August 12th, 2025

THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

Suffolk-Nansemond Chapter

1922 2022 A Century of Conservation Leadership

S-N IWLA Chapter Newsletter

The Blue Heron Times (August, 2025 Issue)

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IWLA State/National

IWLA Virginia Division
IWLA National

Backyard Conservation News

AskHRgreen.org
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Department of Conserv. & Recreation
Division of Wildlife Resources
Hoffler Creek Wildlife Foundation
Nansemond River Preservation Alliance
SCCC - Suffolk Clean Community Commission Recycling
TerraScapes Environmental Consulting
The Wildlife Society
Virginia Conservation Network
Virginia Master Naturalist

Classifieds

Chuckatuck Trading Post
(757)255-9295; 5969 Goodwin Blvd, Suffolk, VA 23452

Suffolk Radio & TV Service
Radio/Television Repair
(757)539-2110; 536 W. Washington St. Suffolk, VA 23434

Appomatox River Company
(757)890-0500; 3009 W. Mercury Blvd. Hampton , VA 23666

Arzillo Recycling **(Scrap Metal)**
(757)539-8593; Suffolk & PTMS Blvd.

Swearing In of Officers and Board Members

Members, on Wednesday, August 20th at the chapter dinner meeting our elected chapter officers and board members will be sworn in to serve for the 2025-2026 term.

Meetings

Chapter Board of Directors meetings are held on the second Monday of each month. They last met at 7pm on **Monday, August 11th** at the Constantia House behind Baker's Funeral Home. The next month's Board meeting will be at 7pm on **Monday, September 8th** at the same location.

Chapter Members Dinner meetings are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. The next chapter dinner meeting will be held at **6:30pm on Wednesday, August 20th** at the Oakland Church Community Life Center in Chuckatuck located at 5641 Godwin Blvd, Suffolk, VA 23434.

The dinner menu theme will be "Taco Night", serving beef and/or chicken tacos, nachos, corn&black bean salad, iced tea, with ice cream for dessert. The cost will be $10.

Our guest speaker will be Will Poston, Forage Campaign Manager for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Will is a lifelong fisherman, hunter, and conservationist. His primary focus is working on menhaden issues in the Bay.

President's Note

Who let the dogs out of the dog days of summer? After an unusually hot July, August came in cool and comfortable. It will not last, but it has been enjoyable.

This marks the beginning of the fifth year of my presidency. I would like to thank all those who have helped me and supported me. Please keep it up. Be sure to support the upcoming youth and park maintenance activities.

"August is ripening grain in the fields, vivid dahlias fling, huge tousled blossoms through gardens, and Joe Pye weed dusts the meadow purple." – Jean Hersey
Respectfully Yours,

Chris Ferguson,
Chapter President,
Suffolk-Nansemond IWLA

Calendar of Events

You can review our full chapter website calendar online at https://sniwla.org/sniwla/calendar for the most recent information about meetings and upcoming events. A courtesy extract through the end of **September** is shown below:

TUE 8/5 - Firing Range Closed supports NNO event.
MON 8/11 at 7pm - Board Meeting.
WED 8/20 at 6:30pm - Dinner Meeting w/ Swearing In of Officers and Board Members.
MON 9/8 - Board Meeting.
SAT 9/13 at 9am - CenterFire Shooting Competition.
SAT 9/20 at 8am - *Park Maintenance Workday.
SAT 9/27 at 9am - *Fishing Rodeo Youth Event (Open-to-Public).

Note: Events marked with an *asterisk count towards work hour credits for meeting the chapter's annual membership volunteer participation requirement.

HOLIDAYS: **MON 9/1 - Labor Day.**

Member Advisory for the September Dinner Meeting

In lieu of a guest speaker for the September members' dinner meeting, the chapter will present a history of our chapter covering how the chapter park and its fishing pond were created by our chapter's founding charter members. In addition to an overview of recent park parcel acquisitions, a discussion will be held on the current status of the chapter park's dam. We encourage all members, especially our most recently sworn in ones, to come to this meeting to learn more.

Membership Participation Policy

Changes to the Policy that were Made Effective as of January 1st, 2025. ***Note: This article is reprinted from the August, 2025 Chapter Newsletter, with a revision to clarify the deadline for policy waiver request form submissions.***

Members, we are about halfway through the 2025 calendar year. Have you provided your 8 hours of service to the chapter?

A reminder, the Board of Directors made changes to the Membership Participation Policy at their November 2024 Board meeting, effective as of January 1st, 2025. The Board was prompted to make these changes to encourage participation by its members in chapter events and activities.

The following committees schedule service events throughout the year and give a variety of opportunities to earn service hours:

- Adopt-A-Road
- Park Maintenance
- Food & Facilities
- Save Our Streams
- Fund Raising
- Scholarship
- Membership Orientation
- Youth Programs.

You can find a written summary of the activities for each of these committees on the chapter website at https://sniwla.org/sniwla/committees/. The Board increased the non-participation fee for this year from $50 to $150. The fee cannot be prorated for hours of service less than 8 hours. Members who turn 75 or are older are exempt from providing service but are welcome to participate.

All completed participation forms are required to be submitted to the Membership Committee by December 1st to be credited for the required service hours.

Additionally, policy exemption waiver request forms will need to be completed and submitted for approval by the board before December 1st and preferably not at the last minute.

To see the Membership Participation Policy click on the link below:
https://sniwla.org/sniwla/membership-info/membership-participation-policy/.

To see the chapter calendar and the upcoming events click the link below:
https://sniwla.org/sniwla/calendar/.

Alan Ferguson
Membership Chair

Recipe of the Month - Crockpot Mexican Shredded Chicken

Source credit: https://www.thisfarmgirlcooks.com/crockpot-mexican-shredded-chicken/#recipe

Yield: 8 Servings

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken thighs
- 2 10 oz. cans Rotel fire-roasted diced tomatoes & green chilies undrained
- 2 15 oz. cans black beans rinsed and drained
- 3-4 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 small jalapeno pepper finely diced
- 1.5 tablespoon hickory-flavored liquid smoke
- 2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper to taste
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 limes quartered
- ¼ c. fresh cilantro chopped, for garnish

Instructions

Place chicken thighs in the bottom of a 5 or 6-quart slow cooker.
Top with tomatoes, black beans, garlic, jalapeno pepper, liquid smoke, cumin, chili powder, smoked paprika, oregano, and cayenne pepper.
Season with salt and black pepper, to taste.
Stir to combine, making sure the chicken thighs are coated and submerged in the liquid.
Cover and cook on high for 3-4 hours or low for 6-8 hours.
30 minutes before serving, remove lid and shred chicken while in the slow cooker with two forks.
Stir to combine shredded chicken with other ingredients.
Cover and cook for remaining 30 minutes to allow chicken to absorb the flavors.
Squeeze fresh lime juice into the crock.
Season with additional salt and black pepper, if desired.
To serve, spoon chicken mixture over plain rice or cilantro-lime rice.
Serve with remaining lime wedges or cilantro.

Recap of the July Chapter Dinner Meeting

The July meeting was held on July 16th at the Oakland Christian Church Community Center. The evening meal consisted of spaghetti and meatballs with garlic bread, a green salad and a selection of deserts. As usual, the cooking committee served a great meal.

After dinner, the 2025 scholarship award was presented to Katie Gallahorn by scholarship committee chair, David Purdue. Katie's parents were also in attendance.

Katie recently graduated from Smithfield High School and will be attending Virginia Polytech Institute and State University (Va. Tech) majoring in civil engineering. One of her main goals is to ensure environmental and conservation principles are incorporated in all her future projects.

Also, Chapter president Chris Ferguson swore in five new members. Pictured here from left to right are Sharon Springfield, John Springfield, Joseph Millot, Amanda Bane and Henry Pittman. Welcome to our chapter, all!

This article is also available for review on our chapter website under the News menu.

Centerfire Shooting Competition Scheduled for September 13th

Message contributed by Eric Fjell, Chapter Shooting Coordinator

A centerfire firearm shoot will be held at our chapter park firing range on **September 13th at 9am**. Members in good standing and their guests (with the sponsoring member present) may compete. A liability release (signed range agreement form) must be on file or filled out for all participants. Rifles should be in accordance with S-N IWLA rules. Factory ammo or handloads may be used. Shotguns may be used with SLUG ammo.

Shooters will be allowed 5 shots on target. Scoring will be the sum of the rings the shots fall in. In the event of a tie, the smallest group will win. If there is still not a clear winner, a shoot off will be conducted. Shooters should bring sufficient ammo. No more than two fouling shots are allowed.

Participants will be limited to the first 15 signups. There is a 50 yard class for open sights and 100 yard class for scoped firearms. You may choose to compete with open sights in the 100 yard class. You may shoot more than one firearm per class and both classes if you sign up for both. Cost will be $5 per firearm.

Please RSVP by the August chapter dinner meeting at kefjell@comcast.net or (651) 373-4620; I may not answer, leave a message. Walk-on spaces may be available the morning of the match. Anyone wishing to assist with the match, please contact me. Participants and volunteers must wear protective eyewear and hearing protection. The rangemaster or his assistant shall have control of the range at all times and will declare the range "hot" or "cold". Anyone observing a safety violation may call a ceasefire.

Chapter Youth *Fishing Rodeo Open-to-the-Public Event is Scheduled for September 27th

Message from Gary Brown, Fishing Rodeo Event Coordinator

Our chapter is hosting the annual open-to-the-public Youth Fishing Rodeo at our chapter park on Saturday, September 27th. Please R.S.V.P the event coordinator, Chapter Board Member Gary Brown, at gtbrown213@gmail.com in advance to sign-up to participate. For more information, see the flyer below. To access a printable PDF version of it, click on the flyer itself or browse to the chapter news article entitled Youth Fishing Rodeo under our chapter website's news menu.

For this event, Gary is asking our Chapter members to donate single-serving pre-packaged snacks. He asks that you bring these items to either of the two monthly chapter dinners meetings held in August and September. ***Gary will coordinate the collection of all donated items so that we know what we will have on hand for the event***. The Chapter will provide beverages for the event such as bottled water and juice box drinks with coolers/ice to keep them cold.

Also, for those members who are interested in volunteering to work at this event, please contact Gary using his contact info shown above to sign up for specific work roster assignments. Alternatively, you may sign up with Gary at either of the two dinner meetings mentioned above. **Note: The hours you work will be credited to help you meet your chapter membership participation annual 8 hour requirement.*

Conservation News - Protect Yourself from Bird Flu

Source Credit: CDC (Centers for Disease Control) article, March 7th, 2025

Bird flu is a disease caused by avian influenza A viruses that usually spread between birds, not people. While the current public health risk is low for H5 bird flu, it has caused sporadic human infections, mostly in people who had contact with infected birds or dairy cows. Wild birds can be infected and show no signs of illness. They can carry disease to new areas when migrating, potentially exposing domestic poultry to the virus. If you hunt or have other recreational exposure(s) to wild birds or other animals, there are actions you can take to protect yourself against bird flu. Protecting yourself when hunting:

- Do not handle wild birds or other animals that are obviously sick or found dead.
- While cleaning and handling game, do not eat, drink, or place anything in your mouth.
- More information on general safety guidelines for hunters handling wildlife and their tissues is available from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's website.

When dressing game birds:

- Hunters who handle wild birds should dress game birds in the field when possible and practice good hygiene to prevent any potential disease spread.
- Use dedicated tools for cleaning game in the field or at home. Do not use the same tools around other poultry or pet birds. Wash and disinfect all tools and work surfaces afterwards.
- If possible, wear gloves, an N95 respirator, if available. If a respirator is not available, wear a well-fitting facemask (e.g., a surgical mask), and eye protection when dressing birds.
- Afterwards, throw away the gloves and facemask and then wash your hands with soap and water.

For more information, see https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/risk-factors/hunters-and-bird-flu.html

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IWLA National Conservation News

Executive Director Scott Kovarovics at the recent IWLA National convention spoke to the need for bold action to counter attacks on bedrock conservation laws and policies. He cited the Supreme Court Sackett decision that hollowed out Clean Water Act protections for wetlands, a halt to investments in clean energy and threats to develop cherished public lands among other challenges. For more information, see https://iwla.org/urgent-call-to-action-at-the-national-convention/.

forward to a friend

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