

# NATURE

**VIRGINIA**

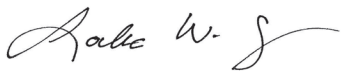
Summer 2019 • [nature.org/virginia](http://nature.org/virginia)



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## Conservation needed a win—and you delivered

Thanks to supporters like you, The Nature Conservancy has helped protect 350,000 acres of Virginia's most important lands and waters. More than a third of this acreage is woven into Virginia's 3.7-million-acre mosaic of public lands managed for everyone's benefit. But early this year, we faced the dire prospect of losing one of our most effective tools for conserving these beloved places: the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Our Virginia team joined with colleagues and allies across the country, reaching out to media and legislators to bolster support for the LWCF. Our efforts were rewarded in March with the signing into law of sweeping public lands legislation, including *permanent* reauthorization of the LWCF. Thank you for your generous support that helped achieve this landmark victory!



Locke Ogens, Virginia Director



Appalachian Trail, protected with assistance from the LWCF © Daniel White

## Endless Summer

### Explore nature on public lands and TNC preserves

Whether you're gazing across blue ridges with your hiking boots resting on rock or looking out to sea with your toes buried in sand, your view will feel as timeless as the summer ahead. But summer is fleeting, so The Nature Conservancy is here to help you make the most of your limited time. To experience nature's "peak" season, we suggest a hike to stunning overlooks at our Warm Springs Mountain Preserve; then beat the heat with a cool stream or lake dip in the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest or Douthat State Park. Or embrace the warmth of the sun: Wander trails at our Brownsville Preserve and nearby Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge, or enjoy the beach at Kiptopeke State Park. Plan your getaway at [nature.org/virginia](http://nature.org/virginia).

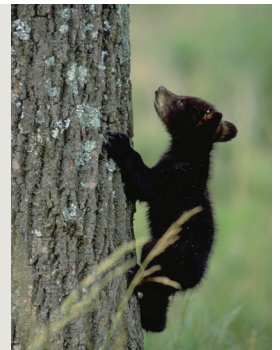
#### Visit Warm Springs Mountain

**Location:** Bath County, near Hot Springs, Virginia

**What to see:** Summer is prime time for hiking and wildlife sightings, especially during morning and evening walks. The preserve's three public trails offer distinctive experiences, from expansive mountain views to a close-up look at a globally rare pine barren.

**Access:** The Ingalls Overlook, Sandy Gap and Bear Loop hiking trails are open daily. Download maps at the site below.

**Plan your visit:** [nature.org/warmspringsmountain](http://nature.org/warmspringsmountain)



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Tom Perry of White Stone Oyster Company, one of four aquaculture ventures collaborating with TNC and VIMS © Robert Clark

# Aquaculture by Design

## Study confirms benefits to clean water

As part of The Nature Conservancy’s global priorities of supporting clean water and sustainable food production, we teamed up with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and four oyster growers to measure aquaculture’s impact on water quality. We know that a single oyster can filter up to 50 gallons of water daily; now new data reveal that every 100,000 oysters grown and harvested annually can remove six pounds of nitrogen pollution from the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. This research points to oyster aquaculture serving not only as a low-impact means of producing animal protein for people—requiring no added fertilizers or feed—but also generating net benefits to nature. In addition to offering a market-based natural solution to improve water quality and, thus, the health of the Bay, oyster farms can also help reduce wave energy and protect shorelines. And as the still-nascent oyster aquaculture industry grows, so, too, will these natural benefits. Learn more and watch our “Aquaculture by Design” video at [nature.org/ChesapeakeBayAquaculture](http://nature.org/ChesapeakeBayAquaculture).

### Splendor in the Seagrass

Eelgrass meadows—critical habitat for myriad fish, shellfish and other wildlife—have bounced back from nearly zero to cover 9,000 acres of bay bottom off the Eastern Shore of Virginia. TNC’s key partners in this remarkable success story are profiled in the winter 2019 issue of William & Mary’s alumni magazine, online at [magazine.wm.edu](http://magazine.wm.edu).



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## Newsbriefs



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- TNC commissions study of natural solutions to sea level rise and flooding in Virginia Beach. Read “Planning for Change” at [nature.org/virginia](http://nature.org/virginia).
- General Assembly appropriates new funds to develop and staff Clinch River State Park. Learn more about the park at [nature.org/clinchvalley](http://nature.org/clinchvalley).

### Conservation Hero: Bruce Smart (1923-2018)



© Douglas Lees

The Nature Conservancy mourns the loss of Bruce Smart, former board of governors vice chair. Bruce passed away on Thanksgiving Day, 2018, at his beloved Upperville horse farm, which he and Edie, his wife, protected with a conservation easement. Bruce and Edie, a former Virginia trustee, have supported TNC for four decades. Beyond his distinguished career in the private and public sectors, Bruce was a highly respected writer on business, ethics and the environment.