

WHITE HOUSE FARM FOUNDATION
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Summary Report 2015



***Mission Statement:** To enrich individuals with knowledge of and involvement with our natural ecological systems, sustainable agriculture, holistic community planning, and respect for local history and culture.*

Thank you to everyone who has participated in our programs this year. It has been another great year at the farm! Thank you to all of our partners and supporters who brought classes out, helped plant native species along the river trail, volunteered and otherwise utilized the farm to learn about the history and ecology of the Shenandoah Valley. We hosted kids from summer camps, private schools and public schools as well as adult education classes on winter tree identification, wildflowers and ecology. We are always interested in working with the community and with students. Please check out our [website](#) for more information on our projects and initiatives.

Scott C. Plein, Chairman [White House Farm Foundation](#)

Chris Anderson, Executive Director canderson@whfarmfoundation.org



We held several naturalist events which were open to the public in 2015, with guest instructors who led groups to the 52 acre riparian buffer, through the native warm season grass fields and along the river trail which parallels the South Fork of the Shenandoah River. We are delighted to have [White House Natives](#) located on the property which features 98 species of trees and shrubs which are native to Virginia. The nursery provides a wonderful opportunity to study native species, comparing leaf shape and arrangement, bark textures, limb structure and also the ecological benefit of the species.



The [Massanutten Chapter of the Archeology Society of Virginia](#) worked with Dr. Carole Nash from James Madison University to conduct the third archeology field camp at the White House in June 2015. Opening some of the test pits first explored in 2012 and 2014, more information was discovered on how the Kauffmans lived in 1760 when the White House was first constructed. Additional pieces of clay pipes, Native American pottery and fire brick were also found, highlighting the many centuries that the beautiful Shenandoah Valley has been inhabited.



Dr. Nash (left) studying soil profiles & flood deposit



Artifact discovered near the White House



Getting ready for the day



Collection of artifacts



Page County High School students visited the farm to learn about topography, mapping, soils and history



The farm served as a retreat location for AA Success

We enjoyed hosting the Northern Shenandoah Valley Master Gardeners for their meeting and potluck



The [Pure Water Forum](#) (PWF) held a quarterly board meeting at the farm. The PWF has a mission of improving water quality and water conservation through networking, collaboration, education and action in the Shenandoah River Watershed.

Valley Conservation Council's 25th Annual Celebration



White House Farm owner Scott C. Plein addresses the attendees



The historic White House makes a beautiful backdrop



About 175 guests attended the afternoon celebration



Sheryl Van Gundy (VCC) prepares nametags



We enjoyed hosting the [Valley Conservation Council](#) for their quarter-century celebration and annual meeting at the farm in September. Following a sudden rain storm, the weather cleared and we had a wonderful afternoon celebrating with conservation easement holders and members of the VCC. The White House Farm is enrolled in a permanent conservation easement held by the [Virginia Outdoors Foundation](#).



The riparian buffer continues to become more diverse in plant, bird and insect species as it is returned to a natural, healthy ecosystem of native warm season grasses and native wildflower and shrub species.



Dryad's Saddle mushroom on boxelder tree and the interior of an Osage orange fruit found along the river trail



Scott Plein speaks with [Lord Fairfax Community College](#) professionals who met at the White House Farm to discuss expanded class offerings.



Professor Stephanie Lessar-Pollard with the [Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute](#) brought her class out to test water quality in the river and learn about the Foundation.



The [Virginia Department of Forestry](#) personnel discuss the plans for burning a test plot in the native warm season grass field adjacent to the Shenandoah River. Burning is one of the most effective ways of clearing out undergrowth, encouraging native grasses and ground nesting birds.



Home-school students visited the farm as a field trip with Raw Learning out of Staunton



Members of the Royal Rock Hounds from the Front Royal area met at the farm to observe the geology and topography.



We appreciate [Shenandoah River Outfitters](#) and volunteers for once again, cleaning up the long-existing tire dump near the island below the White House bridge.



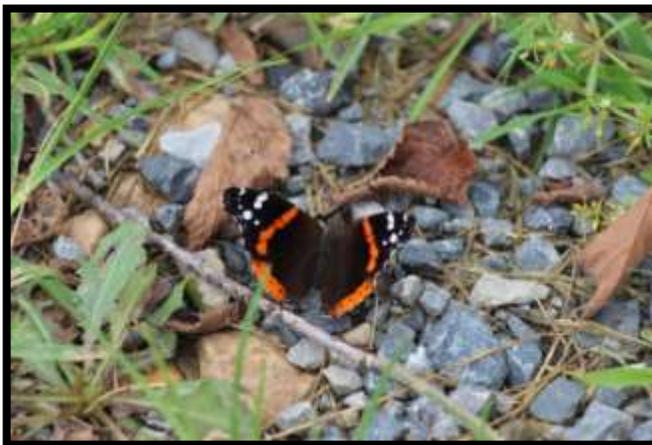
James Madison University professor Dr. Dan Downey has brought his environmental studies class to the farm for the last several years. Professor Morgan Steffan brought her class out to learn about watersheds and gather water samples from the river.



Surveying butterflies



Juniper (Olive) Hairstreak



Red Admiral



Spicebush Swallowtail

We love lepidoptera! The White House Farm has served as one of the study sites in the North American Butterfly Association count for seven years and each year we delight in seeing our favorite colorful pollinators!



[White House Natives](#): Located at the 270 acre White House Farm, the White House Natives nursery currently has more than 12,000 native Virginia trees and shrubs representing over 95 different species. These are used in commercial and residential landscaping in northern Virginia as well as being marketed to public entities such as universities and municipalities interested in stream restoration and landscaping with native species.

The nursery hosted an open house in October to showcase the healthy trees and shrubs



The garden did well again this year producing many pounds of fruits and vegetables resulting from the rich soils deposited by the river.

The pollinators appreciate the flowering herbs and flowers and we appreciate the blossoms and the butterflies who come to visit.

Many thanks to the volunteers who helped in the garden. We follow “old fashioned” practices of composting, companion planting and growing without the use of chemical herbicides or pesticides.

In Conclusion: This report highlights some of our 2015 projects and events and we look forward to continuing our work in 2016.

Please contact us if you are interested in bringing a class to the farm, attending one of our naturalist strolls, booking an event or partnering in other ways.

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