



CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE SHORELINE™

*A Journal of Natural Resources, Public Affairs and
Culture on the Eastern Shore of Virginia*

Volume 31

December 2018

Number 12

Planting for Pollinators

By Sarah Morgan and Ann Snyder

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation’s website (www.virginiadot.org/programs/pollinator_habitat_program.asp), pollinators – including honeybees, native bees, birds, bats, and butterflies – contribute substantially to the U.S. economy. They are vital to keeping fruits, nuts, and vegetables in our diets by moving pollen from one part of the flower of a plant to another, or from one plant to another, to fertilize the flower. Only fertilized flowers can make fruit and/or seeds. Over the past few decades, there has been a significant decrease in pollinators.

There are simple steps the homeowner or landowner can take to help sustain pollinators, especially honeybees, on the Eastern Shore. From flowering plants to shrubs to trees, much of the Shore’s native flora is easily tended, resistant to disease, and provides habitat for not only the pollinators that are critical for crops, but also many of the birds and other fauna that spend all or part of their lives here.

Tips for Pleasing Pollinators

- For pollinators, our tidy lawns are a desert. Many bees and other pollinators love the clover, dandelions, purple dead nettle, henbit, and other familiar wildflowers that make our yards so pretty in Spring. Try to resist neighborhood peer pressure to eliminate the wildflowers. (Notice that on sunny warmer winter days, bees are out foraging on these

flowering “weeds” that pop up in our yards – the nectar is a real help to them during long winters.)

- Let some of your edges, roadsides, borders, ditches, and hedgerows go un-mowed. Allow wildflowers to reach their blooming stages.



- Native plants are largely adapted to withstand local pests. If you MUST use pesticides, spot-treat only the affected plant. Treat when the plant is NOT flowering.
- Leave patches of vegetation and soil undisturbed when possible (even through the winter), as these areas provide homes and nesting sites for many kinds of pollinators. Many live in the soil around the roots of the very plants they pollinate, so turn over the soil only when you need to. Many pollinators make homes in the dried stems of standing plants through the winter.
- Plant patches or rows of summer-blooming plants in your vegetable garden, just for bees (and for beauty). These could include chives, leeks, sage, oregano, zinnias, and various other herbs that will eventually flower. Honeybees

in particular love large plantings with at least a square yard of flowers.

- Let your vegetables and herbs bolt into bloom at the end of the season. Pollinators will enjoy the flowers that supply nutritional variety for them. Consider leaving your cabbage, broccoli, greens, oregano, basil, and other plants in the garden for a few extra weeks of flowering.
- When you plant native plants, you support the native wildlife that is well adapted to those plants and may well depend upon them (and vice versa).
- Try to tolerate a few weeds and pests rather than resorting to pesticides too quickly. Many pests that alarm us actually are self-limiting and do little damage. Even when pesticides don’t kill beneficial pollinators immediately, they can have subtle but serious long-term effects on populations (including us!).

See **Pollinators**, *cont’d* on p. 7

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Wanted: Curator for Local Art Collection

Submitted by Cora Johnston, University of Virginia's Coastal Research Center

The general public would be forgiven for thinking that the types of things needing organizing at the Anheuser-Busch Coastal Research Center (A-NCRC) in Oyster are laboratory supplies and dorm-related items for scientists and students. However, a program begun several years ago has resulted in experimentation of a different kind, and the resulting collection of drawings and paintings needs a curator.

The brainchild of the late Art Schwarzcchild, long-time site director of the A-BCRC, the Art and Ecology program was developed for school-teachers in 2012. Joining Art at the workshop's inception were Linda Blum, coastal ecology professor at UVA, and plein air artist Alice McEnerney Cook. The program, which has been held each spring and fall since 2012, combines class-based lectures on art techniques and basic ecology with visits to scenic natural areas where participants observe, practice, and receive one-on-one instruction.

Though we often think of art and science at opposite ends of a



One highlight for workshop participants is a day spent plein air painting at The Nature Conservancy's seaside property, Brownsville.

spectrum, both share a common starting point: observation. To create art, we observe the world and then try to capture its forms and patterns. To conduct science, we observe the world and then complete studies and experiments to explain the forms and patterns that we see. The shared importance of observation in both art and science is the driving concept behind the Art and Ecology program for teachers.


The program introduces teachers to the ecology and environmental issues impacting habitats of the Eastern Shore and provides an opportunity to learn and practice techniques used in observational drawing (spring sessions) or plein air painting in oil (fall sessions). Upon completion, teachers receive 16 hours of Recertification Credits. Approximately 150 teachers from Northampton and

Accomack counties and 20 other school districts have participated, taking their new appreciation of the coastal environment and refreshed art skills back to the nearly 50,000 students they teach.

The program is ongoing, and both art and science teachers on the Eastern Shore are particularly encouraged to enroll. For more information, visit www.abrc.virginia.edu/siteman2/index.php/abrc-information/teachers-educators/.

As part of the program, participants submit one of their works to be included in the A-BCRC's art collection. The work has been displayed at the University of Virginia (Oyster and Charlottesville), Barrier Islands Center, National Science Foundation, and several national conferences. The collection has become so robust, and has been requested for display so often, that we are working to formalize a catalog for loans and outreach that showcases both our programs and Virginia's beautiful Eastern Shore.

Do You Have Experience With Curation or Collections?

We are seeking a volunteer to help catalog our collection of wetlands art. If you are interested in helping with this project or in participating in the Art & Ecology program, please contact Site Director Cora Johnston at coraj@virginia.edu or call (757) 620-7016. 

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19th Annual Onancock Christmas Homes Tour

It's CHRISTMAS on the CREEK!

December 8, 1-5 PM

Enjoy a weekend of holiday festivities in historic Onancock, VA, highlighted by a rare opportunity to visit 6 private homes – some built in the early 1800s – situated on Onancock Creek and decorated for the holidays.

Tickets: \$20. Available online: Eventbrite.com at "Onancock Christmas 2018" OR at Shore ticket outlets: The Book Bin, Historic Onancock School, Ker Place, Carousel Gift Shop at Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital, Machipongo Trading Company, North Street Market, and Thomas Gardens.

This year's proceeds benefit CBES!

Nearly 1,000 Cyclists Ride Despite Liquid Sunshine in This Year's Bike Tour

By Jane McKinley, Special to *ShoreLine*

Saturday, October 27, marked the 26th CBES Annual Between the Waters Bike Tour. Riders were greeted with blustery weather and “liquid sunshine,” which didn’t let up for most of the day. In spite of these impediments, spirits were high and riders were, once again, treated to an inside view of the beautiful Virginia Eastern Shore. Having participated in this annual event since 2014, I am reminded each year that this event introduced me to the area, ultimately resulting in my move to Cape Charles. And I understand that I’m not the first to either move, vacation, or buy property here after seeing the wonder of the Eastern Shore in this intimate way.

Each year, the location moves to a different 25, 40, 60, and 100 mile route, taking turns between Northampton and Accomack counties. This year’s ride, out of Onancock, quickly reached its registration goal for both the ride and the subsequent Oyster Roast. The total number of riders is kept to around 1,000 to ensure their safety and to provide a more personal experience.

Having opted for a shorter ride than planned due to the weather uncertainty, I rode the 25-mile route, which impressed me with the beautiful little villages and towns that we rode through. This route took us through Onancock, Accomack, and Onley plus numerous smaller villages. The other views were obstructed by the rain-drops settling on my glasses!

Others commented on how happy the riders were in spite of the weather. With only one significant “river” to navigate, being wet and soggy just added to the ambiance of the ride. The pace was slower and, perhaps, riders got started a little later than planned, but we all made it!

This event is CBES biggest fundraiser, supporting its mission to build an awareness of the Shore’s natural and cultural resources. And it is unofficially the largest ecotourism event on the Shore. It also provides a valuable side benefit of bringing revenue into the towns and counties. Last year, the ride, out of Sunset Beach Resort, generated an estimated \$300,000 in total dollars spent by Bike Tour riders on items such as lodging, food, and shopping. This year, CBES partnered with the Onancock Business & Civic Association to offer discounts on purchases in town as well as supplementary events including a movie night at the Roseland, a community Spaghetti Dinner, and a Bike & Brew celebration following the ride.

The traditional Oyster Roast returned to its popular Eastville location on the Bay, hosted by John Wescoat,



The mood was festive at this year's Between the Waters Bike Tour, as evidenced by these 3 participants, who cheerfully set off from the start in Onancock. Photo: Cecil Watts

son of CBES founder, Suzanne Wescoat. The event featured the popular and delicious Eastern Shore clam chowder and fresh-from-the-tides oysters. Oysters were roasted over an open fire with bucketsful for the taking poured out along the table. An upgrade to this year’s event was the cash bar offering selections from Chatham Vineyard and Cape Charles Brewery.

The Between the Waters ride offers a unique experience not found among many large bike-riding events. Riders have repeatedly commented on how friendly and helpful the volunteers are, which sets this ride apart. I’m sure you agree that this friendliness is reflective of the spirit of the Eastern Shore. Thanks are extended to the 120+ volunteers who offer their friendliness and make this event such a hit year after year.

Thanks also go to Sally Richardson, Bike Tour Coordinator, and Donna Bozza, Executive Director, who spent many long hours over many months working to ensure the success of this year’s ride.

Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore works year-round to inform and equip citizens and local government for the development of sound public policy. CBES is committed to promoting sustainable development, economic success, natural resource preservation and social responsibility to ensure a healthy and successful community. Its monthly newsletter, *ShoreLine*, is an interesting and informative read that provides in-depth analysis on issues that impact the Shore community. For more information and to find out how to become a member or donate to CBES, visit their website at www.cbes.org.





The Bike Tour showcases many of the back roads that make the Eastern Shore special. Photo: Cecil Watts

SPONSORS

Without generous sponsors, CBES Bike Tour & Oyster Roast would not be in its 26th year. This major fundraiser allows CBES to continue its work – protecting what you love about the Shore. As one of the biggest local ecotourism events, the Bike Tour also has a positive economic impact on towns and businesses while introducing visitors to our coastal gem. *Please support those who support our community!*

Presenting Sponsors

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Wachapreague
Jones Zittrain Wealth Management
Group, Merrill Lynch

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Tankard Nurseries

Friends of the Bike Tour

Blue Crow Antiques
Willie Randall, Edward Jones
Seaside Ecotours
Suntrust Bank
Union Bank

She Makes Us Look So Good

Heartfelt thanks to Shore artist Bethany Simpson, whose gorgeous work graced our promotional materials and bike apparel. Graciously she donated her painting too, helping CBES to raise much-needed funds.

Oyster Roast Sponsor

Chesapeake Properties

Oyster Roast Donors

American Shellfish Company
Cherrystone Aqua Farms
Full Measure Oyster Farm
Wescoat Nurseries

It Takes a Village

Every effort has been made to acknowledge our volunteers/helpers; we appreciate each and every one of you! Please let us know if there are additions to this list or if we have misspelled your name.

Special Thanks to Those Who Shared Their Spaces

Dreux Alvare
Hills Farm, Tim & Susie Brown
Historic Onancock School
Modest Town Baptist Church
Moose Lodge
New Church Volunteer Fire Company
Saxis Volunteer Fire Company
Karen Terwilliger
John Wescoat

Bike Tour Volunteers

Sandra Beerends
Ruth Boettcher
Martina & John Coker
Joani Donohoe
Kathy Durmick

Eastern Shore Ham Operators, Jim Davis, Lead
Mary Floyd
Eleanor Gordon
Susan and Phil Harris
Jody & Jack Humphreys
Laurie Jones
Pauli Kaiser
Roberta Kellam
John Kolos
Shelia Kooperman
Larry LeMasters
Bo Lusk
Jeff Madson
Sue Mastyl
Susan Murphy
Bob Meyers
Meriwether Payne
Ruth Payne
Olivia & Gary Peart
Jennifer Peirson
Lee & Mike Peirson
Sue Rice
Ashby & Sandra Taylor
Karen Terwilliger
Town of Onancock
Rick Turner & Onancock Parking Volunteers

*See **Bike Tour**, cont'd on page 5*



Attendees at the perennially sold-out Oyster Roast following the Bike Tour get down to business.

Bike Tour, cont'd from p. 4

Carol & Arthur Upshur
Courtney Van Clief
Margaret Van Clief
Jeff Walker
Cecil Watts
Doug Williams

Matt Perrie
Rebecca Raye
Margaret Reinhardt
Terry & Max Solano
Nicki Tiffany
Carol & Arthur Upshur
Margaret Van Clief
Cecil Watts
Janice York

GPS Mapping

John Durmick
Route Markers
Meriwether Payne
Sue Rice

Dessert Bar Bakers

Martina Coker
Donna Fauber
Eleanor Gordon
Mary Miller
Sarah Morgan
Ann Snyder

Oyster Roast Volunteers

Jim Baugh
Martina & John Coker
Norman Colpitts
Karen & Chad Davis
Eleanor Gordon
Jack Humphreys
Cora Johnston
Laurie & Walter Jones
Donna Lawson
Wendy Martin
Barbra Meyers
Sarah Morgan
Bill Mytnik
The Nature Conservancy
Barbara O'Hare
Joe Peirson
Mike Peirson

We got by with a little - or a lot - of help from our friends:

Eastern Shore Events & Rentals
Lemon Tree Gallery and Studio
Machipongo Clam Shack
Northampton Lumber
Pound Net Band
Gail Scott
H.M. Terry Seafood
Watts Photography



Meriwether Payne looks cheerful as she prepares to mark the Bike Tour route.



Longtime volunteer Sue Rice marks the road to guide tour participants on their chosen routes.



Led by American Shellfish Company owner Joe Peirson, the Oyster Roast cooking team served 4,000 oysters and 2,000 clams.

Keeping Track

Lack of Public Notice for Key Groundwater Meeting

On November 13, the Department of Environmental Quality hosted the second Annual Groundwater Stakeholder Forum in Chesapeake. This all-day event included discussions of both the Eastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore Groundwater Management Areas; updates for the Eastern Shore included discussions of U.S. Geological Survey activities, poultry activities, and an update from the Eastern Shore of Virginia Ground Water Committee.

In recent months, many members of the public (including CBES) have been closely following the management of our groundwater, and this would have been a key meeting to attend. Unfortunately, members of the community were not notified of this meeting until an informal email chain the night before.

Although the meeting was listed 2 months ago in the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall (<http://townhall.virginia.gov/L/meetings.cfm>), the agenda was only announced the week before the meeting. Several employees of the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission were aware of the meeting as early as October 31, but did not share this information with members of the Ground Water Committee or the public.

Fortunately, several representatives from the Eastern Shore were able to attend, and a recap will be presented at the November 20 Ground Water Committee meeting. We'll report on this in next month's *ShoreLine*.

Keep It Pumped!

According to Virginia Code (§9VAC25-830-130), all residents within the Chesapeake/Atlantic Preservation Area (which includes all of Accomack and Northampton Counties, except for incorporated towns and federal lands) must have their septic systems pumped out every 5 years.

Both counties have recently stepped up their efforts to make the 5-year pump-out schedule a priority. Northampton County, after a hiatus, has sent out many notices, with a resulting increase in pump-outs, and little criticism noted by County staff. In Accomack County, notices have not been mailed since 2014; the county is actively working on getting out the first wave of notices (including those on behalf of the incorporated towns) in the next few months, with bayside areas having the first priority.

Pumping out septic tanks regularly keeps them from failing or leaking, which in turn protects the Chesapeake Bay and our surface and groundwater from excess nitrates, phosphorus, and bacterial loads.

Northampton County

Comprehensive Plan Update

The Northampton County Board of Supervisors held its first Public Hearing on Oct 24, on the Draft Comprehensive Plan update submitted to them by the Planning Commission. County Staff presented a detailed, 13-page PowerPoint description of how the Draft compares with the county's current Plan.

Missing from the presentation was any explanation of how the Planning Commission decided to make the changes in the Draft – the public input or supporting studies that would justify the changes. The closest thing to an explanation is a 5-bullet point statement labeled "PC (Planning Commission) beliefs and projections" – not one of which clarifies the reasons for the proposed changes, especially in the Land Use and Economic Plans.

Almost all the speakers, and comments written for the Hearing, expressed opposition to many, or all, of the changes. Only 2 speakers supported the Draft – and they were both Planning Commission members.

Board members met with their constituents at 3 Town Hall meetings in November to hear further comments and answer questions. Confusion continued about the status of Hamlets in Virginia. Questions were again raised about whether the Future Land Use Map complies with Virginia Code requirements – for example, why Urban Development Areas or affordable housing districts were not mapped. Also noted was the lack of planning for groundwater resource protections, identifying areas for potential salt water intrusion, etc., which localities are now authorized to implement. The Board will continue consideration of the Draft.

Don't Forget Annual Giving

The Shore needs CBES; CBES needs the Shore

As the holiday season gains fever pitch, please take a moment to contribute to CBES. With a 30-year track record of keeping the community informed on critical issues through our monthly *ShoreLine*, as well as candidate and topical forums, we also act as your local government watchdog. CBES celebrates our diversity at the annual Community Unity Day. And we walk the talk – or should we say, cycle it – as we bring sustainable economic development to our businesses and small towns across the Shore, through the now 26-year-old Between the Waters Bike Tour.

Go to www.cbes.org to donate, or you may send a check with your contact info to CBES, P.O. Box 882, Eastville, VA 23347. Please give as generously as you can; all donations are welcome. Help us protect what you love about the Shore.

Pollinators, cont'd from p. 1

Planting your garden with **MASSES** of flowering plants (clumps that add up to a few square yards of flowers of the same kind) is helpful to bees and other pollinators. Bees love to find thousands of the same kind of flower in one place. It cuts down on the amount of flying and searching they must do to find that precious nectar and pollen. And this makes their work so much easier! (Bees typically only collect one type of nectar on each foraging flight.)



Native Plants for Pollinators: An App

Now we can all Bee Smart, because there's an app for that! Yes, really. The next time you are shopping for plants, you will be able have help in figuring out the plants you can use in your garden to help pollinators the most. Available on both Android and IOS platforms, it covers almost 1,000 plants native to the United States. By entering your zip code, you can refine your search to local eco-regions, too. The app includes plant images, botanical and common names, allows you to filter your plants by what pollinators you want to attract, and by what your light and soil requirements are. For more information on downloading the app, go to www.pollinator.org/bee-smart-app. And yes – it's free!

The Bee's Trees

Unknown to many people who want to provide habitat to pollinators is the importance of trees in a pollinator's life cycle. The real meat-and-potatoes for many, especially butterflies and moths, lies in their leaves. Where monarch butterflies eat primarily milkweed leaves, many other species are dependent on tree leaves for their early stages of development.

According to local beekeeper Donna Fauber, red maple (*Acer rubrum*) is the earliest and most important pollen source for bee colony buildup. Basically, a queen will not lay eggs unless resources are coming in to feed her offspring. Native oaks (*Quercus*) are also some of the most valuable pollinator trees. With all their other values, they really are a crucial species to plant and preserve in this area. Closely following oaks are native cherries such as black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), willows (*Salix*), birches (*Betula*), poplars (*Populus*), and black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). Keep in mind that even though there are non-native species in these plant groups, the native versions provide the greatest benefit to our pollinators.

There are many things we can't change or fix, but we can all plant a few things that support our native pollinators, especially now that we are learning so much about how important they are to our own future.



Celebrating 30 Years of ShoreLine

2004 – Two proposed developments near Eastville would have added several hundred homes and condos; both projects fell victim to the burst real estate bubble. A study done for the Ground Water Committee showed that permitted withdrawals equaled the recharge rate for the Shore, but home and other private wells were not included.

The Northampton County Board of Zoning Appeals was chastised by the Circuit Court judge for granting variances (36 of 39 appeals) where no “reasonable hardship” existed. The Sustainable Development Industrial Park (STIP) went on the market; poor planning and poor management were cited for its lack of success. Northampton County voters threw out 50% of their Supervisors and replaced them with officials who opposed “an invasion of developers from Hampton Roads.”

BECO, a development firm from Hampton Roads, lost its court battle to build 5 homes on a narrow strip of land on Cherrystone Creek – the strip was so narrow its setbacks overlapped, leaving no buildable area for homes. And Northampton County adopted the village of Oyster's Vision to protect natural assets and its working waterfront; the document was included in the county's Comprehensive Plan.

2005 – Former Delegate Bob Bloxom was appointed as Virginia's first Secretary of Agriculture. As the real estate “bubble” continued to expand, the real estate industry became the top donor to General Assembly (GA) members' campaigns. Bills supporting the concept of “impact fees,” paid from developers to localities to help fund increased services for new homes, died a quiet death in the GA.

Accomack County withdrew from the regional Public Service Authority. In response to drinking water issues in some Virginia localities, the Virginia Water Resources Research Center prepared a report on the feasibility of desalinization for coastal areas.

Northampton County stated it would use outside planning and legal professionals to work with county residents to review and update both the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Tourism revenues and payrolls continued to rise in both counties, and a revitalized, stand-alone Tourism Commission was planned. Eight years after approving a Plan to manage density, the Accomack County Chair said, “We are moving it along as fast as we can.” At that time, AG zoning permitted unlimited numbers of lots as small as 30,000 sq. ft.

The Shore's Carolina Bays and the Chesapeake Bay Impact Crater received national attention from USGS research teams. And the ESVA Community Foundation was formed to provide scholarships and grants to non-profits, and to “improve the quality of life” for Shore residents.



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SHORELINE

Community Calendar - December 2018

Note: Please verify times and places prior to attending meetings.

CBES and Other Activities		Accomack County		Northampton County	
Dec 5	VIMS Public Seminar 7:30 PM, Wachapreague	Dec 5	Board of Zoning Appeals 10 AM, Sup. Chambers	Dec 4	Board of Zoning Appeals 1 PM, Conference Room
Dec 6	The Nature Conservancy Open House at Brownsville 4 - 8 PM, Nassawadox	Dec 12	Planning Commission (PC) 7 PM, Sup. Chambers	Dec 4	Planning Commission (PC) 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
Dec 8	Onancock Christmas Homes Tour 1 - 5 PM, Onancock	Dec 13	Wetlands Board 10 AM, Sup. Chambers	Dec 11	Board of Supervisors (BOS) 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
Dec 18	ES Ground Water Committee 10 AM, Accomac	Dec 18	School Board 6:30 PM, Sup. Chambers	Dec 13	School Board 5:30 PM, Occohannock ES
Dec 18	CBES Board Meeting 7:00 PM, Eastville	Dec 19	Board of Supervisors 5 PM, Sup. Chambers	Dec 19	Wetlands Board TBA, Conference Room
				Dec 19	PC Work Session 7 PM, Sup. Chambers

For Memberships & Information: www.cbes.org