

## November 2022 (Report Covers October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022)

Caroline Seitz, Education Committee Chair

[Education@vaherpsociety.com](mailto:Education@vaherpsociety.com)

The Virginia Herpetological Society's (VHS) mission is to advance the conservation, education, and research of Virginia's native herpetofauna. Each year, the VHS performs a variety of education programs throughout Virginia and virtually online. No fees are charged for these programs and all VHS educators are volunteers. The VHS is a 501c3 non-profit organization and donations to support the VHS can be made at [Donate - Virginia Herpetological Society](#).

During the period between October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022, VHS performed 36 education programs and reached approximately 77,845 people. We also responded to 607 email requests for herp IDs and questions.

Currently, there are 19 members in the VHS education committee.

### **Education committee member highlights:**

Larry Mendoza presented 9 programs for approximately 825 people. Events included a snake ID and bite management talk for medical students, master naturalist training classes, a cub scout program, programs at the Children's Museum of Virginia, Pocahontas State Park, civic associations, a Richmond area art gallery, and at a native plant sale.

Travis Anthony performed 4 programs for approximately 320 people. Events included herp talks for the Rivanna Master Naturalists and at Reynolds Community College along with table exhibits at the Eggstravaganza Festival and at Herndon NatureFest.

Susan Watson performed programs as a representative of both the VHS and the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. She presented 6 programs for approximately 220 people. Programs included master naturalist training on various herp topics including vernal pools, a table exhibit at an Earth Day festival, and an American Bullfrog program.

Meagan Thomas also performed as a representative of both the VHS and the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. She presented 4 programs for approximately 60 people. Presentations were made for various school groups and master naturalist groups.

Ana Sparks performed 3 presentations for approximately 75,040 people. She joined Larry Mendoza with a table exhibit at Pocahontas State Park, presented a program at a school age summer camp and presented a virtual presentation on Woodland Box Turtles for the Wildlife Center of Virginia (WCV). The virtual program was seen on the WCV's Facebook page by approximately 75,000 people.

Erin Anthony performed 3 presentations for approximately 1220 people. Two of these were table exhibits at the annual Reptile and Amphibian Weekend event held at the Virginia Living Museum. The other was a program at an assisted living community for 20 residents.

Rod Allen performed 1 program about frogs and toads for approximately 25 people at a backyard plant sale.

Barry Buschow presented 1 program for approximately 10 students at an after school gardening club at an elementary school in Warrenton VA.

Mike Clifford performed 1 herpetology class for approximately 25 people for the Pocohontas chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists.

Matt Close performed 1 herpetology workshop for approximately 25 members of the Virginia Association of Surveyors.

Sophia Larson presented 1 table exhibit for approximately 210 people at the Herndon NatureFest alongside Travis Anthony.

Caroline Seitz lead 1 herp hike for approximately 15 people for the Fairfax Master Naturalists at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park along with Mark Khosravi.

Kory Steele presented 1 program for approximately 45 people via Zoom for the Peninsula Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists.

In addition to presenting educational programs and exhibits, VHS also offers herp ID and answers questions at [id@virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com](mailto:id@virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com) In 2022, Mike Clifford and team responded to 628 email inquiries, which is a record number. It is an increase of 20% above the average year and results can be found at [2022 VHS Email & FaceBook Identifications Summary](#)

VHS has a Facebook page [Virginia Herpetological Society | Facebook](#) and in 2022 our content reached 160,797 people.

The VHS also provided photos and videos to the Department of Defense:

- [Snapping Turtle](#)
- [Eastern Kingsnake](#)
- [Northern Black Racer](#)

#### New Education Materials Purchased in 2022

- Professional graphic design for banners, stickers, and business cards
- 4 New Banners
- 4 sets of new herp models/toys
- Stickers
- Pens
- Business Cards
- Snake Handouts
- 1 Cart
- 1 Pop Up tent
- 4 tablecloths
- 4 table runners with VHS logo
- Polo shirts with VHS logo
- Name tags for education committee members
- Total Spent: \$3164.97
- Total left in 2022 education budget: \$835.03

### **Goals moving forward:**

1. Purchase high quality herp replicas for use in table exhibits and talks, possibly from Morgan Reptile Replicas
2. Purchase herp skeletons/skulls/turtle shell replicas, possibly from Skulls Unlimited: World Leader in Real and Replica Skulls & Skeletons — Skulls Unlimited International, Inc.
3. Purchase projectors?
4. Purchase mics and PAs?
5. Create interpretive labels for replicas
6. Create a brochure handout all about VA herps/snakes with VHS info
7. Create mobile interpretive table signage
8. Create/Update slide presentations (snakes of VA; herps of VA, preferably customized for different regions)
9. Create a training program/guide for education team members
10. Recruit more education team members - If you are interested in joining the education committee, contact [Caroline Seitz at education@vaherpsociety.com](mailto:Caroline Seitz at education@vaherpsociety.com)