

# Valley Views

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August/September 2020

## President's Note

By Jim Cummins, PVAS President

Greetings, and thank you for electing me as your PVAS President. This is my first President's Note, and let me begin by stating how honored and excited I am about working with such a wonderful Board, an incredibly competent, energetic, and talented staff, a marvelous group of members, and awesome, enthusiastic volunteers. I am fortunate to follow in the footsteps of wise predecessors.

At the same time, I am a bit anxious. The COVID-19 pandemic makes this a particularly challenging time for all of us. It has greatly impacted PVAS's ability to use and manage our conservation lands, and it has limited our broad suite of educational programs, especially those to regional schools and our summer camps. Protecting everyone's physical health from the coronavirus has necessarily become our current main concern, but we also must maintain our traditional primary focus: protecting and caring for birds, other wildlife, and their natural habitats while serving as a resource for education about and enjoyment of them. Those actions improve human health and happiness.

Sadly, this is also a time when bird numbers are down across the nation, yet the Migratory Bird Treaty Act - our most important bird law which holds industries accountable when they recklessly kill birds - has been severely weakened. That loss of protection comes at a time when major air and water pollution from industry weighs heavily upon our region, where migratory birds are par-



ticularly important. As an illustration of their significance, let us reflect on the geography in our organization's name. The name, Potomac, was originally used by the Algonquin-speaking Early Peoples for the tidal river, the 100-mile stretch from what is now DC, downstream to the river's mouth. However, the river's 283-mile non-tidal portion flowing in our area and well upstream was called Cohongoruton, a beautiful name which translates to "River of Geese" ("ruton" means river, and you can hear the geese call at the front of the name - cool!). That people who lived in the bird/wildlife rich Chesapeake Bay region for many thousands of years chose to call our Potomac the "river of geese" is strong evidence that it has long been critical migratory bird habitat.

On the good news side of the spectrum, PVAS has truly been blessed with an amazing membership, community support, and by the donations of key properties - including the recent donation of an additional 50 acres at Cool Spring Preserve by Linda Case. We have been blessed with financial resources from our members, and with volunteers who have enabled us to manage those properties for birds, wildlife, all PVAS members, and our community at large. We must continue protecting and improving the health of our organization, which is now especially challenging given the impacts of coronavirus, which have limited both services and support. Most of us are coping with limited resources, but please remember that now, perhaps more than at any other time, is when PVAS needs everyone's continued support.

I am a longtime birder, starting out in the early 1960s. My wife Nancy and I stay familiar with the birds that live around our home. They are our neighbors, and we are always excited to see a new one. I confess that, while I am not a beginner, I am also not an expert at bird identification, especially the warblers. I like to watch and hear birds, feed them, and help improve their habitat. I am a relatively new member of PVAS, recruited to the board due to my retirement, professional skills, and because PVAS - like most organizations - gains strength with some fresh blood. I hope that you elected me because you noted my former career as a biologist who assessed and improved streams, rivers, watersheds, and the critters therein and thereon, that I was lead officer in several natural resource organizations, and that I long worked to involve the public - especially underrepresented minorities - in the management of our natural resources.

I look forward to working with you as we continue to make PVAS an ever-better organization. May the birds approve with songs, full nests, and numerous flights into our lives.

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

## ***Liriodendron tulipifera* – The Tulip Tree**

*By Wil Hershberger, Nature Images and Sounds, LLC*

The cool spring of 2020, followed by rapidly warming temperatures with plenty of moisture, conspired to create a spectacle in the woodlands of our area this year – the sudden, glorious blooming of the Tulip Trees. It seemed like they all bloomed together within just a few days, creating an explosive wash of gold and orange in a sea of green.



### ***Ode to the Tulip Tree***

***With bright green leaves and spreading crown,  
dark, dense shade upon the ground.  
A welcome respite to be found  
when summer's heat does abound.***

***But in spring when leaves expand  
and its flowers are at hand.  
With beauty subtle and extreme  
as if conjured in some dream.***

***Green and orange with golden center,  
I can't imagine them looking better.  
Entire trees festooned in glory,  
as the sun commutes its journey.***

***Then in fall, when frosts are cold,  
this old tree turns pure to gold.  
The brilliant leaves twist and clatter  
as cold breezes make us chatter.***

***Winter winds strip limbs bare,  
then the tree seems not to care.  
Standing hard against the furry,  
dormant buds need not worry.***

***In winter's gloom, we sometimes dream  
of subtle flowers and spring-time gleam.  
Lasting visions of green and gold  
does make winter seem less cold.***

***Wil Hershberger***

*Photo of Liriodendron tulipifera and poem © Wil Hershberger*

Our Tulip Trees are not poplars, even though they are often called Yellow Poplar or Tulip Poplar, perhaps because their leaves twist and turn in the breeze similar to the leaves of true poplars. They are the only member of its genus in the New World and only one of two species globally; the other, the Chinese Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron chinense*) is found in Asia. In fact, Tulip Trees are a member of the Magnolia family.

Tulip Trees are fast-growing, among the tallest trees in our deciduous woodlands in North America, very old trees can attain a height of over 180 feet. Their softwood is an import lumber product, often used for finishing, shelving, and the manufacture of bowls and utensils. The heartwood is highly prized for its rich colors, often with hints of purple. Tulip Trees do not flower until they are roughly 15 years old, but will flower every year thereafter. Some specimens have been found that were ~500 years old. However, Tulip Trees are not shade tolerant and are often missing from very old, mature, or virgin stands of hardwoods. Fortunately, during the first few hundred years of succession to maturity, hardwood forests within its range will be blessed with these lovely giants and their amazing flowers.

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*Liriodendron tulipifera* continued from previous page

Tulip Trees have been adopted as the state tree in Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The champion specimen is a monster at 100 feet tall with a trunk circumference of 390 inches that lives in Chesapeake, Virginia. As a native tree in the Americas, Tulip Trees are host to several species of moths. Still, only one, the Giant Silkmoth (*Callosamia angulifera*) is solely dependent on the Tulip Tree as a host for its caterpillars.

The uniquely shaped leaves of the Tulip Tree make them easy to identify in the spring and summer. Winter trees are often festooned with the seed pods from the past summer's flowers. These upright clusters of samaras are easy to see and identify. During the winter, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers will visit these trees, creating a ring of sap wells around the tree's trunk in their search for food during these lean times.

We are fortunate to have many Tulip Trees in our area. They are often planted as ornamentals, but they are found in most of the deciduous woodlands around our area. There are beautiful specimens within the Shannondale Springs Wildlife Management Area (WMA), and at PVAS's Cool Spring Preserve in Jefferson County. They can also be found within Sleepy Creek WMA in Berkeley County.

Next year, in early to mid-June, be sure to look for the gorgeous flowers of the Tulip Tree, you'll be amazed and in awe of their simple, but incredible beauty.

## PVAS Events

### Thank You for Your Votes!

*By Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director*

With the "New Year" for PVAS comes a new Board of Directors. Thank you, members, for your votes! PVAS continues to be fortunate to have a great Board to share their expertise, leadership, and wisdom.

We'd like to welcome Carolyn Thomas as our new Secretary. Carolyn was a late addition to our slate, so she was not on the ballot, but will be accepted by the Board until next year's vote per our Bylaws. Carolyn is a retired Middle School teacher with strong environmental values and passion for advocacy and education.

Jim Cummins is now the President of PVAS. He comes to us as a biologist with an expertise in fisheries, specifically the reintroduction of shad into the Chesapeake Bay tributaries through a strong school partnership.

Wil Hershberger is a biologist retired from the Appalachian Tree Fruit Research Station in Kearneysville. Wil is a talented naturalist with specialties in songs of birds and insects. He's an avid photographer as well, and helped us frame up PVAS's Grassland Birds Program.

Herb Peddicord is a forester who recently retired as West Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Forester. If you've been to a tree planting in the Panhandle, you've likely met Herb. We're thrilled to have him join the board and bring his expertise and passion for trees and the watershed.

We'd also like to take this opportunity to thank those board members who are stepping down: Mike Sullivan, Shannye Carroll, and Tiffany Lawrence. They have all made wonderful contributions and have helped PVAS become the strong organization it is today. We've planted three redbud trees at the Cool

Spring Nature Playspace in their honor as a small token of thanks for their service on the Board.

On the ballot last spring you also voted on updates to the Bylaws and our Organization and Structure document. Thanks to your votes, those changes were unanimously accepted. Thank you for participating in the votes and taking advantage of your membership privileges! We appreciate your time, opinions, and membership.

### Summer Appeal Exceeds Goal

*By Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director*

We are so grateful for the generosity of our members and friends. It was with some trepidation that we asked for your support in June. There are so many needs out there, and you already give so much, we weren't sure what to expect. But you came through - and then some! You exceeded our Summer Appeal goal of \$25K with gifts totaling \$27,485 to date. Thank you!

We so appreciate the gifts, AND the notes you enclosed cheering us on and expressing how much you value what we do. Thank you for providing us with positive reinforcement that we are meeting the needs of our human community and the local environment - no matter the circumstance.

There are many questions about what the fall will bring. But in spite of the uncertainty, your support and words of encouragement allow us to enter our new fiscal year with optimism and confidence - and that is a gift in itself.

Thank you for your incredible financial and verbal support, and for your patience and flexibility as we continue to navigate into the unknown.

## PVAS Events

### Late Summer and Early Fall Adult Programs

By Krista Hawley, PVAS Adult Programs Coordinator

As we all strive to find our place in this 'new normal,' PVAS is 'thinking outside the box,' listening to our members and creatively looking for ways to continue to meet the needs of our community.

During this time, planning can sometimes feel like a two steps forward, one step back process, yet we are committed to continuing to provide quality, educational programs and a variety of opportunities that will benefit our members, our volunteers, our preserves, and the community around us. What is considered safe or within the guidelines of our national, state, and local governments seems to change weekly, if not daily. Staying abreast of this information is a top priority for our staff, as is the health and safety of you all.



We are happy to be able to offer programs that reflect people's interest in staying connected and engaged, while also providing as safe an environment as possible. Many are finding that they can enjoy an early morning guided bird walk at Cool Spring Preserve or the trails at the USGS Fish Health Lab. We are offering these walks monthly, limiting registration and observing physical distancing. Keep an eye on our events calendar as we hope to be able to add additional bird walks, hawk watches, and owl prowls throughout the fall.

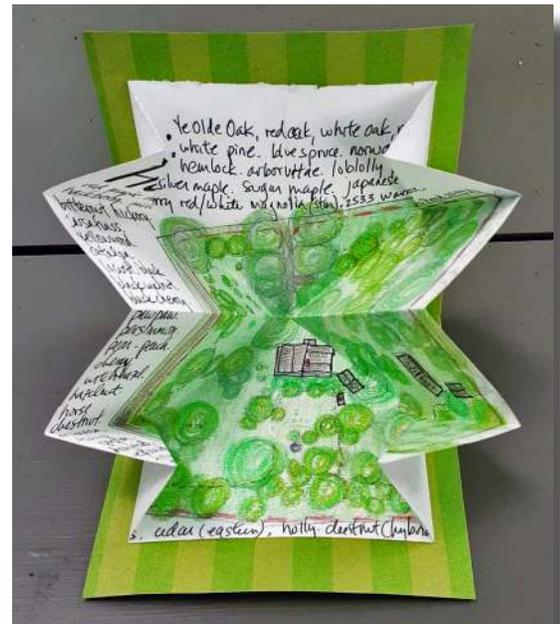
Joy Bridy has kept many of you engaged through her online 'Nature Journaling at

Home' prompts. This has offered many of our members an opportunity to be involved in something, possibly learning a new skill, while still adhering to their own personal quarantine needs. For those that are able to be out and about a bit more, Joy Bridy and Carolyn Duckworth have resumed their monthly journaling gatherings at our preserves. Look at our website's calendar of events for these opportunities for guided nature journaling throughout the fall.

Workshops such as 'Exploring Nature through Expressive Arts' are now being offered exclusively outdoors and adapting the structure of the class in order to accommodate all safety measures. Susan Loonsk is leading this workshop on Sunday, September 20 at Cool Spring Preserve; find more info here: [www.potomacaudubon.org/event/art-to-earth-an-ecopsychology-workshop/](http://www.potomacaudubon.org/event/art-to-earth-an-ecopsychology-workshop/).



PVAS is also excited to be partnering with the American Conservation Film Festival. Stay tuned for further information about an outdoor movie night around the back of Cool Spring's nature center. We are hopeful to be able to welcome movie enthusiasts to a fun evening of picnicking and a picture show!



This fall, we will also be introducing Habitat Highlights! These will be short, 3-4 minute, educational videos that highlight the habitats found in our community's backyards. If you have an interesting feature in your yard that you might like to share, or have an idea for a Habitat Highlight video, please contact me at [AdultPrograms@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:AdultPrograms@PotomacAudubon.org).

While the 2020 Master Naturalist year was turned upside down, the 2020 cohort has shown amazing patience and understanding. The Coordinating Committee worked hard to find ways to safely hold classes either in-person or virtually, however, they eventually made the decision to postpone the start of the classes until it was safe to do so. The 2020 cohort took part in a 'Welcome Gathering' via Zoom where they were able to get to know each other a bit, hear detailed information about the program and ask questions. The goal is to begin classes as soon as it is safe to do so in the traditional manner of in-person classes in the classrooms, labs, and fields. We are happy to be able to continue to work with you all during this time. Please feel free to reach out to us with any ideas or questions you may have. Checking our website and events calendar is an excellent way to stay tuned in to what's happening with PVAS and on our preserves!

## PVAS Events

## Wine in the Woods: Sunday, September 13, 2020

We invite you to an afternoon of wine tasting on the beautiful trails of Cool Spring Preserve. Experience the splendor of Goldenrod in full bloom, discover the rare plants and animals that make the marsh and Bullskin Run special, and observe how an old orchard transitions to a forest - all while sipping wine at three wine tasting stations positioned along the trails.

We look forward to welcoming you to our gorgeous nature preserve, while staying committed to offering this event in a safe environment, following all the local, state, and federal guidelines. Special considerations will be made to ensure physical distancing, timed arrivals, and self-guided 'tours' with your quarantine group. Individual wine glasses and tasting treats will be provided. All fees will be 100% refunded if this event is cancelled on our part, or if you can no longer attend due to any type of illness.

Please head to this link for more information and to RSVP: [www.potomacaudubon.org/event/wine-in-the-woods-2/](http://www.potomacaudubon.org/event/wine-in-the-woods-2/). Contact Krista Hawley at [AdultPrograms@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:AdultPrograms@PotomacAudubon.org) or call 681-252-1387 with any questions you may have.



## Birdseed Sale

Our goal is to begin accepting orders for the annual Birdseed Sale in early September! Based on customer feedback from last year, we'll set an ordering deadline in early October - giving you at least a month to place your order. We're fortunate to continue partnering with Sunny Meadows Garden Center in Boonsboro, Maryland to bring you a variety of high-quality seed and suet.

As in past years, we'll offer multiple pick-up locations in Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, and Washington counties; a tentative pick-up date is set for Saturday, November 7th. There will also be an option to store your order at Sunny Meadows through the end of February.

We will once again be accepting online orders, as well as taking orders via postal mail. A hard copy ordering form will be available at our September 25th-26th Native Plant Sale, but keep an eye on the PVAS website and

our e-newsletter for additional details as they develop. We hope you'll take advantage of the opportunity to purchase your winter bird feeding supplies while supporting our organization. If you have any questions about the Birdseed Sale, please contact PVAS Program Administrator, Erin Shaw, at [admin@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:admin@potomacaudubon.org) or (681) 252-1387.

## Volunteer Spotlight



## Have you met Sandy Sagalkin?

Sandy first became involved with PVAS as one of our bird walk leaders, guiding trips at Antietam National Battlefield and other birding hotspots around Washington County, Maryland. For many seasons, Sandy also contributed his bird ID skills as a guide for our annual fall hawk watches at Washington Monument State Park. But after a trip to Mexico - where he witnessed the stunning site of millions of Monarch butterflies overwintering - Sandy became passionate about the conservation of this declining pollinator species. As a co-founder of The Monarch Alliance (now under PVAS's "wing" as one of our conservation initiatives) Sandy has spearheaded educational outreach programs, native plant sales, and a Monarch Waystation grant program - all designed to help conserve the Monarch butterfly and other native pollinators. From birds to butterflies, Sandy is a fantastic volunteer who contributes so much to our organization.

All of our PVAS volunteers are great! If you know someone who deserves a shout out, please contact [Kristin@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Kristin@PotomacAudubon.org).

## PVAS Events

### Virtual Auction Launches in August

Get your holiday shopping done early and support PVAS at the same time!

PVAS is going to try something new – an online auction! Many of our members, volunteers, and friends have donated things to PVAS to sell at our next fundraiser. As you know, those fundraisers unfortunately haven't happened. But we have great offerings generously donated that we'd like you to know about and potentially purchase while supporting PVAS.

We've found an online tool called BiddingOwl that will allow us to do a virtual auction. We have Wil Hershberger's photography, local kayak and paddleboard adventures, hand-made jewelry and hand-turned wooden pens by Doug Inkley, Ellen Murphy's felt critters, pottery, antiques, artwork, and more.

The auction will open on Friday, August 14th at 8 a.m. and close on Sunday, August 23rd at 11 p.m. With the uncertainty of getting together in person this summer or fall, this is a great time to support PVAS while getting great gifts for yourself or others!

We'll figure out how to get things to you. We're planning on gathering most items at Cool Spring Preserve, or another pre-arranged location, so you can pick up items at a scheduled time. Some smaller items could be mailed if necessary, at the purchaser's expense.

Keep your eyes on our website calendar, Facebook page, and Heads Up e-newsletter for more details as we get closer. When the time comes, here's a direct link to the auction website: [www.biddingowl.com/PVASonlineauction](http://www.biddingowl.com/PVASonlineauction). There are items you won't want to miss!



### Goodbye to Griffin and Laurel

*By Amy Moore, Lead Teacher & Naturalist/Audubon Discovery Camp Director*

It has been an absolute pleasure getting to work with Griffin and Laurel this year. Their dedication to our mission and desire to be the best educators they could be truly shone through in their work.

Watching them grow as educators was amazing. They started the position having never taught in a classroom setting, but embraced the challenges of working with kids with open arms. Being so receptive of feedback, I was able to witness Griffin and Laurel blossom into effective, enthusiastic, and engaging environmental educators. One thing I stress to the AmeriCorps I train is that you can know all the facts about nature there are, and have a lesson plan memorized, but that doesn't make you a good educator. It's the ability to embrace your own sense of wonder, share your passion for nature, and your ability to evoke a sense of wonder and passion in others that makes you successful. Griffin and Laurel are absolutely able to successfully do this. I can't express how proud I am of them.

Griffin and Laurel will without a doubt be very successful wherever their paths take them. I wish them the very best. Their last day of service is August 28th, so if you see them before then, please give them a big thank you! If you know someone interested in applying for our 2020/2021 AmeriCorps position, please get in touch with me at [Amy@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Amy@PotomacAudubon.org).



## Family and Youth Programs

### My AmeriCorps Year with PVAS

By Griffin Bosserman, PVAS AmeriCorps Environmental Educator

What is AmeriCorps? What is a watershed? How does a nonprofit work? It's funny to think that I couldn't answer any of these questions (and many more) when my tenure began back in September. Since then, I can honestly say that I've learned more than I have in any other year of my life - college included. From daily ecology lessons with Amy, to KC patiently reminding me how to string a weed whacker, and acting as a sponge during staff meetings - I've used my backstage pass to the magic show known as PVAS. I have learned so much from every member of the staff. From my first impression, up to this very day, the passion and love for our mission radiates anywhere our team can be found.



The year began with a week of informal training, a great time for the newbies to learn the ropes. Not long after this introduction, we took a trip down to Hillsboro, West Virginia for a training with High Rocks, the organization that hosts our AmeriCorps program. I had my first goof of the year when I missed my ride due to tardiness! I got my first glimpse of Amy's unwavering forgiveness, and they got their first glimpse of my tendency to be an airhead. The training was valuable, and we bonded as a team during our educator camping trip. Not long after this, Laurel and I began shadowing Amy as we learned about the watershed program. Once we were comfortable, we were given our own schools - and began to teach! At first I was super nervous when I found myself facing a classroom of 4th graders, wondering what I was doing in their classroom, but after a minute those nerves went away and comfort ensued. I'd like to thank Amy's training for that. The fall consisted mostly of our watershed programs, and other themed lessons as well. From kindergarten to 8th grade, I had experiences with a wide spectrum of kids, schools, and subject matter.

Working with KC on land management activities was certainly a favorite part of the year for me. I would use the brush cutter to combat Multiflora Rose, and get carried away clipping Autumn Olive on days I wasn't teaching. I very much enjoyed being a "Weed Warrior," and enjoyed my chats with our fearless Land Manager even more.

As the air shifted from crisp to cold, and birds flew south, we AmeriCorps remained relatively consistent with our role... that was until March and, well, we all know what happened next. As COVID-19 began to flex and bare its teeth, we had to step up and brainstorm. It was during this time when I realized that this group is hard to deter, that PVAS has an unwavering mission. We found that our best option at the moment was to produce and

provide online educational videos and materials to best allow the continued learning of our students and program participants. It was a tough time for all, but honestly, it was also quite inspiring to see behind the scenes.

Throughout all this, Amy resolutely continued preparing for camps and worked with Laurel and me on ways to be able to provide this service to the community. We had weeks of mini lessons from Amy, collaborated on activities, and developed ways to make it all happen. That all led us up to June, when we did "family programs", which were a hit, as well as great practice for July! And now here we are; as I write this, we are in the swing of Audubon Discovery Camp. It's sad to think that we are near the end of our year here, but so very encouraging to look back and reflect on what a life changing year it has been. Thank you PVAS, thank you always.

### My AmeriCorps Year with PVAS

By Laurel Schwartz, PVAS AmeriCorps Environmental Educator

For me, this year serving as an AmeriCorps Environmental Educator for PVAS has been a great adventure. I feel that I have grown so much in knowledge, experience, and confidence this year. For this, I can thank Amy and the rest of the wonderful staff at PVAS. While I had little youth education experience prior to starting here, I soon found myself creating lesson plans to teach eager students about natural history and conservation topics that were new to me.



Although I was more nervous than I would like to admit at first, I quickly grew more comfortable standing in front of a classroom full of young learners. I was thrilled to see the excitement on the students' faces when I came into their classroom as a guest to teach these lessons. The enthusiasm that today's youth has for learning has really impressed me. Receiving thoughtful ethical and environmental questions and positive suggestions to the problems of the world from students was all I needed to keep my own enthusiasm through the day.

I truly believe that PVAS has a very special mission of educating in a niche that deserves extra attention in public school curriculum. The staff here are dedicated to reaching as many classrooms, and individual students, as possible to create mindful stewards out of the next generation. Their dedication certainly has rubbed off on Griffin and me. We have both grown tremendously as educators and have made the most of our community service this year. PVAS's mission is one that I deeply admire, and I believe that no matter my future career, I will never stop educating others.

## Camp Programs

### Summer Camp Fun!

By Amy Moore, Audubon Discovery Camp Director

Summer camp has been a thrill!

In June, we led half-day family programs with camp-like activities. Single families, or two families quarantining together, had the option to attend for two or three days each week in June. It was a huge success. Not only did campers learn a lot, but the parents did, too. It was wonderful to watch families enjoy nature together.

Typically, we have about 30 campers at both Yankauer and Cool Spring Nature Preserves every week, but this summer we decided to hold very small camp sessions for 8-12 campers each week at both sites. After a spring where children were spending more time indoors, away from other children, we knew that summer camp would be really meaningful to campers and parents alike. Despite a few changes, such as sanitizing surfaces frequently, no tag games or sharing supplies, temperatures check on arrival, and social distancing, camp is basically the same old, fun adventure! I will say I've learned that kids are terrible at social distancing, though. We remind

them constantly to expand their "vulture wings" to make sure no one is in their social bubble. It works...sometimes.

Here is a snapshot of a day in the life at camp. For our Unsolved Mysteries camp session, the Cool Spring campers named themselves the "Nature Mystery Busters." Every day we pretended the "Nature Mystery Agency" would have a nature mystery challenge for them to solve. One day, the campers investigated an animal crime scene where they had to uncover deer bones and then try to articulate the skeleton. Another day, the agency requested that they investigate the biodiversity of Bull Skin Run and determine the number of different species that live in the stream.



At Camp Survivor, the campers learned all the skills they needed to survive in the wild. Campers at Yankauer learned basic first aid, including how to use natural materials to make a splint for a broken arm. Campers at both locations learned how to build a fire, purify water, and make their own rope! These kids will be just fine to survive any future zombie apocalypse.

### Top 5 Quotes from Campers

By Amy Moore, Audubon Discovery Camp Director

Kids say the darndest things, and as camp counselors, we get a kick out of the silly things campers say while exploring nature. Below is our list of the top five quotes we have overheard campers say at camp (so far):

1. Wineberries are nature's way of saying, "Get your butt outside!"
2. One day, campers were observing two butterflies attached to each other: Camper A: "I think they are mating." Camper B: "Nah, I think they are brothers, sisters, or cousins."
3. When I retire from soccer, I'm going to work here!
4. The kids found a tadpole in the creek and were discussing what they would like to name it. Camper A: "If it's a girl we'll name it Polly." Camper B: "And if it's a boy we'll name it Wog or Big Daddy."
5. For Unsolved Mysteries week, we learned how to track animals by looking at their tracks and scat. While reading the story *Who Pooped in the Park?* campers used mud to make scat that matched each animal mentioned in the book. A camper suddenly stated, "They should make a book called *Who Played with the Poop?*"



## Conservation

### Fall Plant Sales

By KC Walters, PVAS Land & Conservation Manager

The online spring plant sale hosted by The Monarch Alliance in conjunction with PVAS and Sunny Meadows Garden Center was a huge success. We sold over 2,800 native plants and brought in \$14,000 in profits to support programs of The Monarch Alliance and PVAS. This was a major victory in getting more native plants into backyards and gardens that support our pollinators and native wildlife. Because this was the first time ever hosting an online plant sale, there was certainly some trial and error, as well as lessons learned. We look forward to bringing back the online pre-order system next spring after we work out the kinks.

In the meantime, we are looking forward to not one, but two, in-person native plants sales this fall. The Monarch Alliance and PVAS will be hosting the first native plant sale at Sunny Meadows Garden Center on Saturday, September 12th from 9 a.m. to noon. This will be similar to sales held in previous years with all plants available on a first come, first served basis on the day of the sale. This sale will focus on selling milkweed and other herbaceous native plants benefiting pollinators. Both straight natives and cultivars will be offered. There will also be a select variety of shrubs available.

The second native plant sale will be hosted by PVAS at Cool Spring Preserve on September 25th and 26th. This sale will primarily be of native trees and shrubs, but select herbaceous plants may also be available. Friday, September 25th, will be a PVAS members-only sale from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. The following day, September 26th, will be open to the public from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. All plants are available on a first come, first served basis, but we will have plenty for everyone!

Both fall plant sales will be outdoors and masks will be encouraged, even if they are not required by state guidelines at that time. We are also seeking vendors for the sale at Cool Spring. If you are a crafty person and would like to sell your wares, please reach out to me at [Katelyn@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Katelyn@PotomacAudubon.org). Anything homemade is welcome: from jewelry to soap or hand sanitizer, and even masks.

## Notes from the Preserves

### Pavilion at Yankauer Named

By Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director

One of the many things we missed with the cancellation of the May Membership Meeting was honoring Jean Neely. PVAS was the “brainchild” of Jean back in 1981. She’s the one who spent a week at the National Convention of the National Audubon Society, and came home convinced that our area needed a chapter of NAS. So, with the assistance of the then NAS regional office, Jean invited others in our region to join in the push to form a chapter, hoping to thereby help protect the natural heritage the community all valued. We became a chapter in 1982 because of those events, and we can’t thank Jean enough.

One of the many influential contributions Jean has made over the years is at Yankauer Nature Preserve. Jean is responsible for finding the funds for both the parking lot and the pavilion at Yankauer. Those two facilities have allowed PVAS to grow in its programming including school programs, summer camp, homeschool programs, concerts, adult programs, our Annual Membership Meeting, and others. The parking lot and pavilion truly changed PVAS’s capacity to offer programs to the local community.

While not ideal, we presented this honor to Jean virtually. In some ways it was better since it allowed faraway friends from National Audubon to send congratulatory messages to her as well.

So congratulations, Jean, and thank you for all you have done for PVAS. You have brought us far by providing your skills, time, passion, work ethic, vision, and generosity. Without you we likely wouldn’t exist today.

### Letter to the Editor, July 28, 2020

Dear Editor:

Please permit me to use this opportunity to thank the Board and Members of PVAS for giving me the signal honor of naming the pavilion for me. It is not something one expects in one’s lifetime. However, what has not been shared is the way in which I learned of this.

On my birthday, Kristin Alexander, our E.D., showed up at my house with a gift bag and the message, “this is from PVAS... happy birthday!” Upon opening it, I found a thumb drive containing a nearly 6-minute video of 40 different people, 3 dogs, 1 cat, and a parrot – all wishing me a happy 89<sup>th</sup> birthday, and saying so many complimentary things I would never be able to disclose. In her opening video, Kristin advised me of the pavilion naming.

I hope all of you reading this can understand the stunned feeling I had at the time.

Many thanks to everyone. I am confident that with the kind of dedicated people we have in this chapter, PVAS will continue to be a positive presence in our community, even with the challenges confronting us with the virus pandemic.

Faithfully yours,  
Jean C. Neely



## Notes from the Preserves

### In the Preserves

By KC Walters, PVAS Land & Conservation Manager

Preserve volunteer workdays are back on! Join me for a few hours of service at Stauffer's Marsh and Eidolon in August and at Yankauer and Cool Spring in September. These workdays come with a few new protocols. First, registration is required and the number of volunteers will be capped at five. Second, everyone is asked to bring a mask and wear it whenever maintaining a 6-foot physical distance is not possible. Third, volunteers are encouraged to bring their own work gloves and tools, if possible. An email will be sent out prior to the workday with the list of planned tasks and tools required. Wipes and hand sanitizer will be provided if you need to borrow a PVAS tool. Please note that these workdays could be cancelled at any point, depending on the status of COVID-19. My goal is to keep everyone comfortable and safe. I look forward to seeing you all back at the preserves!

In the meantime, the PVAS Weed Warrior program is really revving up. In June, the first 15 Weed Warriors were certified and their second round of training started in July. These folks now have access to the knowledge and tools they need to combat invasive plant species at the preserves. If you are interested in becoming a Weed Warrior, email me at [Katelyn@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Katelyn@PotomacAudubon.org). Future trainings will be held as they are requested.



Unfortunately, we are unable to host the United Way Day of Caring this year. But, let's not let our tradition of service go uncelebrated. I encourage everyone to take a few hours to love on a PVAS preserve in the month of September. There is certainly plenty to do and I am always available to help you find an appropriate and suitable task. Meet up with friends, or drag your family along. Make it fun with a picnic after. And don't forget to take a (physically distant) group photo and share it with us!

The three new trails at Cool Spring have been named. Thanks to submissions from visitors, we were able to select our favorite names and then host a Facebook poll for the final naming decision. Trail A is now Pollinator Path, Trail B will be Whitetail Trail and Trail C is the Box Turtle Shortcut. There are so many new things to see on the expanded trail system so be sure to check it out if you have not already.

Although gatherings are limited, we were able to complete one large project in July at Stauffer's Marsh. Volunteer Steve Hartmann led the charge on moving the fence closer to the road. This improves the ability to mow along the road and also increases the safety of the West Pond Trail for visitors. Gary Sylvester borrowed Peter Palmer's skid steer to complete the job of relocating the fence posts. We also reassembled and reinstalled the Stauffer's Marsh Nature Preserve sign, which is now double-sided for visibility to both directions of traffic. Thank you to Davis Designs of Martinsburg for this upgrade!

### Meet Cool Spring's New Animal Ambassador

By Erin Shaw, PVAS Program Administrator

We are very pleased to welcome a new resident to the nature center at Cool Spring Preserve: a female Wood Turtle! This Wood Turtle (who is yet to be named) was given to us by the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources. She was confiscated in a "bust" of animals that had been illegally poached for sale in the pet trade. Though found in New York, DNA samples indicate that our Wood Turtle is originally from West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle.

Wood Turtles (*Glyptemys insculpta*) are a fascinating species native to North America. They are semi-aquatic, spending the cold winter months hibernating in fast-flowing streams. According to the Smithsonian Institute, they also exhibit a behavior not observed in any other reptile: the worm stomp. This involves stomping their feet and shell on the ground to imitate falling rain or the movement of moles, tricking worms into coming to the surface where they can be eaten.

Wood Turtles are facing decline due to habitat loss, and are currently listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Unfortunately, our new animal ambassador cannot be released in the wild due to concerns of disease spread from different regions. We look forward to giving her an excellent home, and are grateful for all the educational opportunities she will provide our visitors and students.



## August & September Volunteer Opportunities

All volunteer workdays at the preserve will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Please be sure to pre-register for workdays at [www.potomacaudubon.org/calendar/category/volunteer-opportunities/](http://www.potomacaudubon.org/calendar/category/volunteer-opportunities/), or by contacting KC Walters at [Katelyn@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Katelyn@PotomacAudubon.org) or 681-252-1387.

- Thursday, August 13 @ Stauffer’s Marsh; directly across the road from 4069 Back Creek Valley Road, Hedgesville, WV
- Thursday, August 27 @ Eidolon; 2146 Orleans Road, Great Cacapon, WV
- Thursday, September 10 @ Cool Spring; 1469 Lloyd Road, Charles Town, WV
- Thursday, September 17 @ Yankauer; 438 Whittings Neck Road, Martinsburg, WV

If you can’t make it to any in-person volunteer workdays, check out our Weed Warrior Certification training, being offered via Zoom on Monday, August 17 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Certified Weed Warriors will be given the knowledge and the tools needed to tackle invasive species at the preserves on their own schedules. Plus, they will be connected with other Weed Warriors to work together. More information and pre-registration is available at this link: [www.potomacaudubon.org/event/weed-warrior-training-2/](http://www.potomacaudubon.org/event/weed-warrior-training-2/)



## GIVE THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP!

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

- 10% member discount on program fees, facility rentals, and birthday parties.
- A subscription to our bi-monthly newsletter, *Valley Views*, and twice monthly e-newsletter, *Heads Up, PVAS!*
- Free or reduced admission to participating nature centers/museums.
- Discounts to participating **local businesses**.

### Gift Membership Form

To purchase a gift membership, send in the form below with an enclosed check. Dues are \$50/household, \$35/teacher (covering membership for everyone in your household for one year, or \$20/full-time adult student (benefits apply to member only). Make the check out to “PVAS.” For more details on membership, go to: [www.potomacaudubon.org/support/become-a-member/](http://www.potomacaudubon.org/support/become-a-member/).

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

Recipient’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient’s Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Recipient’s E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient’s Phone (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Please note if you’d like us to mail your gift membership directly to the recipient of your choice, or to you. If you’d like us to mail it directly to the recipient, also note when you would like it to be mailed.

### Clip and mail this form to:

Membership Chair, PVAS

PO Box 578

Shepherdstown, WV 25443



**Thank you for your support!**

### About the National Audubon Society

National Audubon has a membership program that is separate from PVAS. 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 an affiliate of PVAS, but not a full PVAS member. Affiliates will have access to our communications, and invitations to our events. However, all National Audubon dues go to the National Audubon Society and are not shared with PVAS. We heartily invite you to become a dues-paying member of both organizations.



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The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through May. 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 meetings take place the first Thursday of every other month (September through June). Meetings are open to all PVAS members. Please contact the President or Vice President if you would like to attend.

*All Officers, Board Members, and Staff can be contacted at 681-252-1387.*

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

- President: ..... Jim Cummins (2022)
- Past President: ..... Suzanne Offut (2022)
- Secretary: ..... Carolyn Thomas (2022)
- Treasurer: ..... Stephen Paradis (2021)
- Board Members-at-Large:
  - ..... Patty Bain Bachner (2022)
  - ..... Susan Brookreson (2022)
  - ..... Don Campbell (2021)
  - ..... Melissa Gonzalez (2021)
  - ..... Mina Goodrich (2021)
  - ..... Rita Hennessey (2021)
  - ..... Wil Hershberger (2022)
  - ..... Georgia Jeppesen (2022)
  - ..... Pete Mulford (2021)
  - ..... Patti Mulkeen-Corley (2021)
  - ..... Herb Peddicord (2022)
  - ..... Rod Snyder (2021)

*Emerita Board Member:* ..... Jean Neely

*Special Contacts*

- Executive Director: Kristin Alexander (304-676-3397) ..... [Kristin@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Kristin@PotomacAudubon.org)
- Land/Conservation Mgr: KC Walters (304-283-7319) ..... [Katelyn@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:Katelyn@potomacaudubon.org)
- Lead Teacher/Naturalist: Amy Moore (240-818-4714) ..... [Amy@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Amy@PotomacAudubon.org)
- Adult Prog. Coord: Krista Hawley (703-303-1026) ..... [AdultPrograms@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:AdultPrograms@PotomacAudubon.org)
- Program Administrator: Erin Shaw (681-252-1387) ..... [Admin@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Admin@PotomacAudubon.org)
- Web Master: Kathy Bilton ..... [kathy@fred.net](mailto:kathy@fred.net)
- PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: Diana Mullis (304-754-3753) ..... [dianamullis7@gmail.com](mailto:dianamullis7@gmail.com)
- Valley Views editor/publisher:  
 Charlotte Fremaux (301-404-8639) ..... [newsletter@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:newsletter@potomacaudubon.org)