

Potomac Valley Audubon Society

VALLEY VIEWS

Volume 31, Issue 3

November 2012

Frosty Fiddler

by Wil Hershberger

Mid-November brings a quiet to the woods and fields as the first frosty nights silence the singers of later summer. At least one of these cricket musicians is hardy enough to survive well into December and may be heard laboriously trilling from the ground — this is the Carolina Ground Cricket (*Eunemobius carolinus*).

Many people, when they encounter them, think that these diminutive crickets are young field crickets. However, these are adult ground crickets that can be found in fields, lawns, pastures, woodlands and roadsides. In our area they mature to adulthood in early July and start their chorusing on a sunny afternoon; from then on they sing night and day well into December. Other species of the ground cricket clan are quieted by the first hard frosts, but the Carolina Ground Cricket continues to survive for reasons unknown.

Although the crickets may be small and inconspicuous, the song of the male is amazingly loud and easy to detect. Singing from his burrow or crevice in the ground, the male sings a continuous trill that seems to stumble now and then immediately pick back up in pitch and cadence. Since they are cold-blooded insects, their song's pitch and tempo are severely lowered and slowed down on cold days when the song may sound as though it belonged to a completely different species.

When you next find yourself exploring nature on a sunny November or December afternoon, tilt an ear toward the ground; perhaps you will hear the remnant song of summer's lush chorus still tinkling from a hidden stage, until winter draws the final curtain. Here is a link to the summer song of the Carolina Ground Cricket: http://www.natureimagesandsounds.com/assets/Carolina_GC_summer.mp3



© Wil Hershberger

November Program at NCTC

It's that time of year... We clean and disinfect our bird feeders, restock our birdseed supply, fill the feeders with a variety of seeds, and settle in for winter's colorful entertainment. Feeding birds is one of Americans' favorite hobbies, with estimates of 60 million people participating annually.

Join PVAS for a talk on common backyard birds that are likely to be seen at your feeders this winter. Speakers Carol Del-Colle and Kathryn Henry, both Master Naturalists, will remind us how to prepare our feeders before filling them for the season, what feeders and seeds will attract which birds, and will help you identify some of the likely backyard visitors including helping to tell the difference between some of the trickier and often confused species.

In addition, the speakers will share with you ways to hone your identification skills and how you can even become a "citizen scientist" by providing your backyard bird data to scientific studies through the Backyard Bird Count (February 15-18) and Project FeederWatch (November 10 – April 5).

The program is free and open to the public. It will begin at 7pm at the National Conservation Training Center.

ACFF Films

The American Conservation Film Festival is proud to announce its 10th anniversary festival, November 1-4 in Shepherdstown. More than 60 films, the best of conservation filmmaking from around the world, will be screened along with meet-the-filmmaker sessions, topical panel discussions and speakers, and a variety of special events. Film listings, festival schedule and ticketing information can be found online at www.conservationfilm.org.

Birdseed Orders pick up dates

Ranson - Gower's Pick up any day AFTER Monday, November 4 (during store hours)

Berkeley Springs - Hunter Hardware Pick up day is Saturday, November 3rd from 10:00 am until noon

Williamsport - Gower's Pick up day is Saturday, November 3rd from 10:00 am until noon.

Questions? Call Diana Mullis at 304-267-3482 or email: dianamullis@aol.com

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

View from the Eagle's Nest

by Sandy Sagalkin

The other day, Jean Neely sent me a US Fish and Wildlife Study on "Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis." The study was done to provide up-to-date information "so birders and policy makers can make informed decisions regarding the protection of birds and their habitats." The Introduction notes that birds are in jeopardy and that one in four bird species in the United States show "significant negative trend estimates," primarily from habitat destruction and short-sighted environmental practices.

I thought you PVASers out there might be interested in some of the information in the report, which is based on data collected in 2001. First off, there were 46 million self-described birders in the United States over the age of 16. That is one in five people in the United States! Of this number, 88% or 40 million people watched birds around the home and 40% or 18 million people watched birds away from home. The average birder is 49 years old and is more likely than not to have a better than average income and education.

Since I organize most of the PVAS bird trips, I was very interested in the age breakdown of birders in the United States. For some time, I have been concerned about our failure to recruit younger people into our sport. So it was not surprising to me to find that people in the age group 18-24 had the lowest rate of participation or only 9% of the total. Ages 35 and older had the highest rate of participation with ages 55-64 the highest of all. The Birding Committee recently started a PVAS Youth Bird Club, trying in our own small way to reverse some of this trend. We have 10 very bright, very interested youngsters keenly interested in birding, all under the age of 14.

The study also tried to estimate the economic value of birding in the United States. In the study year, birders spent an estimated \$32 billion on wildlife watching. This estimate includes money spent on binoculars, field guides, bird food, bird houses, travel, food and other related things. The expenditures were not related solely to bird watching but to all wildlife watching. That \$32 billion in expenditures resulted in a ripple effect of \$85 billion in economic benefits and \$13 billion in state and federal taxes.

What are we to learn from these figures? First, that birding is an activity enjoyed by a very large segment of the US population – one in five people according to the study. That is an astounding number. Second, that birding provides substantial economic benefit to our communities and to the country at large. And third, that we should all be aware of the fragile nature of our environment and support wise choices regarding the use and protection of our natural resources. We will all be a poorer if we were to wake up one morning and fail to hear the birds sing.

The study has served as a wake-up call to me as Chairman of the Birding Committee. I think Backyard Birding can be a real growth area for PVAS. Over the next few months, we will be working on a robust Backyard Birding workshop to provide members and their children with the tools they need to participate in the several citizen science programs related to yard birds.

Outdoor Explore Events For November and December

PVAS's outdoor exploration program for youngsters ages 6-9, will "take to the field" for the final two months of 2012. On November 10, participants will explore the shallow ponds, marshy areas, woods, and edge-lands of a true wetland, then wander into the woods and look for beaver activity on Back Creek. "Muddy Sneakers" will be held from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Stauffers Marsh. In December, participants will experiment with how predators use stealth and finesse to find and hunt their prey by using a GPS to practice tracking down Geocache "prey" at Cacapon State Park near Berkeley Springs. "Give Chase" will be held on December 8 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Both activities have a limited number of openings and registration is open on the PVAS website. More information and directions to each location are also online. This program, which encourages supervised, but unstructured play, is being sponsored by a grant from the WV Division of Natural Resources. The program continues into Summer 2013. To register, go to www.PotomacAudubon.org/outdoorexplore. For more information, contact Ellen Murphy at 304-676-8739 or Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org.



Ranson Elementary watershed field trip

Ailanthus Removal at Yankauer

PVAS has contracted with Sustainable Solutions, LLC to remove ailanthus from about eight acres at the Yankauer Preserve. The specific acreage was indicated as the highest priority for treatment by the Land Management Plan completed by Michael Schwartz last year.

The Sustainable Solutions team will be using the basal spray method that involves the application of an oil-based herbicide and oil dilutant to the bottom portion of the trunk. The oil penetrates the bark and carries the herbicide into the cambium for translocation to the roots, thus killing the tree entirely. The spray is applied using a sprayer at low pressure with a marking dye so the applicators (and visitors) can see what trees have been treated.

The team is fully licensed in herbicide application, and is trained to treat during the appropriate time of year and weather conditions. The herbicide being used is the most environmentally friendly possible, while still being effective against ailanthus.

This Ailanthus Removal initiative is funded by a \$3,000 grant from Potomac Headwaters Resource Conservation and Development. We are grateful for the opportunity to hire professionals for this enormous undertaking and we hope it will make a dent in the ailanthus at Yankauer.

Nice Surprise at Stauffer's Marsh

This year, I decided to conduct bird walks at Stauffer's Marsh once a month just to see what was out there. In late spring, I was happy to find one of my favorite birds, the Yellow-breasted Chat, a bird whose "song", if you can call it that, never fails to delight. If a Rube Goldberg contraption could make a noise, it would surely sound like a Chat. In mid-summer, several of us heard a Northern Bobwhite calling its iconic song, and Jim Farley reported seeing it about a week later. This is a grassland species, a class of birds that is in serious decline nationwide. It was nice to hear it at Stauffer's Marsh.



In late September I had a walk scheduled and the eight of us started into the marsh. There were large flocks of Blue Jays, Red-winged Blackbirds, and Cedar Waxwings flying back and forth into the marsh from across the road. As we approached the pond, Steve Hartman spotted a large raptor as it disappeared into a copse of trees on the other side of the pond. After a short wait, it flew off in a southerly direction and flashed a white rump patch. "Northern Harrier" one of the group called out. Although the Northern Harrier is a common raptor in our area, it was the first one I had seen at the marsh.

The Northern Harrier is the only species in the harrier genus in North America. There are 16 species worldwide. We commonly see it hunting over grass fields, farmlands and marshes. In fact, its common name used to be the "Marsh Hawk". But the Northern Harrier is anything but common in appearance or behavior. If you looked closely at its face, you might think you were looking at an owl. It has sound-trapping facial discs and an acute sense of hearing that helps it hear its prey when flying over the marsh.

The Northern Harrier often looks unsteady or tipsy as it flies over the marsh. It holds its wings in a characteristic dihedral reminiscent of a Turkey Vulture. But just when you think it has lost its edge, it may pull up, hover and just as suddenly wheel over and pounce on a rodent, small bird or other prey.

The bird we saw that morning was a juvenile with a beautiful cinnamon wash to its chest and under wing coverts. As it perched in a tree on the other side of the marsh, I put my spotting scope on it and we all had a good look at its facial discs. Later, as we



walked along the road to the south end of the property, we watched the harrier as it continued its hunt. This bird will leave our area shortly and migrate south for the winter. It was great to see it while it was here.

-- Sandy Saglkin

Winston Gardens Donation

Once again, PVAS has received a generous donation of \$88.50 from the Winston Gardens Native Plant Nursery to support PVAS' Stauffer's Marsh Nature Preserve in Back Creek Valley. The donation represents 15 percent of the proceeds from the Nursery's annual fall Open House, which was held September 29th and 30th.

PVAS appreciates the generosity of the owners, Virginia Provenzano Winston and her husband Eldon. They have generously donated \$680 from their plant sales to date since May of 2011.

The nursery is located in northeastern Berkeley County, at 1121 Hollida Lane, one mile off Swan Pond Road. It specializes in trees and shrubs that are native to this region. For directions and a full list of the plants available, go to the Nursery's website at www.winstongardens.com. Or call the Winstons at 304-267-6924.

Wee Naturalists Program

PVAS's November Wee Naturalists program for preschoolers will be entitled "Nature's Art." It will focus on the many different shapes and colors that can be found in the woods after the leaves have fallen.

The program will be held at the Society's Yankauer Nature Preserve on Whiting's Neck in northeastern Berkeley County.

Two sessions will be offered: one on Thursday the 8th and another on Monday the 12th. Each session will last from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

The Wee Naturalists program is designed to provide regular monthly opportunities for children ages 3-5 to explore nature together safely under the guidance of an experienced PVAS instructor. At each session, children must be accompanied by a parent, grandparent, other adult relative, or guardian.

To ensure that everyone receives close, personal attention, enrollment is limited and pre-registration is required. Easy on-line registration is available on the Society's website at www.poto-macaudubon.org. The fee is \$5 per child/adult team per session.

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

For more information, contact Ms. Taylor at 301-432-1908 or tomandsuzi506@cs.com.

The Wee Naturalists program was established in 2009 with support from the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation's Two Rivers Giving Circle.

Announcing "This Race is For the Birds!"

April 20, 2013

USFWS National Conservation Training Center

Registration opens Thanksgiving Day at Active.com

November Birding Trips

PVAS has scheduled three local birding trips for September. As usual, all the trips are free, and all interested persons are welcome to come along, regardless of their birding skills. Children will be welcome. No pre-registration is required.

For each trip, participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for prevailing weather conditions, and bring along water. If the weather turns warm, bug spray is advised. Binoculars will be available for anyone who needs them. Trips may be cancelled because of bad weather.

Full details can be found on the PVAS website. The specific dates, destinations and details are as follows:

Saturday, November 10: Hawk-watching trip to Snicker's Gap in Virginia on the Clark/Loudoun County line just below Jefferson County WV. Those who wish to carpool should meet at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot in front of the Martin's supermarket in the Jefferson Crossroads Shopping Center just off Route 340 east of Charles Town. Or meet at Snicker's Gap at 9:30 a.m. (From Charles Town take Route 340 south to Route 7. Take Route 7 left [east] about 9 miles; turn right [south] on Route 601. The hawk-watch area is a commuter lot on the right just after intersection.)

The trip will focus on migrating hawks. In November, Golden eagles; northern goshawks; and rough-legged, red-tailed and Swainson's hawks may be seen here. For more information, including plans if rain is forecast, contact Sandy Sagalkin at 240-291-6465 or monsansagalkin@myactv.net.

Wednesday, November 14: Bird walk in the South Schoolhouse Ridge Battlefield section of the Harpers Ferry National Park. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the South Schoolhouse Ridge parking area. From Route 340 west of Harpers Ferry, turn south onto Millville Road (County Route 27) at the outdoor flea market; proceed 2 miles to parking area. If the gate is closed, pull off and park along the road.

Birds likely to be seen include various varieties of sparrows, yellow-rumped warblers, kinglets, woodpeckers and raptors. For more information, contact Deb Hale at debhale72@gmail.com or 304-535-2346.

Saturday, November 17: Birding trip to the Stauffer's Marsh Nature Preserve. The Preserve is located in Back Creek Valley in Berkeley County, one-half mile south of Shanghai, on the east side of Back Creek Valley Road (County Route 7). Meet in the parking area at the north end of the marsh at 8:00 a.m. Waterproof footwear is strongly recommended. This trip will focus on year-round birds, waterfowl and wading birds. For more information, contact Sandy.

Berkeley Springs Birding Festival

This year's Berkeley Springs Fall Birding Festival, which was held over the September 22-23 weekend, drew more people than ever before. The festival's two evening programs and four daytime walks and workshops were attended by a total of 278 people, up from last year's 213.

Some attended several or all of the events but each event drew new participants and in all about 160 different people participated. Many came from out of the area. All the events got excellent reviews,

especially the evening programs.

Shown in the photograph below are some of the 40 people who turned out for the Sunday morning bird walk at Sleepy Creek retreat near Cacapon State Park.

The festival is sponsored by the Potomac Valley Audubon Society, but Judy Webb and Helen Herlocker do the hard work of organizing it and deserve the community's thanks. Thanks are also due to Cacapon State Park and its Naturalist, Renee Fincham, for facilitating the workshop for beginning birders and an afternoon raptor presentation; to Janet Ardem and Jon Boone, for helping to lead the Saturday and Sunday bird walks; to Joe Gentile, for acting as PVAS's representative; and to the festival's evening presenters: Sharon Stiteler, Liam McGranaghan, and Marcy Heacker.

Next year's festival has been scheduled for September 20-22. Preliminary planning will begin shortly. Anyone interested in helping with next year's festival should contact Judy Webb at the Nature Niche store at 304-258-0992 or natureniche@earthlink.net.



PVAS Goes Social!

PVAS now has its own Facebook page and if you have a Facebook account, you can keep up with tidbits and happenings online. The page is "open" which means that anyone can post on the page, upload pictures, or comment on other posts. A Facebook administrator maintains the page and makes sure that all posts are appropriate. Recent posts include updates on local events, nature photographs shared by members, sightings of birds and animals, member comments prompted by books and others' posts, and suggestions for birding events in other areas for those who might be traveling.

To find us, just use the Search feature to locate 'Potomac Valley Audubon Society'. If you "like" the page, you'll get regular updates on your own Home Page. The Facebook "feed" is also on the main PVAS website, www.PotomacAudubon.org. While some do not wish to become involved in online networking, it is one more way that PVAS can connect with members and friends through electronic media. Weekly statistical feedback, which the PVAS administrator receives, shows that we are reaching a wide audience, including non-PVAS members and folks who live all across the United States.

Potomac Valley Master Naturalists has its own Facebook page,

too, and you do not have to be a Master Naturalist to access it. There is also a Potomac Valley Master Naturalist blog (<http://potomacvalleymasternaturalists.blogspot.com/>) which keeps members up to date on happenings and volunteer opportunities. The Potomac Valley Nature Writer's has a blog as well (<http://potomacvalleynaturewritinggroup.blogspot.com/>) which provides a wealth of interesting information on the current group read, past books, authors, and members' personal blogs. The page is open to everyone and provides fascinating browsing. There is also a Potomac Valley Audubon Birder's Blog at <http://wvbirder.org/blog>

Become A Master Naturalist In 2013!

Persons interested in becoming a West Virginia Master Naturalist are invited and encouraged to apply for the next Potomac Valley chapter class which will begin in March 2013. Applications for the class as well as scholarship applications must be postmarked by January 14, 2013, and applicants are notified of the status of their acceptance into the program by the end of January. Each class has only 20 students, but candidates may take up to 2 years to complete the program.

Master Naturalist candidates in the program receive 64 hours of natural history instruction in a wide variety of topics including birds, geology, mammals, aquatic and terrestrial habitats, reptiles and amphibians, wildflowers, woody plants, nature interpretation, and others. Each class includes a classroom session and field work/lab. There are no tests, but students are expected to actively participate in all sessions. To complete certification, students must complete all classes and 30 hours of volunteer work in the area of natural history. Many of our members volunteer at WV State Parks, in citizen science projects, and for PVAS programs. Volunteer work must be completed within the state of West Virginia.

Classes are generally held one Saturday each month, March through October, at a number of locations including the National Conservation Training Center near Shepherdstown, Cacapon State Park in Berkeley Springs, Yankauer Nature Preserve in Berkeley County, and CraftWorks in Jefferson County. Instructors include college professors, natural resource and wildlife biologists, and Master Naturalists who have developed expertise in a chosen field of interest.

Tuition for the entire program is \$300 and a limited number of scholarships are available. No money is required with the application. Applications can be downloaded at www.PotomacAudubon.org/masternat, and scholarship applications are also available there. Questions should be addressed to Melanie Snyder at littleowl48@hotmail.com. Most of our members are from the WV Eastern Panhandle and the surrounding area, but anyone may apply.

The Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the WV Division of Natural Resources and is patterned after the Master Gardener Program. Graduates of the program join the several hundred West Virginians who are currently certified Master Naturalists. Active Master Naturalist chapters are located throughout West Virginia and 30 other states.

Master Naturalist Annual Meeting

Potomac Valley Master Naturalists will hold their annual meeting, pot-luck, and silent auction on November 10, 2012, at Orchard House (4599 Shepherdstown Road, Martinsburg WV), the same location as last year. Master Naturalists, Master Naturalist students, and their friends and family are encouraged to come and enjoy the food and conversation. During the event, members will be bidding high and often for silent auction items.

Master Naturalist students who have completed their initial coursework and volunteer hours will officially graduate. Several members of past classes will be recognized for 5 years of active membership and service. All recertifying Master Naturalists will be recognized with their new 2013 active membership card.

Our annual silent auction provides scholarship funds for next year's class. Everyone is encouraged to bring items that can be bid on. Past items have included nature-themed books and other items, clothing such as sweatshirts/t-shirts, ball caps, jewelry, camping equipment, "rare finds" from member's vacations, CD's and DVD's, and even tasty edibles. In the past, bidding has been fast and furious over homemade pies and one-of-a-kind items. Donated items are best if they are new, but if you have a treasure in good condition, that you know will be popular, bring it along. Last year's auction raised \$528 and we want to top that.

A reminder: smoking and alcohol are not permitted on the Orchard House property.

Eidolon Tower Demolished – Work on Cottage To Begin Soon

Demolition of the Federal Aviation Administration tower at the Eidolon Nature Preserve was completed September 25 and the Preserve has been reopened. No trace of the tower remains and the tower site has been restored to its original contours.

The completion of the tower work clears the way for the second phase of the effort to restore the Preserve's old stone cottage, which will involve constructing a post and beam framework to support a new cottage roof. Hedgesville contractor Duane Householder will begin that work soon. Last fall, he installed concrete footings that were needed to support the post and beam framework.

Once the new roof is in place, PVAS will be able to use the cottage as an educational pavilion and begin offering programming there.

Eidolon's former owners, Louis and Marguerite Zapoleon, built the cottage in 1950-51. They used the structure as a weekend retreat for more than a decade, and they intended to use it as their summer home when they retired. However, the cottage was gutted by fire in 1962 and the Zapoleons never rebuilt it.



Eidolon Nature Preserve Fall 2012 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.

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 buck deer (November 19 through 24 this year), on the last day of buck season, December 1, and during the two antlerless deer seasons in December.
- On all other days during the firearm seasons for deer, the trails will be open to hikers from 10 am until 3 pm only.

2012 Eidolon Fall Hunting and Hiking Schedule at a glance

Monday, November 19 through Saturday, November 24

First week of firearm season for buck deer; trails closed to hikers every day

Sunday, November 25

No hunting

Monday, November 26 through Friday, November 30

Trails open to hikers 10am-3pm only

Saturday, December 1

Last day of firearm season for buck deer; trails closed to hikers all day

Sunday, December 2 through Wednesday, December 12

No hunting

Thursday, December 13 through Saturday, December 15

First antlerless deer hunting season; trails closed to hikers every day

Sunday, December 16 through Thursday, December 27

No hunting

Friday, December 28 and Saturday, December 29

Beginning of second antlerless deer hunting season; trails closed to hikers both days

Sunday, December 30

No hunting

Monday, December 31

Last day of antlerless deer hunting season; trails closed to hikers all day

School Programs Are Underway

Once school started this year, it didn't take teachers long to ask PVAS to present programs for their students! Watershed programs have begun at Tomahawk Intermediate School and St Joseph's Parish School in Berkeley County, and Shepherdstown and Ranson Elementary Schools in Jefferson County. Programs at Tomahawk and St Joe's will continue all year. Over 350 students are currently involved in these programs and more watershed classes will begin after Thanksgiving.

Fourth graders at Eagle Intermediate School "sampled" a session of the watershed program with activities presented in their classroom focusing on the properties of water. Among other activities, they discovered that the number of water drops that can be put on a penny is astounding! Ranson watershed elementary students visited Flowing Springs Park in October to test the water quality of the stream and explore the water for the creatures that live there.

Second graders at St Joe's have begun a 10-hour program that will introduce them to plants and animals in the forest and will include a field experience at Yankauer Preserve in the spring. First graders at Winchester Avenue learned the difference between living and non-living things and second graders at Openquon Elementary discovered that plants and animals can be found everywhere, even in their own schoolyard!

First graders at Ranson Elementary visited Yankauer Preserve in early October and learned that scientists use their senses to explore the natural world. A new activity for this program featured StoryWalk® which enticed the students to walk the Cedar Loop while reading a book posted page-by-page on the trail.

Later in the fall, students from other schools will be visiting Yankauer Preserve and PVAS instructors will be visiting classroom in Berkeley and Jefferson Counties. Several of these programs are being funded by grants from Ecolab and the West Virginia Community Foundation.

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. Both campaigns will last into the winter. Because PVAS is an IRS-qualified non-profit agency, individuals who contribute to either United Way or CFC can designate all or part of those contributions to PVAS, if they wish.

To designate United Way contributions to PVAS, look for the section of the United Way contribution form that asks how you want your donation invested and indicate that you want to make a "Restricted Contribution" to "Potomac Valley Audubon Society,

PO Box 578, Shepherdstown, WV." To designate CFC contributions to PVAS, enter PVAS's CFC number (29061) on the CFC form that you file with your employing agency.

Please note that United Way and CFC deduct a percentage from all designated contributions to cover their administrative costs. If you have any questions, please contact Kristin Alexander at Kristin@PotomacAudubon.org or 304-676-3397.

Project FeederWatch

The 26th season of Project FeederWatch begins November 10, 2012. Anyone interested in birds and nature is invited to help us all learn more about our favorite birds and to become a "citizen scientist." The cost is \$15 which will provide you with:

- The FeederWatcher Handbook & Instructions
- 17" x 22" Common Feeder Birds poster
- the 2012-13 Bird-Watching Days Calendar
- *Winter Bird Highlights*, an annual summary of Feeder-Watch findings

FeederWatch is a program of The Cornell Lab of Ornithology. PVAS does not receive any money from this project but recognizes the importance (and fun) of tracking backyard birds. The program is an excellent way for anyone to learn more about feeding winter birds and tracking the species that visit your feeder. The website is <https://birds.cornell.edu/pfw/>

FLICKER FUN FACTS

- Has common folklore name *Yellowhammer*.
- Named the State bird of Alabama, as that state's Confederacy soldiers were called Yellow Hammers.
- Can extend tongue 3 inches beyond bill; ideal for catching ants from lawns and even sidewalks! Diet includes more ants than any other North American bird.
- Spends more time on the ground than other N. A. woodpeckers.
- Is an *indeterminate layer*, that is, the clutch size varies. In one study "when all eggs after the first were removed from one female's nest, she laid 71 eggs in 73 days."(2)
- Gilded flicker, western subspecies, excavates nest holes in saguaro cactus.



Sources:

- (1) Laura C. Martin, *The Folklore of Birds*, (1993) The Globe Pequot Press
- (2) Paul R. Ehrlich et al; *The Birder's Handbook*, (1988), Simon and Schuster, Inc.

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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A proud partner of the United Way of the Eastern Panhandle and the Combined Federal Campaign.



DATED MATERIALS

MAIL TO:

November 2012

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The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April. Programs are free and open to the public. For additional information about PVAS or its programs and activities, please 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 Officers and Board Members

President: Bob Reynolds (2015).....robert.reynolds40@gmail.com

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PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: Diana Mullis (304-267-3482)dianamullis@aol.com

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.