

Valley Views

Potomac
Valley
Audubon
Society

Volume 23, Issue 3

November 2004

Field Trips

Saturday, November 13

We will once again be visiting Steve Huy at the Project OwlNet banding operation at Lamb's Knoll on the border of Frederick and Washington counties in Maryland. Steve is a licensed bander specializing in Saw-whet owls, our smallest owl. Because the saw-whets don't start migrating till late in the evening – we plan to arrive at the banding station around 9:00pm. This trip proved very popular last year and is already full for this year, however if you are interested please let Ken or Patsy Hunter know and they'll put you on the waiting list. (304) 725-3936 or email at phunter@npca.org.

Sunday, November 14, PVAS' 13th Annual Bird Banding

The 13th Annual Bird Banding demonstration will be hosted by Bob Dean, our expert bird bander, at his home in Hedgesville from 1 to 4 in the afternoon. As usual, there will be refreshments and friends to share and all at no cost (donations are never refused, however). This is a very enjoyable and educational family event and we welcome all kids. We're outdoors most of the time, so dress accordingly.

Directions: From I-81 at exit 20, take Rt. 901 W about 2 miles to first stop sign. Turn left and go 0.2 miles to Harlan Springs Rd. (just beyond church). Turn left here and go 0.7 miles to Limestone Ln. (across from stone spring house and pond). Turn right here and go 0.3 miles to parking sign in field below house.

From Rt. 9 west of Hedgesville, turn left at James Rumsey Vo-Tech (just east of Hedgesville High School) onto Cumbo Rd. Go 1.1 miles to first stop sign and turn left onto Harlan Springs Rd. Go 1.25 miles on Harlan Springs Rd. to Limestone Ln. on left (at bottom of steep hill across from stone spring house and pond). Turn left here and go 0.3 miles to parking sign in field below house.

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Meeting Programs

Report on the October Meeting

Bill Bundy, of Loudoun Beekeepers Association (LBA), explained the pleasures (and the pains) of beekeeping to the stalwart members attending the October meeting. Bill was informative and entertaining and he answered questions from the audience well past the usual closing time.



Bill Bundy Explains Beekeeping
at October Meeting

Photo by Diana Cummins.

There was also a surprise visit from Dave Freese, of the Eastern Panhandle Beekeepers Association (EPBA) to announce activities of the association and local courses in beekeeping. For more information on local beekeeping you can go to www.epbawv.org.

November 10, "The Important Bird Area Program in Maryland and DC"

The Important Bird Areas (IBA) program is part of an ambitious global initiative to identify the sites that are essential to the conservation of viable bird populations. In the United States Audubon is responsible for implementing the IBA program, and has now identified IBAs in most states. David Curson, Audubon MD-DC's newly appointed Director of Bird Conservation will talk about the IBA program in Maryland and DC and how you can help with the current search for new sites.

As the new Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon MD-DC, David Curson is responsible for running the MD-DC Important Bird Areas Program and serves as the principal science and conservation staff person for Audubon MD-DC. Dave grew up in London, England where he spent much of his childhood watching birds and also chasing various other forms of wildlife, including urban foxes, bad-

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

News from Yankauer Nature Preserve . . .

Thank you, Ann!

A hearty thanks goes out to Ann Craig as she finishes up her contract with PVAS the end of October. Ann has brought Yankauer's name and programs to a heightened level of recognition in the community through recruiting "Preserve Partners," attention to public relations, and coordination of wonderful special events such as the Cedar Series. We thank Ann for all her hard work and wish her all the best in her next adventure.

Town Run Fun!

Thanks to a grant from the Corporation of Shepherdstown and a donation from Trinity Episcopal Church's Thrift Shop, Kristin was able to provide a Water Cycle program for Trinity's "Treasure Kids" preschool at Town Run in October. After learning about the water cycle through a story and play, the children and parents had a wonderful time with nets trying to catch water striders and crayfish in Town Run. The Corporation grant will enable Yankauer to provide a watershed program to home-schooled children in Shepherdstown using Town Run as the classroom in the spring.

"Dirt Cheap" Pavilion Floor

After reviewing various floor options for the pavilion for two years, a "dirt cheap" and environmentally sound option has been found! On November 13 and 14, volunteers will be coming together at Yankauer to build an "earth floor" out of clay, sand and cement. An environmental architect will be helping the crew mix and lay the floor over the weekend. This environmental alternative to a cement slab will save on cost; and most importantly, decrease greenhouse gasses created by cement production. You're welcome to come and watch, lend a hand, and bring treats to the volunteers! Look for a full report next month, as well as a thank you to our donors and volunteers who made this project possible!

PVAS Art Festival in 2005!

PVAS is pleased to announce the hiring of JiJi Beckett as our Art Festival Coordinator. JiJi brings wonderful experience to the job both in the arts and event coordination. Our first-ever Art Festival fundraiser will coincide with the 2005 American Conservation Film Festival, set for the 4th & 5th of November, 2005, and will be held at the National Conservation Training Center. JiJi is currently seeking members for an Art Festival Action Committee. The Committee will carry the festival planning through many important milestones such as setting the criteria for artists' work, helping with publicity, labor for setup and breakdown, and more. If you would like to be a part of planning and seeing through this exciting event, please contact JiJi Beckett at artfestival@potomacaudubon.org.

Car donations are still possible!

Contact Kristin if you're interested at PVAmail@aol.com or 304-676-3397

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Sunday, November 21, Matt Orsie Trip

Those of you who subscribe to the WV ListServe know that Matt spends a lot of time finding birds in our local area so this is a great opportunity to join him as he takes us to places in Jefferson and Berkeley counties where we are likely to see both resident and winter visiting birds. Whether you are an experienced birder or a novice you are sure to learn a lot. We will meet at the Martin's parking lot, in the area of the Sherwin Williams store, on Route 340 in Charles Town. at 7:30am. A word to novice birders, we do a fair amount of standing around looking at birds so dress warmly, wear shoes that will keep your feet warm and dry and bring binoculars. For more information call Ken or Patsy Hunter at 304-725-3936 or email at phunter@n pca.org

December

There are no field trips scheduled for December because of the Christmas Bird Count in Charles Town/Jefferson County on December 18 and Inwood/Berkely County on January 2.

As an "on your own" suggestion, however, you may want to consider going to the 16th Annual Memorial Illumination at Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, MD, on Saturday evening, **December 4**. A thousand volunteers light 23,000 candles representing the soldiers who were wounded, missing, or died at the Battle of Antietam during the Civil War. For more information you may go to: <http://www.nps.gov/anti/Luminary.htm> or call the park at 301-432-5124.

American Conservation Film Festival

Once again PVAS is a partner in the *American Conservation Film Festival*. This year's festival runs from **November 4** to **November 6**. The purpose of the festival is to:

- Provide a venue for a diverse range of conservation films that rarely receive a wide showing;
- Celebrate conservation film and video in the fun, eclectic atmosphere of historic Shepherdstown, WV;
- Showcase independent, historic, publicly funded and Appalachian films;
- Offer an education component that complements the film selections and supports those interested in conservation filmmaking.

The festival is presented at two venues, National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) – Byrd Auditorium; and Shepherd University – Reynolds Hall. It begins Thursday night at NCTC with a screening followed by a reception. On Friday night there is a screening at Shepherd with a reception to follow. The majority of showings and events take place on Saturday with activities at both locations. Saturday morning at Shepherd features a special series for the whole family.

Find out more at www.conervationfilm.org.

President's Perch

Hi Everyone -

It is hard to believe that the month of November is at hand, and Thanksgiving is just around the corner. I've been busy collecting up my pumpkins and cornstalks to decorate the front porch for Halloween and getting ready to make apple butter. The deer have eaten all our apples (even with the electric fence) so I guess we will be buying apples this year.

October was such a busy month with lots of activities ... I hope you joined us for Race Day and Jim Stoltz, and I sure hope you got your Birdseed order in. Please don't forget that **Birdseed Pickup Day is November 6 from 10:00 a.m. till noon!**... and I have some extra seed, so if you didn't get your order in, give me a call (304-267-3482).

I'm really looking forward to joining our partners (the American Conservation Film Festival folks) for "The Changing of the Land" films on **November 4, 5 & 6** in Shepherdstown ... hope to see you there also.

Our November program is "The Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program in Maryland and DC," with David Curson. Some of our members are working on Important Bird Areas in West Virginia, and this program will give us a better understanding of what an IBA is, and how we go about obtaining this designation for areas that we think are important. Do join us on **November 10!**

There are migrating birds everywhere right now, and Patsy and Ken have planned some wonderful outings for us this month. There is nothing like Fall in this part of the country ... so let's get out and enjoy!

— Diana Mullis, President



Report on the National Zoo Conservation and Research Center Fieldtrip

A small group of PVAS members attended the open house in Front Royal, Virginia, on Saturday, October 2, had a wonderful time,

and enjoyed a cool day with some unusual animals and birds. Not only did we get to see some rare and endangered species at close range, but equally important, we interacted with the scientists who are doing the research! There were informative booths on many research subjects and, no matter where we were, there was someone to answer our questions.



PVAS members enjoying the demonstration.

Photo by Diana Cummins

Crowds were light and many activities were especially designed for children. Keep your eye out for the trip next year. It's really worthwhile.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE, JOIN PVAS TODAY!

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

Your membership includes:

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

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Calling All Raptor Enthusiasts

The new edition of **Guide to Hawk Watching in North America** (Falcon Guide/Globe Pequot Press, 2004) is now available in paperback. This is a basic hawk watching resource at an inexpensive price. It's packed with information about hawk watching—especially directions for visiting hundreds of hawk watching lookouts, and Bald Eagle viewing areas, in North America.

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gers, amphibians, moths and butterflies. He describes himself as an ornithologist, ecologist, conservation biologist and avid birder, having birded extensively throughout Western Europe and North America.

In 1985 he received his BS in Ecology at the University of East Anglia and began a career in conservation biology, working as a Habitat Survey Ecologist for local government and NGOs in London. He came to the United States in 1993 to begin graduate studies and received MS and PhD degrees in the Department of Wildlife Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His graduate research focused on the ecology and behavior of Brown-headed Cowbirds and their hosts in northern New Mexico, and he's not ashamed to say he developed quite an admiration for this parasitic species! Dave moved to Baltimore in 2003 to marry a native Baltimorean and took up his Audubon position in May 2004.



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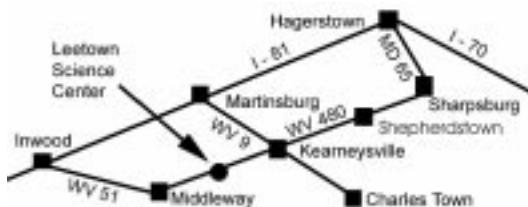
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The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April, in the auditorium at the USGS Leetown Science Center, Letown/Kearneysville, WV. Programs are free and open to the public. For additional information about PVAS or its programs and activities, please call any of the board members listed here or see <http://potomacaudubon.org>. PVAS serves the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

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

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