



Rockfish Valley Foundation

Learning from the Land of the Rockfish Valley!
www.rockfishvalley.org // contact@rockfishvalley.org



2024 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS RETURN TO NHC

- Natural History Center hours resume 12pm-4pm Sat-Sun through November. Open when the flags are flying! Tuesday Workdays resume 7/2/2024. Prepare to learn, hands-on!



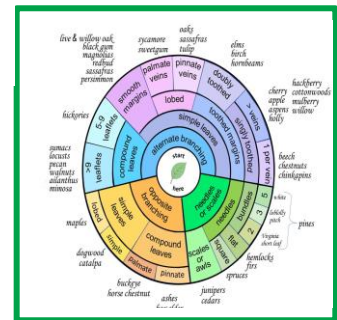
Visit our Natural History Center to learn more about the prolific history of the Monacan Nation!

MONACAN NATION EXHIBIT PREMIERES!

- RVF introduces its newest NHC exhibit, exploring the superb natural and human history of the Monacan Nation in the Rockfish Valley. RVF extends its sincerest thanks to the Monacan Nation, its people, and its elders. Without their diligent work, persistent advocacy, and welcome wisdom through the ages, Virginians would not enjoy the natural grace and beauty we all share in today

CAT TREE ID WHEEL—A NEW RESOURCE FOR NELSON

- RVF is proud to announce a brand-new collaboration with Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards! CAT offers a wide slate of online tools for the study of trees & preservation of arboreal health in Virginia, including their new Tree ID Wheel for identifying our leafy friends! CAT Tree ID Wheel modules under construction will soon be integrated into RVF's educational portfolio. Try it out now with our QR Code!



Check out CATS' new Tree ID Wheel with your smartphone now! Just scan the QR Code Above

¡NUEVAS TRADUCCIONES DE RVF!

- RVF presents our newest resource for Spanish-language visitors and volunteers! Our self-guided Natural History Center tours now include Spanish language translations exploring the Rockfish Valley's bountiful natural resources and human history. Our sincerest thanks to Kathy Barragan & family, & Ken Janson for making these modules possible. Access through our [website!](http://www.rockfishvalley.org)

The Advisory Committee meets & greets at Rodes Farm Barn!



NEW COMMITTEES SET TO TRANSFORM RVF CAPACITY!

- RVF is thrilled to introduce new committee structures to take on the challenges of the future! Marketing, Finance, and Parks & Trails will be a critical part in leading and learning as RVF grows into maturity. As we grow, we encourage new members to step up and join our committees in any capacity they can. Congratulations and many thanks to our new members, advisors, trustees and volunteers for making this leap possible!



Check Out Our 2024 990EZ Form on our [Website!](http://www.rockfishvalley.org)

THANK-YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!
RVF SUMMER 2024 FUND DRIVE CONTINUES [HERE!](#)

RVF AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS BAMA WORKS GRANT!



Bama Works Fund opens incredible opportunities for SCP capacity. Rock on, RVF!

- RVF is honored to receive a celebrated Bama Works Fund Grant for \$7,000! It will go towards the construction of a much-needed commercial well at RVF's Spruce Creek Park. RVF continues to seek the balance of funds for the well construction, but we are proceeding ahead quickly. Our sincerest thanks to the folks at Bama Works, and with another grant source, together with McGann Well Drilling and our own volunteers at RVF, for making this incredible project possible! Consistent water sources will make a profound difference in children's programs and in the success of our native plant horticulture.

PARKING EXPANSION FOR GLENTHORNE LOOP!

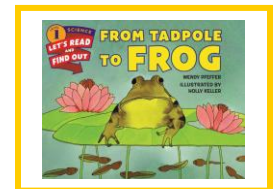
- RVF's project to develop our Glenthorne Loop trailhead has reached completion! Parking has been expanded to accommodate our increasing visitor flow, and the trail itself has been relocated to promote healthier waterways management. See Page 3 for details on the environmental impact of these new transformations in our trail systems. RVF would like to congratulate all our volunteers who worked hard to make our trails accessible and beautiful for all Nelson!



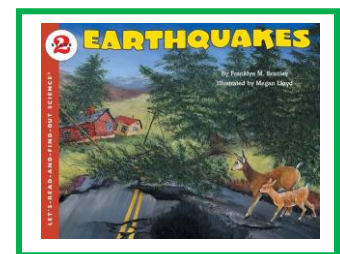
RVF Volunteers wrap up Tuesday Workday at the Glenthorne Loop!

2024 STORYWALKS RETURN WITH NEW FAVORITES

- Trailside StoryWalks return to Nelson! In collaboration with the Nelson County Memorial Library, RVF is proud to present two new StoryWalks, educating visitors and volunteers alike on the natural systems and resources that enrich the land and waters of the Rockfish Valley. *Earthquakes* by Dr. Franklyn Branley will be featured on our Camille Trail Loop. *From Frog to Tadpole* by Wendy Pfeffer will be featured on our Spruce Creek Park trails by the Natural History Center. Come experience our StoryWalks for yourself this summer on our trails!



At our Spruce Creek Park!



At our Camille Trail Loop!

NEW RESOURCES FOR NELSON NATURALISTS!

- RVF is excited to bring a new collection of nature literature, digital guides, and other resources to our Natural History Center's 2024 Season! Complementing our museum's extensive bookstore of plant and animal identification guides, RVF has procured a diverse catalog of electronic resources for visitors and volunteers of all backgrounds. PictureThis, Seek, and iNaturalist apps are all loaded to our tablets and stand ready to scan, illustrate, and educate on the incredible natural systems that thread through our trails and parks. Try them out this summer at our Natural History Center!



Visit our Natural History Center or explore our resources at www.rockfishvalley.org today!

INVASION OF THE VALLEY-SNATCHERS! STILTGRASS & RVF

- Japanese Stiltgrass (*Microstegium viminum*) is on the loose in Nelson County! Known colloquially as bamboograss or packing grass, stiltgrass has become a prolific and perennial pestilence on Nelson County's biodiversity and natural splendor. While some call it beautiful, this unwelcome visitor to North America strangles out native plants, damages topsoil composition, and is considered too unpalatable for grazing animals to eat away. Only human effort can turn back this leafy green invasion!
- Nelson needs your help to stop this Stiltgrass Invasion! Rockfish Valley has installed QR code resources along our trail systems to educate visitors and volunteers on the dangers of stiltgrass. If you see stiltgrass on your next valley walk, remember: **Pause, Pull, and Pile It Up!**



Don't be fooled by its beauty; this weedy invader is deadly to native plants, like wildflowers and grasses! Check out our trailside resources today!

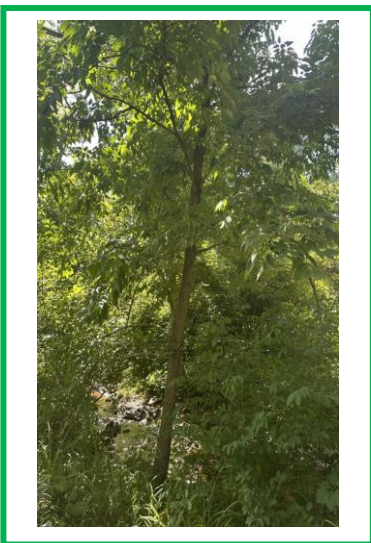
VOLUNTEERS: NURTURING NELSON'S LAND AND WATER

- RVF is abuzz with excitement about our newest development on our Glenthorne Loop: our Reids Creek **Stream Buffer**. In partnership with RVF and other local organizations, Virginia Department of Forestry has planted nearly 100+ native tree seedlings on reclaimed acreage along Reids Creek. This stream buffer will help control flooding, filter out damaging agricultural and road runoff, and encourage the beautiful biodiversity of a vital, healthy riverine ecosystem. Volunteers and partner organizations will continue maintaining the project with regular workdays, protecting Nelson's natural waterways. RVF would like to offer our sincerest thanks to Deya Ramsden and the Virginia Department of Forestry for leading the charge on this critical project!
- RVF is equally elated to present our sister co-development, our latest **Reforestation Project** along our Spruce Creek Park! Spearheaded by fellow naturalists like Kathy Rutherford and her children's education organization, youth volunteers stepped up to plant another incredible array of native tree seedlings in vulnerable ecological niches along our trails. These seedlings will promote habitat diversity and healthier ecosystems in the Rockfish Valley for years to come!



Volunteer efforts plant new trees and new ecosystems on Rockfish Valley trails!

ASH TREES AND RVF: PRESERVING AN AMERICAN ICON



American Ash Trees require diligent care and maintenance to prevent Emerald Ash Borer infestation. Come see our tree here at Spruce Creek Park!

- In forests and farms and backyards all across Virginia, a legend is nearly vanished. The American Ash Tree (*Fraxinus americana*) was once a staple of American woodlands and memory; ash leaves feed frog tadpoles in their earliest weeks of life, and ash timber has gone on to become American icons of their own in vintage baseball bats, high-quality furniture, violin bows, even Fender electric guitars.
- The Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*), an invasive beetle species from East Asia, has descended on North American ash tree populations since 2003, decimating billions of ash trees and irrevocably altering our forest ecosystems. The devastation has touched every state. It is a plague that has cost Virginians millions in dead and damaged trees, and has forever scarred the natural landscape and the memory of generations of Virginians.
- RVF is proud to maintain a handful of Virginia's few remaining American Ash trees along our Camille Trail Loop and our Spruce Creek Park campus. However, caring for them in times of ash borer blight is a considerable challenge. RVF is thus deeply honored by the efforts of Arboristry Associates of Nelson County, who have generously volunteered to maintain and protect our critically-endangered ash trees at a discount. Come see our iconic ash trees today along our trails and parks!

THE FUTURE OF RVF: DONORS, VOLUNTEERS, VISITORS TOGETHER

- RVF stands today on the precipice of a new and exciting future. In recent years, RVF has geared its focus towards critical areas of operational sustainability: in trustworthy and engaged governance, in upgraded capabilities, and in the transition of new leadership and staffing. But all of this cannot happen in a vacuum. RVF is thus excited to announce our intent to expand our donor pool and fund drive through the coming years.
- RVF is a community-focused, fund-driven organization. We have no endowment, we receive no regular support from state or federal governments. Our facilities are free and open to all, and we subsequently see thousands of visitors walk our trails, visit our Natural History Center, and learn from the rich natural world of the Rockfish Valley every year. This astonishing feat is supported by only 300 donors each year. In keeping with our mission and our hopes, RVF seeks to expand this number to 400 donors by 2025, and 500 donors by 2026.
- We at RVF do not wish to create a membership or paid admission structure. We look at RVF as a service and tribute to the community, and we look at our donors as volunteers and collaborators with RVF and the community of Nelson County at large. To this end, we are asking our volunteers, our visitors, our readers, and our neighbors to consider supporting the incredible mission of RVF into the future, with their time, their passion, and their charitable donations.

GAUGING INTEREST: SURVEYS TO BE DISPATCHED TO RVF TRAILS!

- RVF continues to seek new data and new information about our services, mission, and relationship with the community. Your input is desperately needed!
- RVF has asked its volunteers to spend at least one weekend afternoon on our trails with the attached survey. Our hope is for every volunteer to ask at least 10 visitors questions regarding their visit, their background, and their relationship with RVF and the Rockfish Valley on the whole. Better data makes a better RVF, and a better relationship with the natural world of Nelson! Come find our surveys this summer at our Natural History Center at Spruce Creek Park.

RVF PRESENTS 2024 990EZ!



- RVF presents its 990EZ form for the last fiscal year! As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Rockfish Valley Foundation seeks to transparently illustrate its financial composition to the public eye. Check out our form and finances for the on our website [here](#)—we strive to keep visitor, volunteer, donor, and trustee alike engaged with all of our new developments as we grow our organization into the future!

THANK-YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!

www.rockfishvalley.org // contact@rockfishvalley.org

NHC Phone Number: (434)-361-0271

Headquarters & Natural History Center Address: 1368 Rockfish Valley Highway, Nellysford, VA, 22958

Learning from the Land of the Rockfish Valley!

2024 FUND DRIVE CONTINUES! PLEASE DONATE [HERE](#)