

# Virginia Master Naturalist Program

## Recognition Items



### **Nametags**

Those individuals who complete the VMN Basic Training Course are eligible for a VMN nametag. Nametags are ordered by chapters through the VMN State Office. Nametag Information and Ordering Procedures are in a separate document and can be found here: <http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/volunteer-management.html>

### **Diplomas – Basic Training Course Diploma (Virginia Master Naturalist Members)**

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. A template for a Basic Training Course Diploma is available on 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. 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. The template can be found here: <http://www.virginiamasternaturalist.org/volunteer-management.html>

### **Certificates – Certification (Certified Virginia Master Naturalists)**

The VMN State Office will provide state-level certificates to those individuals who complete all the requirements to become Certified Virginia Master Naturalists. This certificate is provided upon initial certification and confers the title of "Certified Master Naturalist". Volunteers who re-certify each year will receive the recertification pin for that year. Initial certification does not get a pin, only this certificate. You can request certificates from the state office twice a year, in January and July. (Exact timeline and ordering procedures are outlined on page two of this document).

### **Pins**

#### **Recertification Pins**

In 2011, we began issuing a limited-edition recertification pin for Virginia Master Naturalists who have qualified for recertification. Recertification pins will be mailed in one batch to each chapter in February based on the number of volunteers recertifying according to the chapter's Certification Spreadsheet. Volunteers whose initial certification already extends through that calendar year are not eligible for a recertification pin unless they have done an additional 40 hours of volunteer service and 8 hours of continuing education in the same calendar year that they completed their **initial** certification requirements. For example, if a volunteer completes the requirements for initial certification in April 2019, he or she is a Certified Virginia Master Naturalist through the end of 2020 and is not eligible for the 2020 recertification pin. If that same volunteer completes an additional 40 hours of service and 8 hours of continuing education between May 2019 and December 2019, he or she may receive a 2020 recertification pin as recognition for going above and beyond the requirements. Recertification pins will be distributed twice a year to each chapter following the same template, ordering procedures, and deadlines as for certificates.

#### **Milestone Pins and the VMN Golden Circle**

We have special milestone pins for volunteers who complete 250, 500, 1000, and 2500 hours of service. At 250 hours, the first milestone, the volunteer receives a silver VMN base pin along with a rocker that says '250 hours'. For subsequent milestones, the rocker is changed out to one that says 500 hours, 1000 hours, etc., but the volunteer keeps the same original base pin.

When a volunteer achieves 5000 hours of service, they become part of the VMN Golden Circle and will be sent a gold VMN base pin. The gold VMN base pin denotes the 5000-hour achievement (rather than a rocker). As for previous rockers, volunteers can choose to return them to the state for reuse/recycling or they can keep them to be reused with

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their gold VMN base pin, should they achieve that milestone. This means that a gold VMN base pin + a 250-hour rocker will denote that a volunteer has 5,250 volunteer hours.

Milestone pins will be distributed twice a year to each chapter following the same template, ordering procedures, and deadlines as for certificates.

### **Volunteers May Decline Recognition Items**

Volunteers are welcome to decline receiving certificates and pins. Some individuals do not want them. Please do still list all members who have earned these, however, because we use this information for other purposes (such as recognition in our newsletter and measuring volunteer retention.). By default, we will assume that everyone on your certification spreadsheet who has earned a recognition item should receive one. For this reason please indicate on the spreadsheet, in the notes section for that volunteer, if you do not want something sent for a particular volunteer.

### **Timeline for Requesting Pins and Certificates**

#### **\*IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT PACKAGES\***

*Check your package as soon as it comes in* to make sure the items you received are correct. If the package sits for four weeks and only gets checked the day before your chapter-wide recognition event, there is no time to replace anything that might be missing. The person putting the package together is only human and can make mistakes (inadvertently, of course). Help her out and allow some time to send corrections if they are needed.

*Make a plan to get every volunteer the recognition items they have earned*, even if they are unable to attend the chapter meeting or other special event. If you choose to mail the items to members, document envelopes are recommended for sending certificates and padded envelopes are recommended for sending pins.

### **Certification Spreadsheets are sent to the State Office twice annually.**

- DUE DATE 1: **JANUARY 31**
  - This due date is MANDATORY for all chapters
  - You are reporting on certificates, re-certifications and milestones earned through December 31.
  - The most recent copy of your chapter's Certification Spreadsheet will be sent from Tiffany to your chapter's current Membership Chair, President, and Chapter Advisor by December 10.
  - You may send in your updated Certification Spreadsheet any time between January 1 and January 31. However, none will be accepted after January 31.
  - Certification Spreadsheets will be reviewed and approved as they come in.
  - Packages will be put together and mailed out in February.
  
- DUE DATE 2: **JULY 31**
  - This due date is OPTIONAL for all chapters. Please note that although this due date is optional for all chapters, keep in mind that you may have volunteers who would like to receive their recognition items mid-year.
  - You are reporting on certificates, re-certifications (if any were missed in the January spreadsheet) and milestones earned through June 30.
  - The most recent copy of your chapter's Certification Spreadsheet will be sent to your current Membership Chair, President, and Chapter Advisor by June 10.
  - You may send in your updated Certification Spreadsheet any time between July 1 and July 31. However, none will be accepted after July 31.
  - Certification Spreadsheets will be reviewed and approved as they come in.
  - Packages will be put together and mailed out in August.