



17 February 2017

Dear VMN Steering Committee, Executive Committee, and Chapter Advisor representatives from VIMS-CCRM,

Thank you for your support of the Virginia Master Naturalist program in 2016! With your support, we continued to grow our program and make positive impacts for the Commonwealth’s natural resources. Your monetary contribution supports two part-time staff members, Tiffany Brown and Terri Keffert, who are vital for program and volunteer coordination. It also supports volunteer recognition items and other program supplies, program communications tools, staff travel to teach and meet with volunteers, training events, and other important functions of the statewide program. Your in-kind contribution of staff time for training volunteers, leading projects, advising chapters, and serving on our committees is also a critical part of our program.

In 2016, VMN volunteers reported 164 service hours leading educational programs at VIMS and assisting at VIMS facilities. They also reported 1,107 hours on oyster restoration projects, including oyster shell recycling, oyster reef balls, and oyster gardening. They reported 308 hours on submerged aquatic vegetation restoration projects, such as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation’s ‘Grasses for the Masses’ effort, and 280 hours on living shoreline projects. In addition, they reported 2,000 hours of water quality monitoring in streams and rivers in Virginia’s coastal zone. In total, these 3,859 hours equate to \$100,681 in service, using the value of a volunteer hour in Virginia for 2015 published by IndependentSector.org, the industry standard (the 2016 value is not yet available, but is likely to be higher.) As you can see, you’ve made an excellent return on your investment in our program!

Below, I have included the program-wide 2016 statistics. These statistics reflect many more hours that were not directly with VIMS, but that align with your agency mission. For example, volunteers in several chapters are educating people about coastal natural resources, monitoring wildlife populations in the coastal zone, conducting beach and waterway cleanups, and promoting the use of native plants for landscaping.

Virginia Master Naturalist Program 2016 Statistics	
New VMN volunteers graduated from basic training	382
Active volunteers reporting service in 2016	1,743 (1,206 Certified VMN volunteers)
Continuing Education hours completed	24,190
Service hours contributed: Education	35,432
Service hours contributed: Citizen Science	43,517
Service hours contributed: Stewardship	29,852
Service hours contributed: Administration & Travel	37,195
Total service hours contributed	145,996 (21% increase over 2015!)
Monetary value of service	\$3,809,035 (source: IndependentSector.org)
Educational contacts made	106,460

Invent the Future

Again, I thank you for both your monetary and in-kind support. Please let me know if you have any questions about this report or our volunteer activities, if you would like me to provide you with any other materials, or if you would like to discuss additional opportunities for collaboration.

Thank you,

Michelle D. Prysby

Michelle Prysby

Director, Virginia Master Naturalist program

Virginia Tech Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation

mprysby@vt.edu

434-872-4571



Virginia Master Naturalists contributed 1,107 hours in projects relating to oyster restoration, including oyster shell recycling, building oyster reef balls, and oyster gardening. This image shows a 2016 delivery of 80 bushels of oyster shells collected by volunteers from Charlottesville-area restaurants. Todd Janeski, director of the Virginia Oyster Shell Recycling Program, stated, "The VMNs are the backbone of the VA Oyster Shell Recycling Program. The success of this Program is due to the dedication and investment of effort from your wonderful volunteers. We could not be happier to work with you. "

