

Potomac Valley Audubon Society

VALLEY VIEWS

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November 2010

Accessible Trail Phase 1 Complete

After years of planning, phase one of the accessible trail at the Yankauer Preserve is complete. The Cedar Loop was laid out several years ago with ADA compliance in mind for a future accessible trail. After a grant was funded by the West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways Recreational Trails Program, we finally have begun to realize that plan.

The trail is intended to be as environmentally friendly as possible. After considerable research and planning, we used a material called EZ Roll Gravel Pavers, made of 100% recycled plastic that is molded into cups. The cups contain the clean limestone gravel, preventing narrow wheels from displacing the gravel and becoming mired. The plastic cups are attached to a tough landscape fabric that allows water to percolate through but is also a root barrier.



Bill Weis and WVCCC Crew

To help with this process, PVAS was able to hire the West Virginia Civilian Conservation Corps (WVCCC). Additionally, a representative of the manufacturer of the product (NDS, Inc.) met the crew the first morning and showed them how to work with the material. They laid out the first straight rows together, and then moved

into the more tedious curves. After laying and cutting the material to fit our windy path the Gravel Paver material was staked in place in preparation for gravel to be dumped into the small plastic cups.

Perhaps the hardest part of the job was hauling and spreading 37 tons of #8 gravel. While the WVCCC crew did much of this, volunteer Tim Murphy, who helped coordinate the project, moved much of the gravel on his own. Thankfully Bill and Bonnie Stubblefield loaned PVAS a gator with a dump bed, making our job significantly easier.



Tim Murphy directs the Crew

See *Accessible Trail*, Page 4

Don't Miss Our "Green Home" Tour and Wine Tasting

If you haven't signed up yet to attend our November 13 "Green Home" tour and wine tasting we hope you'll do so.

The event will be held from 1:00-4:00 p.m. at a brand-new "green" home on Engle Molers Road south of Shepherdstown – reputed to be perhaps the "greenest" home in Jefferson County.

In addition to tours of the home, the event will include a wine tasting featuring wines to complement upcoming holiday meals, courtesy of Grapes and Grains Gourmet of Shepherdstown. Non-alcoholic beverages and delicious light foods will be available as well.

Dress will be casual.

All proceeds will be used to support our educational programs for local children.

The home that is the centerpiece of the event belongs to Tari and Keith Janssen. It is sited on a 32-acre, largely wooded property that

See *Green Home Tour*, Page 2

Birdseed Pick-up November 6

Orders for birdseed can be picked up on November 6, 10:00 a.m. until noon, at Gower's Williamsport, Maryland, Gower's, Ranson, West Virginia, and Hunter Hardware Warehouse, on Union Street in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia. If you forgot to place your order or have questions, please contact Diana Mullis at 304-267-3482 or dianamullis@aol.com.

Eidolon Nature Preserve Fall 2010 Hunting and Hiking Schedule

The land now known as the Eidolon Nature Preserve has been hunted by neighboring families for generations, and when Marguerite Zapoleon willed the land to the Nature Conservancy, she stipulated that hunting should be allowed to continue there.

Accordingly, and also in the interest of maintaining a healthy forest and viable animal populations, the Nature Conservancy and PVAS are permitting hunting on the property.

See *Eidolon Hunting*, Page 2

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



Hello everyone:

Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll note that the new, two-tenths-of-a-mile wheelchair-accessible trail at the Yankauer Nature Preserve is mostly completed. Some finishing touches will be taken care of later in the fall.

This project has been a long time coming. The grant that made it possible—a \$31,350 grant from the West Virginia Recreational Trails Program—was first announced by Governor Manchin on September 5, 2008.

After that, it took over a year for the state to complete all the paperwork needed to allow the project to actually begin.

Then last winter's snows not only made it impossible to work on the project over the winter but also did so much damage to the preserve that we had to push the project forward to this fall.

But that's all in the past. What matters now is that this new trail will allow all sorts of new people to visit and explore the preserve for the first time: patients from the VA hospital and local senior centers; special needs students from local schools, day care centers and preschools; families with strollers; and anyone in a wheelchair.

We're very pleased that the preserve will now be accessible in this way.

As usual, many people deserve credit for making this project possible:

- ◆ Chris Robinson, for helping to write the grant that funded it and laying out the original trail;
- ◆ Rebecca McCloud, of the Potomac Headwaters RC&D, and Matt Gay of NCTC for lots of good advice and counsel on accessibility and trails;
- ◆ Eagle Scout Kyle Myles and his parents Kim and David, for their help in laying out the most recent trail route, and the Student Conservation Association, for clearing ailanthus trees along the trailway;
- ◆ the ITW Sexton company, of Martinsburg, for supplying some dozen volunteers to help prepare the trail bed as part of this year's Day of Caring;
- ◆ Bonnie and Bill Stubblefield for the loan of equipment to haul stone;
- ◆ many other volunteers too numerous to mention, who helped out at various other times;
- ◆ the West Virginia Civilian Conservation Corps, for doing the actual trail installation;
- ◆ and most of all, Tim Murphy, for doing such a fine job of managing the project.

Thanks to all these folks for a job well done.

—Peter Smith

Green Homes (continued from page 1)

is enrolled in a managed forestry program.

Just completed in June, the home uniquely combines cutting-edge green building techniques and technology with traditional, Craftsman-home styling.

It utilizes Structural Insulated Panel construction and is clad with recycled fiber-cement siding. Its green energy features include passive solar siting; solar hot water which provides domestic hot water and radiant floor heat; high efficiency windows; solar panels; a special computer program that continually monitors solar-energy generation; a central, wood-burning masonry stove; and high-efficiency heat pump.

The home's floors are made from cherry, walnut and ash wood harvested from the property. The kitchen includes green cabinetry, counters and tile.

There is a rainwater-catchment system with a 1,500-gallon tank.

Tickets to the reception are 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 \$200 for two will be recognized as Patrons, and those who pay \$250 or more for two will be recognized as Supporters.

All ticket costs will be fully tax-deductible.

If you would like to attend, please contact Alice Barkus at 304-876-8520 or e-mail abarkus@frontiernet.net and provide your name, address, and phone number.

2011 Race for the Birds Registration Opens Soon!

Here's a reminder that registration for PVAS's 10th Annual "This Race is for the Birds!" will open on Thanksgiving Day at www.RacefortheBirds.org. The race will be held April 9, 2011, at the National Conservation Training Center. It will likely be similar to last year's race, and will include 5- and 10-mile runs, a shorter community walk/run, and a one-mile "Fun Run" for kids. Mark your calendars now so you can join this fun family event!

Eidolon Hunting (continued from page 1)

To balance the safety of hikers and the interests of deer hunters, we ask all visitors to observe the following rules during deer season:

- Hunters must be licensed by the state and follow all applicable state laws and regulations.
- For their part, hikers should exercise appropriate caution during hunting season and wear at least one item of blaze orange clothing.
- In accordance with state law, no hunting will be permitted on Sundays.
- The Eidolon Nature Preserve will close its trails to hikers for the entire first week of the firearm season for deer hunting (November 22 through 27 this year) and every Saturday thereafter until the season ends on December 11.
- On all other days during the firearm season for deer, the trails will be open to hikers from 10 am until 3 pm only.

Please see the schedule below for specifics.

2010 Eidolon Fall Hunting and Hiking Schedule at a glance	
Monday, November 22 through Saturday, November 27	First week of firearm season for deer- Trails closed to hikers every day
Sunday, November 28	No hunting
Monday, November 29 through Friday, December 3	Trails open to hikers 10am- 3pm only
Saturday, December 4	Trails closed to hikers all day
Sunday, December 5	No hunting
Monday, December 6 through Friday, December 10	Trails open to hikers from 10am-3pm only
Saturday, December 11	Trails closed to hikers all day Last day of firearm season for deer

Master Naturalist Program Wraps-up Fourth Year

PVAS's Potomac Valley Master Naturalist (PVMN) program wrapped up its fourth year with an annual meeting on October 3 at Yankauer Preserve. More than 40 members, families, and friends attended. The annual meeting featured a review of its many accomplishments over the past year. A silent auction produced \$328 for next year's scholarship fund.

Following the annual meeting, the group held an awards ceremony recognizing those who completed their 64 hours of class work plus 30 hours of approved volunteer service to their communities. The members of the 2010 class who received their certifications as Certified Master Naturalists were Kathy Dille, Marybeth Grove, Jim Fisher, Vicki Blazer, Stephanie Swaim, and Ray Thomas.

The following members of the 2009 class who chose to take two years to complete their certification were also recognized: Brooke Parker and Melanie Snyder. Charlie Potter of the 2008 class was recognized for completing the certification requirements at the event as well.

3 Master Naturalists were recognized for completing 5 hours of active participation in the program: Clark Dixon, Ora Dixon, and Cheryl Jennings. They were presented with a field bag embroidered with the WV Master Naturalist logo. 32 Master Naturalists who completed all of the required coursework and volunteer hours in 2010 to remain certified were also recognized.

The co-chairs of the Potomac Valley Master Naturalists, Wanda Miller and Ellen Murphy, expressed gratitude to the program's participants, instructors, and Coordinating Committee, and thanked PVAS and the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources for their continuing support.

PVAS's Master Naturalist program will offer its fifth year of instruction beginning in Spring of 2011. Watch upcoming issues of *Valley Views* and the PVAS website for details about the course schedule and application information.

Sign Up Now for 2011 Master Naturalist Classes

The Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program is now accepting applications for its 2011 classes.

Instruction will begin in March 2011 and continue monthly through October.

Applications must be postmarked by January 14, 2011 and candidates will be notified of their selection by February 1. Enrollment is strictly limited to 20 persons each year.

Established in 2007, the Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program is sponsored by PVAS and is a chapter of the State of West Virginia Master Naturalist Program.

Its classes are open to anyone who wants to be certified as a Master Naturalist by the state of West Virginia.

Most who enroll come from Jefferson, Berkeley, and Morgan Counties. Interested persons who live outside this area are welcome to apply but they must commit to completing all their volunteer work in West Virginia.

In all, 64 hours of classroom time and 30 hours of volunteer work are required to complete the certification cycle.

Classes are held at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, Cacapon State Park in Berkeley Springs, Yankauer Nature Preserve in northeastern Berkeley County, and Cool Spring Farm in southern Jefferson County.

Tuition is \$300 per person for the full course of instruction. A limited number of scholarships will be available.

Application forms and more details are available on the Potomac Valley Audubon Society website at www.potomacaudubon.org. Scholarship applications are also available there. For more information email Krystal Kennedy at krystalckennedy@gmail.com.

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.

Fall School Programs

Classes from several local schools have participated in programs at Yankauer this fall. Morgan Academy and Martinsburg South Middle School learned about "Talkin' Trash," a new program dealing with the effects of pollution (including oil spills) on wildlife. Students from Ranson Elementary participated in grade level activities focused on "Senses" and "Plants vs. Animals."

In addition, 2nd and 3rd grade programs are being piloted in a few schools in Berkeley County to determine the effectiveness of in-class nature programming. Students from Winchester Avenue, Tuscarora, Burke Street, Berkeley Heights, and Rosemont Elementary Schools

have participated in the programs and completed a pre-and post-assessment to help us evaluate the curriculum. Evaluations are also being provided to teachers.

Our watershed programs are being offered in 4 schools this fall with others joining in during Spring semester. Joining the elementary program after the first of the year will be 10th grade biology students in Berkeley and Jefferson county high schools.

Wee Naturalists Program Continues Through December

Here's a reminder that we're offering "Wee Naturalists" program sessions at our Yankauer Nature Preserve through December.

The program is aimed at pre-school children ages 3-5. It is designed to provide regular opportunities for small children and loving adults to explore nature together safely under the guidance of an experienced PVAS instructor. Children must be accompanied by a parent, grandparent or other adult relative, or a guardian.

The program sessions are offered the third Wednesday and Thursday of each month. Each session will last from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and each month's sessions will explore a different nature theme.

November's sessions will be about finding beauty in nature, and the December theme will be "Snowflakes and Snowbirds."

To ensure that everyone receives close, personal attention, enrollment will be limited and pre-registration is required.

Families may register for one or both of this year's remaining monthly sessions. The fee will be \$8 per child/adult team per session.

The program is led by Suzi Taylor, of Sharpsburg MD, a veteran PVAS camp director who has a degree in environmental education.

For more information or to register, contact Suzi at 301-432-1908 or tomandsuzi506@cs.com. Information and registration forms are also available on the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org.

The program was initiated last year with support from the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation's Two Rivers Giving Circle.

PVAS and Master Naturalists Help with Science Olympiad

Potomac Valley Master Naturalists participated in the Jefferson County Science Olympiad, which was held this year for two weeks during October at the For the Love of Children (FLOC) Outdoor Education Center near Shannondale.

The Olympiad is sponsored by the Jefferson County school system and hosts all of the county's sixth graders for one day of science-related activities. Each day one or more of the activity stations were led by PVAS or our Master Naturalists.

The entire event reached over 650 children. These stations included predator/prey games, molecule activities, bird walks, tree identification walks, and nature-related activities.

Accessible Trail (continued from page 1)

After a summer-long drought, the weather finally changed and made some contributions of its own. While this complicated the work schedule, the rain provided an opportunity to watch how the water was flowing on the new material and where additional drainage was needed. The newly laid trail handled the three-inch rain event beautifully.

On the fifth and final day of phase one, Yankauer neighbor Bill Weis, who is in a wheelchair, was called to try out the trail and provide us with feedback. He said that, while it wasn't for the faint of heart, it was definitely navigable with assistance and he loved the idea that he could come out and enjoy the trail. We'll make some adjustments based on his feedback and label the trail clearly so trail-goers know what they're getting themselves into before they leave the kiosk area.



A section of finished trail

The next phase of the trail project will be creating the waysides—three clearings/rest stops along the trail. These will use the same gravel paver material for accessibility. They will be installed by Eagle Scout candidate Skylar Benedict, who will also be building a bench for each wayside.

The final component of the project will include signage. There will be three interpretive signs along the trail, along with a new kiosk, all of which will be ADA compliant. PVAS will also arrange for an accessible porta-john at the preserve. Lastly, public notice that the trail is ready for people of most ability levels will be sent out with special attention to the VA Hospital, Senior Centers, and other organizations.

Tim Murphy deserves a medal for his coordination of this project and the incredible number of hours (most of which were backbreaking) that he has devoted. Innumerable volunteer hours have gone into this project by folks too numerous to mention, but you know who you are and we thank you!

Berkeley Springs Birding Festival Well-attended

This year's Berkeley Springs Fall Birding Festival was again blessed with good weather and drew good crowds.

The festival was held in Berkeley Springs the weekend of September 24-26.

This was its third year, and its second year under PVAS sponsorship.

PVAS hopes to continue sponsoring the festival, and current plans call for next week's festival to be held the third or fourth weekend of September.

This year's attendees included a mix of people from near and far, many of whom were beginning birders. A good number of children participated in many of the festival sessions, which was an encouraging development.

The festival events and attendance figures were as follows:

A Friday evening presentation at the Country Inn on bird identification by naturalist Scott Shalaway drew an audience of 50 people.

Fourteen people joined Dr. Shalaway for a Saturday morning birding and general nature walk at the mouth of the Cacapon River.



Sixteen children and adults participated in a Saturday morning workshop for beginning birders, led by Kelly Smith at Cacapon State Park.

On Saturday afternoon, 17 attended a session on “backyard birding” and another 19 joined Dr. Shalaway and local naturalist Joe Gentile for a general nature walk at the Eidolon Nature Preserve.

Forty-seven people attended a Saturday evening program at the Country inn that featured talks by Dr. Shalaway and forensic ornithologist Marcy Heacker.

And 35 turned out for a Sunday morning bird walk with Dr. Shalaway and Joe Gentile on a privately owned mountainside meadowland property south of Berkeley Springs.

Many thanks are due to Judy Webb, Helen Herlocker, Kelly Smith and Ellen Murphy for coordinating the festival, and to Judy’s Nature Niche store for providing very generous financial support.

PVAS also thanks Joe Gentile for his help and the many other community supporters for their generosity: Cornelia Belton (in memory of Bill Belton), Berkeley Springs Cottage Rentals, Jean Bialas, Cacapon State Park, Carrot Patch Pottery, Clark’s, the Country Inn, Cowboy Cabin, Jane Davis, Fairfax Coffee House, Fiesta Fibers (Jane Frenke), Patricia Flath, Frog Valley Artisans, Gat Creek Furniture, Betty Harmison, Heath Studio Gallery, Hsu Studios, Jane McCloud, Old Oak Art Glass, Claudia Rauch, Sleepy Creek Retreat, Star Eagle Studio, Beverly Stellges, and Alice Webb.

American Conservation Film Festival November 4-7

Join the American Conservation Film Festival (ACFF) this year to explore their themes, “Saving Seas” and “Fuels for Thought.” The group has selected 50 movies for their 8th Annual Festival. Reflecting the themes, many of the films will focus on the state of the world’s oceans and their inhabitants, and delve into concerns about a variety of fossil fuels and possible alternatives.

Some of this year’s highlighted films include *Gasland*, an award-winning expose about hydraulic fracturing - a relatively new and very controversial natural gas drilling technique; *Confessions of an Eco-Terrorist*, a behind-the-scenes look at the Sea Shepherd eco-pirates; and *Beyond the Pole*, a mockumentary about the first carbon neutral, vegetarian, and organic polar expedition.

On Saturday, ACFF will screen films suitable for children and families. The free, family-friendly programming also includes a Photo Safari. Potomac Valley Master Naturalists will lead a nature walk around the Fish and Wildlife Service’s National Conservation Training Center, and professional photographers will offer instruction on capturing nature images.

The Festival will once again feature the popular “Conservation

in Context” series, offering notable and knowledgeable speakers presenting information and sparking discussion on conservation issues. Panel discussions will follow screenings of *Gasland*, *The Cove*, and *What’s On Your Plate?*. Professor Chris Palmer, author of “Shooting in the Wild: An Insider’s Account of Making Movies in the Animal Kingdom” will offer a special presentation about his insights into the wildlife film business, including a troubling trend toward sensationalism, as well as profiling responsible wildlife filmmakers.

New for this year is a conservation art exhibition, “Renewal Notice: Creative Reuse in Contemporary Art and Design” featuring a selection of works highlighted in the book, “1000 Ideas for Creative Reuse: Remake, Restyle, Recycle, Renew.” The exhibition will be co-located with the Festival Information Center and Box Office at the Shepherdstown War Memorial Building.

An all-access festival pass covering admission to all films, presentations, and activities is available for \$40 until October 31, 2010; \$50 from November 1, 2010 or at the door. Students or seniors enjoy a significant discount--\$20 until October 31; \$30 at the door. Children middle-school-aged or under are free. Purchase all-access passes through www.conservationfilm.org prior to the Festival, or on-site at any of the venues. Day passes for \$15 per day are also available.

Film venues will include Shepherd University, the Shepherdstown Opera House, and the National Conservation Training Center, all in Shepherdstown. A complete list of the 2010 American Conservation Film Festival Official Selections, schedule, and locations can be found at <http://conservationfilm.bside.com/2010/films>.

For more information, or to volunteer to help with Festival activities, please contact the American Conservation Film Festival at 304-876-7373, or email info@conservationfilm.org.

Freshwater Institute Tour Set for November 6

PVAS will sponsor a tour of the Freshwater Institute near Shepherdstown on Saturday, November 6.

The tour will begin at 9:00 a.m. and last about two hours. Anyone with an interest is welcome to join in. There will be no fee.

The Institute occupies a 100-acre campus not far from the National Conservation Training Center. Although the facility has a relatively low profile among the general public, it is well known in research circles nationally and around the world.

Founded by the Arlington, VA-based Conservation Fund in 1987, it is one of the nation’s premier research and development facilities dedicated to the sustainable use of water.

It employs an internationally recognized research team of top scientists, engineers, and technology experts who work with government, industry, nonprofits and individuals to shape sustainable, environmentally responsible solutions to water resource management.



The Institute has also been active in helping with local land and water conservation issues. It has provided the Jefferson County government with a comprehensive analysis of the county's natural resources infrastructure, played a major role in helping to protect and improve Rockymarsh Run, and assisted in the development of PVAS's own Watershed Education Initiative program for local fourth graders.

Field trip participants will tour the Institute's wet lab facilities and aquaculture systems (Atlantic salmon are currently raised there), water chemistry and fish health diagnostic laboratories, and other facilities.

Institute staff will explain these facilities and talk about the future of aquaculture and the Institute's local work on Rockymarsh Run.

For more information about the Institute's projects and programs, see its website at www.freshwaterinstitute.org.

The Institute is located at 1098 Turner Road. Directions can be found on the Institute's website: click on "Who we are" and "Find us."

Once on the property, participants in the tour will gather in the research facility parking lot. To get to the parking lot, follow the gravel entrance lane past an old gray farmhouse; after you pass a barn you will see two large modern buildings and the parking area.

Those who do not have internet access can get directions by calling PVAS at 304-676-3397.

Waggoner's Gap Trip Coming Up

PVAS is sponsoring a hawk-watching trip to Waggoner's Gap in south central Pennsylvania, near Carlisle, on November 6.

There is no fee, and anyone with an interest is welcome to participate.

Waggoner's Gap is one of the best-known hawk-watching sites on the East coast. It began to attract regular visitors in the late 1930s, and hawk-migration data have been collected there since the early 1950s.

The November 6 trip is timed to catch the peak migration period for red-tailed hawks and golden eagles. It will be led by Matt Orsie, one of the Eastern Panhandle's leading birders.

Participants should plan to meet at 8:30 a.m. in front of the Spring Mills Walmart store, at the Route 901 (Hammonds Mill Road) exit off I-81, just north of Martinsburg. The drive time from there to Waggoner's Gap is about 2 hours.

The stay at Waggoner's Gap will be about 4-5 hours.

If weather conditions are unfavorable that day, the trip will be rescheduled to November 7.

Since the trip may be postponed or canceled because of weather, pre-registration is required. To pre-register, contact Sandy Sagalkin

at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465.

The Waggoner's Gap site is basically a rock pile at the top of a 1,500-foot ridge. This offers excellent views but it also leaves visitors very exposed to the weather.

Therefore, trip participants should be prepared for very cold temperatures—possibly in the 30s or 40s—and windy conditions. Very warm clothing is essential.

Participants should also pack a lunch and bring water as nothing is available at the site. They should also bring cushions to sit on, since there is limited space for folding chairs.

PVAS, NCTC Cosponsoring Special November Program on Bats

PVAS will not present a program of its own at the National Conservation Training Center during November.

Instead, on Wednesday, November 10, we are once again cosponsoring with NCTC to present a special program about bats.

The speaker will be Craig Stihler, the Endangered Species Coordinator for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources.

He will discuss bats generally and then focus on their status in West Virginia and the region, with a special emphasis on the challenges different bat species (and those who are trying to conserve them) are facing.



Indiana Bat

In particular he will review the problems now being posed by White Nose Syndrome, a fungal infection that is currently ravaging bat populations in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast.

The program will be held in the Byrd Auditorium at 7:00 p.m.

Admission will be free.

Stihler, who is based in Elkins, has worked for WVDNR for more than 30 years and headed its endangered species conservation efforts since 1987.

He is recognized as an expert on a number of species, including the Cheat Mountain salamander and the West Virginia northern flying squirrel.

However, he is best known for his work on bats. Working with landowners and cavers alike, he has been a leader in the effort to reduce human disturbance in bat caves, which is a major threat to certain bat species.

In 2006, he received the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's prestigious National Recovery Champion award, which recognizes professionals for outstanding contributions toward recovering threatened and endangered species in the United States.

Owl-Banding Trip is a Family Favorite

PVAS this fall is again sponsoring a special nighttime field trip to watch an expert catch, band, and release migrating owls on South Mountain, in Washington County, MD.

The trip will be held on Saturday, November 13. It will start at about 9:15 p.m. and last until about 11:00 p.m.

These trips have long been a favorite for whole families, and interested members of the public are invited to participate. There is no fee.

The expert who will conduct the banding is Steve Huy, who has been banding owls on the mountain for many years as part of Project OwlNet.

The owls he will be banding are the Northern Saw-Whet Owl, the smallest owl in eastern North America. Visits to his banding site offer a unique opportunity to see these birds up close and learn about their life history.



Pre-registration is essential because space for the trip is limited to 25 persons.

To pre-register or get more information contact Carolyn Thomas at 304-267-3115 or crthomas25443@gmail.com.

This trip involves a walk over uneven ground and it is therefore not recommended for anyone who needs assistance.

Participants should bring a flashlight and be sure to dress warmly.

Owls do not fly if it is raining, so the trip may be cancelled if conditions warrant.

To learn more about Project OwlNet go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=plJhiJU5SW8.

Eagle Scout Projects

Two Eagle Scout Projects have been completed at Yankauer this fall.

Phillip Inman has completed a wayside on the South Trail with two built benches, and also built a brush pile along the Cedar Loop specifically designed for wildlife habitat. Gretl Learned of the Fern Wildlife Refuge outside Winchester has been working on perfecting a design for years, and provided PVAS with diagrams on how to maximize the shelter for wildlife diversity.



Wayside with Benches



Kyle with Compost Bin

Kyle Myles, a long time member of PVAS, helped to reroute a few segments of the accessible trail based on ADA guidelines, and build a new three-bay compost bin for use at the preserve for camper food scraps as well as weeds from the gardens.

Both did a fantastic job and we thank them profusely for their contributions to the preserve.

Have You Been To the “Deep, Dark Woods?”

Campers at camp this summer were treated to some special visits by Steve Warner (minus the Rolling Coyotes band). Steve also offers songwriting workshops through CraftWorks at its Shepherdstown location.

Steve spent four of his Wednesday afternoons working with our campers writing a song about their camp experiences. At the end of each 1½ hour session, not only had the campers written the lyrics, but Steve had added the music and the entire camp serenaded parents when they came at the end of the day!

To write the lyrics, themes for 4-5 verses were agreed upon by the entire camp, then campers split into groups and created rough lyrics. Once back together, Steve helped the groups refine their words, worked on the rhyming and rhythm, and set everything to music.

The songs were named “Woods Art” (camp crafts), “BP Really Lied” (invasive species) and “The Deep Dark Woods” which seemed to be the favorite of many campers. Written during a week of Camp Survivor and with its minor tone, the song evoked images of a truly wild place. Of course, all the campers knew that Yankauer Preserve is a friendly place, but they enjoyed creating a sense of wildness. After all, Audubon Discovery Camp encourages campers to use their imagination in nature! We offer the lyrics here so that you can enjoy the creativity of our campers!

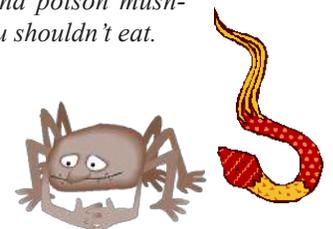
Chorus: If you go to the deep dark woods, It's a natural place out there.

There's lots of beautiful things to see, But you need to be aware... Of...



Poison berries and poison mushrooms, Things you shouldn't eat.

P o i s o n o u s snakes and poisonous spiders,



Things that bite your feet.

Dangerous bears and wild coyotes,

B e a s t s that like to stalk.



Hungry raccoons and scary wolves, That watch you while you walk.

Giant hills and really big rocks, Spike-y vines and fallen trees.

Things that make you trip and stumble, You could scrape your knees.



Dehydration and fatigue, When the sun is really warm.

Lightning strikes and thunder strikes, Take shelter when it storms.

The Potomac River it will toss and turn, You better learn to steer your boat.

If you are faint of heart, You may not want to float.

Feeding Birds This Winter? Here's Some Tips From Cornell

—by Jean Neely

Okay, you have just ordered your PVAS birdseed and you are getting your feeders dug out and ready.

Make sure those feeders are in good repair and CLEAN. A mild bleach solution will ensure that all those pesky microbes are wiped out. You don't want any sharp edges, wires, etc. to injure your avian friends, so inspect carefully.

Next, pick out a spot to hang or place your feeders so that birds will find them but be safe from feral cats and other predators. Then, fill 'em up and let the fun begin!

Remember, when choosing what to feed—your home's 'habitat' usually dictates what birds will be found there. Different species like different food. Wide open spaces? Dense woods? Something in between? [The descriptions in the PVAS Birdseed Order Form should help with your choices.]

If you are starting out and want to buy feeders, take a look at the Cornell info shown below, and remember that your birds will like varying types of feeding—on the ground, perching, etc.

Are you besieged by squirrels and other wildlife looking for freebies? Make sure your feeders are proofed against intruders. (Note: I use tube feeders and suet feeders encased in cages of sturdy wire, and the best I've found locally are at Tractor Supply, but look around.

For more info and a lot of practical advice, try going online to: http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/slides/Backyard_Bird_Feeding_web.pdf

It's a good overall guide in pdf format, but remember to tailor this info to your situation.

Have fun and report to us any unusual species you see this winter. We'll put them in this newsletter for all to enjoy.

Berkeley County Adds Plastic Caps and Lids to Recycling Efforts

For far too long, Berkeley County recyclers have tossed out that plastic lid or cap that came with the plastic bottle or tub. That's about to change!

Effective immediately, plastic caps and lids are an acceptable item for recycling in Berkeley County. Participation is easy. Just place the cap or lid back on the container, bottle or tub that the cap originated from. Do NOT place caps loose in a bag. The caps will be accepted at both the Grapevine Road Recycling Center and the South Berkeley Recycling Center.



Here's a short recap of the Berkeley County Recycling Program's plastic collection programs:

Plastic container #1 or #2

Any plastic container marked #1 or #2 can be accepted at the Grapevine Road Recycling Center or the South Berkeley Recycling Center. These con-

tainers must be empty, rinsed out and placed together in the clear see through bag provided for free at each center.

Plastic #3, #4, #5, #6 or #7 (South Berkeley ONLY)

Any plastic item marked #3, #4, #5, #6 or #7 can be recycled via an ongoing pilot project at the South Berkeley Recycling Center. These items must be stamped with a #3, #4, #5, #6 or #7. Items without a numbered recycling stamp are not acceptable. Place these items together in your bag of any shape, size or color. Do NOT place these items in the clear see through bag provided for the plastic #1 or #2 collection.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Join a Powerful Force for Nature: Project FeederWatch

Ithaca, NY—One backyard at a time, participants in [Project FeederWatch](#) are doing their part to unravel nature's mysteries—simply by sharing information about the birds that visit their feeders from November to April. The 24th season of Project FeederWatch begins November 13, although new participants can join at any time.

People of all ages and skill levels can be FeederWatchers and do their part to help researchers better understand trends in bird populations. Participants count the numbers and different species of birds at their feeders and enter their information on the FeederWatch website at www.FeederWatch.org.

By collecting information from all these feeders in all these backyards, scientists at the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#) are able to track patterns in bird populations and movement from year to year, all across North America.

Here are just a few key findings based on nearly a quarter-century of FeederWatch data:

- Populations of Evening Grosbeaks, once one of our most common backyard birds, continue to decline.



Anna's Hummingbird by Elden Allen

- Many species are expanding their ranges to the north, including Northern Cardinals and Anna's Hummingbirds.

- The nonnative Eurasian Collared-Dove is invading North America at an unprecedented rate – it is now found in backyards from Florida to Alaska.



Evening Grosbeak by Jane Ogilvie

“By engaging the public we are able to pick up fluctuations that could be the result of climate change, habitat destruction, disease, or other environmental factors,” said project leader David Bonter. “These are large-scale changes that we would not be able to see without the massive amount of data we receive from our participants. Keeping an eye out in your own backyard can make a difference.”

To learn more about joining Project FeederWatch and to sign up, visit www.FeederWatch.org or call the Cornell Lab toll-free at (866) 989-2473. In return for the \$15 fee (\$12 for Cornell Lab members) participants receive the *FeederWatcher's Handbook*, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds, a calendar,

complete instructions, and *Winter Bird Highlights*, an annual summary of FeederWatch findings.

Note to reporters: [Photos for articles are available on our website.](#) To find local participants for stories by town name or zip code, contact feederwatch@cornell.edu. Visit the "Explore Data" section of the website to find the top 25 birds reported in your region and bird summaries by state or province.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology is a membership institution dedicated to interpreting and conserving the earth's biological diversity through research, education, and citizen science focused on birds. Visit the Cornell Lab's website at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu>.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology
159 Sapsucker Woods Rd, Ithaca NY 14850
Call toll-free (800) 843-BIRD (2473)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- Nov 4-7: American Conservation Film Festival
- Nov 6: Field trip to Freshwater Institute
- Nov 6: Hawk watching trip
- Nov 10: Bat Presentation at NCTC
- Nov 13: Birding walk at NCTC
- Nov 13: Wine Tasting and Green Home Tour
- Nov 13: Owl-banding on South Mountain
- Dec 3: Potomac Valley Nature Photographers meeting
- Dec 18: Charles Town Christmas Bird Count
- Jan 2: Inwood Christmas Bird Count

Join Potomac Valley Nature Writers Group

Do you enjoy reading and/or writing about nature? Then you are invited to join the Potomac Valley Nature Writers' Group (PVNWG). The Group meets each month from September through May to discuss a particular nature writer and his or her work. Selections vary to include male and female writers, classic and contemporary works, fiction and nonfiction, prose and poetry. PVNWG also supports members' own writing efforts such as nature blogging and nature journaling. PVNWG members take turns hosting monthly meetings. For more information, visit <http://potomacvalleynaturewritinggroup.blogspot.com/> or contact pvnaturewriters@gmail.com

Remember United Way/CFC Fund Drives

Remember that the annual fundraising campaigns of the United Way of the Eastern Panhandle and the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) are now underway.

PVAS receives funding from United Way and CFC each year and encourages its members to give to their campaigns.

CFC is, of course, the mechanism for federal employees to contribute to their local United Way. PVAS members who are federal employees can designate PVAS as the recipient of all or part of their CFC contribution by entering PVAS's CFC number (29061) on the CFC form that they file with their employing agency.

If you have any questions, please contact Kristin Alexander at pvasmail@aol.com or 304-676-3397.

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!



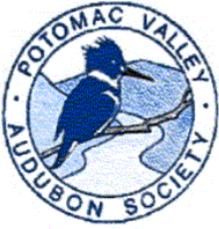
If you'd rather join the National Audubon Society:

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 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.



Potomac Valley Audubon Society
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DATED MATERIALS

A proud partner of the United Way of
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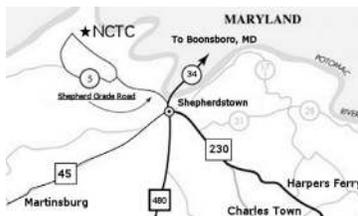


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The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April, at the US Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), Shepherdstown, WV, in the Instructional West Building. 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 304 876-1139pvsmith@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
- Rob Hoxton rhoxton@hoxtonfinancial.com
- Leigh Jenkins jenkinsleigh@hotmail.com
- Jesse Morgan jmorgan@a-zoneenvironmental.com
- 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