

# VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac  
Valley  
Audubon  
Society

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## President's Note

by Michael Sullivan, PVAS President

PVAS acquired ownership of the Cool Spring Preserve on September 30<sup>th</sup>. This property, formerly known as CraftWorks at Cool Spring, was given to us by that organization. The competition for this wonderful property among other nonprofits was keen, and we were indeed lucky to win. Our proposal to CraftWorks laid out our vision for the property wherein PVAS will use the Cool Spring Preserve as our headquarters and as a base for expansion of our environmental education efforts in Jefferson County and elsewhere. Down the road, we'd like to start a nature center at the Cool Spring Preserve and offer hands-on art, nature and cultural history programs for families, schools, and scouts. All of us at PVAS owe a large debt of gratitude to Linda Case and the Board of Directors at CraftWorks for selecting us and giving us this treasure.

Acquisition of the Cool Spring Preserve is very significant for PVAS. The Preserve is our first property in Jefferson County, and it is an ideal location for observing nature and learning about conservation. The property consists of 12 acres of land bisected by Bullskin Run and the Cool Spring Marsh. The Marsh is designated as a Shenandoah Wet Prairie Marsh, and it contains 18 rare and very rare West Virginia plants. Only 100 acres of this type of marsh are known to exist globally. The property includes a studio that PVAS will use as its headquarters, a barn, and a rental cottage. PVAS leases an additional 20 acres of trails adjacent to the preserve for one dollar per year. Taken together, the Preserve offers a rich assortment of habitat and excellent hiking and birding opportunities in all seasons.

The Cool Spring Preserve is located at 1469 Lloyd Rd, Summit Point, WV, approximately 6 miles southwest of Charles Town. The Preserve is open to the public during daylight hours. We have an open house scheduled at the Preserve on Sunday afternoon, November 13<sup>th</sup>. Please join us on the 13<sup>th</sup> - or sooner - and get acquainted with our new home at the Cool Spring Preserve.



## Director's Report

by Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director

About a year ago, CraftWorks at Cool Spring announced their intent to cease programs, and their plan to gift their facility and property to a deserving non-profit that would be excellent caretakers of the marsh and surrounding land.

So many of you got in touch with me, making sure we saw the announcement, and encouraging us to throw our hat in the ring. Many of you have participated in CraftWorks and PVAS programs, birding trips, Master Naturalist courses and the like. It did feel like a natural fit.

We did not enter into the application process lightly. We had a retreat in May to revisit our strategic and 5-year plan, and discussed how the CraftWorks opportunity fit. The Board discussed the opportunity at length, and ultimately decided it fit into our long-range plans for PVAS: it gives us the office space we need in order to grow our staff; it gives us indoor classroom space which allows four-season programming; it preserves another valuable wetland and traditional birding hotspot; and it

gives us a physical presence in Jefferson County.

We've already had schools come for programs at the new site, and we had a press event on October 25<sup>th</sup>. The community's excitement for PVAS's new

property is palpable. We look forward to spreading our wings and taking PVAS to new heights.



Pictured from left to right: Jefferson County Commissioners Patsy Noland, Dale Manuel, and Jane Tabb with Kristin Alexander and Mike Sullivan at Cool Springs Preserve on October 25. Photos © Wil Hershberger.

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

## Snowbirds – the Dark-eyed Junco

By Wil Hershberger

Dark-eyed Juncos can be found throughout North America during some portion of the year. In our area, Dark-eyed Juncos are winter visitors and are easily attracted to bird feeding stations. At this point, there are 5 “groups” of Dark-eyed Juncos across the continent that vary in plumage coloration, habitat preference, migration strategy, and song. Within these 5 groups are 15 recognized subspecies – what a mess. Fortunately, the juncos that typically visit our area is the nominate *Junco hyemalis hyemalis*, the Dark-eye Junco.

These are the “snowbirds” of literature and song. Showing up around mid-October, they form small to large flocks along roadsides and in fields searching for the overwintering seeds of grasses. Dark-eyed Junco males are dark-gray above and white below with light-colored, pinkish bills. Females and young of the year have more brown accents within the “gray” areas. Both sexes have white outer tail feathers that are flashed as the bird takes flight and are used to focus a potential predators attention on their tail. If the predator catches the junco by the tail, the junco can release the muscles that hold the tail feathers in place leaving the predator with nothing but a fist-full of feathers. This is referred to as a fright molt. Keep an eye on the juncos at your feeders; you are bound to see at least one tailless individual during the winter.

The Dark-eyed Juncos that we see during the winter breed north of us, from northern Pennsylvania to the Canadian taiga. Within West Virginia and Maryland, Dark-eyed Juncos of the subspecies *Junco hyemalis carolinensis*, breed in the high elevations of the Appalachians. These juncos have darker, more bluish-colored bills and slightly lighter-gray plumage on their backs. It is well worth a spring trip to the highlands of West Virginia to see these handsome birds.

Dark-eyed Juncos are ground nesters; females build a woven, shallow cup of grasses at the base of a small bush or a clump of vegetation on sloping ground in hopes of concealing the nest from predators. She completes the first nest of the season in under a week. The second nest is often built in one or two days! Her four eggs are long, elliptically shaped, with a pale background colorcast from off-white to bluish or greenish and then speckled all over with reddish-brown to brown blotches. After 12 days of incubation the eggs hatch. The altricial young are dependent on the adults for food and warmth until they leave the nest after about 10 days. After leaving the nest the young are cared for by the parents for another 2 weeks at which time they become independent.

During their winter sojourn, juncos call to one another during aggressive encounters and to keep in contact with flock-mates. These “smack” calls are diagnostic for the species: <http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/100750>. Before our juncos leave for their breeding grounds, young males will start to practice their singing skills, singing quietly to themselves: <http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/107262>. It is amazing how rich and varied this subsinging is – chirps, trills, sweet-notes, and warbling all rolled together.

Once males reach their breeding grounds they are singing full, crystallized adult song which consists of bright, silvery trills: <http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/85241>. These silvery trills are reminiscent of the songs of Swamp Sparrows and Chipping Sparrows.

Early in the morning, Dark-eyed Juncos sing a dawn song that is less musical, louder, and raspier than their typical diurnal song: <http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/85240>. Some males sing songs with a two-parted phrasing: <http://macaulaylibrary.org/audio/85243>.

Dark-eyed juncos are fond of black-oil sunflower seeds, sunflower hearts, and especially white millet. Juncos are typically ground foragers and prefer seeds on the ground or on a flat platform-type feeder. Since there are lots of birds feeding from the ground and platform feeders, it is essential to keep these areas clean; free of old seeds and hulls, as well as bird droppings. Juncos will hop rather than walk while on the ground or on feeders. Dark-eyed Juncos are often rather tame at feeders and can be attracted to feeding situations just outside a window where you can closely view their behaviors and subtle beauty. Those individuals that arrive first to an overwintering feeding area are typically more dominant; a social pecking order quickly develops. It is interesting and fun to watch for these interactions at your feeder and to see how these birds behave when inclement weather systems are moving into your area.

Unfortunately, late-April or early May arrives all too soon and our juncos head north back to their summer homes to raise another family of these gorgeous little Snowbirds.



Male (top right), and female (bottom left) Dark-eyed Juncos; Photos © Wil Hershberger

## PVAS Events

### November 4 Field Trip and Talk About Vultures

The Potomac Valley Audubon Society will sponsor a late-afternoon field trip to the Bolivar Heights section of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park on November 4 to watch resident vultures return to their roosts for the night. This will be followed by a 7:00 p.m. talk about vultures at the Bolivar Community Center, located at 60 Panama Street. Both events are free, and everyone is invited to attend.

The field trip will begin at 4:30 p.m. and last about an hour. It will be led by local birding expert Deb Hale. Participants should plan to meet her at the Bolivar Heights parking area, which is located on Whitman Avenue, off of North Washington Street.

The speaker for the evening talk will be Katie Fallon, a West Virginia birder and writer who lives in Morgantown. She will discuss the natural history and biology of vultures, and their role in the ecosystems in which they live. An avid birder, Ms. Fallon is also one of the founders of the Avian Conservation Center of Appalachia, a nonprofit organization devoted to conserving birds through research, education, and rehabilitation.

Vultures are common in the Harpers Ferry area because the confluence of rivers and surrounding terrain foster the thermal air currents they favor, and provide excellent overall habitat for them.

For more information, go to the PVAS website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org) or contact Krista Hawley at [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org) or 703-303-1026.



Photo © Lonely Birder

### November 9 Program Will Look at Galapagos Islands Conservation Efforts

Our monthly program for November will feature a presentation entitled “The Galapagos Islands: Challenges and triumphs of conservation.” The program will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 9, at the Hospice of the Panhandle facility in Kearneysville. Admission is free, and everyone is welcome to attend.

The speaker will be Bridget Tinsley, PVAS’s Land and Watershed Program Manager. Bridget spent the summer of 2006 working in the islands. She will provide a brief history of the islands, and describe the contemporary context of conservation efforts there.

The Galapagos Islands are a volcanic archipelago in the Pacific Ocean. They are located about 1,000 kilometers off the coast of Ecuador, and are administered by that nation. The islands contain a wide variety of plants and animals, many of which are found nowhere else. Charles Darwin visited there in 1835, and his observations played a major role in his development of his theory of natural selection. The islands have been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1978.

The Hospice facility’s address is 330 Hospice Lane, Kearneysville. The Audubon events are 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 the PVAS website or contact Krista Hawley at [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org) or 703-303-1026.

### Cool Spring Preserve Open House to be Held November 13

Join PVAS at its new headquarters and nature preserve, Cool Spring Preserve, on November 13, 2016 from 1-4pm.

This will be the first opportunity for the public to come and see the preserve under PVAS ownership. Enjoy nature walks, tours of the energy-efficient building, and nature-themed artwork on display. There will also be kid’s activities including scavenger hunts, crafts, and nature games. Light snacks will also be provided.

The open house will be free of charge, and anyone is welcome to attend! We look forward to sharing this new, beautiful place with you!

## PVAS Events

### Be Part of Birding 101's 30th Anniversary Celebration

Join PVAS as we celebrate 30 Years of Birding 101!

Birding 101 has been part of the fabric of PVAS for 30 years. Instructors have included Wil Hershberger, Bob Dean, Matt Orsie, Jean Neely, Lynne Wiseman, and Jim Keel. Bob Dean and Wil Hershberger have been part of the team for each of the 30 years!

This incredible milestone demands celebration! We will be holding a Birding 101 Reunion and Celebration on December 1, 2016 from 6-9pm at NCTC. Join us in "The Commons" of NCTC at 7 pm around the fireplace in the Roosevelt Room to reminisce, share stories, roast an instructor or two, and celebrate the years of introducing the community to birding by sharing the passion and knowledge of these incredible instructors.

We've arranged with NCTC the option for PVAS guests to purchase a meal prior to the program, between 6-7pm. A cash bar will also be available that evening.

Whether a Birding 101 alumnus or simply a fan of the instructors, please feel free to join PVAS as we celebrate 30 years of Birding 101. This is a significant milestone in PVAS history, and to celebrate generosity of those instructors who have helped PVAS achieve it. Please help us reconnect with folks who have taken the course. We have the most recent 15 years of participant registrations, but registrations from earlier years are proving difficult to track down. Please help us spread the word far and wide - in particular reaching those who were part of Birding 101 in the early days.

Registration is required due to NCTC Security. Register on the PVAS website. Hope to see you there!

### Volunteer Spotlight

#### Have you met the "Three Marys?"

Mary Etta Boesl, Mary Beth Ross, and Mary Lynn Robinson did not know each other before they became involved with PVAS youth programs, but they have spent a lot of time together during the past year. We think they know each other pretty well by now!



Last fall, they spent much of the month of October helping with a series of PVAS school field trips to Stauffer's Marsh. In the spring, they were a mainstay at watershed field trips, leading the fish printing activity and helping students test the water or identify macroinvertebrates. They have also helped lead activities at Yankauer school field trips, at special family events like the Wildflower Festival, at our library programs, and at Fireflies, Fiddles, and Frogs.

They are all Master Naturalists. We absolutely could not do as many youth programs as we do if it were not for these three wonderful volunteers!

## Conservation

### Chimney Swifts in Shepherdstown

The past months PVAS has been busy looking at and thinking about chimneys. Not just any chimney mind you, but those that are lucky enough to be selected by a very special bird species. Chimney Swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) are a neotropical migratory bird that is considered threatened by the IUCN due to a dramatic 30% population decline over the past 3 decades. Their natural nesting sites are hollow trees, caves or tree cavities, but with a loss of preferred forests they have adapted to roost in urban areas, substituting chimneys for trees. Due to demolition and the capping of chimneys, Chimney Swifts have continued to lose desired roosting habitat.

West Virginia is an important summer breeding habitat for Chimney Swifts. The two largest, and best known nesting sites are in the state are in Morgantown and Shepherdstown. At Sara Cree Hall, on Shepherd University's campus, around 1,200 roosting birds were counted on multiple nights during September 2016. The birds were also seen in smaller numbers using private residence chimneys around Shepherdstown.

Concerns over the declining Chimney Swift populations have troubled bird advocates for a long time, and local birders have been diligent about counting and recording those who migrate through Shepherdstown annually. With the news that Sara Cree hall is schedule for demolition, locals became concerned over how the Chimney Swifts will respond. PVAS is working with local and state wide bird experts, and the Shepherd University facilities staff to find an alternative to replace Sara Cree's chimney. Possible alternatives include uncapping the Knutti Boiler House Chimney on Shepherd's campus, building a chimney-like tower for roosting habitat, or rebuilding an alternative chimney using bricks saved from Sara Cree's original chimney. Dialogue between stakeholders is underway to resolve concerns before demolition of Sara Cree Hall commences and before the 2017 migration of Chimney Swifts greets Shepherdstown once again.

## Family and Youth Programs

### Watershed Program Update

By Alison Zak

Fourth grade classes in the PVAS watershed program have recently learned about the water cycle by singing and dancing to the tune of *She'll Be Comin' 'Round the Mountain*, concluding with an enthusiastic "Yee-haw!" They also explored maps made especially for each school that include their watershed address, emphasizing that nearby waterways are connected to those larger and farther away, like the Atlantic Ocean!

One class at Orchard View Intermediate School even came up with their own new song inspired by "the thigh bone's connected to the knee bone" song, by substituting names of regional creeks and rivers for body parts. Then students brainstormed ways to protect the watersheds in their own backyards.

At Tomahawk Intermediate School, a student dressed in all black including a beanie and dark sunglasses (an impressive costume for spy day of spirit week) declared "I want to be a scientist. And this is the kind of science I love because it's so hands-on, you know?" (We can't make this stuff up!)



### Sustainable Energy Program

About a year ago, PVAS received a \$10,000 grant from the Appalachian Stewardship Foundation to create a new, multi-session, fifth grade program focused on sustainable energy. This fall, we have been piloting the program in 16 classes throughout the Eastern Panhandle, including: Eagle Intermediate and St. Joseph's Parish Schools in Berkeley County, Ranson Elementary in Jefferson County, and Pleasant View Elementary in Morgan County. We've reached about 385 students through the program.

During the first session, students experimented with a solar panel as a source for powering a light, small fans, and even a tablet and cellphone. Using small solar cars, they were able to experiment with the best angle for capturing solar rays, and then they challenged each other to solar car races. They even discovered that solar panels absorb sunlight and provide energy when it is cloudy or overcast. In the second session, students explored wind as a sustainable power source, built a small working windmill, and were challenged to build a wind-powered car using only items like drinking straws, four Life-Savers, paper clips, a piece of paper, a small cup, and a small amount of tape. Unlike with solar energy, though, the students learned that wind power works only when the wind is blowing!



During the third session, students were able to measure the watts used by various appliances in their schoolroom (pencil sharpener, television, and fans) as well as a cellphone, hairdryer, and lamp provided by PVAS. They learned that newer light bulbs use fewer watts than incandescent ones, and that less power is required to light them. The "light bulb" came on (literally) when they used a hand-cranked generator to power both an incandescent 60w bulb and a 60w LED bulb (that uses only 12.5w of energy). The results brought amazing expressions to the students' faces.

In the final session, students learned to interpret an electric bill, and demonstrated that specially designed soccer balls and jump ropes can power lights. Kinetic energy (the power of motion) recharges a battery in these innovative products, so the more fun the students had, the more light they could provide. (An hour of play with the ball provided three hours of light.)

Now that the pilot program is complete, and teacher evaluations of the program content have been received, the lesson plans are being tweaked for content and best practices. The program is available to any fifth grade classroom in the Eastern Panhandle, either as a complete, 4-part program, or as individual sessions. The hand-cranked generator is also being used in school science night programs this fall.

If you are interested in learning more about this program, contact Ellen Murphy ([Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org](mailto:Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org)).

## Birding News and Events

### Bob Dean Will Hold Two Owl-Banding Sessions in November

PVAS is sponsoring two special nighttime field trips in early November to watch an expert catch, band, and release migrating owls. The first trip will be held on Tuesday, November 1; the second will be on Thursday, November 3. The destination for both trips will be an owl-banding station operated by West Virginia birding expert Bob Dean near Hedgesville. Both will last from 5:45 p.m. to about 10:00 p.m.

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 birds up close and learn about their life history. The trips are family friendly, and everyone is invited to participate. There is no fee but pre-registration is essential for both trips, because space will be very limited.

Participants should bring folding chairs and flashlights and be



sure to dress warmly. Please note that owls do not fly if it is raining, so these trips will be cancelled if conditions warrant.

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

### South Mountain Owl Banding Trip Set

PVAS is sponsoring a Friday, November 4, field trip to watch an expert catch, band, and release migrating owls. The destination is a banding station operated by Maryland birding expert Steve Huy on South Mountain, near Boonsboro. The trip will last from 9:00 p.m. to about 11:30 p.m.



The owls being banded will be Northern Saw-Whet Owls, the smallest owl in eastern North America. The trip offers a unique opportunity to see these birds up close and learn about their life history. It is family friendly, and everyone is invited

to participate.

There is no fee, 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 because space will be very limited. To pre-register and get directions and full information, go to the PVAS website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org) or contact Krista Hawley at [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org) or 703-303-1026.

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

*CJ White shot these photos of a Northern Saw-Whet Owl during one of Bob Dean's banding trips in November, 2015. Lower left: Bob measures and weighs each owl, and records data for each individual.*

### Join November 19 Bird Walk at Hagerstown Kiwanis Park

PVAS, the City of Hagerstown, and the Washington County Bird Club will sponsor a bird walk at Hagerstown's new Kiwanis Park on Saturday, November 19. The walk, led by local birding expert Sandy Sagalkin, will start at 8:00 a.m., and last one and a half hours.

It is free and open to everyone, regardless of their birding experience or skills, but pre-registration will be required. Register and get full information on the City of Hagerstown's website at [www.hagerstownmd.org/birdwalks](http://www.hagerstownmd.org/birdwalks).

The Kiwanis Park is located at 371 Dynasty Drive in Hagerstown, behind the medical professional buildings on Opal Court, off Eastern Boulevard. For more information, contact Sandy at [sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com) or 240-291-6465.

## Birding News and Events

### PVAS Sponsoring November 13 C&O Canal Bird Walk

PVAS will sponsor a bird walk along the C&O Canal towpath in the Williamsport MD area on Sunday, November 13. The walk, led by local birding expert Sandy Sagalkin, will begin at 8:00 a.m. at the Canal Visitor Center at Cushwa Basin, and it will last about three hours.

The walk is free and open to anyone with an interest, regardless of their birding skills. It will involve easy walking over level ground, and children and families will be welcome. Pre-registration is encouraged but not required. Registration is available on the PVAS website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org).

The Canal towpath offers good birding opportunities, since it is a major stop for migrating birds.

Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring along insect repellent and drinking water. Binoculars will be provided if needed. The walk may be canceled or postponed if weather conditions are poor.

Directions to the Williamsport Canal Visitor Center can be found on the Canal website at [www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/williamsportvisitorcenter.htm](http://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/williamsportvisitorcenter.htm). For more information, go to the PVAS website or contact Sandy at [sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com) or 240-291-6465.

### Antietam Bird Walk Set for November 26

PVAS will sponsor a bird walk along the Final Attack Trail on the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg, MD on Saturday, November 26. The walk is free and open to anyone with an interest, regardless of their birding skills. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged but not required; easy registration is available on the PVAS website.

Participants should plan to meet walk leader Sandy Sagalkin at the Burnside Bridge at 8:00 a.m. The walk will last about 2 ½ to 3 hours, and cover mostly level terrain. The trail the walk will follow is in the area where the Union Army made its final advance to drive the Confederate Army from Maryland on September 17, 1862, only to be turned back by A.P. Hill's final Confederate counterattack. It is also the site of an extensive effort by the Antietam National Battlefield to restore and preserve native grasslands on the Otto Farm fields in the Battlefield's southwest corner.

Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring along water. PVAS will provide binoculars for those who do not have their own. Various trip details could change depending on weather or recent bird sightings.

For more information, contact Sandy at [sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com) or 240-291-6465.

### First Cool Spring Bird Walk Set for November 19

Join Lynne Wiseman on PVAS's first bird walk at Cool Spring Preserve. The trails at Cool Spring preserve have a lot to offer! From well-maintained foot paths to gorgeous views, the preserve is home to much wildlife.

Meet Lynne in the parking lot of Cool Spring Preserve at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday, November 19. Possible birds to be seen include local common winter bird species of Sparrows, Finches, Woodpeckers, Brown Creeper, Tufted Titmouse, Nuthatches, possible Hawks, and other birds.

This bird walk is free and open to bird watchers of all levels including those that have never been on a PVAS bird walk. Bring your binoculars if you have them; some will be available to those who don't.

Pre-registration is encouraged but not required; register on the PVAS website.

Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress for the prevailing weather conditions, and carry insect repellent and drinking water. The trip may be canceled or postponed if weather conditions are poor.

For more information contact Lynne Wiseman at 304-676-2725 or [lewiseman@aol.com](mailto:lewiseman@aol.com).



## Birding News and Events

### Area Hawk Watches Will Wrap Up November 2 and 9

PVAS and the Washington County (MD) Bird Club will co-sponsor hawk watches the first two Wednesdays of November at Maryland's Washington Monument State Park. Both watches, November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, will begin at 9:30 a.m. and last until noon or so. The park is located on South Mountain, off Alternate U.S. Route 40, just east of Boonsboro, MD.

These watches will be the last in series of hawk watches the two organizations have been sponsoring this fall during the period of the annual fall hawk migration. The Washington Monument park offers an excellent vantage point to view migrating hawks.

All the hawk watches are free and open to anyone with an interest. Children are welcome, if accompanied by an adult. Please note that space at the best viewpoints is limited, and pre-registration is strongly encouraged. Easy registration is available on the PVAS website.

Participants should plan to meet watch leader Sandy Sagalkin in the upper parking lot of the Park by 9:30 a.m. Participants should wear sturdy footwear, dress appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions, and bring 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 rain or snow. 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 240-291-6465 or [sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com](mailto:sandy.sagalkin@gmail.com).

## Notes from the Preserves

### Autumn at the Nature Preserves

Autumn is a spectacular time to visit any of the PVAS Nature Preserves. With the activity of the summer behind us, the nature preserves present subtle-yet-spectacular changes, and become a more tranquil environment. Our Nature Preserves are open to the public seven days a week, and are a commonly used for naturalist walks, family excursions and picnics. Here are some updates on the recent activities at each preserve:

Stauffer's Marsh has hosted a few guided nature walks for visitors to see wildlife and the unique terrain. The preserve continues to be a popular site for bird watchers and Geocachers alike. To better facilitate self-guided hikes, Steve Hartmann, our volunteer land manager, has been labeling plants and trees of interest along the trails, and PVAS will be installing two new interpretative signs at Stauffer's Marsh.

Recently at Eidolon, two outstanding Master Naturalists, Mary Youngblood and Sylvia Thompson, have dedicated several days and countless hours into trail maintenance and invasive weed control. Eidolon has an extensive trail system through mature forests with several stunning viewpoints. Thank you to Mary and Sylvia for helping to maintain Eidolon's trail system!

Yankauer will soon have running water for visitors, and a walk-out porch for the new restroom facilities. The intention is to provide a more comfortable and accessible nature preserve to all. Yankauer receives a lot of visitors, and we know many will appreciate the improvements.

As the migrating birds start to fly, the rodents busily prepare for winter, and the leaf color begins to change we are reminded of, and humbled by the beauty that surrounds us. We encourage our members to use the Nature Preserves for a hike, a picnic or for wildlife viewing this fall season.



# Eidolon Nature Preserve

## 2016 FALL HUNTING AND HIKING SCHEDULE

All hunters and hikers please note the following.

In the interest of maintaining a healthy forest and viable animal populations, the Eidolon Nature Preserve permits hunting on the property during hunting season. To balance the safety of hikers and the interests of deer hunters during deer season, we ask all visitors to observe the following rules:

- 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 21 through 26 this year), on the last day of buck season, December 3, and during the two antlerless deer seasons in December.
- 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 details. For more information contact: Peter Smith at the Potomac Valley Audubon Society at 304-876-1139 or [pvsmith@frontiernet.net](mailto:pvsmith@frontiernet.net).

<b>2016 Eidolon Hunting and Hiking Schedule at a Glance</b>	
Monday, November 21 through Saturday, November 26	<b>First week of firearm season for buck deer; trails closed to hikers every day</b>
Sunday, November 27	No hunting
Monday, November 28 through Friday, December 2	Trails open to hikers 10am-3pm only
Saturday, December 3	<b>Last day of firearm season for buck deer; trails closed to hikers all day</b>
Sunday, December 4 through Wednesday, December 14	No hunting
Thursday, December 15 through Saturday, December 17	<b>First antlerless deer hunting season; trails closed to hikers every day</b>
Sunday, December 18 through Sunday, December 25	No hunting
Monday, December 26 through Saturday, December 31	<b>Second antlerless deer hunting season; trails closed to hikers every day</b>

## Potomac Valley Master Naturalists

### Local Master Naturalist Group Celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program celebrated its 10th anniversary with a reception and dinner at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown on October 8th.

Speakers included Karene Motivans, Chief of the Conservation Science and Policy Branch of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Training Division; local naturalist Clark Dixon, who spearheaded the Program's creation in 2006; Michael Sullivan, President of the Potomac Valley Audubon Society; Potomac Valley Audubon Executive Director Kristin Alexander; and Peter Smith, Potomac Valley Audubon past-president.

About 60 Master Naturalists and friends attended. Music was provided by the Berkeley County Strings, a seven-member ensemble, composed of Berkeley County high school students and their instructor.

The Potomac Valley Master Naturalist Program is sponsored by the Potomac Valley Audubon Society, and is a chapter of the State of West Virginia's Master Naturalist Program. 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.

For more information, go to the Potomac Valley Audubon website at [www.potomacaudubon.org](http://www.potomacaudubon.org).

### PVMN Annual Meeting, Potluck, and Silent Auction on October 29

Greetings, Master Naturalists! Please come to our Annual Meeting, which will be held on Saturday October 29, from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m., at Orchard House, just outside of Shepherdstown.

We've had a wonderful 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, and this will be our final celebratory event. This Annual Meeting is a wonderful way for MNs to connect, as well as a way to raise money to support our scholarships for the incoming class. We will have our business meeting, recognize new and recertifying MNs, and partake in an always-delicious potluck lunch. Please bring a dish to share (your choice), and your own plates, cups, and silverware. Coffee and lemonade will be provided.

As usual, we will hold a silent auction. All proceeds go toward scholarships for the next year's students, so please bring an item to donate. You can bring just about anything: t-shirts, books, food (people bid on pie!), field guides, crafts, bird items and other fun stuff. Don't forget to bring your checkbook so you can bid often! (You wouldn't believe the hot bidding on that pie!).

Remember, you have until the end of the year to recertify, so don't panic if you haven't gotten all of your hours in yet. When you do, please send them to Larry Smith, our Recognition Coordinator, at [msmith19@frontiernet.net](mailto:msmith19@frontiernet.net), or mail them to P.O. Box 578, Shepherdstown, WV 25443.

MNs don't get to gather often, so we hope you will join us! If you have any questions, please contact Krista Hawley at [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org) or 703-303-1026.



Clark Dixon delivers remarks to Master Naturalists and friends at NCTC

**PVMN**

**Master Naturalist Open House & Program Set for November 16 in Berkeley Springs**

Morgan County residents are invited to check out the volunteer and training opportunities offered by West Virginia’s Master Naturalist Program at an Open House in Berkeley Springs, the evening of Wednesday, November 16.

Sponsored by the Master Naturalist Program’s Potomac Valley Chapter, it will be held from 6:00-7:00 p.m. in the Morgan County Board of Education Office building at 247 Harrison Avenue, in Berkeley Springs.

This will be an opportunity to meet Master Naturalists, see examples of volunteer projects, and have your questions answered. There is no charge, and anyone 16 years or older is welcome to attend.

Master Naturalist programs are patterned after the long-established Master Gardener program, and operate on a state-by-state basis. They train individuals in the fundamentals of natural history and nature interpretation as a way of promoting responsible stewardship of natural resources.

West Virginia’s Master Naturalist Program is one of the first in the nation, and the local Potomac Valley Chapter, which was established by the Potomac Valley Audubon Society in 2007, is one of the first chapters in the state.

Immediately following the Open House, at 7:00 p.m., the Potomac Valley Audubon Society will hold a public program in the same room. The program will feature the showing of an award-winning documentary, *Green Fire*, about the famous American Naturalist Aldo Leopold. Afterwards, a panel of Master Naturalists from the Eastern Panhandle will discuss a visit they made this past summer to the Aldo Leopold Foundation, in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

The program is free, and everyone is welcome to attend.

For more information, go to the PVAS website or contact Krista Hawley at [adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org](mailto:adultprograms@potomacaudubon.org) or 703-303-1026.

**PVAS Seeks VISTA Volunteer to help build PVAS’s capacity to serve youth.**

Research and write grants, promote PVAS programs through social media, build partnerships, and more!

Learn more at [potomacaudubon.org/jobs](http://potomacaudubon.org/jobs).

**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:

- Member discount to many PVAS programs and events.
- A subscription to *Valley Views*, the PVAS newsletter.
- Free or reduced admission to participating nature centers and/or their programs across the country.
- E-mail alerts about events and programs (upon request).
- An invitation to a PVAS Members annual gathering.
- Discounts to participating **local businesses**.

Details available at [potomacaudubon.org/member](http://potomacaudubon.org/member)

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. For details, go to: <http://potomacaudubon.org/member>.

**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: \_\_\_\_.*

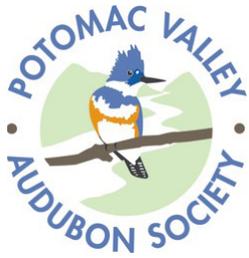
**Clip and mail this form to:**

Membership Chair, PVAS  
PO Box 578  
Shepherdstown, WV 25443



**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](http://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: Michael Sullivan (2018) ..... msullivanwv@gmail.com  
 Vice President (*acting*): Jane Vanderhook (2017) ..... janehook@frontiernet.net  
 Secretary: Diana Gaviria (2018) ..... jpikester@comcast.net  
 Treasurer: Dan Cogswell (2017) ..... daniel.cogswell@gmail.com  
 Board Members-at-Large:  
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