

## Potomac Valley Audubon Society

### Board of Director Candidate Bios 2022 - 2023

**Jim Cummins, President:** Jim is a retired freshwater ecologist. Jim and his wife Nancy, a retired Jefferson County teacher, live in Bakerton. He has a Masters of Science (1985) in Biology from George Washington University. Jim co-started the District of Columbia's fisheries program where he worked from 1985 to 1988. From 1988 until his retirement in 2016 he was the Director of the Living Resources for the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin. His projects included biological assessments of streams and rivers in WV, MD, PA and DC, environmental flow studies, habitat restoration and fish passage, especially in regard to the Little Falls Dam near Washington, D.C. and a linked American shad stocking program with integrated student and volunteer involvement. Jim enjoys woodworking, gardening, fishing, canoeing, playing music, working at various scales to improve the community, reading, and trying to keep a beagle named "Abe" from causing trouble.

**Suzanne Offutt, Past-President:** Suzanne Offutt worked as an educator in Jefferson County for 25 years and recently retired after a 17-year stint as Principal of Shepherdstown Elementary School. Suzanne was one of the founding members of PVAS. She went on to serve as the Education Chair, then President, followed by service as President of the WV Audubon Council. In those roles she ardently worked for environmental initiatives including recycling, clean water, forest preservation, and the establishment of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge near Davis, WV. She had the great honor of sitting with the late Senator Robert C. Byrd at the dedication of the refuge in 1994. Through her professional career, she has been able to establish opportunities for environmental stewardship for children in the school. Suzanne lives with her husband, Mike Zagarella who also served on the PVAS board, in Shepherdstown and near their adult children and grandson. She maintains her long interest in birding, botany, and other conservation activities. She holds degrees in Speech Pathology and Audiology, Deaf Education, and an Ed D in education leadership.

**Mike Sullivan, Vice-President:** Mike works part time as a consultant with a DC-based environmental engineering firm. He and his wife, Susan Hirsch, live outside Shepherdstown in the Steamboat Run Community. As a hydrologist and water resources specialist, Mike has worked extensively on watershed and water quality projects in the mid-Atlantic area including the Potomac River. During his career he held positions with EPA, the National Weather Service, and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Mike has also held leadership positions on the boards of DC Greenworks and the Federal Water Quality Association. His interest in birding and

conservation date back to his twenties when he joined the environmental movement following Earth Day.

**Carolyn Thomas, Secretary:** Carolyn has been a resident of the eastern panhandle for more than 30 years and has been involved in science and environmental education as a classroom teacher and volunteer. A recipient of a Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators, Carolyn has worked extensively with Trout in the Classroom to teach young people about water quality, habitat, and native species. An active volunteer in the community, Carolyn has worked to build and promote PVAS's Annual "This Race is for the Birds." Carolyn wants to engage PVAS members and the community in advocacy for climate and environmental issues that affect all living things.

**Janet Ady, At-large Member:** Janet began her career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the Environmental Education Center on the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, then moved to Alaska as the regional Environmental Education Coordinator. In 1990, she joined the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown, WV, in the design stages, developing education and outreach training and education programs. Janet then led the Division of Education, Interpretation, and Partnerships for the Bureau of Land Management Headquarters Office in Washington, DC, from 2016 until her retirement in 2020. Janet has a bachelor's degree in Natural Resource Management, teaching credentials in High School Biology and Elementary Education, a Master's in Natural Science, a doctorate in Sustainability Education (focusing on community science for conservation and positive youth development), and a certificate in Sustainability and Behavior Change (exploring what motivates people to adopt environmentally sustainable behaviors). Ms. Ady advises several national, state, and local level conservation and environmental education organizations; and joined the board of the Audubon Society of Central Maryland in 2021. Her passion is to connect people of all ages with their natural world to promote environmentally responsible behavior.

**Susan Brookreson, At-large Member:** Susan is a founding member and past president of the Potomac Valley Audubon Society. She has a passion for education and the natural world. Susan has also served on the PVAS board as education chair and co-chair of our bird seed sale. Current PVAS activities include serving on the events committee, being an instructor for Master Naturalists elective classes, Watershed Education instructor and assisting or leading other various workshops and classes as needed. Susan has been an educator most of her professional life teaching art to Pre-Kindergarten through college level (Shepherd University). She most recently was employed by the Martinsburg VA Hospital as a Creative Arts Therapist. Susan earned her BA from the University of Maryland and her MA from West Virginia University.

**Wil Hershberger, At-large Member:** Wil has been an avid naturalist most of his life. After becoming an accomplished and well-respected birder, photography skills learned in his Dad's basement darkroom were rekindled. Today his photography has become an extension of his passion for the natural world. He has an innate ability to capture the natural world in an artistic way. Over a decade ago, Wil and his wife Donna formed Nature Images and Sounds, LLC. Together, they photograph everything from birds to bugs. Wil is also an accomplished sound recordist. Over 3,200 of his recordings, including birds and bugs, are archived at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds. Through his photography and sound recordings, he hopes to instill in others the desire to protect and save these sacred natural treasures. Wil is a Past-President of PVAS.

**Herb Peddicord, At-large Member:** Herb has been a resident of Martinsburg in Berkeley County WV for 29 years. He has a BS in Forestry Resource Management and currently owns a registered forestry consultant business. He recently retired from WV Department of Forestry, where his forestry skills included landowner site visits, timber harvest inspections, and wildland fires issues. As a watershed forester for 11 years of his career, Herb is active in six different watershed groups, including board membership on the Opequon Watershed Team. Herb is also a trained facilitator for Project Learning Tree, a national Environmental Education curriculum. He has provided education and outreach for a vast array of youth and adults in the panhandle. He is a licensed herbicide applicator, and is knowledgeable in many of the environmental issues in this area, including stormwater management. He is an active volunteer for Potomac Valley Audubon Society and in many aspects of this community. He feels climate change is the biggest threat to the habitat of all species including birds and humans.

**Kristan Phillips, At-large member:** Kris is happily retired so she can spend more time outdoors with her husband, including at their cabin in Morgan County. She has a BS in Biology from Carlow University in Pittsburgh, PA and an MS in Biotechnology from Johns Hopkins University. She spent over 25 years working in Regulatory Affairs in the biotech industry. She has been a certified Master Naturalist with the Potomac Valley Master Naturalists (PVMN) since 2017. Kris was the PVMN Instruction and Training Coordinator in 2019-2021 and the PVMN Co-Chair in 2021. She remains active supporting the PVMN Coordinating Committee. Other volunteer activities include driving and coordinating other drivers for the American Cancer Society's Road to Recovery. Kris also volunteers with the Friends of Krimgold Park, a Carroll County park near their Maryland home. She advises and works on habitat conservation, leads bird walks, and volunteers at special events at Krimgold Park. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, birding, hiking, kayaking, reading and learning about the wonders of the natural world.

**Sally Reynolds, At-large member:** Sally moved to Shepherdstown in 2017 with her husband John Deupree after retiring from the USDA's Agricultural Research Service as a microbiologist. Areas of research included developing molecular tools for the identification of mycorrhizal fungi and developing food safety guidelines for leafy greens for the FDA. She holds a master's degree in plant pathology from the University of Maryland and a bachelor's in biology from Earlham College. She studied abroad in Scotland and taught English in Japan. Her love of the outdoors was nurtured in childhood and in college through winter and summer internships at outdoor education in Michigan and Vermont. Those experiences became a guiding influence for her grandparents who deeded their property outside of Columbus, Ohio to the Columbus public schools. Now called the Spruce Run Nature Center, it is visited by 100's of school children annually. Before coming to Shepherdstown, Sally became a Maryland Master Gardener and she has also completed the West Virginia Master Naturalist courses in Tucker County. She has worked to shape the land around their new home as a bird and pollinator friendly space together with an organic vegetable garden. Besides gardening, her passions include hiking, traveling, kayaking, backyard bird watching, and yoga.