

Valley Views

**Potomac
Valley
Audubon
Society**

Volume 23, Issue 7

April 2005

Meeting Programs

April 13 – The Mountaintop Removal Road Show

In West Virginia and eastern Kentucky, coal companies now blast as much as 600 feet off the top of the mountains, then dump the rock and debris into mountain streams. Over 300,000 acres of the most beautiful and productive hardwood forests in America have already been turned into barren grasslands. Mountaintop removal mining increases flooding, contaminates drinking water supplies, cracks foundations of nearby homes, and showers towns with dust and noise from blasting.

The Mountaintop Removal Road Show includes a stunning slide show about the impacts of mountaintop removal on coalfield communities. It features traditional Appalachian mountain music and shocking aerial photos of decapitated Appalachian mountains.

Dave Cooper is a resident of Lexington, Kentucky. After 20 years working as a mechanical engineer in various industries, most recently at the 3M plant in Cynthiana, Kentucky, that makes Post-it notes, he decided to devote his full attention to environmental issues after seeing a mountaintop removal mine on Kayford Mountain, West Virginia. He is a member of the Sierra Club and Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, and worked for a year as a coalfield organizer for the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (OVEC). He is currently organizing a national speaking tour to educate communities across America about Mountaintop Removal.

May 11 - Annual Dinner and Election of Officers

Come out to our family style, potluck dinner. Enjoy the camaraderie and applaud some of our outstanding volunteers. Most important, find out about the slate of officers for the coming year. This will be your chance to join in and participate by electing officers to fill vacancies on the board.

Field Trips

For more information on any of these trips please get in touch with Ken or Patsy Hunter at 304-725-3936 or email at phunter@npca.org. A word to novice birders, we do a fair amount of standing around looking at birds, so dress warmly, wear shoes that will keep your feet warm and dry, and bring binoculars.

Saturday, April 2

Following up on last month notice of the Patuxent Wildlife Art Show at the National Wildlife Visitors Center, Patuxent Research Refuge, in Laurel, Maryland. If anyone wants a ride or more information call Patsy Hunter at 304-725-3936 or phunter@npca.org.

Saturday April 23 – Harpers Ferry

Join us for a walk from the parking lot for Harpers Ferry National Historical Park off Route 340 down to Harpers Ferry. We will leave by 7:30 a.m. and walk down from the NPS parking lot botanizing and birding as we go. We'll walk into Harpers Ferry and take the park service shuttle back up the hill. With luck we should find lots of warblers, and other migrating birds. Experienced birder or novice, you are sure to enjoy this trip and with luck there'll be lots of good birds.

Saturday, April 30 – “Searching for Feathered Butterflies”

Join us for what is sure to be a terrific field trip with Matt Orsie as our leader. We will scour the area for spring migrants Those of you who subscribe to the WV ListServe know that Matt spends a lot of time finding birds in our local area, so this is a great opportunity to join him as he takes us to places in Jefferson and Berkeley counties where we are likely to see both resident and newly arrived migrants birds. Matt is very knowledgeable and a terrific leader, and whether

- Field Trips continues on page 2, bottom right



*Potomac Valley Audubon Society is people dedicated to preserving, restoring,
and enjoying the natural world through education and activism.*

News from Yankauer Nature Preserve . . .

Norm Thompson Sponsors Interns

Great news! Norm Thompson Outfitters has agreed to sponsor our two watershed interns this spring: Rachel Gray and Steve Shaffer. The company has a long history of concern for the environment and of supporting local organizations in communities where its employees live and work. Norm Thompson has for the last several years sponsored PVAS's annual fall 5K run, and we are very pleased they have extended their support to our intern program.

In the Watershed...

In April, participating students will be heading into the field to measure the health of the Potomac River as well as visit the Shepherdstown Wastewater Treatment Plant to see how water is cleaned before being released back into the river. Students will learn how to measure and judge the quality of water by testing for dissolved oxygen, pH, and temperature; then search for insects and other macro-invertebrates in the river. We'd like to thank those who help make this memorable field experience available to the children: The Isaac Walton League of Berkeley County, Bill and Bonnie Stubblefield, and the Shepherdstown Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Annual Appeal Update

Many of you have responded to our second appeal in the last newsletter. Thank you so much for your generosity and for helping us close the gap in the appeal's apparent shortfall. We will have a final announcement in next month's newsletter as to the final outcome of the appeal, as well as a list of our donors who have made such generous contributions to our programs and projects at Yankauer. Many thanks!

Wildflower Festival April 16, 11-4

The Spring Wildflower Festival plans are coming together! Please join us for a wonderful day of spring celebration at Yankauer at the peak of wildflower season. The event will be free, with guided walks, refreshments, children's activities, storytelling, dance performances, music and artists showing and selling their work and demonstrating their techniques. We look forward to seeing you there! Please help us spread the word! For more details about the event, go to www.potomacaudubon.org.



April 21 & 22, 10-11:15 a.m. - Park High School of Baltimore at Yankauer

April 26, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. - Harper's Ferry Middle School, 7th-grade honors biology students at Yankauer

April 27, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. - "Sensational Senses" with Shepherdstown Elementary 2nd graders at Yankauer

May 6, 4-5 p.m. - Exploring Town Run with Shepherdstown Youth Center in Shepherdstown

May 23 - 27, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. - Jefferson County Science Olympiad, 6th graders at NCTC (single and half-days possible.)

Camp registration has begun! Go to www.potomacaudubon.org for registration information and other details!

Proposed Development Near Yankauer

PVAS has recently learned of a proposed, high density development just beyond Yankauer on the corner of Whiting's Neck and Carlyle Roads. The proposed development on the 91 acres calls for 140 homes on lots from under 1/4 acre to 1.5 acres, streetlights, sidewalks, boat docks, and its own large well and sewage treatment plant. If you are interested in finding out more about the proposal as well as getting involved with concerned neighbors, please contact PVAS member Bill Weis at wbweis@access4less.net. Interested folks are encouraged to get involved. Andy Vecchio, our Conservation Chair on the PVAS Board, is also keeping abreast on the development and can be reached at TheVecchios@hotmail.com.

Uncontrolled Growth - What You Can Do

Being an informed citizen is an important first step. Attend meetings, ask questions, and gather the facts. The Berkeley and Jefferson County Planning Commissions supplied the following information: The Berkeley County Planning Commission meets every other Monday (unless there is a holiday and then the meeting is Tuesday). Call 304-264-1963 for more information. The Jefferson County Planning Commission meets the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.. The Zoning Board meets on Thursdays at 3 p.m. Call 304-728-3228 for more information.

-Field Trips continued from page 1

you are an experienced birder or a novice you are sure to learn a lot. We will meet at the Martins parking lot, in the area of the Sherwin Williams store, on Route 340 in Charles Town, at 6:30 a.m.

Mark your calendars

Sunday, May 1

Field trip to Thompson Wildlife Management Area - for the trilliums and spring migrants.

Saturday and Sunday, May 14 & 15

PVAS's annual trip to Cape May for passerine migrants, shorebirds, horseshoe crabs, and more.

Volunteer Opportunities in April-May

Spring is a busy time! If you'd like to help with some of our programs and projects, please contact Kristin. Here are some projects that could use your help!

April 8, 4-6 p.m. - "Go Take a Hike!" at Yankauer with Shepherdstown Youth Center

April 9 - "Spring Cleaning" at the Preserve!

April 15, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. - "Wildflower Festival" at Yankauer could still use a few hands

Presidents Perch

Hello Everyone –

Is it spring yet? Maybe by the time this arrives in the mail, spring will have sprung. The longer days are wonderful, but March sure hasn't been warm! Just the same, we are trusting that those spring flowers will arrive in time for our Spring Wildflower Festival on April 16 at Yankauer. This is going to be quite an event! (see page 2)



Though it's hard to remember what summer is like, it is time to plan the summer camp schedule. Once again we are offering scholarships (see page 3) to some wonderful camps as a result of profits from our annual birdseed sale. Be sure to share this information with the young people in your life.

Spring migration is under way, the Canada geese are everywhere, there are robins in the marsh, bluebirds checking out the boxes, and even a kingfisher in my Backyard Bird Count ... their weather forecaster must not be any better than ours! Since they are here though, I guess we better get out there and welcome them. Check out all the field trips (page 1).

Joe Hankins gave us plenty to think about at our March meeting highlighting water quality and watershed protection (thank you Joe), and Dave Cooper is coming all the way from Kentucky (April 13) to share his Mountain Top Removal Road Show (see page 1). Mark your calendars and come join us!

Diana Mullis, President

PVAS SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

We are now accepting applications for its 2005 summer youth camp scholarship program.

Each year, the program helps send deserving area youngsters to summer camps that emphasize conservation and the environment. This year, at least four such scholarships will be awarded, and applicants will be able to choose between five different camps.



Application forms can be found on the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org. Contact Diana Mullis at 304-267-3482 (evenings) if you can't get one from the Web.

Some scholarships will cover only cover a portion of that fee; in that case, the recipient and their family will make up the remaining portion. Transportation costs to the camps will be the responsibility of the scholarship recipients.

All applications must be submitted by April 15. Winners will be announced during the first week in May.

For more information contact Ms. Mullis at the telephone number mentioned above or by e-mail at dianamullis@aol.com.

Have a Say!

You can have a say and do good work for conservation and the communities PVAS serves. Think of all that PVAS does: steward Yankauer Nature Preserve, youth conservation education, field trips and outings, summer youth camp, scholarships, Cedar Series concerts, and more. We have great volunteers and you've probably been one. Put your name next to an open position and make it official. There's something for every talent and ability.

- President Diana Mullis
- Vice President
- Secretary Fiona Harrison
- Treasurer Jane Vanderhook
- Board Development
- Conservation Andy Vecchio
- Education
- Field Trips
- Fundraising
- Hospitality
- Membership David and Mary Sue Eldridge
- Newsletter
- Programs
- Publicity Peter Smith
- Yankauer Liaison Rodney Woods

Contact Diana Mullis or any current board member (see the back panel) and let them know you are interested in a position on the board.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE, JOIN PVAS TODAY!

When you join PVAS, you automatically become a member of the *National Audubon Society*.

Your membership includes:

- ◆ One year (six issues) of award-winning *Audubon Magazine*
- ◆ Eight issues of *Valley Views*, PVAS's newsletter of field trips, programs, and local issues
- ◆ Advance notice of all PVAS events

ENCLOSED IS MY CHECK FOR:

\$20 Individual SPECIAL OFFER, 1st time members only!

\$35 Individual (renewal)

\$15 Seniors and full-time students.

Make checks payable to *National Audubon Society*.

Mail to:

Membership Chair, PVAS

P.O. Box 578

Shepherdstown, WV 25443

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Address _____

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DATED MATERIALS

MAIL TO:

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The *Potomac Valley Audubon Society* meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April, in the auditorium at the USGS Leetown Science Center, Letown/Kearneysville, WV. Programs are free and open to the public. For additional information about *PVAS* or its programs and activities, please call any of the board members listed her or see <http://potomacaudubon.org>. *PVAS* serves the Easter Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

PVASBOARD
 The *PVAS*Board meets the first Wednesday of the month (Sept.-June) at Shepherd College, Snyder Hall, Room 317, 7PM. These meetings are open to all *PVAS* members.

PVAS Officers and Board Members

President:	Diana Mullis 304 267-3482	dianamullis@aol.com
Vice President:	Diana Cummins 304 728-0345	montex@frontiernet.net
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PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord:	Diana Mullis	304-267-3482 & 304 724-4500(day)