VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
Board of Trustees Research and Collections Committee
Saturday, August 15, 2026
9 a.m.

A G E N D A

- Call to order
- Roll call: Dr. Carole Nash, Dr. Tom Benzing, Dr. Melany Clark, Dr. David Furth, Katherine McGuire
- Approval of minutes from the Nov. 15, 2025 and May 16, 2026 meetings of the Research and Collections Committee
- Approval of acquisitions from September 2025-June 2026 (action item)
- Recommendation to full board regarding changes to live animals policy
- Consideration of Dr. Paul Sattler, Dr. Kevin Bezy, Dr. Ben Kligman, Dr. Keiko Meshida, and Jeff Carpenter as Research Associates
- Other business
- Adjourn

The mission of the Virginia Museum of Natural History:

To interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth.

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF THE RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE
Nov. 15, 2025, 9 A.M.
Virginia Museum of Natural History, Room 237 Conference Room A

Present at the meeting were Dr. Art Evans, Dr. Carole Nash, Dr. Melany Clark, Dr. Tom Benzing, Dr. Hayden Bassett, Dr. Kal Ivanov, Dr. Collin Van Buren, Marshall Boyd, Jonathan Martin, Dr. Joe Keiper, Ambria Wood, Sarah Bowman, and Ben Williams. Dr. David Furth was absent and a quorum was provided.

Committee Chair Dr. Art Evans called the meeting to order. The committee unanimously approved the meetings from the August 9 meeting. The committee circulated the acquisitions sign-off sheet and approved it unanimously.

Dr. Joe Keiper introduced Ambria Wood, the museum's new representative from the Virginia Attorney General's Office, and Sarah Bowman, the museum's newest trustee.

Dr. Art Evans said that the committee was initially going to recommend to the full board that it approve the changes to the museum's live animals policy, but that it had been decided to table that recommendation until the following board meeting in February. Dr. Melany Clark said it was likely that the February board meeting would be a virtual meeting. Dr. Carole Nash asked how often the museum has to update its live animal certifications. Jonathan Martin said that the museum has a live animal permit that must be updated annually, and Dr. Collin Van Buren clarified that it's a permit rather than a certification since the museum's animals are ambassadors and not research subjects.

Dr. Art Evans extended the committee's congratulations to Dr. Maddy Bassett for receiving her Ph.D.

Dr. Kal Ivanov said that the previous Wednesday, the herpetology curator search committee completed its first round of virtual interviews with the second round taking place on Monday. Three candidates will be chosen from the nine total interviews for in-person interviews.

Marshall Boyd and Jonathan Martin provided an update on the museum's Douglas Avenue facility. Boyd said that the museum's library is in the process of being stabilized. Martin said that the museum received its first cost estimate for the total project. He's

looking through the estimate line-by-line and noticed that the costs for certain things (such as finishings) were high, so he's going to go room-by-room with the architect to get the cost down to a more reasonable level. Martin added that asbestos remediation will be taking place concurrently with renovations. Dr. Joe Keiper added that a decision was made the day prior to go with a larger HVAC unit for the new facility rather than two smaller HVAC units, which would have been both more expensive and less efficient. Dr. Tom Benzing said it was too early to schedule another joint meeting between the Facilities Committee and the Research and Collections Committee, but another meeting would likely be scheduled prior to the February 7 board meeting.

Dr. Carole Nash said that she sits on the science advisory committee for the Wintergreen Nature Foundation and the foundation's new executive director is planning to develop a field station north of Waynesboro. Nash said she was tasked with coming to the Research and Collections committee and asking if anyone had ideas for the field station. The committee agreed that it was an exciting prospect once a site has been chosen.

Dr. Art Evans said that given how much the museum's endowment has grown, he thinks the museum should consider purchasing a dedicated field vehicle for the research staff. Dr. Melany Clark asked if any staff are wanting for vehicles, and Dr. Kal Ivanov explained that the state motor pool vehicles are readily available but not suitable for field work. The one field vehicle — a Subaru Outback — is rapidly nearing the end of its life. Clark said that Frank Mariels, the late donor who substantially grew the VMNH endowment with his generous gift, was a frugal man, and the museum had also been frugal. However, she said, she thinks that it's possible to strike a balance between being frugal with the endowment and spending enough of it to make a substantial difference for the museum.

Dr. Art Evans said that he will be rotating off of the Board of Trustees in June 2026. As a result, he is going to begin stepping back from some of his board responsibilities. The February meeting will be the last Research and Collections Committee meeting that he chairs, he said. He added that he feels comfortable leaving the board as the museum is in an excellent position and the future looks bright.

Dr. Tom Benzing congratulated Marshall Boyd for being featured in an article produced by the Virginia Retirement System that focused on a state employee early in their career. He also thanked both Boyd and Dr. Joe Keiper for attending the most recent Waynesboro Science Talk.

Dr. Art Evans adjourned the meeting.

Virginia Museum of
NATURAL HISTORY
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF THE RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE
May 16, 2026, 9 A.M.
Virginia Museum of Natural History, Room 237 Conference Room A

Present at the meeting were Dr. Art Evans, Katherine McGuire, Dr. Hayden Bassett, Ambria Wood, Dr. Kal Ivanov, Ryan Barber, Dr. Joe Keiper, Jonathan Martin, and Ben Williams. Committee members Dr. Carole Nash, Dr. David Furth, Dr. Melany Clark, and Dr. Tom Benzing were absent and no quorum was provided.

Ben Williams called the meeting to order. Due to the lack of quorum, Williams tabled all action items until the next committee meeting and called upon VMNH Assistant Curator of Archaeology Dr. Hayden Bassett to address a recent conversation his department has had with Carter Bank and Trust.

According to Dr. Bassett, the bank acquired a former plantation house to serve as their new headquarters. On the same property is a detached kitchen dating back to the 1830s that has unfortunately fallen into disrepair. According to Dr. Bassett, leadership at Carter Bank reached out to the VMNH archaeology department to inquire about what steps could be taken to restore the kitchen facility or if VMNH would like to take ownership of the facility as a donation.

Dr. Bassett said that unfortunately, the structure is far too damaged for restoration to be feasible, and even stabilizing the ruins would be an expensive proposition. The costs to stabilize the building are likely outside the scope of either VMNH's budget or Carter Bank's.

However, Dr. Bassett said, the archaeology department will be happy to provide any technical assistance for grant writing if another local organization decides to take on the project, such as the Fayette Area Historical Initiative.

Board of Trustees member Katherine McGuire asked if the kitchen has historical significance. Dr. Bassett said it had immense historical significance locally, as the plantation house was the main Hairston plantation. Many descendant communities locally would likely identify with the property, he said, adding that the plantation house is part of the National Register of Historic Places. Dr. Art Evans agreed with Dr. Bassett's assessment that offering technical support is the best approach.

Dr. Joe Keiper said that he wished to recommend Dr. Art Evans for the title of Senior Fellow given his 25+ year association with VMNH. Evans, who concluded his second and final term with the Board of Trustees at the May 16 meeting, is one of just four people to be named a Senior Fellow at VMNH.

Joe asked new board member Katherine McGuire to introduce herself, and McGuire discussed her career and 30-year stint on Capitol Hill.

Ben Williams adjourned the meeting.

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS ACTIVITIES

Report to the Board of Trustees
April-June 2026

Kaloyan Ivanov, Ph.D.
Associate Curator of Invertebrate Zoology

Dr. Jackson Means
Associate Curator of Myriapodology

- Dr. Means and colleagues published a paper at *Banisteria*.
- Drs. Ivanov and Means, and colleagues have manuscripts accepted at *Zoologia* and *Spixiana*.
- Drs. Ivanov and Means, and colleagues have manuscripts in review at *Austral Ecology* and *Zoologia*.
- Dr. Ivanov and colleagues have a manuscript in review at *Zootaxa*.
- Dr. Ivanov VMNH Research Associate Dr. Art Evans recently returned from a 2-week-long trip to southern Florida.
- Dr. Means recorded an interview for the Xerxes Society's Bug Banter podcast.
- Drs. Ivanov and Means, and L. Hightower participated in VMNH's Reptile Festival and interacted with 1,300+ visitors.

Research & Collections

Dr. Means, Dr. E. Day, T. A. Dellinger, A. D. Thompson, and A. G. Swenson (Virginia Tech) published a paper at the Virginia Natural History Society's periodical *Banisteria*. The work summarizes 25 years of survey efforts of native and introduced woodboring insects at Virginia Ports of Entry (VPN) and Emergency Action Notification (EAN) sites and will help inform efforts to reduce the importation of potentially harmful insects into the state for years to come.

[Day, E. R., T. A. Dellinger, J. C. Means, A. D. Thompson, and A. G. Swenson. 2026. A checklist of woodboring insects (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae, Buprestidae, Oedemeridae, and Hymenoptera: Siricidae) associated with Virginia ports of entry and emergency action notification sites. Banisteria 61: 59–78.]

Drs. Ivanov and Means, Dr. R. S. Bouzan, Dr. A. D. Brescovit, Caroline T. Paranhos, Ricardo Cezar Ramos Nicolau (Instituto Butantan, Brazil), and Dr. L. F. M. Iniesta (Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Brazil) have a manuscript accepted at *Zoologia*. The study reports the first record of the paradoxosomatid *Helicorthomorpha holstii* (Pocock, 1895) in Brazil, expanding the known distribution of this East Asian millipede to South America.

Drs. Ivanov and Means, Bouzan, Brescovit, and Iniesta have a manuscript accepted at *Spixiana*. The work reports the first case of an adult female with fully developed gonopods (specialized male copulatory structures) in the millipede family

Chelodesmidae. This rare morphological condition expands our understanding of intersexuality in millipedes and raises questions regarding developmental pathways and genetic regulation of sexual traits in the order Polydesmida.

Drs. Ivanov, Means, Bouzan, Iniesta, Brescovit, Dr. R. A. Castro-Souza (Universidade Federal de Lavras, Brazil), and Ph.D. student M. D. Faustino-Magalhães (Instituto Butantan) have a manuscript in reviw at *Austral Ecology*. The paper explores the sampling biases associated with the known distribution of the millipede order Spirostreptida in Brazil's Atlantic Forest biome.

Drs. Ivanov, Means, Iniesta, Brescovit, Bouzan, and Castro-Souza have a manuscript in review at *Zoologia*. The work is the first global assesment of the distribution and sampling ignorance of cambalidean millipedes (Diplopoda: Spirostreptida: Cambalidea). By integrating species richness and ignorance metrics, the study identifies regions where collecting efforts, taxonomic revisions, and biodiversity inventories are most urgently needed.

Dr. Ivanov, Dr. C. Bartlett and student L. Hook (U Delaware), Dr. J. Leavengood (USDA- APHIS), and Dr. B. R. Garcete-Barrett (Museo Nacional de Historia Natural, Paraguay) have a manuscript in review at *Zootaxa*. The work is a revision of the South American planthopper genus *Protachilus* (Hemiptera: Fulgoridae) and includes the description of the previously unknown male of *Protachilus rex* Fennah, 1944, and two new species from Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru.

Dr. Ivanov and colleague myrmecologists from various Florida and Georgia institutions continued work on a manuscript focused on the non-native myrmecofauna of Florida. When completed, the paper will offer a comprehensive account of all non-native ant taxa recorded from Florida, a global hotspot of introduced and invasive ants.

Drs. Ivanov and Means, Dr. J. Pérez-Schultheiss (Museo Nacional de Historia Natural, Chile), and A. Parra-Gómez (Universidad Austral de Chile) continued work on revising the South American millipede genus *Monenchodesmus* (Polydesmida: Dalodesmidae). The work includes the description of a new genus and species from Chile.

Drs. Ivanov, Means, Bouza, Brescovit, Iniesta, and Dr.Dr. Rodrigo L. Ferreira (Universidade Federal de Lavras, Brazil) are working on a manuscript focused on testing the monophyly and tribal palcement of the Brazilian endemic millipede genus *Rupidesmus* (Diplopoda: Chelodesmidae). The study includes the description of two new cave-dwelling species from the state of Minas Gerais.

Drs. Ivanov, Means, Bouzan, Brescovit and Iniesta, Dr. Hevana S. Lima (Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Brazil), and Dr. Ricardo Basini-Silva (Instituto Butantan, Brazil) are working on a comprehensive review of bird anting behaviors utilizing millipedes, a significant, yet understudied, resource for avian self-anointing.

Dr. Ivanov and VMNH Research Associate Dr. Art Evans recently returned from a 2-week-long expedition to Florida where they continued work on one of the nation's richest arthropod faunas. Using a combination of various collecting techniques, Ivanov and Evans conducted field work in thirteen protected areas and preserves primarily targeting the southern part of the state. The trip included work at the Archbold

Biological Station's arthropod collection, one of the largest holdings focused on any single location in North America

Dr. Means conducted fieldwork at various sites in North Carolina and Virginia in support of ongoing research projects.

Dr. Means and Liberty Hightower processed (removed and sorted specimens for identification) 39 litter samples from recent collecting trips to Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, and the United States (Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia).

Dr. Means identified and curated 20 specimens (millipedes and spiders) for VMNH's molecular collection, with another 2,000+ specimens put aside for various taxonomic experts.

Dr. Means curated and identified 43 specimens (millipedes and spiders) from a recent trip to Florida.

Liberty Hightower prepared 1,225 ants and 161 non-ants from recent field work in Paraguay, Peru, and Florida.

Dr. Ivanov processed and curated 1,559 fly specimens from a recently returned loan.

Dr. Ivanov responded to information request regarding VMNH holdings: *Scaphinotus* (*Irichroa*) (Carabidae; ground beetles) (James R. LaBonte, Oregon Department of Agriculture, retired).

Visiting researchers Dr. P. Wooden and student N. Collins (Virginia Tech), and Dr. S. Roble (VA DCR) worked on capturing data and curating VMNH's Corixidae (water boatmen) and Ichneumonidae (ichneumon wasps), and Odonata (dragonflies and damselflies) holdings, respectively. (June 1, 24)

Dr. Ivanov satisfied a loan request regarding VMNH's invertebrate holdings: 332 pinned/pointed unidentified Corixidae (water boatmen) to Dr. P. Wooden (Virginia Tech).

Dr. Ivanov oversaw the acquisition of 307 lots of ethanol-preserved bulk invertebrates donated to VMNH by Dr. D. Hennen (VA DCR); 303 pinned/pointed unidentified Trichoptera and 232 pinned/pointed unidentified Hymenoptera donated to VMNH by Dr. S. Roble (VA DCR); and 26 lots of ethanol-preserved unidentified Myriapoda and 5 lots of ethanol-preserved unidentified Formicidae donated to VMNH by T. Malabad (VA DCR).

Liberty Hightower, VMNH Visting Scholar Dr. C. Vanburen, Biology Technician M. Boyd, and Collections Manager H. Cartmell attended a bird study skin preparation workshop at the National Museum of Natural History, Washington DC. (April 12-18)

Education & Outreach

Drs. Ivanov and Means, L. Hightower and museum staff participated in VMNH's 12th annual Reptile Festival, which offered a variety of displays and activities that ranged from preserved amphibian and reptile specimens from the museum's collections to live arthropods, amphibians and reptiles, and variety of herpetology-themed children's crafts and activities. The two-day event attracted over 2,500 children and adults from Virginia, North Carolina, and five additional US states. (April 24-25)

Liberty Hightower served as an adjudicator for the Piedmont Governor's School Senior Science Research Symposium. (May 6-7)

Dr. Means presented a large collection of pinned insects to four classes of students at Salem Montessori. (June 17)

This quarter, Drs. Ivanov and Means, and L. Hightower gave tours of museum's labs and collections to members of VMNH's "Science Exploration" and "Camp-ology" summer camps, PHCC, and visitors from Henry Co., VA. (June 3, 4, 10, and 24)

Student intern Sara Wall (Virginia Wesleyan U) began work in the Department of Recent Invertebrates in late May. Sara's primary duties are related to assisting with various aspects (data capture, literature review, etc.) of the recently launched Millipedes of Virginia Project.

Dr. Means recorded a 1-hour interview for the Xerxes Society's Bug Banter podcast (May 19).

Drs. Ivanov and Means were interviewed for an upcoming WFXR Science Series. (June 23)

Dr. Ivanov contributed five posts to VMNH's FB page outlining recent field work in southern Florida.

Exhibits

Dr. Means and L. Hightower participated in a meeting regarding early planning stages of VMNH's upcoming temporary exhibit.

Dr. Ivanov and L. Hightower, with help from VMNH Trades Technician D. Eanes, updated the small pollinator exhibit in VMNH's Hanh Hall of Biodiversity.

Professional Service

Drs. Ivanov and Means participated in a board meeting of the Virginia Institute for Invertebrates. The meeting was devoted to discussing details regarding the recently funded Virginia Outdoors Foundation's Forest CORE proposal. (June 16)

Dr. Means served as an editor for two manuscripts submitted to *Banisteria*. (completed May 20 and June 24)

Dr. Ivanov served as an editor for a manuscript submitted to *Historia Naturalis Bulgarica.* (completed May 29)

Dr. Ivanov copy edited three articles for *Banisteria* (Volume 61). (completed April 9, May 26, and June 25)

Hayden Bassett, Ph.D.
Assistant Curator of Archaeology

Introduction

The VMNH Archaeology Department is currently staffed by 8 personnel as of July 2026. This includes the Department Curator, the VMNH Archaeologist, the four core staff of the Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab and two Archaeology Lab technicians. Over the past three months, Dr. Hayden Bassett focused the department's efforts on publications, collections management, and fieldwork on the Smith River in Henry County, VA.

Research and Collections

The VMNH Archaeology Department continued collections organization efforts with the goal of enabling research in Virginia Archaeology. The lab coordinated volunteers to re-bag and label artifact assemblage bags from several sites in Virginia with high research potential. This effort ensures that the VMNH is maximizing research potential with the Commonwealth's collections.

In July, the Archaeology Department continued field work on the Smith River Survey, a grant-funded project that seeks to document all in-water cultural resources in a 25-mile section of the Smith River in Henry County, VA. The team completed survey of the first 16 miles of the river. The documented the condition of previously recorded sites and identified four new archaeological sites associated with early river crossings, 19th century use of the river to move timber, and 19th century modifications to the river for batteau navigation. Dr. Bassett coordinated site visits to the newly identified sites with a range of stakeholders, including other state agencies: VDOT and VDHR. He will continue this in-water survey throughout the summer.

As a producer and curatorial repository of digital collections, the VMNH Archaeology Department has expanded its digital collection holdings by nearly 10,000 "objects" this quarter and anticipates further growth in digital collections with each new quarter. At the request of its research stakeholders, the new objects include expanded cultural heritage site locations for Venezuela and the Marianna Islands. The Archaeology Department's CHML is using these data to assess impacts to cultural heritage from the recent floods and earthquakes. These digital objects in the VMNH's collections have already been requested/accessed by multiple outside organizations.

A part of Dr. Bassett's research efforts this quarter were dedicated to continuing the leading role played by the VMNH's Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab (CHML) in response to the destruction of museums, archaeological sites, and other cultural heritage sites in Ukraine and Sudan. Since February 2022, the VMNH-CHML team has been monitoring over 28,000 cultural heritage sites in Ukraine, identified potential damage to 4,483 sites, and confirmed damage to 780. The VMNH team is also monitoring Sudan's museums, religious sites, and archaeological sites in the areas impacted by the ongoing civil war. As previously mentioned, the CHML at VMNH also responded to the recent storms in Marianna Islands and the major earthquake in Venezuela.

Publications

In May, Dr. Bassett and his team submitted a manuscript titled “Riverine Settlement and Aquatic Resource Use in Late Woodland Virginia” for publication. It is currently in peer review with the journal *American Antiquity*. Additionally, VMNH’s CHML team published three open access reports this quarter through the Smithsonian Institution. As of July 2026, the total readership of the VMNH’s Archaeology Departments publications from the past 34 months is 69,073 reads and 10,173 downloads.

Published Reports this Quarter (VMNH Archaeology authors in bold):

Hanson, K., **Fitzgerald, K.,** Meharry, J. E., Tuttle, E., Bakhshi, R., Rozhko, V., Makar, R., Zadorozhna, M., Kovalova, P., Oleksii, A., Cil, D., **Bassett, H.,** Averyt, K., Kane, K. E., **Gunter-Bassett, M., Welsh, W., Maher, A**., Muller, C. E., and Daniels, B. I. (2026). “Site Report: Damage and Cross Removal at Christian Churches in Melitopol, Ukraine,” Ukrainian Heritage Monitoring Lab; Virginia Museum of Natural History, Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab; University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Penn Cultural Heritage Center; University of Maryland, Center for International Development and Conflict Management; and Smithsonian Institution, Museum Conservation Institute—Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25573/data.30826295.

Carroll, C., Griffin, K., **Welsh, W.,** Hanson, K., **Bassett, H., Fitzgerald, K., Maher, A**., Averyt, K., **Gunter-Bassett, M.,** Gottlieb-Miller, L., Markle, N., Pate, L., Martindale, K., Muise, I., and Sproat, M. (2026). “Potential impacts to Cultural Heritage Sites from Flash Floods Burnet, Guadalupe, Kerr, Kimble, McCulloch, Menard, San Saba, Tom Green, Travis, and Williamson Counties, Texas, USA.” Virginia Museum of Natural History, Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab; Smithsonian Institution, Museum Conservation Institute—Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative; and Texas Collections Emergency Resource Alliance. DOI: 10.25573/data.32060373.

Bassett, H. F., Aronson, J., Cil, D., Hanson, K., Meharry, J. E., **Fitzgerald, K., Welsh, W., Maher, A., Gunter-Bassett,** M., Averyt, K., Kane, K. E., Muller, C. E., and Daniels, B. I. (2026). “Damage to Cultural Heritage Sites in Ukraine: 24 February 2022 to 30 November 2025,” Ukrainian Heritage Monitoring Lab; Virginia Museum of Natural History, Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab; University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Penn Cultural Heritage Center; University of Maryland, Center for International Development and Conflict Management; and Smithsonian Institution, Museum Conservation Institute - Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative. DOI: 10.25573/data.32025594

Education and Outreach

Museum Exhibits / Services / Outreach:

Between May and July, VMNH Archaeology Lab technician Aidan Lawrence conducted experimental archaeology in the VMNH greenhouses, growing a range of plants recovered archaeologically on Virginia’s Late Woodland archaeological sites. This included Tutelo Strawberry Corn, Hidatsa Red Indian Bean, Ozark Melon, Sacred Tobacco/Indian Tobacco/Mapacho, Jamestown Weed, and Longleaf Groundcherry/Wild Tomatillo. This combined research and outreach project allowed the archaeology

department to understand the affordances and risks of small-scale horticulture for these specific plants, while producing a large quantity of seeds for the museum's archaeobotanical reference collection. The Archaeology Department documented this project on a dedicated section of the VMNH website.

This quarter, the VMNH Archaeology Department visited the headquarters of the Archaeological Society of Virginia at Kittiewan in Charles City, VA. The VMNH helped process a large library of archaeological books for multiple institutions. A significant number of these books will be integrated into the VMNH Research Library.

In July, the Archaeology Department also participated in the VMNH Dino Fest. Archaeology Lab Technician Madison Ross created hand drawn coloring pages of VMNH dinosaur specimens, and the lab staffed this station for the two-day festival.

Professional Service:
In July, Dr. Bassett was selected to served as a peer reviewer for the journal *American Antiquity*. Additionally, he continued his appointments as a Research Associate at the Smithsonian Institution, a Fellow of The Explorers Club, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, and an Adjunct Lecturer in William & Mary's Department of Anthropology. He continued his duties as Vice President of the Board of Trustees for Falmouth Heritage Renewal, an international historic preservation non-profit.

This quarter, Dr. Hayden Bassett and VMNH staff archaeologist Dr. Madeleine Gunter Bassett continued to fulfill their duties in the Archaeological Society of Virginia (ASV) and Council for Virginia Archaeologists (CoVA). This included participating in the annual ASV and CoVA meeting in Staunton, VA. In their roles on committees in these organizations, VMNH Archaeology staff provide direction, technical review, grant approvals, among other tasks for state-wide archaeological research for the foreseeable future.

- Dr. Pritchard published a scientific article in the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology* on a two-legged toothless reptile from the Age of Dinosaurs in New Mexico. He and an international team of colleagues, including collaborators from Virginia Tech have an article in press on a newly discovered species of crocodile relative found in the VMNH collections.
- Dr. Pritchard worked with intern Joshua Safley (all of Q2) on the 3D modeling of the Virginian reptile *Tanytrachelos*. The project is funded by the Luck Companies Foundation and will produce an exhibit (coordinated with Lila Dougherty). An abstract describing the new discovery was submitted for presentation at the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Annual Meeting in Q4 of 2026.
- Dr. Pritchard led a field trip to the Ashland Triassic Site with a team of students from the college of William & Mary, amateur paleontologists from the area, and retired field paleontologists. Their work recovered many fossil fish skeletons, invertebrates, and new tiny fossil reptile teeth that likely represent new species.

Research & Collections

Dr. Pritchard published one paper and has a second in press:

- A description and analysis of a toothless bipedal reptile from Triassic New Mexico in the *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*, led by Dr. Alan Turner of Stony Brook University.
- An analysis of VMNH reptile skull bones from Fraser sites in the United Kingdom that represent a new taxon of small carnivorous reptile in revision for *Earth & Environmental Science Transactions*, led by Dr. Sterling Nesbitt of Virginia Tech.

Dr. Pritchard submitted as primary author or co-author three abstracts for presentation at the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Annual Meeting in Cleveland, OH.

In ongoing projects, Dr. Pritchard developed a database of three-dimensional models for an article on Triassic drepanosaurs of Utah. He also contributed a section on geological and discovery context for a manuscript on pathological fossil crocodylian bones from the VMNH collections from the Age of Dinosaurs in North Carolina.

Dr. Pritchard developed the collections in several targeted ways:

- Dr. Pritchard brought in a specimen of a fossil mammal from Westmoreland State Park that represents a single incisor tooth from a large big cat, most likely a jaguar.

Dr. Pritchard worked with several scientific workers and private citizens seeking to use VMNH collections in their work:

- He and technician Lucy Treado oversaw two visits from teams from the College of William & Mary seeking to examine and borrow specimens of fossil clams for environmental studies.

- He sent field journals and maps to the Bureau of Land Management related to ongoing work in Jurassic rocks in the Big Horn Basin of Wyoming. These will be used in collaboration with teams from the University of Washington.

Education & Outreach

Dr. Pritchard oversaw a short internship project by a Virginia Tech paleontology undergraduate student focused on developing an annotated guide to completeness and photography on specimens of the Virginian fossil reptile *Tanytrachelos ahynis*.

Dr. Pritchard oversaw the beginning of a month-long internship (June-July) for an undergraduate geology student from the University of Mary Washington. Funded by a grant from Mary Washington, the student will be documenting, photographing, and cataloging vertebrae from the giant marine snake *Paleophis*.

Dr. Pritchard and Education Manager Christy Deatherage presented an educational activity focused on fossil shark teeth to a group of science instructors at a symposium hosted by Southwest Virginia Community College.

Dr. Pritchard, technician Lucy Treado, and museum director Joe Keiper presented for children and adults at an event at the Caroline County Visitor's Center, focused on the fossil record of whales and marine animals in the region.

Dr. Pritchard hosted collections tours for three groups of private citizens.

Dr. Pritchard coordinated with technician Lucy Treado on a display of fossil sea turtles for Reptile Festival 2026, including never-before-seen-publicly specimens from Virginia

Dr. Pritchard served ten requests for specimen identifications.

Grants & Funding

Dr. Pritchard began discussions with other members of the curator and technical team on developing a cross-departmental initiative focused on photogrammetry—using photography to obtain high-quality three-dimensional models of objects—targeting the most vulnerable specimens in collections. This project will be developed further following the 2026 Dinosaur Festival.

Professional Service

Dr. Pritchard reviewed an article for *Scientific Advances.*

Jackson Roberts, Ph.D.
Assistant Curator of Herpetology

- Dr. Roberts began as the Assistant Curator of Herpetology on 16 June 2026.
- Dr. Roberts co-authored a paper with colleagues describing a new species of snake from Papua New Guinea (accepted – *Zootaxa).*
- Dr. Roberts presented at the 2026 Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (New Orleans, Louisiana; 8-12 July) on the genetics and origins of an introduced Western Diamond-backed Rattlesnake population in central Kansas. In addition, Dr. Roberts' undergraduate researcher at Fort Hays State University presented a poster on their work documenting a rattlesnake hybrid from west Texas.
- Dr. Roberts met with the leaders of Philpott Lake's management team to discuss Timber Rattlesnake and Copperhead sampling/monitoring on US Army Corps of Engineers' property.
- Dr. Roberts participated in the 2026 Dino Festival by preparing and managing a table on extant and extinct crocodilians.
- Dr. Roberts led three lab tours to visitors to show them the herpetology research lab, including the live snakes held for education, as well as the growing parasitology station equipped with compound microscope and camera lucida.
- Dr. Roberts has submitted collection and salvage permit applications to VDWR to begin regular surveying of reptiles and amphibians of Virginia for physical vouchers and molecular-grade tissue samples. He has received verbal approval but is still waiting for the official paperwork.

Research & Collections

This June, Dr. Roberts began as the second Assistant Curator of Herpetology for the VMNH. His research focus is overarching evolution and biogeography, utilizing the morphology and genomics of herpetofauna (and their parasites) to test patterns of change and relatedness over time. He and his family are ecstatic to begin their Virginia chapter for many years to come.

Shortly after beginning (25 June 2026), Dr. Roberts received acceptance on a co-authored new snake species description submitted to *Zootaxa*. The snake is a new species of Papuan Groundsnake (genus *Lielaphis*), from the north coast of Papua New Guinea. Collaborators include researchers from the Field Museum, Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Sciences, American Museum of Natural History, University of Kentucky, and the Papua New Guinea National Museum and Art Gallery.

In July, Dr. Roberts presented work he began in Kansas on the population structure and origins of an introduced population of Western Diamond-backed Rattlesnakes at the 2026 Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists in New Orleans, Louisiana. More importantly, Dr. Roberts was able to introduce himself to the field and colleagues as the VMNH herpetology curator for the first time. In addition, he also coauthored the poster presentation given by his current undergraduate researcher, Amelia Coykendall

(Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas). Her poster documents with morphology and genomics evidence of a Mohave Rattlesnake x Western Diamond-backed Rattlesnake in west Texas.

On June 30th, Dr. Roberts met with the rangers and managers at Philpott Lake (US Army Corps of Engineers) to discuss land access and collaborations for pit viper monitoring around the lake. The meeting was successful, the USACE rangers showing enthusiasm for focus on the snakes living around the lake. In addition to the future plans for research (once Dr. Roberts has received VDWR permits in-hand), the rangers gave precise localities where Timber Rattlesnakes and Copperheads have been encountered by the public. Dr. Roberts drove one of these localities late at night on July 3rd and found three adult Timber Rattlesnakes crossing the road. This was an exciting find to confirm a future long-term site for a species of conservation concern so close to the museum's location.

Exhibits

Dr. Roberts joined the Advisory Committee created by our exhibit's director, Lila Dougherty, to advise on the upcoming temporary Virginia Birds exhibit.

Education & Outreach

Dr. Roberts curated and worked a crocodilian table at the 2026 Dino Festival July 23-24. The festival was a massive success. As his first VMNH festival, Dr. Roberts enjoyed discussing modern crocodilians and their long evolutionary history on earth.

Dr. Roberts led three lab tours of the herpetology division since arriving to the area. The tours were given to eight total individuals comprising the family of a fellow curator (three people), colleagues of our research technician (two people), and a representative from the Attorney General's office and her family (three people).

Professional Service

Dr. Roberts reviewed a manuscript for the journal *Ichthyology and Herpetology*, the journal of the Amerrican Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists.

Dr. Roberts continued the mentorship of his two remaining students in Kansas, Dawson Kosmicki (MSc student at Fort Hays State University) and Amelia Coykendall (Undergraduate at FHSU).

Collin VanBuren, Ph.D.
Visiting Scholar

- Dr. VanBuren resubmitted two papers after completing revisions and submitted another paper with VMNH colleagues
- Dr. VanBuren and colleagues presented a webinar to conservation practitioners around the world through the Amphibian Survival Alliance
- Dr. VanBuren helped strengthen the capacity of VMNH staff by co-organizing a training workshop on bird specimen preparation at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History

Research & Collections

Dr. VanBuren and colleagues revised two papers and resubmitted them:

- van Rees, VanBuren, et al. *In review*. Eight recommendations to enhance biodiversity outcomes of nature-based solutions at multiple scales. *Journal of Environmental Management* (Accepted in July)
- Stevenson et al. *In review*. Changes in plant community composition and diversity in a high-elevation rangeland: implications for pollinators. *Rangeland Ecology & Management*

Dr. VanBuren submitted another paper with VMNH colleagues M. Boyd and Dr. H. Bassett that is in review at the *Northeastern Naturalist*, titled “Observations of beaver (*Castor canadensis*) foraging on autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellate*) in southern Virginia.

Dr. VanBuren coordinated with staff at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History to organize a week-long workshop for himself and other VMNH staff (M. Boyd, H. Cartmell, and L. Hightower) on preparing bird study skins, which staff had minimal experience with.

Dr. VanBuren and M. Boyd received three nutria carcasses from the USDA-APHIS team managing the invasive nutria population in southeastern Virginia and these are set to be processed in the near future

Dr. VanBuren visited multiple additional sites to assess them for the beaver and autumn olive study

Dr. VanBuren is working with VMNH colleagues Dr. H. Bassett and M. Boyd to establish a monitoring program along the Smith River with the goal of capturing biodiversity change associated with hydroelectric power generation when the dam comes back online within the next year.

Dr. VanBuren and VMNH staff (H. Cartmell and M. Boyd) hosted the Gomez-Bahamon lab from Virginia Tech to visit VMNH collections for their research

Education & Outreach

Dr. VanBuren gave a webinar for the Amphibian Survival Alliance and Mohammed bin Zayed Foundation with former USAID colleagues Dr. Sara Carlson and Jennifer Kane titled “Connecting Amphibian Conservation with International Development”

Dr. VanBuren worked with M. Boyd and L. Dougherty to finish and publish an infographic informing the public about bird window strikes, including how to prevent them and what to do if a window strike happens.

Dr. VanBuren and M. Boyd visited Staunton River State Park to assess the location for inclusion in a study about beavers and autumn olive. During this visit, they learned about beaver coexistence issues at the State Park and connected the Park Manager with wildlife coexistence professionals to identify solutions.

Dr. VanBuren spoke with homeschool students of various ages about careers in natural history.

Dr. VanBuren created and ran a table at Reptile Fest on the differences between mammal and reptile vertebrae.

Dr. VanBuren’s incoming summer intern from Longwood University received a grant to fund his accommodation in Martinsville during the seven-week internship.

Dr. VanBuren met with a student at Hanover High School working on a research project to provide feedback and guidance on her project.

Professional Service

Dr. VanBuren continues to participate in the “nutria task force” monthly calls with state and federal wildlife managers, and in his role as Strategy Planning and Implementation Chair of the Southeast Beaver Alliance (SEBA).

Dr. VanBuren and colleagues hosted a consultation of SEBA members to inform the development of the organization’s strategy.

Vertebrate Zoology
Marshall Boyd, Research Technician

Research & Collections

Field work
M. Boyd, C. VanBuren, and H. Bassett have continued documenting beaver activity across areas surrounding about a 1 hour radius of Martinsville including site visits, trail camera documentation and dendrochronology specimen acquisition. Anticipation of intern involvement for continued data collection and hopeful publication of this activity will continue throughout 2026. More sites with active beavers and the presence of Autumn Olive have been documented and are planned to be visited in the next quarter stretching to the surrounding counties.

Professional Presentations/Conferences
M. Boyd attended the North Carolina Herpetology Society Meeting in Asheboro, NC where collaborators/colleagues presented on past, currently active, and upcoming research projects related to the herpetofauna of the Mid-Atlantic but also elsewhere in the world.

Ongoing research
M. Boyd continues to collaborate with Dr. VanBuren on beaver and autumn olive research along with coordination of the developing Smith River project including Dr. Bassett. The project has reported on fauna found in or around the Smith River using camera traps with more technology and coordination on survey methods in the coming quarter. This project will include intern work, active collaboration with Fairy Stone State Park, Philpott Dam, and Dan River Basin Association (DRBA).

Professional Development
M. Boyd along with several other staff traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend a bird specimen preparation workshop led by Smithsonian staff where dry bird specimens were the main focus of learning techniques but also included a rundown of fluid bird specimen preparation and several collections tours both downtown and at the satellite facility Museum Support Center (MSC).

M. Boyd submitted a proposal for Dr. Paul Sattler to become a research associate of the VMNH. Approval of this proposal is still be awaited.

M. Boyd along with Dr. Jackson Means began hosting a paid intern Majestic Utt funded through one of the VMNH endowment programs. Majestic will be working part-time for several weeks on collections based projects determined by Boyd and Means per schedule allowance.

M. Boyd attended a training workshop in North Carolina to learn updated protocols, techniques, and procedures for mist netting bats in the region.

Collections Growth, Management and Use

M. Boyd along with H. Cartmell, C. VanBuren, and L. Hightower have continued to have volunteers working on collections either through Virginia Master Naturalist or more generalized volunteers who apply through the programs at the VMNH.

M. Boyd and J. Harris have continued to coordinate with Margaret Harden for the digitization of the VMNH nest and egg collection. M. Harden is documenting all the information of the ledger catalog that is associated with that collection into a digital spreadsheet. This ongoing project, when finished, will contribute towards the recuration of the collection and hopeful research project collaboration(s) in the future.

M. Boyd continues to collect DOR specimens and those donated by other institutions for the growth of vertebrate zoology research collections along with the education/outreach collections.

Education & Outreach

VMNH-based Activities
M. Boyd along with the rest of the VMNH staff hosted the 2026 ReptileFest bringing in thousands of visitors of all ages. Newer partnerships with groups like the Department of Forestry, Martinsville Fire Department, and others.

M. Boyd worked alongside the VMNH education team to give short presentations about working at the museum in collections, background of Boyd's career trajectory to today, and projects that are currently happening at the VMNH.

M. Boyd assisted with an after hours event at the VMNH as a reprise to ReptileFest for the Martinsville Chamber of Commerce. Live animals were highlighted including the newest animal ambassador Uromastyx lizard.

M. Boyd led a behind the scenes tour to Ruth and Marvin Key, the winners of the auction item at the Wildlife Center of Virginia's gala event.

non-VMNH based Activities

M. Boyd led a herpetology hike at Sycamore Station near Roanoke, VA with 15 participants to learn about the ecology of the area. Snakes, turtles and frogs were all observed along with the occasional other non-anticipated animals like insects, birds, and mammals.

M. Boyd and other educators of the Virginia Herpetological Society (VHS) hosted an educational table at the Waynesboro Riverfest event where thousands of visitors came to learn about the ecology of Virginia but specifically the riparian habitats throughout the region.

M. Boyd worked alongside the park rangers of Fairy Stone State Park for the spring bioblitz. Live animals from the VMNH, local collaborators, and some live caught animals from the park itself aided in the educational programming. About 15 participants either staying at the park for the weekend or came in specifically for the event were present.

Media

M. Boyd continues to be the Social Media Chair for the Virginia Herpetological Society (VHS) where educational material, announcements for programming and community outreach occur.

M. Boyd continues to be the Social Media Coordinator for the Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society including the Facebook and Website where educational material, announcements for programming and community outreach occur.

Professional Service

M. Boyd continues to be the Vice President and Social Media Chair for the Virginia Herpetological Society.

M. Boyd continues the role as Social Media Coordinator for the Virginia Chapter of The Wildlife Society

M. Boyd continues to serve on the executive committee for the Friends of Fairy Stone State Park nonprofit organization.

M. Boyd continues to be a member of the local young professionals (“Yo-Pros”) group by attending events. The group is working to connect younger professionals of the Martinsville/Henry County area in a social but also collaborative way.

Research and Collections

Jill K. Harris, Registrar

Sixteen (16) collections acquisitions were recorded for 540 individual specimens, 348 vials, 1 bag, and 5 boxes of specimens. These specimens were added to the invertebrate zoology, vertebrate zoology, and paleontology collections.

Three (3) outgoing loans were recorded from the invertebrate zoology and paleontology collections. The loans were to a VMNH Research Associate and William & Mary.

Ms. Harris (database administrator) reports that, within the collections management system *Re:discovery Proficio,* VMNH staff added/modified/updated 9,246 catalog records*,* according to database statistics.

Haley Cartmell, Collections Manager

Curators and staff modified/updated 7,194 existing records and added 25 new records to the VMNH collections databases during the months of April, May, and June 2026.

In April, VMNH staff members H. Cartmell, L. Hightower, M. Boyd, and C. VanBuren attended a week-long training class at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D. C., led by Museum Specialists Christina Gebhard and Brian Schmidt with the Division of Birds. This class focused on preparation techniques for bird specimens, which included demonstrations and hands-on practice.

Q4 OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2025
VMNH ACQUISITIONS FOR REVIEW BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

RIM* #	Collector/Donor	Date at VMNH	VMNH Dept.	QTY	Description	Method	To Be Accessioned (Y/N)
RIM 34-2025	VA Dept of Wildlife Resources (Leah Card)	10/18/2025	MAMMALOGY	1	American Porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*)	Transfer	Y
RIM 35-2025	Dr. Steven M. Roble	11/10/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	1035	pinned beetles (Coleoptera), most unidentified	Transfer	Y
RIM 36-2025	Dr. Arthur V. Evans	5/16/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	57	pinned insects, with data	Gift	Y
RIM 37-2025	Dr. Arthur V. Evans	5/16/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	347	pinned insects, no data	Gift	N
RIM 38-2025	Canadian Museum of Nature (Dr. Robert S. Anderson)	9/30/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	3	pinned weevil (Coleoptera: Curculionidae) PARATYPES; *Eurhoptus cariniventris, E. limbricatus, E. occidentalis*	Gift	Y
RIM 39-2025	Dr. Arthur V. Evans	11/13/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	1029	pinned insects, with data	Gift	Y
RIM 40-2025	USDA-APHIS (John M. Leavengood, Jr. PhD)	11/19/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	398	pinned insects (124 Coleoptera, 274 Hemiptera)	Gift	Y
RIM 41-2025	John D. Kleopfer	4/29/2025	HERPETOLOGY	1	Mole Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis rhombomaculata*)	Gift	Y
RIM 42-2025	Arianna Kuhn	3/4/2025	HERPETOLOGY	1	Bluetongue Skink (*Tiliqua scincoides*)	Gift	Y
RIM 43-2025	Marshall Boyd	11/24/2025	HERPETOLOGY	4	Wormsnake (*Carphophis amoenus*), Five-lined Skink (*Plestiodon fasciatus*), Dekay's Brownsnake (*Storeia dekayi*), Mole Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis calligaster rhombomaculata*)	Salvaged	Y
RIM 44-2025	Marshall Boyd	11/24/2025	MAMMALOGY	3	Flying Squirrel (*Glaucomys volans*), American Beaver (*Castor canadensis*), Raccoon skull (*Procyon lotor*)	Salvaged	Y
RIM 45-2025	Marshall Boyd	11/24/2025	ORNITHOLOGY	2	Barred Owl (Strix varia), Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)	Salvaged	Y

* RIM is an acronym for the Record of Incoming Material form

Q1 JANUARY-MARCH 2026 and Q2 APRIL-JUNE 2026
VMNH ACQUISITIONS FOR REVIEW BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

RIM* #	Collector/Donor	Date at VMNH	VMNH Dept.	QTY	Description	Method	To Be Accessioned (Y/N)
RIM 01-2026	Curt W. Harden	12/26/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	192	dry, pinned beetles	Gift	Y
RIM 02-2026	Todd Gearheart	12/28/2025	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	9	frozen (deceased) invertebrates from pet trade: 7 tarantulas, 1 scorpion, and 1 centipede	Gift	N
RIM 03-2026	Elizabeth Moore	Pre 2017	HERPETOLOGY	3 boxes	turtle shells, no data	Found In Collection	N
RIM 04-2026	Robert Weems	2/19/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	7	footprints: dinosaur: theropod, sauropod, thyreophoran	Gift	Y
RIM 05-2026	Dr. Julian J. Lewis	3/13/2026	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	164 lots (910 Indiv.)	75 lots (629 specimens) of identified Asellidae, including 4 male paratypes of *Caecidotea malarki*, 89 lots (281 specimens) of identified Oniscidea all lots in 95% ethanol	Gift	Y
RIM 06-2026	Marshall Boyd	3/25/2026	HERPETOLOGY	1	Eastern Rat Snake (*Pantherophis alleghaniensis*)	Salvaged	Y
RIM 07-2026	Liberty Hightower	3/3/2026	ORNITHOLOGY	1	Eastern Screech Owl, red phase (*Megascops asio*)	Salvaged	Y
RIM 08-2026	Todd Gearheart	12/28/2025	HERPETOLOGY	3	frozen (deceased) vertebrate lizards from pet trade: 2 *Uromastyx occellata* (male and female) and 1 *Trioceros hoenelii*	Gift	N
RIM 09-2026	VA DCR - NHP (Derek Hennen)	4/17/2026	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	307 vials	bulk samples of invertebrates in EtOH, also, one bee bowl sample contains a vertebrate (small frog)	Transfer	Y
RIM 10-2026	Columbia University - Paul E.Olsen	3/25/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	3	Item 1: 4 pcs of sediment w/giant paleonisciform fish bones and scales; Item 2: 2 pcs of sediment w/small paleonisciform fish skull and scales; Item 3: 2 slabs of mudstone w/ *Rhynchosauroides* footprints, small lizard- like reptile tracks	Gift	Y
RIM 11-2026	Adam Pritchard	4/14/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	1 box	shale and mudstone slabs w/Actinopterygian fishes, reptile tooth, fern, conchostracan invertebrates	Field Collection	Y
RIM 12-2026	One More Find - Doug Meneely	5/9/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	1	incisor, carnivoran mammal (most likely felid)	Gift	Y

* RIM is an acronym for the Record of Incoming Material form

Q1 JANUARY-MARCH 2026 and Q2 APRIL-JUNE 2026
VMNH ACQUISITIONS FOR REVIEW BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE
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RIM* #	Collector/Donor	Date at VMNH	VMNH Dept.	QTY	Description	Method	To Be Accessioned (Y/N)
RIM 13-2026	Marshall Boyd	5/5/2026	HERPETOLOGY	1	Red Cornsnake (*Pantherophis guttatus*)	Salvaged	Y
RIM 14-2026	USDA-APHIS (Mary Krieger)	5/1/2026	MAMMALOGY	3	Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*)	Gift	Y
RIM 15-2026	Hayden Bassett	5/13/2026	ORNITHOLOGY	1	Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*)	Salvaged	Y
RIM 16-2026	Markus Martin	4/15/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	6	2 *Triarthrus* trilobite specimens w/pyritized soft tissues and 4 slabs w/trilobite segments	Gift	Y
RIM 17-2026	William F. Schmachtenberg	4/15/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	1	pyritized *Triarthrus* trilobite exoskeletons w/soft tissues	Gift	Y
RIM 18-2026	Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation	4/15/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	1	pyritized *Triarthrus* trilobite exoskeletons w/soft tissues	Purchase	Y
RIM 19-2026	Ryan Collins	4/12/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	5	4 boxes and 1 bag of vertebrate fossils	Gift	Y/N TBD – some may be accessioned; some may not be.
RIM 20-2026	Jackson R. Roberts	5/21/2026	HERPETOLOGY	1	Eastern Copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix*)	Field Collection	Y
RIM 21-2026	Robbie Hendrix- Wirt	6/25/2026	ORNITHOLOGY	1	Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*)	Salvaged	Y
RIM 22-2026	VA DCR-DNH (Steven M. Roble)	6/24/2026	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	535	pinned insects - 303 unidentified Trichoptera and 232 unidentified Hymenoptera	Transfer	Y
RIM 23-2026	VA DCP-NHP (Thomas Malabad)	7/2/2026	RECENT INVERTEBRATES	31 vials	26 vials of myriapods and 5 vials of ants	Transfer	Y
RIM 24-2026	Michael Jeremiah	5/29/2026	PALEONTOLOGY	16	Models/casts: whale, shark, walrus, and *Archaeopteryx*	Gift	N

* RIM is an acronym for the Record of Incoming Material form

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2025 Q4, JANUARY-MARCH 2026 Q1, and APRIL-JUNE 2026 Q2
VMNH ACQUISITIONS FOR REVIEW BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESEARCH AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

VMNH Collections Committee and Executive Director have Approved Acquisitions:
RIM 34-2025 through RIM 45-2025 and RIM 01-2026 through RIM 24-2026

VMNH Board of Trustees Research & Collections Committee Review of Acquisitions:
RIM 34-2025 through RIM 45-2025 and RIM 01-2026 through RIM 24-2026

Dr. Carole L. Nash, Chair _____ _____
(signature) Carole L. Nash, Chair Date

Dr. Thomas R. Benzing _____ _____
(signature) Thomas R. Benzing Date

Dr. Melany Clark _____ _____
(signature) Melany Clark Date

Dr. David Furth _____ _____
(signature) David Furth Date

_____ _____
(signature) Date

_____ _____
(signature) Date

Note: this info will not print on final version, it is for informational purposes only, to help reviewers.

The only edits made to this document since the August 2023 BOT approved version are:

- the leaf cutter ant colony paragraph was removed, since we no longer have the ant colony, and
- all animal care sheets were removed. These care sheets are not policy, so they will become a procedural document, rather than a policy document. This is due to how frequently these care sheets change and every time they do, they would need BOT approval.

These changes have been approved by the VMNH Collections Committee and Executive Director.

Virginia Museum of Natural History

Policies for Live Animals

Table of Contents

I. Preface

The Virginia Museum of Natural History (VMNH) uses live invertebrates, fish, amphibians, and reptiles in exhibits, education, and public programs as part of its mission to interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth. These living collections serve an important role by helping to instill a sense of understanding and respect for creatures that are often misunderstood for a variety of reasons. The VMNH will not keep live mammals or birds without undergoing the American Zoological Association's accreditation process.

II. Institutional Commitment and Animal Care

The VMNH is committed to providing the financial, physical, and human resources necessary to safely and humanely care for the animals entrusted to its care. The Manager of the Department of Education and Public Programs (DEPP) and the Exhibits Manager, in consultation with other relevant staff and outside animal-care experts, are responsible for recommending to the VMNH Executive Director all the resources needed to effectively care for the VMNH's live animals that are housed at the museum. Research and Collections Division staff are responsible for effective care of all live animals housed in their research laboratories and office spaces.

The VMNH staff research the best practices of care and maintenance for each type of animal, and then apply these practices to the fullest extent possible. Under no circumstances will the VMNH take on responsibilities for numbers or types of animals that are beyond its ability to care for humanely, nor will it engage in any activity that threatens the welfare of animals, staff, or visitors. All staff assigned to assist in the maintenance of VMNH animals receive detailed training in the care and handling procedures for each species. The live animal collection at the VMNH is under the care of a licensed veterinarian, as required by permits issued by state and federal regulatory agencies. Yearly wellness checks will be conducted, and veterinary medical staff are contacted if emergency care is needed.

The live animal collection is funded in a variety of ways, such as through grants and individual donations. Funds acquired for the live animal collection may be secured through the Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation, a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that exists to support the mission and programs of the VMNH.

III. Acquisition

Acquisition of live animals is in full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations of local, state, federal, and international authorities. Animal ambassadors that are used in education and public programs are generally acquired through proposed donations that are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Acquisition of live animals requires VMNH staff to consider multiple criteria, including: the animal's health, habitat needs, veterinary care requirements, cost of care, legal concerns, and available