

VALLEY VIEWS

Potomac Valley Audubon Society

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September 2013

Mystery of the Missing Cicadas

By Wil Hershberger



*Female 17-year cicada laying eggs in a sassafras twig.
©Wil Hershberger, Nature Images and Sounds, LLC.*

Many people have asked, “What happened to the 17-year cicadas this year?” There has been a lot of press this summer about the emergence of these amazing creatures among the major cities of south-eastern New York, New Jersey, and the big cities of Maryland.

These unique cicadas, also called Linnaeus’s 17-year Cicadas, are a favorite of everyone who has encountered them. Their black bodies, red eyes and orange wings make them easy to identify. Adults emerge in early summer. Females lay eggs in the twigs of deciduous trees. The eggs develop into nymphs in about 4 to 7 weeks. The tiny nymphs rain down from the trees and burrow into the ground, where they remain and grow for 17 years, feeding on the sap of roots! Amazing! The last molt from nymph to adult is synchronized for all of the cicadas in a particular area (synchronized populations are called “broods”—see maps on next page). Nymphs emerge *en masse*. Tens of thousands molt into adults in just a few days. Their shed exoskeletons litter the bark and leaves of trees.

During the early summer of 2013, 17-year cicadas of Brood II emerged in the general area outlined above, all to the east of our location. Some areas did not experience the same overwhelming numbers that they had during the last emergence in 1996. This

observation is not surprising. These cicadas require woodlands – specifically, mature deciduous trees for successful reproduction. If they had emerged in 1996 in an area that had formerly been wooded and is now a new shopping center, parking lot, office building, or housing development, there would be few if any mature deciduous trees for the females to lay their eggs in or for the new young to feed from the roots of. These smaller populations of the larger brood would perish and not repopulate their kind. So, now in 2013 there would be no 17-year cicadas in these areas to emerge with the rest of the Brood II bunch.

Delineating the different broods is not an exact science. Many amateur volunteers as well as professional entomologists, have scoured the countryside looking and listen for these insects for decades. There is still a lot to be learned about the exact extent and borders of these different broods. It was reported that, during the 2004 emergence of Brood X, singing 17-year cicadas were heard and observed in the areas of Wheeling, WV and Youngstown, Ohio — well outside the known range of Brood X.

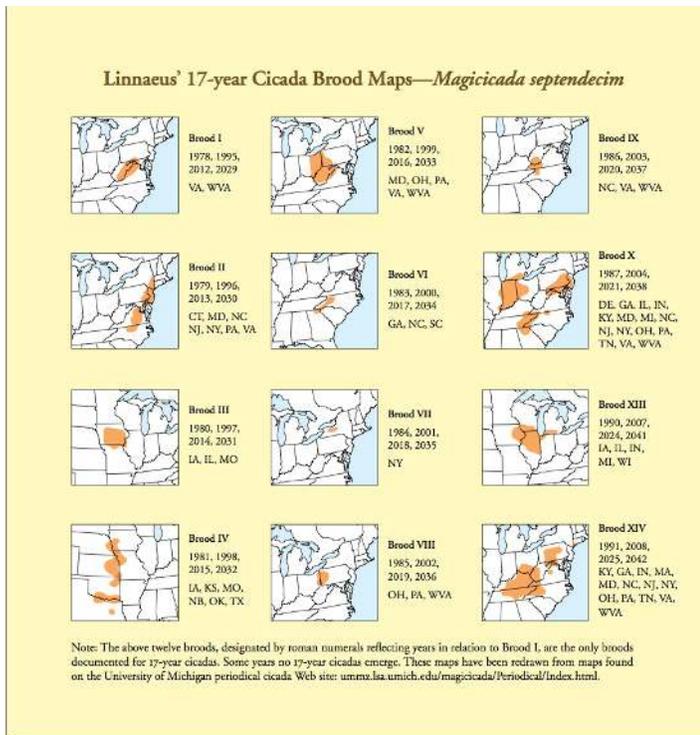
Our area, the eastern panhandle of West Virginia, is blessed with three broods, some of which overlap. These are Broods I, X, and XIV. Brood X is by far the biggest, with more individuals emerging than any of the other broods. The next emergence of 17-year cicadas in our area should be June of 2021 when Brood X again emerges and overwhelms the woodlands and our senses with the glorious cacophony of these amazing insects. Farther west in West Virginia, Brood V will emerge in 2016.

Male 17-year cicadas produce two distinct song types. The first is the calling song that the males give to attract females. If you listen carefully you can hear the female giving a sharp wing-flick that sounds like a tick, in response to the males’ song. http://songsofinsects.com/iframes/cicadas/popup_magisept1.html

The second song type is the mating song, given by males when they approach females. The mating song becomes very animated just before copulation. http://songsofinsects.com/iframes/cicadas/popup_magisept2.html

Lastly, the chorus of a woodland full of these magnificent insects sounds otherworldly. Even the birds are affected – their songs are drowned out by the din (they seem to sing far less in areas where broods emerge.) http://songsofinsects.com/iframes/cicadas/popup_magisept3.html

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



Map of the 12 Broods of the 17-year cicada. Note the dates for the emergence of these broods and the states involved. From "The Songs of Insects," with permission of the author.

President's Perch

By Diana Mullis, PVAS President

Things Change and All Is Well!

We have all heard the phrase that the only things certain in life are change and taxes, and since PVAS is tax exempt, I guess change is what we can count on. Our Executive Board and Nominating Committee have been busy over the summer because, for a variety of reasons that are personal in nature, our President, Vice President, and a couple of our Board Members needed to leave their appointments early. Before leaving, our Vice President, Gary Heichel, called a meeting of our Board Development Committee (which maintains a list of people that have been recommended by the Board & others to fill Board and Committee vacancies) to find people to fill our newly vacated positions - and they did. This resulted in me, Diana Mullis, stepping up to fill the President's position for the coming year (what a surprise ... for you and me both). As a Past President and Founding Member of PVAS, I know many of you and have a pretty good grasp of what we are about, so with that and lots of help from all of you, we are headed into another year with lots of exciting new prospects, field trips, events, and more - as you will see here in *Valley Views*. Thank you for being a member and supporter of PVAS! I am looking forward to seeing you and hearing your thoughts and ideas. There is a lot to do, so come help me and us do good things! Diana Mullis at 304-267-3482, email: dianamullis@aol.com

Birdseed Sale

The Birdseed order form will be sent out in the October Valley Views. Questions? Contact Diana Mullis at dianamullis@aol.com or 304-267-3482.

Director's Report

By Kristin Alexander, PVAS Executive Director

I hope all of our members and friends had an enjoyable summer, full of outdoor adventures and fun.

PVAS experienced quite a busy summer! In addition to a very successful summer camp and lots of great birding trips, classes, hikes and other field experiences, we also were tending to some administrative matters. For a variety of reasons ranging from personal to professional, several Board members resigned over the summer. We'd like to sincerely thank Bob Reynolds, Gary Heichel, Sandy Sagalkin, and Heather McSharry for their hours of service and significant contributions over the last several years. All have promised to stay involved, and I hope they will!

We are fortunate to have found exceptional individuals to fill their shoes, and we'd like to welcome them and thank them for "signing on" for leadership roles within PVAS. Some are "old friends" to PVAS, and some are relatively new to the organization.

Diana Mullis, a founding member and a past president, has agreed to serve as President for a one-year term during this transitional time. Diana has managed our birdseed sale and coordinated wildlife rescue efforts for many years, and has served in nearly every board position that has existed. She has continued to be very actively engaged with board activities, and has generously agreed to serve in this leadership role for the year.

Jane Vanderhook will serve as Vice President of PVAS. Jane served on the Board last year as the chair of the Youth Services Committee after a short hiatus from the board. Previously she had served as the PVAS Treasurer from 2004 to 2008, so is very familiar with the organization's finances and programs.

Mina Goodrich has agreed to serve as Secretary for an additional year to provide consistency on the Executive Committee and to help PVAS through this transition. This was made official at the Board meeting in June.

Mike Sullivan will be joining the Conservation and Action Committee. Mike works part time as a consultant with a DC-based environmental engineering firm. He has worked extensively on watershed and water quality projects in the mid-Atlantic area including the Potomac River.

Diana Gaviria will be serving on the Youth Services Committee. Diana is a public health physician with board certification in Family Medicine. She has volunteered for PVAS youth programs and served two years as Race Director for PVAS' annual "Race for the Birds." Her children attended the PVAS Audubon Discovery Camp.

These nominees were approved by the Board of Directors at the August 1 meeting. Complete bios of all board members are available on our website <http://www.potomacaudubon.org/board>.

We sincerely thank all of our departing Board members for their service, and welcome these new members to the PVAS Board.

Annual Meeting and Elections

The PVAS annual meeting was held on June 1 at the Yankauer Nature Preserve. The end of the year was celebrated with a potluck, election of officers and board members, and recognition of volunteers.

After a delicious potluck supper, Gary Heichel called the meeting to order to elect officers and board members. Two new at-large members were elected: Tanner Haid and Amanda Whitmore. Three past board members were elected for additional terms to serve at-large: Clark Dixon, Leigh Jenkins, and Jane Vanderhook.

Following the election, Bob Reynolds and Kathy Stolzenburg were recognized for their service on the board. A grove of native trees and shrubs will be planted in their honor.

The following volunteers were also recognized for outstanding contributions to PVAS over the last year: Rebecca Ayrud, Alice Barkus, Kathy Bilton, Sandra Bloom, Joette Borzik, Susan Brookreson, Larry and Rebecca Carper, Dan Cogswell, Bob Dean, Carol Del-Colle, Joe Gentile, Deb Hale, Steve Hartman, Don Henry, Wil Hershberger, Nan Johnson, Susan Jones, Elliot Kirschbaum, Nancy Kirschbaum, Gretchen Meadows, Diana Mullis, James and Suzi Munnis, Matt Orsie, James Remuzzi, Sandy Sagalkin, Peter Smith, Melanie Snyder, Gary Sylvester, Diane Sylvester, Marie Van Valkenburgh, Jane Vanderhook, Eldon Winston, Virginia Winston, Kelly Wolf, Rodney Woods.

Winston Gardens Nursery Helping PVAS Again

The Winston Gardens Native Plant Nursery has generously been helping PVAS in recent years. During the month of September this year, it has pledged to donate 15 percent of the proceeds from all its sales to PVAS. The donation will be used to support our Stauffer's Marsh Nature Preserve in Back Creek Valley.

The nursery is located in northeastern Berkeley County, at 1121 Hollida Lane, one mile off Swan Pond Road. It will be open by appointment during September. To schedule a visit call 304-267-6924.

Operated by noted area landscape designer Virginia Winston and her husband Eldon, the nursery specializes in trees and shrubs that are native to this region and typically offers more than two dozen different species for sale. These range from popular favorites like Sugar Maples and Redbuds to hard-to-find species like Fringe Tree, Witch Hazel, and Black Haw Viburnum.

For detailed directions and a full list of the plants available, go to the Nursery's website at www.winstongardens.com.

"Wild Time at Wild Goose" October 26th!

Cricky and Michelle Shultz have generously agreed to host our fall fundraiser at their wonderful barn at Wild Goose Farm again this year. Please save the date for a "Wild Time" from 1-4pm on October 26th. We hope to see you there. More details will be in the October newsletter, but please mark your calendars!

First Convention For Audubon In 15 Years!

By Jean Neely

"Audubon's first national convention in 15 years was a resounding success. More than 500 leaders from across Audubon came together to celebrate our achievements and our network and to learn from like-minded conservation leaders."

Thus began National Audubon President David Yarnold's enthusiastic report from the Washington state convention site. Moreover, 142 chapter leaders attended from across the flyways. There were 127 Audubon staff members from 27 states, as well as sponsors, donors and international partners. And they signed up 70 new chapters at the convention alone.

Some of us remember the last convention. Held in 1998 in Estes Park, CO, it was the final chapter in these biennial gatherings, although we did not know it then. I had gone to my first one in 1981, and attended many more thereafter. The cessation of the conventions—as well as alternate year regional conferences—was laid at the doorstep of "saving money." I put it at the feet of the culprit—John Flicker, the then NAS president. He just didn't get it somehow. To him, the weeklong series of workshops, plenary sessions, field trips and schmoozing was a waste of his time and NAS money. To us attending, however, it was an instructive and energizing experience. Just think: At one such event, PVAS got national attention drawn to the long struggle to get a National Wildlife Refuge in West Virginia's Canaan Valley, and we were able to announce the successful launching at the next one.

But let's get back to the just-completed July convention. Yarnold says: "We tackled some difficult topics and we all came away energized and empowered to take on our next big challenges. At the closing session I asked folks what their biggest takeaway was from the convention. One of our chapter leaders said, 'I've learned that if it can't be done, someone in Audubon has probably already done it.' It's hard not to love that spirit."

To which I would like to add: Please bring back also the regional conferences on the 'even years'. Furthermore, in 2015, get the national event back to Estes Park, CO at the YMCA of the Rockies. (Washington is a nearly 3000-mile trek for us East Coasters.) What a glorious setting Estes Park it is—at the entrance to the Rocky Mountain National Park! As for 2015, if NAS does this again, I hope PVAS will be budgeting to send at least two members as well our Executive Director, Kristin Alexander, to attend.

If you'd like further info, convention highlights, *etc.*, go to <http://wa.audubon.org/documents/national-audubon-society-convention-2013>



What's the height of that tree?

Jean Nealy Receives Award

PVAS members who are familiar with the chapter's history probably know that founding member Jean Neely led efforts to establish our organization, including serving as its first president. But did you know that Jean played similar roles with the League of Women's Voters in Jefferson County and Shepherdstown Area Independent Living (SAIL)? Or that she represented us all when she served on the Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D) and the Air Quality Board (AQB), rising to the level of Chair of each organization?

For these reasons and many more, Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital selected Jean as one of three Women of Distinction recipients from the Eastern Panhandle for 2013. The prestigious award is based on distinguished service, excellent leadership, and the capacity to serve as role models for girls.

PVAS is 30 years old now and Jean has been involved in its growth every step of the way. She is currently active as Board Member *Emerita* and a member of the Birding Committee. Please congratulate Jean on her award when you see her, and thank her for everything she's done to make PVAS such a vital part of our communities!

Eidolon Event Held June 15

PVAS held an event at the Eidolon Nature Preserve June 15 to mark the restoration of the preserve's old stone cottage and to thank the contractor who did the work, Duane Householder of Hedgesville. About 30 people turned out for the occasion.

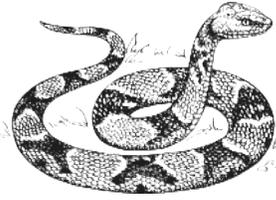


One special guest was a member of the family that donated the Eidolon property: Victor Bonilla, of Bethesda, MD. Victor is a grandnephew of Louis Zapoleon. Three other special guests were Marcie, Anne, and Gavin Beyersdorfer. They are the grown children of the late Margaret Beyersdorfer, of Bethesda, who was the goddaughter of Louis's wife, Marguerite. Victor, Anne, Marcie and Gavin all visited Eidolon when they were children, and they shared their recollections of their experiences there and their memories of the Zapoleons.



Also attending were volunteers who have helped develop Eidolon as a nature preserve, community members who have been supportive of the preserve, and PVAS staff and Board members.

Eidolon Caution



Several times this summer, young copperhead snakes have been found around the east side of the stone cottage at Eidolon. On each of these occasions, the snakes have been curled up against the base of the cottage's exterior walls or along the sides and base of the stone steps to the porch—no doubt seeking the warmth of the stones.

Copperheads have never been sighted there before, and we are theorizing that a female may have had a litter somewhere nearby last fall.

Accordingly, visitors to the preserve are asked to be vigilant and to watch where they place their feet and hands when they are in the vicinity of the cottage during snake season.

In our area, snakes are typically active each year from about mid-April to mid- to late October.

Although copperhead bites are rarely fatal, they can be serious and painful. Anyone who is bitten should seek medical attention immediately.

Monthly Program in September Will Focus on National Audubon Agenda

Our September program at the National Conservation Training Center will feature a presentation by Connie Mahan, the National Audubon Society's Grassroots Outreach Director. The program will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 11 in Room 151 of the Instructional West Building. Admission is free and everyone is welcome to attend.

Connie will review the ways in which local Audubon chapters fit in with the National Society's overall conservation and action goals. She will also cover Audubon's big-picture conservation campaigns, feature a few success stories and offer a policy road map for achieving the National Society's bird goals. She says her presentation "will help everyone rethink what it means to be an advocate for birds and habitat and offer some insights on how everyone can more effectively hone their messages."

Connie has actively worked with national grassroots, Audubon chapters and a number of smaller conservation organizations since 1981. In her current position, she works to engage Audubon's 470 chapters, coalition partners, and activists in national conservation campaigns that focus on climate change, migratory bird conservation, a Mississippi River Initiative, and other issues. Her own focus is on advocacy training, policy education and engagement.

Sign Up Now For October Cape May Hawk-Watch Trip

PVAS is sponsoring a hawk-watching trip to Cape May, NJ the weekend of October 11-14. Anyone with an interest is welcome to participate and there will be no fee, but participants will be expected furnish their own transportation and arrange for their own accommodations. Hotel and motel reservations should be made

now, because Cape May is a very popular destination in October. Those planning to use the Lewes-Cape May Ferry also need to make reservations early for the same reason.

The trip will be led by local birding expert Sandy Sagalkin and will focus on several hawk-watching sites in the Cape May area. It will offer good opportunities to see Peregrine Falcons, Merlins, American Kestrels, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Coopers Hawks, Bald Eagles, Northern Harriers, and other raptors.

Those who participate will also be able to take advantage of a variety of free educational opportunities offered by the Cape May Bird Observatory and the New Jersey Audubon Society. Their offerings include such events as a Mini-Hawk ID workshop for beginners, a Hawk-banding demonstration, a Monarch tagging demonstration, and bird walks that are open to the public.

The Cape May Bird Observatory website (www.birdcapemay.org) contains a list of Cape May hotels and motels which offer discounts to birders who are members of the Observatory. The savings can be significant enough that trip participants who are not already members may wish to join. Joining can be done easily online.

Sandy will be staying at Leith Hall, a Victorian B&B in Cape May that offers discounts to members of the Cape May Bird Observatory. You can make a reservation by calling them at 609-884-1934 or through their website at www.leithhall.com. If you call, mention Sandy's name to the proprietors, Elon or Susan.

Those who wish to participate should pre-register by contacting Sandy by phone at 240-291-6465. For more information, contact him by email at monsansagalkin@myactv.net.

September Local Birding Trips

PVAS has scheduled three local birding trips for September. All the trips will focus on migrating birds. All are free, and any interested person, regardless of skill level, is welcome to come along. Children are welcome. No pre-registration is required, unless otherwise noted.

For each trip, 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. Trips may be cancelled in the event of bad weather. Various trip details could also change depending on weather or recent bird sightings.

Full details can be found on the Society's website at www.potomacaudubon.org.

The specific dates, destinations and details are as follows:

Saturday, September 7: Birding trip to Altona Marsh.

Trip will begin at 7:30 a.m. Because this is a protected site and there are access issues, participants must pre-register and sign a waiver. To do this, contact Jim Farley at jamesfarley@frontiernet.net or 540-686-2056.

Tuesday, September 10: Birding field trip to the historic Claymont property outside Charles Town. Meet at 7:30 a.m. on the Claymont entrance road at 667 Huyett Road. The trip will involve about three miles of moderate hiking. It should offer

opportunities to see a good variety of birds, including raptors, grassland birds, and early fall migrants. For more info, contact trip leader Joette Borzik, at 240-440-4221 or pep4223@comcast.net.

Wednesday, September 18: Hawk-watching trip to the Washington Monument on South Mountain just outside Boonsboro, MD.

The annual Broad-winged hawk migration is usually at its peak at this time, and this trip should provide excellent opportunities to view these magnificent birds as they soar over the region's ridge tops. The trip will begin at 8:30 a.m. Space constraints at the viewing site will limit participation to just eight people so pre-registration is essential. This trip will be definitely be cancelled in case of rain because hawks do not fly in such weather. To pre-register and get specific directions, contact Sandy Sagalkin at 240-291-6465 or monsansagalkin@myactv.net.

Thursday, September 19: Bird walk in the Bolivar Heights section of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park.

Various species may be seen, including migrating hawks and warblers. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Bolivar Heights parking area. From the Route 340 traffic light at the entrance to the National Park, turn north onto Washington Street and follow it for about 1/4 mile, then turn north again (left) onto Whitman Avenue; the parking area is at the top of the hill. For more info contact Deb Hale at debhale72@gmail.com or 304-535-2346.

Berkeley Springs Birding Festival Set for September 20-23

The Sixth Annual Berkeley Springs Fall Birding Festival will be held in and around Berkeley Springs the weekend of September 20-22. PVAS is once again the lead festival sponsor. Most of the festival's events will be free and everyone is invited to attend any or all of them. No pre-registration is required.

The festival is timed to coincide with the annual fall bird migration. It will include Friday and Saturday evening programs at the Ice House in Berkeley Springs, bird walks, and workshops during the day Saturday, and a bird walk Sunday morning.

This year's featured evening speaker will be noted West Virginia naturalist and nature photographer Wil Hershberger. Other speakers will be Virginia raptor expert Liam McGranaghan; Smithsonian Institution forensic ornithologist Marcy Heacker; and Desiree Narango, a research associate at the Smithsonian's Migratory Bird Center.

The first event will be a reception and program at the Ice House the evening of Friday, September 20. The reception will begin at 6:00 p.m., and the program at 7:00 p.m. with a presentation by Wil Hershberger entitled "A Celebration of Bird Song." At 8:00 p.m. Liam McGranaghan will give a presentation about the fall hawk migration. The Ice House is located downtown at 138 Independence Street.

Saturday's events will begin with a free morning bird walk starting at 8:00 a.m. at the scenic Panorama Overlook on Route 9 west of Berkeley Springs and then will move on to favorite ripar-

ian sites near the junction of the Cacapon and Potomac rivers. At 10:00 a.m. those interested in looking for migrating hawks can join Liam McGranaghan for a free hawk watch on the top of Cacapon Mountain in Cacapon State Park.

Saturday afternoon, there will be two free events. The first will be a 1:30 p.m. "Beginning Birding" workshop at the Warm Springs Middle School Library, led by Marcy Heacker and local naturalists Judy Webb and Helen Herlocker. The workshop will be aimed at children but open to beginning birders of all ages. It will cover such topics as identification basics, birding manners, and using guidebooks and equipment.

The second Saturday afternoon event will be a 2:00 p.m. birding and general nature hike at the Eidolon Nature Preserve on Sideling Hill Mountain. The hike will be led by preserve caretaker and naturalist Joe Gentile.

Saturday evening will feature two presentations at the Ice House. At 7:00 p.m., Marcy Heacker, who has participated in the festival for the past two years, will give a talk entitled "Feathers 101; The Basic Anatomy and Function of Feathers." At 8:15 p.m., Desiree Narango will discuss "Bird Banding for Science and Education."

The festival will wrap up the morning of Sunday, September 22, with a free 8:30 a.m. bird walk at Sleepy Creek Retreat, a mountain-side property off Route 522 south of Berkeley Springs. The property offers sweeping views and a rich variety of habitats. The walk will provide good opportunities to see migrating raptors, blue jays, and warblers. This year this event will also include a bird-banding demonstration by Desiree Narango. The bird walk will be led by local birding experts Jon Boone and Janet Ardam.

To help cover festival expenses, a \$10 ticket will be sold for the evening programs. This ticket will be good for admission to both those programs.

Advance tickets will be available at the Nature Niche store at 168 North Washington Street in Berkeley Springs (304-258-0992 or natureniche@earthlink.net). Tickets will also be available at the door for both evening programs.



2012 Berkeley Springs Bird Fest Group

PVAS visits the Delaware Shore

By Matt Orsie

Potomac Valley Audubon held its annual birding trip to Delaware for migrating shorebirds during the weekend of July 27. Nine participants with all levels of experience had a great time during our two days in the field. Even though shorebirds were the primary target we did not ignore other birds. A total of 106 species graced our spotting scopes and binoculars. Notable for the trip were twenty-one shorebird species, eleven different types of Gulls/Terns/Skimmers and eight species of Bitterns/Herons.

Some of the group got together Friday evening for a nice dinner at the Olive Garden in Dover, DE and then headed out to Bombay Hook NWR for the evening heron show. Toward dusk herons and egrets started gathering at the Raymond Pool impoundment of the refuge. They trickled in at first and by sunset were coming in by the 10's, 20's and more. By the time we left there were approximately 300+ gathered. Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets, Little Blue Herons, and even a Tricolored Heron came in. As our cars pulled away a Great Horned Owl called. What a wonderful way to start the trip!

The next morning it was down to Cape Henlopen State Park to look for endangered Piping Plovers. In order to protect newly hatched Piping Plover chicks, a stretch of beach at "The Point" is closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic starting in early July. This practice has been going on for over 10 years. The closure remains in effect until the last plover chick is able to fly. Fledging usually occurs in late August. Piping Plovers are listed as Threatened on the Federal Endangered Species List, which is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Also at Henlopen we were treated to a couple of bonus ducks, namely Surf and Black Scoters which are rare in that area during the summer. All of us were happy campers and this was only the first stop. (:> We proceeded to bird a couple of locations at Prime Hook NWR and then it was on to Fowler Beach. New shorebirds were found including a pair of uncommon Whimbrels.

The rest of the birding on Saturday afternoon and early Sunday was spent doing a more thorough search of Bombay Hook NWR followed by the Woodland Beach Wildlife Area affectionately known as "Taylor's Gut". The group saw thousands of Semipalmated Sandpipers and spent time learning how to tell the peeps (Least, Western, Semipalmated Sandpipers) apart. In addition to the peeps hundreds of Short-billed Dowitchers and Avocets were seen. The complete list of shorebird species can be seen below.

If you've never gone on one of these trips all we can say is you're missing out on an exciting experience. It's only three hours away from the eastern panhandle. The weather was spectacular and we got only a few sprinkles on Sunday.

Shorebirds seen included: Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Piping Plover, Killdeer, American Oystercatcher, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Spotted Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Lesser Yellowlegs, Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Stilt sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, and Long-billed Dowitcher.



Piping Plover

Photo by Matt Orsie

Natural History Workshops Open To All

Persons interested in learning more about the natural history of our area will want to check out the Natural History Workshops that are listed on the PVAS website. In September you can explore the Geology of Hardy County and in November learn more about the natural history of fish. New workshops are posted periodically on the PVAS website, so check back frequently. All workshops are open to the public and feature some formal instruction and a field component so that participants can readily apply what they have just learned in class. Registration is open now at www.PotomacAudubon.org.

Master Naturalist Classes are also available now on an individual basis! Adults and teens, over age 16, may register for any or all of the classes that interest them without committing to the entire program. Classes cost \$15-20 each, depending on the number of hours. These classes are a great way to get your “feet wet” with the Master Naturalist program, and any classes taken will count if you decide to formally enter the program. There are a few classes still being offered in 2013 and new ones will be added early next year. All classes can be found at www.PotomacAudubon.org under the Events Calendar.



Dragonfly workshop

Yankauer Progress

Yankauer Preserve has been a very busy place this summer! In addition to summer camp, several land management efforts have been underway.

First, in June, 15 high school students enrolled in NCTC’s Student Climate and Conservation Congress (SC3) volunteered at the preserve. The work crew spent three hours learning about stilt grass and other problematic invasive species, then pulling up stilt grass along the trails. We are grateful that NCTC included us in this volunteer day! The students had some adult helpers. One SC3 teacher from the program, NCTC staff person Georgia Jeppesen, and two Master Naturalists, Tracy McCleaf and Wanda Miller, all helped the students in their volunteer efforts.

Secondly, volunteer Eldon Winston has been leading the charge on battling autumn olive at the preserve. On several dates through the summer, several “Weed Warriors” joined Eldon in cutting, digging, and poisoning autumn olive by painting the stumps of recently cut shoots. The difference they’ve made is clearly visible! Eldon led another anti-autumn olive workday with incoming freshmen as part of Shepherd University’s “Day of Service” on August 20th. We can’t thank him enough for his leadership on this effort!

Additionally, volunteers have begun to construct the shed extension at Yankauer under Bob Dean’s expert guidance. The much-needed addition will house tables, chairs, and program supplies that are used for PVAS’ outreach programs, and free up space in the original structure for camp and other Yankauer-based program supplies.

Finally, after a long wait, we will be able to begin work on the composting toilet and well-drilling project at the Yankauer Preserve this fall! We will have two years to complete the project. Lou Scavnicky, the PVAS Board member that chairs the Land Management Committee, is spearheading the project. Lou is an experienced construction manager, so the project is in excellent hands.

Shepherd University Day of Service at Yankauer
Photo by Emily Gross

Stauffer's Marsh

The marsh will be the location for an Eagle Scout project beginning this fall. Shawn Hogbin of Hedgesville will be mulching a trail, building a kiosk and bench at the parking lot, and building wood duck boxes for the marsh as part of his project. We'll keep you posted as his project progresses, but we are excited that he chose Stauffer's as the location of his project and look forward to working with him!

Fall Program Preview

Now that September is here, PVAS has plenty of programs planned for children, families, and adults! There are organized birding programs at Claymont Mansion and Bolivar Heights, a trip to Cape May NJ, and the Berkeley Springs Birding Festival. Geology workshops and hikes are scheduled for September and October. A Natural History Workshop in November will focus on fish. The Potomac Valley Nature Photographers are resuming their meetings on the second Friday night of each month. The monthly PVAS programs will be held on the second Wednesday at NCTC. The Potomac Valley Nature Writers will continue to meet monthly.

Our popular Wee Naturalists programs will be held on one Monday each month through November. This program is designed to help preschoolers, ages 3-5 with a caring adult, to explore Yankauer Preserve. Each month has a different nature focus with age appropriate activities, circle time, books, and hikes. Suzi Taylor is once again leading these programs.

Last year, we started a Saturday program for younger elementary children called *Outdoor Explore!* The program returns this fall, but has expanded to include families, introducing them to different natural areas around the Eastern WV Panhandle through unstructured exploration. We hope to offer *Outdoor Explore!* events on a monthly basis beginning in late September or early October. Program locations this year include Shannondale Springs and Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Areas, Devil's Nose, Yankauer and Eidolon Nature Preserves, and others.



Critters!

School programs are beginning again as well. Students from Burke Street Elementary School will be participating in a special, grant-funded cooperative program with PVAS. Each class, kindergarten through third grade will have two classroom visits from a PVAS instructor and enjoy a day exploring Yankauer Nature Preserve. Other classes are making plans to visit Yankauer or invite PVAS into their classroom. Generous grants from Ecolab and the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation make it possible for us to provide programs to Title 1 Schools at reduced or no cost. Teachers that would like to learn more or schedule a program should contact Ellen Murphy at Ellen@PotomacAudubon.org.

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All these programs and registration information can be found on the PVAS website under Events Calendar. The website is updated

frequently so check back on a regular basis to see what's new with PVAS. Our website www.PotomacAudubon.org can be your best source of nature programs in this area!

Audubon Discovery Camp's 11th Year is a Huge Success

This year's Audubon Discovery Camp may have been one of the coolest ever, even though we may have had more rainy days than sunny ones this year! Our 11th season saw an increase in enrollment and many new faces. There were 217 campers attending sessions at Yankauer Nature Preserve or the Peter Burr Farm, and an additional 10 campers at our Digital Nature Photo Camp and 16 junior staff brought the total to 243!

Campers began the summer with *Do You Like Spiders and Snakes?* and discovered that they did! A special treat was the day that our "resident" black rat snake at Yankauer came out of the storage shed to see what was going on. Other sessions included the ever popular *Camp Survivor* and *Bugs-A-Billion*. All campers had the opportunity to build forts in the woods, hike the trails, try out some new and tried-and-true arts and crafts, and play numerous games of Ranger Rick

Teen campers spent an afternoon exploring Whiting's Neck Cave, discovered how to break open their own geodes, and spent much of the week with Walter Duke, who shared many rocks and minerals with the group. Another group of older campers hiked the C & O Canal and canoed part of the Shenandoah River.

Among the most popular sessions this summer were those at the Peter Burr Farm. Campers discovered an amazing assortment of bugs and butterflies there during *Bugs-A-Billion* including June Bugs, Harlequin Bugs, Red and Black Stinkbugs (not destructive to crops), Painted Ladies, Cabbage Whites, Sulphur butterflies, and the occasional caterpillar. *Ol' Time Arts* week found the campers making hobby horses from socks, experimenting with invisible ink and homemade lip gloss, and making their own butter and bread, which they ate on Friday.

Our camp staff was awesome, but we could not have done all that we did without the help of volunteers. Some came for just a day and others for a week or more! A huge thank you goes to Wayne Braunstein, Bland Campbell, Sheri Cooper, Linda DeGraf, Walter Duke, Susan and Scot Fluharty, Wanda Miller, Diana Pavlik, Deborah Rochefort, and Melanie Snyder. Special thanks also go to the Shepherdstown Community Club for their last-minute assistance on a day of truly threatening weather. Their support allowed us to move our campers "under roof" and continue camp.



Cavers

Sign Up for Fall *Wee Naturalists* Sessions

PVAS is now accepting enrollments for our fall “Wee Naturalists” sessions for preschoolers. The sessions will be held on Mondays once a month from September through November. They are designed to provide opportunities for children ages 3-5 to explore nature together safely under the guidance of an experienced PVAS instructor. All sessions will be held at the Yankauer Nature Preserve.

Each session will last from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and will include walks, crafts, and other activities that focus on something different in nature, related to the season. The specific session dates will be September 23, October 21, and November 18.

PVAS’s Wee Naturalists program is led by Suzi Taylor, of Sharpsburg, MD, a veteran Audubon camp director who has a degree in environmental education.

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 will be limited and pre-registration is required. Easy on-line registration is available on the PVAS website. Families may register for any or all of the months. The fee is \$5 per child/adult team per session.

For more information, contact Suzi at 301-432-1908 or tomand-suzi506@cs.com.

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

Our Backyard Naturalist Program is Growing

Have you wondered why we don’t have massive numbers of cicadas in our area this year? Do you wish you knew what might be going on underground in the fall? Are you still trying to figure out which species migrate in the winter and which don’t? PVAS can help! These questions, and others, will be addressed in a new regular column in The Observer newspaper, distributed to all households in Jefferson County each month. (It’s also available online at www.wvobserver.com)

This *Backyard Naturalist* column will be written by Wil Hershberger and others who are members of the Backyard Naturalist Committee, the Potomac Valley Nature Writers, and Potomac Valley Master Naturalists. All the columns will deal with various natural history topics that are common to the Eastern Panhandle area and will be seasonal-specific. If you’d like to contribute to this effort by writing a column, contact Kathryn Henry at dhenry@myexcel.com.

The Backyard Naturalist program is a new PVAS effort to help adults and families discover the wonders in their backyards and learn ways to provide habitat for native animals and birds. It doesn’t matter if you have acreage, a small yard, or a window box in a condominium or apartment; you can do your part! There is a

Backyard Naturalist page on the PVAS website that can help you with lots of resources. From selecting field guides to purchasing binoculars to finding native plants, we’ve provided tips and resource links: www.potomacaudubon.org/naturehome.

June 8 Fundraiser

The Champagne Garden Party on June 8th was by all measures a wonderful success. Alice and Neal Barkus graciously opened the grounds of their Shepherdstown home to host our spring fundraiser. The weather was glorious and the gardens were beautiful. The “Blue Giving Tree” had to be seen to be believed!



Because of the loyal support of so many people, we were able to exceed our goal, nearly doubling it. The proceeds of this event – an impressive \$8,400 - will benefit our youth education programs.

An enormous thank you goes to Diane and Gary Sylvester, Jim Vanderhook, Neal Barkus, Jeff Feldman, Eleanor Finn, Mina Goodrich, Jennifer Jones, Sean McGowan and to the Special Events Committee that includes Alice Barkus, Diana Mullis, Gretchen Meadows, Susan Brookreson and Jane Vanderhook.

No PVAS event could be successful without the continuing support of our dedicated members and friends, so our biggest thanks goes to them. Your generosity is always inspirational. We hope you can join us at our next event on October 28th.



Photo Camp Returns

PVAS was excited to offer our Digital Nature Photography Camp again this year. The week long session for high school students was held at Shepherd University’s Center for Contemporary Arts. Campers spent the morning in the computer lab, learning the basics of digital photography and then most afternoons exploring the local area for subjects to photograph. Each camper had use of a Nikon SLR digital camera for the week. A field trip to Trego Mountain Sanctuary in Keedysville provided some great opportunities for wildlife and landscape photography. Each camper chose one photograph to enlarge and print and these images will be on display at The Bridge Gallery in Shepherdstown later this year. Reports from



parents indicate that many of the students now have digital cameras on their Christmas or birthday wish lists!

Our photography instructor for the week was Hannah Swindoll, a graduate of the Shepherd University Visual Arts Department. She found the experience an exciting one and we hope she will return! She was assisted by a wonderful volunteer, Sarah Butt. The support and assistance of Shepherd University made the program a breeze this year and Asbury United Methodist Church provided us with a van for the field trip. Special thanks also go to Stephanie Robbins-Thulin of the Department of Contemporary Art and Theater, who made it all so easy!

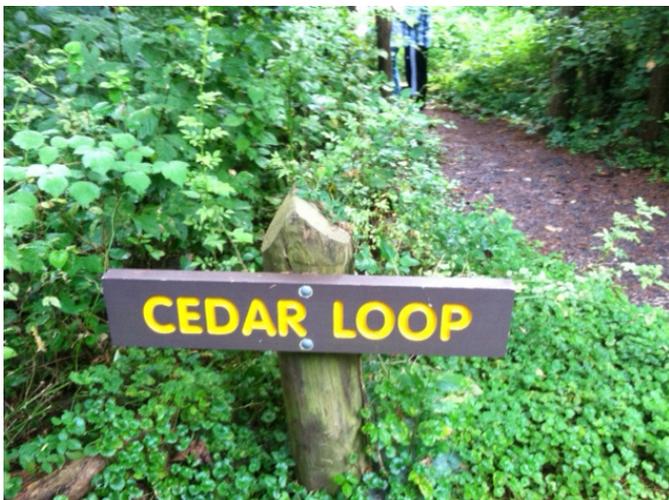
Day of Caring On September 10

This year's Day of Caring will be held Tuesday, September 10. The day's events will kick off with a 7:30 a.m. breakfast in Berkeley County at War Memorial Park in Martinsburg and in Jefferson County at the Inn at Charles Town.

This year PVAS is spearheading projects at the Yankauer Preserve from 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. You may join the PVAS group there to work on invasive removal (like ailanthus, autumn olive and stilt grass), cleaning up the butterfly garden, trimming the trails and parking lot, and other cleaning-up tasks. Lots of work AND fun to be had by all. We'll provide a delicious hot lunch (around 12) if you provide the labor! To pre-register to help at Yankauer, contact Nan Johnson at 304-274-0493 or gabbyvanv@frontier.com.

The United Way is also collecting food for the MEGA food drive as part of this year's Day of Caring. We will be collecting canned goods and other non-perishable food items at the preserve on September 10, so we encourage any and all participants to bring some along. All donated foods will be given to local food pantries.

Afterwards, enjoy dinner at the Clarion in Shepherdstown from 4:00-6:00 p.m. where you can celebrate the day of hard work for a good cause with fellow community members. Please pre-register to ensure enough food and t-shirts for all volunteers!



United Way/CFC Fund Drives Coming Up

The annual fundraising campaigns of the United Way of the Eastern Panhandle and the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) get underway this month. Both campaigns will last into the winter. PVAS receives funds from both agencies and encourages its members to give to their campaigns. 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 304-676-3397 or Kristin@PotomacAudubon.org.

Friends of NCTC Annual Social Event

The Friends of the National Conservation Training Center will host their annual social event on September 15, including a tour of the beautiful wooded campus (off Shepherd Grade Road north of Shepherdstown) starting at 2 p.m. and a wine and cheese tasting in the NCTC Commons Area from 3 to 5 p.m. Information will also be available about the Friends Kayaking and Bicycling Program and volunteer opportunities. At 4:30 p.m. join them for a sneak preview of student films submitted to the 2013 American Conservation Film Festival held in Shepherdstown. For more information about the event, go to <http://friendsofnctc.org>.



We Have a Job For You!

PVAS is an active organization, but everything depends on volunteers. If you, or anyone you know, are interested in volunteering for PVAS, we have a job to please just about anyone! We need people to:

- Represent us at contact booths at local fairs and festivals.
- Weed the gardens at Yankauer Preserve.
- Trim and repair trails at Yankauer, Eidolon, and Stauffer’s Marsh.
- Lead nature and birding walks at locations all around the Eastern Panhandle.
- Help with PVAS events like the Wildflower Festival and Race For The Birds.
- Present workshop programs to Master Naturalists.
- Support Fundraisers by stuffing envelopes, providing refreshments, or helping to plan the events.
- and especially, help with educational programs at Yankauer Preserve!

We offer training for every job. Please contact us via phone, email, Facebook, snail mail, smoke signal, carrier pigeon, or in person. We will be happy to hear from you.



PVAS Positions Available!

You may have noticed that we recently announced an employment opportunity with PVAS. With the growth of our adult services and increased program attendance, we are seeking a coordinator of adult programs to help us keep up with the details of these offerings and provide the participants the attention they deserve. We hope to hire this part-time person in September, and will look forward to introducing the new “Adult Program Coordinator” in the next newsletter!

We also hope to have another position open in the late fall. Depending on funding, we are hoping to recruit a full time VISTA volunteer to help us build our capacity to serve additional youth. We’ll know about this opportunity in September, so stay tuned! If the position is funded, this person will help us with grant research and writing, fundraising efforts, volunteer recruitment and management, membership recruitment and services, and other administrative tasks that ultimately support our youth programs. We will announce the opportunity through the PVAS “Heads up” e-mail list, newsletter, Facebook, colleges, other partner organizations and professional networks. We hope you’ll help us spread the word!

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!



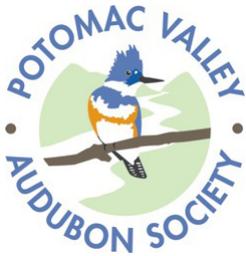
If you’d rather join the National Audubon Society:

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.



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



MAIL TO:

September 2013

Volume 32, Issue 1

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
 The PVAS Board meets every other month on the first Thursday of the month (Sept.-June). Meeting location and time will be announced prior to meetings. These meetings are open to all PVAS members.

PVAS Officers and Board Members

- President: Diana Mullis (2014)..... DianaMullis@aol.com
- Vice President: Jane Vanderhook (2015)..... janehook@frontiernet.net
- Secretary: Mina Goodrich (2014)..... larrymina@peoplepc.com
- Treasurer: Lex Miller (2014)..... pamandlex@frontiernet.net
- Board Members-at-Large:
 - Don Briggs (2015) Idonaldbriggs@gmail.com
 - Clark Dixon (2013)..... dixonconsultants@aol.com
 - Diana Gaviria (2014)..... jpikester@comcast.net
 - Tanner Haid (2016)..... Tanner.Haid@gmail.com
 - Leigh Jenkins (2013)..... jenkinsleigh@hotmail.com
 - Lou Scavnicky (2015)..... captainlou@comcast.net
 - Michael Sullivan (2014)..... msullivan@limno.com
 - Amanda Whitmore (2016)..... Tremba01@gmail.com

- Ex Officio Board Member:** Peter Smith (past president)..... pvsmitth@frontiernet.net
- 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
- Web Master: Kathy Bilton..... kathy@fred.net
- PVAS Wildlife Rescue Coord: Diana Mullis (304-267-3482)..... dianamullis@aol.com