

Celebrating
25 Potomac Valley Audubon Society
Years
VALLEY VIEWS

Volume 26, Issue 3

November 2007

PVAS Launches "Nature Explorer" Backpacks for Kids

PVAS is teaming up with three Eastern Panhandle libraries and Cacapon State Park to offer a new nature-education opportunity for area children.

Starting November 1, we will provide each of the libraries and the Park with "Nature Explorer" backpacks that children can check out for approximately two-week periods. The packs will be available at the nature center at Cacapon State Park and the children's sections of the Shepherdstown Public Library, the Morgan County Public Library, and the Martinsburg Public Library.

The backpacks will include books, field guides, and supplies that have been specially selected to help children explore the natural world with an adult. Two kinds of backpacks will be available: one focused on exploring the world of birds, and the other on exploring the world of insects. Both kinds of backpacks will identify local natural areas where children can take field trips, and they will also include suggestions for lots of "rainy day" activities.

Intended primarily for young children, the activities and supplies in them can be easily adapted for older children as well. They should be a useful resource for families who are home-schooling their children and families with budding backyard naturalists.

The backpacks were developed by PVAS with the assistance of a generous \$2,000 grant from the Nora Roberts Foundation. They were designed and compiled by Suzi Taylor of Sharpsburg, Maryland. Suzi has a degree in environmental education from Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania and is a past camp director of PVAS' Audubon Discovery Camp. She is also a West Virginia Master Naturalist Program candidate.

Over time, PVAS hopes to expand the number of backpacks in circulation and to add new packs that focus on other facets of the natural world.

Some of the lending sites may require a deposit on the backpacks, refundable upon return of the packs and all activity supplies.

For more information, contact Kristin Alexander at 304-676-3397 or at PVASmail@aol.com.

Third Annual Potomac Arts Festival November 2-4



Please join PVAS and 43 artists who find inspiration in nature for their work at PVAS' Third Annual "Potomac Arts Festival: A Celebration of Nature and the Arts." This juried festival will be held in the gymnasium of the US Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) again this year.

Events will include the Friday night "Preview Party" - the fundraising portion of the weekend event - from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Enjoy a sneak preview of the artists' work and the opportunity to make purchases before the general public arrives on Saturday. Bid on silent auction items donated by the artists; enjoy drinks, hors d'oeuvres, music, and wonderful company. All proceeds from the event benefit PVAS' environmental education programs.

The rest of the weekend is free and open to the public, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m.-4 p.m. on Sunday. The dining hall at NCTC will be open for lunch both days, and snacks and drinks will be available in the gym throughout the festival. Please spread the word about the event and bring lots of friends.

The American Conservation Film Festival will also be taking place throughout the weekend (www.conservationfilm.org), and Goose Route Arts Collaborative will be performing at NCTC as well (www.goose route.org). There is something for everyone, so please join us!

An enormous thank you goes out to the festival committee for organizing this special event: Jane Vanderhook (Committee Chair), Alice Barkus, Susan Brookreson, Nancy Kirschbaum, Gretchen Meadows, and Deb Patthoff. All went above and beyond in their efforts to bring this year's festival to fruition, and we thank them heartily.

November Field Trips

PVAS has two field trips scheduled for November.

Evening of Saturday, November 3

The trip will start at about 8:30 p.m. and last until about 10:30

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

November Meeting Will Feature Wildlife Rescue Expert

Wildlife rescue expert Gretl Learned will be the featured speaker at our November meeting.

Ms. Learned is the founder and director of the nonprofit Fern Wildlife Refuge, which is located near Winchester, Virginia. She will talk about her work at the Refuge, about wildlife rehabilitation in general, and about the importance of public education on habitat conservation.

The refuge was founded in 1993. It is twenty-three acres in size, and it provides rescue and rehabilitation services for orphaned, injured, and displaced wildlife from Winchester and the surrounding area. It can assist most types of wildlife, but predominantly cares for songbirds and small mammals, such as fox kits, squirrels, and skunks. The refuge's case load is increasing every year, as urban sprawl takes over more and more natural habitat in the region, displacing more and more animals. Currently it is handling some 800 animals annually.

The refuge is located at 3274 Green Spring Road. It is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and also offers a 24-hour emergency telephone hotline at 540-888-7949. It relies totally on donations and work done by volunteers, and welcomes offers of help.

For more information about the refuge see its website at www.fernwildliferefuge.org/.

The program is free and anyone is welcome to attend.

The meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 14, at the National Conservation Training Center on Shepherd Grade Road, just north of Shepherdstown. It will be held in the small auditorium (Room 151) of the Center's Instructional West Building.

PVAS' School Programs Gaining Momentum

Last month's *Valley Views* noted that we had received a major grant from the state of West Virginia to help us provide our well-established 4th Grade environmental education program in more local elementary schools.

So far, two new schools have signed up to enroll their 4th Graders in this program when we next offer it early in 2008: the Jefferson County Country Day School and St. Joseph's Parish School in Martinsburg. This brings the number of schools participating in the program to seven.

The program teaches 4th graders about the importance of protecting water resources, especially those that impact the Chesapeake Bay, and groundwater in the Eastern Panhandle.

Meanwhile, using an excellent new brochure developed by our Director of Children's Programs, Ellen Murphy, we are also for the first time beginning to market our education programs for all the other K-6 grades to local schools as well.

These programs are designed to engage children in learning about various aspects of the natural world, from the way animals adapt to their surroundings to the way forests work. Each of them involves

a field trip experience at our Yankauer Nature Preserve.

To date, the Bedington Elementary School and the Wright Denny Elementary School in Charles Town have signed up to enroll at least one class in these other programs, and additional schools are expressing interest.

Our school-program volunteers are already busy, and all this new activity will be keeping them busier than ever.

For more information about our school programs, you can view the new brochure about them on our website at www.potomacau-dubon.org.

If you'd like to volunteer to help with these programs, please contact Ellen at 304-676-8739 or pvasprograms@comcast.net. She'll be glad to tell you more about ways in which you can get involved.

November Field Trips - continues from Page 1

p.m. Watch an expert catch, band, and release migrating owls on South Mountain, in Washington County, Maryland.

Steve Huy, who has been banding owls on the mountain for many years as part of Project OwlNet, will conduct the banding. The owls he will be banding are the Northern Saw-Whet Owl, the smallest owl in eastern North America. Visits to his banding site offer a unique opportunity to see these birds up close and learn about their life history.

Pre-registration is essential because space for each trip is limited to 20 persons. To pre-register for the trip and to get more information contact Carolyn Thomas at 304-267-3115 or webethomas@aol.com.

This trip will involve a walk over uneven ground and is therefore not recommended for anyone who needs assistance. Participants should bring a flashlight and be sure to dress warmly.

The trip will be cancelled if it is raining.

Saturday, November 17

Tour prime late-season birdwatching sites in Jefferson County.

Led by local bird experts Nancy and Elliot Kirschbaum, the tour will focus on waterfowl. Birds likely to be sighted include grebes, cormorants, and a wide variety of ducks.

Sites to be visited will likely include Lake Shannondale and the Shenandoah River.

The tour should be instructive for both experienced and novice birders and anyone with an interest is invited to participate. Novice birders are advised to be sure to dress warmly, wear shoes that will keep their feet warm and dry, and bring binoculars and field guides if they have them.

Participants will meet at 7:00 a.m. in front of the Martin's super-market in the Jefferson Crossing shopping center off Route 340 just south of Charles Town. From there, carpools will be formed to keep the number of vehicles required for the tour to a minimum.

For more information contact Nancy Kirschbaum at 304-876-6881.

Eidolon Nature Preserve Fall 2007 Hunting and Hiking Schedule

The land now known as the Eidolon Nature Preserve has been hunted by neighboring families for generations, and when Marguerite Zapoleon willed the land to the Nature Conservancy, she stipulated that hunting should be allowed to continue there.

Accordingly, and also in the interest of maintaining a healthy forest and viable animal populations, the Nature Conservancy and PVAS are permitting hunting on the property.

To balance the safety of hikers and the interests of deer hunters, we ask all visitors to observe the following rules during deer season:

- Hunters must be licensed by the state and follow all applicable state laws and regulations.
- For their part, hikers should exercise appropriate caution during hunting season and wear at least one item of blaze orange clothing.
- In accordance with state law, no hunting will be permitted on Sundays.
- The Eidolon Nature Preserve will close its trails to hikers for the entire first week of the firearm season for deer hunting (November 19 through 24 this year) and every Saturday thereafter until the season ends on December 8.
- On all other days during the firearm season for deer, the trails will be open to hikers from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. only.

Please see the schedule below for specifics.

2007 Eidolon Hunting and Hiking Schedule	
Monday, November 19 through Saturday, November 24	First week of firearm season for deer—Trails closed to hikers every day
Sunday, November 25	No hunting
Monday, November 26 through Friday, November 30	Trails open to hikers 10 a.m.-3 p.m. only
Saturday, December 1	Trails closed to hikers all day
Sunday, December 2	No hunting
Monday, December 3 through Friday, December 7	Trails open to hikers from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. only
Saturday, December 8	Trails closed to hikers all day Last day of firearm season for deer

New Kiosk at Eidolon

A temporary kiosk that includes a trail map and other information has now been installed at our Eidolon Nature Preserve in Morgan County.

The kiosk is located at the start of the White Trail, a few hundred feet from the preserve entrance.

Shown above is Berkeley Springs PVAS member and volunteer Joe Gentile, who did the lion's share of the installation work—which

was not easy because the ground in the area where the kiosk is located is nearly as hard as concrete.

A permanent metal kiosk built to National Park Service specifications is on order.



PVAS' November Calendar

- Nov. 2: Potomac Arts Festival Preview Party (tickets required)
- Nov. 3: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.: Potomac Arts Festival (free and open to the public)
- Nov. 3: 8:30 p.m. Owl-banding field trip to South Mountain
- Nov. 4: 11a.m.-4 p.m.: Potomac Arts Festival (free and open to the public)
- Nov. 14: 7-9 p.m.: PVAS Program: Wildlife Rescue (at NCTC)
- Nov. 17: 7 a.m.: Waterfowl field trip in Jefferson County.
- Nov. 29: 7-9 p.m.: PVAS Program: Green Construction (at Cacapon State Park)

Leigh Jenkins Joins Board

Leigh Jenkins, of Berkeley Springs, has joined PVAS's Board of Directors. She will fill the seat vacated in July by David Eldridge, who had served two full terms. Along with becoming a member of the board, she will chair our Conservation and Action Committee.

Leigh has lived fulltime in Morgan County, WV since 1989, after moving there from the Washington, D.C. area. She was raised in El Paso, Texas where she was an active member of the Trans-Pecos Audubon Society. She worked as an Environmental Specialist for Gifford-Hill and Company, a cement corporation, in Texas before moving to the Washington, D.C. area.

She presently teaches Advanced Placement Biology and Advanced Placement Environmental Science, as well as Advanced Biology, at Berkeley Springs High School in Berkeley Springs.

She is a member of the Morgan County Master Gardeners and is currently enrolled in the Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program.

She holds a Bachelor of Science in Sociology from Texas A & M University and a Master of Arts in Sociology from the University of Texas at El Paso. She returned to school at Shepherd College in 1994 to receive her teaching certification in Biology and is currently a candidate for a Master of Arts degree in Science Education/Curriculum and Instruction at Shepherd University.

Birdseed Sale Pickup Reminder

Don't forget to pickup your birdseed order between 10 a.m. and Noon at the location you designated on your order form. Pickup locations are Gower's, Ranson; Gower's, Williamsport; or Hunter's Hardware, Berkeley Springs.

If you didn't get your order in because you ran out of time, contact Diana Mullis at 304-267-3482 to see if we have seed available to accommodate your last minute order.





Hello, everyone:

In this issue of *Valley Views*, you'll find an article about the "Nature Explorer Backpack" program we're launching this month.

We hope these backpacks will offer a fun, new way for families to involve young children in nature, and if they prove as popular as we think they will we'll be expanding this program in the future.

Thanks to the Nora Roberts Foundation for making this program possible and to volunteer Suzi Taylor for making it actually happen.

You'll also find an article about our efforts to provide more nature education programming in local schools.

This is something we've been working toward for a long time and it's gratifying to see some momentum starting to build.

Thanks to our very capable Executive Director, Kristin Alexander, and our equally capable new Director of Children's Programs, Ellen Murphy, for their careful, thoughtful approach to growing these programs.

Finally, please note that our November 14 monthly meeting at the National Conservation Training Center will feature a presentation by Gretl Learned, a wildlife rescue expert who operates a nonprofit wildlife refuge near Winchester.

With more and more natural habitat being lost to development in this area, wildlife rescue—and the attendant issue of habitat protection—should be increasingly important priorities for all of us.

PVAS is, of course, heavily involved in habitat protection through our management of two nature preserves, and we offer wildlife rescue services as well.

But wildlife rescue is a highly specialized endeavor that requires expertise and resources that PVAS doesn't have, so our Wildlife Rescue Coordinator, Diana Mullis, acts as a sort of broker between the public and the specialists, fielding calls from people who've come across sick or injured wildlife and transporting those animals to special facilities as needed.

Gretl Learned is our go-to person for help with injured and orphaned songbirds and small mammals. She works tirelessly and selflessly at this, not only taking animals in around the clock throughout the year by also offering a 24-hour-a-day emergency telephone hotline for those simply seeking advice.

Her efforts deserve our recognition and support, so we hope you'll come and hear her presentation, and spread the word about it to your friends and neighbors.

—Peter Smith

PVAS Members Invited to Smithsonian Events

The Smithsonian Naturalist Center in Leesburg, Virginia is inviting PVAS members to attend two events there this November. Admission is free.

Saturday, November 3, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.: An "Exploring Nature in Detail" "Draw-In." This is a special event for budding and professional artists. Bring your art supplies and draw from our collections. Professional artists will be available to answer questions and give career information.

Saturday, November 10, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.: A lecture entitled "Whale Tales: Global Diversification of Whales as Seen in the Fossil record," by Dr. Mark Uhen.

The Smithsonian Naturalist Center is located in the Leesburg Airpark Business Center on the southeast edge of Leesburg. To get there from the Eastern Panhandle, take Route 9 to Route 7, and then follow 7 east past the entrance to the Greenway toll road to Sycolin Road. Turn right on Sycolin and go 1.3 miles to Miller Drive. Turn right on Miller.

The address is 741 Miller Drive SE, Suite G-2, Leesburg VA 20175. Call 703-779-9712 or 1-800-729-7725 for further information.

Volunteers Collect Tree Seeds at Eidolon

About two dozen volunteers working under the supervision of state forester Herb Peddicord gathered at our Eidolon Nature Preserve on September 22 to participate in a "Growing Native" seed collection event sponsored by the Potomac Conservancy. The Growing Native program is an effort to improve water quality in the Potomac watershed by restoring forests that filter pollution and runoff. It recruits volunteers to collect tree seeds throughout the fall, and the seeds are delivered to state nurseries where they are nurtured into small tree seedlings. The seedlings are then planted along streams and rivers in the watershed. Since the program's inception in 2001, volunteers have collected more than 94,000 pounds of seeds and helped restore hardwood forests along nearly 800 miles of streamside land. For more information about the program go to its website at www.growingnative.org.

PVAS Sponsoring "Green" Homebuilding Talk at Cacapon State Park

PVAS's first evening program for Morgan County residents was a great success—more than 40 people came to the Cacapon State Park Lodge the evening of October 12 to hear Wil Hershberger discuss his new book, "The Songs of Insects."

Our next program at the Park will be a talk about "green" home construction the evening of Thursday, November 29. The program will be held in the Daniel Morgan Room of the Park's Lodge starting at 7:00 p.m. Admission will be free and anyone with an interest is welcome to attend.

The speaker will be Jeff Feldman, and his presentation will be an evolution of a talk he gave on the same subject at our September monthly meeting at the NCTC in Shepherdstown.

Using his own home project as an example, he will discuss green building and the importance of environmental considerations in decision-making about new construction, remodeling, and even simple upgrades of existing homes. He will stress practical approaches and

point out not only the environmental benefits of green construction but the potential cost savings for families and individuals.

Feldman is a former environmental educator. He has a BS in Environmental Interpretation from Penn State and an MS in Experiential Learning from Minnesota State University at Mankato. He served five years as a faculty member at Penn State University, and was Program Director and Community Environmental Advocate for the University's Shaver's Creek Environmental Center.

For the past thirteen years, he has run a leadership development and team building training firm called Eagle's View Enterprises.

Remember United Way/ CFC Fund Drives

We want to remind PVAS members that the annual fundraising campaigns of the United Way of the Eastern Panhandle and the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) are underway. Both campaigns will last through December 15.

PVAS receives substantial funding from United Way and CFC each year and encourages its members to give generously to these organizations.

If you are having trouble finding PVAS in this year's CFC catalogue and want to designate PVAS as the recipient of all or part of your CFC contribution, do so simply by entering PVAS's CFC number (29061) on the CFC form .

If you have any questions about this, please contact Kristin Alexander at pvasmail@aol.com or 304-229-9771.



POTOMAC ARTS FESTIVAL

PVAS thanks the following businesses
for their support of this year's
Potomac Arts Festival

Gold:

Jefferson Security Bank



Bronze:

Centra Bank

Supporter:

City National Bank

Nichols DeHaven and Associates
Shepherdstown Sweet Shop

JOIN PVAS TODAY!

We now offer two kinds of memberships:

1. PVAS Local Membership

Here's what you get:

- Access to a wide variety of PVAS programs and events for adults and children.
- Discounts for selected chapter activities, like children's summer camps.
- A subscription to PVAS's newsletter and e-mail alerts about events and programs of special interest.
- ALL your dues stay here to support local PVAS efforts!

To become a local member: Enclose a check for \$20 (\$15 for seniors and students). Please make check out to "PVAS." This fee covers membership for everyone in your household for one year.

2. Dual Membership with National Audubon

You get all the benefits of PVAS membership plus membership in the National Audubon Society, which includes a subscription to *Audubon* magazine. If you select this option, almost all of your dues will go to National Audubon. To obtain a dual membership, enclose a check for \$20 if you are joining NAS for the first time or \$35 to renew an existing NAS membership (\$15 in either case for seniors and students). Make check out to "National Audubon Society."

Membership Form

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: ____ Zip code: _____
 Phone (optional): _____
 E-mail: (optional): _____

Membership Type (check one):

PVAS Local Membership ____
(For PVAS local membership, check the box following if you do NOT want PVAS to share your contact information with National Audubon: ____)

Dual Membership with National Audubon ____

I'd like to get *Valley Views* by e-mail ____ US mail ____ (check one)

.....(Audubon chapter code Y54; source code 79N7)

Clip and mail this form to:

Membership Chair, PVAS
PO Box 578
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Thank you for your support!



RED DOT ALERT

● If a red dot appears on your mailing label, your membership may have expired and this could be your last issue of Valley Views. Take action to renew your Dual membership or Local membership.



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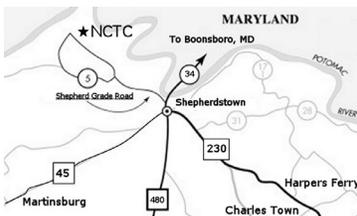


MAIL TO:

November 2007

Printed on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper

Volume 26, Issue 3



The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April, at the US Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), Shepherdstown, WV, in Room 151 Instructional West Building. 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://www.potomacaudubon.org>. PVAS serves the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

PVAS BOARD
 The PVAS Board meets every other month on the first Wednesday of the month (Sept.-June). Meeting location will be announced prior to meetings. These meetings are open to all PVAS members.

PVAS Officers and Board Members

- President: Peter Smith 304 876-1139pvsmith@frontiernet.net
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