdown box.
- Click “Update”
- Check the box to confirm the bulk update and click “Set the Level”

Updating from “Current Trainee” to “VMN Basic Training Course Graduate”

- Go to People.
- Under Qualification in the left column, click “Bulk Update User Qualification”.
- Under Module and Status Filters, click “Accepted” and “People that have ANY of the selected modules and ANY of the selected statuses”. Do not click any other boxes in this section.
- Under Communications Filters, leave all choices as “Don’t Filter”.
- Click “Add Search Criteria”.
- Search Type, choose “Qualifications”; Qualification, choose “VMN Training”; Match Type, leave as “Is equal to”; and Level, choose “Current Trainee”.
- Click “Add”, click “Close”
- Click “Search”.
 - You will now see Search Results showing all of the individuals enrolled in your current Basic Training Course.
 - Select all who have completed the Basic Training Course and passed the assessment.
- Under, “Update Qualification for the Selected People”
 - Qualification should be “VMN Training”
 - Value should be “Set the value for every selected person”
 - Choose “Graduate” from the dropdown box.
- Click “Update”
- Check the box to confirm the bulk update and click “Set the Level”
- NOTE: For any individuals who did not complete the Basic Training Course because they have to make up a class (or any other valid reason), you would leave them as “Trainee” while they work to finish. If there are individuals who do not complete the class because they resigned or did not complete the requirements and there is no plan to do so, you will need to “Remove” the Qualification “VMN Training” from their profiles as they are no longer Trainees. If there is not an immediate plan to come back as a Trainee, the chapter might consider Archiving these individuals.

Additional Recognition Options

Chapters are welcome and encouraged to use additional means of recognizing Basic Training Course graduates. Some possibilities include:

- Celebration event to hand out certificates and name badges. You may consider inviting the graduates' families, course instructors, and representatives from local partner organizations to join the celebration. You may also want to invite other VMN volunteers in the chapter to promote networking and social interactions between the graduates and other members.
- Press release or announcement for the local newspaper highlighting the graduates' accomplishments. It can also be shared on the chapter's social media accounts, website, and newsletter.
- VMN or chapter logo items such as shirts, hats, or tote bags for the graduates.
- Fun, non-competitive awards that recall memories of things that happened during the training, such as "Most Likely to See a Snake" or "Most Likely to Stump the Instructor".

Visit Virginia Master Naturalist: virginiamasternaturalist.org

Visit Virginia Cooperative Extension: ext.vt.edu

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June 2022