

Virginia Master Naturalists Course Information for Applicants Rivanna Chapter – Class of 2021—COVID Protocols



Thank you for your interest in becoming a Virginia Master Naturalist (VMN) with the Rivanna Chapter. The VMN training class prepares you to become a Certified Virginia Master Naturalist volunteer. The VMN Program is a statewide corps of volunteers providing education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.

Please note: VMN is a volunteer training and service-based program. If you do not intend to be an active volunteer and in this way to support our local natural resources through your volunteer service, then this class and organization are not for you.

The basic training course covers background knowledge and skills that will prepare you for service as a VMN volunteer. This includes a wide range of topics in many areas relating to the natural sciences. Initial certification, as well as annual recertification, requires 8 hours of approved continuing education and 40 hours of approved volunteer service within a year following completion of your basic training course. You can complete your volunteer service in any of four key areas: citizen science, stewardship, education and outreach, and chapter administration. For more info, see: <http://www.vmn-rivanna.org/>

Basic Training Course details:

- Classes run February 2 to May 18 on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 9:30pm.
- During the pandemic, classes meet online, on Zoom. ONLY if COVID19 restrictions are lifted by VMN sponsor Virginia Tech and the Commonwealth, class sessions might meet in the Education Building at Ivy Creek Natural Area. If this happens the class will be appropriately informed.
- Because of COVID, field trips will be designed as self-guided or small group events that may include feedback assignments. Usually, there are 8 field trip opportunities, and class members are expected to participate in at least 5 field trips outside of class time.
- Attendance at all classes and at least 5 field trips is mandatory for graduation and VMN membership. Up to 2 classes may be missed, but must be made up.
- Trainees must have an email address and reliable Internet access, since class sessions, program communications and volunteer hour reporting are transmitted online, especially during COVID.
- Class size is limited, so applications will be reviewed in detail.
- The program is targeted toward adults. Candidates under 18 may apply under special conditions. *
- Course fee of \$150 covers basic training and a generous book bag of course materials and guides. ***Do not send any money until you have been accepted. A limited number of need-based scholarships are available upon request. ****

HOW TO APPLY (see our “How to Apply” handout to find out where to find the necessary documents)

Send your completed **APPLICANT QUESTIONNAIRE** and your signed **ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT**, and ask each of your three references to send their **COMPLETED REFERENCE FORM by email** to rivannamapplications@gmail.com by January 5th (with subject line “RMN Application” plus “Reference” if applicable). This deadline is firm. Also, please send any questions you have to this email. Individuals with disabilities desiring accommodations in the application process should notify the Chapter Advisor, Page Hutchinson, at page.hutchinson@dof.virginia.gov well before the deadline.