# VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac Valley Audubon Society

Volume 33, Issue 8 May 2015

## President's Perch

*by Jane Vanderhook, PVAS President*

It's here! Spring is finally here, and it is splendid outside. Forsythia, daffodils and cherry blossoms provide an abundance of color and the promise of things to come. The Spring Migration has begun and there is so much to see and do.

This month we celebrate International Migratory Bird Day. The Birding Committee has scheduled a number of events in recognition of the day, including 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. Please check the website for details.

We are approaching the end of the fiscal year and that means it is time for the election of Board members. In this month's newsletter you will find a ballot for the election of four board members; the Treasurer and three At-Large Board Members. You may vote by mailing in the enclosed ballot, by voting in person at the Annual Member Meeting, or by electronic balloting.

This final option will become available by the middle of May so watch for the announcement. Regardless of which method you choose, please do vote. PVAS is your organization and your opinions matter.

**Please save the date for the Annual Member Meeting: Saturday May 30th 6:00pm at the Yankauer Preserve.** Once again, dinner is on us. We certainly want to thank Gary and Diane Sylvester who will provide their delicious BBQ pork. The Board will provide everything else (sides, other dinner options, drinks, plates, silverware and napkins) as a "Thank You" to our members. The event will begin with a very brief business meeting to gather votes, to recognize our dedicated volunteers and to acknowledge the contributions of those Board Members who are stepping off the board.

This is a members-only (and free) event. For planning purposes, please RSVP to Melanie Snyder at Admin@PotomacAudubon.org or (703) 973-5419 to let us know how many from your party to expect for dinner. We hope you will join us!

I look forward to seeing you all soon.

## Director's Report

*by Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director*

PVAS members and friends have outdone themselves yet again. This year's annual appeal ran from December 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015. In that time, PVAS members and friends gave a total of $41,465. That is a truly remarkable number…$3,615 more than last year and certainly a new record for PVAS!

We are truly grateful for the generosity of the PVAS community. Without monetary gifts and the gift of time given by volunteers, we would not be able to accomplish nearly as much. We are also lucky to have a Board that is invested in the organization. In addition to providing their leadership, every board member contributed to the Annual Appeal.

Thank you for believing in PVAS. We will use your contributions efficiently, effectively, and wisely. We are humbled by your generosity, and we thank you for your vote of confidence.

### Save June 20th for a Champagne Garden Party!

Alice and Neal Barkus of Shepherdstown are generously hosting another champagne garden party to benefit PVAS on June 20 from 1-4pm.

PVAS members and friends are invited to come and explore their beautiful gardens and orchard. Our event volunteers will be preparing a delicious lunch, accompanied by champagne, beer, wine and lemonade.

Tickets prices start at $45 per person, and reservations are required. Invitations will be sent out shortly!

If you do not receive an invitation, or prefer to purchase a ticket online, you may do so on our website at www.potomacaudubon.org. To request a paper invitation with mail-in RSVP card, contact Melanie Snyder at 703-973-5419 or admin@PotomacAudubon.org. RSVPs must be received by June 8.

We hope to see you there!

# Red-bellied Woodpecker

*by Will Hershberger*

Red-bellied Woodpeckers are very common, and are found in most forested habitats in our area. They are easily seen and heard. As with the other woodpecker species of our area, Red-bellied Woodpeckers fly with an undulating flight style. They will often jump off of the side of a tree and fall a few feet before opening their wings and flying. They are also very territorial — both sexes will repel intruders.

Often thought to be a misnomer, the Red-bellied Woodpecker does indeed have red feathers on the center of their bellies. This is hard to see in the wild as their bellies are against the trunks of trees. These red belly feathers are more easily seen when the birds are at a feeder. Red-bellied Woodpeckers are not as apt to drill for concealed insects as other woodpeckers, instead rely on fruits, nuts, insects, and small vertebrates.

Male Red-bellied Woodpeckers remain on their territories year-round. Males typically start a cavity and then try to attract a mate by calling, drumming, or tapping quietly from inside the cavity. If a female is impressed, she will land beside him on the tree and they will commence quiet tapping together, called mutual tapping. This mutual tapping seems to spur the females into helping with finishing the cavity. Nest sites are usually dead trees or dead limbs. Males may start a new cavity in the same tree that was used in previous years but they do not use the same nest cavity from previous years. Once the pair is working together to dig the cavity, they can finish in about 14 days.



*Photo © Wil Hershberger*

Once the cavity is completed, 4-5 eggs are laid, one a day, in a bed of fine wood chips. Both sexes have a brood patch and incubate the eggs. For the few nests that have been carefully studied, it appears that the male incubates the eggs at night; females incubate for fewer, longer periods during the day relieved by the male who incubates more often but for short periods. One parent will typically wait to be relieved of incubation duties rather than fly off leaving the nest unattended. After 12-14 days the eggs hatch. The young leave the nest at about 25 days after hatching and are dependent on the parents for food and care for an additional 10 weeks. After this dependent period, the young are driven out of the territory by the resident male.

Red-bellied Woodpeckers can be heard year-round, but are most vocal in late winter through spring. They have a vocabulary of calls that they use for different circumstances. The Kwirr call is the most often heard call during the breeding season, and is thought to be used when a pair is trying to contact each other. This is also the call used by the male to attract a mate to his territory. The Cha call is used singly or in groups and appears to be a long-range call between mated birds. This call is often associated with one of the pair being alarmed or excited about something going on in their territory. Finally, the Chee-wuck call is used before pairs form and appears to be an aggressive display between birds of either sex. Male Red-bellied Woodpeckers also drum, rapid banging of their bill against a resonant limb or telephone pole at slightly less than 20 beats per second. Drumming is used to establish a territory and to attract a mate.

Once you learn these calls and the drumming rhythm, you will be able to detect Red-bellied Woodpeckers all over our area and eavesdrop on their daily routines.

Listen to the calls of Red-bellied Woodpeckers here:

http://natureimagesandsounds.com/assets/RBWO_calls.mov

## NCTC Birding Trip Set for May 16

PVAS is sponsoring a birding trip to the National Conservation Training Center outside Shepherdstown on Saturday, May 16. The trip will begin at 7:30 a.m. It is free and anyone with an interest is welcome to come along. Children are welcome. Please note that because of security considerations at NCTC pre-registration is essential. Easy, on-line registration is available on the PVAS website. Please register before May 14. For more information, contact trip leader Jim Farley at jamesfarley@frontiernet.net or 540-686-2056.

The Center's 538-acre campus is not normally open to the public, so this is a great opportunity to visit the campus and enjoy their trails while birding. The campus contains a mix of fields and forest, providing good habitat for a rich variety of bird species. It also should provide a good opportunity to see NCTC's resident Bald Eagles. The trip will last about three-and-a-half hours and involve walking about two miles over moderate terrain.

Participants should dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions; bring insect repellent, water, and sunscreen; and wear comfortable walking shoes or hiking boots. PVAS will provide binoculars for those who need them. The trip may be cancelled if there is bad weather. To check on possible weather cancellation, watch the PVAS website or contact Jim.

## Join May 20 Bird Walk on Rolling Ridge Lands on the Blue Ridge

PVAS will sponsor a bird walk on the Rolling Ridge Foundation Lands on the Blue Ridge in Jefferson County, West Virginia on Wednesday, May 20. The walk will be led by local birding expert Joette Borzik and 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. Participants should plan to meet Joette at the Rolling Ridge Study Retreat Community, located at the end of Mission Road.

(From Charles Town, follow Route 115/Charles Town Road (Old Route 9) heading south, then turn right on Mission Road. Continue on Mission Road approximately 6.2 miles, driving past Shannondale Springs Wildlife Management Area. Turn left where Mission Road becomes a gravel road, and where a wooden sign marks the Rolling Ridge Foundation Lands. After 1 mile on the gravel road, you will approach a 4-way intersection. Go straight and park your vehicle near the first house on the right where the walk will begin.) The walk will last about 3 hours, and will cover rolling terrain. Birds likely to be present will be migrating warblers, Wood Thrushes, Scarlet Tanagers, vireos, and possibly Red-headed Woodpeckers.

Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring along water, a snack and insect repellent. PVAS will provide binoculars for those who do not have their own. The walk may be cancelled in the event of heavy or steady rain, as access requires travel on a gravel road. Those who register on the PVAS website will be notified by email by 9:00 p.m. the previous evening if cancellation is anticipated.

The Rolling Ridge Foundation Lands are one of the largest privately held wilderness preserves in the Eastern Panhandle. On its 1,400 acres of secluded, forested land are miles of hiking trails, the Appalachian Trail, the Shenandoah River, five mountain streams, ponds, waterfalls and scenic overlooks.

To reserve binoculars or for additional trip information, contact Joette at 240-440-4221 or pep4223@comcast.net. For property access questions, contact Scot DeGraf at 301-275-2009.

## Join May 23 Bird Walk at Antietam

PVAS will sponsor a bird walk along the Final Attack Trail on the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg, MD on Saturday, May 23. 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 7:30 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.

# Reminder About International Migratory Bird Day Events

Here's a reminder that PVAS has put together a special series of local events in May to mark the 23rd annual observance of International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD).

All the local events are 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 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

**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 7:30 a.m. and last about 3 ½ 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: Birding Trip 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/Senior 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.

## Eidolon Bird Walk Set for May 3

The Potomac Valley Audubon Society is teaming up with the Nature Niche Store in Berkeley Springs to sponsor an early morning bird walk at the Eidolon Nature Preserve in Morgan County on Sunday, May 3. There will be no fee, and anyone with an interest is invited to attend. No pre-registration is required. The walk will be led by local birding experts Jon Boone and Janet Ardam.

This will be a good opportunity to see a variety of migrating and year-round birds before trees are in full foliage. In particular, it will provide a chance to see the rare Cerulean Warbler, a species of concern that nests in considerable numbers at Eidolon at this time of year. Those who wish to join in should plan to arrive at the Preserve at 7:30 a.m. Everyone should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the prevailing weather and bring water and bug spray. For more information or directions to the preserve contact the Nature Niche store at 304-258-0992 or natureniche@naturenichewv.com. Directions are also on the PVAS website.

## May 8 Program Will Feature Talk on Cuban Birds

PVAS's monthly program for March will feature a presentation about the birds of Cuba. The program will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 13 at the Hospice of the Panhandle facility in Kearneysville. Admission is free, and everyone is welcome to attend.

The speaker will be local birding expert and Master Naturalist Joette Borzik. Joette recently returned from her fourth trip to Cuba, where she conducted Cuban bird surveys with Cuban ornithologists and citizen scientists from the US. The diversity of Cuba's birds is considerable, with the country supporting 26 endemic birds found nowhere else in the world. Cuba is also home to the world's smallest bird and the world's smallest frog.

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 www.potomacaudubon.org or contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org, or 703-303-1026.

## Learn All About Bees at May 3 Apiary Visit

PVAS is sponsoring a visit to the Eversweet Apiaries in Kearneysville the afternoon of Sunday, May 3. The visit will begin at 1:00 p.m. and last about 1½ hours. It will be free and open to anyone with an interest, and children are welcome. Pre-registration is required; register on the PVAS website. The visit will be a good opportunity to learn all about Honeybees, honey and beekeeping.

Specific topics that will be covered will include bee biology and the social organization of hives, problems honeybees face, different honey varieties, and tips to becoming a beekeeper. The beginning of May is an excellent time for such an event because bees are very active at this time of year. The visit will take place rain or shine. Participants should plan to meet at the Eversweet Apiaries facility; full directions can be found on the PVAS website.

For more information about Eversweet, go to their website at www.eversweetapiaries.com. For more information about PVAS's visit contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or 703-303-1026.

## May 10 Plant Walk at Eidolon Will Be First of a Series

PVAS will sponsor a plant walk at our Eidolon Nature preserve in Morgan County on Sunday, May 10. The walk is free and anyone with an interest is welcome to come along. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged, but not required. To register, go to the PVAS website.

Participants should plan to meet at the preserve at 10:00 a.m. The preserve is located on Sideling Hill Mountain northwest of Great Cacapon. Directions can be found on the PVAS website. The walk will be led by naturalist Joe Metzger and will last about five hours. It is one of three planned walks that will offer unique opportunities to participate in a systematic effort to compare the plants growing now on the Eidolon property to those recorded there as far back as 70 years ago.

The Eidolon property was purchased in 1945 by Louis and Marguerite Zapoleon and enjoyed by them for many years. According to Mrs. Zapoleon's wishes, it became a nature preserve after she passed away in 2003. For more than five decades, Mrs. Zapoleon kept careful records of the plants and animals she had seen on the property. These records have survived (they can be found on the PVAS website) and the planned series of walks will attempt to rediscover the more than 600 species of plants that Mrs. Zapoleon recorded. Those plants included 30 very rare species, only four of which have been rediscovered so far.

The other two planned walks will be held on July 12 and September 13. All these walks are being co-sponsored by the Maryland Native Plant Society. Registration for each of the walks will be separate, and those who are interested may choose to participate in any or all of them.

Participants should dress for the prevailing weather, and bring bug spray, sun screen, drinking water and a sack lunch. They may also wish to bring a camera and binoculars. For more information contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or 703-303-1026.

## Spring Blossoms Welcome Wildflower Festival Goers

Our annual Wildflower Festival at Yankauer Preserve did not disappoint this year! About seventy visitors to the festival were treated to several varieties including Twinleaf, Dutchman's Breeches, Spring Beauties, and Bloodroot. Other species sighted were violets, wood sorrel, purple dead nettle, cinquefoil, Jack in the pulpit, and Mayapple. Guided walks were led by PVAS volunteers Kathy Bilton, Mary Duke, Kathryn Henry, Wanda Miller, and Mary Beth Ross. A special walk for "advanced wildflower enthusiasts," was led this year by naturalist Joe Metzger, an outstanding source of wildflower knowledge and lore.





Many PVAS friends contributed poems, which were posted along the trail to enhance the guided walks and give solitary walkers the chance to contemplate additional beauty in nature. Kendra Atkins coordinated all the poems and posted them in advance. (Did you have a favorite?)

At the pavilion, children's activities were coordinated by Flo Wilbik. These included making wildflowers from coffee filters, wildflower games, and flower crafts. Again this year, students from Shepherdstown Elementary School contributed artwork to decorate the pavilion. The third grade students at the school created artwork inspired by Georgia O'Keefe's enlarged view of flowers.

We are grateful of all the time and effort provide by our volunteers. The Wildflower Festival is one of the favorite activities each year and if you had a chance to join us, we're so glad! If you were not able to visit during the festival, be assured that the wildflowers at Yankauer Preserve will continue blooming for several more weeks so we hope you can take the time to walk and enjoy them. And we thank you for leaving them for others to enjoy.

## Who Laid That Egg?



Our eighth annual Spring Egg Hunt was such fun for the children and parents who attended that we just had to tell you about it! Participants were able to learn which animals lay eggs through guessing games and the chance to feel (faux) eggs without looking. The "frog eggs" created a few shouts of surprise!



The egg hunt itself gave the preschoolers the chance to look for eggs painted like wild bird eggs which were camouflaged on the Yankauer trails. Two special eggs (made of stone) were exchanged for a special prize: a "What Do You See?" nature explore book by Eric Carle and bug collection box. After the hunt everyone was able to enjoy special cookies and lemonade made by PVAS volunteers Susan Fluharty and Becki Jones. This year's event also featured a special "nest cake" made by Diana Mullis. A special thank you goes to summer campers Allie Snyder and Eve and Zoe Rosen who hid the eggs prior to the event! Without their help there would have been no hidden eggs to hunt!

## Thank You!

Thanks to everyone who has been saving milk and juice cartons! We reached our goal and the kids at Shepherdstown Elementary were each able to plant a tree whip to take home and plant during their watershed field trip. We could not have done it without your help! (We would have spent $$ without it.) If you have more cartons just waiting around your house, go ahead and recycle them.

A special thanks to the San Diego Audubon Society for sending us a copy of *WV Birds* (1983) that turned up in their donations. Michelle Baker of Martinsburg was the first to claim it on our "free to a good home" Facebook posting! (If you don't follow PVAS on Facebook, check us out!)

## Tail Tales

Are their tales about tails!? Indeed there are, and some of them can be heard at Yankauer Preserve on the last Saturday of each month! Family Nature Tales is a program that combines reading a book about nature with nature exploration. Volunteers Carolyn Maddock and Don Henry have been leading the activities, which last about two hours: first the book then a hike on the trails.

On May 30, we'll be learning more about birds, and on June 27 the search will be on for Insects on the Trails! Family Nature Tales is a free program that is being funded by the Nora Roberts Foundation and PVAS is excited to be able to combine nature and reading. Programs are rain or shine. All we ask is that you pre-register at www.PotomacAudubon.org!

## Wee Nats Is Back!

After taking a break for a few months, our popular Wee Naturalists program, led by Suzi Taylor, is back! This program, designed to help preschool children accompanied by a caring adult explore nature, will begin again on Monday May 4! The program will be held at Yankauer Preserve from 9:30-11:00 a.m.

The first half hour is designed for the kids to explore a bit on their own with the formal program beginning at 10:00. Cost is $10 per child/adult team and $5 for a second child. (There is no extra charge for additional children under the age of 2.) Our theme in May is definitely "Wee Scientists!" Pre-registration is required at www.PotomacAudubon.org. (And don't forget that our "Out of the Nest" preschool camp for child/adult teams is the week of July 20, also at Yankauer Preserve!)

## Why Summer Camp Is Important For Children

Since 2003, PVAS has conducted a summer day camp at Yankauer Preserve and other sites in Jefferson and Berkeley Counties. After so many years, it's easy to assume that *everyone* knows camp is important for kids, but it's always good to remember why spending a week outdoors is important. Research studies have shown that children need nature to develop their senses and foster learning and creativity. Being in nature helps children focus and concentrate, lengthening their attention spans and offering them a place where they can contemplate infinity. Nature camps can help children expend energy in a healthy environment and counteract childhood obesity. But most importantly, children themselves often define "play" as something other than sports and structured activities!

Our Audubon Discovery Camps offer hands-on, experiential activities designed to help children actually play in nature! Small groups of 8-10 campers are encouraged to explore the natural world, supervised by trained adult staff. Our campers not only expand their awareness of nature and have a fun, safe week outdoors, but they also they learn critical thinking and problem solving skills when building forts in the woods! Our staff are adult college students and teachers who are trained in program development and supervision before the campers arrive. They are then able to help the campers choose activities for their week based on a specific theme, and supervise their unstructured play. We think this is one positive element that sets us apart from other camps in the area!

Some of our camp sessions are already at capacity, but we do have some spots left (including in our Teen Nature Photo Camp at Shepherd University). If you have not already registered your child, grandchild, niece or nephew for a session, don't wait! Camp sessions and registration links are at www.PotomacAudubon.org/discovercamp.

## PVAS Volunteers Have All The Fun!

Volunteering with PVAS is one of the best ways we know of to have fun in nature! We have a number of ways that you can accomplish that very thing coming up in May and throughout the summer, and we'd love to have you help out! (Master Naturalists can use these opportunities to fulfill their volunteer hours.)

Our final watershed field trips are on May 11, 12, 13 and 20 at Poor House Farm Park in Martinsburg and Catoctin Creek Park near Middletown MD. We offer onsite training and pair first-time volunteers with experienced ones to make it a fun experience. We also have a second grade field trip to Stauffer's Marsh scheduled for May 4. If you have never been there, it's a jewel of a place -- what better way to see it than by helping with some fun activities!

This summer, each session of Audubon Discovery Camp is the perfect place for volunteers to help without the pressure of being "in charge" of activities. Camp volunteers help the camp staff with activities, hikes, games and fort building or just gathering materials and supplies. Whatever time you can give to making our camp sessions extra-special is greatly appreciated! (We'll even give you a camp shirt as a thank you, but you'll receive a lot more than that from the campers!) Also this summer, we will be presenting programs at several libraries in the Eastern Panhandle and at the Martinsburg Children's Museum. The library summer theme is "Heroes" and PVAS will be focusing on environmental heroes. We've chosen some books and activities that will work well with kids -- all we need now are volunteers who are willing to help carry them out! The first programs are scheduled for Friday June 12 and July 31, both at 10:30 a.m., at the Martinsburg Children's Library.

PVAS will be at several fairs and festivals in the next few months including Boonsboro's GreenFest on May 9 and Shepherdstown's DogFest the weekend of August 15-16. We'll have a contact booth at both festivals, but we're looking for some folks who like foxes and wolves for DogFest! And if you're the type of person who really plans ahead, the United Way Day of Caring will be September 8th. If you'd like more information about any of these opportunities, contact Ellen Murphy at Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org.

# HFI Wealth Management Was Leading Sponsor for This Year's Race




Each year PVAS is fortunate to have local businesses sponsor our annual Race for the Birds. Held each spring at the National Conservation Training Center, the event supports PVAS programs while allowing the community to enjoy the trails for professionally timed runs, a 2-mile walk/run, and a kids "Fun Run."This year's race was held on April 25. We sincerely thank each and every race sponsor!

HFI Wealth Management was the race's "Platinum" Level sponsor, contributing $1,000. The accompanying photo shows, from left to right, firm members Stacy Lindberg, Alle Nasteff, Leota Trainor, Rob Hoxton, and Jessie Gleason.

The race's other sponsors were as follows:

Gold Level: ($500 or more). Caribbean Islands Travel Service; Friends of Mark Benedict; *Martinsburg Journal*; *The Observer* newspaper; *Shepherdstown Chronicle*; *Spirit of Jefferson* newspaper; Trees 101, LLC; Two Rivers Treads; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center.

Silver Level: ($250 or more). Associated Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons; Briarwood Dental Clinic; Joe and Susan Brookreson; Chick-fil-A of Martinsburg; John A. Draper, Jr., MD; Jefferson Security Bank; Patthoff General Dentistry; Progressive Printing; Roach Energy/ROCS Convenience; Shepherd University Wellness Center.

Bronze Level: ($100 or more). AC&T Co., Inc.; Anne R. Basham, DDS; Clayton Johnson; d'Accord Boutique; Davitt McAteer & Associates; Depot Florist; Dickinson & Wait Craft Gallery; Domestic American Restaurant; Edward Jones Investments; German Street Coffee and Candlery, a MARKETPLACE; Grapes and Grains Gourmet; La Trattoria Italian Eatery, Martinsburg; Ted Leslie, DDS; Lynne Wiseman@ERA.com, Realtor; Medicap Pharmacy; Mountain View Solar; Potomac-Mecklenburg Garden Club; Potomac Valley Master Naturalists; The Press Room; Reid's Distributor; Royalicious Bagel Bakery; Shepherdstown Pharmacy; Shepherdstown Sweet Shop; William F. Queen, DDS & Whitney Queen Spry, DDS.

Members and friends, please thank these sponsors for their support when you patronize their businesses!

## Wings of Dreams Store Continues Donations to PVAS




Shepherdstown's On the Wings of Dreams shop has once again donated a portion of its sales proceeds to PVAS.

This is the eighth year shop owner Laura Rau has set aside three cents from each crystal and mineral sold during the year to donate to the Society. This year's donation - the largest ever - totals $300. It is based on 2014 sales, and it brings the shop's total donations to PVAS to $1,865. All these funds have been used to support the Society's programs for children, which include camps, scholarships and programs that promote conservation and exploration in nature.

PVAS is very grateful to Laura and her colleagues at the store for their generosity. The funds they've contributed have been a wonderful source of support for our programs.

The Wings of Dreams store is located at 139 West German Street. In addition to crystals, it offers a wide variety of sterling silver and natural stone jewelry; Native American jewelry, books and music; incense; sages, shells and prayer feathers; magical and ceremonial herbs; tools and statuary for practitioners of Buddhist, Hindu and Earth-Based spiritualities; essential oils; prayer flags and Tibetan and crystal singing bowls. Its website can be found at www.WingsOfDreamsShop.com.

***Bill & Carole Telfair's resident Great Horned Owls and chicks!***







## Don't Forget Winston Gardens Plant Sale

Here's a reminder that the Winston Gardens Native Plant Nursery will be having its final native plant sale the weekend of May 2-3, and PVAS will receive a share of the proceeds. The sale will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. each day.

Plant species available will include Sugar Maples, Bottlebrush Buckeye, Summersweet, Cockspur Hawthorn, Winterberry Holly, Northern Bayberry, Viburnums (including Arrowwood, Possum Haw, and Mapleleaf) and White, Red and other oaks. These are all native species, adapted to our climate and soils.

The nursery is located in northeastern Berkeley County, at 1121 Hollida Lane, one mile off Swan Pond Road. Operated by noted area landscape designer Virginia Winston and her husband Eldon for the past 15 years, it has specialized in trees and shrubs that are native to this region.

Since the spring of 2011, the Winstons have donated 15 percent of the proceeds of their annual spring and fall sales to PVAS's Stauffer's Marsh Nature Preserve. These donations have totaled more than $1,200. They will donate the same percentage from this final sale. If you are not available the weekend of the sale, Virginia is willing to set up individual appointments by phone or e-mail. She can be reached at (304) 267-6924 or virginia@winstongardens.com.

For directions and a full list of the plants available, go to the Nursery's website at www.winstongardens.com. Or contact the Winstons at the phone number or email address given above.

## Reforestation Day at NCTC

A cooperative effort between Friends of NCTC and Potomac Valley Audubon Society completed a reforestation project in support of NCTC. A dozen Potomac Valley Master Naturalists attended the event where they learned reforestation techniques from Phil Pannill, Land Manager at National Conservation Training Center. Together, the group helped restore 3 acres of native hardwood forest by planting 325 trees. Tree varieties included four species of oak, sugar maple, tulip poplar, redbud and American plum. Each tree was protected from deer browsing through the installation of tree shelters

Six of the PVMNs returned mid week to finish the plantings. As the group finished up, an eagle flew past, low overhead.

PVMNs in attendance included: Andy Obringer, Martina Kendig, Sandy Brown, Clark Dixon, Nan Johnson, Marie VanValkenburgh, Emily Gross, Gail Berrigan, Aileen Curfman, Karen Fuegi, Diana Pavlik, and Karlin Sink.



## Sign Up Now for May 17 Rattlesnake Workshop

PVAS will sponsor a Natural History Workshop on Timber Rattlesnakes the afternoon of Sunday, May 17. It will be held from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Hospice of the Panhandle facility in Kearneysville, and will be led by leading rattlesnake expert W.H. "Marty" Martin.



The workshop is open to anyone with an interest but space will be limited and pre-registration is required. Register on the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org.

There will also be a fee of $10 for PVAS members and $15 for nonmembers.

The workshop will focus on the life history, seasonal activities and habitats of the Timber Rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*). One of two venomous snakes in our area (the other is the Copperhead), the Timber Rattlesnake is found throughout the Eastern Panhandle and surrounding Maryland and Virginia counties. Its overall range encompasses some 27 eastern, southern, and Midwestern states.

An Eastern Panhandle resident, Mr. Martin is widely recognized as one of the foremost field experts on eastern rattlesnakes in general, and the Timber Rattlesnake in particular. He has authored or co-authored several important papers on the Eastern Diamondback and Timber Rattlesnake, and is the lead author and co-editor of the Timber Rattlesnake Conservation Action Plan, a project of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Hospice facility's address is 330 Hospice Lane, Kearneysville. The entrance is located on old Route 9, near Short Road, across from the Food Lion store. The workshop will be held in the Education Room of the facility's Main Office building. There is plenty of parking on site.

This event is one of a series of Natural History Workshops on different natural history topics PVAS is sponsoring this year. These Workshops are intended for people who are interested in learning about particular natural history topics in considerable depth, but cannot commit to pursue the much more comprehensive natural history education available through PVAS's Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program, which can take a year or more to complete. This workshop is eligible for Master Naturalist recerification hours.

For more information contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or 703-303-

# Master Naturalist Program Kicks Off Ninth Year



The Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program kicked off its ninth year of instruction the weekend of March 21-22 with a full weekend of classes at Cacapon State Park outside Berkeley Springs.

Organized in 2006 by PVAS, the program began offering classes in 2007. It is still sponsored by PVAS, and is a chapter of the State of West Virginia Master Naturalist Program. The program offers weekend classes monthly at various locations in West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle from March through October. Enrollment is limited to about 20 persons each year, and those who wish to participate must apply before the end of January.

The accompanying photo shows this year's participants outside the Cacapon State Parks' Ole Inn, where the weekend's classes were held. They are, from left to right:

*First row:* Laura Galvin, Charles Town; Becki Jones, Middleway; Chrissy Lewin, Martinsburg; Kaitlyn Snyder, Bunker Hill; Alma Heck, Martinsburg; Judy Shremshock, Harpers Ferry; and Nancy Guney, Harpers Ferry.

*Second Row:* Maryellen York, Inwood; Aileen Curfman, Shepherdstown; Karlin Sink, Hedgesville; Bill Powell, Martinsburg; Andy Obringer, Shepherdstown; and Frances Lynch, Boonsboro.

*Third Row:* Michael Shremshock, Harpers Ferry; Gail Berrigan, Harpers Ferry; Steve Hoover, Martinsburg; Rick Lowman, Martinsburg; John Hilleary, Gerrardstown; Peter Petretta, Charles Town; David Cooper, Hedgesville; Kat Cooper, Hedgesville; and Carrie Whitaker, Charles Town.

The Master Naturalist program is patterned after the long-established Master Gardener program. It trains individuals in the fundamentals of natural history and nature interpretation as a way of promoting responsible stewardship of natural resources. Graduates of the program become part of a corps of highly qualified volunteers who assist government agencies, schools, and non-government organizations with research, outdoor recreation development, and environmental education and protection. To remain certified they must take 8 hours of training and participate in 16 hours of volunteer activity annually. More information is available on the PVAS web page at www.potomacaudubon.org.

## Learn Outdoor Cooking From an Expert

PVAS will offer another of its popular outdoor cooking classes at Cacapon State Park on Saturday, May 30. The class will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. It will be led by master naturalist (and skilled outdoor chef), Clark Dixon. Clark will provide instruction and practice in cooking outdoors, without pots and pans or kitchen utensils.

The class is open to anyone who is interested, but participation will be limited and pre-registration by May 23 will be required. There will also be a fee of $10 to cover supplies and materials for instruction. Each registrant may bring one guest, such as a child or spouse, free of charge. These classes usually fill up quickly, so early registration is advised. To register, go to the PVAS website.

The class will be held unless there is a torrential down pour, electrical storm, or soaked ground from steady continuous rain. Should the class be cancelled a rain date will be announced. Participants should plan to bring their own food to be cooked. A list of possible foods and suggestions for preparation will be provided to those who register, along with directions and full details. For more information, contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or 703-303-1026.

## eMammal Citizen Science project in Virginia and West Virginia

The eMammal project is looking for volunteers to run trail cameras in the following counties in Virginia and West Virginia on public and private (backyards) lands.

**West Virginia:** Hardy, Pendleton, Grant, Tucker and Randolph

**Virginia:** Shenandoah, Page, Rockingham and Culpepper

Volunteering for this project involves:

1. Attending an eMammal training on how to use camera traps.
2. Use of personal GPS (handheld or phone apps) to navigate to proposed camera locations in national forest.
3. Hiking and navigating public lands in the Appalachian Mountains.
4. Downloading data from camera SD card and using eMammal custom software (included in training) to upload data to the eMammal team (requires internet connection and basic computer skills).
5. Love of the outdoors!

This survey effort will run from July 2015 to November 2015 with deploying cameras every 3 weeks during this time. Scheduling is semi-flexible with a requirement to finish the deployments assigned to each volunteer. If you are interested in participating with the eMammal project this summer/fall please email the eMammal team at emammal@si.edu with your interest. Training for the project will occur in

## Election of Board Members 2015

It's time to vote for PVAS Board members! As mentioned in the President's Perch, you'll notice there is a ballot included with this month's Valley Views. PVAS holds elections of its Board of Directors annually. Votes may be submitted by mail-in ballot, electronically, or at the Annual Member Meeting which will take place on Saturday May 30th this year. There are thirteen board positions called for in the PVAS Bylaws. Four of the positions are officers, and the remainder serve as at-large members. The new terms will begin July 1, 2015.

Election of board members is staggered to avoid an entirely new slate of officers and directors at one time. The term of office for all board members is two years with a maximum of three consecutive terms. However, a person who serves three consecutive terms and is elected as an officer may extend his or her board membership/officer position by one additional term, by unanimous decision of the board.

Lex Miller, our Treasurer, has reached his term limit. Lex's acumen, advice, and dependability have been appreciated by everyone on the board. Lou Scavnicky, who has devoted so much time and attention to maintaining our preserves, will also be leaving the board after finishing his term as an at-large member and chairman of the Land and Facilities Committee. We are very grateful to them both for all they have done in the past and plan to continue to do.

The Nominating Committee presents the following candidates for election to the board for two-year terms beginning on July 1, 2015:

Dan Cogswell, Treasurer; Don Campbell, At-large member; Clark Dixon, At-large member (reelection); Mina Goodrich, At-large member; Elizabeth (Beth) Morningstar, At-large member. The biographies of the slate of officers are printed on the back of the ballot, and are also available at http://www.potomacaudubon.org/2015nominees.

***Annual PVAS Member Dinner***

***at the Yankauer Preserve***

***May 30, 2015 at 6pm***

***Elections, Volunteer Recognition, Birdathon Winners and more!***

***All members and volunteers welcome.***

***RSVP to Melanie Snyder: 703-973-5419***

***or Admin@PotomacAudubon.org***

## 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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May 2015 Printed on100% post-consumer waste recycled paper Volume 33, Issue 8

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 meetings take place the first Thursday of the month (September 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)*

President: Jane Vanderhook (2016)..... janehook@frontiernet.net
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:
Clark Dixon (2015)..... dixonconsultants@aol.com
Kara Gibson (2016)..... KaraKlein@gmail.com
Tanner Haid (2016) ..... Tanner.Haid@gmail.com
Joe Hankins (2016) ..... joseph.hankins@gmail.com
Susan Jones (2016) ..... wvbagend@frontier.com
Matthew Patterson (2016)..... tridecanone@yahoo.com
Lou Scavnicky (2015)..... captainlou@comcast.net
Lainie Weber (2016) ..... lainie_weber@fws.gov
***Ex Officio Board Member:*** Diana Mullis (past president) ..... DianaMullis@aol.com
***Emerita Board Member:*** Jean Neely ..... jeaneely@comcast.net

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