



# Lands and Waters 2021

I hope this letter finds you well. We're not fully back to normal but it's been busy. Most of our work is still outside with partners and volunteers. We plan to be back in classrooms and with clubs late winter or spring of 2022.

## *Yorktowne Square Stormwater Project*



Blue flag Iris, thriving in the wet environment

2020's newsletter featured a volunteer project that addressed serious erosion and flooding issues with best management practices. Kelly Wilson, project's co-director, suggested we enter the BUBBAs contest, Chesapeake Stormwater Network's Best Urban BMP in the Bay Awards. The contest is open to all projects in the Bay watershed. From the applicants, a jury of stormwater experts selects the best urban stormwater practices project. In February 2021, we received news that our Yorktowne Square Project was chosen as one of the three best projects in the residential category for the 2021 Award contest.



## *Chesapeake Bay Restoration Grant*

Oct. 2020, we received funding from The Chesapeake Bay Restoration Council to increase awareness of the negative impact of invasive plants by hosting 12 volunteer workshops at three locations that represent different urban situations with serious invasive issues. During the workshops, volunteers would remove invasive plants from targeted areas and plant a minimum of 250 native alternatives. Targeted sites: 8,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of riparian forest (Daniels Run School), 900 ft<sup>2</sup> of meadow (Knox Church), and 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of forest corridor (Yorktowne Square Community). The grant period ended Oct. 2021. In keeping with covid guidelines, the sizes of the volunteer groups were kept small. Even with these limitations, we were able to meet and exceed the grant's goals. **Thank you Restoration Council for your support! Now, let's support them by purchasing a Friends of Chesapeake licence plate!**

## *Riparian Forest - Daniels Run School*

Daniels Run School's forest covers a large section of their living classroom. It provides opportunities for students to observe and study wetland and riparian forest environments. For this grant, volunteers focused on 8,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of the most degraded forest areas near Daniels Run stream. The dominate invasive plants were honeysuckle bush, porcelain berry, English ivy, multiflora rose. A few native viburnums, spicebushes, and ferns were uncovered. We planted native plants as we went along. A partial list includes oak, American holly, ironwood, maple, sweetbay magnolia, sweet gum, hackberry, redbud, smooth alder, spicebush, goldenrod, black eyed Susan. In all, 82 volunteers donated 340 hours over 15 workday sessions.



Students helped carry debris to be picked up during their recess



MOM's Organic Market volunteers focused on English ivy



Latter-day Saint missionary volunteers focused on removing English ivy from trees



## *Knox Presbyterian Church*

Knox Church, Earth Care Congregation since 2014, has a mix of native and nonnative plants. Cindy Wackerbarth, church member and Lands and Waters' director, has led the church's transition from traditional to sustainable landscaping for over a decade. Knox's gardens support local wildlife, especially pollinators. Sadly, invasives have become a very serious problem. 63 volunteers contributed 311 hours over 10 workdays. 1,638ft<sup>2</sup> of garden areas were cleared of invasives. Ornamental bushes and grasses were removed to create space for new native gardens.

Partners: Audubon Society (youth mini-grant for native plants), VA. Native Plant Society (design, plant selection, volunteer hours). Jamaury James, Eagle Scout project, did an outstanding job funding, organizing, and directing 2 workdays. Natives plants were added as we went along. A partial list includes black eyed Susan, cone flower, bee balm, butterfly weed, hyssop, ironweed, Joe Pye weed, goldenrod, swamp milkweed, blueberry, amsonia, inkberry.



Eagle Scout January James helping volunteers plant



Latter-day Saint missionary volunteers removing ornamental bushes

## *Forest Corridor - Yorktowne Square Community*

Wildlife corridors are uninterrupted strips of vegetation, such as hedges or strips of forest. They provide animals with a safe way to move about while avoiding roads and other human structures, improve access to food and water, and support the spread of seeds and pollen, which enhances biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

Yorktowne's corridor is a forest strip stretching for about 1,587ft. before connecting with a 2 acre patch of forest and meadow. We chose a particularly degraded 6,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> section to work. 50 volunteers donated 347 hours over 47 workdays. Native plants were planted as invasives were removed. Some of the natives planted were smooth alder, spirea, hornbeam, blue eyed grass, hop hornbeam, black and red chokeberry, spicebush, Joe Pye weed, viburnum, aster, tickseed, mist flower, goldenrod, and cone flower.



Joe Pye weed is thriving in the project's sunny meadow areas



A road & fence define the corridor's width



Community volunteers worked on weekends and weekday afternoons removing invasives and debris



Wire grass, vegetable garden

***VolunteerFest, Daniels Run School***

This year marks our 9<sup>th</sup> year of participation in VolunteerFest, a weekend of community service events hosted by Volunteer Fairfax. This year, volunteers removed invasive plants in 2 interior courtyards and forest areas in the back. Before the workday, the courtyards were so overgrown they were not available for activities. Making the courtyards functional was a top priority.

Teachers and students use the gardens extensively. The literacy garden gives students and teachers a relaxed outdoor space to read, eat lunch, or take a break from the classroom. In the vegetable garden, students grow and harvest vegetables. They observe and study natural processes such as decomposition, life cycles of insects and plants, and pollination.



Freeing a tomato cage



Weeding raised beds, vegetable garden



Removing weeds is just the beginning. Debris then has to be moved to the back of the school to be picked up.



## *Northfax West Plant Rescue*



Philip with a bucket of wild flowers, corridor meadow

In 2020, we joined Friends of Accotink Creek, Audubon Society, and others to oppose the Northfax West project (North Fork of Accotink Creek, Fairfax City). The project would bury 1,000 ft.<sup>+</sup> of a living stream without the minimal accommodation due the Resource Protection Areas that bound the stream. Despite objections, the project was approved.

In response, VA. Native Plant Society, Friends of Accotink Creek, and City of Fairfax Parks partnered to rescue native and aquatic wildlife from the doomed area. Almost every week in 2021, volunteers dug up wild flowers, sedges, shrubs and seedlings. These plants found homes in backyards of volunteers or were stockpiled for a Providence Park project. Philip Latasa, Friends of Accotink Creek, dug up and delivered thousands of these plants for use in our restoration projects. They now cover large areas that would have been left unplanted until we found additional funding.



Let's Celebrate - less invasive plants, more native plants!

Your support made 2021 a very productive year. Please help us continue our work by making a contribution on line or snail mail.

Donate at <http://donate.landsandwaters.org>  
Or visit our website at [www.landsandwaters.org](http://www.landsandwaters.org)

**Thank You  
Happy Holidays**

**Lands and Waters  
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Rescued asters share the meadow with other native plants that come voluntarily