

# VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac  
Valley  
Audubon  
Society

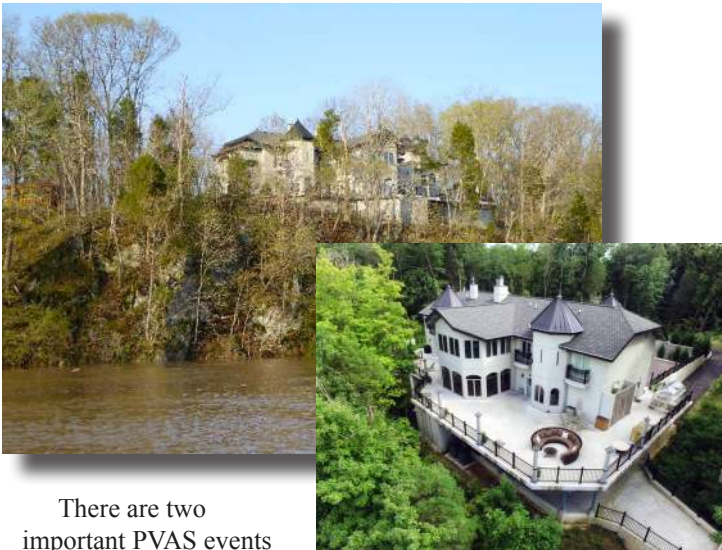
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## President's Note

by Michael Sullivan, PVAS President

Our fiscal year comes to an end this month. But what a year it has been! We are finishing FY 2016/2017 in a very strong position thanks to our loyal and generous members and our very dependable volunteers. Our programs are reaching more and more people, our nature preserves are getting attention, and we have new conservation initiatives under way. Thanks to everyone for making this a great year.



There are two important PVAS events scheduled in June.

The first is our Spring Fundraiser at Graycliff Hall. Please join us from 3 to 6 pm on Saturday June 10<sup>th</sup> for sips, savories and sweets on a terrace overlooking the Potomac River. Who knows? Maybe we'll see a Kingfisher? Please find details and RSVP instructions on our website at <http://www.potomacaudubon.org/event-2559201>.

The second is our Annual PVAS Meeting for Members and Volunteers on June 17<sup>th</sup> at Yankauer Nature Preserve. The event will kick off at 6:00 pm with a short business meeting where we will announce board election results, recognize volunteers, and celebrate Birdathon winners. Immediately following the business portion of the meeting, we'll enjoy BBQ with all the fixin's (and vegetarian options, of course) courtesy of PVAS volunteers.

Please join us for these two important events if you can.

## Director's Report

by Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director

### *This Summer...Explore a PVAS Preserve!*

Are you ready for a summer challenge? A couple of years ago, I challenged all of us (myself included) to get outside and play. I talked about all of the public lands in our area. How tourists from all over the world come to visit our backyard for hiking, rafting, biking...

My challenge this year is for all of us to spend some time on our own properties! PVAS now has 500 acres of preserved green space that include mountaintops, meadows, and marshes, in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan Counties.

Last year we did an on-line survey and asked how often you explore the preserves PVAS manages. Yankauer was most often cited, with some of you visiting there weekly! The other preserves weren't visited nearly as often, and many of you had never been to the preserves at all.

But in that same survey, we asked what program areas you value most within PVAS. 60% of you listed our nature preserves as "essential." So let's go and explore them!

The preserves are open every day of the year during daylight hours. There are summer wildflowers, wood turtles, waterfowl, warblers, and vistas. There are opportunities for quiet, exercise, photography, and journaling.

Bridget Tinsley, our Land Manager, will be spearheading workdays throughout the summer, so if you need a date on the calendar to make a visit happen, you can help her out. Workdays are a great way to get to know the preserves. We'll be scheduling summer field trips to the preserves as well to focus on the natural history of each.

I hope all of us can get out and about to all of the four preserves this summer. We obviously value them. Let's visit them! Descriptions and directions are on our website at [http://potomacaudubon.org/nat\\_preserves](http://potomacaudubon.org/nat_preserves). I hope to see you at a preserve this summer!

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

## Northern Cardinal – *Cardinalis cardinalis*

By Wil Hershberger

Certainly one of the most recognized birds by even the most casual of wildlife watchers, the Northern Cardinal is a real showstopper. The bright red plumage of the male is almost unbelievable when seen in bright sunlight. Females are not to be overlooked either. The subtle browns, suffused with red, is certainly quite a becoming wardrobe. Northern Cardinals are found in every county in West Virginia and Maryland. They are adapted to breed in disturbed areas when succession creates shrubby habitats – urban and suburban yards meet the criteria quite nicely.

In our area, male Northern Cardinals are staking out a claim on territories by mid to late-February. Females that are attracted to his territory will start to build a cup-shaped nest composed of leaves, grasses and twigs. She will soften the twigs by chewing them and bending them around the nest, molding the shape with her body. The female alone builds the nest in a site selected by the pair. Males will often bring nesting material to the busy female as well as bring her food as she works. These first nests take about 2 weeks to complete and are well hidden, built when the first leaves are starting to expand, and are often in a woody shrub, small tree or a bramble thicket. The females will then start laying eggs, one a day with a full clutch being 2-5 eggs. The eggs are creamy white to gray and spotted with brownish markings over the entire eggs, often concentrated at the large end. Once the last egg is in the nest the female will start incubating and remain on the eggs for slightly less than 2 weeks. The eggs hatch on the same day, the young are altricial, dependent on the parents for warmth and food for another 10 days. The female alone broods the young.

While the female is busy caring for the eggs and young, the male is busy protecting his territory from intruders and predators. The male will sing off-and-on throughout the day to proclaim that his territory is occupied and to keep bachelor males away from his mate. Unfortunately, the male Northern Cardinal cannot tell the difference between a real interloper and his reflection. If there are buildings with windows or cars within his territory, the male will see his reflection in the glass or mirrors and do all that he can to drive off this rival. No doubt you have had a Northern Cardinal, Northern Mockingbird, or perhaps an American Robin banging into your windows as if that male wants to come inside. He does not want inside your home or car, he wants to get rid of that intruder. The only thing that you can do, that seems to be successful, is to coat the OUTSIDE of the window or the mirror with soap, opaque paper or plastic so that these males can no longer see their reflection.



The songs of Male Northern Cardinals are very pleasing to our ears – clear whistles, staccato notes, and glissandos are musical and soothing. His songs are sung to attract a mate, defend his territory, and to communicate with his incubating female (<http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/107306>). Sometimes males will end a song with a burry note (<http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/107278>). This appears to be more common when a female is close by. Even females will sing (<http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/100764>). It appears that females sing when the resident male is not having success in driving off an intruder. His constant singing and chipping pulls her off the nest to assist in repelling the interloper in defense of their territory and nest – she does this by singing. Her songs are often not as complex and rich as those of the male, but they are apparently effective. When she is really excited and not having success in driving off the other cardinal, she too will add burry notes to the end of some songs ([http://natureimagesandsounds.com/assets/WH\\_14T0185\\_Northern%20Cardinal%20Female%20song%20and%20burr%20call\\_Berkeley%20Co%20WV.mp3](http://natureimagesandsounds.com/assets/WH_14T0185_Northern%20Cardinal%20Female%20song%20and%20burr%20call_Berkeley%20Co%20WV.mp3)). In this recording, the female was attacking her reflection in a window, as the male does all day long, after several lunges at the reflection she backed off and began to sing – one song with a burry ending. I was amazed that she did that.

Northern Cardinals are still a common breeding and wintering species in our area. They are easily attracted to bird feeders and favor black oil sunflower seeds. They will nest close to houses as long as there is sufficient cover to hide their nest. From a splash of brilliant-red in the winter, to sweet choruses of song in the spring and summer, having Northern Cardinals as neighbors is to be cherished all year long.



Photos of female (top) and male (bottom) Northern Cardinals © Wil Hershberger

## PVAS Events

### Workshop on Field Journaling Set for June 4

PVAS is offering a one-day workshop on field journaling for naturalists on Sunday, June 4. Led by Carolyn Duckworth, a professional writer for the National Park Service, it will be held from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Cool Spring Nature Preserve in southern Jefferson County. It will begin with a brief introduction to field journaling, and then move outdoors for practical experience in journaling the Preserve's flora and fauna.

Field journals have long been used by naturalists to record regular observations of the natural world. Such detailed information, which may include species counts, illustrations, weather patterns, and notable seasonal changes, are used by naturalists for pleasure, scientific, and historic inquiry. Field journals encourage making keen observations, to gain insight and record lasting impressions of the natural world.

The workshop is intended primarily for Master Naturalists, but it is open to anyone with an interest, on a space-available basis. There is no charge, but space is limited to 10 people, and pre-registration is required. Please register on the PVAS website.

This workshop is part of PVAS's "Natural History Workshop" series. These sessions are intended for people who are interested in learning about particular natural history topics in considerable depth but cannot commit to pursue the much more comprehensive natural history education available through PVAS's Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program. That program can take a year or more to complete.

The Cool Spring Preserve is located at 1469 Lloyd Road, about six miles southwest of Charles Town. Detailed directions can be found at on the PVAS website. For more information, contact Krista Hawley at 703-303-1026 or [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org).

### Summer Concerts Are Back

by Erin Shaw

Thanks to the efforts of a dedicated volunteer group, PVAS's evening concert series will be back this summer!

Concerts will be held rain or shine from 6:30pm to 7:30pm every Tuesday in August at Cool Spring's natural amphitheater, and every Tuesday in September at Yankauer's outdoor pavilion. The concert line-up is still being put together, but here is the schedule so far:

August 1: Lucia Valentine

August 8: Todd Coyle

August 15: Jeff & Trudy Roth

August 22: TBD

August 29: Flowers and Birds

(Scooter Scudieri and daughter, Sophia Adara)

September 5: Tom Musselman

September 12: Steve Warner

September 19: The Woods Ukulele Club

September 26: Flowers and Birds

These musicians generously volunteer their time and talent so that all performances will be free of charge and open to all. Please come out to support these fantastic local musicians, and feel free to bring a picnic dinner to enjoy while you listen. Stay tuned for a full schedule. In the meantime, if you would like to help coordinate concerts, recruit musicians, or perform yourself, please contact Erin Shaw at [admin@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:admin@potomacaudubon.org) or (304) 703-2510.

### Volunteer Spotlight

#### Have You Met Kathryn Henry?

Not only is she a retired chemistry professor from Hood College, she is also an avid birder, and champion of getting kids to camp!

For over 10 years, she has chaired the PVAS Scholarship Committee that helps provide financial assistance for children to attend either our own Audubon Discovery Camp, or an overnight camp that excels in nature programming (such as Burgundy Center for Wildlife Studies or Hog Island Family Camp).

Kathryn is a former PVAS Board Member. She was a member of the first PVAS-sponsored Master Naturalist class in 2007, and she has maintained that certification for over 10 years. She and her husband, Don, are now retired, but still busy and often "on the road" attending a Road Scholar program or traveling to visit friends, family, or "nature they haven't yet explored."

We know all of our PVAS volunteers are great! If you know someone who deserves a shout out, please contact Bridget Tinsley at [bridget@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:bridget@potomacaudubon.org).



## PVAS Events

### Mark Your Calendars for August 5 “Singing Insect Walk” with Wil Hershberger

On Saturday, August 5, PVAS will sponsor one of its always-popular “singing insect walks” at a new location: the Cool Spring Nature Preserve. As always, the walk will be led by local naturalist Wil Hershberger, who is coauthor of *The Songs of Insects*, a book and audio CD published by Houghton-Mifflin Company. Wil typically does only one or two of these walks each year. Consequently, this is a rare opportunity to learn first-hand, from a leading expert, about the singing insects heard in this region during the summer months.

These walks are family-oriented events that are especially suited to young children but anyone with an interest is welcome to participate, and there is no fee. However, space will be very limited so those who would like to participate should make a reservation as soon as possible. Register on the PVAS website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org) or contact Krista Hawley at [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org) or 703-303-1026.

The walking group will assemble at 7:30 p.m. in the Cool Spring Preserve parking lot. From there, Hershberger will lead an exploration of the Preserve’s land. Insects likely to be encountered include: tree crickets, several species of meadow katydids, one or two species of round-winged katydids, northern true katydids, oblong-wing katydids, and perhaps some bush katydids.

Those who wish to participate should bring a flashlight, and be prepared to walk through high grass and weeds. Tucking pants legs into socks and spraying them with a DEET-based insect repellent is highly recommended. The walk will not take place if it is raining. The Cool Spring Preserve is located at 1469 Lloyd Road, about six miles southwest of Charles Town. Detailed directions can be found on the PVAS website.

Hershberger, who lives in Hedgesville, is one of the area’s leading naturalists. He has been photographing and recording the natural world for more than a decade and his work has been published in magazines, calendars, and books. We are indeed privileged to be able to present his monthly natural history articles in this newsletter! Wil’s recordings of birds, frogs and insects are archived at the Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. His website can be found at [www.natureimagesandsounds.com](http://www.natureimagesandsounds.com).



Nebraska Conehead © Wil Hershberger

### Sign Up Now for August 10 and 12 Butterfly Events

PVAS is sponsoring a “Butterflies for Beginners” Natural History Workshop the evening of Thursday, August 10. It will be held from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Hospice of the Panhandle facility in Kearneysville. The workshop will be led by Penny Stritch, a self-taught naturalist and photographer, who has created an extensive butterfly garden on her property in Berkeley County. It will cover such topics as identification of butterfly species, developing butterfly habitat, useful field guides, and tips for photographing butterflies.

Two days later, on Saturday August 12, Mrs. Stritch will lead a tour of her butterfly garden from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The tour will be free, and one need not have attended the workshop to join it. However, space will be limited to only 15 people, and everyone who wants to participate (including workshop attendees) must register. Registration for the tour is available on the PVAS website.

The workshop is intended primarily for Master Naturalists, but open to anyone with an interest. It is part of a series of Natural History Workshops, on different natural history topics, the Society is sponsoring in 2017. Pre-registration is required. To register and get directions go to the PVAS website. There will be a fee of \$10 for PVAS members and \$15 for nonmembers.

These Workshops are intended for people who are interested in learning about specific natural history topics in considerable depth but cannot commit to pursue the much more comprehensive natural history education available through PVAS’s Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program, which can take a year or more to complete.

The Hospice facility’s address is 330 Hospice Lane, Kearneysville. Audubon events are held in the main meeting room of the facility’s Main Office building. There is plenty of parking at the facility.

For more information go to [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org) or contact Krista Hawley at [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org) or 703-303-1026.

## PVAS Events

### Valley Views Schedule this Summer

After reviewing feedback from the ANCA consult, one item they suggested we consider is sending out Valley Views bi-monthly instead of monthly. Contributors to Valley Views recently came together for a focused conversation about the newsletter and PVAS's overall communication strategy.

The end result is that, starting in July, we'll be sending out Valley Views every other month. We'll be sure to list all upcoming events for the next two months within each Valley Views so you won't miss anything. We'll also be sending out electronic communications on a regular basis in between the bi-monthly Valley Views newsletter to keep you apprised of PVAS goings-on.

So keep your eyes open for your next Valley Views in your e-mail boxes or mailbox in early August. We'll be in touch via e-mail in the meantime!

### Spring Fundraiser June 10th

Join PVAS for its Annual Spring Fundraiser. The event will take place Saturday, June 10, 2017 from 3:00 to 6:00pm at Graycliff Hall at Shepherds Cove, between Shepherdstown and Martinsburg. This unique building is located high above the Potomac River, and the view is spectacular.

You will be treated to your choice of champagne, wine, beer, or lemonade on the terrace overlooking the Potomac. The Special Events Committee will once again be preparing an elegant array of delicious savory and sweet bites for your pleasure.

Please join us! Ticket prices begin at \$50 per person, and all proceeds go to support PVAS programs. You can purchase the tickets on our website at <http://potomacaudubon.org/event-2559201>. You won't want to miss it!

## Family and Youth Programs

### Youth Programs Volunteers Needed

During the summer, PVAS will be presenting programs at local libraries, and we are looking for volunteers to help share the fun. If you enjoy reading to kids and helping them with hands-on activities, we can use your help! This year's summer reading theme is about building, so PVAS will be helping kids learn about bird nests. The program "Building A Better Nest," will encourage kids to try their hand at building a nest to protect a plastic egg. Programs have been scheduled on June 22, 27, 28 (tentative), July 5, 10, 25, and August 16, and most reading times range between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. depending on each library's needs. This year, we have received requests from libraries in Jefferson, Berkeley, and Washington Counties, and it is possible there will be other programs scheduled.

We also need volunteers for a "Sustainable Energy" program scheduled for Cool Spring Preserve on July 22, from 3-5 p.m. This program is being sponsored by the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library and is focused on helping adults learn ways to "green" their homes; we will have activities for kids as well, so it is really a family event. Among other things, we will have a solar panel demonstration, light bulb comparison using a hand-crank generator, and a talk about how the building at Cool Spring is so energy efficient. Kids will have the opportunity to experiment with solar powered toy cars, and build a wind-powered car. After the formal activities, families will be able to explore the preserve. Volunteers will be helping at the activity stations. Strong knowledge about sustainable energy is not required, but an interest in sharing ways to be "greener" is a definite plus.

And don't forget that "Fireflies, Fiddles, and Frogs" returns on the evening of July 12! For that event, we need help setting up in the afternoon, providing activities for families during the event, and cleaning up after it's all over. To help with any of these programs, contact Ellen Murphy at [Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org).

### Homeschool Programs

We have had a great season of homeschool programs that have drawn in homeschoolers from all over Berkeley and Jefferson Counties. Some topics covered were trees in winter, birds, and camouflage. We are taking a break from these programs for the summer, but will be starting up again in the fall.

Keep an eye out for our fall homeschool programs on our website event calendar and future issues of *Valley Views*.

### Wee Naturalists

Our preschool Wee Naturalist programs this spring have been very popular and concluded with a program about Spring Wildflowers in May.

Look for information on future programs in the coming months, as Wee Naturalist will start up again in the fall.

## Family and Youth Programs

### Spring School Programs Wind Down



When the school year ends, PVAS takes a break from classroom visits and field trips, but we spend the summer creating new lesson plans for next year!

This year, we were privileged to visit classes at three schools on a regular basis: Back Creek Valley Elementary, St. Joseph's School, and Wee Disciples Christian School. This extended program allowed us to develop a relationship with the students, and incorporate nature into a variety of subjects. By using scientific discovery methods, read-aloud books, engineering challenges, and outdoor exploration, the students in all the classes learned to view nature as a regular part of their classroom.

All these classes finished the year with a visit, either to Cool Spring Preserve, Stauffer's Marsh, or Yankauer Nature Preserve. At Stauffer's Marsh, some of the

kindergarten students from Back Creek Valley Elementary actually saw an eagle swoop down and catch a fish out of the water! That's a totally different experience from seeing it on television! News of this extended program has spread and we have had inquiries from other schools about offering the program there as well.

We could not have done programs, especially the field trips, over the past school year without the help from PVAS volunteers. Many, many thanks go to Mary Etta Boesl, Susan Brookreson, Mary Duke, Karen Fuegi, Lisa Kovatch, Elizabeth Morningstar, Mary Lynn Robinson, Mary Beth Ross, Erin Shaw, Flo Wilbik, Carol Winkler, and Alison Zak.

During this school year, we served 1038 students in 52 classrooms; 200 of those students were in the extended program! In addition, we presented our new sustainable energy program to 382 fifth graders in 17 classrooms. We have already been hearing from teachers about reserving a date for programs next fall!

For more information about our school programs or to schedule one, contact Ellen Murphy at [Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org).



### Watershed Programs Wrap Up for the School Year

This academic year, the watershed education program was taught in a total of twelve schools, reaching sixty-one classes, and over fifteen-hundred students. Four instructors taught classes in Jefferson, Berkeley, and Morgan Counties.

At the end of each program, we leave the classroom to participate in a long-awaited field trip day. Students, teachers, chaperones, and amazing PVAS volunteers spend a fun morning searching for and identifying live macros, testing the water quality of local waterways, playing games, and exploring nature together. The macroinvertebrate station is a consistent favorite, involving the enthusiastic observation of real mayflies, craneflies, midges, and very exciting vertebrates, like salamanders!

For some schools, a traditional field trip is not practically possible, so we bring an adapted version of the experience to the school site. Last month, Amy and Alison captured creek critters and transported them to a school so students wouldn't miss out on observing the animals they had been studying in the classroom since January. Many students have no idea that the creeks flowing through their backyards and along the roadsides are teeming with such interesting wildlife. Watershed field trips may even provide the opportunity for some kids to participate in the rite-of-passage many of us remember from our own childhoods: catching their first crayfish!

## Camp Programs

### Summer Camps

There are just a few spots left in some of our summer camp sessions, so register now before they are all full. Our camp sessions are offered at both Yankauer Nature Preserve in Berkeley County and at Cool Spring Preserve in Jefferson County, WV.

The following camps still have available spots:

**Yankauer Nature Preserve**  
Camp Survivor | July 17 - 21

**Cool Spring Preserve**  
Mud Pies and Dragonflies | July 10-14

**Preschoolers (Ages 3-6)**  
Nature Buddies | June 5-7 (3 days)

**Teens and Pre-teens**  
Outdoor Adventurer | June 19-23



Details about camp sessions and online registration can be found at: [www.PotomacAudubon.org/discovercamp](http://www.PotomacAudubon.org/discovercamp).

### Summer Camp Staff Preview

We are super excited to introduce this summer's team of camp counselors!

**Hunter Bodwell:** Hunter is a returning counselor; this will be his second year. He has been a long time camper and has worked as Junior staff for a handful of summers as well. Hunter just finished his freshman year at WVU where he is a member of the WVU marching band.

**Maria Lagrotteria:** Maria has been a long time camper and has worked as Junior staff for quite a few summers. This spring she graduated from Middletown High School. This will be her first year working as a camp counselor for PVAS. Maria hopes to study politics and astronomy in college.

**Nick Petrarca:** This will be Nick's first year working with PVAS. Nick graduated from Washington High School this spring. Nick is involved in Future Farmers of America and his local 4H club, and has worked as a senior counselor for the West Virginia Sheriff's Association Youth Leadership Academy. Nick aspires to have a career in the Park Service.

**Justin Kline:** Justin just graduated from Shepherd University this spring with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies. Justin owns his own business where he teaches percussion to students of all ages. This is his first year working with PVAS as well.



## Birding News and Events

### International Migratory Bird Day Celebration

The Potomac Valley Audubon Society celebrated 2017's International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) with a series of bird walks from Saturday, May 6 through Mother's Day on Sunday, May 14. Enthusiastic birders had ample opportunities to bird that week with walks offered at 10 locations in 4 counties: Washington (MD), Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan (WV).

The weather cooperated with sunny skies and mild temperatures for much of the week, although rain did cancel Joette Borzik's May 13<sup>th</sup> walk at Rolling Ridge Foundations Land. The celebration kicked off on May 6<sup>th</sup> with two walks: one on the C&O Cushwa Basin near Williamsport, MD, and one at the National Conservation Training Center just outside Shepherdstown. The week continued with a Cerulean Warbler walk at Eidolon Nature Preserve, and walks at Claymont Historic Mansion, Sideling Hill, Grabill Farm, Shannondale Spings WMA, and two walks at Cool Spring Preserve.

The International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) Celebration is held once a year at the peak of the spring migration. IMBD was created in the early 1990s at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center, and first celebrated at the National Zoo in Washington, D.C. in 1993. IMBD helps raise awareness of the spectacular journey migratory birds take between their summer and winter homes. The unique nature of migratory birds highlights the importance of the United States, Mexico, the Caribbean, and South and Central America collaborating and working towards international conservation efforts and environmental education. PVAS is pleased to join in this celebration of the migratory bird's amazing accomplishments.

A big thank you goes out to all our trip leaders for getting up early and leading our walks. Our devoted leaders of the 2017 IMBD were Sandy Sagalkin, Lynne Wiseman, Jim Farley, Joette Borzik, Beth Poole, Bob Dean and Jon Boone. We appreciate the support and enthusiasm PVAS's volunteers and community give to IMBD and we look forward to many more years of education, conservation and enjoyment!

### June 3 C&O Canal Bird Walk

PVAS is teaming up again this year with the National Park Service to offer a bird walk along the C&O Canal towpath in the Williamsport MD area on Saturday, June 3. The walk, led by local birding expert Sandy Sagalkin, will begin at 7:30 a.m. at the Canal Visitor Center at Cushwa Basin, and it will last about two hours. It will be free and open to anyone with an interest, regardless of their birding skills, and will involve easy walking over level ground. Children and families are welcome. Pre-registration is encouraged but not required; registration is available on the PVAS website.

The Canal towpath offers good birding opportunities, since it is a major stop for migrating birds and neotropical birds that breed in our area. Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring insect repellent and drinking water. Binoculars will be provided if needed.

Directions to the Williamsport Canal Visitor Center can be found on the Canal website at [www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/williamsportvisitorcenter.htm](http://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/williamsportvisitorcenter.htm). The walk may be canceled or postponed if weather conditions are poor. For more information, contact Sandy at [sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com) or 240-291-6465.

### Join Deb Hale for June 14 Harpers Ferry Bird Walk

Deb Hale will lead a PVAS bird walk in the Schoolhouse Ridge section of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park on Wednesday, June 14. The walk will begin at 7:00 a.m. and last about three hours. It will be free, and anyone with an interest is welcome, regardless of birding skills. Children are also welcome.

Participants will meet at the North Schoolhouse Ridge parking area. From Route 340 just west of Harpers Ferry, turn north on Bakerton Road (Route 27) and go about three-quarters of a mile to the parking area on the left. The trip will involve about 2.5 miles of walking through fields and unpaved roads, along mostly level terrain. Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for prevailing weather conditions, and bring water, sunscreen and insect repellent; binoculars are available for anyone who needs them. The trip will be canceled in the event of bad weather.

Pre-registration is strongly encouraged but not required. To register, go to the PVAS website. For more information contact Deb at [debhale72@gmail.com](mailto:debhale72@gmail.com) or 304-535-1528.

### June 28 Bird Walk at Hagerstown Kiwanis Park

PVAS, the City of Hagerstown, and the Washington County Bird Club will sponsor a bird walk at Hagerstown's new Kiwanis Park on Wednesday, June 28. The walk, led by local birding expert Sandy Sagalkin, will start at 8:00 a.m. and last one and a half hours. It will be free and open to everyone, but pre-registration is required. Register and get full information on the City of Hagerstown's website at [www.hagerstownmd.org/birdwalks](http://www.hagerstownmd.org/birdwalks).

The trip will focus on a variety of birds and will cover easy terrain. It will be a perfect trip for beginner birders and will include working on birding skills. However, all levels of birders will be welcome. The Kiwanis park is located at 371 Dynasty Drive in Hagerstown, behind the medical professional buildings on Opal Court, off Eastern Boulevard.

For more information, contact Sandy at [sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com) or 240-291-6465.



## Birding News and Events

### Three Antietam Battlefield Bird Walks: June 24, July 22, and August 19



PVAS will sponsor three summer bird walks along the Final Attack Trail on the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg, MD on Saturday, June 24, Saturday, July 22, and Saturday, August 19. They are all free and open to anyone with an interest, regardless of birding skills. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied by an adult.

Participants should plan to meet walk leader Sandy Sagalkin at the Burnside Bridge at 7:30 a.m. on each Saturday. The walks will last about 2 1/2 to 3 hours, and cover mostly level terrain. Everyone should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring water and insect repellent. PVAS will provide binoculars for those who do not have their own.

Various trip details could change depending on weather or recent bird sightings, so watch the PVAS website and your inbox for possible updates.

The trail the walks will follow is in the area where the Union Army made its final advance to drive the Confederate Army from Maryland on September 17, 1862, only to be turned back by A.P. Hill's final Confederate counterattack. It is also the site of an extensive effort by the Antietam National Battlefield to restore and preserve native grasslands on the Otto Farm fields in the Battlefield's southwest corner.

Pre-registration is strongly encouraged but not required. Easy registration is available on the PVAS website. For more information, contact Sandy at [sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com) or 240-291-6465.

## Conservation

### Native Plant Sale Success

The Second Annual Native Plant Sale on May 20th was a great success thanks to wonderful vendors, volunteers, and community. Over 700 individual native plants, trees and shrubs were sold, ensuring that native pollinators will have more habitat for years to come. Vendors of beautiful native plants included Bluebell Ridge Nursery in Sharpsburg, MD, Sustainable Solutions of Shepherdstown, WV, and Sunshine Farm and Nursery of Rennick, WV. PVAS offered butterfly weed provided by Sunny Meadows Farm of Sharpsburg, MD, and native trees provided by Stadler Nursery in Frederick, MD. The butterfly weed and swamp milkweed order was 250% larger than last year's and still we sold out again!

Additionally, we had educational booths about beekeeping, and one for children about seed germination. Two talented artists joined us for the plant sale; Shary's Garden Art from Berkeley Springs, and Cooper Captures photography from Shepherdstown. Next year we hope to expand the event to sell more plants and include more vendors that celebrate and raise awareness for the value of our native pollinator species and the plants they need.

Our successful day was made possible with the help of our wonderful PVAS/ Master Naturalist volunteers: Paul Breitenbach, Karlin Sink, Shawn Walker, Eldon and Ginny Winston, Emily Gross, Steve Sensabaugh, Lisa Kovatch, Diane Boward, Kat Cooper, Colleen Young, and Joy Bridy. The team spirit and positive attitudes made the day very enjoyable, and made the vendors feel welcome and valued. A special thank you to the Shepherdstown Community Club's Back Alley Garden Tour and Tea for their collaboration and support in publicity, event coordination, and town permitting.



## Conservation

### Making Swift Progress for a Better Community!

Shepherdstown may be the oldest town in West Virginia, but plenty of new things are happening here! For a place with significant historic preservation, it's a wonder how much progress and ingenuity is simultaneously fostered here. Witness recent progressive actions such as creating urban habitat for a charismatic migratory bird species, exploring innovative ideas about conservation, and creating strong partnerships with diverse stakeholders. The success of the PVAS Chimney Swift "Raise the Roost" project highlights why Shepherdstown and the greater Eastern Panhandle is a wonderful community to live in. Whether you love where you live, or are a bird enthusiast, PVAS hopes that you continue to stay up to date on this community conservation project.

The month of May saw the removal of Sara Cree Hall, and the chimney that nearly 1,400 Chimney Swifts roosted in last year. As this site was deconstructed, the Chimney Swifts busily established themselves in Knutti Boiler Chimney, which was uncapped last February. This new site is one of two that the Chimney Swifts will have access to this year! The other will be the new roosting

tower that is currently being designed and will be constructed this summer on the north campus of Shepherd University. This project is a sizeable effort to improve habitat for Chimney Swifts, a near threatened species that has suffered a staggering population decline due to loss of habitat. If you appreciate living in a progressive community that is mindful of conservation and preservation of threatened species, PVAS invites you to help advocate for Chimney Swifts.

Ten ways to make "Swift" progress:

1. Look up! Discover active Chimney Swift habitats and report them to [bridget@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:bridget@potomacaudubon.org)
2. Keep your brick chimney open! Uncap it, cap it with a 12-inch gap for swifts to enter, or leave it open.
3. Build a small tower on your property to provide nesting habitat.
4. Become a citizen scientist and help with Chimney Swift bird counts.
5. Learn how to return a baby bird to its nest if it falls down on your hearth.
6. Keep your chimney damper closed March through October when the Chimney Swifts are here.
7. Clean your chimney before the birds arrive in March/April or after they leave in October.
8. Educate others about Chimney Swifts.
9. Donate to the PVAS "Raise the Roost" project.
10. Celebrate insectivores! Chimney Swifts eat a third of their weight in insects each day.



*The Knutti Boiler Chimney*



### Pollinator Habitat Restoration Underway

PVAS received a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore Monarch Butterfly habitat in Jefferson & Berkeley Counties. Meadows at Briggs Animal Adoption Center, Stauffer's Marsh and Cool Spring Preserves will be managed to create quality pollinator habitat.

This work involves removal of invasive and undesirable plant species, establishing native pollinator friendly plants, such as milkweed, goldenrod, Penstemon and Bee Balm, as well as ecological monitoring. Grassland birds also benefit from pollinator friendly meadows, and allow for increased entertainment for hikers and nature lovers alike. PVAS is pleased to be part of this important effort to promote Monarch Butterfly habitat, and to improve the ecological function of our nature preserves.



## Notes from the Preserves

## Volunteers Needed at Cool Spring Preserve

PVAS is looking for a few good members! The following are areas in which we need help.

**Mowing:** We are looking for an individual to help mow the trails and open grass areas around the preserve every other week for the summer. A ride-on mower will be provided.

**Garden Maintenance:** Do you like gardening? We are in need of an individual to help us weed and care for the garden around the Nature Center every couple of weeks, and also help us plant some more native plant species.

**Compost Bin:** We are looking for a handy person to help construct a compost bin at Cool Spring Preserve. We will provide the materials and support!

Please contact Amy Moore, PVAS's Cool Spring Site Manager, at [amy@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:amy@potomacaudubon.org) if you are interested in volunteering for any of these projects.

## Water at Yankauer

We are one step further in getting water running at Yankauer thanks to Comstock Plumbing! Kristen and Chip of Comstock Plumbing came to Yankauer on April 29, 2017, to dig a trench from the wellhead to the pavilion to run the underground pipes. They donated their time and service on a Saturday to help us finish the project.

We're almost there!

*Kristen and Chip of Comstock Plumbing at Yankauer on April 29, 2017*



## Camp Wishlist

**Bins:** If you have ever had a look inside the Yankauer shed, you know that PVAS loves bins! We are always in need of plastic bins with lids to keep our supplies dry and mouse-free! If you are trying to de-clutter and have any bins that you want to donate, we'll gladly take them off your hands!

**Craft Supplies:** Do you have any craft supplies that you are trying to get rid of? Popsicle sticks, corks, yarn, wax and clothespins are just a few examples of items we often use for summer camp crafts. We are always happy to receive craft supplies of all kinds!

For donations, contact Amy Moore, PVAS's Cool Spring Site Manager and Summer Camp Director, at [amy@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:amy@potomacaudubon.org).

## Annual Meeting and Picnic!

Members and Volunteers are invited to our Annual Member Meeting: Saturday, June 17, 6:00pm at the Yankauer Preserve. Once again, dinner is being provided by Gary and Diane Sylvester. You'll enjoy Pork BBQ with all the fixins. Vegetarian options will also be available. Drinks, plates, silverware, cups and napkins will also be provided.

The event will begin with a very brief business meeting to elect board members, acknowledge contributions of board members who are stepping off the board, and to recognize Birdathon winners and dedicated volunteers.

This is a members-and-volunteers-only (and free) event. For planning purposes, please RSVP using the website's event calendar (<http://potomacaudubon.org/event-2532397>) or leave a message at 304-676-3397 to let us know how many from your party to expect for dinner. We hope you will join us!

## Potomac Valley Master Naturalists

### Third Annual Master Naturalist Spring Gathering

The Third Annual Master Naturalist Spring Gathering was held on Sunday, April 30 at Cacapon State Park. About twenty-five Master Naturalists and guests enjoyed the beautiful day, and a host of activities.

The day kicked off with a bird walk, led by MN and birder extraordinaire, Lynne Wiseman, and joined by guests of the park as well as members of the community. Thirty-four species of birds were sighted, including a Red-headed Woodpecker, one of the highlights of the walk.

The theme for the day was “A Leopold Spring,” and, in keeping with the theme, MNs listened to readings from *A Sand County Almanac*, and built six Aldo Leopold benches. Special thanks to Paul Breitenbach for overseeing the project, buying the materials and precutting the wood. Our bench-builders did a great job, and, despite concerns to the contrary, the benches fit into their cars!



MNs and guests enjoyed a potluck lunch, enlivened by two educational presentations. Tanner Haid from the Cacapon Institute led a presentation and discussion on urban forestry, and the benefits of tree planting. For fun he brought his hand-made Stream Cleaner pinball machine. Becki Jones from the Berkeley/Jefferson Master Gardeners spoke on creating a butterfly habitat and helping Monarch butterfly conservation. She presented information on nectar and host plants, and provided handouts with resource information.

For dessert, Clark Dixon made his famous Dutch Oven fire-pit cobbler, which was quickly devoured. He also led a hike after lunch, to complete the day's events.

One of the day's ongoing activities was a service project: working on the future native plant garden behind the new addition to the Nature Center. MNs made a big dent in the removal of rocks (and there were many!), making way for the laying of topsoil, raking, and seed planting to proceed.

Many thanks to all the presenters, program leaders, volunteer helpers, (Steve Sensabaugh, J.P. Miller, and Kris Phillips), and all of the attendees who made the day a success!



### Did You Know...?

#### *Making up a Core Class*

Master Naturalist students occasionally miss a core class, and these must be made up. In that event, the student has two choices: he/she can wait until it is offered in the following year's course, or he/she can take it when offered at another chapter during the current year. In the second case, the procedure is as follows: first, the student is to notify the PVMN Chair of the availability of the course. The Chair, in turn, will contact the coordinator of the chapter offering the class, and request a space in the class for the student. Once the student has completed the class, the instructor or coordinator will confirm completion by signing and dating the Master Naturalist's class form.

There is no additional cost for classes taught at other chapters, as all who are enrolled in Master Naturalist program are entitled to take make-up classes offered by another chapter.

### PVMN Instructors Needed!

Do you have knowledge of a particular natural history subject or activity that you would like to share with others? Renee Fincham, Cacapon State Park Naturalist, welcomes your participation at the Cacapon State Park Nature Center.

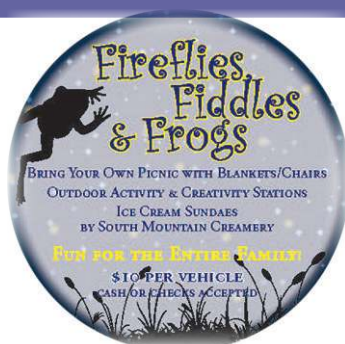
Contact her at [Renee.M.Fincham@wv.gov](mailto:Renee.M.Fincham@wv.gov), stop by the nature center, or call (304) 258-1022 for more information, and to receive a volunteer interest application.

This is yet another way for Master Naturalists to earn volunteer service hours.

## Fiddles, Fireflies and Frogs – Save the DATE!

On Wednesday, July 12<sup>th</sup>, PVAS will host its Third Annual “Fireflies, Fiddles and Frogs” family event. Bring your own supper and blanket to have a picnic, then enjoy lots of outdoor fun activities with the kids. We are very fortunate that Wild Goose Farm will be hosting the event again this year.

The event will begin at 6pm and go ‘til dark. The fee will be \$10/car and will include all activities and the very popular South Mountain Creamery ice cream! Specifics will be available at [www.PotomacAudubon.org](http://www.PotomacAudubon.org) as the event gets closer and as details come together! We hope to see you there, rain or shine!



## JOIN PVAS TODAY!

ALL of your dues will stay here to support local PVAS efforts and help us grow! And here's what you'll get:

- Member discount to many PVAS programs and events.
- A subscription to *Valley Views*, the PVAS newsletter.
- Free or reduced admission to participating nature centers and/or their programs across the country.
- E-mail alerts about events and programs (upon request).
- An invitation to a PVAS Members annual gathering.
- Discounts to participating **local businesses**.

Details available at [potomacaudubon.org/member](http://potomacaudubon.org/member)

To become a local member, send in the form below and enclose a check for \$20 (\$15 for seniors and students). Make the check out to “PVAS.” This fee covers membership for everyone in your household for one year. For details, go to: <http://potomacaudubon.org/member>.

### Membership Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*To save postage costs, PVAS regularly sends its newsletter by e-mail. You can be assured that we do not share email addresses with anyone. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by U.S. mail check here: \_\_\_\_.*

**Clip and mail this form to:**

Membership Chair, PVAS

PO Box 578

Shepherdstown, WV 25443



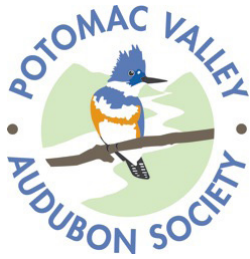
### If you'd rather join the National Audubon Society:

Some people prefer National Audubon Society membership, which includes a subscription to the Society's Audubon magazine. To become a National member, go to the Society's website at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) and click on “join.” If you join National Audubon and reside in Berkeley, Jefferson or Morgan counties in West Virginia, or in Washington County Maryland, you will automatically become a member of PVAS and have access to our events, an e-mail copy of newsletter and e-mail alerts. However almost all of your dues payments will go to the National Audubon Society; only a small percentage will go to PVAS.

## Riverpalooza!

**Go birding by boat on the Shenandoah with Elliot and Nancy Kirshbaum as part of the Potomac Riverkeeper Network's RiverPalooza 2017.**

**For details and registration, go to <http://www.potomacriverkeepernetwork.org/?event=riverpalooza-june5-birdwatchingfloat>.**



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The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April. Programs are free and open to the public. For additional information about PVAS or its programs and activities, please contact any of the board members listed here or see <http://www.potomacaudubon.org>. PVAS serves the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

**PVAS BOARD**  
 PVAS Board meet-  
 ings take place the  
 first Thursday of  
 the month (Sep-  
 tember through  
 June). Meetings  
 are open to all  
 PVAS members.  
 Please contact  
 the President or  
 Vice President if  
 you would like to  
 attend.

**PVAS Officers and Board Members** (Year of term expiration in parentheses)

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 Vice President (*acting*): Jane Vanderhook (2017)..... janehook@frontiernet.net  
 Secretary: Diana Gaviria (2018) ..... jpikester@comcast.net  
 Treasurer: Dan Cogswell (2017) ..... daniel.cogswell@gmail.com  
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