

# Valley Views

**Potomac  
Valley  
Audubon  
Society**

Volume 23, Issue 5

February 2005

## Meeting Programs

### **February 9 – “Environmentalism as Reform and Religion” by Thomas Dunlap**

An event co-sponsored with National Conservation Training Center: begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Byrd Auditorium of the NCTC

Thomas Dunlap is among the leading environmental historians and historians of science in the United States. Originally trained as a chemist, he has a rigorous understanding of science and appreciates its vital importance to environmental thought. But he is also a devout Catholic who believes that the insights of religious revelation need not necessarily be at odds with the insights of scientific investigation. His latest book *Faith in Nature: Environmentalism as Religious Quest* grew from his own religious journey and his attempts to understand human ethical obligations and spiritual debts to the natural world. Other books by Dunlap include *DDT: Scientists, Citizens and Public Policy* and *Saving America's Wildlife*. Thomas Dunlap is an historian at Texas A & M University.

### **March 9 – TBA**

### **April 13 – The Mountaintop Removal Road Show**

Dave Cooper of Lexington, Kentucky, presents a stunning slide show about the impacts of mountaintop removal on coalfield communities. The show features traditional Appalachian mountain music and shocking aerial photos of decapitated Appalachian mountains.

## Field Trips

### **Sunday, February 20 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

*The Cathy Shewbridge Memorial Waterfowl Outing.* PVAS' great birders Lynne Wiseman, Tess England, and Bruni Haydl will again be leading us on this popular birding trip formerly known as the Waterfowl on the Shenandoah River field trip. Birding beginner or just curious? Come on out, this one's for you! One year we had an irruption of Red-necked Grebes, and last year there was a beautiful barred owl snoozing the afternoon away in a sycamore tree, just where Bruni told us to look!

We will meet at Bakerton Road off Route 340, just west of Harpers Ferry. Park on the broad (west) side of the road. We will leave at 1:00 p.m. for the Bloomery Road area and possibly Shannondale and the Potomac River. We encourage you to carpool as parking areas are limited. Please dress warmly and be aware there may be muddy areas if it doesn't freeze before then. Please contact either Lynne or Tess at (304) 876-2539 if you have any questions. The day of the event you can contact Lynne at 304-676-2725 on her cell phone.

### **Saturday, February 26 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.**

Please join some PVAS members as we participate with the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy in their monthly nature walk at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship on Harpers Ferry Road, Rt. 671. The Center is in Virginia between the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers. We meet at the Neersville Volunteer Fire Station at 8:00 a.m.

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

## News from Yankauer Nature Preserve . . .

### ***Pavilion floor thanks***

In our haste to thank all of the volunteers for their hard work and all of the businesses for their in-kind services and donations, we neglected to thank the financial contributions toward the project! My apologies. Despite the many services and materials donated, the project would not have been possible without the financial contributions of Jeanne Baden, Nick and Joanie Blanton, and the State Budget Digest. Thank you!

### ***Watershed Education Initiative '05***

The Watershed Education Initiative will commence in February with seventeen classrooms from four schools: Morgan Academy, North Jefferson Elementary, Potomac Intermediate, and Shepherdstown Elementary. We are pleased that this list includes two schools new to the program, and all ten classrooms from Potomac Intermediate. We look forward to getting started!

### ***Annual Appeal Update***

All of you should have received the annual appeal in the mail in December along with an annual report on the Yankauer Nature Preserve. We hope you take the time to look over the accomplishments of 2004 as well as what we have to look forward to in 2005. The progress we've made over the last several years is a direct result of the contributions from you - our members and friends. If for whatever reason you did not receive an appeal letter or if you have misplaced the pledge envelope, you may still contribute by sending a check made out to PVAS - Yankauer Fund to P.O. Box 578, Shepherdstown, WV 25443. We look forward to hearing from you, and thank you sincerely for your support of this project!

### ***Wetland Project***

If you've been to Yankauer lately, you've probably noticed lots of little flags all over the pavilion area. Volunteer Steve Shaffer participated in POW! (Planning of Wetlands) last summer at NCTC. As part of his training, Steve agreed to plan a constructed wetland at Yankauer to increase the educational programming potential at the preserve. Steve has surveyed the site and developed a map of the pavilion area to be used in calculating the natural water drainage of the area. The next step will be to work with Kristin Alexander on a design for the wetland itself. Stay tuned for future developments!

### ***Potluck Highlights Camp Experiences***

The December PVAS Potluck in Martinsburg featured campers sharing highlights from their summer scholarship experiences. How fun to hear about their favorite activities and to see their photos and art projects! This was a great way to launch the planning and organizing of this summer's Audubon Discovery Camp at the Preserve. Stay tuned for details in the next Valley Views! A tremendous thank you goes out to those who made the scholarships possible for these children at the Audubon Discovery Camp: Bill Belton, Susan Benjamin, Frank Hill, and Diane and Gary Silvester.

## **POTOMAC ARTS FESTIVAL**

PVAS is currently organizing a juried arts and crafts show that will be held October 28 - 30, 2005 at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. A remarkably beautiful and state-of-the-art facility, the Training Center will provide a perfect location for a festival geared toward supporting environmental education and the Yankauer Nature Preserve. JiJi Beckett, a Shepherdstown native and long-time arts supporter, has been hired as the coordinator for the festival. She has mailed a "call to artists" postcard and is currently finalizing application criteria for artist participants. The festival will run concurrently with the American Conservation Film Festival, also held at NCTC next fall.



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## **8<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Backyard Bird Count - "North America's Great Backyard"**

New York, NY, Tuesday, January 18, 2005 - During the weekend of February 18 through 21, people across the North American continent are urged to look at the birds in their backyards and report them over the Internet as part of the Great Backyard Bird Count, one of the world's largest volunteer efforts of its kind. This count allows people to celebrate their birds, and whether counters are novices or experts, their participation is vital in helping North America's birds.

This is the eighth year of the popular event, developed and managed by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology with sponsorship from Wild Birds Unlimited storeowners. This year's theme, "North America's Great Backyard," was chosen as a way to celebrate the unique beauty and birds found across the continent. People are encouraged to enjoy the birds around them by going out into the "Great Backyard" during any or all of the count days and noting down of the highest numbers of each bird species they see. People then report their sightings over the Internet.

An important part of North America's Great Backyard is the 730 million acres of land (around one third of the land area of the United States) held in trust by Federal Agencies. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Parks Service, Department of Defense, and Bureau of Reclamation are among the stewards of lands that support significant populations of wild birds. For this year's Great Backyard Bird Count, Audubon and Cornell, along with these federal agencies, are encouraging families and individuals to visit their local national wildlife refuge, national forest, national park, and other federal wild lands, in addition to reporting the birds they see in their own backyard.

Instructions for participating can be found at [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc). There's no fee and no registration is required. Community organizations interested in promoting the GBBC can contact the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at 800/ 843-2473 (outside the U.S., call 607/254-2473), 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, New York 14850, or the National Audubon Society at [citizenscience@audubon.org](mailto:citizenscience@audubon.org) or (215) 355-9588, Ext 20, Audubon Science Office, 545 Almshouse Road, Ivyland, PA 18974.

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## Saturday March 12

We will be making a trip to Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge on the Eastern Shore in Delaware. This is one of the prime birding areas on the Eastern Shore and while it will be a long day—a 3 hour drive each way—it should give us a good list for the day. The Snow Geese should still be there along with various ducks, harriers, and maybe an eagle or two. In the surrounding areas we will go looking for short eared owls in the late afternoon. We would like to leave very early Saturday morning (approx. 5:00 a.m.) to be there in the early morning and probably will not leave until dusk. For those who want to spend the weekend, the refuge is easily accessible from Dover, Delaware, where there are many motels. To sign up or for more information, call Ken or Patsy Hunter at 304-725-3936 or [phunter@npca.org](mailto:phunter@npca.org)

## Sunday, March 20. 8:00 a.m.

We'll celebrate the first day of spring with a trip to Nolans Ferry on the C & O Canal and explore the fields and ponds at Lily Ponds in Maryland. The section of the C & O at Nolans Ferry has open fields and an area of mature woods that often yield interesting birds. The fields and ponds at Lily Ponds could yield sightings of various ducks, great blue herons, and migrating shorebirds. Two years ago we had 10-12 snipe, along with various land birds. We'll be doing a fair amount of walking so bring your waterproof walking shoes or boots. We will meet at the WV Visitors Center parking lot on Route 340 across from the entrance to Harpers Ferry National Park. If you need directions, let me know, [phunter@npca.org](mailto:phunter@npca.org) or 304-725-3936, and I'll be happy to send them.

## December Pot Luck - Better than Ever

As usual, the food was extraordinary and the good cheer bountiful. The meeting was held at St. John's Lutheran Church in downtown Martinsburg. Turnout was the best in recent memory as attested by the fact that seats in the hall were at a premium. Attendees were treated to presentations by seven of our scholarship winners from last year.



As usual, the evening was capped off with a silent auction. Members and guest got a chance to bid on some great donated items and PVAS Tees and Sweatshirts were available as well. All told, PVAS benefitted to the tune of more than \$480.

## Presidents Perch



Hi Everyone

Happy after the holidays! Hope you had a wonderful holiday and are now enjoying some quiet time! We have sure had a mixed bag of weather this winter. I am enjoying all the birds (and squirrels) on my feeders, and all the birdseed I bought is going fast. The garden catalogs have arrived in mass, but I'm not quite ready to think about tomatoes yet ... I want to enjoy the quite of winter a little longer.

Please note that our February meeting is our annual joint meeting at and with the National Conservation Training Center (see page 1). Sure hope to see you there; Thomas Dunlap should leave us with many things to think about. Hope to see you there.

We have also scheduled some winter field trips (see page 1) to help us avoid any cabin fever (I hear there can be too much quiet time). So bundle up and come join us. And don't forget Yankauer, you can do your own walk on your own schedule and enjoy some great views of the River with no leaves to block the view. There are always pleasant surprises on a walk through a winter woods.

*Happy New Year ... Diana Mullis, President*

### MAKE A DIFFERENCE, JOIN PVAS TODAY!

When you join PVAS, you automatically become a member of the *National Audubon Society*.

Your membership includes:

- ◆ One year (six issues) of award-winning *Audubon Magazine*
- ◆ Eight issues of *Valley Views*, PVAS's newsletter of field trips, programs, and local issues
- ◆ Advance notice of all PVAS events

ENCLOSED IS MY CHECK FOR:

\$20 Individual SPECIAL OFFER, 1st time members only!

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\$15 Seniors and full-time students.

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**DATED MATERIALS**

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The *Potomac Valley Audubon Society* meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April, in the auditorium at the USGS Leetown Science Center, Letown/Kearneysville, WV. 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://potomacaudubon.org>. *PVAS* serves the Easter Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

**PVASBOARD**  
 The *PVAS*Board meets the first Wednesday of the month (Sept.-June) at Shepherd College, Snyder Hall, Room 317, 7PM. These meetings are open to all *PVAS* members.

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