



– 2024 –
**ANNUAL
REPORT**

*...people dedicated to
preserving, restoring,
and enjoying
the natural world
through education
and action.*

.....
www.PotomacAudubon.org

681.252.1387

ABOUT US

Potomac Valley Audubon Society (PVAS) is a non-profit conservation and education organization serving Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan Counties in WV and Washington County, MD. Established in 1982, the group continues to grow significantly and strategically.

PVAS manages four nature preserves, now totaling 580 acres, where wildlife can count on preserved habitat and people can enjoy quiet contemplation, exercise, and exploration. The preserves are also used for educational programs, summer camps, nature and art workshops, bird walks, and other events related to our mission: *preserving, restoring, and enjoying the natural world through education and action.*

PVAS partners with land trusts, public agencies, schools, governmental entities, and other non-profits to steward the local landscape and reach new audiences. We value biodiversity in nature, and we recognize the importance of diversity across our organization. Diversity, inclusion, and equity are essential to our community and to our mission.

Each year we produce an annual report to share our accomplishments as we work to build a community of knowledgeable, motivated and capable environmental citizens; steward and protect sensitive habitats; and provide opportunities to learn about and explore the natural world.

PVAS can only accomplish so much because of its generous donors, members, and volunteers. Thank you.

Sandy Brown, *President*
Kristin Alexander, *Executive Director*



PVAS's growing staff:

Top, left to right: Sonja Melander (Associate Director of Education), Tony Troxel (Facilities Assistant), Lindsey Kesecker (Administrative Assistant), Amy Thomas (Lead Teacher/Naturalist)

Middle, left to right: Laurel Schwartz (Watershed Programs Coordinator and Camp Director), Kristin Alexander (Executive Director), Ellen Kinzer (Fundraising and Communications Manager)

Front: Katelyn "KC" Walters (Associate Director of Conservation and Operations)

PRESERVING



The year provided PVAS with a unique opportunity to preserve and protect the remaining fragile marsh at Cool Spring. Linda Case, who owned 18 acres adjacent to the preserve, offered us the opportunity to purchase her home and surrounding land for a price significantly below market value. We made a plan, procured a loan, and took the plunge. A unique ecosystem made of significant springs that host rare plant and animal species will be protected in perpetuity thanks to Linda's generosity. The entirety of Cool Spring Preserve – now 74 acres – is thanks to her vision, and we're honored she has entrusted us with this unique and rare habitat. PVAS is in the process of selling the residential portion of Linda's property, so by the end of 2024, PVAS will once again be debt-free while protecting 11 acres of precious wildlife habitat for rare species found at and around the marsh.



Balancing visitor needs while protecting the marsh at Cool Spring is always on our mind. PVAS received a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) to fund an infrastructure concept plan that will allow us to expand the parking lot, improve trail surfaces, and incorporate additional green infrastructure. PVAS staff presented the plan to the CBT and partners at the award announcement in DC.



PVAS was on the ground training volunteers and community members how to control Spotted Lanternfly populations and other invasive pests at the preserves. New volunteers were also trained as Weed Warriors and Community Scientists to help with removing invasives, trimming trails, and collecting scientific data.



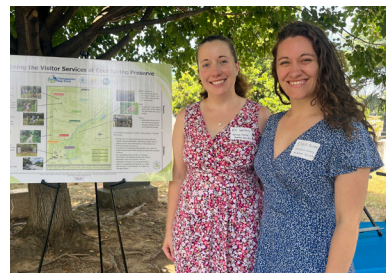
The beavers at Cool Spring helped maintain the marsh's water levels in spite of the summer drought and kept PVAS staff and volunteers busy protecting significant trees along Bullskin Run with fencing.



We have entered into a new Compatible Use Authorization with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to continue PVAS's preservation and conservation efforts at Stauffer's Marsh.



*Photo By: Wil Hershberger,
Nature Images and Sounds ©*



*Photo By: Randy Hope,
Photographer*



RESTORING



Partners and volunteers are critical to all we do at the four preserves we manage. 38 workdays were held with over 150 volunteers providing skills and labor!



The two native plant sales placed 1,592 native plants in the hands of motivated conservation gardeners. The fall and spring sales included presentations by local experts about the benefits native plants. Sunny Meadows Garden Center continues to generously host these sales.



The Case Nature Center now has a “Living Roof” to provide shelter for the back patio. It was possible by grants from the Chesapeake Bay Trust, Detlev and Mary Ellen Preissler Fund for the Arts, Music, Design, and Nature through the Eastern WV Community Foundation, and a generous donation from Mina Goodrich and Larry Dean. In keeping with our native plant efforts, the roof ecosystem was inspired by the shale barrens found in West Virginia for the plants’ shallow roots and tolerance for dry conditions.



At Yankauer, the Cedar Loop continued to be improved with new lumber for trail liners thanks to the volunteers at Day of Caring. The trail was becoming uneven and these improvements have made it safer for wheelchairs and strollers.



This fall, over 1,000 Chimney Swifts were observed using the tower PVAS constructed on Shepherd University’s campus on a single evening – a new record, by far. We even discovered a nest inside the tower this year for the first time which tells us its being used for both reproduction and migration! In addition to our annual “Swift Night Out” in August, the project was featured in an NCTC training about community collaborations with 50 people from all over the country visiting the tower.



To help manage our growing land stewardship responsibilities, Bob Schwartz, Restoration Ecologist, was contracted to assist PVAS with tree plantings, invasive removal, establishing the green roof, and maintaining pollinator demonstration gardens at Cool Spring Preserve.



PVAS participated in the WV DEP Make it Shine initiative and removed enough irrigation hose from Cool Spring Preserve’s long-gone orchards to fill a 250 cubic foot trailer with trash. Community members with the Charles Town Rotary and Proctor and Gamble participated in this volunteer event.



At Eidolon, we are monitoring the impact of Spongy Moths on the mature oak forest to inform future management strategies and needs. Also at Eidolon, the parking lot was expanded to accommodate additional visitors enjoying the 354-acre preserve.



RESTORING

ENJOYING



PVAS was honored to be recognized by Celebrating Healthy West Virginia, a program of the WV State Health Department. This group supports the efforts organizations like ours are making across West Virginia to make it a healthier place to live, learn, work, eat, and play.



Over 100 participants enjoyed artistic endeavors thanks to 24 volunteer-led programs including nature journaling, sketching, painting, crafting, and nature photography.



Almost 100 people explored the natural world on Wellness Walks at the C&O Canal, Frog Hollow Trail, Harper's Ferry National Historical Park, Sam Michael's Park, Antietam National Battlefield, and some beautiful private properties as well!



181 runners and walkers participated in our 24th annual "This Race is for the Birds!" raising nearly \$20,000 thanks to participants and sponsors. The event provides beautiful 5K and 10K courses through fields and forests at Broomgrass Community in Berkeley County.



34 free bird walks were provided in 2024, led almost entirely by volunteers. Walks were offered at the USGS Eastern Ecological Science Center, Cool Spring Preserve, Rolling Ridge Conservancy, and Claymont Retreat Center. PVAS is grateful to the knowledgeable and enthusiastic volunteers who make these birding activities possible.



Walks and workshops with varied themes such as wildflowers, full moon, insect sounds, monarchs, birds, spiders, and other topics were met with great enthusiasm by 322 participants. PVAS began training new volunteer hosts to help grow these programs.



PVAS tripled the impact of its "Nature in the Neighborhood" program serving 442 children this year. This year's partners included local libraries, the Ranson Community Garden, and the Gateway Children's Garden. We also worked with the Boys & Girls Club of the Eastern Panhandle, and CASA of the Eastern Panhandle. Aimed at reaching a more diverse audience than our summer day camps, the programs were completely free to participants thanks to grant funding.*



PVAS's annual Founder's Day picnic was an opportunity for members to gather and celebrate the accomplishments of the year. Birdathon winners, board members, and PVAS Founder, Jean Neely, were recognized at the event. All who came enjoyed delicious food provided by volunteers.

*See Grants section at end of report.



ENJOYING

EDUCATING



We've seen a significant increase in demand for our programming, and have improved registration systems for teachers and individuals. This fall, we doubled the number of AmeriCorps Service Members to respond to the additional program requests!



The watershed program reached 1,740 students – nearly every 4th grader in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan Counties – thanks to grant funding.* Each 4th grade class at Mill Creek and Eagle School Intermediate Schools planted a tree or shrub at Poor House Farm Park as part of their Watershed Field Trip, in partnership with Cacapon Institute and the Berkeley County Public Service Stormwater District.



We served an additional 2,000 children through other K-5th grade school programs that include topics such as birds, trees, insects, worms, skulls, and more. All programs are designed around WV Curriculum Standards to help teachers meet their required objectives. All of these programs were provided free to schools thanks to grant funding.* :

"I don't even want to go to lunch because I don't want this field trip to end." - 2nd grader

"We've been learning all day! You didn't notice?!?" - 2nd grader



Audubon Discovery Camp saw 382 individual campers, plus 47 counselors-in-training. Several counselors were campers as kids, demonstrating the positive and lasting impact our camp has on children. Campers enjoyed exploring, learning, and playing all summer at both Cool Spring and Yankauer Preserves. We extended the summer camp season to 10 weeks to meet the community demand which included eleven unique camp themes.



This fall, we introduced "School's Out" Day Camps to provide childcare and education opportunities for families on days that public schools are not in session. It's good for the kids AND the caregivers!



The Potomac Valley Master Naturalists trained 20 new candidates in 2024 and provided almost 4,000 hours of conservation-related volunteer service to the community! This year our local chapter hosted the state-wide WV Master Naturalist Conference at Cacapon State Park with great success, and several PVAS staff presented.



Monthly lectures were offered in hybrid format to ensure accessibility of these informative presentations. We are so grateful to our talented presenters for sharing their knowledge and passion for their topics. A special thank you goes to the USFWS National Conservation Training Center for partnering with us on two presentations, and to Hospice of the Panhandle for hosting the others.



In September 2023, we piloted a new monthly program called "Turtle Time!" Visitors were invited to help us feed PVAS's turtle ambassadors and learn about their adaptations and conservation concerns. The program has continued to attract new people each time. 460 people were reached in 2024!



86 people participated in our "Wee Naturalist" program, geared toward young children and a loving adult to explore the natural world together. This fall we morphed this program into "Trail Trekkers" at Cool Spring and Yankauer and added "Forest Storytime" at Yankauer to broaden our reach. 50 people attended the inaugural sessions in October!

* See grant funding at the end of this report.



EDUCATING

INVESTING

As you saw in the Preserving section of this report, PVAS took a giant leap of faith this year when it was presented with an opportunity to protect the most fragile and precious portion of the Cool Spring Marsh by purchasing 18 acres well below market value.

Our donors and members encouraged us to move forward with this purchase, and several donors and grantors* provided funding to help us cover closing costs and other expenses. We are so grateful to our donors for giving us the confidence needed to purchase land for the first time in our history to ensure its preservation.

The downpayment on the property (\$50K) took a bite out of our savings, and the bridge loan was not taken on lightly, but the Board agreed it was a worthwhile cause and a calculated risk. The short-term financial investment will come to an end, but the investment in conservation is forever.

Compared to last year our cash is down due to the investment of the new property and the related expenses. You'll see the impact of the acquisition on our assets and liabilities as well.

Expenses increased significantly in the 2024 fiscal year. This is partly due to inflation, but mostly demonstrates a strategic, planned investment in the AmeriCorps program and payroll during the 2024 fiscal year. Additional program fees, donations and grants will help bring the income back into balance in the near future.

From the annual auction to the lovely fundraisers at Sundogs B&B, hosted by Peggy Bowers and David Plummer, your continued encouragement and sustenance enable our growth. Your support and participation allow us to inspire conservation and stewardship actions and help us manage the four nature preserves actively and thoughtfully for the benefit of people and wildlife. We continue to be awed and humbled by your generosity.

We send out a heartfelt thank you to all who have generously donated, those who have included PVAS in your wills for future gifts, and those who have given through generous in-kind service and volunteerism. We could not accomplish nearly as much as we do without your support, and we are truly grateful.

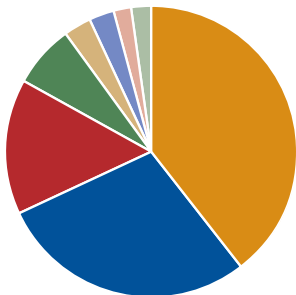


Statement of Financial Position, Fiscal Year 2024

ASSETS	2023	2024
Cash and cash equivalents	\$423,250	\$313,696
Property & equipment	\$592,713	\$680,464
Other Assets	\$9,514	\$526,608
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,111,177	\$1,610,685
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$18,397	\$541,372
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$1,092,780	\$1,069,313

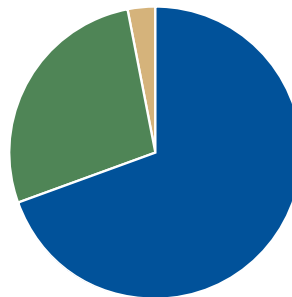
Fiscal Year September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024

PVAS Income: \$525,664



■ Contributions \$209,402 (40%)	■ Memberships \$14,254 (3%)
■ Programs \$154,493 (29%)	■ Other revenue \$14,203 (3%)
■ Grants \$80,385 (15%)	■ Investment Income \$9,520 (2%)
■ Special Events \$35,194 (7%)	■ Rental \$8,213 (2%)

PVAS Expenses: \$584,508



■ Program Services \$401,555 (69%)
■ Management & General \$150,817 (26%)
■ Fundraising \$32,136 (5%)

Complete audited financial statements and 990 are available at www.potomacaudubon.org/about/finances

Figures do not include in-kind support.

Contributions received September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024

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Mina Goodrich
Ellen & Kevin Murphy

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 Rodney & Cindy Woods
 Timothy Yates
 Anne Young



MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Janet & Piers Ady
 In memory of
 Clark Dixon
 Verna G. Anson
 In memory of
 Christopher Anson
 Verna G. Anson
 In memory of
 Peter Anson
 Kathy Bilton
 In memory of
 Adolph & Mary Jo
 Donald &
 Sandra Campbell
 In memory of
 Ryan Campbell
 Linda Benedict Colvin
 In memory of
 Dr. Mark Benedict for
 Cool Spring Preserve
 Marilee Cunningham
 In memory of
 Betsy Rogers
 Carole Daly
 In memory of
 Nancy Streeter
 Ora Dixon
 In memory of
 Clark Dixon
 Edward Enamait
 In memory of
 MD NRP Officer
 Bob Taylor

Eleanor Finn
 In memory of
 Nancy Streeter
 Eve Gettys
 In memory of
 Clark Dixon
 Marybeth Schied Grove
 In memory of
 G Edward Grove who
 had been dedicated to
 his vonteer commitment
 in working toward
 Master Naturalist
 until he started cancer
 treatments. He was a
 MN at heart.
 Sarah Jean Harper
 In memory of
 Anne H. Pullen
 Mary Kinnie
 In memory of
 Ally Kinnie
 Adele Knott
 In memory of
 Mary Louise King,
 in support of the
 wonderful work PVAS
 does and the programs/
 activities PVAS offers.
 Thank you! Adele
 Knott and Family,
 Shepherdstown
 Gregory Leck
 In memory of
 Debbie Leck
 Ricardo Locarnini
 In memory of
 Sally Jo P. Locarnini
 Rebecca McKeon
 In memory of
 Mary King

Marcia McNiff &
 Charles Anthony
 In memory of
 Nancy Streeter
 Larry McDonald
 In memory of
 Ruth Ann Dean
 Ellen & Kevin Murphy
 In memory of
 Mary King
 Stephen Paradis &
 Lisa Kovatch
 In memory of
 Clark Dixon
 Mary Richter
 In memory of
 Mary King. I feel
 everyone who met my
 Aunt Mary walked away
 blessed and inspired.
 She was an amazing
 person – always smiling
 and cared for everyone.
 Rest in peace Aunt
 Mary and give a big
 hug to my mom, Aunt
 Margie, and Aunt
 Deloris.
 Riverside High School's
 REPAC Board
 In memory of
 Sally Ann Velegol
 Randy Robinson
 In memory of
 Wendy Webb
 Mary Ruos
 In memory of
 James L. Ruos
 Philip Saladay
 In memory of
 Margaret Dawson
 Saladay

Peter & Victoria Smith
 In memory of
 Bill Belton, Betty Lou
 Harmison & Clark
 Dixon
 Renny Travers Smith
 In memory of
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 In memory of
 C. David Miller
 Jane Turner
 In memory of
 Tom Trumble
 Lynn Truslow
 In memory of
 Kit Franklin
 Frank & Annette van Hilst
 In memory of
 Dan & Anne Fisher
 Dr. & Mrs. Ray
 Vanderhook
 In memory of
 Mary Jane Puckett
 Lynne Wiseman
 In memory of
 Clark Dixon
 Mary Youngblood
 In memory of
 Roger Youngblood

HONORARY DONATIONS

Marianne Alexander
 In honor of Jean Neely
 Jennifer Allen
 In honor of Rod Snyder
 and Alex Orton's
 wedding

Jennifer Allen
In honor of
Kristin Alexander
Harriet Arthur
In honor of Harriet Arthur
Clayton &
Jacqueline Austin
In honor of
The Next Generation
Bill & Vicki Bonifant
In honor of
Brookresons, Meadows,
and Vanderhooks
Joette Borzik and
Richard Parker
In honor of Jean Neely
Rosalie Borzik
In honor of Joette Borzik
Patti Mulkeen-Corley &
Tom Corley
In honor of Mike Sullivan
& Susan Hirsch
Carolyn Cummins &
Jamie Kaye Sullivan
In honor of Jim &
Nancy Cummins
Bob Dean
In honor of Jean Neely
Mary & Walter Duke
In honor of Ellen Murphy
Eleanor Finn
In honor of Linda Case
Suzanne Frund
In honor of Wesley
Lindner, my dad, who
taught me to love and
appreciate nature.
Rena Hirsch
In honor of Mike Sullivan
& Susan Hirsch

Amy Hirsch
In honor of Susan Hirsch
and Michael Sullivan
Elizabeth Howard
In honor of Kathy Pike
Klein's Birthday!
Georgia Jeppesen &
Bill Ashforth
In honor of KC & Preserve
Volunteers/Staff for the
great job on the preserve
brochure!
Georgia Jeppesen &
Bill Ashforth
In honor of PVAS's
amazing staff, board
and volunteers. Their
dedication and passion
to long term preservation,
protection and
environmental education
are evident.
Georgia Jeppesen &
Bill Ashforth
In honor of PVAS Staff
and Volunteers
Molly Kramer
In honor of
Lisbeth Loughran
David Lemarie
In honor of Kathy Bilton
in thanks for a wonderful
wildflower walk!
Stephanie and
Jared Luciano
In honor of Rod Snyder
and Alex Orton's
marriage
Bill & Bonnie Miller
In honor of Stauffer &
Elinor Miller

Ellen & Kevin Murphy
In honor of Every
Audubon Discovery Camp
Camper
Rebecca Nachtrieb
In honor of Helen Burns'
95th birthday!
Jean Neely
In honor of
Marianne Alexander
Stephen Paradis &
Lisa Kovatch
In honor of PVAS Board
Members, who do such
great work
Suzanne Patrick
In honor of Nan Johnson's
generosity of time,
cheerfulness, and help to
many of our community.
Lee Scriggins
In honor of Larry &
Victoria Scriggins
Linda Spatig and
Marty Amerikaner
In honor of Jean Neely
Joanne Walters
In honor of
Katelyn Walters
Paul & Lisa Welch
In honor of Nan Johnson
and Linda Spatig
Michael & Susan Whalton
In honor of
Kristin Alexander
Ron & Lyn Widmyer
In honor of Patti Corley &
Jean Neely

GRANTS

Active Southern West Virginia
\$1,300 Award from "Celebrating
Healthy WV"

**Berkeley County Public Service
Storm Water District**
\$16,515 to provide PVAS's watershed
and tree education programs to
Berkeley County students

City of Martinsburg
\$10,370 to provide PVAS's watershed
education and tree programs to
students in the City of Martinsburg

City of Ranson
\$3,000 to provide school programs
for Ranson Elementary Students

Children & Nature Network
\$350 to help support adaptive
recreation training and programming
at PVAS

**Eastern West Virginia
Community Foundation**
\$5,000 to support PVAS programs at
schools to ensure equity of program
access in Berkeley County

**Eastern West Virginia
Community Foundation**
\$3,000 for PVAS to implement
"Nature in the Neighborhood" for
Berkeley County youth

**Eastern West Virginia
Community Foundation**
\$3,000 to support PVAS programs at
schools to ensure equity of program
access in Jefferson County

**Eastern West Virginia
Community Foundation**
\$2,000 for PVAS to implement
"Nature in the Neighborhood"
for Jefferson County

**George R. Moore Wildlife
Preservation Fund at the
Community Foundation**
\$1,350 to support wildlife habitat
gardens in Washington County

National Audubon Society
\$15,000 to support purchase and
conservation of new property at
Cool Spring Preserve

National Audubon Society
\$1,000 to support design and
production of stickers to
thank preserve volunteers

The Nora Roberts Foundation
\$21,000 for the general support of
youth programs

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If any of the information is inaccurate or incomplete,
please get in touch with us so we may correct our records.

Thank you for your generous support!