

## Wood Frog

by Wil Hershberger



Wood Frog - *Rana (Lithobates) sylvatica*

Photos ©Wil Hershberger Nature Images and Sounds, LLC

Among the many signs that winter is finally releasing her icy grip are the voices of frogs. The first species of frog to become active in our area is the Wood Frog, handsomely adorned in shades of brown with a darker “bandit’s mask” around the eyes. Their low-pitched quacking calls, heard day or night, usually emanate from vernal pools or small permanent ponds where there are no predatory fish. It is amazing to hear the first Wood Frogs calling as there is often ice still present around the edges of the pools where they breed. It is not uncommon to hear them chorusing on a sunny afternoon when the air temperature is still in the low 40’s Fahrenheit.

How can they be active so early when it is still so cold? They survive the freezing temperatures of winter by literally freezing solid. Nucleating proteins in their blood cause water to freeze first. These crystals of water-ice then attract more water from within the adjacent cells of the frog’s tissues, thus dehydrating the organs and muscles so that ice crystals will not form there. Extra glucose, produced by the frog’s liver, and urea are concentrated within the individual cells to keep them from freezing and to keep the cells from dehydrating, which would also kill them. This concentration of urea and glucose creates an antifreeze that protects the cells. This fine balancing act is repeated over and over with each “false spring” that occurs. As an individual frog thaws, several things happen in succession. First, the blood and tissues thaw, taking about 20

minutes depending on the ambient temperature. Second, the heart will start to beat after another 20-30 minutes. Third, as the heart pumps blood throughout the frog’s body it will start to breathe, then move around, and eventually hop away. This can happen several times during the transition from winter to spring without harming the frog. Amazing!

In fact, this is so amazing that scientists for some time have been studying how these frogs freeze without dying. It is hoped that one day we will be able to preserve human organs for longer periods of time before they must be transplanted into a waiting recipient. If we could extend that period from a few hours to a few days, many more lives could be saved with these precious donated organs.

Once the frogs thaw and become active they are all about the business of creating the next generation of Wood Frogs. Males and the larger females will emerge from their hiding places under the leaf litter and make their way to the closest pool of water. Typically, this is the same pool where they were born. Large numbers of males will space themselves out around the pool and start to call. Calling appears to be contagious; once one male starts calling, others soon join in. In no time the area resounds with the quacking of Wood Frogs. (Listen to a chorus of several Wood Frogs in a small ephemeral pool next to a stream: [http://www.natureimagesandsounds.com/assets/wood\\_frog\\_chorus.mp3](http://www.natureimagesandsounds.com/assets/wood_frog_chorus.mp3))

As a female moves past a singing male, he will clamber onto her back, clasp her around the abdomen just behind her front legs (amplexus), and not release her until she has laid her eggs so that he can fertilize them. She will lay a large mass of eggs (1,000 - 3,000) that are typically attached to some underwater substrate, such as a twig or cattail stem. If there are egg masses already in the pool, she will attach hers to that ever-growing mass. These large egg masses can contain tens of thousands of eggs. Apparently, the eggs near the center of these large masses benefit from slightly warmer temperatures and greater protection from egg-eating predators.



Wood Frog eggs neural stage

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

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Development occurs very quickly. These vernal pools don't last forever. The eggs develop and hatch into tadpoles, the tadpoles eat algae and grow into tiny frogs that eat small insects and algae. Before these pools dry up for the season, these tiny Wood Frogs must leave, moving out into the surrounding woodlands. About 20% of these new frogs will wander off, well away from their natal pools. The remaining 80% will stay and perhaps breed here next year. An individual Wood Frog may live to be three years old.

Wood Frogs are doing pretty well. The biggest problem they face is a loss of appropriate habitat — vernal pools or small ponds closely associated with woodlands. Listen carefully while walking in or near woodlands this March for their joyful quacking. Draw near to their pools and marvel at the miracle of life in these ephemeral retreats. Take a close look at the egg masses and return often to see how they develop. Look carefully at the abundant life that shares these temporary pools with our beautiful Wood Frogs. If you do, you too will be hooked on these “here today, gone tomorrow” habitats.

## President's Report

by Diana Mullis, PVAS President

Many thanks to the many PVAS members and friends who have already contributed to the 2013 Annual Appeal! Contributions continue to come in as we approach the March 30 deadline.

As I'm writing this article, we're up to 146 generous donors having contributed \$31,530 with an impressive average donation of \$215.96! Last year the appeal closed at \$36,139, so we're well on our way but we have a little ways to go. We'd love to at least match last year's total!

The annual appeal is our most important source of income that can be used for day-to-day operations, and allow us to reach thousands of children and adults each year. We can't thank you enough for your contributions (past and future) to enable staff and volunteers to do what they do so well.

The 2013 appeal will close on March 30, so please contribute what you can! No amount is too large or too small. We value each and every dollar, and promise to use it wisely in furthering our programs and mission. Thank you!

### Birdseed Reminder

Don't forget to **pick up your stored Birdseed before April 1**, and if you have any birdseed related issues, please call Diana Mullis at [304-267-3482](tel:304-267-3482) or [dianamullis@aol.com](mailto:dianamullis@aol.com).

## PVAS Welcomes VISTA Volunteer

by Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director

We are very excited to announce that PVAS has its first AmeriCorps Promise VISTA volunteer! Melanie Snyder, of Charles Town, has accepted this volunteer position and will begin with PVAS on March 1. She will be a full-time member of the PVAS team, focusing her attention on membership development, fundraising, communications strategies, volunteer recruitment, and the development of partnerships. She will be with PVAS for a minimum of one year.



VISTA volunteer  
Melanie Snyder

The VISTA program we're working with is called “West Virginia's Promise - The Alliance for Youth.” It is a statewide program that mobilizes partners to strengthen the capacity of local communities to develop and support young people. The idea is that VISTA will help us build PVAS' capacity in order to strengthen and expand PVAS' youth programs in our region.

Melanie comes to this position with a full understanding of PVAS programs already under her belt. While a student at Shepherd University, she was a PVAS watershed instructor in Spring 2010. She also was a camp counselor in 2013 for our Audubon Discovery Camp at the Yankauer Preserve. She is a Certified Master Naturalist and is currently in her second year of co-chairing the Master Naturalist Committee. Now a graduate of Shepherd, where she majored in English with a minor in Biology, Melanie is excited to use her experience, skills and knowledge to help PVAS further its mission.

One of the requirements of hosting a VISTA is that we must provide the volunteer with an office, a computer, and other supporting infrastructure. We are very pleased to report that Rob Hoxton, of HFI Wealth Management, has generously offered pro bono space in his office in Shepherdstown. We can't thank Rob enough for this significant contribution.

Please welcome Melanie when you see her at future PVAS events!

## This Race is for the Birds!

Mark your calendars for PVAS's annual Race for the Birds Saturday April 5, 2014. This is an excellent opportunity to not only get outside and exercise after our long, cold winter, but also to experience running or walking on the trails of the National Conservation Training Center.



Race for the Birds offers a variety of race courses for runners

of all levels:

- A 4.9 mile and a 7.7 mile professionally timed race
- A self-timed 2 mile walk/jog
- A Children's Fun Run for children less than 10 years of age.

The Children's Fun Run is free while the fees for the other portions of the event range from \$15 to \$25. All proceeds from the event help to support PVAS's children's programming and all fees are tax deductible.

Registration and information can be found at the race website, [www.raceforthebirds.org](http://www.raceforthebirds.org) or feel free to contact race directors Nan Johnson or Krista Hawley at the race email, [race4birds@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:race4birds@potomacaudubon.org).

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## Race Volunteers Needed

If you are interested in helping with the *Race for the Birds* event on April 5, 2014 we would love your help! Volunteer opportunities include being a race marshal, registering runners, handing out t-shirts, organizing food and drinks for runners, cleaning up after the race, or a variety of other tasks. Most volunteer responsibilities begin around 7:00 a.m. and are done at noon. Volunteers receive a t-shirt and food in exchange for their services.

Please visit [raceforthebirds.org](http://raceforthebirds.org) and click the Volunteer tab on the left side of the home page. The Volunteer tab will lead you to a Volunteer Request Form. If you have questions please feel free to contact Nan Johnson at [race4birds@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:race4birds@potomacaudubon.org) or call 304-274-5057.

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## PVAS Field Trips

For current information on a field trip, check the PVAS website [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org). Participants should wear sturdy footwear and dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions. A trip may be cancelled due to bad weather; check the website. Except where noted below, trips are free and any interested persons are invited to participate.

### • Charles Town "Tree Walk" on March 1

PVAS is sponsoring a late winter Tree Walk along the streets of Charles Town on Saturday, March 1. The walk will be led by local arborist Shawn Walker. Participants should meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Library. The walk, lasting about two hours, will offer a close-up look at the town's diverse tree population, with a special emphasis on evergreens. The event will be free but space is limited and *pre-registration is essential*. To pre-register go to the PVAS website. For more information, contact Kelly Wolf at [k2kellywolf@outlook.com](mailto:k2kellywolf@outlook.com) or 304-229-6229.

### • Harpers Ferry Birding Trip on May 5

Join local birding expert Deb Hale for a birding trip along the Virginius Island and Shenandoah Wetlands areas of Harpers Ferry on Wednesday, May 5. The walk will focus on the riverfront and old canal areas of Virginius Island. Species likely to be sighted include raptors, waterfowl, and other winter birds.

Children are welcome. *Pre-registration is required* and partici-

pants must sign a waiver of liability prior to heading out on the walk. To pre-register, go to the PVAS website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org). For more information, please contact Ms. Hale at [mdebhale72@gmail.com](mailto:mdebhale72@gmail.com).

Participants should meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking area on Shenandoah Street just below the intersection with Route 340. The walk will be about 3 miles total. Bring along drinking water. Binoculars will be available for anyone who needs them.

### • Late Winter Tree ID Walk on March 8

PVAS will offer a winter tree-identification field trip along the C&O Canal across from Shepherdstown the morning of Saturday, March 8. West Virginia state forester Herb Peddicord will lead the trip. He will show how to identify trees through such clues as their branching habits and overall shape, twigs and buds, and bark.

Participants will meet at 10:00 a.m. in the parking lot of Ferry Hill Place, the old brick mansion on the Maryland side of the Potomac River. The entrance is on MD Route 34 just east of the Rumsey Bridge across the Potomac.

Space is limited and *pre-registration is essential*. To register, go to the Society's website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org). For more information, contact Kelly Wolf at [mkheldreth@hotmail.com](mailto:mkheldreth@hotmail.com) or 304-229-6229.

The total time of the trip will be about two hours. If the trip is snowed out, it will be rescheduled to March 15.

### • Wildlife Signs Walk at Cacapon State March 15

PVAS is sponsoring a "Wildlife Signs Walk" at the Cacapon State Park in Morgan County on Saturday, March 15. This will be a family-friendly event that will show how to look for tracks and other signs of wildlife in West Virginia forests.

Participants should meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Park's Nature Center. The walk will begin from there and be led by the Park's naturalist, Renee Fincham. It will last about two hours. *Pre-registration is strongly encouraged* but not required. To register, go to the Society's website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org). For more information, contact Kelly Wolf at [k2kellywolf@outlook.com](mailto:k2kellywolf@outlook.com) or 304-229-6229. If the trip is snowed out, it will be rescheduled to March 22.

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## Natural History Workshops

PVAS offers a series of Natural History Workshops that consist of 2 or more hours of expert instruction on a specific natural history topic. These workshops are open to the general public and also qualify as elective or recertification courses for the Potomac Valley Master Naturalists.

We have a variety of workshops already scheduled and we are continually adding more so please make sure to check our Events Calendar at [potomacaudubon.org](http://potomacaudubon.org) for details and events as well as to register.

*Exploring Vernal Pools* with Master Naturalist Clark Dixon will take place on March 8. The workshop includes background information in a classroom setting as well as field time exploring 3-4 different vernal pools.

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Lou Scavnick and Clark Dixon are offering *Introduction to Fly Fishing* on March 22 at Wildwood Middle School. Learn the history of fly fishing and fly tying. Reap the benefits of extensive casting practice under the watchful eyes of the two instructors. (See article on page 5.)

*Birding 101* returns again this April with birding experts Bob Dean and Wil Hershberger. Classroom sessions will take place at NCTC on 4 consecutive Thursdays with field trips happening on the following Saturdays. (See article below.)

April also hosts Susan Brookreson's *Nature Sketching Workshop* which will take place at CraftWorks at Cool Spring. Bring your sketch pad and pencil and enjoy the beautiful setting while learning how sketching can enhance your nature walks and sharpen your observations.

May 10 brings *Geology of Hardy County* with Mike O'Donnell. This Natural History Workshop will involve a day road trip exploring various significant geological sites and areas of interest.

There will be a three day (Sept. 19 - 21) *Nature Photography Workshop* in September at Cacapon State Park outside Berkeley Springs with accomplished nature photographers Wil and Donna Hershberger. This workshop will cover all aspects of nature photography through classroom and outdoor field sessions.

Join us as we explore the natural history of West Virginia and the Tri State area!

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## Sign Up for Birding 101

PVAS is still accepting applications for its April 2014 *Birding 101* course for beginning birders. This will be the 29th year we have offered this course, and it continues to be very popular. Space will be limited, so those who are interested are encouraged to sign up soon.

The course will to be taught by leading local bird experts, including Bob Dean and Wil Hershberger, and will utilize both evening classroom sessions and daytime field trips. Participants will learn bird identification, birding techniques, resources, and field etiquette. The focus will be on bird species found in the Eastern Panhandle area.

There is a tuition charge of \$95, which covers the full course package of four two-hour classroom sessions and four five-hour field trips. Participants get 28 hours of expert instruction for only \$3.39 per hour!

The evening classroom sessions take place on Thursdays April 3, 10, 17, and 24. All sessions will meet from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center just north of Shepherdstown.

The field trips will be held at various locations around the Panhandle from roughly 7:00 a.m. to 12 noon on the Saturdays following the Thursday evening sessions (April 5, 12, 19, and 27).

Registration is required. To register, go to the PVAS website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org) and look for "Birding 101" under

"Birding" or "Events Calendar." Or contact Krista Hawley at 304-876-8471 or [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org).

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## March Workshop and Monthly Meeting Talk on Vernal Pools

PVAS will offer two different events in early March that explore the subject of Vernal Pools. Vernal Pools are small, seasonal bodies of water that provide valuable seasonal habitat for many creatures, including frogs and salamanders. Typically, they are at their peak size and depth in the spring, and then dwindle greatly or disappear entirely during hot weather. They are quite common in this area.

The first event will be a March 8 Natural History Workshop ; from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The workshop will begin with a classroom session to provide an overview of the subject and then focus on field visits to vernal pool sites of particular interest in the Eastern Panhandle.

Everyone is welcome at the workshop but space is limited and pre-registration and a fee are required. Easy pre-registration is available on the PVAS website [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org). The fee will be \$15 for PVAS members and the general public and \$10 for members and students of our Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program.

Our second Vernal Pools event will be a program on the subject at our regular monthly meeting for March, which will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 12 at the National Conservation Training Center in Room 151 of the Center's Instructional West Building. The presenter will be local Master Naturalist Clark Dixon, of Ranson. Everyone is welcome here as well, and for this program time there will be no pre-registration or fee required.

If you have any questions, contact Krista Hawley at 304-876-8471 or [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org).

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## Tree Care Workshop Rescheduled to March 23

The PVAS tree care workshop that was scheduled for February 15 was snowed out and is rescheduled to Sunday, March 23. The two-hour workshop will begin at 10:00 am at Morgan's Grove Park, Shepherdstown. The group will meet in the lower parking lot near the railroad tracks. The workshop, led by local arborist Shawn Walker, will provide an overview of pruning concepts and techniques and offer hands-on instruction. The focus will be on recent riparian plantings at the park and on some specimen trees.

Everyone is welcome but pre-registration is required and there is a fee of \$10 per person. Register on the PVAS website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org). Pruning supplies will be provided but participants should feel free to bring their own if they wish.



## Introduction to Fly Fishing Workshop Set for March 22

PVAS will sponsor its first Introduction to Fly Fishing Workshop on Saturday, March 22, starting at 8:00 am at Wildwood Middle School in Jefferson County. The event will be part of PVAS's "Natural History Workshop" series. Everyone is welcome but pre-registration is required and there is a modest fee.

Full details of this workshop remain to be finalized. Please watch the PVAS website [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org) for more information.

Wildwood Middle School is located just opposite Jefferson High School at 1209 Shenandoah Junction Road, in Shenandoah Junction.

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## Wildflower Festival On April 12

PVAS' Thirteenth Annual Wildflower Festival at Yankauer Preserve will be held on Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup>. Since it has been a long winter, we are hoping that the lovely wildflowers will be up and sporting their gorgeous blooms. The festival, which is scheduled to coincide with the peak of wildflower season, will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine. The event includes guided wildflower walks, refreshments, children's activities, poems by local poets along the trail, and a fantastic array of wildflowers along the trails. You may enjoy the wildflowers on your own or with a knowledgeable guide. Guided tours leave the Yankauer pavilion hourly and provide visitors with a leisurely hike and tidbits of information about wildflowers that are found along the trails.



2013 Wildflower Festival

New this year, professional photographer Frank Ceravalo will offer a casual hike, focused on "Photographing Nature and Wildflowers," for those who'd like some tips on getting great nature pictures. Bring your camera and accompany Frank as you look for special sights to photograph. This activity is scheduled for 1 p.m.

Again this year, the festival will feature a Poetry Walk. Poems that focus on spring will be posted along the Kingfisher Trail where the majority of wildflowers are found (see following article).

Some of the most popular, and showy, wildflowers that can be found at Yankauer Preserve are Bloodroot, Spring beauties, Dutchman's Breeches, and Rue Anemone. We'll also have children's activities about flowers and a StoryWalk on the Cedar Loop for families to enjoy.

The trails at the preserve are primitive, so sturdy shoes are recommended. We ask that you leave pets at home. Bring your cameras and take pictures as mementos of the day and leave the wildflowers for others to enjoy. For more information about the Wildflower Festival, contact Ellen Murphy at [Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org).

## Write a Poem or Draw a Picture for the Wildflower Festival!

PVAS is asking local poets to submit poems that will be displayed as part of our annual Wildflower Festival at Yankauer Preserve in April. (A separate article details the Festival.) Those who would like to submit poems are encouraged to do so by sending them via email to Kendra at Shepherdstown's Four Seasons Bookstore at [4seasons@citlink.net](mailto:4seasons@citlink.net). Poems may also be dropped off at the store on German Street or sent by regular mail to Poetry Walk, c/o PVAS, PO Box 578, Shepherdstown WV 25443. The deadline for submissions is 5:00 p.m., March 31.

In addition to poems, young artists (under age 18) are invited to submit artwork that celebrates the Flowers of Spring. Artwork will be displayed at the Yankauer Pavilion and along the Cedar Loop during the festival. Young artists may send their art to Flowers of Spring, c/o PVAS, PO Box 578, Shepherdstown WV 25443 and should include their name and contact information on the back of their art; artwork can be collected at the end of the festival, between 4 and 5 p.m. on April 12. For more information, contact [Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org)

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## Family Hikes for Spring

*Outdoor Explore* hikes and programs for families will be offered this spring on a monthly basis. All events are on Saturdays. *Explore Eidolon!* will be held at Eidolon Preserve in Morgan County on March 22, *Hike The Hills* (Maryland Heights Trail near Harpers Ferry) on April 19, *Muddy Sneakers* at Stauffer's Marsh on May 17, and *Creek Sneak* (Berkeley County) on June 7. These events are designed to help families explore new locations in the Eastern Panhandle, but with an experienced leader to help with logistics and safety. Unlike traditionally-led hikes, families and children are encouraged to freely discover nature as they come upon something of interest and share it with the rest of the group. Pre-registration is required and there is a small fee for each child. Register at [www.PotomacAudubon.org/outdoorexplora](http://www.PotomacAudubon.org/outdoorexplora). Jan Hummer can answer questions at [janhummer@hotmail.com](mailto:janhummer@hotmail.com) or 304-839-5128.

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## Register Now for Spring Egg Hunt

PVAS will hold its sixth annual Spring Children's Egg Hunt the afternoon of Sunday, April 13 at our Yankauer Nature Preserve north of Shepherdstown. The hunt will be held from 2:00-3:30 p.m. and is for children ages 3-6. It will be a family-oriented event, and parents should plan to accompany their children as they hunt for eggs.



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 these eggs on the trail and, in the process, they discover how birds

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.... Egg Hunt *continued from page 5*

use camouflage to keep their eggs safe from predators. Other activities this year will include a “penguin egg walk,” an “ostrich egg balance challenge,” and an egg-toss game. At the end of the event, collected eggs will be “traded in” for a sweet treat: Children will decorate an egg-shaped cookie to enjoy on the spot with lemonade or to take home and enjoy later.

Space will be limited and pre-registration is required. There will be a fee of \$5 per child. Register online at the PVAS website [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org) or contact Ellen Murphy, PVAS’s Director of Youth Programs, at [Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org).

## Camp Scholarships Are Available!

Here’s your opportunity! If you are a young person, or a family, who would enjoy learning about nature at summer camp, please think about applying for a camp scholarship from PVAS. If you know someone else who would be interested, pass this information along!

Applications must be post-marked by **Friday, April 8, 2014**, so act now! Camps, locations, ages, and dates are listed below, but the PVAS web site, [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org), provides much more information, including exciting camp descriptions and links to camp web pages with great photos and other details.

- **Audubon Discovery Day Camp:** our own local camp at Yankauer Nature Preserve, Peter Burr Farm, and Craft Works at Cool Spring; pre-school to grade 12; a variety of week-long sessions in *June and July 2014*.
- **Oglebay Institute Junior Nature Camp:** at Dallas Pike (near Wheeling), WV; ages 10-15; *July 20-26, 2014 or July 27 - August 2, 2014*.
- **Burgundy Center for Wildlife Studies:** at Capon Bridge, WV; ages 11-15; *June 22-July 5; July 8-22; or July 29 - August 11, 2014*.
- **Mountain Adventures Camp:** at Mountain Institute, Spruce Knob, WV; ages 12-17; *June 22-28, 2014*.
- **West Virginia State 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 9 - 14, 2014*.
- **Student Climate & Conservation Congress (SC3):** at the National Conservation and Training Center (NCTC), Shepherdstown, WV; Rising grades 9-12 (ages 14-18); *June 22-28, 2014*.
- **PVAS Digital Photo Camp:** at Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, WV; grades 9-12 (ages 14-18); *June 23-27, 2014*.

- **Family Camp:** at historic Audubon camp, Hog Island, Maine; families with children ages 8-12; *August 12-17, 2014*.

Please check our web site at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org) for updates or additional details and opportunities as they become available. The web site provides PVAS scholarship application forms plus links to the camps’ web sites. You may also contact scholarship coordinator Kathryn Henry at 304-876-6681, or [dhenry@myexcel.com](mailto:dhenry@myexcel.com).

Scholarships are available for eligible persons throughout the PVAS membership area – the WV Eastern Panhandle and Washington County, Maryland. Every year during its 32-year history, PVAS has provided camp scholarships to deserving individuals, generously supported by our fall bird seed sale, as well as other donors and community sources. We thank our bird seed customers and all loyal supporters of our camp scholarships!

## Audubon Discovery Camp Preview

Registration for Audubon Discovery Camp is open! Sessions are filling so if you your child is thinking about *Camp Survivor*, *Deep Woods Detectives*, *Back in the Good Ol’ Days*, *Tales in the Woods* or *Mystery Week*, don’t wait to sign up! Camp begins in June.

Fees range from \$50 to \$200, depending on the session, and can be paid online, but if you prefer to pay only a \$50 deposit, you may send a check to *Audubon Discovery Camp, PO Box 578, Shepherdstown WV 25443*. Just make sure to include the camper name and session on the check memo so we can accurately credit your account. Full fees may also be paid by check using the same address. The camp t-shirt for this year will have a blue crow mascot on a daisy yellow shirt. Shirts, which are \$10 each, should be ordered when campers register. Full information about what to bring to camp and other things parents want to know is found on the PVAS website.

Camp scholarships are available to Audubon Discovery Camps and forms can be found online at [www.PotomacAudubon.org/scholarships](http://www.PotomacAudubon.org/scholarships). If you have questions about camp sessions or need help with the online registration process, contact Ellen Murphy at [Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org) or 304-676-8739.

## Our Preschool Programs

You’re never too young to get outside and explore nature, so PVAS has several programs especially designed for preschoolers and their families! Our *Spring Egg Hunt*, for children ages 3-6, will be held April 13 (see separate article), but later in April, *Wee Naturalists* returns. This popular program, for preschoolers and a caring adult, combines hands-on activities with nature exploration at Yankauer Preserve. The program will be led by Suzi Taylor, an experienced environmental educator who has a special connection with our youngest nature enthusiasts. By April, we are hoping for an end to winter and for the beginning of a lovely spring, so activities for this program will focus on exploring *Signs of Spring*. *Wee Naturalists* and the *Spring Egg Hunt* have a small fee for each child.

This summer, two special camp sessions are conducted for pre-schoolers. *Out of the Nest* is a five-day, extended morning session for ages 3-4 and an adult partner. Each day features a different nature discovery theme with circle time, short hikes, hands-on nature discovery activities, and story time. This session will be held June 2-6. Later in July, a new session called *Nature Buddies* will be offered for campers ages 5-6 who would like to come to camp without a parent, but for a shorter day. These campers will explore insects, mammals, birds, and the forest through hands-on activities. Suzi Taylor leads both these camps, with help from staff and volunteers. Fees for these camps are \$50 to \$125 per child.

To register for any of these preschool program, visit the Calendar of Events at [www.PotomacAudubon.org](http://www.PotomacAudubon.org). If you have questions, contact Ellen Murphy at [Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org).

## Potomac Audubon Master Naturalist Class

The eighth Master Naturalist Class begins March 15 and 16. The opening weekend will be held at For the Love of Children (FLOC) Outdoor Education Center and will involve two days of core and elective classes. These students will continue taking courses one Saturday each month from March through September. The closing weekend for the 2014 class will be held at NCTC on September 20 and 21.



Each student enrolled in the West Virginia Master Naturalist Program will receive a total of 48 Core and 16 Elective hours of instruction.

If you have been thinking of enrolling in this exceptional program, now is the time. We are still accepting applications as we have just a few slots open. You can find a complete schedule and application at [potomacaudubon.org](http://potomacaudubon.org). Please contact Krista Hawley at [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org) or 304-876-8471 with any questions you may have.

### 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!**

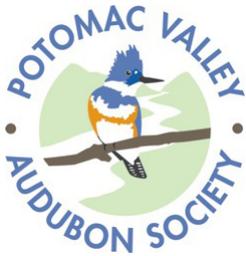


Wood Frogs mating

©Wil Hershberger Nature Images and Sounds, LLC

### 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](http://www.audubon.org) and click on "join." If you join National Audubon and reside in Berkeley, Jefferson or Morgan counties in West Virginia, or in Washington County Maryland, you will automatically become 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.



Potomac Valley Audubon Society  
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 Shepherdstown, WV 25443  
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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**  
 The PVAS Board meets every other month on the first Thursday of the month (Sept.-June). Meeting location and time will be announced prior to meetings. These meetings are open to all PVAS members.

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

- President: Diana Mullis (2014)..... DianaMullis@aol.com
- Vice President: Jane Vanderhook (2015)..... janehook@frontiernet.net
- Secretary: Mina Goodrich (2014)..... larrymina@peoplepc.com
- Treasurer: Lex Miller (2014)..... pamandlex@frontiernet.net
- Board Members-at-Large:
  - Clark Dixon (2014)..... dixonconsultants@aol.com
  - Diana Gaviria (2014)..... jpikester@comcast.net
  - Tanner Haid (2016)..... Tanner.Haid@gmail.com
  - Leigh Jenkins (2014)..... jenkinsleigh@hotmail.com
  - Lou Scavnicky (2015)..... captainlou@comcast.net
  - Michael Sullivan (2014)..... msullivan@limno.com
  - Amanda Whitmore (2016)..... Tremba01@gmail.com

**Ex Officio Board Member:** Peter Smith (past president)..... pvsmitth@frontiernet.net

**Emerita Board Member:** Jean Neely .....jeaneely@comcast.net

**Special Contacts**

- Executive Director: Kristin Alexander (304-676-3397)..... Kristin@PotomacAudubon.org
- Program Director: Ellen Murphy (304-676-8739)..... Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org
- Adult Prog. Coord: Krista Hawley..... AdultPrograms@PotomacAudubon.org
- Web Master: Kathy Bilton..... kathy@fred.net
- PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: Diana Mullis (304-267-3482)..... dianamullis@aol.com
- Valley Views editor/publisher: Don Henry (304-876-6681)..... dhenry@myexcel.com