

VERMONT MASTER NATURALIST

WINOOSKI HEADWATERS CHAPTER

2021 COHORT



WHAT: Place-based natural history training across the earth, life and social sciences.

VMN participants learn from regional experts to interpret the layers of the local landscape, then apply that training to long-term stewardship and ambassadorship of local natural areas. Master Naturalists become important resources for environmental conservation in our communities and schools.



WHO: Fifteen residents of the Winooski Headwaters towns with a sustained interest and background in at least one natural history discipline.

Participants are selected by application. VMN coordinators work with local conservation entities to build a base of local support and sponsorship for programs, projects, and the participants. Trainings are developed and instructed by VMN, NBNC, and other visiting experts. Applicants residing or working in Montpelier, East Montpelier, Middlesex, Calais, Worcester, Plainfield, Marshfield, or Berlin will be given preference.



HOW: A five-session core training program exploring the processes, events, and characters shaping the Montpelier region.

Candidates will investigate and integrate layers of the physical, environmental, and cultural landscape such as: **geology, soils, botany, natural communities, wildlife, human land use history, and natural processes like wind, fire, and succession.** Each VMN candidate will also select an extracurricular practice chosen to deepen his or her naturalist skills, including wilderness awareness, sketching, photography, etc. The trainings will explore conservation history and management issues related to each site.

STEWARDSHIP: Candidates will be matched with partnering conservation organizations to undertake stewardship and engagement projects of at least 20 hours per person. Upon completion, certified Vermont Master Naturalists will continue to support the local community, while receiving continued mentorship in their future naturalist endeavors.

WHEN: Five Saturdays in 2021 from 9 am - 3:30 pm, plus 20 additional project service hours. See next page for dates and details.

COST AND APPLICATIONS:

One-time enrollment fee of \$495 due upon acceptance in the program. Applications are open November 1st 2020 until filled.

SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE:

Applicants may qualify for scholarship assistance. Details available in program application materials. Contact us for more info.

COVID-19 NOTE: This program takes place entirely outdoors. Masks and adequate distancing required. Cohort size is restricted to facilitate teaching and learning at 6' distance.

ABOUT VERMONT MASTER NATURALIST

Unlike other Master Naturalist programs, Vermont Master Naturalist emphasizes deep investigation at the local level, and training naturalists to serve as environmental ambassadors of their local landscapes. VMN began in Burlington in 2016, where it is currently training its fourth cohort of master naturalists. VMN now operates nine chapters in the Champlain Valley and Winooski River watershed. Alicia Daniel, VMN Executive Director, is a lead faculty member of UVM's distinguished Field Naturalist graduate program, and has adapted this program's approach to serve Vermont communities.

Visit VermontMasterNaturalist.org for more information.

FOR MORE INFO AND TO APPLY:
NorthBranchNatureCenter.org/VMN

FIELD SESSION SYLLABUS

All sessions 9 am - 3:30 pm

Field locations selected from natural areas in the Winooski Headwaters towns



SESSION 1: Geology & Topography (4/24/2021)

What forces shaped the local geological landscape?

- ♦ Vermont's geological origins.
- ♦ Bedrock and glacial geology of Central Vermont.
- ♦ Relationships between geology and local topography.



SESSION 2: Soils, Botany, & Signs of Spring (5/15/2021)

What grows where, and why?

- ♦ Soil types, soil formation, and soil quality.
- ♦ Relationships between landform, soils, and plant communities.
- ♦ Springtime botany and spring ephemeral wildflowers.
- ♦ Understanding upland natural communities.



SESSION 3: Watersheds and Wetlands (6/19/2021)

How does water shape the landscape?

- ♦ Wetland botany and natural communities.
- ♦ Vernal pools and amphibian ecology.
- ♦ Hydrology and watershed science.



SESSION 4: Human Land Use History & Forest Forensics (9/11/2021)

What historic disturbances shaped the forests today?

- ♦ Interpreting stone walls and other agricultural artifacts.
- ♦ Settlement history and its impact on today's forested landscape.
- ♦ Uncovering disturbance clues like storms, logging, and tilling.
- ♦ Native American land use history.



SESSION 5: Winter Ecology & Wildlife (12/11/2021)

How does winter wildlife use the local landscape?

- ♦ Wildlife tracking and interpreting wildlife movement corridors.
- ♦ Introduction to snow science and subnivean ecology.
- ♦ Winter survival strategies in mammals and birds.
- ♦ Winter tree identification.

STEWARDSHIP PROJECTS

Following the five-part training program, time is dedicated to community stewardship and engagement projects designed in collaboration between sponsoring conservation entities, VMN candidate teams, and NBNC.