



Board Brief



Happy Summer Chesapeake Interpreters! The Chesapeake Region of NAI really bloomed this spring. We were able to host a two-day virtual workshop showcasing best practices from many of you. We enjoyed hearing from guest presenter, Adam Buscher, on the impacts of climate change on our region and gardens. Interpreters from across the region contributed to the international City Nature Challenge which you can read about in this edition of the Chesapeake Chat. Already looking towards the cooler days of fall, our board is hard at work planning a day-long virtual historical interpretation workshop on Tues. Sept. 10th, 2024. For more information on this workshop please visit the upcoming events page of our NAI Region 2 website. Mark your calendars! As a Park Naturalist, I know summer is my busiest season of the year. I'm weeks away from summer camp and hosting my first summer program on June 3. I'm feeling the excitement of the "starting line", knowing the race will be intense but full of amazing stories to tell when I reach the "finish line" in September. Whether you are exploring the magic of summer through hiking campers, through the woods, leading night hikes or campfire

programs with families, or telling stories of the past to those vacationing – remember each visitor comes to us with one major goal, to make memories. They come to us to help them write their story. The experiences we provide are the stories they share about their summer adventures. These memories could be the stories they share later in life about their favorite family memories or the secret places they bonded with as children. Summer is a season of connection, and we are so lucky to be in a profession where we get to provide opportunities to deepen these bonds. Wishing each of you endurance and joy in your summer race!

Best, Tiffany Jenkins Board Directors

Webinar Recording Now Available



Free Webinar on The Impacts of Climate Change on Our Gardens Presented by Adam Bucher Review by Patricia Dietly Just prior to Earth Day, 2024 Adam Bucher offered an insightful webinar, “What does climate change mean for my garden?” to all Chesapeake Region 2 members. In case you missed it, we are pleased and proud to post a recording of the presentation, which can be accessed free of charge using the link below. Adam heads the Horticulture operations at Green Spring Gardens in Annandale, Virginia. In planning ahead for a 31-acre botanical garden, he realized that climate change would be a big factor in plant selection. How do we predict what trees and shrubs will tolerate the increased temperatures we know are coming? Adam shared generally available tools and explained how any gardener can use them to make solid choices for landscapes in flux. A program recording of this talk can be found on our NAI Region 2 Website www.nairegion2.org.

"How The City Nature Challenge introduced me to the snake next door."



DeKay's Brownsnake *Storeria dekayi*

Observed by Susan Matthews in Catonsville, MD

In the spring 2024, Baltimore Metro Area and Washington D.C. residents participated in a City Nature Challenges. What is a City Nature Challenge? It's a city-wide survey or (Bioblitz). Citizens took wildlife and plant sightings during a set time and logged them into a free App called iNaturalist. The City Nature Challenge Baltimore Metro search area included seven search areas that encompassed Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and sections of four additional counties. The National Aquarium hosted this year's City Nature Challenge 2024. According to Hallie Carter, Conservation Project Manager, at the Nation Aquarium, we collected a total of 10,154 observations in the Baltimore Metro Area which included over this day event from (April 26th – April 29th), a total of 1,645 species and a total of 766 observations. As a Baltimore County resident, I was excited about the opportunity to participate in this year's event. The day before the City Nature Challenge began, I noticed a small snake crossing a driveway. So, I stopped and helped him/her across. I took a picture of this snake (see above) and I logged my sighting into the iNaturalist App. I wasn't sure what snake species I had found. Could it be a Juvenile black rat snake I wondered. The next day I checked my iNaturalist sightings log and I saw that my snake observation had been changed to a DeKay's Brownsnake. Wow! I don't think I've ever seen this species of snake before. How exciting! I found myself asking more questions. Are they a common species of snake in our area? Where do they live? What do they eat? How did they get their name? What snake species are they most closely related too? I learned from my research that they are a pretty common species of snake here in the East coast. Why hadn't I heard of them before? They are a shy and nocturnal snake species that preys on slugs and snails.

The more I found out about this species the more confused I became. Why was this shy snake species found out in the open on a driveway. Maybe a bird had carried him there. I learned from the Maryland Biodiversity Project that Red shouldered hawks and even little American Robins prey on DeKay's Brownsnake. Perhaps this little snake escaped the talons of a bird of prey and that's why I found this leaf litter dweller out in the open.

Upcoming Workshops & Conferences:



NAI National Workshop Scholarship

Scholarship money is available to regional interpreters to assist with the conference fees for the upcoming NAI National Workshop, December 3-6, 2024 in St. Augustine, Florida. Scholarship Applications are due July 20th. For more information on this scholarship please visit our Upcoming Conferences page on our website www.nairegion2.org



NAI Chesapeake Region 2 2024 Virtual Historic Interpretation Workshop "History - Seeing the Past...Meeting the Future" September 10, 2024 9:00 am - 2:30 pm Call For Presentations deadline for our 2024 Virtual Historic Interpretation Workshop is July 15th. For more information on this workshop please visit our Upcoming Events page on our website www.nairegion2.org