

VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac
Valley
Audubon
Society

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President's Perch

by Jane Vanderhook, PVAS President

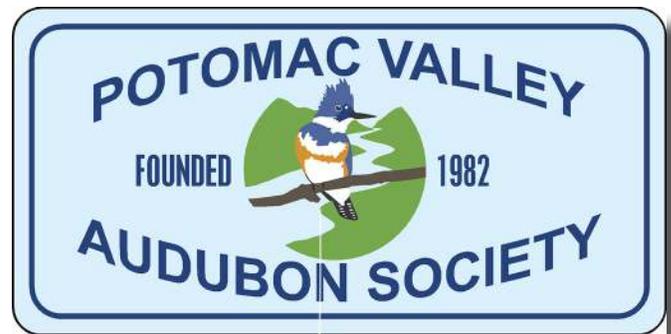
I love November. It is home to my favorite holiday – Thanksgiving. That time of year when we get out the good dishes and our best tablecloth; we prepare our favorite traditional foods and present them with loving pride to our family and friends. But it isn't just about the food and the fellowship. It is also about giving thanks. We actually take the time to think and talk about what we are grateful for.

In that spirit, here are some of the many things for which Potomac Valley Audubon Society is thankful:

- For the members of PVAS. For those of you who are reading this; for your interest and support.
- For the founding members of PVAS. Those who worked hard to begin the organization and those who continue working actively to support the mission.
- For Kristin Alexander and Ellen Murphy.
- For Krista Hawley and Melanie Snyder.
- For the seasonal teaching staff who represent PVAS so well in the community.
- For all those who have served on the Board of Directors.
- For all those who have served on committees.
- For all the financial support, both great and small. It all is gratefully received.
- For everyone who has worked to maintain and improve the preserves.
- For all the volunteers who have edited and contributed to the newsletter.
- For all the volunteers who have helped with school programs and the Discovery Camp and all youth programs.
- For the volunteers who have organized, managed and participated in “This Race is for the Birds”, the Ruth Ann Dean Memorial Birdathon, the Bird Seed Sale, and all Special Events.

- For all the volunteers who have organized, managed, taught and participated in the Master Naturalist program.
- For all who have led field trips, scheduled monthly meetings, taught Birding 101 and Birding 201 and participated in the adult programs.
- In brief, for the time and expertise of ALL volunteers both past and future.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving.



Updated License Plates Now Available!

Just in time for the holidays, PVAS license plates (for the front of vehicles) are available for WV residents. (MD residents must have official license plates on front and back of vehicles. Sorry Marylanders!)

We have updated the PVAS logo on the new version. They are available to PVAS members, and are \$15 each. They will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact Melanie Snyder at (703) 973-5419 or Admin@PotomacAudubon.org to reserve one. They can be picked up at the November 12th PVAS meeting, or other arrangements can be made. Checks should be made out to PVAS.

This is a great way to promote PVAS and to see fellow PVAS'ers on the road so you can wave as they pass by. See you on the road!

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

Director's Report: Stepping back... Preserve Updates

by Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director

I recently took a vacation to Colorado to visit friends and family – and a nature center where I used to work. I've been keeping track of the place and its growth over the years. I was an intern there the summer after my sophomore year in college, and an "educator" working with the local schools in '97-'98. It is a wonderful place in Aspen, Colorado, the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies (ACES). I admit, the place and its programs have always been on a pedestal in my mind and has been the vision in the back of my head as something that PVAS could strive for.

Over the years ACES has grown. In 1991 the center had an opportunity to forge a unique partnership with Aspen Elementary School so every child in that school had one hour of environmental education every week. We educators got to know the kids because we saw them throughout the school year. Every kid had three field trips per year so they could explore nature through the seasons. Since the inception of this partnership, they now have similar partnerships with other schools down the entire river valley.

ACES was founded in 1968 with the donation of one small, 25-acre preserve, Hallam Lake, where a nature center (originally an old barn) was located. Now they have four preserves including a ranch where they teach sustainable agriculture and help kids learn where food comes from and how it is produced.

Their story of growth in properties and programs is exciting and overwhelming and I admit I've been awed by it over the years.

But as I stepped back during this trip, the reality of PVAS's own growth began to sink in. Our story is not all that different.

PVAS's school programs began with our fourth grade watershed program in four schools in two counties. The watershed program is unique in that classrooms are visited multiple times so our instructors actually get to know the children and the children get to know the instructors. This same program is now provided at schools in every one of PVAS's four-county service area. This year, in Berkeley County, it's possible that we will be providing the watershed program to every fourth grader in the county. Other programs continue to grow as our properties and program offerings increase.

Regarding our nature preserves, we started out partnering with The Nature Conservancy at the Yankauer Preserve in 1994. Then came Eidolon Preserve and Stauffer's Marsh with another property in Jefferson County lined up for future PVAS ownership. Sound familiar?

So - while I'm awed at ACES growth, as I stepped back to consider PVAS's growth, I'm perhaps even more awed. (Especially when you consider PVAS's three "senior" staff, four summer staff, and three very part-time school program staff vs. the 12 senior staff, 17 seasonal staff, and six environmental education staff that ACES employs.) Once again, it's volunteers that make the difference for PVAS and allow us to do as much as we do.

Opportunities to travel and reconnect with people and places are so valuable to step back, gain perspective, and get re-inspired. ACES remains on a pedestal in my mind, but there's nothing wrong with having something to shoot for! Amazingly, we're well on our way.

At Eidolon, in addition to ongoing trail maintenance, the timbers at the cabin are being preserved. We are trying a new (to us) environmentally-friendly wood preservative called "Eco Wood." It is a water soluble product with no inert particles or chemicals added. With one application, the wood takes on an aged appearance and (theoretically) will not need any further maintenance. (www.ecowoodtreatment.com) We'll see how it works! The trail blazes are also in need of a new coat of paint, so a date will be set for that job in the near future.

At Stauffer's, perhaps a note from one of our members says it best:

"Larry and I finally made it to Stauffer's Marsh yesterday after many months and were quite impressed with the hard work done. ...This Wood Turtle was the highlight and was right by the path. We also saw at least 2 beavers, kingfisher, 4 Spotted Sandpipers, Killdeer and about 30 Cedar waxwings in the big Sycamore by the parking lot as well as butterflies. Thanks for all the hard work!" ...Mary Lynn



photo by Larry Robinson

Unfortunately Yankauer has been the site of some significant parties and vandalism over the last several months. PVAS is working with the Berkeley County Sheriff's Office to prevent future problems. As part of this effort, volunteers have removed some of the growth along the road to increase visibility into the parking lot from the road. If you see any suspicious activities at any of the preserves, please contact Kristin Alexander immediately, or call the Sheriff's office directly if immediate response is required. With many watchful eyes, hopefully we can prevent further damage.

Thank You Winston Gardens!

Once again, Winston Gardens has generously provided PVAS 15% of its plant sales in October to Stauffer's Marsh Preserve. Many thanks for this support!

Kirtland's Warbler in West Virginia

by Wil Hershberger

Well, it isn't every day that you can claim to have not only seen, but also held the first ever-documented bird of a particular species within the state of West Virginia — but Bob Dean, Maggie Perl and Beth Ritter can!

On the morning of September 30, 2014 Maggie Perl removed a bird from one of the nets at the Allegheny Front Bird Migration Observatory high on the plateau of Dolly Sods in Tucker County. She was puzzled by the bird and asked a nearby net tender, "Is this a Palm Warbler?" He thought that it might be a Magnolia Warbler so, she labeled the bag, "Palm/Magnolia Warbler." As the birds from the latest net run were being processed by the two banders on duty, Beth Ritter removed the Palm/Magnolia from the bag. Just then Bob Dean turned around to see what was next — his recognition of the species was immediate and he, "...began quivering all over as soon as I saw it out of the bag!" Carefully he took the bird from Beth and asked her, "Do you know what this is?!" As soon as he announced to the assembled crowd that this was a Kirtland's Warbler the excitement became palpable. The other bander finished with the bird he was working on and became enthralled with the action.

Bob quickly went to work. The main focus was on the welfare of the bird; the banding requirements would have to be done with alacrity. Once the Fish and Wildlife Service's numbered aluminum band was in place, Bob deftly checked the salient field marks, wing and tail measurements were taken, molting feather tracts examined, and tail feather shape was assessed. A careful look at the bird showed it to have a brown back, indicative of a female. The tail feathers were pointed, an indication of a bird that hatched this past summer (a hatch year, HY bird). So, now they knew that this Kirtland's Warbler was a HY female on her first trip south to the species wintering grounds in the Bahamas.

As Bob was nearing the last stages of examining the bird, he was getting ready to "skull" her. This involves wetting the feathers on the top of her head, spreading them to get a good look at the skin and the underlying skull. This allows the bander an additional reference as to the age of the bird. As birds age, the bones of the skull grow together and continue to calcify. If you can see pillars of ossification it is a young, HY bird. However, in order to get the required documentary photos, the photographers asked that the skulling be postponed. With great care Bob held the bird in the "photographers" grip and photos were taken. As you can see in the accompanying photo, you couldn't wipe the grin off of Bob's face!

Since its inception in 1958, the Allegheny Front Bird Migration Observatory has banded over 255,000 individual birds. This was their FIRST Kirtland's Warbler.

There are 5 reported sightings of Kirtland's Warbler in the WV Birds Records Committee logs. All were reported from dates in May and none of the reports were accepted by the records committee due to a lack of additional observers, photos, or other supporting evidence. So, Kirtland's Warbler has been on the state hypothetical list for decades.



photo by Lelay Graffious



photo by Wil Hershberger

Kirtland's Warbler is a beleaguered species that was near extinction due to its very tight dependence on young Jack Pine forests. The first problem was the suppression of wildfires in the Jack Pine forests of Michigan. Kirtland's Warblers do not use older stands. Jack Pine cones require fire to open and release their seeds. After a fire clears an area and releases a new crop of Jack Pine seeds, it takes about 6 years for the area to be appealing to Kirtland's Warblers as nesting habitat. Were it not for the tireless efforts of countless volunteers managing the forests and controlling the population of Brown-headed Cowbirds (a nest parasite), the Kirtland's Warbler would have vanished years ago.

Currently there is an estimated 2,000 singing males, up from a mere 167 in 1987. Recently, a few additional breeding pairs have been found in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Wisconsin, and Ontario.

Bob Dean still grins from ear-to-ear when someone asks him about banding the Kirtland's Warbler — I imagine he always will.

Eidolon Nature Preserve Fall 2014 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 24 through 29 this year), on the last day of buck season, December 6, 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.

Please see the schedule below for specifics.

2014 Eidolon Fall Hunting and Hiking Schedule at a glance	
Monday, November 24 through Saturday, November 29	First week of firearm season for buck deer; trails closed to hikers every day
Sunday, November 30	No hunting
Monday, December 1 through Friday, December 5	Trails open to hikers 10am-3pm only
Saturday, December 6	Last day of firearm season for buck deer; trails closed to hikers all day
Sunday, December 7 through Wednesday, December 17	No hunting
Thursday, December 18 through Saturday, December 20	First antlerless deer hunting season; trails closed to hikers every day
Sunday, December 21 through Sunday, December 28	No hunting
Monday, December 29 through Wednesday, December 31	Second antlerless deer hunting season; trails closed to hikers every day

Tickets available for this year's Rotary Charity Ball!

This year's Rotary Ball will be held Friday, December 5th. Vice President Mike Sullivan is coordinating the PVAS table this year.

If you would like to purchase a ticket, please contact Mike at msullivan@limno.com or 302-876-1343. The minimum ticket price is \$100/person.

In addition, if you have an item to donate for the Rotary Ball's silent auction, please let Mike know. Items such as cabins or services are always well-received.

Please contact Mike Sullivan for information, ideas and offers as soon as possible: msullivan@limno.com or 302-876-1343.



Owl-Banding Trips Set for November 3 and 8

PVAS this year is sponsoring two special nighttime field trips in early November to watch experts catch, band, and release migrating owls.

The first trip will be held Monday, November 3, at an owl-banding station operated by West Virginia birding expert Bob Dean near Hedgesville. It will last from 5:00 p.m. to about 10:00 p.m.

The second trip will be held Saturday, November 8, at a banding station operated by Maryland birding expert Steve Huy on South Mountain, near Boonsboro. It will start at about 9:00 p.m. and last until approximately 11:30 p.m.

In both instances, the owls being banded will be Northern Saw-whet Owls, the smallest owl in eastern North America. These trips offer unique opportunities to see these fascinating little birds up close and learn about their life history

The trips are family friendly, and everyone is invited to participate.

There is no fee for either trip but a donation of \$5 or \$10 to the South Mountain owl banding station is suggested. This will help support that station's work.

Pre-registration is essential for both trips, because space is very limited.

To pre-register and get full information, go to the PVAS website or contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or [703-303-1026](tel:703-303-1026).

Participants should bring flashlights and be sure to dress warmly. Owls do not fly if it is raining, so these trips may be cancelled if conditions warrant.

Last South Mountain Hawk Watch is November 5



Here's a reminder that our last regular weekly hawk watch at Maryland's Washington Monument State Park will be held on Wednesday, November 5.

The watch will be free and open to anyone with an interest. Children are welcome if accompanied by an adult. However, space at the best viewpoints is limited and pre-registration is strongly encouraged.

Easy registration is available on the PVAS website.

The Park is located on South Mountain, east of Boonsboro. Participants should plan to meet Sandy Sagalkin, the watch leader, in the Park's upper parking lot at 9:30 a.m. The watch will go until 12 noon, although participants will welcome to stay longer if they wish.

Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions and bring along drinking water and insect repellent. Binoculars will be available for anyone who needs them.

Hawk-watching is very weather sensitive because these birds do not fly in bad weather. If it is certain that weather will force cancellation of any particular watch, those who have pre-registered will be notified of that cancellation by email no later than 6:00 p.m. the evening before.

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

PVAS and the Washington County (MD) Bird Club have teamed up this fall to co-sponsor these watches every Wednesday since mid-September.

Join November 6 Harpers Ferry Bird Walk

Join Deb Hale for a birding trip to the Virginius Island section of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park on Thursday, November 6.

The walk will begin at 8:00 a.m. It will be free and anyone with an interest is welcome to come along, regardless of their birding skills. Children will be welcome.

Registration is required and participants will need to sign a waiver of liability because the walk involves crossing some railroad tracks.

To register, go to the PVAS website.

Participants will meet in the parking area on Shenandoah Street just below the intersection with Route 340.

The walk will focus on the riverfront and old canal areas of Virginius Island. Birds likely to be sighted include waterfowl and arriving winter birds.

The trip will be about 3 miles total. Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring along drinking water, and sunscreen.

Binoculars will be provided if needed.

The trip may be canceled or postponed if weather conditions are poor.

For more information go to the PVAS website or contact Deb at debhale72@gmail.com or 304-535-2346.

November 8 Shannondale Springs Bird Walk

Jim Farley will lead a PVAS birding trip to the Shannondale Springs Wildlife Management Area, on the east bank of the Shenandoah River in Jefferson County, on Saturday, November 8.

The trip is free and anyone with an interest is welcome to come along, regardless of their birding skills. Children will be welcome. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged but not required.

Participants should plan to meet at 7:30 a.m. at the WMA parking area by the boat launch site, off Mission Road.

The 1,361-acre Shannondale Springs property is managed by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. It includes a mixture of forest, brush land and open fields covering rolling hills. The trip will involve walking about three miles over moderately even ground.

Possible species to be sighted include Bald Eagles, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, vultures, waterfowl, and woodpeckers.

Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for prevailing weather conditions, and bring along water and bug spray. Binoculars will be available for anyone who needs them.

The trip may be cancelled in the event of bad weather.

For more info, contact Jim at jamesfarley@frontiernet.net or 540-686-2056.

Science Olympiad

656 sixth graders from Jefferson County in 5 days!

It sounds like a real challenge, but our Master Naturalists helped make the Jefferson County Science Olympiad simple.

All sixth grade students in Jefferson County have the opportunity to attend the event held at For Love of Children Outdoor Education Center (FLOC) each year.

About 150 students come each day and participate in hands-on activities related to science: everything from tree and bird walks to watershed activities and recycling games.

Volunteers from environmental groups provide the activities each day. Twelve PVAS Master Naturalists helped with this year's Olympiad including Melanie Snyder, Kathryn Henry, Marcyanna Millet, Carol Del-Colle, Carol Wood, David Pennock, David Miller, Charlotte Fremaux, Vicki Blazer, Scot and Linda DeGraf and Ellen Murphy.

Many thanks to these folks who made the Science Olympiad possible!

Fall Youth Programs

15 kindergarten classes and 1 PreK class learning about habitats, 10 first grade classes exploring their senses (some at Yankauer), 17 second grade classes comparing plants to animals, and 7 third grade classes discovering animal adaptations. (And 25 fourth grade watershed classes and 13 fifth grade classes participating in the Growing Native program).

Yep, that's a normal fall for PVAS youth programs! Ellen Murphy, Suzi Taylor, Sarah Brennan, and Wanda Miller have been busy serving classes that ask for programs and will keep up the pace into early December!

Most of the early elementary classes are an hour each, conducted in the classroom but our fourth and fifth grade programs are multiple-sessions (5-12 visits each). As exciting as it is to visit a classroom to share nature knowledge and activities, it is in the multiple session programs where relationships are built with the students and teachers and students learn better critical thinking skills. In December, school programs are generally not as heavily scheduled, but they pick up again in the spring. All of these programs provide learning opportunities for kids, but the multiple session programs are where relationships are built with the students and teachers and students learn better critical thinking skills.

Sign Up Now for November 23 Altona Marsh Birding Trip

Join us for a birding trip to the Altona Marsh in Jefferson County on Sunday, November 23.

The trip will begin at 8:00 a.m. and last a couple of hours. It will focus on migrating waterfowl and winter resident species.

The Marsh is a rare, 70-acre marl wetland protected by a Nature Conservancy easement. It is a good site for birding, not only because it harbors a rich variety of species but also because the terrain offers easy viewing.

The trip will be free and anyone with an interest is welcome to come along, regardless of their birding skills.

However, because this is a protected site and there are access issues, participants must pre-register and sign a waiver. To pre-register, and to get more information go to the PVAS website.

Children ages 12 and up will be welcome but they must be accompanied by an adult.

Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring along water. Binoculars will be available for anyone who needs them.

The trip may be cancelled in the event of bad weather.

Charles Town Tree Walk Set for Nov. 22

PVAS is sponsoring a late fall Tree Walk along the streets of Charles Town on Saturday, November 22.

The walk will be led by local arborist Shawn Walker. Participants will meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Library

The walk will last about two hours. It will offer a close-up look at the town's diverse tree population, with a special emphasis on evergreens. The emphasis will be on identifying species by bark, branching habits, and other late fall/early winter characteristics.

There will be a prize for the winner of a tree-height guessing challenge.

The event will be free and open to the public but space will be limited and pre-registration is essential. To pre-register or get more information, go to the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org. Or contact Krista Hawley at 703-303-1026 or adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org.

November Program Will Look at Snowy Owl Research

Our monthly program for November will feature a presentation about Project SNOWstorm, a collaborative effort that has used last winter's Snowy Owl "irruption" to enhance research on these magnificent arctic birds.

The program will be held at 7:00 p.m. November 12 at the Hospice of the Panhandle facility in Kearneysville.

Admission will be free and everyone is welcome to attend.

The speaker will be owl expert Steve Huy. He is a co-founder and co-director of Project OwlNet, which facilitates communication, cooperation and innovation among a network of owl migration researchers across North America and abroad.

Snowy Owls normally live their entire lives in the High Arctic but every once in a while, for reasons that are not clear, they come flooding south in a phenomenon known as an "irruption."

Smaller irruptions happen every few years, but very rarely a "mega-irruption" occurs, in which Snowy Owls show up much farther south, and in vastly greater numbers, than usual.

The irruption of the 2013-2014 winter was such an event, the largest in the United States' Northeast and Great Lakes regions in forty or fifty years.

Project SNOWstorm capitalized on this event by fitting as many captured Snowy Owls as possible with small, lightweight transmitters. The goal has been to better understand the lifestyle and behavior of these birds, and thereby to enhance conservation of them.

Interestingly, the funds for this effort were raised largely through crowdsourcing.

The Hospice facility's address is 330 Hospice Lane, Kearneysville. The Audubon program will be held in the main meeting room of the facility's Main Office building.

There is plenty of parking at the facility.

For more information go to <http://www.potomacaudubon.org> or contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or [703-303-1026](tel:703-303-1026).

United Way/CFC Reminder

The United Way and Combined Federal Campaigns have begun! Don't forget you can designate PVAS as the recipient of your donation through those agencies! (CFC#29061)

Become A Master Naturalist in 2015!

Potomac Valley Audubon is proud to sponsor the West Virginia Master Naturalist course for a ninth year in a row. Our Master Naturalist Program is one of our most popular adult programs, with over 100 active, certified Master Naturalists!

Persons interested in becoming a WV Master Naturalist are invited and encouraged to apply for the 2015 class which will begin in March 2015. Applications for the program can be submitted at any time through January 15, 2015. The class is limited in size to 20 students so early application is encouraged.

Master Naturalist candidates in the program receive 64 hours of natural history instruction in a classroom and field/lab environments in a wide variety of topics.

Whether they have a doctorate in a field of natural science (some of our members do!) or are just interested in nature, our Master Naturalists have one thing in common—an interest in the natural history of West Virginia. Each class seems to form a special bond among its members and participants enjoy learning in a casual, but challenging way. There are no tests, just opportunities for adults to learn from experts in the field.

To complete certification, students have 2 years to 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 and scholarship information can be downloaded at <http://www.PotomacAudubon.org/masternat>.

This Race is for the Birds!

April 25, 2015

Registration opens
Thanksgiving Day at

www.active.com

Master Naturalist Update and Annual Meeting

The Potomac Valley Master Naturalist 2014 class completed their year-long program with two days of workshops on September 20 & 21 at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). The program began in March and students attended a day of workshops each month from March through September. The workshops were held at a variety of venues including NCTC, FLOC Outdoor Education Center, Craftworks and Cacapon State Park and entailed both classroom and field work.

The 2014 class and all of the Potomac Valley Master Naturalists are invited to gather together at the annual meeting, pot-luck and silent auction on Saturday November 8. The meeting will be held at Orchard House, 4599 Shepherdstown Road (about 3 miles west of the four way stop sign in Shepherdstown). Members who have completed their coursework and volunteer hours will officially graduate. Those members who have been active for five years will be honored and all Master Naturalists who have recertified this year will be recognized as well. One of the high points of this event is the silent auction which raises funds for Master Naturalist scholarships. 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, CDs and DVDs, 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.



Dr. Bell's Weeds and Wildflowers Class, from the 2014 Master Naturalist Program

Join Trip to Cathedral State Park

PVAS is planning a special field trip to West Virginia's Cathedral State Park on Saturday, November 15.

The trip will be led by Master Naturalist Clark Dixon and include a guided park tour led by the park's naturalist.

The tour will start at 10:30 a.m. and last about one-and-a-half hours.

Afterwards, the trip group will travel to nearby Blackwater Falls State Park, with a lunch stop along the way, before heading home.

There is no fee and anyone with an interest is welcome to participate, including families with children. However, space will be limited so pre-registration is essential.

Easy online registration is available on the PVAS website at www.potomacaudubon.org.

Located in southeastern Preston County, WV, Cathedral State Park contains the only stand of mixed virgin timber left in West Virginia.

The park gets its name from its many ancient hemlocks, which reach majestic proportions and form spectacular natural cloisters. They are one of the last remnants of a vast virgin hemlock forest that once flourished in the Appalachian highlands.

It was entered in the National Registry for Natural Historical Landmarks in 1966 as "an area that possesses exceptional value in illustrating the natural history of the United States."

The drive to the park from the Eastern Panhandle is about two-and-a-half hours long.

Because of the distances involved, those who wish to carpool should plan to meet at the Food Lion supermarket parking lot on Route 51 in Inwood, just off I-81; carpoolers will depart from there at 8:00 a.m.

For those who prefer to drive on their own to the park, take I-81 south to the Route 37 bypass around the west side of Winchester; from there, take Route 50 west all the way through the Maryland panhandle and back into West Virginia. The park is approximately five miles west of Red House, MD.

Trip participants should wear comfortable walking shoes and dress for the season. Because of the park's altitude (about 2,500 feet), air temperatures there are likely to be significantly cooler than in the Eastern Panhandle.

For more information about the trip, contact Krista Hawley at adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org or 703-303-1026.

For more information about the park, see its website at <http://www.cathedralstatepark.com>.



Daily Companions Visit Yankauer

Daily Companions, a group that provides assistance to adults with special needs, recently visited Yankauer and were escorted by PVAS volunteer and Master Naturalist Carol Del-Colle.

The group had a marvelous time and Carol's report gives many of the details:

"We spent the first part of the time in the pavilion looking at pictures of local birds and listening to their sounds. We stopped to listen to a Blue Jay who responded to the bird call. They thought that was neat. Then we went to the bird feeding area where Nan (Johnson), who had come earlier in the morning to do some cleaning up, had helped me fill some of the bird feeders. Everyone sat quietly and the birds gave quite a show. There were bird calls all around us and a little hummingbird even flew by. I checked with the staff if we had time to walk back to the pavilion by way of Ceder Loop and she said yes, so that is what we did. One of the staff said she wants to come back with her grandchild. She also said she would just like to come back sometime herself with a book and sit on one of the benches because it is such a lovely and peaceful place."

Many thanks to Carol for leading this group and introducing them to the wonders of nature at Yankauer Preserve!

Join November 13 Walk, Program at Blandy Farm

PVAS invites members and friends to come to the State Arboretum of Virginia at Blandy Experimental Farm on Thursday, November 13 for a walk and an afternoon presentation about the eMammal Citizen Science Project.

Anyone with an interest is welcome to participate.

The walk will include an exploration of the Arboretum's grounds. It will start at the Blandy Gift Shop at 11:30 a.m. and last until 1:00 p.m. It will be led by Master Naturalist Debbie Maiorano, and it will be free.

The presentation will be held from 1:00-2:30 p.m. and be given by Travis Forrester, of the Smithsonian Institution's Conservation Biology Program. It will provide an overview of the e-Mammal project, which links citizen volunteers with researchers at the Smithsonian Institution and the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences to document mammals throughout the mid-Atlantic region, and soon, the entire country. Volunteers place infrared-activated cameras in parks and other natural areas to collect photos of mammals. These photos help answer questions about mammal distribution and abundance and help assist conservation efforts.

Those who wish to attend this session must register beforehand on the Arboretum website at http://blandy.virginia.edu/our-foundation/online_payments and pay a fee of \$10 (for members of the Arboretum's Friends group) or \$12 (for non members).

Blandy Farm is located in Boyce, VA, off Route 50/17, a mile east of the intersection with Route 340.

Birdseed Pick-up Reminder

Berkeley Springs delivery is Saturday, November 1

Williamsport pick-up is Saturday, November 1

Ranson pick-up begins on Monday, November 3

If you have questions or comments, please contact

Diana Mullis [304-754-3753](tel:304-754-3753) or
DianaMullis@aol.com

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:

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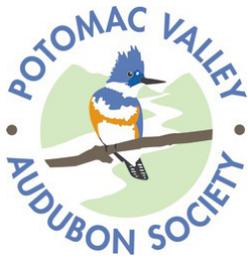
**Membership Chair, PVAS
PO Box 578
Shepherdstown, WV 25443**

Thank you for your support!



If you'd rather join the National Audubon Society:

Some people prefer National Audubon Society membership, which includes a subscription to the Society's Audubon magazine. To become a National member, go to the Society's website at www.audubon.org and click on "join." If you join National Audubon and reside in Berkeley, Jefferson or Morgan counties in West Virginia, or in Washington County Maryland, you will automatically become a member of PVAS and have access to our events, an e-mail copy of newsletter and e-mail alerts. However almost all of your dues payments will go to the National Audubon Society; only a small percentage will go to PVAS.



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The Potomac Valley Audubon Society meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, September through April. Programs are free and open to the public. For additional information about PVAS or its programs and activities, please contact any of the board members listed here or see <http://www.potomacaudubon.org>. PVAS serves the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and neighboring Washington County, Maryland.

PVAS BOARD

PVAS Board meet-
 ings take place the
 first Thursday of
 the month (Sep-
 tember through
 June). Meetings
 are open to all
 PVAS members.
 Please contact
 the President or
 Vice President if
 you would like to
 attend.

PVAS Officers and Board Members (Year of term expiration in parentheses)

- President: Jane Vanderhook (2016)..... janehook@frontiernet.net
- Vice President: Michael Sullivan (2016) msullivan@limno.com
- Secretary: Diana Gaviria (2016) jpikester@comcast.net
- Treasurer: Lex Miller (2014)..... pamandlex@frontiernet.net
- Board Members-at-Large:
 - Charles Cranford (2016)..... Charles.Cranford95@gmail.com
 - Clark Dixon (2015)..... dixonconsultants@aol.com
 - Kara Gibson (2016)..... KaraKlein@gmail.com
 - Tanner Haid (2016)..... Tanner.Haid@gmail.com
 - Joe Hankins (2016)..... joseph.hankins@gmail.com
 - Susan Jones (2016)..... wvbagend@frontier.com
 - Matthew Patterson (2016)..... tridecanone@yahoo.com
 - Lou Scavnicky (2015)..... captainlou@comcast.net
 - Lainie Weber (2016) lainie_weber@fws.gov

Ex Officio Board Member: Diana Mullis (past president) DianaMullis@aol.com

Emerita Board Member: Jean Neely jeaneely@comcast.net

Special Contacts

- Executive Director: Kristin Alexander (304-676-3397) Kristin@PotomacAudubon.org
- Program Director: Ellen Murphy (304-676-8739)..... Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org
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