

# 2024 VHS Spring Meeting Education Report

Education programs performed October 1, 2023 thru May 16, 2024: 28

Estimated number of people reached: 7060

Education Committee Member Highlights (there are currently 22 Education Committee Members):

Erin Anthony performed 1 event for 135 people

1. Herpetology lecture for students at Post Oak Middle School in Spotsylvania

Travis Anthony performed 3 events for approximately 170 people

1. A tabling with Larry Mendoza at Reynolds Community College STEM Fair, Richmond VA
2. Presented a herp talk for the Rivanna Master Naturalist Class using the frog call slideshow and a modified "An Introduction to the Reptiles and Amphibians of Virginia - Northern Region."
3. Presented a general program on herpetology to about 15 middle school students at Swift Creek Middle School for their wildlife club. It was well received, the kids asked lots of great questions and had great participation.

Marshall Boyd staffed a table display for 2 days and reached approximately 2200 people at the Virginia Living Museum's Reptile and Amphibian Weekend.

Barry Buschow performed 4 events for approximately 130 people

1. Presented a herp talk for a St. James Episcopal School's after school class
2. Assisted Ana Sparks at a Boy Scout Herp Badge event in Prince William Co
3. Assisted Caroline Seitz at Lake Frederick Conservation Club with a "Amphib & Reptiles of NOVA" slideshow
4. Assisted Caroline Seitz with an educational snake walk at Ivy Creek Foundation Natural Area

Mike Clifford performed 1 event May 4, 2024 Pocahontas VMN Herpetology Training and Herp Search  
Mike Clifford, Kelly Geer, and Ana Sparks (and family) conducted the VMN event with about 30 trainees and staff participating. The hour-long indoor session included a slide presentation and hands-on intro to herps using some of Ana's live specimens. Following that, we formed three groups for the 2-hour herp search. A cold front had put a damper on the herp activity, but the groups still had some success. Among the species encountered were two Rough Earthsnakes, a Eastern Wormsnake, a Dekay's Brownsnake, five Little Brown Skinks, American Toads, Eastern Cricket Frogs, and a Red Eft.

Matt Close performed 5 events for approximately 3650 people

1. Presented a program on the reptiles and amphibians of Roanoke City and County to the Roanoke City & County Master Gardeners Club. They donated \$75 to the VHS.
2. Tabled at the McHarg Elementary One School, One Book Adventure Night on March 28th and had a display that featured information about local and Virginia frog species, facts about frog anatomy and development, and general Herpetology. A community member provided their Grey Tree Frog habitat to display and tree frog habitat was discussed. Overall there were 132 McHarg students (pre-K through 3rd grade) and 500 people total (including students, their families, staff and guests).
3. 2 Day event: Staffed a table at the Virginia Museum of Natural History's Reptile Festival

4. Zoom Turtle slideshow program for the Friends of Dyke Marsh who will make a \$250 donation to VHS

Kelly Geer performed 2 events for 35 people

1. Assisted Caroline Seitz, Ana Sparks, and Yohn Sutton with an informal survey of Widewater State Park in Stafford.
2. Assisted Mike Clifford and Ana Sparks with a herp talk and walk for the Virginia Master Naturalists at Pocahontas State Park.

Mark Khosravi performed 1 event for approximately 200 people

1. Staffed a table with Caroline Seitz at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fairfax's Earth Day Festival.

Larry Mendoza performed 1 event for approximately 150 people

1. A tabling with Travis Anthony at Reynolds Community College STEM Fair, Richmond VA

Caroline Seitz performed 7 events for approximately 400 people

1. Presented a new VHS slideshow "An Introduction to the Reptiles and Amphibians of Virginia - Northern Region" to the Lake Frederick Conservation Club in Frederick County.
2. Conducted a Zoom interview with a high school student about careers in herpetology.
3. Assisted Ana Sparks, Kelly Geer, and Yohn Sutton with an informal survey of a section of Widewater State Park in Stafford.
4. Led an educational snake walk at Ivy Creek Foundation Natural Area in Charlottesville.
5. Presented another new VHS slideshow "An Introduction to the Snakes of Virginia - Central Region" at Ivy Creek Foundation Natural Area.
6. Staffed a table with Mark Khosravi at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fairfax's Earth Day Festival.
7. Assisted Ana Sparks with staffing a table at Mason Neck State Park's Eagle Festival.

Amanda Stinnett performed 1 table display for approximately 300 people at the Waynesboro Riverfest.

Ana Sparks performed 4 events for approximately 110 people

1. Presented a Boy Scout Badge herp program in Prince William County.
2. Assisted Caroline Seitz, Kelly Geer, and Yohn Sutton with an informal survey of a section of Widewater State Park in Stafford.
3. Assisted Mike Clifford and Kelly Geer with a herp talk and walk for the Virginia Master Naturalists at Pocahontas State Park.
4. Staffed a table at Mason Neck State Park's Eagle Festival.

Susan Watson, representing both DWR and VHS, performed 5 events for approximately 109 people.

1. Presented Herpetology to Riverine Chapter of Virginia Master Naturalists (VMN), in Henrico County, on January 25.
- 2-4. Presented and trained VMN volunteers on vernal pool habitat and species identification and monitoring during three different sessions, in Charles City County, on March 9, 16, and 17.
5. Presented Herpetology to Historic Southside Chapter of VMN, in Isle of Wight County, on April

VHS Media Mentions:

1. A news article written about the VHS Fall Meeting in the Martinsville Bulletin "Society's meeting puts spotlight on natural history museum's herpetology department" on Nov 11, 2023  
[https://martinsvillebulletin.com/news/local/herpetology-vmnh-vhs-annual-meeting/article\\_1f332a44-74ee-11ee-8e4e-ffb3df7d2db.html](https://martinsvillebulletin.com/news/local/herpetology-vmnh-vhs-annual-meeting/article_1f332a44-74ee-11ee-8e4e-ffb3df7d2db.html)
2. Caroline Seitz was interviewed by Northern Virginia Magazine an article published in the June 2024 issue [Virginia's Turtles in Peril Due to Poaching \(northernvirginiamag.com\)](https://www.northernvirginiamag.com)

#### Goals Accomplished:

1. Created a new slideshow: "An Introduction to the Reptiles and Amphibians of Virginia - Northern Region"
2. Created a new slideshow: "An Introduction to the Snakes of Virginia - Central Region"
3. John White created a new slideshow "Northern Virginia Frog Calls"
4. With John White created a new slideshow "An Introduction to the Turtles of Virginia - Northern Region"
5. John White created 3 new VHS coloring pages: copperhead, rat snake, barking treefrog
6. John White printed MANY native herp 3D models (including copperheads, rattlesnakes, cottonmouths, and so many more) and shipped them out to various VHS members for painting
7. VHS purchased 6 new duffle bags, various herp toy models, 6 plush kingsnake toys and paid for printing of 600 copies of copperhead coloring pages and 600 copies of rat snake coloring pages.
8. I purchased 6 tri-fold foam boards, glue, double sided tape, laminating pouches, clear sleeve pages, 6 three ring binders, 3 business card holders, and donated a few tablecloths.
9. Created 6 VHS tri fold foam board displays; 6 snake quiz books using the two snake quizzes from the VHS website; created multiple interpretive signs to go with the various herp toy models.
10. Put together 4 complete "to go" VHS table display kits in duffle bags and distributed them among various education committee members. Have 2 more kits that are almost complete.

#### Goals Moving Forward:

1. Establish guidelines and training for VHS education programs and tablings and criteria for joining the education committee.
2. Establish how the education chair can more easily obtain education materials (credit card?)
3. Establish description of duties and responsibilities of the Education Chair.
4. Order 6 carts, lightweight folding tables, chairs, tents, logo tablecloths
5. Order 6 quality display boards
6. Order stickers, VHS business cards, copperhead ID cards and add them to display kits
7. Order 3 more banners and distribute
8. As 3D herp models are completed, order protective display cases and stands
9. As 3D herp models are completed, create interpretive signs for each
10. Distribute completed herp models among the kits
11. Order a laminating machine????
12. Create more slideshows
13. Plan to have 2-3 virtual meeting per year with Education team
14. Offer a list of education programs that folks can choose from on the VHS website