

VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac
Valley
Audubon
Society

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April 2015

President's Perch

by Jane Vanderhook, PVAS President

After a cold, snowy winter, spring officially arrived on March 20th at 3:46pm. Along with its bright greens and yellows, spring brings a myriad of activities for Potomac Valley Audubon Society.

Our Annual Appeal campaign is ending with a record total exceeding \$40,000! Many thanks to all of you who made the Annual Appeal so successful. With your help PVAS can continue to offer the programs that benefit us all and we thank you for your support.

The April calendar is very full so here are just a few highlights:

Birding 101 will begin on Thursday, April 2 at 7:00pm at the National Conservation Training Center. This course, with classroom sessions every Thursday and field trips every Saturday for four weeks is wonderful introduction to birding. The instructor/guides are really good and if you are interested in learning about the birds you are seeing around you, this is a fun way to begin. Classroom size is limited so be sure to register right away.

There is a bird walk at the historic Claymont Mansion property scheduled for Friday, April 3 and a guided walking tour of the State Arboretum of Virginia on Thursday, April 16. Celebrate Earth Day with a bird walk at Schoolhouse Ridge Battlefield at Harpers Ferry National Park on Wednesday, April 22.

April 25th is the date for "This Race is for the Birds". Whether you are a runner or a volunteer, the event, which takes place on the beautiful National Conservation Training Center campus is lots of fun. To find out more, check the PVAS website: www.potomacaudubon.org.

Please review the Events Calendar for details on how to register for these and so many other activities. And while you're doing that, be sure to look ahead to May for all the events our very dedicated Birding Committee has scheduled to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day, starting with the Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon on May 2, and culminating with a bird walk at Bolivar Heights, Harpers Ferry National Park on Wednesday, May 13.

It's spring! Let's get out and celebrate.

Director's Report

by Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director

Camp can be a truly formative experience for youth. I can personally say that going to nature-based summer camps helped me become who I am, both personally and professionally. From day camp as a youngster to sleep-away camps as I got older, the experiences made an impression. As a person who remembers embarrassingly little of my childhood, I DO remember many of my summer camp experiences!

PVAS is in the very fortunate position to send youth to nature-based summer camps on scholarship thanks to members and friends purchasing birdseed, donations from civic organizations, and from individuals.

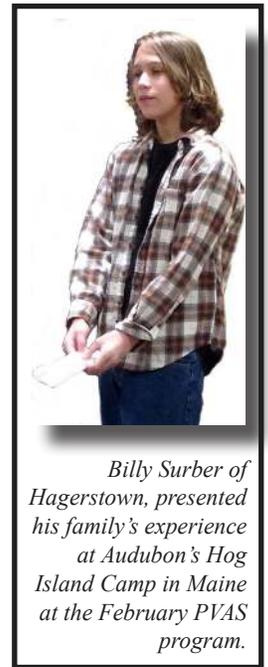
If you have attended one of PVAS's monthly meetings in recent months, you've heard from some of the campers who have attended a camp on a PVAS scholarship.

Campers have shared some of their favorite memories, from meals (always a highlight), to new friends, to meaningful outdoor experiences. These experiences range from visiting puffins on Egg Rock, to sleeping on a "bald" WV mountain.

How many local kids get to visit an island in Maine with their families, or meet the leading conservationists and writers in the nation? Thanks to our members, friends, partners, and donors, we are able to offer these incredible opportunities to kids who might not otherwise have these experiences.

I'm sure you know a deserving youth who would benefit from one of many camp experiences offered through PVAS Camp Scholarships. I hope you'll encourage a young person to apply for a scholarship this year to provide a potentially life-changing experience.

Applications are due April 8th, so please promote the opportunity to a deserving youth today. And offer to help them with the application! Sometimes that extra "nudge" from a caring adult can make all the difference. Details and applications are available on our website: <http://www.potomacaudubon.org/scholarships>.



Billy Surber of Hagerstown, presented his family's experience at Audubon's Hog Island Camp in Maine at the February PVAS program.

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

Chipping Sparrows

by Wil Hershberger

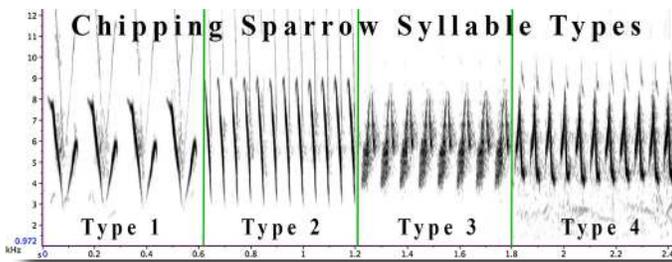
By mid-April our yards, parks, and forests will once again bounce with the staccato trills of Chipping Sparrow song. Having spent the winter in the Southeastern States and into Mexico, the male Chipping Sparrows are among the early-returning migrants in our area, arriving a week or two ahead of the females. It is a sure sign of spring when you finally hear the beautiful trill of this little gem cascading across your lawn.

Males and females look alike, dapperly attired with a rich rufous cap, black eye line, white eyebrow, small black bill, brown and black backs, and a notched tail. They average 5.5 inches from the tip of their bill to the tip of their tail. Chipping Sparrows are slim and long-tailed making them appear much smaller than the equally common Song Sparrow, which is huskier and about 6 inches in length.



Above: Adult singing.

Below: This sonagram shows 4 of the over 30 syllable types that Chipping Sparrows sing. Songs are composed of the same syllable repeated many times to create a trill.



that song type will continue and proliferate within the species.

Typical daytime song: <http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/94464>

During the breeding season, as the very first hint of light appears on the eastern horizon, neighboring male Chipping Sparrows will assemble in small groups. They typically meet on the ground in an open area, face one another, and start to sing very rapidly. It is reminiscent of machine gun fire back and forth as the males sing toward each other. No one is quite certain what this dawn ritual is all about, but it is certainly a wonderful experience to witness. Perhaps they are reasserting their dominance or establishing the fact that they did indeed survive the night and are going to be back on their territories for the day throwing their trills to the wind for all to hear.

Dawn song: <http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/191234>

¹ A syllable is a single note within a song. Chipping Sparrow songs are composed of a single syllable type, repeated many times to create a trill.

Chipping Sparrows breed across much of North America. Shortly after the females arrive in a male's territory the nesting cycle starts with searching for nesting sites. As the pair searches for a good site, the female will stand at the proposed nest site, squat, turn around, and check out the area. She will often repeat this process at any given site several times. During this time, the female will beg food from her mate, perhaps testing his ability to provide for the new family they are ready to start. Once the female selects a site, often in an Eastern Red Cedar or other shrub, she alone builds the nest from fine grasses and roots. Once the cup of the nest is complete, she will line it with finer material including animal hair. She completes the task in 3-4 days working most vigorously in the mornings. She will lay 4 pale sky-blue eggs, one a day, and begin incubating them with the laying of the third egg. She alone is responsible for incubation. The eggs hatch after 12 days and the young fledge after an additional 8-10 days in the nest. Both parents feed the nestlings and dependent young.

The song of the Chipping Sparrow is a simple, rapid trill. This species is a songbird; therefore males learn to sing just as we learn to speak. During the summer of his birth, a male wanders away from the nest and listens to other adult males singing in the area that he will return to the following spring. He may learn several of the syllable types¹ that can be found in the songs of males in this area. However, once he returns in the spring and begins singing, he selects one syllable type from

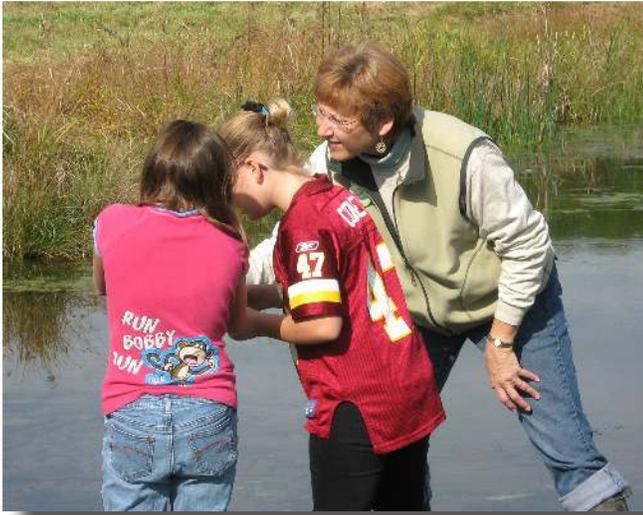
all that he learned, typically that of one of his new neighbors, and sings that single type for the rest of his life. Looking at Chipping Sparrow songs from across the country, there are at least 30 syllable types that this species can produce. A male can show off his fitness by singing more rapid trills and singing more loudly than his rivals. The females are listening for these subtle cues while selecting mates. As in other songbirds, females are the architects of the songs we hear, sculpted by the choices she makes for a mate. The more successful a song type is at attracting a mate, the more likely



Adult with insect larvae.

Volunteers Needed!

PVAS is able to do so many programs and reach so many children through school programs, camp, and special events because of our great volunteers. We have a number of volunteer needs coming up in the next few weeks and we'd love to have you help out! **(Master Naturalists can use these opportunities to fulfill their volunteer hours.)**



Watershed Field Trips: Each watershed field trip lasts from about 8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (some are shorter) and are at different locations in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan Counties. There's even one in Washington County MD! Fourth grade

classes attend with teachers and chaperones and participate in activities like water quality testing and searching for macroinvertebrates. If you don't have experience it's no problem! We can teach you the basics in a few minutes or put you with a more experienced volunteer if possible.



artifacts, games, activities, and ideas ready to go!

Summer Camp: During the summer, we love to have volunteers help at our day camp sessions. Camp volunteers can help the staff with camper activities, hikes, games, and fort building. Extra adults at camp make the sessions extra-special for campers. The camp day is 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Some volunteers come every day for a week, some come for one day during specific sessions, and some come only one day all summer to present a specific activity. Whatever time commitment will work for you is a bonus for camp! Camp volunteers receive a t-shirt as a thank you for your time, but you receive a lot more from the campers.

If you'd like to be a part of watershed field trips, the Wildflower Festival, or day camp, please let Ellen know at Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org. She can answer all your questions and put you on the schedule.

Watershed Field Trips will be held on the following dates:

April 1, Shepherdstown Elementary School
(Flowing Springs Park near Ranson Home Depot)

April 13, 15 Tomahawk Intermediate
(Izaak Walton League, Scrabble Rd, Martinsburg)

April 14, St. Joseph's School
(Poor House Farm Park in Martinsburg)

April 16-17, Mountain Ridge Intermediate
(at the school near Inwood)

April 20, 23, 24, Orchard View Intermediate
(Poor House Farm Park in Martinsburg)

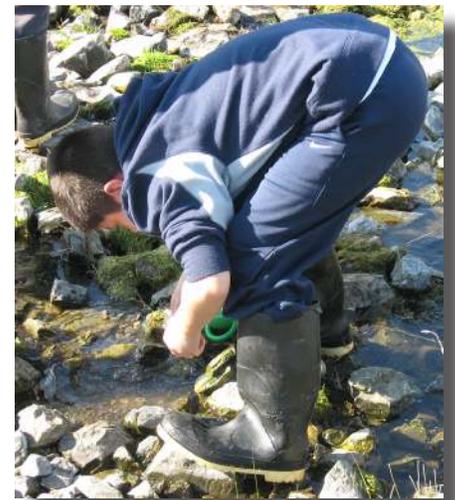
April 27, 28, 29
(Cacapon River, past Great Cacapon, Morgan County WV)

May 11, 12, 13 Eagle Intermediate
(Poor House Farm in Martinsburg)

May 20, Pleasant Valley Elementary
(Catoclin Creek Park, near Middletown MD)

Smell The Flowers: Our annual Wildflower Festival will be held at Yankauer Preserve on Saturday April 18. Volunteers lead wildflower hikes between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. but we also have children's activities at the Pavilion and can always use help with them. We provide the supplies and materials and you supply the fun! (*More in article on p. 7*).

Read To A Kid: We'd like to find some folks who like to read children's books out loud and are then willing to help lead some nature-oriented activities. "Reading to the Trees" is a program at the Martinsburg Children's Library and the Martinsburg Children's Museum, located at the train station (the museum is called "For the Kids, By George!"). "Audubon on the Road" will be a similar nature-story hour at libraries in the local area. Both of these programs have flexible hours and we can work with you to set them up; we have lots of nature



Local Events Set to Mark International Migratory Bird Day

PVAS has put together a special series of local events in late April and early May to mark the 23rd annual observance of International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD). The IMBD is an international program that aims to promote greater understanding and appreciation of the importance of migratory birds in North, Central and South America. It was initiated in 1993 by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. This year's IMBD theme is "Restore Habitat; Restore Birds."

All the local events will be free, and anyone with an interest is invited to participate. Pre-registration is required for the Birdathon event and a May 5 bird walk at Altona Marsh; it is encouraged but not required for all the other daytime events. No pre-registration is needed for a May 13 evening lecture.

To register for events and get more details go to the PVAS website. For each trip, participants should dress for the weather, wear comfortable walking shoes and bring drinking water and insect repellent. Binoculars will be provided if needed. For additional information about specific events contact the individuals mentioned in the event descriptions or Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or 703-303-1026.

Schedule of Events

Monday, April 27: Children's birding workshop and birdwalk at the Wind Dance Farm and Home School in Morgan County. 8:30-11:00 a.m. In the event of rain, this event will be rescheduled to Friday, May 1. For more info contact Sandy Sagalkin at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465 or Leslie Milbourne at www.winddancefarm.org 304-258-4672.

Saturday and Sunday, May 2-3: Sixth Annual Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon. Teams and individuals will compete to identify the highest numbers of bird species they find in the area within any 24-consecutive-hour-period during the weekend. Free and open to anyone who is interested, but all must pre-register. Those who participate are encouraged to seek pledges from neighbors, family, and friends to help raise funds to improve wild bird habitat at PVAS's Stauffer's Marsh Nature Preserve. For more info go to <http://www.potomacaudubon.org/birdathon.html>.

Sunday, May 3: Bird Walk at the Eidolon Nature Preserve in Morgan County. To be led by local birders Jon Boone and Janet Ardem. A good opportunity to see the rare Cerulean Warbler, which nests here. Meet at the preserve at 7:30 a.m. For more info, contact the Nature Niche store in Berkeley Springs at 304-258-0992 or natureniche@naturenichewv.com.

Monday, May 4: Bird Walk on the C&O Canal, across from Shepherdstown. Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the large C&O Canal parking lot on River Road, just south of the railroad bridge. For more info, contact walk leader Lynne Wiseman at 304-676-2725.

Tuesday, May 5: Bird Walk at Altona Marsh in Jefferson County. Walk will start at 8:00 a.m. and last about 3 hours. Because this is a protected site and there are access issues, participants must pre-register and sign a waiver. For more info contact trip leader James Farley at jamesfarley@frontiernet.net or 540-686-2056.

Wednesday, May 6: Bird Walk in western Berkeley County. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Eagle Mart Plaza parking lot on Route 9 just south of Hedgesville. Participants will carpool from there because there is limited space for parking at the sites that will be visited. Trip will last about 3 hours. For more info, contact walk leader Bob Dean at bobdean52@gmail.com.

Thursday, May 7: Bird walk at Stauffer's Marsh in Berkeley County. Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking area at the north end of the marsh. Walk will last about 2 ½ hours. For more info contact walk leader Steve Hartmann at 304-433-7777.

Friday, May 8: Bird walk at the Murphy's Farm section of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. 7:00-10:00 a.m. Meet at the park's visitor's center off Route 340. Please note that the Park Service will charge a fee of \$10 per vehicle to enter the Park unless you have an annual Park pass or a NPS Golden Eagle pass. For more info contact trip leader Deb Hale at 304-535-2346.

Saturday, May 9: Bird Walk at Sideling Hill in Maryland. Co-sponsored by the Washington County Bird Club. Meet at 7:00 a.m. in the upper parking lot of the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration facility at 18306 Col. Henry K. Douglas Drive, Hagerstown (off Route 65, just south of U.S. 70). For more info contact trip leader Sandy Sagalkin at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

Sunday, May 10: Mother's Day Bird Walk in the Final Attack Trail/Otto Farm section of the Antietam National Battlefield. Co-sponsored by the Washington County Bird Club. 7:30-10:30 a.m. Meet at the Burnside Bridge parking lot. For more info contact trip leader Sandy Sagalkin at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

Wednesday, May 13: Bird walk at the Bolivar Heights section of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. 7:00-9:00 a.m. Meet in the Bolivar Heights parking area. For more info, contact trip leader Deb Hale at 304-535-2346 or debhale72@gmail.com.

Wednesday, May 13: PVAS evening program at the Hospice of the Panhandle Facility at 330 Hospice Lane, Kearneysville. 7:00 p.m. in the main meeting room of the Main Office Building. Joette Borzik will give a presentation on the birds of Cuba.

Sixth Annual Birdathon Set for May 2-3

PVAS will hold its sixth annual “Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon” the weekend of May 2-3. Everyone is welcome to participate, regardless of their experience or expertise at birding.

The Birdathon offers options for joining friendly competitions to see who can identify the highest number of bird species during the weekend inside PVAS’s geographical territory (Jefferson, Berkeley, and Morgan counties in West Virginia and Washington County in Maryland).

PVAS bills the event as very family-friendly and says it is great way to get children more interested in birds and the natural world in general. All its activities are free.

Those who participate are encouraged to seek pledges from neighbors, family, and friends to help raise funds to improve wild bird habitat at PVAS’s Stauffer’s Marsh Nature Preserve.

Full details are available on the PVAS website. Or you may contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or 703-303-1026.

People can participate in the Birdathon in one of two ways:

The first way is to go out in the field, as part of a team or as an individual, and actively seek to identify as many birds as possible during any 24-consecutive-hour-period during the weekend. Birdathon teams should be two to five members in size and can be made up of friends or family members. If you don’t have a team of your own, PVAS can help you find one.

The second way to participate is to initiate a “Big Sit,” in which you choose any location you want within PVAS’s territory and identify all the bird species you can see or hear from within a 50-foot diameter circle -- again, within a 24-consecutive-hour-period during the weekend. You can locate your circle outside your porch or deck, in your yard, or in some favorite local spot. Here, too, you can do this on your own or invite friends and family to join you and make it a special event. This is a much easier option, and better suited for older folks and families with small children.

Those participating in the field and in individual or small-group Big Sits are asked to register with PVAS. Registration is free and easy on the PVAS website.

PVAS’s annual Birdathon is named in honor of Ruth Ann Dean, who was a founding member and ardent supporter of PVAS. Each year, it is part of a week of local activities commemorating International Migratory Bird Day (*see p.4*).



Race for the Birds

April 25, 2015

**Don't forget to register to run, walk, or volunteer for
This Race is for the Birds!**

**Visit www.raceforthebirds.org for information, or
to register, email Race4birds@potomacaudubon.org
with any questions you may have.**

Save money by registering online before April 20!

(Race day registration will be available)

**Chip timing this year as well as great prizes
and fun courses!**

We look forward to seeing you on the trails!

Birdseed Pickup Reminder!

**If you have birdseed in storage at Gower's,
please be sure to pick it up before April 1
(that's when our storage option expires,
and seed is forfeited).**

**Give me a call if I can be of help.
And Thank You! for buying birdseed
through PVAS ... with your help we put
\$2,200 into the camp scholarship fund
this year!**

How good is that?!?

Again, Thank YOU!!

**Diana Mullis [304-754-3753](tel:304-754-3753) or
dianamullis@aol.com**

Harpers Ferry Bird Walk Set for April 22 Join April 3 Bird Walk at Claymont

PVAS will sponsor a birding trip to the North Schoolhouse Ridge section of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park on Earth Day, Wednesday April 22. The walk will begin at 7:00 a.m. and last about three hours.

It will be free and anyone with an interest is welcome to come along, regardless of their birding skills. Children are welcome. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged but not required. To register, go to the PVAS website.

Participants will meet at the North Schoolhouse Ridge parking area. From Route 340 just west of Harpers Ferry, turn north on Bakerton Road (Route 27) and go about three-quarters of a mile to the parking area on the left. The trip will involve about 2.5 miles of walking through fields and unpaved roads, along mostly level terrain.

Birds expected to be seen include returning warblers, vireos, meadowlarks, and sparrows, as well as raptors and migrating birds. Many butterfly varieties also frequent this area.

Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for prevailing weather conditions, and bring along water, sunscreen and bug spray. Binoculars will be available for anyone who needs them. The trip will be cancelled in the event of bad weather.

For more information go to the PVAS website, or contact Deb Hale at debhale72@gmail.com or 304-535-2346.

PVAS will sponsor a bird walk on the historic Claymont property outside Charles Town, WV on Friday, April 3.

The walk will begin at 7:30 a.m. It is free and open to anyone with an interest, regardless of their birding skills. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied by an adult.

Pre-registration is strongly encouraged but not required. Easy registration is available on the PVAS website.

Field trip participants should plan to meet the trip leader on the Claymont entrance road where a wetland meets the access driveway. The entrance is located at 667 Huyett Road; it is marked by a street sign that says "Claymont Mansion."

The trip will last about four hours and involve about three miles of moderate hiking, but participants may opt out at any time along the way.

It should offer opportunities to see early grassland breeders, such as the Eastern Meadowlark, and winter residents that have not yet departed for their summer grounds.

Participants should dress appropriately for the prevailing weather and bring drinking water, trail snacks and insect repellent. Binoculars will be available for those who need them.

For more info, contact trip leader, Joette Borzik, at 240-440-4221 or pep4223@comcast.net.

Join April 26 Bird Walk at Antietam

PVAS will sponsor a bird walk along the Final Attack Trail on the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg, MD on Sunday, April 26. The walk is being cosponsored by the Washington County Bird Club.

It will be free and open to anyone with an interest, regardless of their birding skills. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged but not required. Easy registration is available on the PVAS website.

Participants should plan to meet walk leader Sandy Sagalkin at the Burnside Bridge at 8:00 a.m. The walk will last about 2 1/2 to 3 hours, and cover mostly level terrain.

Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring along water and insect repellent. PVAS will provide binoculars for those who do not have their own. Various trip details could change depending on weather or recent bird sightings.

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

Working with Battlefield staff, Sandy has assisted the Battlefield in surveying the grassland birds in the area during the spring and summer of 2014. So far, they have counted more than 70 species that have used the area as a stopover or residence, including Blue Grosbeaks, Yellow-breasted Chats, Common Yellowthroats, Willow Flycatchers, Grasshopper Sparrows and Prairie Warblers.

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

This Year's Wildflower Festival Set for April 18

We will hold our annual spring Wildflower Festival on Saturday, April 18 at its 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. It will include guided, beginner and advanced wildflower walks through the preserve for families, children's activities and refreshments.

Admission is free and everyone is welcome. No pre-registration is required. Guided walks will leave the pavilion on the hour, though visitors will be welcome to explore the trails on their own as well.

For the eighth year in a row, the festival will also include a special Poetry Walk. Poems, contributed by local poets and focusing on spring themes, will be posted all along the preserve's Kingfisher trail where the majority of wildflowers are found. During early April, a wide variety of wildflowers should be on display, including 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. The Yankauer Preserve is located on Whiting's Neck in northeastern Berkeley County, off Scrabble Road. Directions can be found on the PVAS website.

For more info, check the PVAS website or contact Ellen Murphy at 304-676-8739 or ellen@potomacaudubon.org.



Cutleaf Toothwort photo by Laura Rau



Spring Beauty



Rue Anemone

Join April 16 Tour of Virginia Arboretum

PVAS has arranged for a special guided tour of the State Arboretum of Virginia in Clarke County VA on Thursday, April 16.

Anyone with an interest is welcome to participate but space will be limited and pre-registration is required. There will also be a fee of \$5 per person. Easy registration is available on the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org.

The Arboretum is part of the University of Virginia's Blandy Experimental Farm, a 700-acre research and educational facility. It contains more than 8,000 trees and woody shrubs. The collections include a third of the world's pine species, a Virginia Native Plant Trail, a Boxwood Memorial Garden, a spectacular grove of more than 300 ginkgo trees, an herb garden featuring culinary, medicinal and ornamental herbs, and more.



Participants should plan to meet at 10:00 a.m. in the library of the Arboretum's main entrance building. The tour will last about one-and-a-half hours and be led by Steven Carroll, the facility's Director of Public Programs. It will involve easy walking over mostly level ground.

Afterwards, participants will be free to stay as long as they like to explore the Arboretum's many plant collections on their own. The tour will take place as scheduled if there is light rain but will be rescheduled in the event of heavy rain.

Participants should dress for the weather, wear appropriate footwear, and bring binoculars if they have them. There is no cafeteria on the property but people can bring their own picnic lunch. Restrooms are available.

The Arboretum is located on Route 50 about ten miles east of Winchester.

This is a half-hour drive from the Charles Town area. Full directions are available on the PVAS website.

Those who would like to carpool from Berkeley County should plan to meet Debbie Maiorano at the Inwood Food Lion parking lot no later than 9:15 a.m.

For more information about the trip, contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or 703-303-1026. For more information about the Arboretum, go to <http://blandy.virginia.edu>.

April Program Will Focus on the Emerald Ash Borer

Our monthly program for March will feature a presentation on the Emerald Ash Borer.

The program will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 8 at the Hospice of the Panhandle facility in Kearneysville. Admission will be free and everyone is welcome to attend.

The speaker will be local arborist Shawn Walker. He will discuss the threat the Emerald Ash Borer poses to local ash trees and steps property owners can take to help protect their trees.

The Emerald Ash Borer is a beetle native to Asia and Eastern Russia. Outside its native range it is highly invasive and has a devastating impact on ash tree populations.

The insect was first detected in the U.S. in Michigan in 2002. Scientists believe it probably first arrived here in the 1990s, in packing crates from Asia. By now it has spread and killed uncounted millions of trees throughout the Eastern U.S. and Canada, and as far west as Colorado and as far south as Georgia. It was first found in West Virginia in 2007 and is now a major problem here.

The Hospice facility's address is 330 Hospice Lane, Kearneysville. The Audubon events will be held in the main meeting room of the facility's Main Office building. There is plenty of parking at the facility. For more information go to the PVAS website or contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or 703-303-1026.



Photo USDA

Do You Know About Our School Programs?

During the school year, our Program Director, Ellen Murphy, spends time visiting school classrooms to present nature-focused programs. Each program is tied to the WV learning standards for each grade level and most grades have several programs to choose from. For example, "Insectigations" is very popular with kindergarten classes. Other programs include "Sensational Senses" (first grade), "Plants v. Animals" (second grade), "Amazing Animal Adaptations" (third grade), "What's For Lunch" (food webs, fourth grade), "My Life as a Scientist" (fifth grade). Each classroom program is designed for one-hour and is delivered to individual classrooms so that students get a quality, hands-on experience. (In case you are wondering, Ellen says her favorite program is always the one she is doing at any specific time because they are all fun for students!)



"Is" (kindergarten), "It's Alive!" (first grade), "Rainbow Crow" and "Bird Beak Basics" (illustrated above) (second and third grades), "Wonders of Water" (fourth grade), "Trees Are The Key" (dichotomous keys) and "Changing Lands, Changing Time" (fifth grade).

Homeschool groups may be interested in our programs. We also work with groups to find programs that can be adapted to meet multiple age levels. We're currently developing a customized, homeschool watershed program that will be suitable for multiple ages and include a trip to the Chesapeake Bay!

Ellen will be at several schools this spring delivering programs, including Berkeley Heights and Opequon Elementary Schools in Martinsburg. For a complete list of all our current programs, go to www.potomacaudubon.org/school.

Family Nature Tales Takes Off!

Our newest program for families at Yankauer Preserve, Family Nature Tales, has quickly become a favorite with kids and parents alike.

Activities paired with a read-aloud story are helping families explore nature in new and different ways. In February, even the 10-degree weather didn't keep us from making tree bark rubbings, measuring trees to find the biggest one, and playing shadow tag in the snow!

The monthly program continues this spring on April 28 and May 30. Both programs are from 10 a.m.-12 noon at Yankauer Preserve. The programs are free and pre-registration is on the PVAS website, www.PotomacAudubon.org.



Learn About “Sharing Nature With Children”

PVAS is offering a special, one-day workshop about “Sharing Nature With Children” on Sunday, April 19. The workshop will be held at the Yankauer Nature Preserve in Berkeley County from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

It is intended to help caring adults learn new ways to share nature with their favorite youngsters -- their own children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, or those of friends and neighbors. It will provide specific techniques and activities for exploring the out-of-doors with children, especially during the spring and summer months. (Another workshop focusing on fall and winter months is being planned for later.)

None of the activities will require special equipment, and they can be done anywhere -- in local parks or trails, or in the backyard at home.

Anyone who is interested will be welcome but there will be a fee and pre-registration will be required. The fee will be \$10 for PVAS members and \$15 for nonmembers. Register on the PVAS website.

For more information, contact Ellen Murphy at Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org.

Summer Camp Countdown

In two months, our Audubon Discovery Camp will begin its 12th year! Where has the time gone? Our first summer, we served 29 campers. This year, we hope to serve over 200!

Because of the school days missed for snow, we have adjusted the schedule for some of our sessions. Our preschool session, “Out of the Nest” for preschoolers is now scheduled for the week of July 20-24. Also that week, we have added a session of “Outdoor Adventurer: Build A Techno Trail,” focused on exploring Martinsburg, and headquartered at the Martinsburg Children’s Museum (“for the kids, by George!”). Other sessions this year include “Bugs, Slugs, and Other Ughs,” “I’m Flying,” “Camp Survivor,” “Butterfly...Flutter By,” and “Pioneer Adventure.”

All of our camp sessions feature supervised, but unstructured play as well as directed games, activities, and hikes. All sessions at Yankauer Preserve include building a fort in the woods! A special evening campfire and hike is part of “I’m Flying.” Camps at the Peter Burr Farm include some new activities in both sessions.

We maintain waiting lists for all camp sessions (no fee is required unless you order a t-shirt) and we encourage you to register there if your chosen session is already filled. We try our best to place every camper in a session of his or her choice, in the order of registration on waiting lists. All T-shirts must be ordered by May 15 to guarantee delivery at camp. Shirts are \$10 and must be paid in advance. Full information about all sessions and direct links to register are on the PVAS website: www.PotomacAudubon.org/discovercamp.



Photo Camp Is Picture Perfect

If someone loaned you a Nikon digital SLR camera for a week, what pictures would you take? That’s the question high school students are faced with at our Digital Nature Photo Camp held on the Shepherd University campus. Campers spend the week learning to compose, photograph, and digitally manipulate the images they take, under the instruction of Ben Schonberger, a professional photographer and adjunct faculty at Shepherd. Ben is returning for his second year teaching at the camp.

Much of each day at the camp is spent outside taking pictures in the Shepherdstown area, but a day-long field trip during the week provides the campers with other photographic opportunities. Campers choose their best photos and display them at a public exhibition on the last day of the camp. (It’s open to everyone so prepare to be stunned by the quality of the images that the campers capture during the week!)

Each year, some of the campers are first time photographers, so no experience is necessary to be part of the camp. In fact, we encourage teens to take the opportunity to try out what might become a new hobby or even profession for them. Complete information about the camp, financial assistance forms, and registration information is at www.potomacaudubon.org/photcamp.



STILL TIME TO APPLY FOR SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS!

It's finally spring! What a great time to plan for summer nature camp! Camp scholarship applications must be post-marked no later than April 8, 2015, so act now! Scholarship offerings include the camps listed below, with ages and dates given. Our web site www.potomacaudubon.org provides additional details about each camp.

- ☐ **Audubon Discovery Day Camp:** our own local day camp at Yankauer Nature Preserve, Peter Burr Farm, and Shepherd University; pre-school to grade 12; a variety of week-long sessions in *June and July 2015*.
- ☐ **Family Camp:** at historic Audubon camp, Hog Island, Maine; families with children ages 8-12; *August 11-16, 2015*.
- ☐ **Oglebay Institute Junior Nature Camp:** at Dallas Pike (near Wheeling), WV; ages 10-15; *July 19-25 and/or July 26 - August 1, 2015*.
- ☐ **Burgundy Center for Wildlife Studies:** at Capon Bridge, WV; ages 11-15; *June 21-July 4; July 7-21; or July 28 - August 10, 2015*.
- ☐ **West Virginia Junior Conservation Camp:** at Cedar Lakes, Ripley, WV; ages 11-14; *June 15-19, 2015*.
- ☐ **Mountain Stewards Summer Camp,** at Spruce Knob, WV; grades 9-12 (up to age 17); *June 7-12, June 14-19, June 28-July 3, July 5-10, 2015*.
- ☐ **West Virginia Senior Conservation Camp:** at Camp Caesar, Webster County, WV; Campers must be age 14 by January 1 and not past age 18 on June 1; *June 15 - 20, 2015*.
- ☐ **Student Climate & Conservation Congress (SC3):** at the National Conservation and Training Center (NCTC), Shepherdstown, WV; Rising grades 9-12 (ages 14-18); *June 21-27, 2015*.
- ☐ **Nature Photography Camp:** at Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, WV; grades 9-12 (ages 14-18); *June 22-26, 2015*.

Please check our web site for scholarship application forms and links to the camps' web sites, providing lots more exciting information, great pictures, and camp descriptions! You may also contact scholarship coordinator Kathryn Henry at 304-876-6681, or dhenry@myexcel.com.

All young people within the PVAS membership area are eligible to apply for camp scholarships, which are supported by our fall bird seed sale and by additional individual and community sources. Many thanks to these loyal supporters of our summer camping programs!

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. *And discounts to most programs that require a fee!*
- 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:

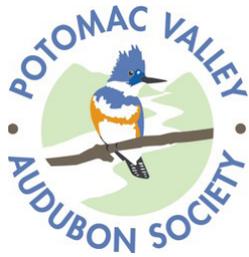
**Membership Chair, PVAS
PO Box 578
Shepherdstown, WV 25443**



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.



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

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

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

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 Vice President: Michael Sullivan (2016) msullivan@limno.com
 Secretary: Diana Gaviria (2016) jpikester@comcast.net
 Treasurer: Lex Miller (2014)..... pamandlex@frontiernet.net
 Board Members-at-Large:

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 Kara Gibson (2016)..... KaraKlein@gmail.com
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