



Landscapes

A VES Land Trust newsletter

Summer 2021

Pollinator meadows

A great way to steward the land

By Arthur Upshur, Stewardship Manager

Whether you own or rent, the actions you take today impact the land and resources future generations inherit. Good stewardship is a legacy passed down with productive farms, forests, and habitat. Landowners are all stewards of their lands for future generations and owners. Because Virginia Eastern Shore (VES) Land Trust protects land in perpetuity and therefore focuses on its long-term potential, we aim to facilitate good stewardship. This article focuses on one type of habitat that may be an excellent option for many landowners – a pollinator meadow.

On the Eastern Shore, forests are often our standard of undisturbed land. It is true that most land on the Shore will, when left unmanaged, revert to a mixed pine and hardwood forest in just a few years. But a diversity of habitat creates the broadest array of wildlife. Edges, places where woods and open spaces intersect, are key habitat for many beloved species of birds and wildlife. This is particularly true when the edge is filled with pioneer species which are the first to establish after a disturbance. The weeds and seeds provide food and offer cover for many animals, birds, and insects.

However, edge habitats are less common than they used to be. Modern farming practices emphasize land use in large uninterrupted blocks to accommodate equipment. Ditches are often cleared of all vegetation to increase productivity of adjacent fields. Hedgerows are no longer

considered an efficient land use and field edges are often sprayed with herbicides or mowed to reduce weed competition. Suburban yards have also changed and include fewer wild and unkept areas and more non-native plants, which are not as valuable for food and shelter to local wildlife. The widespread use of insecticides and herbicides across fields and yards also creates a less habitable space for pollinators. It is a recipe for dramatic loss of diversity particularly in pollinator species of butterflies and wasps.

As the populations of wasps, songbirds, bats, and other insect predators decline, we need more insecticide to keep things in check. This in turn makes even more habitat unsuitable for those insect predators that frequently depend on nectar, seeds, or caterpillars for important parts of their lifecycle. For example, songbirds almost exclusively feed their young caterpillars even when they eat mostly seeds as adults. Without wild spaces and native species loaded with insects, they cannot successfully raise young even if seeds are plentiful. Many bee species depend on not only great nectar and pollen sources, but also need wild habitat with rotting wood and dense and tall spent vegetation to give them winter places to survive until spring.

Increasingly, folks are turning to actively managed pollinator meadow as one stewardship solution. This is a great option if a portion of a farm field has become a more marginal producer or for small spaces that no longer work well with modern large farming equipment. It is also a good option if you have vegetative buffers to help protect waterfront, stream beds, or even ditches that drain directly into waterways. There are a number of programs

available to help fund these habitats from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). There are also good resources to help you select and supply species of pollinators that work well on the Eastern Shore.

I have a half of an acre on my farm that acts as a buffer to a commercial agricultural field. When first planted, it was a riotous display of Coreopsis in the early summer, followed by Indian Blanket, and masses of Black-eyed Susan, Maxmillian Sunflower, and bee balm or bergamot. The only maintenance was a single mowing in late winter to help uncover the seed for the following year. The buffer stayed healthy for over four years before goldenrod dominated and I needed to replant with a new pollinator mix. Milkweed and new types of clover are volunteering now in adjacent pastures and pollinator populations are strong on the farm.

Pollinator workshop July 22, 2021

VES Land Trust and NRCS are sponsoring a presentation on the benefits of and specifics for starting a pollinator meadow. Participants will visit a farm in Accomac, Virginia just off Baylys Neck Road on Lang Farm Road on July 22 at 3pm. The tour will highlight two sites. One is subject to salt intrusion and includes more salt tolerant species in

its mix. The other has a more standard upland mix. Representatives from NRCS will discuss the programs available to help fund these habitats. Bob Glennon, the state biologist that has supported much of this effort around the Shore and across the state, will also present. He will talk specifically about the process of starting the meadow and how they select the species mix. Reserve your spot online at www.veslt.org or contact Hali at director@veslt.org.

VES Land Trust board participates in Clean the Bay Day

Welcomes new board members

Board participates in litter clean up challenge

To welcome new board members Robin Rinaca and Hank Badger, the VES Land Trust Board of Directors organized a cleanup challenge in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's (CBF) Clean the Bay Day. *"The VES Land Trust Board is devoted to serving and conserving the Eastern Shore community and the health of its precious natural lands and waters,"* said President of the Board Karen Terwilliger, *"Because litter negatively impacts the resources we protect, participating in Clean the Bay Day is a natural fit."* Robin and Hank rose to the occasion along with Vice President Carl

Nordstrom, board members Susan Harris, David Turner, and Jeff Walker, Stewardship Manager Arthur Upshur, and Executive Director Hali Plourde-Rogers.

Clean the Bay Day is usually held on the first Saturday of June. This year, CBF expanded the clean up to include the full week leading up to June 5th and encouraged participants to do individual and team cleanups throughout the week. Arthur and Carl organized a cleanup at Morley's Wharf in Exmore, Virginia. Hank, his wife Julie, their daughter Beth, and Arthur's wife Carol volunteered to pick up trash from the public landing. The Morley's



YOU'RE INVITED!
14th Oyster Roast Dinner
Sept. 25, 2021 - 4 p.m. - Windingdale
Home of John and Harriet Malbon



Clean the Bay Day 2021 Photos from top left: Susan Harris, debris from Morley's Wharf clean up, Carl Nordstrom, Carol Upshur and Beth Badger, the Chesapeake Bay, and Hali Plourde-Rogers.

Wharf crew picked up 250 lbs. of debris and litter including an air conditioner and a tire. Robin, Susan, David, and Hali individually picked up litter along various roads near their homes and businesses in Cheriton, Melfa, and Onancock. Jeff volunteered at the Rosenwald School clean up in Cape Charles. Team VES Land Trust most commonly found plastic and glass bottles, aluminum cans, and cigarette butts. All together they collected more than 300 lbs. of litter and debris.

Litter and debris are harmful to the Eastern Shore's people, wildlife, and natural resources. Cigarette butts and plastics contain toxic chemicals that seep into the environment. These chemicals accumulate in the fish we eat and may cause serious health

concerns in people and marine life. Keeping litter out of our landscapes and waterways, protects the farms, forests, waters, and wildlife we all love, depend on, and enjoy.

Please join us in welcoming our new board members. Also serving on the Board are Timmy Brown, Grayson Chesser, John Graham, and Meriwether Payne. The Board is committed to fulfilling the VES Land Trust mission to conserve the farms, forests, wetlands, and waters of the Eastern Shore for future generations. *"We are excited to welcome our new board members Robin and Hank as they bring their longstanding knowledge of the Shore and extensive experience with the Eastern Shore community and conservation of its natural resources,"* commented Karen.

Welcome Robin Rinaca



Robin moved to the Eastern Shore in 1980 from the Shenandoah Valley. She lives on Folly Creek in Accomack County in an historic house that she

and her late husband, Nick, restored while raising their two daughters. Robin and Nick protected the 600-acre property by donating a conservation easement with VES Land Trust in 2007. *“I believe in preserving and protecting open space and waterfront property in general and on the Eastern Shore particularly,”* shared Robin.

“In addition to placing their land under easement, Robin brings her successful nursery business experience as well as her service on several state and local level boards,” added Karen. Robin serves on the Eastern Shore Community Foundation Board, the Mid Atlantic Nursery Trade Show, Virginians for the Arts and is

a Trustee of Grace United Methodist Church.

Welcome Hank Badger



Hank Badger is an Eastern Shore native. His family roots go back to the mid-seventeen hundreds in Northampton County. He is a licensed land surveyor and retired from the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) in 2020 after 42 years of service. Hank served as VMRC’s Chief Engineer and was the

Environmental Engineer on the Shore. He was part of the management team that inventoried and managed approximately 28,000 acres of ungranted shores, marshes and meadowlands. *“Hank’s extensive knowledge of the Eastern Shore’s coastal systems and long career in public service through VMRC brings deeper understanding of our working waters and landscapes,”* stated Karen.

LEAVE A LEGACY THROUGH CONSERVATION

You can have a lasting impact and protect nature for future generations with a planned gift to VES Land Trust. Consider donating an easement or naming VES Land Trust as a beneficiary of your retirement account, insurance policy, or other assets.

“We all, through the way we live, leave a legacy, not confined to our material wealth. Because you chose this path, things are better for you having trod this way. For me, it was conserving the farm.” ~ Mr. C.D. Fleming, easement donor

LEARN MORE AT WWW.VESLT.ORG/DONATE



Accreditation renewal public notice

Comment period now open

The land trust accreditation program recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands forever. The Virginia Eastern Shore Land Trust, Inc. is pleased to announce it is applying for renewal accreditation. A public comment period is now open.

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission, an independent program of the Land Trust Alliance, conducts an extensive review of each applicant's policies and programs.

The Commission invites public input and accepts signed, written comments on pending applications. Comments must relate to how the VES Land Trust complies with national quality standards. These standards address the ethical and technical operation of a land trust. For the full list of standards visit:

<http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/help-and-resources/indicator-practices>.

To learn more about the accreditation program and to submit a comment, visit www.landtrustaccreditation.org, or email your comment to info@landtrustaccreditation.org.

Comments may also be faxed or mailed to the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, Attn: Public Comments: (fax) 518-587-3183; (mail) 36 Phila Street, Suite 2, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

Comments on the VES Land Trust's application will be most useful by September 19, 2021.

Paint the Shore

Paint the Shore is a plein air event and art exhibit designed to bring conservation to the public through visual art. Paint the Shore welcomes artists to conserved land, highlighting both the art of plein air painting and the unique natural environment on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. *"There is nothing I would rather do in the whole world than immerse myself in nature and try to capture the awesome power and beauty of our Eastern Shore in my paintings,"* reflected Nancy Richards West following the 2019 event.

Through their work, artists will have the opportunity to capture and share a sense of place and a brief moment in a changing landscape.

In addition to professional artists, Paint the Shore will feature student artwork from Nandua Middle and High School. Student artists will learn from a professional artist, practice plein air painting on school grounds, and have a chance to exhibit their work in the show at the Barrier Islands Center along with the professional artists.

A plein air and art exhibit designed to bring conservation to the public through visual art.

NOV. 12-30, 2021

PAINT THE SHORE

Exhibit opening and reception
Nov. 12, 2021, 6-8 p.m.
at the Barrier Islands Center



Mission

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

Stay in touch

Are you interested in programs, hikes, events, and conservation news? Sign up for our e-newsletter and follow us on Facebook. We never share our mailing list, so your privacy is protected.

www.veslt.org

facebook.com/VESLandTrust

Contact us

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- Sound Finances
 - Ethical Conduct
 - Responsible Governance
 - Lasting Stewardship
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