

# VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac  
Valley  
Audubon  
Society

Volume 29, Issue 8

May 2011

## 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Race for the Birds! “Memorable”

Saturday, April 9, was to be Potomac Valley Audubon’s 10<sup>th</sup> annual “This Race is for the Birds!,” a trail race and kids’ fun run held as a fundraiser in support of our youth programs. The event was to be held at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). This 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary race was certainly memorable, though not exactly in the way we had hoped.

On Tuesday of race week, we learned that NCTC, a federal facility, would be closed to our use in the event of the pending government shut down. In the face of this uncertainty, we began to explore alternatives to support our 400+ registered runners.

We worked our way through numerous options – private subdivisions, low traffic roads, public bike routes – with each ultimately being rejected due to safety concerns, availability (i.e. non-federal) or simple lack of necessary facilities for the expected numbers. These plans formed and faded as race day approached with no official news of the federal shutdown forthcoming. But still, all was not lost.

See *Race*, Page 3

## Annual Meeting to be Held June 11

This year’s PVAS annual meeting will be held the evening of Saturday, June 11, at the Yankauer Nature Preserve.

The evening will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a potluck supper.

Afterwards, we will recognize outstanding PVAS volunteers and the annual meeting will be called to order for the election of new directors. The slate of candidates for the election will be presented in the June issue of *Valley Views*.

All PVAS members are invited to attend, and children are welcome.

For the potluck supper, please bring a dish to share. Those whose last names begin with the letters A-H are asked to bring vegetables or fruit; I-L, a dessert; M-R, a protein dish; and S-Z, a starch dish.

All are asked to bring their own dishes, flatware, and the like, so we can be environmentally conscientious. PVAS will provide water and lemonade.

For more information, contact Kristin Alexander at 304-676-3397 or [pvasmail@aol.com](mailto:pvasmail@aol.com)

## Don’t Forget June 4 PVAS Reception at Harewood

Here’s a reminder that PVAS members and friends are invited to a fundraising reception for PVAS at Harewood, the historic Washington family home just east of Charles Town, the evening of Saturday, June 4.

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

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

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

Dress will be casual.

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

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

Ticket costs will be fully tax-deductible.

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

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

Harewood is also notable because the 219 acres surrounding it are permanently protected by a conservation easement signed in a formal ceremony in 2007.

The property’s protected lands include a wetland and marl marsh that provide habitat to several rare plant and animal species. The nature walks that will be offered during the reception will include visits to these areas. Representatives of the Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle and the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board will be on hand to discuss the conservation easement process.

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



Hello everyone:

Sometimes, things don't work out the way you'd hoped they would.

As you'll see elsewhere in this newsletter, that's what happened to this year's Race for the Birds, which turned out to be one of probably many cases of collateral damage caused across the country by the April 8 government shutdown that didn't happen.

The *Valley Views* article about this episode gives thanks to the many individuals and organizations that pitched in to help us out. I'd like to echo and amplify those thanks here.

Shepherd University's Wellness Center deserves a lot of credit for going way out of their way to help us recover what we could of the event, and we're very grateful to them for that.

The same goes for the race organizers, James and Suzy Munnis, and the other members of the race committee, Carolyn Thomas, Tom Shantz, and Mark Cucuzella. They all worked tirelessly in advance of the race date to try to find an alternative site and then, when that proved impossible, did their best to make the most of things.

We're also very grateful to the community members and businesses who offered assistance and support in trying to sort things out, and to the race volunteers who were so helpful on the day of the event.

And of course we're grateful to the race sponsors who stuck with us and to the many runners who were so gracious and understanding about what had happened.

There is one individual who isn't named in the *Valley Views* article who also deserves great credit: our Executive Director, Kristin Alexander. From beginning to end, she handled an extremely complex and difficult situation not only skillfully and thoughtfully but also calmly, never losing her trademark cheerfulness and consideration for others.

So hat's off to Kristin, James and Suzy, and everybody else involved in this year's race. Adverse events test organizations, and I'd say PVAS performed very well in this instance.

We're very fortunate to have such talented and dedicated people involved with us!

—Peter Smith

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## Look for PVAS Booth at May 7 Boonsboro Green Fest

The town of Boonsboro, Maryland, will hold its Third Annual Boonsboro Green Fest on Saturday, May 7. The festival will be held rain or shine in Shafer Park, which is right next to the downtown, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission will be free.

Hosted by the Boonsboro Recycling Task Force, the festival is aimed at promoting conservation efforts and recycling and will feature a wide variety of vendors and exhibitors.

Items for sale will include earth-friendly products and services,

vegetable and flower plants, rain barrels, compost kits, and crafts made from recycled and repurposed materials. There will be a multitude of recycling opportunities and a large clothing swap and sale.

Exhibitors will include firms that specialize in such areas as renewable energy systems, as well as PVAS and other conservation-minded organizations.

There will also be special children's activities and food concessions, and entertainment and speakers throughout the day.

See the festival website at [www.boonsborogreenfest.com](http://www.boonsborogreenfest.com) for full details.

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## Flowing Springs Park Open House and Volunteer Day

April 2 was the first public event for the Flowing Springs Park in Ranson, West Virginia. The purpose of the day was to introduce community members to their proposed park, get their feedback and thoughts, as well as to get some good work done.

Overall, the day was a success, in spite of bad weather. The rain and wind made the day an adventure (complete with tying tents to vehicles so they didn't blow away!)

Thirty-five volunteers involved with various partner agencies came out to help lead activities including leading nature walks, picking up trash, removing invasive plants, getting rid of tires, and planting trees to protect the stream. In addition, there were stations to talk about the history of the site and opportunities to look for crayfish and other critters in the stream. In addition to all of those volunteer leaders, 32 adults and 7 children come out for the event to help.

While we didn't have a huge turnout from the general public, that doesn't mean we didn't make tremendous progress. In all, 38 tires were removed, more than 80 bags of trash collected, 150 trees were planted, a huge quantity of invasives were removed, and all of the visitors who stopped by were introduced to the future park and its resources.

Many of the folks who showed up at the open house signed up to help at future volunteer days, so the work load will be spread over even more willing hands in the future.

A tremendous thank you goes to the staff of the City of Ranson for pulling off a miraculous deer fence construction in a short period of time in preparation for the tree planting, not to mention all the time and effort they put into digging holes and planting trees on Saturday.

All of the volunteer leaders who were there to introduce the visitors to the park also deserve thanks for sharing their knowledge, time, expertise, equipment, passion and vision for Flowing Springs Park! The park is sure to be a tremendous success thanks to the many hands involved.

The incredible partners involved with the day include City of Ranson, The Conservation Fund's Freshwater Institute, Potomac Valley Audubon Society, The West Virginia Conservation Agency, WV Division of Forestry, WV Make it Shine, and WVU's Division

See *Flowing Springs*, Page 4

*Race* (continued from page 1)

The Wellness Center at Shepherd University GENEROUSLY offered to host the event at their facility. Maps of the area were posted and local runners were on hand to provide suggestions for informal runs in the area. The Wellness Center provided free shower facilities and access to the track and equipment. With Shepherd's support, we were able to hold the Children's "Fun Run" on campus. Forty-five children participated, receiving prizes, ribbons and cheers as they crossed the finish line.



We can't thank Shepherd University and the Wellness Center enough for taking us under their wing. They were the most incredible partners you can imagine.

Special thanks must go to the race committee – especially volunteer race co-directors James and Suzy Munnis – for their flexibility and determination to make the race happen despite every obstacle encountered.

The community's support was truly remarkable. As race alternatives were explored, fields were offered for parking, River and Trail Outfitters made busses available, NCTC allowed us as much decision-making leeway as possible, Two Rivers Half Marathon offered free admission to their May 14 race for those registrants we had to cancel.

The list goes on, and we are so grateful for everyone's generosity and dedication. Though the 10<sup>th</sup> annual "Race for the Birds" did not come off as planned, the fact that it took a different shape and went forward despite the unexpected challenges is a tribute to the strength and generous spirit of our members and this community.

Thank you all for your support, generosity, and patience through this "memorable" 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary race!

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*Flowing Springs* (continued from page 2)

of Forestry. (Students from the WVU program led the history station, helped with the invasive removal, and helped introduce visitors to the site with maps.)

Funding for the event was provided by the TogetherGreen grant received by PVAS and the City of Ranson last fall. WV Project CommuniTree provided funding for the tree planting as well as the deer fence.



*WVU students learn about Flowing Springs history*

## Wildflowers Bring out Hardy Bunch!

In spite of the Festival's rain – ranging from “drizzle” to “cats and dogs” - about 20 people came out to enjoy the guided wildflower walks and poetry! They arrived to cheers and congratulations from volunteers for coming out in spite of the rain. The volunteer walk leaders were true troopers and didn't complain once as they hunkered down in the pavilion between walks. The hot tea, hot cocoa and homemade cookies certainly helped everyone make the best of the situation!

The wildflowers were peaking nicely for this year's festival providing a wonderful display for participants. Thanks to the cool spring, they were more prolific than at past festivals, though the rain forced them closed to protect their pollen for the majority of the day.

About 40 poems were displayed along the trail, contributed by local poets and Mrs. Austin's class from Shepherdstown Elementary School. This poetry element of the festival continues to be a very popular aspect of the event, and introduces a new audience to the preserve every year.

A special thanks goes out to all of the volunteers involved. Kathy Bilton led her annual “wildflower review” for walk leaders on Friday evening. Walk leaders included Sandy Bloom, Mary Duke, Bruni Haydl, Joe Metzger, and Joy Pardue. Marybeth Grove was prepared with children's activities (and ran home to get hot water for everyone) and Diana Mullis provided homemade chocolate chip cookies for volunteers and festival participants.

We are so fortunate to have generous, knowledgeable, dedicated, and hardy volunteers who are willing to lead walks and activities whatever the weather!

## Watershed Program Update

**Whew! What A Spring!** Watershed programs and school visits to Yankauer are winding down, but we had a super successful spring semester with both. A few schools still have scheduled visits to Yankauer (or have invited PVAS to present similar programs at their school) and watershed programs are just about over for this year. Both elementary and high school classes that participated in the program have visited Potomac River tributaries to test the water quality, look for benthic macroinvertebrates, and practice their stream bank assessment skills.

Almost 1,200 students participated in a watershed education program this year. About 1,000 students either visited Yankauer or participated in in-school programs, and over 1,000 students participated in other types of PVAS programs.

Thanks go to those who helped in ANY way with programs and field trips!

## Don't Miss Out On Camp!

If you have not already registered your camper for a session of Audubon Discovery Camp, you don't want to wait much longer! Several sessions of camp are already at capacity, but there are still a few spots in the popular *Camp Survivor* and *4 Legs, 6 Legs, More Legs, No Legs*.

This summer, we are trying a new, twilight session called *The Deep, DARK Woods* that will give campers a chance to be at Yankauer in the evening, 5-10 p.m. This three-evening session will feature activities that you just can't do during the day, including: night hikes, an owl prowl, twilight games, stargazing (weather permitting), and experiencing the woods as night falls. PVAS always maintains waiting lists for camp sessions that fill, so if you find that your first choice session is not available, please sign up for the waiting list. All registrations are online and you can enter the system at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org).

## After Storms...

### Good Day for Egg Hunt

Thirty-two preschoolers and their families came to our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Egg Hunt at the Yankauer Nature Preserve on Sunday, April 17. This egg hunt was more challenging than your traditional egg hunt; instead of searching for brightly colored plastic eggs, these were painted in earth tones to look like natural eggs.

In spite of the blustery afternoon, the children came ready to collect eggs that had been hidden on the Cedar Loop! They were also able to participate in activities at the pavilion. Activities included making a reproduction birds nest using grass, bits of yarn, and sticks collected from the ground, examining an enormous egg (it was a papier mache model of an elephant bird fossilized egg), examining books that featured different types of eggs (including snakes and turtles), and trying their skill at walking while balancing a plastic, ostrich-sized egg on a spoon or on their feet! Upon returning from the egg hunt, the children exchanged



their eggs for an egg-shaped cookie which they could then decorate with icing and colored sugar. Family members enjoyed lemonade and cookies as well. Each child was able to leave with a specially decorated cookie as a take-home treat. Many thanks go to Susan Fluharty, Jen Janus, Diana Mullis, and Cecile Quinlan for their help with the activities and making cookies for the event. Thanks also to the Braithwaite family who hid all the eggs prior to the event!

## Annual Appeal Raised A Record \$31,596

Our latest annual fundraising appeal, which began in December and concluded at the beginning of April, raised a total of \$31,596.

This is \$1,740, or 5.8 percent, more than we raised over the 2009-2010 winter and represents a new record high.

The number of donors hit a new high, too: 180 families and individuals contributed, up from 60 the year before.

The average contribution to this year's appeal was \$174.56, which is a very high figure for small organizations like ours.

These figures do not include contributions that families and individuals made to PVAS through United Way or the Combined Federal Campaign—we typically don't get any information about those contributions until late May or so.

In any case, the return from this year's appeal was a great outcome given the continuing concerns about the economy in our region, and it will go a long way in helping us sustain our programming in this difficult time. It's gratifying to know we have such a loyal base of support in the community, and that this base continues to grow.

A full list of all those who contributed follows on the next two pages.

Thanks again to all of you who have been so generous to PVAS. We appreciate your help, and you can count on us to put your contributions to good use!

## Garlic Mustard Challenge Is Coming

The West Virginia Garlic Mustard Challenge is coming to Yankauer Nature Preserve on Saturday, May 7, from 10 a.m. until noon! This is a cooperative effort sponsored by the Monongahela National Forest, the Potomac Highlands Cooperative Weed and Pest Management Area, and the Appalachian Forest Heritage Area. Potomac Valley Master Naturalists have set aside the date for attacking the plant *en masse* at Yankauer. This is the third year of the Garlic Mustard Challenge and the first official year for PVAS to participate although volunteers have done much to pull the weed at Yankauer in past years. The state goal for 2011 is pulling up 20,000 pounds of garlic mustard! Garlic mustard is one of West Virginia's most invasive plant species. It outcompetes native plants by hogging all the light, moisture, nutrients, soil and space. Garlic mustard also deprives wildlife of food sources that are instrumental to their survival.

## Four Birding Trips Set for May

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

**Sunday, May 1: Birding field trip along the C&O Canal in the Hancock area.** Meet at 9 a.m. in the parking lot of the new Hancock C&O Canal Visitor's Center, which overlooks Lock 52 and the Tonoloway Aqueduct at Canal milepost 123 (the street address is 439 East Main Street—go east from downtown Hancock; the entrance to the center is opposite the truck stop).

Possible species include Bald Eagles, Red-tailed hawks, Great Blue Herons, several varieties of woodpeckers, flycatchers, vireos, and others.

For more information, contact trip leader Sandy Sagalkin at [monsansagalkin@myactv.net](mailto:monsansagalkin@myactv.net) or 240-291-6465.

**Wednesday, May 4: Birding at Shepherd's Spring Outdoor Ministry in Washington County, Maryland.** Meet in the Ministry parking lot at 8 a.m. (The address is 16869 Taylors Landing Road, Sharpsburg, MD. From Rt. 65, turn onto Taylors Landing Road. At the canal, turn right and follow Taylors Landing Road until it starts back up the hill. About a quarter mile up the hill, turn left into the property.)

This lovely property is bordered by the C&O Canal on one side and includes riverine habitat, woodlands, meadows and a spring. Trip should provide a good opportunity to see a wide variety of spring migrants.

For more information, contact trip leader Sandy Sagalkin at [monsansagalkin@myactv.net](mailto:monsansagalkin@myactv.net) or 240-291-6465.

For more information about the center go to its website at [www.shepherdsspring.org/](http://www.shepherdsspring.org/).

**Wednesday, May 25: Birding at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship in Loudoun County, Virginia.** Meet at 8 a.m. at the Center, which is located in Virginia at 11661 Harpers Ferry Road (Route 671), about 2 miles south of the Potomac River and Route 340.

This beautiful 894-acre nature preserve will offer good opportunities to see spring migrants, including Northern parula, Cerulean warbler, Ovenbird, Louisiana waterthrush, Scarlet tanager, Indigo bunting, and White-eyed vireo.

For more information, contact trip leader Kate Weatherby at 304-535-1319 or [yankee\\_in\\_virginia@yahoo.com](mailto:yankee_in_virginia@yahoo.com). For more information about the Center go to its website at [www.blueridgecenter.org](http://www.blueridgecenter.org).

**Saturday, May 28: Birding trip to Stauffer's Marsh in Back Creek Valley in Berkeley County.** Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the Eagle Plaza parking lot (about 1 mile east of Hedgesville on the north side of Route 9, between Hedgesville High School and the Food Lion shopping center). The marsh is located on Back Creek Road (County Route 7), one-half mile south of Shanghai on the east side of the road.

This 46-acre property includes marsh, woodland, and edge habitats. Species likely to be sighted include the Baltimore and Orchard oriole, Blue-gray gnatcatcher, Yellow warbler, Common yellowthroat, Gray catbird, Brown thrasher, Mockingbird, Warbling vireo, Song sparrow, Red-winged blackbird, Willow flycatcher. Virginia rail may also be seen.

For more information contact trip leader Wil Hershberger at [wil@natureimagesandsounds.com](mailto:wil@natureimagesandsounds.com).

**2010 PVAS Annual Appeal Donors****December 2010-April 2011****Advocates (\$1,000 and up)**

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Mary Helen Staley, Cascade, MD  
Kathy and Wil Stolzenburg, Shepherdstown  
Bonnie and Bill Stubblefield, Martinsburg  
Sylvia Sutton, Great Cacapon  
Katherine Sweeny, Hagerstown  
Jean B. Taylor, Martinsburg  
Sharon Tebben, Berkeley Springs  
Carolyn and Bruce Thomas, Shepherdstown  
Judith Treesberg, Bakerton  
Lynn B. Truslow, Shepherdstown  
Dale and Hank Walter, Shepherdstown  
Steven Warrick, Martinsburg  
Kate Weatherby, Harpers Ferry  
Byron Webb, Martinsburg (in memory of Mrs. Byron Webb)  
Bill and Janet Weis, Martinsburg  
Ron and Lyn Widmyer, Charles Town  
Rie Wilson, Shepherdstown  
Virginia and Eldon Winston, Martinsburg  
Susan and Michael Wisniewski, Shepherdstown  
Ed Zahniser, Shepherdstown

***Thanks to all of you for your generous support of PVAS!***



Note: If any of the information above is inaccurate or incomplete, please let us know so we can correct our records!

## Ruth Ann Dean Birdathon Coming Up Soon

Please don't forget that time is running out to register for PVAS's second annual "Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon."

The Birdathon will be held the weekend of May 14-15, and registration must be completed by May 12.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For further information, call Sandy or contact him at [monsansagalkin@myactv.net](mailto:monsansagalkin@myactv.net).

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## Calling All Birders!

As many of you know, the National Audubon Society was created over a hundred years ago to protect wild birds and their eggs. Birding and the protection of birds have long been core activities of PVAS and other National Audubon Society chapters. Many of you have said that PVAS, with that history, should have more "adult" birding programs for its members—this is our response.

A number of like-minded members of PVAS would like to solicit your opinion on a proposal to elevate birding issues within PVAS. This would mean establishing a Birding Committee that would report to the PVAS Board and oversee all birding programs, plan new ones, and be an advocate for birding programs within PVAS.

The current birding programs of PVAS include Birding 101 (designed as an Introduction to Birding), the Christmas Bird Counts (a National Audubon Society citizen science program to assess the

health of bird populations and guide conservation action), the Ruth Ann Dean Annual Birdathon (a program begun last year to get people out birding and to collect data on bird populations in the Eastern Panhandle), and PVAS Birding Walks (activities open to the public designed to get people out to watch and enjoy birds). The PVAS Board has also authorized the study of two new birding programs: an Eastern Panhandle Birding Trails Map (identifying the birding hot spots in the Eastern Panhandle) and a Master Birding Program (that would provide individuals with more in-depth knowledge of birds, their habitats, and conservation.) These programs are now divided among several PVAS committees that have a broader mission than just birding.

These birding programs have been led by a few dedicated PVAS individuals. The "regular birders" refer to themselves as the "Over 50 Club." Birding need not be just a "Boomer" activity. One doesn't have to be an "expert" to have an impact in PVAS. New and intermediate level birders, advanced birders, as well as birders of all ages, are needed to help with birding programs.

The Executive Committee of PVAS has given the go-ahead to establish a Birding Committee assuming there is membership support. Please send your comments to Sandy Sagalkin at [monsansagalkin@myactv.net](mailto:monsansagalkin@myactv.net). Let us know whether you support this idea and whether you would be willing to serve on the Birding Committee. Thanks!

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## Birding Notes—Orioles Return

In early May, two oriole species return from their wintering grounds in Mexico, Central and South America to breeding territories in our area. Orioles migrate mostly by night. Loose bands of 5 to 10 may sometimes be seen just above the treetops in early morning.

The male Baltimore Orioles arrive a few days before the females and select tall deciduous trees near water, or in rural or suburban yards. The males are brilliant orange, with black heads, wings, and tail, and two white wing bars. They sing clear, flutelike, whistled songs, which soon attract mates. They also make a noisy chatter when disputing territory with other birds. The females, which are yellowish in color, build pendant nests woven of grasses and plant fibers. The females lay 4 or 5 eggs and incubate them for about 14 days. They produce only one brood of young each season. Baltimore Orioles eat caterpillars and other insects, spiders, and fruit such as mulberries and wild grape. Oranges offered at a feeding station can also tempt them.

Male Orchard Orioles are a brick red color, with black heads, wings, and tail. They choose nesting territories around farms, parks, unsprayed orchards, or open woodlands. The males sing a series of melodious whistles and flute-like notes. They sometimes display by rising upwards from their treetop perches while singing to attract mates. The yellowish females build nests, which are also woven of grasses and plant fiber, but are not as pendulous as the Baltimore Oriole's nests. Orchard Orioles mainly eat insects, and will sometimes eat berries as well.

Both species are easiest to see early this month before the trees are completely leafed out. In this area, they are commonly seen in tall Sycamores along rivers and streams. One easily accessible place to see both Oriole species is the new Flowing Springs Park that PVAS has been working on with the City of Ranson. Check the Sycamore trees along the stream bank. Enjoy these beautiful birds

this month! They spend only a short time in the area. The Orchard Orioles begin migrating south around the end of July. Baltimore Orioles will be around here through mid-September with a few lingering later into the fall.

## May Program Will Focus on Potomac River

The topic for our May program at the National Conservation Training Center will be “The Natural History of the Potomac River.”

The program will be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 11, in Room 151 of the Instructional West Building. Admission is free and anyone is welcome to attend.

The speaker will be Dr. Nathaniel (Than) Hitt, a Research Fish Biologist in the Aquatic Ecology Branch of the U.S. Geological Survey’s Leetown Science Center in Kearneysville,

Dr. Hitt holds a B.A. in Biology from the College of Wooster, an M.S. in Organismal Biology and Ecology from the University of Montana, and a Ph.D. in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences from Virginia Tech.

In his research work, he examines freshwater fish ecology and community ecotoxicology from a landscape-scale perspective, focusing on stream ecosystems in the mid-Atlantic highlands.

His work has demonstrated that landscape-scale dispersal affects fish community structure, and that an understanding of stream network topology may improve fish bioassessment in Appalachia.

## Calendar of Events

- April 30, 7 a.m.: Birding field trip, Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area
- May 1, 9 a.m.: Birding field trip, C&O Canal in the Hancock
- May 7, 10 a.m.-5p.m.: Boonsboro Green Fest
- May 7, 1 a.m.-12 p.m.: Garlic Mustard Pull at Yankauer Preserve
- May 4, 8 a.m.: Birding at Shepherd’s Spring Outdoor Ministry, Washington County, MD.
- May 11, 7 p.m.: PVAS program, NCTC “Natural History of the Potomac”
- May 14-15: Ruth Anne Dean Memorial Birdathon
- May 25, 8 a.m.: Birding at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship
- May 27, 7 p.m.: Potomac Valley Nature Photographers
- May 28, 6:30a.m.: Birding trip to Stauffer’s Marsh
- June 4, 4-7 p.m.: PVAS fundraiser at Harewood
- June 4, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.: Mile-a-Minute Pull at Flowing Springs Park, Ranson
- June 11, 6:30 p.m.: PVAS Annual Meeting and Potluck
- June 24, 7 p.m.: Potomac Valley Nature Photographers
- June 25: Shepherdstown Street Fest
- July 22, 7 p.m.: Potomac Valley Nature Photographers
- July 29-31: Weekend trip to Delaware’s Bombay Hook
- July 30-31: Morgan County Fair

## JOIN PVAS TODAY!

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

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

To become a local member, send in the form below and enclose a check for \$20 (\$15 for seniors and students). Make the check out to “PVAS.” This fee covers membership for everyone in your household for one year.

### Membership Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (optional): \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*To save postage costs, PVAS regularly sends its newsletter by e-mail. You can be assured that we do not share email addresses with anyone. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter by U.S. mail check here: \_\_\_\_.*

**Clip and mail this form to:**

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

**Thank you for your support!**

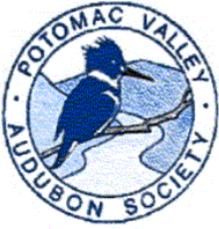


## If you’d rather join the National Audubon Society:

Some people prefer National Audubon Society membership, which includes a subscription to the Society’s Audubon magazine. To become a National member, go to the Society’s website at [www.audubon.org](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.

### RED TEXT - DOT ALERT

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



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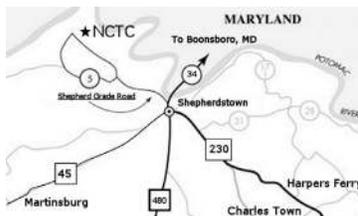


MAIL TO:

May 2011

Printed on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper

Volume 29, Issue 8



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

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

***PVAS Officers and Board Members***

- President: Peter Smith 304 876-1139 .....pvsmith@frontiernet.net
- Vice President: Georgia Jeppesen ..... georgia\_jeppesen@comcast.net
- Secretary: Mina Goodrich ..... larrymina@peoplepc.com
- Treasurer: Lex Miller ..... pamandlex@frontiernet.net
- Board Development: Wayne Braunstein 304 728-7181 ..... wbraun@frontiernet.net
- Board Members-at-Large: Don Briggs ..... ldonaldbriggs@gmail.com
- Clark Dixon ..... dixonconsultants@aol.com
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- Kathy Stolzenburg ..... kstolzenburg@gmail.com
- Carolyn Thomas ..... webethomas@aol.com
- Jane Vanderhook ..... janehook@frontiernet.net

***Ex Officio Board Members***

- Diana Mullis 304 267-3482 ..... dianamullis@aol.com

***Emeritus Board Members***

- Jean Neely ..... jeaneely@comcast.net

***Special Contacts***

- Executive Director: Kristin Alexander 304 676-3397 ..... kaemail730@aol.com
- Web Master: Kathy Bilton ..... kathy@fred.net
- PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: Diana Mullis ..... 304-267-3482