

## Land Trust Coordinates Nature Walks for Second Graders

VES Land Trust, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy's Virginia Coast Reserve and support from Citizens for a Better Eastern Shore, coordinated and sponsored a field trip for Occohannock Elementary second graders to the Brownsville Preserve in mid-April. The field trip was attended by nearly 80 children who along with their teachers and several parents spent three hours on the Brownsville Birding and Wildlife Trail. They were able to enjoy the opportunity to get out in the woods and fields, to observe different habitats, and to learn about the wildlife and plants that are so abundant on the Eastern Shore. In addition to hiking over two miles, they spent time examining turtles and tree frogs, climbed an elevated platform to enjoy a breathtaking view of the marsh, hummocks and waters that lie between the mainland and Hog Island. The children also handled Native American artifacts.



2<sup>nd</sup> graders try their hands at grinding corn kernels with a Native American mortar and pestle.

VES Land Trust has made it a high priority to continue to provide opportunities for our youth to experience the great Eastern Shore outdoors. We are planning another field trip for this coming fall and have made this an integral part of our workplan.

Brownsville Farm is part of more than 125,000 acres permanently protected on the Eastern Shore by private landowners, conservation organizations, as well as state, federal and local governments. The Birding and Wildlife Trail at Brownsville is open all year to the public. It's a convenient, safe opportunity for families to get out in the woods and fields, see some of the marsh habitats and have a fun, relaxing time outdoors.

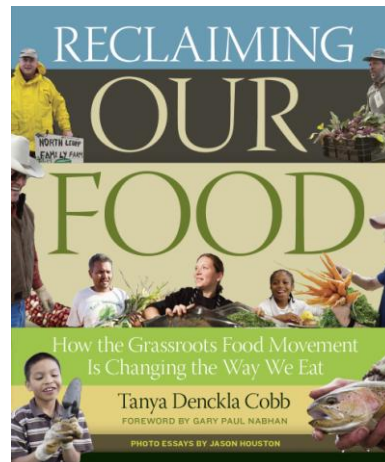


Tree frog gets attention from 2<sup>nd</sup> graders.

## Book Signing at the Barrier Island Center to Benefit Land Trust and Promote Farm to Table Initiative

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, VESLT is teaming up with the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities at the Barrier Island Center in Machipongo to present a relaxed late afternoon presentation and book-signing. There will be complementary wine and cheese to enjoy along with the opportunity to meet and chat with Tanya Denckla Cobb. A leader in food systems, Ms. Cobb is the author of a new book: *Reclaiming our Food*, in which she shares her experiences and research on successful sustainable food systems for healthier communities throughout the U.S. Where others have made the case for the local food movement, *Reclaiming Our Food* shows how communities are actually making it happen. She will present a thirty minute talk in which she will discuss her new book and share relevant personal experiences with the audience.

Call the Barrier Islands Center at 678-5550 to reserve a spot at what will be a very enlightening session. (There will be copies of the book available for purchase.)



## Protecting Working Landscapes Promoting Sustainable Agriculture

In 2011 VES Land Trust took donations of eight new conservation easements totaling nearly 700 acres. The Land Trust now holds conservation easements on 65 properties encompassing more than 13,000 acres and nearly 73 miles of shoreline. 74 percent of this area (9,662 acres) consists of working farmland and forests. The importance of protecting working landscapes has been and will continue to be of extreme importance to VES Land Trust as we work to strengthen the Eastern Shore's farm-to-table and local foods movement.

Our farm-to-table efforts will focus on connecting the folks who are already successful in this arena with entrepreneurs sharing the same passion of growing specialty crops and providing the community with the opportunity to buy locally grown foods. VES Land Trust is also working to develop opportunities for entrepreneur farmers by connecting them with landowners interested in leasing small parcels for production. If you are interested in any angle of this new and exciting opportunity, please call the Land Trust office at (757) 442-5885.



### Backyard Habitat Enhancement Workshop Offered this Fall

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, from 9 am to 4 pm, VES Land Trust will present residents of the Eastern Shore an excellent opportunity to learn about alternative uses of the landscape around their homes to provide habitat for wildlife. The workshop/fieldtrip is coordinated through the Eastern Shore Community College's Academy for Lifetime Learning and will feature presentations from three master naturalists (Toni Picardi, Clyde Morris, and Peggy Swan). They

will give attendees an overview of habitats and their value to wildlife, then show you how you can provide and enhance important places for insects, reptiles, amphibians and birds regardless of how large or small the area is that you want to improve. Additionally, you will learn what it takes to make and maintain habitat in terms of initial investment and person-hours. Then to cap off the day, there will be a road trip to visit some "enhanced yards", providing opportunities to share experiences and knowledge about habitat restoration.

As part of our outreach program, VESLT is happy to bring this learning experience to the community to encourage as many folks as possible to support wildlife and the habitat they depend upon. Seats will be limited so please give VES Land Trust a call at 44-5885 to reserve your spot!

### Clean the Bay Day Scheduled for June 2

Last year 6,500 volunteers removed 200,000 pounds of debris along more than 500 miles of shoreline during Clean the Bay Day. At Morley's Wharf eight VES Land Trust volunteers hauled 700 pounds of garbage and debris from the parking lot and surrounding marsh in about one hour! Come help us again this year the morning of June 2. Call the land trust office for more details, (757) 442-5885.



Clean the Bay Day Volunteers at Morley's Wharf, 2011.

Visit [www.cbf.org/clean](http://www.cbf.org/clean) for more information about Clean the Bay Day.

### Volunteers Wanted

This newsletter has outlined some new outreach efforts taken on by the VES Land Trust. If you are interested in volunteering to help with a certain workshop or just participating in any of these activities we welcome you to do so. Just give us a call at 442-5885!



*White Hall, home of Steve and Barbara Johnsen*

## **Thank You to Everyone Who Made Our Fundraiser a Success!**

VES Land Trust hosted its fifth annual fundraiser this April at White Hall near Pungoteague, home of Steve and Barbara Johnsen. Another fantastic affair thanks to the generosity of the Johnsens and all of our sponsors, donors, volunteers and event committee. Thanks to all of you who helped us reach a new record of more than \$23,000 which will be used to further land protection on Virginia's Eastern Shore!



*Volunteers at White Hall.*

### *Event Committee:*

*Lynn Allison  
Susie Brown  
Timothy Brown  
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**Save the Date for Next Year's Oyster Roast!**  
**April 13, 2013**

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**Contributions**

With much gratitude, VES Land Trust presents the names of individuals, businesses, organizations, foundations, and trusts that supported VES Land Trust in 2011.

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Mr. and Mrs. Robert R. Graham by Mr. John P. Graham  
 Mrs. Suzanne Wescoat by Mr. Ralph Dodd

**VES Land Trust Newsletter: Spring 2012**

VES Land Trust makes youth education a priority

Book signing to be held at Barrier Islands Center

Habitat Workshop Slated for October 10

Clean the Bay Day June 2

White Hall Oyster Roast Sets the Bar

Thanks to Our Supporters

**HELP KEEP OUR RECORDS UP TO DATE**

Please notify us if you have a new mailing address, E-mail or phone number. Send your new info to [veslt@verizon.net](mailto:veslt@verizon.net) or call 757-442-5885.

*To support our work, please send your donation to: VES Land Trust, P.O. Box 1114, Exmore, VA 23350, or On-line at [www.veslt.org](http://www.veslt.org).*

*Call us 757- 442-5885 for instructions on making gifts of stock.*



*VES Land Trust seeks to conserve rural lands which will best preserve the farms, forests, fisheries and heritage of Virginia's Eastern Shore for the benefit of future generations.*

**VES Land Trust**  
**P.O. Box 1114**  
**Exmore, VA 23350**