VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac Valley Audubon Society

Volume 29, Issue 6 April 2011

PVAS Reception Set for June 4 at Harewood

Walter Washington has graciously offered to host a fundraising reception for PVAS at Harewood, the historic Washington family home just east of Charles Town, the evening of Saturday, June 4.



The reception will be held from 4:00-7:00 p.m. If weather permits it will be held mostly outside, on the lawn.

The first floor of the house will be open for viewing, and there will also be guided nature walks of the property.

Food and beverages will be served, and musical entertainment will provide background.

Dress will be casual.

The event is open to PVAS members and friends, and all proceeds will be used to support the Society's education programs for children.

Tickets to the event will be required, and space will be limited.

Basic tickets are $45 per person. Those who pay $150 for two people will be recognized as Donors, those who pay $250 for two will be recognized as Patrons, and those who pay $500 or more for two will be recognized as Supporters.

Ticket costs will be fully tax-deductible.

To reserve tickets, please call 304-676-3397 or e-mail pvasmail@aol.com and provide your name, address, phone number and number of tickets desired.

Harewood was built in 1770 by George Washingon's brother Samuel (1734-1781), and it has remained in Washington family hands ever since. The current owner, Walter Washington, is a sixth-generation descendant of Samuel.

See ***Reception***, Page 2

It's Just April, but Camp Sessions Are Filling Up!

Three of our new camp sessions are proving to be big hits this year, so camper families may want to register before spots are taken. *The Simple Life*, at the Peter Burr Farm near Bardane, West Virginis, has been so popular that PVAS is looking for ways to offer another week of that session. *The Deep, DARK Woods* and *4 Legs, 6 Legs, More Legs, No Legs* are also proving to be popular themes.

PVAS always maintains waiting lists for camp sessions that fill, so if you find that your first choice session is not available, please sign up for the waiting list. No money is required for the waiting list and every year, many campers find that a spot opens for them. If you aren't on the list, we don't know you are interested!

All registrations are online and you can enter the system at www.potomacaudubon.org. You can also order t-shirts on the camp

See ***Summer Camp***, Page 2

Annual Appeal Tops $30,000 For First Time

As this is being written in mid March, 172 of you have contributed $30,226 to our current annual fundraising appeal.

Both figures are new records. When last year's annual appeal ended, a total of 160 donors had given a total of $29,856.

Thanks to all of you who have given so far.

This year's annual appeal ends on March 30. Since you'll likely get this newsletter a few days before that date—and since we're not going to turn away contributions that come in a few days after it—there's still time for you to make a contribution if you wish to do so.

Remember that your annual appeal contributions are essential to our program efforts. Many of our programs are free. For those that do involve fees, we could never charge participants—especially children—enough to cover all our expenses. Your support makes up the difference!

To contribute, just send a check made out to "PVAS" to PVAS, PO Box 578, Shepherdstown, WV 25443.

President's Perch



Hello everyone:

Sometimes the articles in particular issues of *Valley Views* form patterns that say something important about PVAS and the community we serve.

This is one of those issues. As you review it, consider how it illustrates the many different ways in which many different people and organizations are helping PVAS out:

- Our annual appeal contributions have exceeded $30,000 for the first time, and more families and individuals have contributed than ever before.
- Local businesses are continuing to support our "Race for the Birds."
- Shepherd University's Wellness Center is supporting that event, too, by donating a year's membership for us to raffle off.
- Valley Trees of Shepherdstown this winter generously donated its time and expertise to remove a dangerous broken tree limb at the Yankauer preserve.
- The Winston Gardens Native Plant Nursery in Berkeley County is generously donating a portion of the proceeds from its annual spring open house to our summer camp scholarship program.
- Walter Washington is generously letting us use his historic home near Charles Town for our spring fundraiser this year.

And all of this has been happening at a time when this region still seems, for the most part, to be caught in the grips of a particularly nasty recession.

Obviously, we're grateful that we live in a community that's willing to support us in these ways in such times.

But we should also be humbled by this support because it means, presumably, that we've now developed a reputation that we'll need to live up to as we go forward.

—Peter Smith

Reception (continued from page 1)

The house is rich in history. George Washington's diary records several visits there and James and Dolly Madison were married in the drawing room in 1794. Other notable visitors during the house's early years included Louis Phillipe, later to be King of France.

The National Register of Historic Places describes the house as "an outstanding and little-altered example of a large Georgian stone mansion."

Its interior includes elaborate paneled woodwork and a carved marble fireplace said to have been a gift from the Marquis de Lafayette. The paneling in the drawing room retains its original 18th century paint.

Harewood is also notable because the 219 acres surrounding it are permanently protected by a conservation easement that Walter Washington signed in a formal ceremony in 2007. The signing was regarded as a major event in conservation circles and was attended by representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Nature Conservancy, the American Battlefield Protection Program, the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board, and others.

The property's protected lands include a wetland and marl marsh that provide habitat to several rare plant and animal species. The nature walks that will be offered during the reception will include visits to these areas.

Summer Camp (continued from page 1)

registration website. Both youth and adult sizes are available for $10 each, but you must pre-order by May 15 to guarantee a shirt.

Camp Wish List:

Camp art and crafts often depend on using recycled materials. If you have any of the following that you'd like to get rid of, we can use them: Crystal Light containers with lids (the 4" or 6" tall clear plastic kind that contain 8 tubes of powdered drink mix); large roll of newsprint or butcher paper; lengths of pine (1 x 4 size) for making weaving looms and someone to cut and assemble them; yarn; binoculars; plant sources for making natural dyes. Contact Ellen Murphy to arrange your donation at 304-676-8739.

Summer Camp Scholarships Still Available

Families have until April 8 to apply for PVAS scholarships at a variety of summer nature camps, so act now! Scholarships are available for eligible young people within the PVAS membership area – the WV Eastern Panhandle and Washington County, Maryland.

Camps, locations, dates and ages are as follows:

West Virginia State Conservation Camp, at Camp Caesar, Webster County, WV. June 13-18. Campers must be 14 by January 2011 and not past their 18th birthday on June 1, 2011.

Trout Unlimited Conservation & Fishing Camp, at Syria, Virginia (next to Shenandoah National Park). June 26 – July 1. Grades 8 through 11.

Burgundy Center for Wildlife Studies, at Capon Bridge, WV. June 26-July 9, July 12-26, or August 2-15. Ages 11-15.

Oglebay Institute Junior Nature Camp, at Dallas Pike (near Wheeling), WV, ages 10-15; July 24-30 or July 31 – August 6, 2011.

Mountain Adventures Camp, at Mountain Institute, Spruce Knob, WV. June 19-25, June 26-July 2, or July 3-9. Ages 12-17.

Chesapeake Adventures, schooner trip, Chestertown, MD. Various dates in July. Ages 11-14.

Audubon Discovery Day Camp, at Yankauer Nature Preserve in Shepherdstown, at Craft Works in southern Jefferson

County, and at Peter Burr Farm Site in Kearneysville. Nine weeks late May to late July. Pre-school to grade 12.

Every year throughout its 29-year history PVAS has sent youngsters to camp on scholarships, supported by our fall bird seed sale. Additional community sources also support scholarships to our own day camp program at the Yankauer Nature Preserve.

To obtain more information and/or an application form, go to www.potomacaudubon.org. There you'll also find links to the camps' web sites, which provide lots more exciting information and descriptions! Or contact Kathryn Henry at 304-876-6681, dhenry@myexcel.com.

Sign Up Now for Wee Naturalists Program

PVAS is offering its "Wee Naturalists" program again this spring.

The program is aimed at pre-school children ages 3-5. It is designed to provide regular opportunities for small children and loving adults to explore nature together safely under the guidance of an experienced PVAS instructor. Children must be accompanied by a parent, grandparent or other adult relative or guardian.

Program sessions will be offered at the Yankauer Nature Preserve in late March and April. Each session will last from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and each month's sessions will explore a different nature theme.

One session will be held on Wednesday, March 30. Its theme will be "Let's Go Outside!"

Two sessions will be held in April, on Wednesday the 27th, and Thursday the 28th. The theme for these sessions will be "What do April Showers Bring?"

To ensure that all participants receive close, personal attention, enrollment will be limited and pre-registration is required.

Families may register for one or all of the monthly sessions. The fee for each session will be $5 for each child/adult team.

The sessions will be led by Suzi Taylor, of Sharpsburg, Maryland, a veteran PVAS camp director who has a degree in environmental education.

Information and registration forms are available on the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org, or contact Ms. Taylor at 301-432-1908 or tomandsuzi506@cs.com.

PVAS launched its Wee Naturalists program two years ago with support from the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation's Two Rivers Giving Circle.



Bring the Kids to Spring Egg Hunt

PVAS will hold its fourth annual Spring Children's Egg Hunt the afternoon of Sunday, April 17, at the Yankauer Nature Preserve.

Unlike traditional egg hunts, this one combines fun with an educational experience.

The eggs used in the hunt are colored to resemble real eggs of wild birds. Children are challenged to find the naturally camouflaged eggs on the trail and in the process they discover how birds keep their eggs safe from predators.

This year's event will be for children ages 3-5. Eggs for them to collect will be hidden along the preserve's trails.

At the end of the event, collected eggs will be "traded in" for a sweet treat.

This will be a family-oriented event and parents should plan to go with their children as they walk on the trail.

The hunt will be held from 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Space will be limited and pre-registration with a credit card is required. The fee is $5 per child.

Registration is available on the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org using the "Egg Hunt at Yankauer" link.

For more information, contact Ellen Murphy, PVAS's Youth Education Director, at 304-676-8739 or pvasprograms@comcast.net.

Wildflower Festival Set for April 16

PVAS will hold its annual spring Wildflower Festival on Saturday, April 16, at the Yankauer Nature Preserve.

The festival, which is held to coincide with the peak of the spring wildflower season, will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., rain or shine.



Craggy Toothwart by Laura Rau

It will include guided wildflower walks through the preserve for advanced and beginner/ families, children's activities and refreshments.

Guided walks will leave the pavilion on the hour, though visitors are welcome to explore the trails on their own as well.

Admission to all these events will be free and everyone is welcome.

For the fourth year in a row, the festival will also include a special Poetry Walk component—poems that focus on spring themes will be posted all along the preserve's Kingfisher trail where the majority of wildflowers are found.

Mid- to late April is traditionally the best time to view early spring wildflowers at the preserve. Some of the wildflowers on display should include bloodroot, spring beauties, Dutchman's breeches, and rue anemone.

The trails at Yankauer are primitive, so wear sturdy walking shoes. Please leave pets at home and leave the wildflowers for all to enjoy.

For more information contact PVAS at 304-676-3397 or pvasmail@aol.com.

Local Tree Service Helps PVAS

On March 3, Valley Trees of Shepherdstown gave PVAS a hand by removing free of charge a large, broken oak-tree tree limb that was dangerously overhanging one of the main trails at the Yankauer Nature Preserve.



The accompanying photo shows Valley Tree technician Nu Bucher, roped into the tree, cutting the limb down.

"This limb was way too high and heavy for our volunteers to handle," said PVAS President Peter Smith. "We needed expert help to get the job done safely, and we 're very grateful to Valley Tree owner Paul Simmons and his crew for volunteering to do it."

"It speaks well of this community that our local businesses are willing to help local nonprofit organizations in these kinds of ways."

The Yankauer preserve is located north of Shepherdstown on Whiting's Neck Road. PVAS co-manages it in partnership with The Nature Conservancy.

The 104-acre preserve has two miles of walking trails, river views, and an education pavilion. It is open to the public from dawn to dusk daily.

Trips to Yankauer Begin While Watershed Wraps Up

With warmer weather around the corner, schools are scheduling visits to the Yankauer Nature Preserve. These spring school visits are always popular for elementary students as a way to explore the out of doors after a long winter of being inside. Programs include activities around a specific theme and a chance for the students to "enter the woods" by hiking one of the trails at the preserve. All of the programs help teachers meet state education requirements. Dates in April are filling up, but there are still open spots in May. Schools should contact Ellen Murphy at 304-676-8739 to schedule dates. We can always use more volunteers for these programs, too!

Our watershed programs will be finishing up by mid-April with trips to a local waterway where students can practice the water testing and stream evaluation skills they have been learning in class. Schools will be traveling to Flowing Springs Run in Ranson, Mill Creek in southern Berkeley County, the Cacapon River in Morgan County, Back Creek in northern Berkeley County, and Tuscarora Creek in downtown Martinsburg. Volunteers are being recruited to help with these trips and with the schoolyard plantings that will take place at some of the schools.

Our watershed program for high schoolers has given students at Musselman, Martinsburg, Jefferson, and Paw Paw High Schools the opportunity to learn more about groundwater quality issues (using a Ground Water Flow model) and the effects of water pollution on fish. Dr. Vicki Blazer, from the USGS National Fish Health Research Laboratory in Kearneysville, West Virginia, shared her knowledge with students including a session on fish anatomy. The culmination of this program will be planting rain gardens at the participating high schools which have been designed with the help of James Dillon, a local horticulturalist. The high school version of our watershed program is funded by the WV Division of Environmental Protection.

Open House/Volunteer Day Set for New Ranson Park

Everyone is invited to an Open House/Volunteer Day at the site of Flowing Springs Park, the new natural park in Ranson that PVAS is helping to plan and develop, on April 2.

The event will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The park, which will encompass approximately 36 acres, is located off Route 9, just south of Ranson's Potomac Towne Center shopping complex.

The event will include a welcome tent in the parking lot of the Center's Home Depot store. There, visitors will be able to overlook the property, review a map of a proposed park layout, and share their views and suggestions with Ranson staff and others working on the project.

Visitors will then be invited down into the park itself. Those who simply wish to explore the park area will be able to take guided nature walks. Those who wish to volunteer will be put to work on trash and tire cleanup, removal of problematic plants, and tree planting. Gloves, tools and refreshments will be provided to volunteers, along with commemorative t-shirts. Volunteers are encouraged to dress comfortably in clothes and footwear that can get dirty.

A broad range of organizations and agencies are helping the City of Ranson with the park project and the April 2 event. In addition to PVAS, these include West Virginia University's landscape architecture and natural resource management programs, PVAS's Master Naturalist Program, the West Virginia Division of Forestry, Project CommuniTree, the West Virginia Conservation Agency, and the Conservation Fund's Freshwater Institute.

Funding for the April 2 event is being provided by the TogetherGreen grant PVAS received last year. The TogetherGreen grant program is a collaborative effort of the National Audubon Society and Toyota, Inc. It is aimed at engaging local community members in conservation projects.

For more information or to get involved with this event, please contact Kristin Alexander of PVAS at 304-676-3397 or pvasmail@aol.com.

Nursery Open House Will Benefit PVAS

The Winston Gardens Native Plant Nursery has generously decided to donate 15 percent of the proceeds from its upcoming spring Open House to PVAS.

The donation will be used to support PVAS's summer camp scholarship program.

The nursery is located in northeastern Berkeley County, at 1121

Hollida Lane, one mile off Swan Pond Road.

Operated by noted area landscape designer Virginia Winston and her husband Eldon, it specializes in trees and shrubs that are native to this region.

This spring it is offering more than 30 different species for sale. These range from popular favorites like Sugar Maples and Redbuds to hard-to-find species like Carolina Allspice, Hornbeam, and Spicebush.

The Open House will be held the weekend of April 30 and May 1, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. each day.

Light refreshments will be served and a door prize will be offered.

For directions and a full list of the plants available, go to the Nursery's website at www.winstongardens.com. Or call the Winstons at 304-267-6924.

"Race for the Birds" Coming Up Soon

Our tenth annual "This Race is for the Birds!" event is almost here.

The race will be held on Saturday, April 9, on the campus of the National Conservation Training Center outside Shepherdstown.

The centerpieces of the event will be two professionally timed races—one 4.9 miles long and another 7.7 miles long.

The combined registration for these races will be capped at 400, so those who wish to compete should sign up soon.

There will also be a self-timed 2-mile community jog/walk for families and individuals who prefer a slower pace, and a 1-mile "Fun Run" for children under 10 years of age.

The trails on the NCTC campus are not normally open to the general public so this event is a good opportunity to visit and enjoy the facility's beautiful trail network.

The two races will begin at 9:00 a.m. The jog/walk will begin shortly afterwards and the children's Fun Run will be held at about 10:45 a.m.

The children's Fun Run will be free. Fees for the other portions of the event will range from $15 to $25.

All proceeds will be used to support PVAS's programs for children, and all fees will be tax deductible.

For full information, go to the race website at www.raceforthebirds.org. On-line registration is available there through a link to Active.com. Or contact the race directors, James and Suzy Munnis, at jmunnis@earthlink.net or 304-876-6784.

Race Volunteers Needed!

As this is being written, we still need volunteers to help out with this year's April 9 Race for the Birds.

All sorts of different jobs are available, from helping to set up for the race to being a course marshal during the event, to helping clean up afterwards.

All volunteers will receive a free race t-shirt and some food for the day.

If you'd like to help, please contact Carolyn Thomas at crthomas25443@gmail.com or go to the race website at www.raceforthebirds.org and fill out the online volunteer form.

Thanks to Race Sponsors!

PVAS wants to give special thanks to the many businesses and organizations that have sponsored this year's Race for the Birds.

This year, we have two "Platinum" Level sponsors, who each contributed $1,000 or more. One is Hoxton Financial, Inc., the Shepherdstown wealth management firm. The other is the "Friends of Mark Benedict," a group of individuals who sponsor the race each year to honor the memory of Dr. Mark A. Benedict, a local conservation scientist who passed away in 2006.



Hoxton Financial President and CEO Rob Hoxton is shown in the accompanying photo with PVAS Executive Director Kristin Alexander.

The other race sponsors are as follows:

Gold Level ($500 or more): Shepherd University Wellness Center, Shepherdstown Chronicle, Two Rivers Treads, USFWS National Conservation Training Center.

Silver Level ($250 or more): Associated Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, Caribbean Islands Travel Service; Chick-fil-A of Martinsburg; HypnoCoffee, Coffee Roaster-Coffee Bar; Jefferson Security Bank; Progressive Printing; Roach Energy, Oil & Propane; Dr. Ray Vanderhook, DDS, MS.

Bronze Level ($100 or more): Bavarian Inn; Joe and Susan Brookreson; Dickinson & Wait Craft Gallery; Dr. David Miljour, Chiropractor; Edward Jones Investments, Shepherdstown; FUNKYCPA.COM; GlitterBugz FacePainting; Go Green Gals; Grapes and Grains Gourmet; Lynne Wiseman@era.com, realtor; McAteer & Associates, PLLC; Mellow Moods Café; Nesquik-Juicy Juice; Panhandle Medical Associates; Patthoff General Dentistry; Pedal and Paddle, 876-3000; Potomac Portable Restrooms and Septic Service, LLC; Potomac-Mecklenburg Garden Club; Professional Sports-Care & Rehab; Shepherdstown Sweet Shop; Stone Soup Bistro.

As always, we appreciate the strong community support for this event. You can express your appreciation as well by giving these businesses and organizations a "thank you" of your own the next time you see them.

Win a Wellness Center Membership!

As part of its sponsorship for this year's PVAS Race for the Birds, Shepherd University's Wellness Center has donated a one-year gym membership for us to raffle off.

The membership is worth $550, so the raffle winner will be getting a great value.

All proceeds will support PVAS's programs for children.

Raffle tickets will be $1 for one ticket or $5 for six tickets.

The drawing of the winning ticket will be held during the awards ceremony after the race on April 9. You do NOT have to be present to win!

Tickets will be available at the following locations:

- The Two Rivers Treads running store in Shepherdstown (113 W. German Street, upstairs). The store is open from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. every day but Tuesday.
- This year's first Shepherdstown Farmer's Market, on Sunday, April 3.
- The registration table at the Race on April 9.

Or contact Kristin Alexander at 304-676-3397 or pvasmail@aol.com.

Many thanks to the SU Wellness Center for this donation!

PVAS Helping With April Berkeley Springs Events

PVAS has been helping Travel Berkeley Springs and local organizers plan a special effort to promote the month of April as "Get Outside Month" in Berkeley Springs.

The effort represents an expansion of Berkeley Springs' traditional "Redbud Weekend," which has been held during April for many years.

Redbud Weekend will still take place the weekend of April 15-17 but there will also be a wide variety of events relating to nature and the outdoors each weekend throughout the month. All events will be free and open to the public.

A full schedule is available on the Travel Berkeley Springs website at www.berkeleysprings.com.

As part of its contribution to this effort, PVAS has organized the following five events:

Friday, April 8: Stink Bug program at the Ice House in Berkeley Springs. 7:00 p.m. Dr. Tracy Leskey, entomologist at the USDA Appalachian Fruit Research Station in Kearneysville, will reprise the talk she gave at the National Conservation Training Center in February under the auspices of PVAS and NCTC. Dr. Leskey and her colleagues at the Research Station are in the forefront of research into the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, and she co-chairs a special USDA working group that is trying to find ways to respond to the problems the insect poses.

Friday, April 15: Rattlesnake program at the Ice House in Berkeley Springs. 7:00 p.m. W.H. "Marty" Martin will give a presentation on Timber Rattlesnakes. A Harpers Ferry resident, Martin is widely recognized as the nation's foremost field expert on this species. His last appearance at a PVAS event was a presentation he gave at a PVAS program at NCTC in April 2008.

Sunday, April 17: Wildflower and wildlife walks at the Eidolon Nature Preserve outside Great Cacapon. At 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. local naturalists Joe Gentile and Helen Herlocker will lead family friendly walks that show how to identify wildflowers as well as tracks and other signs of wildlife. For directions to the preserve, go to the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org.

Saturday, April 30: Birding field trip to the Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area. Bob Dean, one of the Eastern Panhandle's leading bird experts, will lead a trip that will focus on local breeding species as well as mid-season migrants with special emphasis on warblers. Participants will meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Eagle Plaza parking lot (about 1 mile east of Hedgesville on the north side of Route 9, between Hedgesville High School and the Food Lion shopping center). The trip will last about four hours.

Sunday, May 1: Birding field trip along the C&O Canal in the Hancock area. Meet PVAS birding expert Sandy Sagalkin at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot of the new Hancock C&O Canal Visitor's Center, which overlooks Lock 52 and the Tonoloway Aqueduct at Canal milepost 123 (the street address is 439 East Main Street—go east from downtown Hancock; the entrance to the center is opposite the truck stop). Possible species include Bald Eagles, Red-tailed hawks, Great Blue Herons, several varieties of woodpeckers, flycatchers, vireos, and others.

Three Birding Trips Set for April

PVAS is sponsoring three birding trips for the month of March. All trips are free and anyone with an interest is welcome to participate. Various details of each trip could change depending on weather and recent bird sightings. In case of inclement weather, contact the trip leader to see if the trip is still on. Here's the schedule:

April 6: Birding walk at Cool Spring Farm in southern Jefferson County.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot in front of the Martin's Supermarket in the Jefferson Crossroads shopping Center off Route 340 in Charles Town.

The Cool Spring property offers a rich mix of habitats ranging from open fields to former orchard plots, as well as marshland along Bullskin Run.

Species likely to be sighted on the property this month include various raptors, including Red-tailed Hawks, Great Blue heron, various species of woodpecker, vireos, Eastern Phoebes and other flycatchers, Bluebirds and other species of birds.

For more information, contact trip leader Sandy Sagalkin at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

April 16—Birding trip to the Shenandoah River in Jefferson County.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot in front of the Martin's Supermarket in the Jefferson Crossroads shopping Center off Route 340 in Charles Town.

This trip will mostly involve driving from place to place by car, with not much walking.

Some of the early migrants will be back and the trip will offer opportunities to see cormorants, Great Blue herons, several species of ducks, Bald eagles, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered hawks, Pileated and other woodpeckers, Eastern Phoebes, swallows, Rufous-sided towhees and other species.

For more information, contact trip leader Sandy Sagalkin at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

April 20: Birding trip to Lilypons Water Gardens in Frederick County, MD.

Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the park and ride lot in Jefferson, MD, just off Route 340.

Lilypons is a birder-friendly aquatic gardening center located on 250 acres that include numerous ponds, woods, and rolling hills next to the Monocacy River.

At this time of year, the property's ponds will provide excellent viewing of the first of this season's shorebirds and the last ducks making their way north. There is also a Great Blue Heron rookery

on the property, which can be seen easily from the trail.

Other likely species include Blue-winged Teal, Wood Ducks, Green Heron, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers, and Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs.

Maybe we'll stir up some Wilson's Snipe and if we're very lucky we may spy an American Bittern or Virginia Rail.

Ticks may be present and waterproof boots are recommended.

For more info, contact trip leader Kate Weatherby at yankee_in_virginia@yahoo.com or 304-535-1319.

April NCTC Program Will Look at USFWS Youth Initiatives

Our April program at the National Conservation Training Center will look at two youth initiatives administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The program will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 13, in Room 151 of the Instructional West Building.

Admission is free and anyone is welcome to attend.

The speaker will be Fish and Wildlife Service Biologist Jim Siegel. The two initiatives he will discuss are the "Let's Go Outside" program and the Shorebird Sister Schools Program.

The "Let's Go Outside" initiative is a broad-based effort intended to get children, parents and educators more involved in nature. Its website can be found at www.fws.gov/letsgooutside.

The Shorebird Sister Schools Program initiative is focused specifically on engaging schools and communities in learning more about shorebirds and their conservation. Its website is at www.fws.gov/sssp.

Dr. Siegel is a biologist and course leader for the Division of Education and Outreach at NCTC.

He holds BS and MS degrees in wildlife sciences from Cornell University and the University of Arizona, respectively, and a Ph.D. from the University of Georgia.

His academic specialty is forest birds, with additional strong interests in amphibians and reptiles.

Get Involved In Watershed Efforts!

This is the time of year for watershed cleanup efforts.

PVAS encourages its members to pitch in and get involved whenever they can.

At all cleanup sites, expect moderate-to-difficult work. In addition, cleanup work usually involves walking on rocky/slippery terrain.

Trash bags, gloves and other equipment will be provided to all volunteers unless otherwise noted. Feel free to bring along your own gloves, rakes, or grabbers. Waterproof boots or waders may be helpful at some sites.

Other less strenuous volunteer jobs such as volunteer check-in and recording data are often also available.

In our area, most of cleanup efforts are coordinated through the Alice Ferguson Foundation's Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup and/or the state of West Virginia's "Make it Shine" Program.

The events scheduled so far in our area are as follows. All will be held rain or shine unless otherwise noted.

Jefferson County, WV

April 9: Potomac River—two sites in the **Harpers Ferry area** (Jefferson County). 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Sponsored by the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Directions, Site 1—Potomac Wayside: Meet at the wayside at the east end of the Route 340 bridge. Park in the open lot adjacent to the Tri-state Exxon station at the intersection of Route 340 and Route 671. Participants must be able to negotiate long, steep trail to river's edge. Site 2—Potomac Extension; Dam No. 3 to lower town Harpers Ferry: Meet at Harpers Ferry train station parking lot. From there, group will move to cleanup location. Please car pool as vehicle access to site is limited. For more information contact Jessica Liptak at jessica_liptak@nps.gov.

April 9 (rain date April 16): Potomac River—National Conservation Training Center, Shepherdstown (Jefferson County). 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Sponsored by NCTC. Directions: Once inside the NCTC campus, the guards at the guard station will tell you where to go. For more information contact Joe Stanley at joe_stanley@fws.gov.

April 9: Shenandoah River at Harpers Ferry. 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Sponsored by the Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival. Directions: Meet at the parking lot by the bridge on Shenandoah Street just off Route 340. From there, volunteers will divide into two groups, some staying to clean up the river at this location and others heading upstream to Millville to clean up along Bloomery Road. For more information contact Chuck Davis at aff-cleanup@bolivarwv.us.

Berkeley County, WV

April 9: Opequon Creek at Van Metre Ford Stone Bridge, Martinsburg (Berkeley County). 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Sponsored by the Opequon Creek Project Team. Pre-registration required; contact Sandra Bernardi at 304-267-6657. Directions: From Interstate 81 Take Exit 13 East (King Street) 1.5 miles Left on Queen Street one block Right on Burke Street (CR36) Follow Burke through town and along the railroad tracks for 2.2 miles until you reach Stone Bridge. Parking lot is on the right before you cross the bridge.

Morgan County, WV

April 9: Exact location in **Sleepy Creek area** to be determined. 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Sponsored by the Sleepy Creek Watershed Association. For more information contact Gale Foulds at 304 258-6155 or dgfoulds@aol.com.

April 13. Warm Springs Run, Berkeley Springs. 9;00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Sponsored by the Warm Springs Watershed Association. Directions: Meet at the McDonald's on Route 522 south of downtown.

Washington County, MD

April 9: Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, MD. 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Sponsored by the National Park Service. Directions: Meet at the Battlefield Visitors Center on Route 65. For more information contact Debbie Cohen at debbie_cohen@nps.gov.

April 9: C&O Canal at Sandy Hook, MD. 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Sponsored by the Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival and Mason-Dixon Canoe Club. Directions: Meet in the parking lot next to Cindy Dees restaurant near Sandy Hook MD (from Route 340, turn on to Keep Tryst Road, about 1/4 mile from Potomac River bridge; restaurant is on the left). For more information, contact Chuck Davis at aff-cleanup@bolivarwv.us.

April 16: McCoy's Ferry Campground, Clear Spring, MD. 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Sponsored by the C&O Canal National Historic Park and the C&O Canal Trust. Directions: From I-70, take Exit 18 toward Clear Spring; turn left at US 40; turn left at Boyd Road; turn right at MD Route 56 (Big Pool Road); take first left on to McCoy's Ferry Road. You must apply to participate in this cleanup. To apply and for more information go to the Canal Trust website at http://www.canaltrust.org/index.php?page=canal-pride-days-application.

Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon

PVAS will hold its second annual "Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon" the weekend of May 14-15.

The event is named in honor of Ruth Ann Dean, who was a founding member and ardent supporter of PVAS, a Board member in the early years, and an avid birder.

The Birdathon is open to all PVAS members and members of the public. It is a team event or a family activity. Birdwatchers at all levels of experience or expertise are invited to participate. Teams will compete to identify the highest numbers of bird species they find anywhere within Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan or Washington counties within any 24-consecutive-hour-period during the May 14-15 weekend.

In addition to the Birdathon being an activity all can enjoy, we hope it will yield valuable longitudinal data over time on the species present in our area during this period. Last year, 155 different species were identified within the four county area and the winning Birdathon team identified 110 species.

Participants can choose to form their own teams, decide their team names and select their own leaders. If you don't have a team, and want to participate, we will help you find one.

Another option is to participate individually or as a group in a "Big Sit." For the Big Sit, individuals identify, or a team identifies all birds they can see from within a 50-foot diameter circle of your choosing within the 24-consecutive-hour-period. You could choose your back porch, a circle within your backyard, or a 50 foot circle within a place you like to bird. You can invite friends and family to join you within the circle and make it a special event.

Winners of the Birdathon and Big Sit will be announced in Valley Views and on the PVAS website.

There is no entry fee, and registration is easy. Teams may consist of 2-5 participants (unless an individual registers for the Big Sit). All you have to do is get together with friends and form a team. Or you could make this a family event and enter as a family team. Just go onto the PVAS website, www.potomacaudubon.org and click on "2011 Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon." You can fill out the registration form on line.

If you don't have internet access, contact Sandy Sagalkin, the Birdathon Coordinator, at 240-291-6465 to register.

Registration must be completed by May 12. For further information, call Sandy or contact him at monsansaglakin@myactv.net.

Master Naturalist Program Enters Fifth Year

PVAS's Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program kicked off its fifth year of instruction March 19 and 20 with a full weekend of classes at Cacapon State Park. Classes will continue at various locations in the Eastern Panhandle into October. The accompanying photo shows this year's class members. Listed alphabetically, they are as follows: Barbara Andreadis, Berekeley Springs; Joette Borzik, Shenandoah Junction; Ralph Campbell, Berkeley Springs; Carol Coryea, Paw Paw; Stephanie Diamond, Charles Town; Karen Eddleman, Harpers Ferry; Susan Jones, Berkeley Springs; Todd Kennedy, Boonsboro, MD; Margie Knott, Arlington, VA; Tracy McCleaf, Fairfield, PA; Linda Mercer, Capon Bridge; Woodrow Nackley, Shepherdstown; Connie Ness, Martinsburg; Sue Pellish, Shepherdstown; Cecile Quinlan, Towson, MD; Louis Scavincky, Martinsburg; Tom Tsakeris, Rockville, MD; and Melissa Wertz, Boonsboro, MD. The co-chairs of this year's Program are Krystal Kennedy, of Hagerstown, MD, and Nancy Little, of Harpers Ferry.



Potomac Valley Nature Writers Group

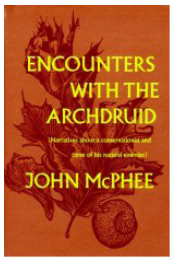
Do you enjoy reading and/or writing about nature? Then you are invited to join the Potomac Valley Nature Writers' Group (PVNWG). The Group meets each month from September through May to discuss a particular nature writer and his or her work. Selections vary to include male and female writers, classic and contemporary works, fiction and nonfiction, prose and poetry. PVNWG also supports members' own writing efforts such as nature journaling. Meeting dates and locations vary. For more information, visit http://potomacvalleynaturewritinggroup.blogspot.com/ or contact pvnaturewriters@gmail.com

PVNWG 2011 Upcoming Book Selections

April: Donald Kroodsma, ***The Singing Life of Birds***
May: John Himmelman: ***Discovering Moths***
Summer Hiatus: Bernd Heinrich, ***Summer World***

October: Jane Goodall, ***A Reason for Hope***
November: Barbara Hurd, ***Entering the Stone***
December: Barry Lopez, ***Arctic Dreams***

PVNWG RECOMMENDS



In March, PVNWG honored Pulitizer Prize winning author John McPhee and his 1971 work ***Encounters With the Archdruid***. Reading like a novel, ***Encounters...*** acquaints us with the personalities of four men. The protagonist is the legendary ***Friends of the Earth*** founder David Brower. Brower's three antagonists on the environmental battlefield include a developer, a geologist/miner, and a federal bureaucrat. McPhee takes us on virtual journeys to three wildernesses - a coastal island, a western mountain range, and the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon. We witness the clash of these men's differing philosophies and relationships to nature, but also the humor and friendliness of their interactions as worthy opponents.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

April 2:	Open House/Volunteer Day, Ranson's Flowing Springs Park
April 6:	Bird walk, Cool Spring Farm
April 7:	Birding 101 begins at NCTC
April 8:	Stink Bugs Program, Ice House in Berkeley Springs
April 9:	"This Race is for the Birds" at NCTC
April 13:	PVAS program, NCTC "Youth Initiatives of the Fish and Wildlife Service"
April 15:	Timber Rattlesnake Program, Ice House in Berkeley Springs
April 16:	Birding trip, Shenandoah River
April 16:	Wildflower Festival, Yankauer Nature Preserve
April 17:	Egg Hunt!, Yankauer Nature Preserve
April 17:	Wildflower and Wildlife Walks, Eidolon Nature Preserve
April 20:	Birding trip, Lilypons Water Gardens
April 22:	EARTH DAY!
April 22:	Potomac Valley Nature Photographers meeting, NCTC
April 30:	Birding field trip, Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area
April 30:	Native Plant Open House, Winston Gardens in Swan Pond
May 1:	Birding field trip, C&O Canal in the Hancock
May 11:	PVAS program, NCTC "The Natural History of the Potomac River."
May 14-15:	Ruth Anne Dean Memorial Birdathon
May 27:	Potomac Valley Nature Photographers meeting, NCTC
May 28:	Birding field trip, Stauffer's Marsh
May 31:	Summer Camp Begins!
June 4:	PVAS fundraiser at Harewood, Charles Town
June 11:	PVAS Annual Pot Luck Dinner Meeting and Elections
June 24:	Potomac Valley Nature Photographers meeting, NCTC

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:

- Access to a wide variety of PVAS programs and events for adults and children, including field trips, special events, workshops and courses, and environmental projects.
- A subscription to Valley Views, the PVAS newsletter
- E-mail alerts about events and programs of special interest
- Satisfaction of supporting conservation efforts, youth and adult nature education, individual and family recreation, and a wide array of programs in your community.

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.

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

Thank you for your support!

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 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.

RED TEXT - DOT ALERT

If red text or a red dot appears on your mailing label, your membership may have expired and this could be your last issue of Valley Views. Take action to renew your Local membership. If you are a National Audubon Society member, the National Society will notify you directly when your membership is up for renewal.

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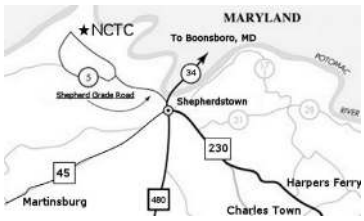
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DATED MATERIALS

A proud partner of the United Way of the Eastern Panhandle and the Combined Federal Campaign.

MAIL TO:

April 2011 Printed on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper Volume 29, Issue 6



The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April, at the US Fish and Widlife Service National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), Shepherdstown, WV, in the Instructional West Building. Programs are free and open to the public. For additional information about PVAS or its programs and activities, please call any of the board members listed her or see http://www.potomacaudubon.org. PVAS serves the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

PVAS BOARD

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

PVAS Officers and Board Members

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