



Natural Area News

A publication of the Ivy Creek Foundation
Volume 14, No. 1

Summer Newsletter 2008

National Trails Day and Trail Training Plans

On May 17th, Dan Mahon came to Ivy Creek and gave a great talk on Albemarle County's Greenways Initiative and on trail building more broadly. Dan is the Greenway Supervisor for Albemarle County, and is pictured to the right during our walk that followed the talk. One of the issues we discussed was the stress caused by losing one's way during a pleasant hike and the importance of clear sign posting when trail building. Dan was impressed by our new signs, but you will notice he never goes on a hike without his GPS unit!



We rely on a team of volunteer trail monitors to keep our trails in good shape at the Ivy Creek and Ragged Mountain Natural Areas. You may have read about some of these hard workers in the last issue of *Natural Area News*. This is a time of year when they have even more work on their hands as some trails seem to get overgrown overnight! As we walked the Red Trail with Dan, he commented that on a trail like this, he would usually recommend making the trail a little wider, or "overbuilding," initially so as to reduce the intensity of long-term maintenance. And yet, we acknowledged that a small, meandering trail is befitting a natural area like Ivy Creek, pointing to the many, sometimes conflicting, needs to consider when designing nature trails.

The Ivy Creek Foundation is planning to cosponsor, with the County, a three-day trail building seminar in October. We will work with Dan and his colleagues to provide guidance and training on trail construction and maintenance, trail design, switchback construction, water bars and drainage dips. This workshop will provide us the opportunity to give back to our volunteer trail monitors with valuable training and skill building, and will also help us professionalize the way we work. We are also discussing how we can certify volunteers for certain types of work and then share out trail monitoring and building. Like us, the County and other partners rely on the invaluable work of trail volunteers!

This training will be free to those interested in working with Ivy Creek, the County and partners on trail maintenance. However, planning a good workshop will take a lot of work and if you would like to contribute to this initiative, as with any of our other work, please do!

And remember that Saturday, June 7th is National Trails Day. Join Rivanna Trails Foundation and friends for the day, 8:30am-2:00pm, helping with trail clearing and building and stream clean-up. Meet at the Catholic High School on Rio Road at 8:30am. Let them know you are coming along to help by emailing

Director's Note

What a spring at Ivy Creek! Our prescribed burn went off without a hitch on April 2nd. Many thanks to our friends at the Nature Conservancy for doing such a spectacular job! If you have not been out to see the field's new growth, please do soon!

A month later our Burn Manager, Sam Lindblom, gave a talk at the Education Building about the local, historical relationship between people, the land and fire. We are currently discussing the idea of planting more varieties of native plants in our fields. We will keep you posted!

We have been very busy with this season's school tours, so busy that I acted as guide to a group of preschoolers in May – my first time as a guide. It seemed to go well and it was a treat for me to spend some time with the children and their parents and have the opportunity to see the natural area through their eyes.

We have a wonderful group of trail monitors who help us maintain the trails at Ivy Creek and Ragged Mountain. This is the season when we really start to notice how much work there is to do! If you, or someone you know, might enjoy working with us on trail maintenance or otherwise, please give us a call - (434) 973-7772 or email icf@ivycreekfoundation.org.

All the best for summer,

Karen

dfoster@newventure.com and for more details go to <http://avenue.org/rivanna>. Hope to see you there!

The School Trail at Ivy Creek Natural Area

Leslie Middleton

The School Trail at Ivy Creek Natural Area got its name because it's just right for taking a group of kids on a 45-minute guided walk in the woods, something our Ivy Creek Foundation guides have been doing free of charge since 1980. It's 3/10 of a mile long, traverses both field and forest, and ends up at the Barn for a closer look at natural history artifacts and exhibits. On a sunny fall morning, Tom Walsh who's been a guide for only a couple of years, stops at the row of trees in the middle of the parking area and asks some kindergarteners from Free Union Country Day School, "Now, who is the leader here?" in a firm but kindly way letting them know the rules of the trail. Follow the leader, don't take anything from the Natural Area, and stop and listen when he has something to show.



And from this moment on, it is all show and tell, starting with an inspection of the dogwood's red berries. "And what happens to the berries after the birds eat them?" They all look at him, silent, until he says, "Well, the seed inside the berry gets pooped out, and this is where a new tree grows." The word "poop" gets their attention, and suddenly they are all making noises and thinking this adult is OK after all. Stopping at a clump of thistle, thigh high with seeds scattered from their brown heads, Tom bends one down so the kids can inspect it, telling them that just a month ago, goldfinches had built their late summer nests here and raised and fed their young.

Where the School Trail veers off to the right into the woods, Tom starts introducing the trees of Virginia. High as the sky, the kids peer up to see seed pods on tulip poplars. In front of an American Beech, its smooth gray bark scarred by initials cut by a knife, Tom tells the kids that it's just like cutting the skin of the tree, and asks "You wouldn't like someone to do that to you, would you?"

"Now, what's this one called?" Tom asks in front of a tree we've seen before. "Hollywood!" shouts one of the kids, which seems as good a mnemonic as any for a tree that is ever green. Though naming something is not the same as truly knowing it – this requires understanding habits and ecology -- without names, we cannot learn or converse about what we see, nor be specific about that which we hope to protect. The guides at Ivy Creek provide names and knowledge along with memories of walking in the woods. It is from these foundations that stewardship is nurtured at Ivy Creek.

Leslie Middleton and her husband, Pat Punch, have been members of ICF for many years. Leslie hosts the weekly radio show, The Rivanna Rambler, on WTJU, Thursdays at 11:55 a.m. on 91.1 FM or wtju.net. Also available as podcast at www.rivannarambler.org.

Ivy Creek Inspired Poetry

No sooner did Nancy Neighbors and her husband move to Charlottesville, than she found and joined the Ivy Creek Foundation, volunteering as a guide for school tours since November 1994. She quickly learned all the trails, using them in all seasons just for pleasure. She claims they restore her to sanity even on difficult days.

"It's great fun," she says, "to share my love for Nature with children, and then also to walk silently, and see things I'd never see if I were out talking with a group – such as the wild turkey I nearly stepped on one fall day on the Yellow Trail, that rose up and ran off to a more private place for its morning snack. Or the doe I literally caught napping in a hollow, who stood up and stared at me. So I stopped walking and bowed to her, the way deer bow their heads to one another, and pretended to look away. And out of the corner of my eye, I saw her lie back down, while I walked away thrilled."

Nancy kindly shares her poem, "A Walk in June," with us.

A Walk in June

Fed-up and frazzled,
I break for the woods.

For the soft breeze on my face,
the Deptford Pinks,
the mosses brightly green,
thank You.

And for the lovely old beech tree
next to its little stream, the
water slicking through stones,
reflecting the green shade,
cooling the ferns,
thank You.

To the fluting of a thrush,
the breeze and I move on,
depart in peace.

Thank You.

LOCAL GREENING INITIATIVES

Building a green roof is only one way local groups and citizens are greening up our area. Green roofs reduce stormwater runoff, filter stormwater, reduce energy use in the building for temperature control, provide habitat, and filter airborne pollution. To the right, sedum from the green roof on the County Office Building is pictured. Their roof, installed almost three years ago, is growing in well, and young visitors have commented that the plants look very strong and possibly alien! Varieties of sedum are used on local green roofs because they are very low-maintenance and drought-tolerant, able to store water for later use.



While we have been very busy at Ivy Creek this spring with all our school tours coming to us, we also endeavor to conduct our work more through community outreach where possible. On May 23rd we organized a talk on local greening initiatives for the third graders at Burnley-Moran Elementary School. We have another presentation planned for June, for some older students at different school, and will then work with local teachers, the City and County to develop a more programmatic approach to this project for the coming school year.

Our own Bruce Gatling-Austin opened the presentation at Burnley-Moran and introduced the students to the array of local greening initiatives being taken by Ivy Creek, the City, the County and others, and then later followed up with details on our geothermal building, the Education Building, where we hold most of our programs.



Kristel Riddervold, Environmental Administrator for the City of Charlottesville, then gave an introduction to the problem of stormwater runoff and the importance of finding ways to reduce pollutants to our waters. She explained that the green roof the City is building on City Hall (pictured left) is just one way the city is working to green up Charlottesville and encouraged the students to go and see the roof, while it was still being planted and growing in, when on the Downtown Mall this summer. The roof, pictured to the left, can be seen from the Market Street parking garage. Please go to <http://www.charlottesville.org/Index.aspx?page=2270> for more details, pictures and other links.

Gregor Patsch, Water Resources Engineer for Albemarle County, then told the students about the County's green roof, mentioned above, as well as some of their other greening initiatives, like planting rain gardens and using pervious pavers in certain areas of local parking lots. See <http://www.albemarle.org/departments.asp?department=planning&relpage=8664> for more details on the County's green roof and follow links to their other greening efforts.

The presentations were anchored with a series of photographs of local places and current activities. The children asked a lot of questions and also got to see and handle physical examples of green roof material from the City Hall project. Ivy Creek will work hard over the summer to develop this program more. This is a big step we are taking in our organizational development and partnering, and we can use all the help we can get! If you or someone you know would like to work with us on this or make a financial contribution to the project, please contact Karen by email icf@ivycreekfoundation.org or phone (434) 973 7772.

Coordinator's Corner

Due to the generosity of our volunteer guides, over 2,000 school children directly experienced the Ivy Creek Natural Area this spring and fall. Parents and teachers offered their hearty thanks to us by voice and email. Older children shouted and waved their gratitude as their buses pulled away. The younger children showed their thanks with the adoring looks they gave each guide. I add my name to this chorus of gratitude, for without our volunteers, there would be no school program. Please consider joining this wonderful group of volunteers by becoming a guide yourself!

The Ivy Creek blog has regular updates on the trees, plants and birds at Ivy Creek. Check out ivycreek.wordpress.com for the latest flora and fauna news. The latest entry was on wood ducks. And please give yourself the gift of a walk at Ivy Creek.

June 2008

1 **Ragged Mountain Forest Walk**

Sunday, June 1, 2:00 pm

Join Ellen Powell of the Virginia Department of Forestry on a summer walk at Ragged Mountain Natural Area to learn to identify trees indigenous to Central Virginia. Cosponsored with the Virginia Native Plant Society.

5 **Central Virginia Beekeepers Meeting**

Thursday, June 5, 7:00 pm

Ann Harman, Treasurer for the Virginia State Beekeepers' Association, will speak to the club on "Cooking with Honey". Ann has authored her own cookbook, "Kitchen Creations With Honey." She will provide us with information, tips, and information to substitute honey for sugar in your cooking. She will also bring some honey dishes for us to try. Beginners welcome. Free and open to the public.

7 **First Saturday Bird Walk**

Saturday, June 7, 7:30 am

Come join Leigh Surdukowski for an early morning bird walk. Cosponsored by the Monticello Bird Club. Beginners always welcome.

7 **National Trails Day**

Saturday, June 7, 8:30 am

Learn how to work on trails and work on the Rivanna Trails Foundation project. Meet at Charlottesville Catholic School on Rio Road.

8 **Virginia Native Plant Society Picnic**

Sunday, June 8, 12:30 pm

Picnic and walk at Humpback Rocks. Meet there at 12:30 pm or carpool from Barracks Rd. Shopping Center in front of Ben and Jerry's at 11:15 am. Humpback Rocks Picnic ground located 8.4 mi. south of Rockfish Gap on Blue Ridge Pkwy. (between mile post 8 & 9). Use tables on outer loop far in the back near trails. Drinks & dessert provided to the final meeting of the Jefferson Chapter.

12 **Monticello Bird Club Meeting**

Thursday, June 12, 7:30 pm

Annual Potluck Supper. No meetings until September.

14 **Bats at Ivy Creek**

Saturday, June 14, 7:00 pm

Learn from Bridget Wandelt about bats local to our Ivy Creek area. Learn about our efforts to establish a bat colony here at Ivy Creek.

26 **Ivy Creek Toddler Time**

Thursday, June 26, 10:00 am

Enjoy a read-aloud and trail walk for three to five year old toddlers at Ivy Creek. Volunteer guide Rachel Bush will host, starting in the Education Building at Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.

28 **Barn Day**

Saturday, June 28, 2:00 pm

Come enjoy the barn at Ivy Creek Natural Area. This was formerly the showpiece of the working farm known as River View Farm. This is a rare afternoon with the barn open to the public.

29 **Butterflies of Ivy Creek**

Sunday, June 29, 1:00 pm

Swallowtails, Fritillaries, and Little Blues. Take a walk with Mike Scott to find Ivy Creek's early summer butterflies. Meet in the Education Building for a brief introduction to identification skills. Fun for the whole family.

July 2008

Central Virginia Beekeepers Meeting

No meeting this month.

Monticello Bird Club Meeting

No meeting this month

Virginia Native Plants Society Meeting

No meeting this month

5 First Saturday Bird Walk

Saturday, July 5, 7:30 am

Come join us for an early morning bird walk with Jenny Gaden from the Monticello Bird Club. Beginners always welcome.

12 Dragonfly Walk at Ivy Creek

Saturday, July 12, 11:00 am

Jim Childress will lead a walk to see dragonflies and damselflies of Ivy Creek. We will view them with binoculars and catch a few to look at them in hand. Come and learn to identify some of the midsummer species and their habitats.

19 Wilderness First Aid Certification

Saturday & Sunday, July 19-20, 8:30 am

This two day course will provide a combination of basic instruction and role playing scenarios to give you a well rounded introduction to Wilderness First Aid for bushwalkers, climbers, paddlers and those who find themselves out and about. Led by SOLO instructor and director of the Outdoor Adventure Social Club - Matt Rosefsky. The certification is valid for two years. Registration required. Fee includes books, handouts, and certification. For more information go to <http://www.outdoorsocial.com/wfa.htm> or call (434) 760-HIKE.

10% of proceeds will go to Ivy Creek Foundation.

26 Barn Day

Saturday, July 26, 2:00 pm

Come enjoy the barn at Ivy Creek Natural Area. This was formerly the showpiece of the working farm known as River View Farm. This is a rare afternoon with the barn open to the public.

27 Midsummer Butterfly Walk

Sunday, July 27, 1:00 pm

Learn to identify Ivy Creek's butterflies on a walk with Mike Scott at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. Mike will lead a brief identification workshop before the walk. Meet in the Education Building.

31 Ivy Creek Toddler Time

Thursday, July 31, 10:00 am

Enjoy a read-aloud and trail walk for three to five year old toddlers at Ivy Creek. Volunteer guide Rachel Bush will host, starting in the Education Building at Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.

August 2008

Monticello Bird Club Meeting

No meeting this month. Meet in September.

Virginia Native Plants Society Meeting

No meeting this month. Meet in September.

Central Virginia Beekeepers Meeting

No meeting this month. County fair.

2 First Saturday Bird Walk

Saturday, August 2, 7:30 am

Come join Ron Kingston for an early morning bird walk to see our summer residents. Cosponsored by the *Monticello Bird Club*. Beginners always welcome.

16 Exploring Summer

Saturday, August 16, 9:00 am

Naturalist Mary Jane Epps, will lead an exploratory walk at Ivy Creek to see the wonders of a summer morning in nature. Wildflowers, ferns, mushrooms and the amazing variety of insects are a few of the topics Mary Jane may cover. Meet at the Education Building.

24 Summer Butterfly Walk

Sunday, August 24, 1:00 pm

Learn to identify Ivy Creek's butterflies on a walk with Mike Scott at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. Mike will lead a brief identification workshop before the walk. Meet in the Education Building.

26 Nighthawk Migration: Circus in the Sky

Tuesday, August 26, 6:30 pm

Join members of the Monticello Bird Club to watch the first of two nights of nighthawk's acrobatics as observed in aerial feeding on hunting circuits from the reservoir to native grass field.

28 Nighthawk Migration: Circus in the Sky

Thursday, August 28, 6:30 pm

Join members of the Monticello Bird Club to watch a second night of nighthawk's acrobatics as observed in aerial feeding on hunting circuits from the reservoir to native grass field.

28 Ivy Creek Toddler Time

Thursday, August 28, 10:00 am

Enjoy a read-aloud and trail walk for three to five year old toddlers at Ivy Creek. Volunteer guide Rachel Bush will host, starting in the Education Building at Ivy Creek Natural Area. The event is free.

30 Barn Day

Saturday, August 30, 2:00 pm

Come enjoy the barn at Ivy Creek Natural Area. This was formerly the showpiece of the working farm known as River View Farm. This is a rare afternoon with the barn open to the public.

30 Summer Wildflowers

Saturday, August 30, 9:00 am

Walk with Phil Stokes of the Virginia Native Plant Society to see the spectacular late blooming wildflowers of summer. Cardinal flower, boneset, and jewelweed are among the flowers that bloom in August at Ivy Creek. Co-sponsored with the Virginia Native Plant Society.

September 2008

6 First Saturday Bird Walk

Saturday, September 6, 7:30 am

Come join John Zimmerman for an early morning bird walk. Cosponsored by the Monticello Bird Club. Beginners always welcome.

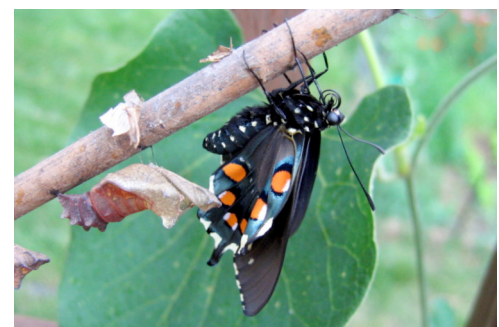
7 Ivy Creek Foundation Annual Meeting

Sunday, September 7, 2:00 pm

Come meet the staff and board of Ivy Creek Foundation. Hear about upcoming events and plans. Meet in the Education Building.

Walk with Butterflies at Ivy Creek this Summer!

Be sure to make at least one of the butterfly walks this summer (June 29th, July 27th and August 24th). On May 18th, Mike Scott gave his first butterfly walk of the season. As it was quite chilly and wet, we saw few butterflies on our walk, but we certainly learned a lot from his presentation beforehand! This is the perfect family event, appealing to naturalists of all ages. Mike is married with two children and has been offering his program at Ivy Creek for nine years now. He is a true butterfly enthusiast.



Pictures by Mike Scott

All that he shares with us comes from some 38 years of observation and reading; he has never taken an entomology course! His collection is extensive and his photographs are wonderful. Pictured to the right is a Pipevine Swallowtail having just emerged from its chrysalis about an hour after our May walk. Pictured to the left are newly hatched Pipevine Swallowtail caterpillars eating their eggshells as their first meal. Mike was keen to share this photo with

us as it was the first time he had captured this moment in a photo.

Barn Day at Ivy Creek

The Barn at Ivy Creek Natural Area is usually closed up tight, but this March we started opening the barn to the general public one Saturday every month. Holding Barn Day has given us the opportunity to explore how we can work harder to make visits to the area more educational, and has also begun to satisfy the public's considerable curiosity!

Visitors have been delighted at the chance to see the inside of the barn. Questions about the barn have ranged far and wide. They have displayed an intense interest in farming, nature, and history. Children and some adults want to know where the animals are now. Many have asked to see or just peek at the upstairs. Some have had a difficult time visualizing the horses in the stalls. Others want to know where the cow bones (called dinosaur bones by the very little) came from.



Picture by Lori Dillehunt

In May, interest in the barn even piqued the local television news! They carried a piece on Ivy Creek Barn Day on both their 6 pm and 10 pm news that same day.

We would also like to be able to do more education work related to the barn. It was considered state of the art when built in the 1930s and farmers from all around came to see the barn and learn from the farmer who built it. Conley Greer was Albemarle County's first African-American agricultural extension agent, and made River View Farm into a showcase.

As with all the extra programming we would like to have the time and resources to provide, we need help to further develop this exciting program. We have talked to several local business owners about possible support of this program. Please consider making a personal or business contribution to the development of Barn Day!

ICF Membership

The Ivy Creek Foundation is a volunteer-based non-profit organization that depends on community donations to maintain the natural areas and to continue and expand its educational programming. At Ivy Creek Natural Area we hope to increase the number of school tours we offer as well as develop education programs to take place elsewhere, such as at local schools and at the sites of local environment projects or areas where activity is underway that will impact the local environment. For instance, in this issue of *Natural Area News* we tell about our recent experience and future plans for working on local green initiatives with area schools! At Ragged Mountain Natural Area, we will likely need to respond to change by constructing new trails and anticipating new habitat opportunities, as well as developing and conducting hands-on education programs related to the anticipated changes to the landscape. Our planned trail building workshop in October will be an important step in this work!

We will not be able to do any of this without the support of our membership! Please become a member if you are not already, or pass this form on to a friend who enjoys the natural areas but is not yet a member. To join, please send your tax-deductible contribution to: Ivy Creek Foundation, P.O. Box 956, Charlottesville, VA 22902

Name (s) _____ Email _____

Address _____

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|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Sustaining | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Benefactor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Regular | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Subscribing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Donor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Patron |

Ivy Creek Foundation
P.O. Box 956
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Non-Profit Organization
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Permit No. 299

Change Service Requested

Possible Continuing Trail Diversions at Ragged Mountain Natural Area:

Please continue to be aware of possible trail diversions at Ragged Mountain Natural Area. Possible detours will be clearly marked at the kiosk and at the trails themselves. Please heed the detour signs and steer clear of any machinery and works. We will do what we can to keep you informed as your use of the natural area is impacted by the proposed dam development. Also see: <http://www.rivanna.org>.

Ivy Creek Foundation mission

“To preserve and manage the Ivy Creek and Ragged Mountain Natural Areas for education and appreciation”

The Ivy Creek Foundation is a volunteer-based, non-profit organization created in 1979 that works to manage, improve, and preserve the ecosystems of the Ivy Creek and Ragged Mountain Natural Areas for the purposes of environmental education, land conservation, and the appreciation of Virginia’s natural heritage.

Ivy Creek Foundation Board of Directors 2007-2008

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For membership information, write to P.O.Box 956, Charlottesville, VA 22902, call (434) 973-7772
email: icf@ivycreekfoundation.org or visit our website at <http://www.ivycreekfoundation.org>



*Please check our website for news and possible
program schedule changes.*

Please consider sending us your email address.

Thank you for your continuing support of our work!